

Half Circle



Number 66 - June 2012

(Please increase picture size to 150% for a better read!)

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.

VALE - 11836 SGT STAN ARNOLD

We have been advised that Sgt Stan Arnold - "Shut up or I'll butt-stroke ya!", passed away last month in Charters Towers, Qld. We will all remember Stan as the PL SGT of 9PL during our training at Holsworthy, and the initial period of our Vietnam tour. Stan was very "old school", having served in post WWII times. Rest in Peace, Stan, you have attended your final parade.

EDITORIAL. Alan Riley, in his series of articles about the life of the "REO", when he joined 5RAR has stirred a lot of thoughts in how we trained for and travelled to Vietnam as a group, and as our tour progressed, how we were reinforced as our comrades left C Company - either because their service was completed, they were transferred, or had made the ultimate sacrifice. C Company was comprised of 50% National servicemen and 50% Regular Army. Apart from the compulsory sledging, I am sure that we all agree that every man was welcomed into C Coy as an integral part of our group, and that no man was ever looked upon or judged by the circumstances that led him to being a soldier in our force. If any soldier ever felt that he was not accepted as being one of us, I sincerely apologise on behalf of C Company. You were, and are, C Company. It belongs to all of us. For this, Jack Lake must take a bow. Without a CSM like Jack, we could have been fairly ordinary. *Don Harrod*

ANZAC DAY 2012 - Here is a précis of events in various parts of Australia, from a selection of our Diggers:

Lesley and Jim Lowry, Maryborough Qld.

"The morning started off quite cold, foggy and with overcast skies. Approximately 600 people attended the Dawn Service. It was very well received by the local people. The weather cleared for the main service and the turnout swelled to about 5000 people. We are a bit light on for Tigers here and I believe I was the sole representative of "C" Coy. All the schools in the

area participated in the service, marching and laying wreaths. It is heartening to see all the young people attending and is a great sign that the ANZAC spirit is alive and well in the Queensland bush”.



John Hellyer, Portland Victoria:

As a veteran who served in C Company on both tours, I went to Portland Vic this year, as C Coy 1st tour had a reunion there, with over 100 attending. Roger Wainwright gave the address at the ANZAC Day service, which was very well attended. I was able to meet the family of the late Rod Heinze, and gave them a photo of Rod taken in 1969, along with a copy of my DVD.

In Portland, it is traditional for the guest speaker's unit to have a floral arrangement – this year – 5RAR.

Don Frohmuller, Mid North Coast, NSW.

Carolin & I recently spent 10 days at Scotts Head, near Macksville. We met up there with my army mate Bob Tawyer from the Gold Coast with whom I spent only our first 10 weeks basic training at Singleton in 1968 and have been best mates ever since. We decided to spend our first ever Anzac Day together. I normally attend the Dawn Service at Terrigal on the Central Coast so this year it was a little different. We three attended the Scotts Head Dawn Service on Ocean Street overlooking Little Beach and the Pacific Ocean – probably 150 attended. Currently Scotts Head does not have a Cenotaph. The air was chilly with a cloudy sunrise. The service was arranged by Scotts Head Primary School. As the Ode was read the Scotts Head Surf Club boat which was stationary some 200 metres off shore raised oars – it was quite moving. Also, the children sang along with the recording of the song ‘Lest We Forget’ by Michael Reynolds, which we hadn’t heard before – it is a good one. Later Bob & I marched in Macksville. The March & Service were arranged by the Macksville Ex-Services Club. It was their biggest Anzac Day turnout ever with at least 2500 attending the service and again local schools played a big part.

Sylvia Evans, Caloundra Qld.

“Breakfast 6am March 9-30am, a very big turn out, perfect day, and so nice to see so many young children attending. The rum toddy was yummy” so they say”, I marched with my husband Evan [Bill] Evans ,his digger mate from Montville Peter Molloy, my grand daughter Briar 10 a Kiwi like myself, I was so very proud Bill also wore his Dad’s medals”.



Bill and Sylvia Evans, with Peter Molloy in the background (right).



Don Teichelman, Melbourne, Vic.

ANZAC Day was wet. There were very few C Coy blokes present. Pictured are myself, Wally Magalas and Ken Leggett. No, that's DEFINATELY Ken's umbrella there!

Alan Miles, Sydney:

I arrived at the forming up point early as usual, so I decided to have a wander around. The weather was a bit windy, but nice and sunny. There is a great atmosphere here prior to the commencement of the march – old friends meeting again, bands warming up, tuning up of bagpipes (if that's possible – the most ear-shattering noise you will ever hear when a piper attempts to get his strangled cat going). I got to meet some Korean children in their national costume. Beautiful kids: as excited as anybody could be. I wonder if they had any idea what ANZAC Day was all about. Still, they added some colour to the proceedings. I talked to various groups as I wandered around, lots of complaints about the cold wind, but I didn't even notice it. The atmosphere kept me warm. Then the banner turned up and was unfurled, turning the street into a rallying point for 5RAR Tigers, who started turning up. Time for some good conversation.

Time to form up, and as usual, Tex took charge. "Form five ranks", he yelled out. Nobody moved. "Form five bloody ranks", he yelled out. Nobody moved. What he said next is not fit for publication, but we formed five ranks after a bit of shuffling around. Mates always want to march next to their mates. Then a marshal along and shouted "Form seven ranks". Tex went very red in the face and confronted the marshal. It looked as if things were going to get a bit ugly for a minute, then Tex backed down. "Form seven ranks", he yelled out. Nobody moved. Then Tex started to grab people and shove them into place – **HE** was organising the form-up and that was it. Seriously though, Tex does a great job organising the ranks, and we would be still milling around if he didn't take charge.

