

TIGER TALES

5 RAR TIGERS

NEWSLETTER of the 5 RAR ASSOCIATION

PP 22620210007

JULY 1994

EDITION 2

Editor's NOTEBOOK

ANZAC DAY 1994

The Anzac Day commemorations in Sydney proved to be a great success. BOB TRENEAR reported that about 120 5 RAR members marched on the day and 86 members attended the function at the TUDOR INN after the march. Mr Mooney and his wife, Barbara, made everyone very welcome and offered the TUDOR INN as a permanent meeting place in the future.

The Association will plan on making the TUDOR INN our meeting place after the 1995 ANZAC DAY march.

In Batemans Bay NSW, a small contingent of 5 RAR members attended the Dawn Service and the ceremony at the Memorial in the town centre.

GEOFF PEARSON (our roving reporter and committee man), managed to call into TAMWORTH (Vietnam Veteran's League) on his way to Queensland, and also attended the ANZAC DAY ceremony in Brisbane. He reported that 5 RAR was a bit light on the ground, although this was mainly due to the wide ranging activities on the day spread over a very big state.



FEES 5 RAR ASSOCIATION

Renewal of membership is due prior to our 1995 Reunion. In the February 1994 issue of TIGER TALES, membership application formed part of the order form return page of that edition. This was to allow members sufficient time to renew their membership and to avoid, as much as possible, everyone trying to renew their membership on the actual Re-union weekend.

Association fees remain at \$25 (5 year period) and will include a new badge.

5 RAR VIDEO

The 5 RAR Video is selling well. However, there have been one or two complaints on video quality.

My copy is fine (clear and good sound track).

If members feel that their video has sound or picture quality problems, return it to the Association. If it is found to be faulty the Association will replace it. (Don't forget to clean video heads and adjust tracking, just to make sure the machine is working properly.) Sorry, but it does need to be mentioned.



BINH BA DAY 5/7 RAR (MECH)

Due to exercise commitments, 5/7 RAR (MECH) could not hold a Parade Day on 6 June 1994. The battalion did, however, hold a training evening on 6 June and it was a privilege for me to be invited to take part in the presentation of the "Battle of Binh Ba" given by the OC D Coy 5/7 RAR, MAJOR STUART SMITH. Major Smith gave an excellent over-view of the Battle, going into fine detail at all levels of the engagement between 5 RAR and elements of the 33 NVA Regiment. The Battle of Binh Ba is of particular interest to 5/7 RAR (MECH) due to their mode of operations and the similarity to 5 RAR operations in June 1969. 5/7 RAR (MECH) has re-decorated a room in the Officer's Mess (5 RAR ASSOCIATION Meeting Room) and named it the 'Binh Ba' Room. The area was officially opened by MAJOR GENERAL M. P. BLAKE A.O. M.C. just prior to 6 June 1994.

In the Mess proper, there is a framed picture of a tiger with the inscription "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING". I don't think that we need worry, 5/7 RAR will, I'm sure, be equal to any task that they are called upon to do.

COMING EVENTS

5 RAR RE-UNION (3 - 5 MARCH 1995)

5/7 RAR (MECH) BARRACKS

Planning for our re-union in 1995 is underway. The Association can only plan in detail if we get accurate returns for that weekend, so we need your help to get our act together.

The 3 - 5 March will be broken up into three areas for costing and catering purposes.

1. Friday 3 March 1995

This is the proposed mixed function night. The committee must know if members are interested in attending. In the last issue of TIGER TALES, three choices were given:

- a. Harbour Cruise
- b. Restaurant
- c. Club

from the returns received to date, the Harbour Cruise seems to be popular, however members should continue to indicate the other choices of venues if they wish. It really comes down to the most popular choice at the 'end of play'. Members should therefore be aware that the function could be held at any one of the three venues indicated. Consider this when making your returns. In any case, a final decision will be made once all returns are received.

2. Saturday 4 March 1995

This is the actual re-union dinner, obviously we need to know if you will be there. (5 RAR only)

3. Sunday 5 March 1995

Church Parade and BBQ.

Clearly, there is a lot of organisation to be done. The Association committee requests that returns reach SYDNEY by 25 October 1994. Full details of costs involved will be published in the November issue of TIGER TALES, and final details in the January 1995 edition.

The ORDER FORM / RETURN page has provision for the 1995 Re-union returns. Please don't leave it to the last minute to decide.

LETTERS

Editor's Note: the response to TIGER TALES has been most pleasing. There has been an influx of mail, and unfortunately we are unable to print all of the letters received. Please accept a brief reply from the Editor, and many thanks.

