

Half Circle

Number 7 - June 2007

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

Tigers Prepare for Iraq Deployment

Since 5RAR was re-established on the Army Order of Battle in December last year, the Tiger battalion has been working at a hectic pace to prepare for its first unit deployment on active service since the Vietnam War. A very busy pre-deployment training schedule has just been completed at Cultana Field Training Area near Port Augusta in South Australia.

During this period the Chief of Army (CA) gave approval for the original colours of 5RAR to be re-dedicated and used by the battalion until new colours are presented. This re-dedication ceremony occurred in the field at Cultana in late March. On ANZAC Day the battalion was visited by the CA who addressed the 450 members of the battle group during the traditional dawn service. A farewell parade for the Tigers was held at Robertson Barracks in Darwin on 10 May with deployment commencing in late May. The 5RAR group commanded by Lt Col Jake Ellwood will deploy for six months as Overwatch Battle Group (West)-3 in Southern Iraq. Also under command are 70 members of the Australian Army Training Team Iraq.

It is still planned that the battalion will receive new colours on the battalion birthday on 1 March 2008; with the original colours being returned to their laying-up place in the Chapel at the Army Recruit Training Centre at Kapooka NSW.

The original 5RAR Colours had been re-dedicated at Cultana S.A. during the pre-deployment training. Two photos were sent to the President of the 5RAR Association, **and have been posted onto the 5RAR website, www.5rar.asn.au**. The initial understanding was that the Colours were to be returned temporarily to Darwin for display at BHQ and not re-dedicated. It probably means that our original colours will have to be laid up again (at Kapooka) after the new 5RAR colours are presented on 1 Mar 08. The President intended to confirm this with CO 5RAR whilst in Darwin for the Farewell Parade last Thu 10 May 07. 5RAR will deploy in groups to Iraq from late May. President Roger Wainwright is writing an article for the next edition of Tiger Tales and the 5RAR website. (With thanks to Barry Morgan).

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I went into the local butcher shop today.
I said "Have you got a sheep's head?"
He said "No, it's just the way I part my hair".
I said "are they sausages hanging up over there?"
He said "No, those sausages are hanging down".

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From the Website - www.5rar.asn.au Ted has posted a glossary of the way we wrecked the English language in Vietnam - these will bring back a few memories. Also, an update on VC weapons. The 5RAR site is constantly revised - compelling reading for everyone.

FROM THE DESK OF JACK LAKE

I have been asked to write an article for "Half Circle", and it's good to be in touch with the C Coy soldiers once again. We went through a lot of training together prior to going to Vietnam, and when we got there, it certainly was full-on.

My role, as your CSM and the senior NCO in the Company, was to understudy the OC and 2IC, be aware of every facet of decision making, and to ensure that discipline was paramount in our daily activities.

It is one thing to stand on a parade ground and bark orders at terrified young soldiers, and another to see that the discipline instilled in soldiers was operating in tactical situations. If we had not been disciplined in the barracks, there was always the possibility that soldiers, under the extreme pressure of confrontation with the enemy, would not react in the interests of themselves, their mates, the Company, and the Battalion.

I clearly recall that many of you tested me in Holsworthy and again in Vietnam - and the late Paul Monaghan from 8PI was undoubtedly the best of them!

I would have liked to have been a bit closer to the diggers, but my role demanded that there be a clear division between the soldiers and the leadership structure. The result of this was that we had a successful tour of duty, we accomplished our aims, and I feel that I was very involved in bringing you blokes home.

Those of you whom I have met in recent years can now realize that I **WAS** in fact human!

I am very involved with the Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans and Associated Forces Inc, and have been the President of that organisation for quite some years. Our major annual event is the commemoration of the Battle of Long Tan. This year the commemoration is to be held on Sunday 19th of August at Springwood in the Blue Mountains of NSW. I would encourage all who have not already, to join this Association. For \$10 per year, you receive four copies of "Contact!" have access to our welfare officers, and assist us to make representations to relevant departments on the behalf of all veterans. Please contact the Secretary, Graham Glasson - secretary@bmvets.com.au or by phone on 0418 518 538. The website is www.bmvets.com.au.

Kind regards,

Jack Lake

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A policeman came up to me the other day. He had a pencil and a very thin piece of paper in his hand. He said: I want you to help me trace someone"

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We found (at last!).....

Geoff Ford, our leading stretcher bearer during our tour. Geoff is located at Griffith, and spends most of his time under trucks, forklifts, or any other machinery that needs his attention. Geoff's email is (c/- of his son) maggienut@hotmail.com.

Paul McQueen, our Int Rep, who took over from Barry Morgan, when wounded. Paul is located in Peakhurst in Sydney, and is a real estate valuer. Paul can be contacted at mcqueenpm@optusnet.com.au. Paul joined the C Coy boys for ANZAC Day in Sydney this year.

Jack Bradd. Only a contact email address at this stage - further details to follow.

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A study found that the average Australian walks about 900 miles per year.

Another study found that Australians drink an average of 22 gallons of beer per year.

That means on average, Australians get 41 miles per gallon.

Isn't that great?

Remember????????????? C Coy group, 1969 (With thanks to Mike Radwell)



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My tyre was thumping
I thought it was flat
But when I looked
I noticed your cat.

Problems..... The other day, someone at a store in our town read that a Methamphetamine lab had been found in an old farmhouse, and he asked me a rhetorical question, "Why didn't we have a drug problem when you and I were growing up?"

I replied, I had a drug problem when I was young:

I was drug to church on Sunday morning.

I was drug to church for weddings and funerals.

I was drug to family reunions and community socials no matter the weather.

I was drug by my ears when I was disrespectful to adults.

I was also drug to the woodshed when I disobeyed my parents, told a lie, brought home a bad report card, did not speak with respect, spoke ill of the teacher or the preacher, or if I didn't put forth my best effort in everything that was asked of me.

I was drug to the kitchen sink to have my mouth washed out with soap if I uttered a profanity.

I was drug out to pull weeds in mom's garden and flower beds and pick bales out of dad's fields.

I was drug to the homes of family, friends, and neighbors to help out some poor soul who had no one to mow the yard, repair the clothesline, or chop some firewood; and, if my mother had ever known that I took a single dime as a tip for this kindness, she would have drug me back to the woodshed.

Those drugs are still in my veins and they affect my behavior in everything I do, say, and think. They are stronger than cocaine, crack, or heroin; and, if today's children had this kind of drug problem, this country of ours would be a better place.

God bless the parents who drugged us.

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Please note: This newsletter was published earlier than anticipated, due to 5RAR deploying to Iraq, and the re-issuing of the Battalion Colours. The next issue is planned for August, and I have asked Claude Ducker to supply a special interest article.