

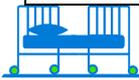


Half Circle

Number 104 - August 2015

(If this is hard to read, try increasing the picture size to 150%!!)

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:

Barrie Taylor, ongoing oncology treatment

Colin Summerfield – medical

Matt Smith – medical

Neville Hayne – from Moree (NSW), Neville has been sent to Toowoomba (Qld) for heart treatment. Nev reckons an 1100psi compressor through the arteries could possibly do the trick.

Some others have not been too well. If you know of someone and would like to let their mates know, please contact your editor.



In Sydney and want to hit the little white ball? Then head for the Georges River Golf Course, Henry Lawson Drive Georges Hall. Geoff Grimish and his team will make you most welcome. Geoff is a Vietnam vet (RAA), and is a great humanitarian. Phone (02) 9724 1615.

Ed's note: Some ask why Geoff gets mentioned in this newsletter. This man does so much behind the scenes that we could all take a lesson from him. For instance, Geoff has just returned from Vung Tau, where he took some old digger mates to help in an orphanage and to begin a fundraiser to provide a bus for the children there.

SO WHAT HAPPENED TO C COY 5RAR (2nd TOUR OF VIETNAM?)

Let's have a look:

- Some became Colonels, Lieutenant Colonels, Majors, and Captains

- Some became Warrant Officers
- Some remained as Sergeants, in vital training capacities
- Some remained Corporals, happy at their levels
- Some returned to business and became successful managing directors
- Some worked for bosses
- Some became miners
- Some became bricklayers
- Some returned to the land
- Some worked for government departments in their own States
- Some left the cities for a country life
- Some worked for charities
- Some were unwell, and were picked up by DVA
- Some slept under bridges
- Many hid
- Many others went their own ways.

So what happens now? We all have the opportunity to meet again in Canberra next year – 228 days from the publication of this newsletter. We have not been together as a Company since March 1970, when, on the HMAS Sydney, CSM Jack Lake gave us his final spray.

In Canberra, we will have a Meet and Greet, a cruise on Lake Burley Griffin, time as platoon groups, a tour of the Australian War Memorial, attendance at the War Memorial Closing Ceremony, where our seven diggers who made the supreme sacrifice will be honoured, and a Company Dinner with our CO, Brig Colin (Genghis) Khan DSO AM as the guest speaker. This will be one of the best and closest reunions any battle group will ever attend. I urge you to register as soon as possible to ensure your attendance. If you do not have registration documents, please contact Barry Morgan at b.kmorgan@bigpond.com *Ed.*



TRAVELLING ABOUT: Ian and Glenys Leis, believed to still be somewhere in WA, heading north.

Phil and Marion Greenhalgh, heading north from Melbourne to NSW and Queensland, visiting a lot of old mates along the way.

C COMPANY PERSONNEL – IAN LEIS PROVIDES AN INSIGHT INTO THE LIFE OF 2789674 PTE PETER JOSEPH MOLLOY – 7 PLATOON

Firstly I would like to say it is a privilege to be writing this short story on Peter who is an inspiration to all who have known him, and my thanks for being able

to share part of his life. I have not spent a lot of time in his company since Vietnam, however, the valued friendship and admiration I personally hold for him is almost impossible to put into words, but I will try.

Peter was born in Tamworth in 1947, one of seven children. Like me he grew up in a fairly strict Catholic family. Discipline at home and at school was always there (this is why we grew into the gentlemen we are today). He attended St. Joseph's school, then completed an apprenticeship as a motor mechanic with a Holden dealership in Merriwa.

His early life was that of a typical young boy growing up in Tamworth. He holds great respect and admiration for his father, who raised him from the early age of 12 years, along with the rest of the family. His father was employed by the N.S.W. Rail and the family lived in Merriwa and the New England area.

Peter was called up as a National Serviceman in the 12th intake in May 1968. He completed rookie training at Singleton and during this period a valued friendship with Greg Parish (the Reverend) began. Unfortunately, Peter and Greg lost contact post-Vietnam. Another friendship that was consolidated post-Vietnam was with Geoff Pearson. This friendship is now over 46 years long and shows no sign of diminishing. What Geoff has done for Peter over these years will be recognised in due course.