DAVID & HELEN KEATING - TASMANIA

Dear David and Helen

Thank you for both letters (20 March '94/14 May '94)
I'm sorry to hear about your health problems; however, from the tone of your letter, you both seem to be coping well.

LETTERS contd

In reference to those members of ANTI/TANK platoon, we have an address for JOHN SEALE and PAUL BAKER, but I can't find a listing on JOCK LETFORD or DAVID BARTER. Perhaps someone can help when this edition arrives in the mail. Also thanks for the news on DONALD OAKLEY. I'll ensure that he receives a copy of TIGER TALES.

I can't help much with advice on the closest place for you and your wife to stay on 3 - 5 March 1995. Try to get hold of an NRMA accommodation guide (RACT in Tassie). That will list all accommodation in Sydney.

Regards

Brian London

Editor

Editor's Note: If members wish to contact David - send your contact address to me at PO Box 422 Batemans Bay NSW 2536 and I will pass the information on to David.

NORM SIMMS - ULLADULLA NSW

Dear Norm

Thanks for your letter (9 March '94). Pleased to hear you received your video, and for the news on MICK DWYER. As we live only 50km apart I will call in for a 'cuppa' on the way through to the rifle range at Milton. I'll give you a call before hand.

Best of luck

Brian London

P.S.

Small world, isn't it?

IVOR ATKINS - ALTONA

Dear Ivor

It was great to hear from you and thanks for your kind remarks on the newsletter. Don't worry, I have the same problem with faces and names. Thanks also for your very generous donation towards the cost of replacing the 'lost' gear (\$100). All things being equal, I will see you at the 1995 re-union.

Regards

Brian London

SID DAVIS - ENGLAND (TIGER TALES is now international!)

Dear Sid

We are pleased our newsletter found you. Great place, as you say. Snowing and cold in winter; raining and cold in summer. But I suppose the 10 days in Spain and 8 days in Malta tended to make up for it a little. Your video should have arrived by now. Let us know your thoughts on it.

Keep away from that "warm beer" and keep in touch. Don't forget to call 'Australia home'.

Regards from us all, Brian London

LETTERS Contd

PETER JACKSON - MT RIVERVIEW

Dear Peter

Sorry I missed you on Anzac Day. We had our own thing to do here in Batemans Bay NSW. Sorry to hear about BOB DARBY SIG PLATOON 69/70 (car accident). Please pass on our condolences to his family.

All the best
Brian London

COLIN VICKERY - BOWEN QLD

Dear Colin

Received your letter (5 May 1994) and will try to do something about your plaque question in the next issue of TIGER TALES. As you made up the plaque yourself, I doubt if there is another like it. In fact, from your photo, I'm sure it is the only one in existence. Anyway, I will enquire further and let you know the outcome as soon as possible.

Regards
Brian London

EDDIE HOBSON - MORLEY WA

Dear Eddie

Thanks for the wonderful photos and information on ANDREW DRUMMOND. I'll make sure the material takes pride of place in TIGER TALES.

I'm pleased to hear you are okay now, just keep up the good work, and feel free to contact us at any time.

Best of luck
Brian London

P.S. I will send you extra copies of TIGER TALES to hand on to Andrew's family.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

There were several complaints from members who have paid for 5 RAR items but have not yet received the goods. The committee addressed the problem as quickly as possible, and as of March '94 I think we have solved the problem. (I hope). The committee has voluntarily offered their services to the Association and sometimes because of other commitments we do, at times, fall short of the mark. However, we try.

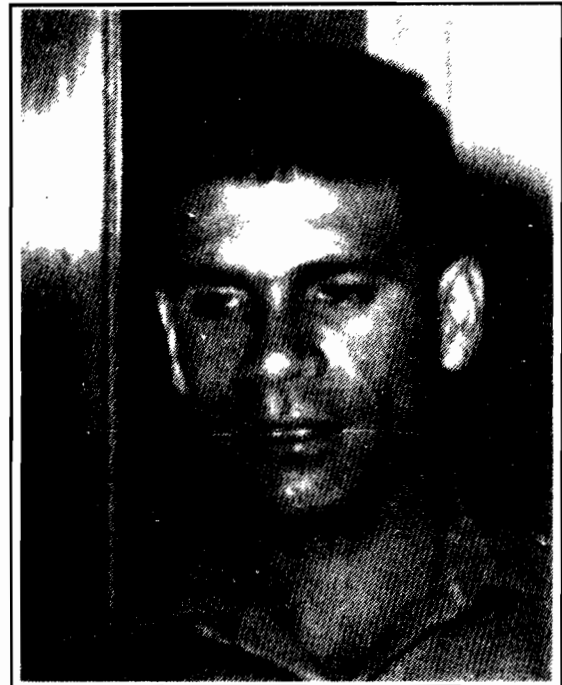
**ANDREW DRUMMOND MEMORIAL
SCULPTURE UNVEILING**

&

DEDICATION CEREMONY

Sunday, 30th May 1993 at 11.30 am
Carnarvon Civic Centre Gardens, Western Australia.

