

Half Circle



Number 102 - June 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.



This is very clever, only the uniform differentiates which war...starting left to right chronologically. *(Courtesy Neville Paine, A Coy)*



Above: A Copy of the plaque attached to a floral tribute/wreath placed on the Sydney Cenotaph at the Dawn Service this year. The plaque was prepared by Brian Budden* who also placed a floral tribute/wreath on the waters off Anzac Cove on Anzac Day. As can be seen, the plaque commemorates the landing of the 5th Battalion AIF who landed at Anzac Cove (2nd wave) on 25th April 1915. 5RAR has a lineage with the 5th AIF.

Brian Budden was a member of C Coy (1st tour). He is a long time supporter of the 5RAR Association, and has been rewarded with Life Membership for his service.

ANZAC DAY 2015 –



An officer flanked by two rogues – ANZAC Day at Hervey Bay, Qld. Pictured are Ben Oram, Bill Titley and Barry Baker.

AN ASIDE TO THE ANZAC DAY COMMEMMORATION: Anzac Day saw Peter Molloy travel to Sydney for the March & was pushed in a wheelchair by yours truly. Let me tell you, it is much easier marching. Before leaving Montville, Peter was having trouble with his “stump”, feeling he may have had an infection. After the March, the pain was so intense that he telephone his

surgeon who told him to report to Bella Vista Hospital on the Monday morning. He was admitted immediately & placed on antibiotic drips. A further operation was performed on Monday (4th May), with “flesh” samples sent off for biopsies. Whilst it has been confirmed that he does not have any infection in his bone, he is being sent home later this week, but has to remain on antibiotics for the next 3 months. Whilst he seems happy with his new (\$135,000) leg, he is having trouble with the fitting that projects from his stump.

The “determined” bugger will still be going to Canberra & probably Darwin for the Battalions’ 50th Anniversary celebrations in November.

Geoff Pearson



Eric Hamlin with children and grandchildren – the family has had photos taken under this tree in Port Macquarie (NSW) for over 40 years.

WHAT HAPPENS TO OLD MACHINE GUNNERS WHEN THEY RETIRE?

Simply, the answer is that they never lose their spirit of the bush. Read on.....



Fleabag is my 10 year old granddaughter, and we’re the best of mates. Each year we head out to the far west, exploring. Last September we made a night camp off the road south of Charleville. This was about 6m from some muddy water that had pig tracks around it. After we had a feed, I told Fleabag to turn in as it had been a long day. Her bed was a stretcher on the back of my ute, and my stretcher is always on the ground at the side of it. We had a bit of a talk, and then silence. Fleabag had nodded off, and I soon followed. About 2200 hours I awoke to shuffling and grunting. There were nine grunters coming in!

I grabbed the gun and put on a clean belt – no – hang on – that was from another era. I grabbed the snake killer – a single shot .22. There was a full moon, so I could see clearly. I aimed the rifle barrel into the black blob – I couldn’t miss. I squeezed the trigger and there was a sharp crack. Pigs went hell west and crooked. Bugger, I didn’t hit one. There is definitely something wrong with this rifle!

At Piccaninny daylight (first light for city people), I woke Fleabag up and asked did she hear a rifle shot during the night? She replied “No, Digger PA”. She sure is a good sleeper.

Just last week we went down the Bulloo River track to Tickalara where I dug up many old bottles –some were still sealed. The Fleabag was full of excitement. On the return journey I made camp in some red sandy country east of Cunnamulla. I cooked up some chook and mash with thick gravy (no Yankee “C” rations here). We turned in, had our little talk, and nodded off. I then awoke to the sound of banging tins. I immediately thought “Dingo or wild dog”. I jumped up with only my Reg Grundy’s on, grabbed the torch and followed the rubbish trail. After 30m I saw the bugger, it was a mangy starved fox; he was licking into a tin of baked beans.

I moved closer to get the rubbish bag, but he picked up the bag and went bush. I went back to the vehicle and checked Fleabag, who was sound asleep. I then grabbed a bucket and cleaned up our five days of rubbish. From there I slipped on the boots and picked up the snake rifle. I slipped in a round and left the action to the rear.

I lay down on my stretcher and put the rifle on the ground. The bush boy in me said this fox was starving and he had to return. Thirty minutes went past, and it was still quiet. I was worried that Andy MacDougal would turn up, lay down and put his head on my shoulder like he did in the May Tao’s in 1970.

Just before midnight I heard a movement. I sat up and grabbed the snake killer. I picked him up with the torch – he was less than 6m away. Once again the moon was full. I slipped the action forward. I was able to keep the torch on him with my left hand, but once again had to sight along the barrel. At this range I couldn’t miss. The rifle cracked – the fox leapt two feet into the air and went hell west and crooked. Bugger! I missed. There is something wrong with this rifle. Even Jack Bradd knows that I’m not this bad.

At Piccaninny daylight I awoke the Fleabag and asked her did she hear a rifle shot during the night? She replied “No, Digger Pa”. I’m off to the NT ranges after ANZAC Day, but before I go I’m going to get the snake killer checked to see why it doesn’t shoot straight.

Dennis (Digger) Nevins

TRAVELLING ABOUT: Ian and Glenys Leis – still travelling through Australia, and have just visited Matt Smith, Hickory Dick and Mick Struchlak. After five days fishing with Strucky, the caravan freezer is full! As at 23rd May, the Leis’ are on the Nullabor Plain.

FROM JOHN HELLYER:

I was thinking that perhaps we could ask C Coy members to put a few words together about their own journeys to 5RAR, C Company, and on to Vietnam.

What did they do before Army service – were they Nasho's or Regs, etc. Who is up to the challenge? Come on, have a go, and tell us about yourself.

ATTENTION TRAVELLERS: Advice has been received through the TPI Association that Great Southern Rail is in the process of being sold by its UK based owners, Serco Group plc, to Australian owned Allegro Funds. The business of Great Southern Rail will continue to be developed with the change of ownership and specifically, no change to the entitlements of concession holders, including TPI's, will result from the change in ownership.

Also of note is the statement in the 2014 Federal Budget announcing that the funding for concessions on Great Southern Rail journeys will cease from 1 July 2016. This impact of the cessation of this concession beyond that date is still being assessed. All relevant stakeholders will be advised of the outcome once the impact for concession holders has been determined.

Hint - those planning to travel via Great Southern Rail to either Perth or Darwin may well need to do so before 1st July 2016.



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 supporter of this newsletter. Phone (02) 9724 1615.

OUR C COMPANY (2nd tour, Vietnam) REUNION will be held in Canberra on 15th-17th March 2016. If you haven't received documents regarding activities, registration or accommodation, contact Barry Morgan at b.kmorgan@bigpond.com



Heavy duty snag cooker. I have a mate who says his wife cooks according to the Bible. It's either a burnt offering or a sacrifice!

Half Circle was compiled and edited by Don Harrod – donharrod@bigpond.com, 0418 423 313, with help from, Brian Budden with the First AIF Plaque, Dennis Nevins, Eric and Pam Hamlin, Phil Greenhalgh, Geoff Pearson, John Hellyer and Ian Leis.