Peter volunteered for the infantry corps as he wanted to go to Vietnam. His corps training was completed at Holsworthy after allocation to 7 Platoon C. Coy 5 R.A.R. Peter admits he left Australia on HMAS Sydney not really knowing where Vietnam was on the map. None of us had any real knowledge of the inhabitants or their way of life. We knew the enemy mostly wore black pyjamas. But on arrival it was very clear that nearly everyone wore black pyjamas.

It was on our first 2 day break to Vung Tau (known as R&C) that Peter became known as "Number 10" or 10. He enjoyed all the normal routine and antics associated with R&C. The story around his becoming known as No. 10 is not really known by me, however it involved a bar girl who in anguish told him "YOU ARE NUMBER 10". Those who witnessed this have not forgotten. He still is "10" to many today.

When 7 Platoon made contact with the enemy in the hospital complex/bunker/cave system and Corporal Jack Loader was shot, Peter MOLLOY was L.O.B. (Left on base). On 4th July 1969, Peter was critically wounded by mines at the base of the Long Hais.

At this time the remainder of C Company knew very little of the devastation caused to 7 Platoon by the mines. We were told of those killed in action, and that there was a need for a new 7 Platoon to be formed. Reinforcements and some of the uninjured members became the new 7 Platoon.

Between the 4th July and the 16th July, when Peter arrived at Ingleburn's 2 Military Hospital, he had endured a medivac that wasn't easy. He was held over in Butterworth Hospital in Malaysia, with John Faint, whose injuries were very similar. They were unable to continue on the medivac flight. Both Peter and John would endure much the same medical procedures/recovery during the next two years.

As we know "10" received horrific wounds on 4th July, 1969, a night that has in some way affected every day of his life since. Until August 1972 he remained in the military, being held over for medical reasons. He endured many invasive medical procedures during this time.

In 1972 Peter married Gail, a nursing sister who had cared for him at Concord Repatriation Hospital. Feeling sorry for himself was not part of Peter MOLLOY. He got on with life, handling the good and not so good times. Peter and Gail had two children, Kim who arrived in 1974 and Ben in 1977.

Over the next 12 years, life in Sydney was OK. Peter returned to his trade working for Chrysler and Gail continued nursing. With the support of Gail and children Peter showed just how strong and determined he was. No artificial leg or injuries was going to hinder his journey through life.

Peter is not afraid to show or state his love and respect for Gail, and he also acknowledges the importance she, their two children and grandchildren have and are playing in his life today.

After 12 years in Sydney the Molloy family returned to Tamworth. Employment and schooling continued. The children enjoyed being country kids, with horses and motor bikes to ride. At this time Peter obtained a special permit from the National Parks and Wildlife. This enabled him to pursue and enjoy his love of birds. He built many special aviaries at their home on the outskirts of Tamworth and began collecting and breeding Australian Native Birds. The dedication and daily activities required to complete this hobby were very beneficial to Peter. It involved regular inspections by National Parks. The requirements to fulfil all the paperwork regarding breeding, supplying and distribution of birds was a full time affair. This was physically and mentally good for Peter.

In 1988 Peter Molloy accepted being made T.P.I. It was time for him to slow up.

Some years down the track with Kim and Ben experiencing their own way in life it was time for Peter and Gail. They sold up in Tamworth and moved to Montville, QLD. Together they designed and had built a magnificent home on the side of a mountain. All was designed to help and assist Peter with his disabilities.

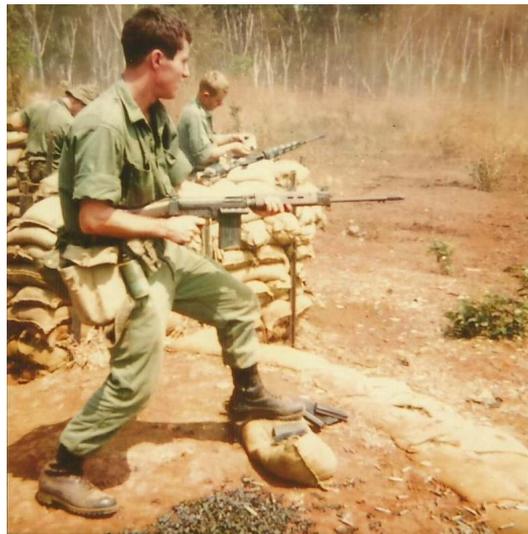
Both of Peter and Gail's children, Kim and Ben are back living in Australia, and there are 3 grandchildren for them to enjoy. Gail has retired from nursing and some travel plans are being made.