*Andrew Drummond (2-5-42 - 30-5-69)
and all those who served in Vietnam.*



55537 Pte. Andrew Drummond
5th Bn. Royal Australian Regiment
30th May 1969

"Lest we forget"

Vietnam

1962

-

1973

*Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his
life for his friends.*

*Taken from the original service sheet,
from the service at Nui Dat, South Vietnam,
Tuesday 3rd June, 1969*

B COY

FIFTH BATTALION

THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT



MEMORIAL SERVICE

To Commemorate the Fallen of B Coy 5 RAR
who paid the supreme sacrifice
on Operation TWICKENHAM
to be held at
NUI DAT
on
Tuesday 3rd June 1969
at 1315 hours

Officiating Chaplains:

Chaplain J. McELVENEY	CE
Chaplain T.H. SHANAHAN	RC
Chaplain H. SHAW	PD

ORDER OF SERVICE

We gather together today as a company to pay respect to the memory of departed comrades and friends to recall with gratitude the privilege of having known them, and to express our sincere sympathy to their wives, parents, relatives and loved ones.

With these intentions in mind, let us pray - first with the prayer Our Lord taught us to pray: Our Father....

Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 4, 13 - 18.

Short Address

Psalm 130. All together:

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;

Lord, hear my voice; Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications;

If you, O Lord, should work iniquities, Lord who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with you, that you may be feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope;

My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord;

For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is plenteous redemption.

And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Two minutes silence

List of fallen, plus ODE - CSM



Pte. Drummond's mother attending ceremony held at Civic Centre Gardens Western Australia



The 5 RAR Association regrets to announce the passing of the following members of the Fifth Battalion Royal Australian Regiment:

W R CAVANAGH	MINTO, NSW
E T DALEY	BONDI, NSW
J B LEAMAN	PEELHURST, WA
R R DARBY	WHALE BEACH, NSW



Preparations Prior to Ops



TIGER TALES Editor Brian London 1966



Early Stages of Construction Nui Dat 1966



Vietnam Air Force Base



Luxembourg Field "Coming Home"

RETURNS 1995 RE-UNION and ORDER FORM

MEMBER'S DETAILS

SURNAME GIVEN NAMES

ADDRESS P/CODE

1st/2nd TOUR COMPANY PLATOON

PHONE: H B

RETURN THIS COMPLETE PAGE (PLEASE PRINT). DELETE FORMS NOT APPLICABLE TO YOU

Please ENSURE your details are complete before mailing to: Hon SECRETARY
5 RAR Association
GPO Box 817
SYDNEY, NSW 2001



1. 1995 RE-UNION (3rd-5th MARCH)

I will be attending the following functions: (venue TBA November)

celebrations Note

a. MIXED FUNCTION 3rd MARCH

*\$50 BBQ details in
NOV 94 ISSUE*

b. 1995 RE-UNION DINNER 4th MARCH

c. BBQ 5th MARCH

2. HISTORY OF THE FIFTH BATTALION (VIDEO)

Please send me copy/ies of the 5 RAR video

(Cost per video \$40.00)

\$

3. 5 RAR ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I wish to renew my membership

I am a new member

MEMBERSHIP FEE - \$25.00 (5 year period)

\$

4. RAR ASSOCIATION ITEMS (FOR SALE)

Please send me: 5 RAR Tie/s @ \$15.00 each \$

..... 5 RAR Car Stickers @ \$3.00 each \$

..... 5 RAR Caps @ \$13.00 each \$

..... 5 RAR Honour Rolls @ \$30.00 each \$

..... 5 RAR Plaques @ \$15.00 each \$

TOTAL AMOUNT

ENCLOSED

\$

VIETNAM REVISITED

25 YEARS ON

ANZAC DAY 1994 NUI DAT 5 RAR AREA

Editor's Note:

Peter Turner has put together a fine article on his recent visit to VIETNAM. It makes good reading and I'm sure it will be of considerable interest to 5 RAR Association members.

