

Half Circle



Number 108 - December 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:

Geoff Ford Geoff is currently undergoing radiation and chemotherapy for a throat cancer. He is bearing up well. Anyone who would like to phone Fordy to say G'day is welcome to phone **0417 717 314**.

Don Frohmuller: Don is still recovering from a serious fall, but is progressing well.

Barrie Taylor: Ongoing oncology treatment. This bloke won't lie down!

John Hellyer: John is currently suffering heart and throat problems, and is under medical treatment. We wish him well – a two-tour Vietnam veteran, and a bloke who, with his wife Hazel, has fostered about **250** children.

THE DIARY OF DENNIS (Digger) NEVINS: 7PL C Coy 5RAR:

1 Nov 69 - Reveille at 0600hrs in Nui Dat, had breakfast then cleaned up the lines. At 0900 we embarked onto trucks and they dropped us off at Luscombe Field. Around 0945 we loaded onto a caribou and we landed at a dirt airstrip about 15 minutes later. I think 9RAR are around this strip or near it, but can't be certain. As we got off 9RAR members embarked - this was their last operation. We harboured on the edge of the strip for awhile then got on APCs and moved to B Coy AO as they were in contact with nogs in bunkers. Yesterday we were told we would be heading north but the B Coy contact changed that. We stopped about 2000 yds from the contact on the edge of route 15. We watched a Phantom air strike going in and by Christ were they laying down some bombs - they must have been using napalm as

well because the sky was full of black smoke. After an hour or so we moved again to an area to act as a blocking force and stayed there for two hours. We've been going around in circles all day so I haven't got a clue where we are. The nogs are armed with Machine Gun, AK47 and RPG. They've been shooting at gunships, so they must be a big force, and confident. 6PL got one KIA and had two of theirs WIA. When we finally moved it was on a APC track for a mile or so, more or less in the direction of the B Coy contact. After a mile we got off the APCs all except for those with M79. Barry Baker and I went with the Platoon all others stayed with the tankies for an ambush that included Barry Williams, Jack Bradd, John Marine and Roy Hicks. Our PL moved a further 250 yds, then moved off the APC track into the scrub and had tea. Just before dark we put in an ambush on a nog foot track that led onto the APC track. My Gun is at the rear. The track were ambushing hasn't been used for a while but you never know the nogs bugging out from B Coy will use any track.

14 Nov 69. Last night it rained and most of us got wet. Barry Williams and I had nothing over us. I placed my hutchie over my gun and rounds, I would rather keep that dry, than myself. It was a pretty uncomfortable night but we did get a little sleep. Bowies section also did piquet on my Gun. We left the ambush at 0900 and 2 section led out. Hippie Koppen is scouting for them now seeing Mick Brown copped it the other day. Hip set a good pace and we made a lot of ground but there were no fresh tracks. We had lunch then Jock's section took the lead then our section took over. We hit the Fire Trail and then patrolled along it until we crossed a nog track. It went off the Fire Trail so we followed it. After 150 yds we came cross a snare so we put a harbour type ambush on it - my gun is at one end. I hope its not a civilian track, not that I care really but it is a civilian access area. There's a lot of animal stick fences around here but no fresh nog tracks- I'm convinced there are no nogs in this area; its been so quiet for us. D Coy had two contacts with no results.

27 Nov 69. Last night 9PL made contact with two nogs, they came into the rear of their ambush. After a sweep this morning there were no results. It was quiet for us last night. Moved out at 0830 with 2 section leading. After an hour we stopped as 9PL had come across bunkers. They must have been clear as we moved on again. Some time later we came across a river, I think this is between us and the Thai's (Thailand troops). Our section took over the lead and after 70 yds there was a nog track leading down into the water - it was decided to put an ambush on them. We moved into the donga and harboured amongst old bunkers. At this time 8PL were in contact which resulted in two nogs KIA. Bowies section went out on a recce and they found a camp about 5 days old -they checked it out and returned to us. We all then saddled up and moved 350 yds and harboured. The skipper (Hosie) took a couple of blokes from each section including myself and Andy on another recce of the track - it was a bloody good track. We moved back to Company then we all saddled up and moved into ambush. This ambush is an area to the rear where we set up ambush last night - some how all these tracks must lead into something, its hard to explain in writing. Andy MacDougal is now 2IC. Barry Baker is now full Corporal in 9PL.

As a footnote in reference to the river and Thai soldiers – I'm sure you will laugh at this and maybe Major Ducker may remember. The OC came around to check the ambush positions; my gun was looking along the river. When he stopped in my position I said "Sir are the Thais working the other side of the river?" He replied Pte Nevins there are no Thais on the other side, don't you know where you are?" I replied "No sir we keep going around in circles and I have no idea where we are". The OC was not impressed. At the O group that evening the OC told LT Hosie tell Pte Nevins there are still no Thais on the other side of the river. That's how I found out that there were no Thailand troops around.



ON THE MOVE: We have been advised that the CSM of C Coy 5RAR, WO2 Craig Thomson, has left the Army. We wish Craig well, acknowledge his service to our Country, and hope that he enjoyed C Coy as much as we remember that we did!



TRAVELLING ABOUT: No reports received, but as families often travel during the Christmas break to visit their loved ones, please drive safely and have plenty of breaks. We are no longer able to run marathons!!

My mate Tinky, the local butcher in my town, told me that a lady who bought frankfurts from him last Friday complained that there was sawdust in the tips of those items. Tinky told her "You have to understand that times are tough, and it's hard to make ends meat".

A woman appeared in court, charged with stealing a can of pears. The magistrate how many pears were in the can, and was told "nine". The magistrate said "in that case, you can spend nine days in jail". Her husband leapt to his feet in the rear of the court and said "Hang on a minute; she also stole a large can of peas".

After hearing the news about possible terrorism attack and a high security alert I was a little nervous, so when I was at the checkout and ready to pay

for my groceries the cashier said, "Strip down, facing me."
Making a mental note so I could complain to my local MP about this security rubbish, I did just as she had instructed.
After the shrieking and hysterical remarks finally subsided, I found out that she was referring to how I should position my credit card.
Nonetheless, I've been asked to shop elsewhere in the future.
They need to make their instructions a little clearer for seniors.
I hate this getting older stuff.



Merry Christmas to all members of C Coy, wives, partners, families and friends. Many of us will remember Christmas 1969. Claude Ducker had just handed over the command of our Company to David Wilkins. Bill Titley had recently moved back to BnHQ to assume the position of Adjutant, and our CO, Lt Col "Genghis" Khan accepted the invitation to spend Christmas day with us. We had brandy in our coffee in the lines, the officers and sergeants served us our Christmas dinner, Kevin Mulligan produced "Bunny San", the most infamous rabbit of the Vietnam War, everyone had plenty of refreshments, and the war stopped for 24 hours. I can't remember a better Christmas. How can you ever explain the close mateship that we felt in that far away country? We don't expect anyone to understand. May Christmas 2015 and the year 2016 be all that you could wish for. *Roslyn and Don*

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