Then, after the long wait, we were off. You have all read about and taken part in ANZAC marches, so I will leave the march alone, except for one incident that deserves mention. At the Cenotaph in Martin Place we usually march past on the left side, and an "Eyes Right" is given. This time for some reason we marched past on the right side – but somebody – no names, no pack drill, gave an "Eyes Right". A bit of confusion for a second, but being 5RAR Tigers, we quickly assessed the situation and gave an "Eyes Left". Nothing fazes us!

The function at the pub was the usual. I had a couple of beers and a conversation with Dave Wilkins. He is coming up to 70 years shortly, we'll have to carry him around soon! I witnessed one happy digger practicing his Vietnamese trying to chat up the barmaid, until she politely smiled and informed him that she was from Thailand. More beer, more reminiscing, spilt beer down Tex's suit (glad it wasn't his hat or there would have been real trouble. We had an all-round great time. See you all next year.

Geoff Pearson, Sydney: Anzac Day in Sydney (for me) did not seem the same as usual. There were a noticeable lack of bands, so the usual "vibe" did not seem to be there. 5RAR were well down on numbers (approx 80-90) as we had a C Coy (1st Tour) Reunion in Portland Vic (70+ members) + a B Coy (2nd Tour) Reunion @ Lake Macquarie (approx 50+) members. We appointed Tex Cunningham as our March marshal and he did a great job getting our guys into 8 "wanks on the woad" for the first time ever. Unfortunately, Tex continues to get a few guys "off-side" & I'm sure you know where I am coming from here. He did a great job under circumstances & he should be encouraged to continue, even though Blue Schafer won't agree. After the March, we headed for the Crown Hotel where our usual "reserved" area had been taken over by a large group of Navy veterans. Our NSW Rep Barney Ruttle went off to

the Hotel Manager, who moved the Navy guys on & the afternoon went much better from there. We had a few current 5RAR soldiers in our ranks & we tried to encourage them to carry our banner, but they preferred not to. It was carried by Andy & myself & we had quite a few moments. Turning from George St into Bathurst towards the end of the March, the wind almost carried us further down George St towards Central Station. I think it is about time to have air pockets in the banner. I have resisted this for quite some time, but we are not getting any younger. Hope your Anzac Day was enjoyable.



The 5RAR contingent



Andy MacDougal
buying a horse



Andy MacDougal and
John Yabsley



Geoff Pearson with Andy MacDougal

Don Harrod, Coonabarabran NSW.

“A cold morning saw about 200 people attend the Dawn Service, with about 12 diggers present. The main morning service was attended by about 600 people, with 23 diggers participating in the march. Local schools played a large part in the ceremony”.

SOMETHING SERIOUS OUT OF FUNNY

Number 2 on the gun was tall, quietly spoken and had a dry sense of humour. If I had to share a pit at night with anyone it may as well be with Number.2 – he was good company.

Now being Number 2 on the gun he carried more than his share of belts for the M60 and did so uncomplainingly most of the time but on one operation that was dragging uneventfully he was getting a bit fed up toting all this ammunition without us yet having an opportunity of firing the gun. Mind, it didn't particularly worry me because if there wasn't a need to fire the gun then it meant we weren't as likely not being fired at.

Well on this operation we were harboured up and we were told that another platoon would be coming in from a patrol through our gun pit. Number 2 mentioned that sometimes the enemy would follow in such a patrol to suss out our strength etc. I recall looking at him long and hard as I couldn't work out or remember for the life of me where or when Number 2 suddenly had access to or any interest in enemy tactics. I think a discussion took place about unnecessary yippee shoots are not a good thing and then we saw the platoon coming in out of the “J”.

No sooner had the last man made his way past us and despite my warning look Number 2 yelled out words to the effect of “Oh my, the enemy are following the platoon in!” Now I looked and looked and couldn't see anything at all that suggested that - but in the “J” that didn't mean a lot and Number 2 had far better eyes than me anyway. Then the Platoon Commander of the

returning platoon asked what was going on and Number 2 told him. Next thing the Platoon Commander and his mob spread out to our left and everyone opened fire. It must have sure scared the hell out of all that jungle. Certainly going by the smile on his face the Platoon Commander seemed to be thoroughly enjoying himself but I know there was one person who wasn't and that was our Scout. He had just eased out of the perimeter round to our right to relieve himself and while so engaged the firing had begun. He told us he immediately went to ground with his duds still around his knees wondering what the hell was going on. It must have been a sight and although we saw humour in the situation the Scout failed to see it the same way.

And the serious bit? Well as everybody had opened up I was of course obligated to as well. I must have only fired a couple of rounds when my gun stopped. The feed cover was just not dragging in the belt. Nothing to do with dirt getting in it – I kept the gun meticulously clean – it was a failure. So after all that a new M60 was flown in that day.

Now I think Number 2 and me are pretty sure whether he saw something or not but I was glad the shooting started anyway. I would rather find out the feed cover was going to fail in those circumstances than when involved in ahem, "a real" contact.

This is the last of four articles written by "The REO", Alan Riley. Thanks Al, great articles, and a great read.

I know a bloke who is addicted to brake fluid. However, he reckons he can stop at any time.

Another bloke had a job in a bank. They sacked him because he lost interest.

IN THE NEXT EDITION OF HALF CIRCLE:

1. Jack Lake lists the blokes who he actually liked;
2. Mouse McLeod opens his Q Store to the public;
3. The day the Orderly Room Corporal got a regimental number wrong – but was right all the time;
4. A photo of Claude Ducker smiling;
5. A photo of Paul Monaghan and Reg Smith wearing **ironed and starched** greens;
6. Details of a bloke who Blue Schafer **didn't** know; and
7. The recipe for **Paddy's buns!**

None of the above is true, but at least it will make you have a look!

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