

# Half Circle

Number 15 - 2008

A publication for the members  
of C Coy 5 RAR (2<sup>nd</sup> tour) South Vietnam,  
and especially for the families of those who are no longer with us.

## Half Circle has moved!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Thanks to the interest of members of the Battalion, and the input from the C Coy troops, Webmaster Ted Harrison has moved us. We are now on the FRONT PAGE of the 5RAR site, on the right hand side, just below the 2005 Reunion details. Find us at [www.5rar.asn.au](http://www.5rar.asn.au).

## Help Required!!!!!!!!!!!!

Andy Macdougall and Dave Wilkins are preparing an article for the 5RAR website on Ian Hosie's 7 Platoon contact of 31 July 1969 in the Hat Dich Secret Zone. Tragically Jim McMillan was killed in that action.

Many of you may know that much of the radio conversations of that heavy contact were recorded by a RAAF Bushranger helicopter in support, and that tape was given to Hoss many years later. That tape is central to the article.

Andy and Dave would like to include some photographs of the diggers from that action, so if anyone has some pics of 7 Platoon blokes including one of Ian Hosie, preferably pics taken in South Vietnam, they would appreciate your sharing them. You can email them to Dave at [dwilkins@bigpond.net.au](mailto:dwilkins@bigpond.net.au) and when doing so could you please use a large enough format that will reproduce well. If you are unable to scan your photos please contact Dave by email or phone (02-9416 8519) and he will make alternative arrangements.

## From the Sydney Daily Telegraph - Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2008.....

"Almost 40 years ago, when we were young men in Vietnam, we suspected bromide was being added to our drinking water to prevent us getting horny but we couldn't prove it. Well, we were right - it's starting to work!"

## Mal Youd said.....

Al Geernaert was a member of 8 Pl 69/70 the last address I have for him was in Canada as he was Canadian he was the same as me stayed over from 1RAR.

His address was as follows.

Al Geernaert.

Box 1453.

Fort St James.

B.C. VOJ1PO.

Canada.

Ed's note: anyone who knew Al knew what a character he was. We might have enjoyed a few thousand beers the night before Al returned to Australia - considering how he looked and smelled, it's a wonder that Qantas accepted him on the flight home!

## Andy MacDougal said.....

Thought we should give a few stories about Jack .....

Many of us from 7 PI met Jack Bradd at the Infantry Centre at Singleton. He arrived a few weeks after we did, and his presence was immediately felt. After the rigours of recruit training, we didn't quite know how to take this long gangly sort of scary bloke. He really related to us, and we were very impressed by his simple practical approach to soldiering - clearly born from his extensive experience during the Malayan Insurgency and Vietnam.

Our infantry training was regularly punctuated by fire fighting activities around the area. Because there weren't enough trucks to take us to the fire ground, we were transported in government double decker buses borrowed from Newcastle (armed with the latest state-of-the-art fire beaters - sand bags attached to wooden broom sticks). Forty degrees in a double decker bus over dirt roads was much worse than fighting the fires, Strangely, I never remember Jack going off to fight fires in double decker buses - he always had important business elsewhere!

One night we went to our favourite pub near the river. It was the usual scene - drink as much as you could before going back to camp. We managed to get into a scrap with some of the locals. Actually it was a bit more than a scrap. Soon the place was filled with local police and MPs. I remember Jack protesting vehemently that he hadn't finished his beer as we were being forcibly evicted straight into the MP's paddy wagon. Off to camp we went. Jack was happy that we were getting "a lift" back, because he said we would be back in time for lights out. I thought that was very positive thinking, and wondered if we had to get into a fight every time we wanted to get back to camp before lights out. Jack said he knew one of the MPs (I am sure he knew many of them!) and said he would organise for us to be let out before the gates and before a night in the guard room. So he attempted to start a discussion with the MP. The MP couldn't hear what Jack was saying - or more likely, did not want to hear! Jack raised his voice to parade ground volume. But to no avail. That's when Jack's ingenuity came to the forefront. I know he said, we will make them stop! How do we do that I asked? Well, when we go round the next corner, we both sit on the "high" side, then when I say GO, we both run over to "down" side. Then, when it nearly tips over we go to the other side. After a few of these and with a little luck, we tip the wagon over! I trusted Jack completely, I did not want to spend the night in the guard house, and vague thoughts of the next morning's punishment on top of a hangover haunted me. So I thought Jack suggestion was just great! At the next corner we executed the plan. With the Paddy wagon already leaning over as we rounded a corner, Jack yelled "GO", and across the other side we went. The wagon lurched precariously, then back across the other side we went. Of course, it had the desired effect .... all of a sudden we could hear the MP's yelling at us, and they could hear us!! After a couple more corners the wagon stopped, the door was opened, and we were told to walk the rest of the way back to camp. At this stage we were only a few hundred metres from the gates. We were very pleased with our efforts!