However, since late 2014 Peter has again endured more medical procedures with his legs, mainly a change in appliance of his right leg. Initially he had a total knee replacement to his left leg before the procedure to fit a computerised right leg could begin. This procedure to the stump of his right leg is called osseointegration, which involves fitting a metal shaft into the femur. This is ongoing and will take some time, plus lots of discomfort and pain.

The wound is open requiring daily dressing. Gail's support and knowledge of intensive surgical care is most beneficial for Peter, in being able to receive the specialist care from her at home. This means less hospital time and travelling.

The future for Peter? Full confidence that there is light at the end of the tunnel (with his new leg). Once again his dedication and ability to overcome and succeed are shining through. He can only be admired for what he has endured since "4th July, 1969".

To me, PETER MOLLOY IS A TRUE AUSTRALIAN, A SILENT ACHIEVER, AND A GOOD AUSSIE BLOKE. HE IS ONE WHO IS TRULY PART OF THE AUSTRALIAN ANZAC LEGEND. *Ian Leis*



Peter Molloy at the Practice Range, Nui Dat, 1969.

Ed's note: Thanks Ian, a great piece on a great Australian. Peter, we all salute you.

FROM IAN LEIS:

I thought you might put a short note in Half Circle re. Andy Drummonds 'grave' at Carnarvon, WA. Those who were lucky to have known Andy will be pleased to know that his grave, although in the old cemetery in town is in good order and condition.

At some stage when I get home, I will contact our Battalion Association to look at renewing his plaque, which is starting to show its' age. Andy's death was a big blow to many of our Battalion, as he had many mates.

FROM DAVID WILKINS:

I thought you'd be interested (and maybe the boys also) in a letter I came across during my research for the 2nd volume of *Rallying the Troops*, a WW1 commemoration by the Ku-Ring-Gai Historical Society. It was from an Aussie digger on the Western Front to his father in October 1918:

Three days before I left, after we had been fighting very hard for four weeks solid, Fritz put in his two crack regiments – the Kaiser's Prussian Grenadier Guards, and the Princess's Guards. They had volunteered to stop the Aussies. These Germans were fresh from a spell, and our men were tired out. There was not a man in those two Fritz regiments under 6ft. They were a magnificent lot, and well fed and clothed. The Aussies attacked, and Fritz fought for a while, but we took all our objectives and 2,000 prisoners. I watched them pass through, and never saw finer looking men – the pick of Germany. You may and can well be proud of the Aussie Infantry. There is none to beat them in the whole world.

Makes you proud doesn't it?

FROM BOB HOOPER: The last time I caught a helicopter to a Liberal Party function, I was in Vietnam.

FOUND: Bill (Blue) Douglas, formerly from WA. Bill is now back in WA, and want to re-establish contact with his old C Coy mates. Bill's email address is blueddouglas@yahoo.com He looks forward to hearing from **YOU** .

Half Circle was compiled and edited by Don Harrod - donharrod@bigpond.com, 0418 423 313, with help from Ian Leis, Phil Greenhalgh, Geoff Grimish, Dave Wilkins and Bob Hooper.

PLEASE SEE THE NEXT PAGE REGARDING THE ANNUAL VETERANS' PARADE AND MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE BLUE MOUNTAINS VIETNAM VETERANS AND ASSOCIATED FORCES INC.

BLUE MOUNTAINS VIETNAM
VETERANS
& ASSOCIATED FORCES INC.

cordially invites you to attend our

Annual Parade & Memorial Service

Sunday 16th August, 2015

The parade will be assembling at 11:00am, at Macquarie Rd, Springwood. The service will be followed by a social function at the Royal Hotel, Springwood to which members are invited.

This year our Guest of Honour is his Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC, DSC (Ret'd), Governor of New South Wales.

Prior to his appointment as Governor, His Excellency served for 42 years in the Australian Army, concluding his service as the Chief of the Defence Force. His Excellency was awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia in 2010 for eminent service to the Australian Defence Force, and a Distinguished Service Cross for his leadership during the Operation SOLACE in Somalia in 1993.

**Please advise our
Association of your
intention to attend by 17th
July & whether you intend
to lay a floral tribute or
book to be presented to a
local school.**



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