There is very little evidence now that 25 years ago a battalion of young Australians lived here. The rubber trees, tents, weapon pits and barbed wire have been replaced with newly planted 1m high rubber tree saplings awaiting the wet season. John Price, 5 RAR signals corps rear link operator; Jeff Pearce, RAEME 3 CAV, and myself (Peter Turner) are having a look around "THE DAT" during a week long visit to Vietnam. We have spent yesterday and today exploring PHUOC TUY Province, now called Baria - Vung Tau Province.

After arriving at NUI DAT we found Luscombe Airfield tarmac was still intact, but is breaking up in many places. With the help of a map of the old 1 ATF Base, and using the airfield as a starting point, we walked through the area once occupied by 5RAR. The whole area has been freshly cultivated, and apart from what remains of the old road system, which can be followed easily, there is very little sign of our past presence, a few large rocks painted black and gold, and some in blue from 1 RAR's tenure. Concrete foundations of more solid structures like B.H.Q. Messes etc have long been broken up then possibly removed, because the whole area has been put under the plough except for an area in the vicinity once occupied by B Company and later D Company, which is now a small cemetery with a herd of goats grazing and being tended by a young boy, who must be wondering what three grown men are doing wandering around the place looking at rocks.

There is an eerie silence today compared to what was a 2500 man Task Force going about its mission, no aircraft, no artillery or vehicles, just the wind and a few plantation workers cycling around the roads once occupied by Land Rovers and APCs. The workers' huts are scattered around the old base area, with a small village located between Luscombe airfield and SAS hill. Both Nui Dat and SAS hill have now only a few dozen trees on them, with some bananas under cultivation on the slopes. The Nui Thi Vai's, Nui Dinh's and Long Hai hills are also naked of trees, with only patches of scrub. Whether this absence of trees was caused by defoliants, or the local timber gatherers using the timber to make charcoal, still the main fuel for cooking, nobody can tell me for sure. I think a combination of both.

During our tour of the rest of 1 ATF area, we found that KANGA PAD, the starting point of many operations, is now a paddy field. We stopped and took a further walk in the vicinity of the main gate, and were soon recognised by a group of children as

UC DAI - LOIs, and quickly drew a crowd of about two dozen locals of all ages, smiling and laughing, eager and curious to see us. Through broken English an old lady approached me with a small bag of old Australian coins, dog tags and other metal objects which had been in the ground for some time, and after some bargaining I had some unusual souvenirs.

Earlier in the day, following an over - night stay in Vung Tau, we had driven up to Baria, soon to be the terminal for a 107km \$400 million gas pipe line linking the offshore oil rigs, then around Route 44 to LONG HAI and around the coast to PHUOC HAI. This area has had a population expansion, the main road is being sealed, and small holiday camps have sprung up along the beaches. The area where Fire Support Base THRUST once stood is now under cultivation with an irrigation system. The area is under a good crop and stands out against the dry surrounds waiting for the wet. Then on to DAT DO (the dogs are now under lights on Saturday nights)



left to right: JOHN PRICE, PETER
TURNER, JEFF PEARCE.
5 RAR LINES NUI DAT

and little appears to have changed for the man on the land. He still tends his rice paddy with his water buffalo and takes his produce to market in an ox cart.

Yesterday we had driven to Vung Tau from Saigon along Route 15 through the villages of PHU MY, ONG TRINH, etc, which, during the war, like all towns and villages, had their population controlled within strict boundaries by fire zones and curfews. They have now expanded, fringing the highway for its full length with homes, rubber, paddy fields, and a number of larger factories under construction. There is very little except the NUI THI VAI's and other similar features to recall from 25 years ago.

We also visited BINH BA, which has expanded population and rubber. Overall there is very little sign of the war throughout the country, no uniforms or weapons, no guard bunkers etc around the villages; but you do see green US Army duce and a half trucks, now with their radiators long gone, using a 44 gallon drum of water on the roof and a pipe running down to the engine to cool it. They carry everything from rice to timber, some grossly overloaded. A truck definitely built to last.

We spent two nights in VUNG TAU at the Sea Breeze Hotel, a joint Australian venture, just around the corner from the old Grand Hotel, which has had a face lift and is now owned by the Oil Service Company, but still has a "reputation". The city is now the centre for a growing offshore oil - gas industry and is the hub for Vietsovetro, a Soviet - Vietnamese oil exploration company. However with the collapse of the Soviet Union their influence is disappearing and with the lifting of US embargos companies like BHP are having a big input and stake in Vietnam's future. Vung Tau will also resume its resort town status, with many new hotels under construction along back beach. There is no sign left of 1 ALSG. Nor is there any sign of the bars which were found in great numbers in this R & C Centre.