By the end of our time at Singleton, we were itching to go to Vietnam. We had no idea that we would meet Jack again.

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### **Jack Bradd's quiz from "Half Circle No 14":**

The questions were:

1. What is the weight of an SLR pull-through?
2. Bolts for Australian weapons had their serial numbers inscribed on the side. Where was the serial number for the following US weapons inscribed?
  - M79; and
  - 81mm mortar?
2. How do you stop a runaway M60?

### **The answers are:**

1. The metal thing on the end of the pull through is the weight
2. The m79 and 81mm mortar have no bolts
3. Runaway M60 - there are two answers - (1) break the belt, or (2) mount the tripod and give chase.

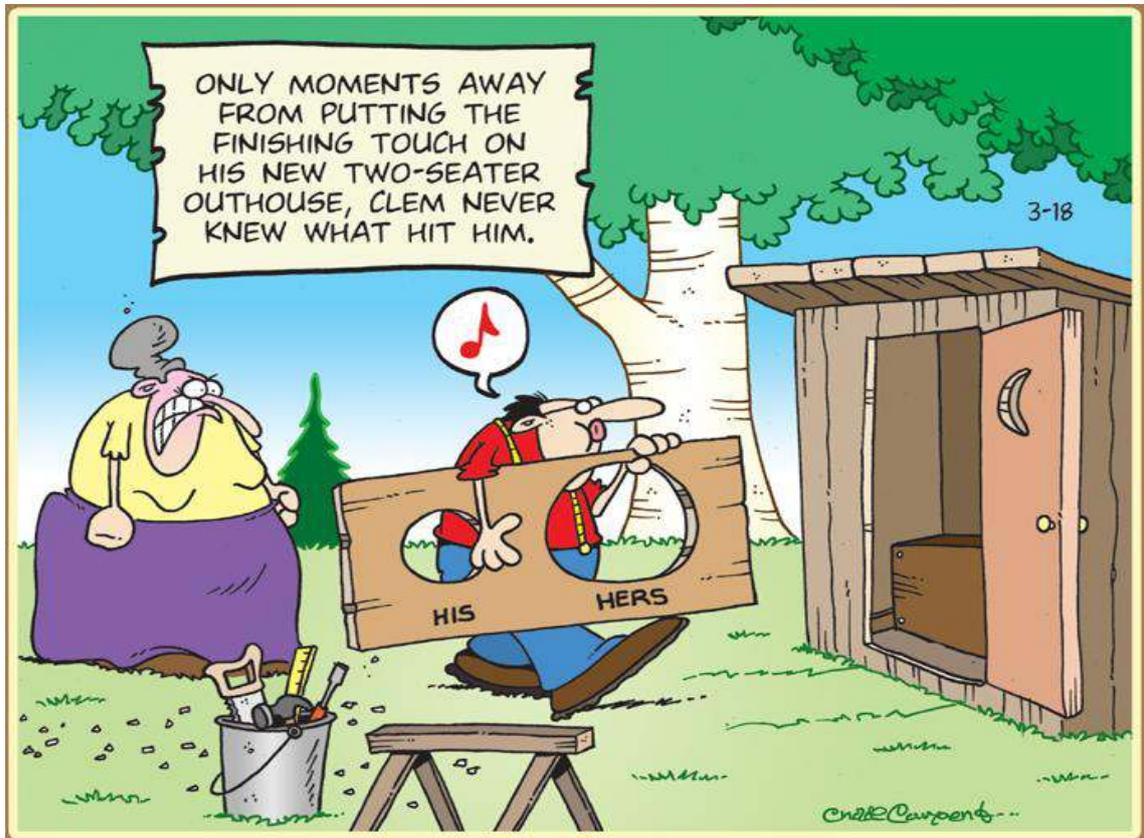


Jack Lake – our CSM – always happy, always laughing. Gotcha!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft...  
Today, it's called golf.

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An idea for future "Half Circles" - how about two photographs of each of you - one from 1969 and one from 2008? Anyone game?



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This "Half Circle" was produced and edited by Don Harrod, with help from Dave Wilkins, Jack Bradd, the Sydney Daily Telegraph, Mal Youd, Andy MacDougal, and some crook jokes.