

Half Circle

Number 11 - November-December 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.

Jack Bradd said..... JACK THE CAT

I was called to BHQ and stood at attention in front of the RSM racking my brains trying to work out what undetected crime this top soldier had found out about and getting my excuses ready. He pointed to a shirt with Sergeants stripes 'You are incorrectly dressed, put that on, congratulations Sergeant'. A Sergeant in the finest Battalion in the Regiment, Mum will be proud. He escorted me to the SGT Mess and bought me the first beer of many that night.

It took a while to get used to the routine of the SGT Mess and it was great but like all institutions they have egotists. This one clown reckoned as I was the junior Sergeant I had to answer the phone so I played along with his silly game and answered the phone. About a week later a deputation of angry wives fronted the Mess wanting to know why they can't talk to their husbands, I told them that I answered the phone as per junior Sergeant's duties but if the phone call wasn't for me I would hang up. Banned from answering the phone in the SGT Mess, great, more drinking time.

The RSM was a fine soldier, a great bloke and a gentleman and had many years at the bar, now and again he would grab some bloke who reckoned he could drink and an all night session would result. One night it was my turn as I reckoned I could handle the grog so we hooked in. The barman woke me as he came on duty, I was on the floor of the bar, he told me that I was going drink for drink with the RSM then I just collapsed and curled up around the RSM's feet. I went to work crook as a dog and couldn't even look at a beer that afternoon instead I hid in the TV room and suffered. I don't know if it was Rod Lees or Spewy Higgins who gave me the name Jack the Cat but they dragged me out of the TV room and in front of the RSM I was presented with a saucer of milk and a tin of cat food. The next afternoon I asked the cook to heat up the cat food, place it on a plate with Jatz bickies and put it out for bar snacks. I told Zeke about it and we sat down to watch the fun, Zeke nearly gave the game away as he was pissing himself laughing as we watched Rod Lees, Blue Schafer and a few others hoe into the cat tucker, they ate the lot. The cook let the cat out of the bag (pun intended) when he asked if the blokes want cat tucker for bar snacks each afternoon as they seemed to like it and it was fairly cheap. I drank at the Chevron Rails and the Moorebank till things quietened down, and if any one called me Jack the Cat I had the last laugh.

Someone said.....

Seen on a sign at a pet store run by a Chinese man "**Buy one dog, get one flea**"

Eric Hamlin said....."I've found a few old photos of a few old mates. These will be copies from slides and sent to those whom they concern".

(Thanks Eric, much appreciated).

Don Teichelman said.....Here are the email addresses for Ken Leggett, John Martini and Bill Murphy.

(Thanks, Don, always looking for more of our mates. Click on the names at the top of the email conveying this newsletter for their contact addresses).

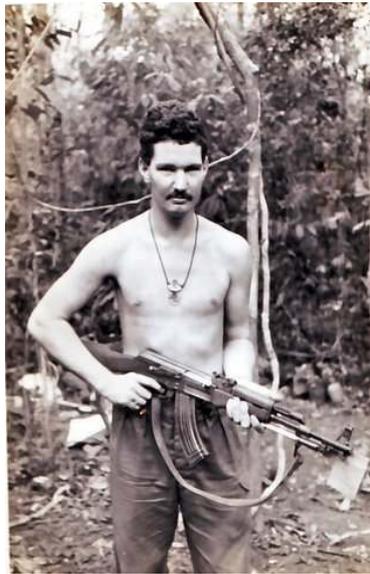
Don Harrod said.....Hop on to the Battalion website – Webmaster Ted Harrison has compiled a lot more information on the Tigers – our era, and the modern era. Articles

from Lt Col Jake Ellwood (current CO), the campaign in Iraq, etc. **The Tigers are as strong and proud as ever!** www.5rar.asn.au

Someone else said.....We think David Wilkins is in France – he attempted to send an email using a Froggy keyboard. Stick to the frogs' legs, the huge roundabout, and the big tower, Dave. **UPDATE - Dave is back in Oz!!!!!!!**

The truck driver.....Phoned his boss, and told him that he had broken the outside mirror on the truck. The boss thanked him for letting him know, and asked how it happened. The driver said "The truck rolled on it".

This edition's picture:
Barry Morgan with an AK47 Assault Rifle



Another C Coy Digger said.....This Don Harrod (Pirate) sends us stuff every month or two. Most of its garbage. They should "blah, blah, blah". Well, here's the answer – send me something I can print, so your mates can find out where you are, what you are doing, how life's treating you, etc. We all want to know – rosdon@bigpond.net.au.