PETER TURNER
CU CHI TUNNELS
'68 TET MAP

A few cafe style bars have emerged, one of which is the "Apocalypse Now" found in Saigon, Vung Tau and Hanoi. The first two establishments now proudly display the 5 RAR Association logo and members of the Tiger Battalion are assured of a warm welcome and a cold beer from the owner, TON THAT DIEP (nickname ZIP TONE).

We also took day trips to MYTHO in the MEKONG DELTA and to the CU CHI Tunnels. The Delta is a contrast after the type of country that we operated in and is an enjoyable day visiting homes and villages on small islands in the river. During our visit to the CU CHI Tunnels, whilst being shown a map used to plan the '68 TET OFFENSIVE on Saigon, I pointed out PHOC TUY to the guide and asked about



LUSCOMBE AIRFIELD
looking west '94

VIETNAM REVISITED contd

Australian troops, his reply, after a short discussion with a non - English speaking guide, was "SPECIAL JUNGLE TROOPS", in fact "SPECIAL" came up in a number of casual conversations with Vietnamese. I was left with the impression that Australians are held in respect then and now. The tunnels are about 80km from Saigon, near BEN DINH, and small renovated sections (once a network of over 200km) are open to visitors, with displays of equipment used by both sides. Compared to the museums in Saigon, which can be depressing, the tunnels hold a lot of interest for old INFANTRYMEN.

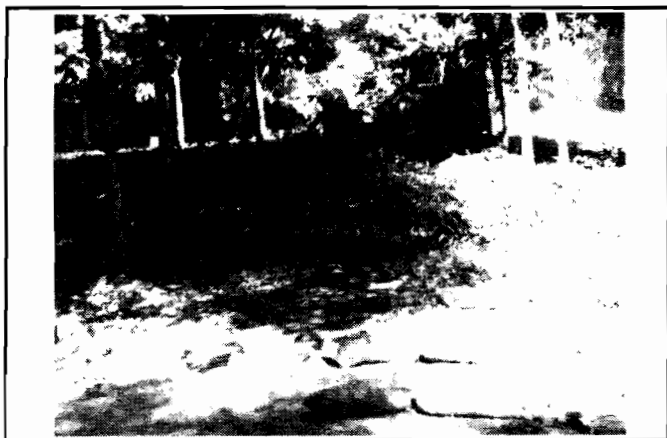
Reflecting on our holiday spent in Saigon, Phouc tuy, Vung Tau, I found that the Vietnamese want to get on with life, in 25 years where Australia has changed dramatically, Vietnam has been in a time warp. Take out the huge military machine that was there for many years and little has changed for the average person, life is still a matter of survival. It is the fourth poorest country in the world.

My wife and 12 year old daughter travelled with me and were prepared to accept delays and hassles during our trip, as Vietnam is not yet on the tourist routes. We were surprised when greeted with smiles and good service, it is easy to get around the country and reasonably cheap. The five of us thoroughly enjoyed the trip and can recommend it, my family would go back tomorrow and are making plans to return in a few years. If anybody would like information or to talk to me about a trip to Vietnam or about taking family etc, please feel free to ring me. (070) 51 7155
PETER TURNER.

Editor's Note:

"Dog tags" found in task force base area in Vietnam are:

M. J. WALKER R.C.
1733142
Op
W. J. SUTTON Meth.
2793 2/5? 30
Op



SIG PL Lines '66

5 RAR ASSOCIATION STATE REPRESENTATIVES

- QLD** Lt Col R T Shambrook AM Ron
57 Lade Street
ENNOGERA QLD 4051
Tel : B. (07) 252 9866
- VIC** POSITION VACANT
Applications to: Hon. Secretary
5 RAR Association
GPO Box 817
SYDNEY NSW 2001
- SA** Mr R H Naismith Bob
16/A2 Harrison Road
PENNINGTON SA 5013
- WA** Mr J D Burrige John
88 Watkins Road
CLAREMONT WA 6010
- TAS** Mr C M Illman Colin
20 Blackstone Road
LAUNCESTON TAS 7250
- ACT** Mr G Negus Greg
3 Daplyn Close
WESTON ACT 2611
Tel : (06) 243 1029 H.
(06) 288 2070 B.

Footnote from the Editor:

TIGER TALES, 5 RAR Association newsletter, will be published three times a year in February, June/July and November. Contributions welcome.



Three Sergeants 5 RAR 1969'70