Remember.....Boots and gaiters, webbed belt, and polishing brass? Most of us seem to remember only our GPs, and have forgotten about other aspects of our (then) uniforms and way of life in the barracks. These include, but are not limited to: sheet change each Tuesday, a razor blade, a cake of Ivy soap, flannelette cloth, rifle oil, pull-through, a Mickey Mouse watch, the bush hat, the hat block (to bash a slouch hat), mongrels pinching your socks from the drying room, having your own cork to use as a bung for the Company washing machine, mess queues, orderly corporal, runner, waterproof wallet, sweat rag, dixies, protests when we came home, the snubs of the snobs in RSL clubs, etc, etc – more memories in the next issue.

Bob Hooper said.....Went to the cemetery the other day and saw 4 men carrying a coffin. Three hours later I saw the same 4 men with the same coffin. Thought to myself, they've lost the plot!

Paul McQueen said..... I thought you might be interested in what happened to me last Saturday night. There is a pretty good Vietnamese/Thai Restaurant in Tower St Panania that

is called Green Bamboo. The wife and I have been there about 8 or 9 times over the last 12 or 18 months. Always in a group of about four couples.

They remember me as on the first occasion I commented to them that their menu was similar to a place in Balmain called Blue Ginger, and they said they had been part owners of it, hence the similarity.

Anyway, near the end of a very good evening, a few of us were talking with one of the ladies who seems like she is one of the owners. Another person in our group asked her where she came from and she replied Vietnam.

She asked if any of us had been there and only I said yes. She then asked when had I been there and without thinking, and in possession of much liquid amber and good Shiraz , I automatically said 1969-1970 .

Well ,her eyes lit up and she came straight over and said "Oh thank you , you were with the Australian Army who were so good to us." She then proceeded to give me a kiss and hugs and continued to thank me personally and the Australian Army. And kept saying lots of nice things about us being there and how she was from the south, and Australia had been so good to go and help her country etc etc....

I thought, if she keeps this up either her hubby or my wife are going to kill me. Wouldn't that be ironic, getting done in by Vietnamese now and not then.

So it was an amazing finish to a very enjoyable night. And I'm looking forward to our next visit.

Another very appropriate contribution from David Wilkins.....

Below is a picture of a typical Vietnamese woodcutter. These peasants were simple, hard working villagers, with only the most basic hand tools. They were heavily targeted by the Viet Cong and NVA, and on the threat of death, had to pay exorbitant taxes to enter the timbered areas, including contribution of their logs for the building of enemy bunker systems.

Because of their enforced assistance to the VC the timber cutters knew where the mines and panji pits were located, and at times when the Australians encountered woodcutters near enemy positions they were sometimes used to travel with their bullock cart ahead of our troops in areas suspected of being mined, such as in the defile on the western side of the Warbies between it and the Nui Thi Vai features. We then slavishly followed that safe path. 8 platoon C Company, commanded by Second Lieutenant Peter Commerford, did just this in that area the day before Christmas in 1969.



The Grapevine tells us.....That the 5RAR Association is **planning** a new-look "Tiger" patch and car sticker. The major changes will include reference not only to Vietnam, but also the service of the Tigers in Iraq. Great news!!

Don Harrod also said..... When a number of us joined the Battalion (and C Coy) from the Ingleburn Infantry Centre in May 1968, one of these was a bloke called Neville Paine. Neville only spent a short time with C Coy, then was sent to Canungra to join A Coy in putting the rest of the battalion through the Jungle Training Centre. Neville has just completed **40** years service, is now posted to Victoria as a Major, and is thinking about retiring next year. Well done mate.

A reunion.....

By the time you receive this newsletter, 9PI will be assembling in Forster (NSW) for a reunion. This year's event will include participation in a memorial service to commemorate Remembrance Day, in cooperation with the Forster RSL. These reunions are held every year or two, and have been held in places such as Hervey Bay, Newcastle, and Echuca. To find out how to stage a successful reunion, contact any of the 9PI boys, by clicking their email addresses above.

This will probably be the last edition before Christmas 2007 so I would like to take the opportunity to wish you and your families all the very best wishes for the season. Unlike some politically correct groups, I wish to say "Merry Christmas". Sometimes we seem to forget that was a faith that kept us together, and that we should be thankful for all the good things that life has given us. Have a few coldies, and be comfortable in the knowledge that our bond is as strong as ever.



Edited by Don (Pirate) Harrod, with help from Jack Bradd, Don Teichelman, Barry Morgan, Eric Hamlin, Bob Hooper, Paul McQueen, David Wilkins, and some very ordinary jokes.