

# Half Circle



Number 71, November 2012

**(If this is hard to read, try increasing the picture size!)**

This informal publication is for the members of C Coy 5 RAR (2<sup>nd</sup> 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.



**AT THE RAP:** Eddie Moon - Ed has been diagnosed with an illness which will involve a long period of treatment. Our thoughts and our support are with Ed, Wanda and family.



**DAVE'S DIARY:** Continued from my entry in edition # 70 of Half Circle:

*It is hoped that a large allied armoured push from the north-east might flush some VC through the valleys down our way, and also towards D Company located in the eastern pass of the Nui Tà Lóc.*

24 Jan 70

CHQ and 8 Platoon remained in their ambush position in the narrow valley between Nui Mây Tào and Nui Tà Lóc, whilst 7 and 9 Platoons were patrolling and ambushing about 1,000-1,500 metres away. 7 Platoon was on the slopes of Nui Mây Tào and 9 Platoon further north-east of them in the foothills of Nui Tà Lóc.

*We had some casualties in a decent-sized clash with some Main Force VC (& NVA?) this afternoon. Ian Hosie's 7 Platoon ambushed an enemy group of platoon size and then assaulted into the killing ground after the initial ambush had been sprung. One of the bodies on the track was lying 'doggo' and got away a long burst of fire from his AK47, hitting Pte Jim Reid and Pte Eddie Davies. Jim was the forward man and might have prevented it if his M16 hadn't suffered a stoppage. He was hit in the crotch and thighs. Eddie, the number 2 on the MG was hit badly in the arm above the elbow. The initial contact occurred at 1745 hours and was all over in 20 minutes. Once the area was secured Dustoff was urgently called forward (Dustoff had been placed on stand-by as soon as our casualties were known to have occurred). A light fire team (heavily armed "Bushranger" chopper) was also requested. The trees were 80 feet high necessitating the two men to be winched to the Dustoff chopper by Stokes Litter, but it was all complete by 1900 hours, pretty quick really, particularly given the lengthy distance from either Nui Dat or Vung Tau.*

*Eddie's arm has been amputated and he will be RTA within a week. Pte Dave Nicholls (who joined 5RAR from 1ARU with Pte Jim Reid on 20 August 1969) received shrapnel wounds to the head from enemy RPG fire.*

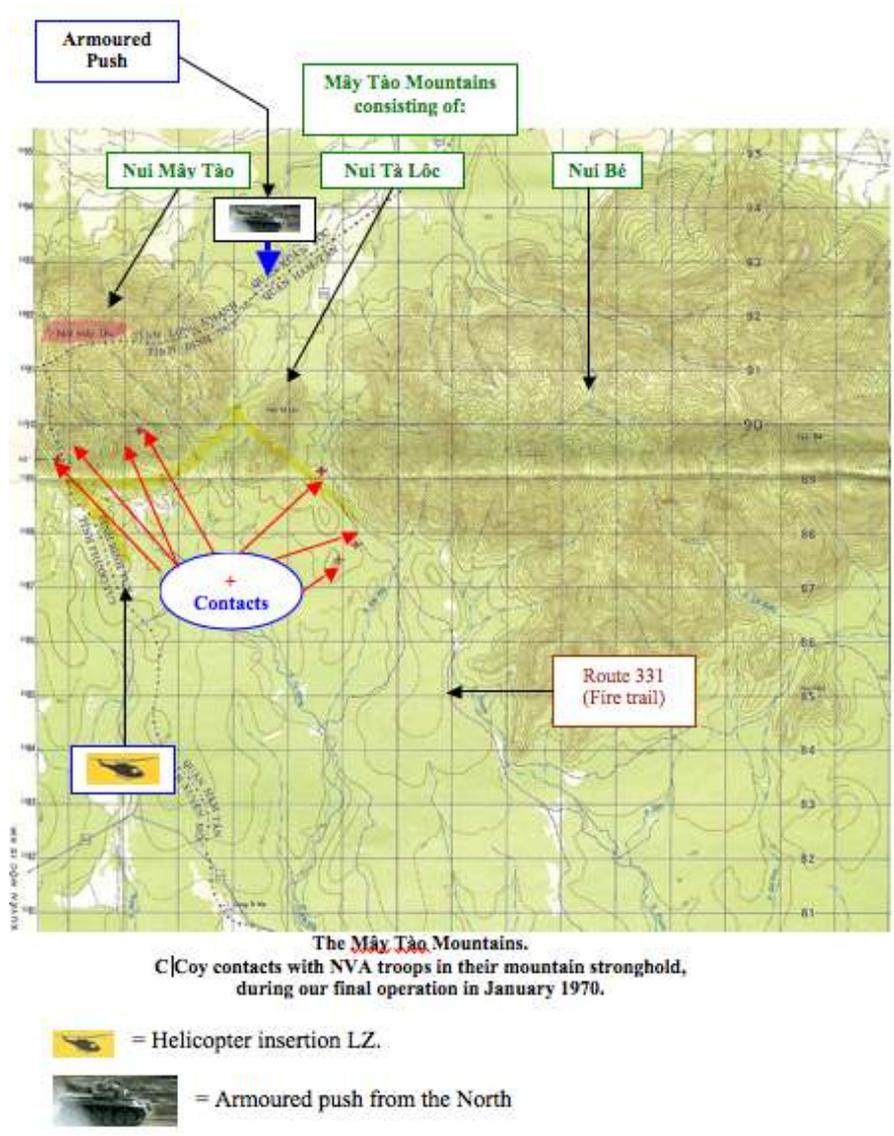
Two enemy KIA from body count was the result with several others possible owing to the drag marks and blood trails. The enemy wore black except their forward scout was in dark blue. Two AK47s and four packs were captured together with considerable equipment scattered down their withdrawal track. It was a most aggressive ambush and follow-up assault by 7 Platoon the success of which was lessened by the unfortunate weapon stoppage at a crucial instant. It was no one's fault as Ian Hosie's platoon always had scrupulously clean weapons. It was just one of those things that can happen in the heat of battle.

Glossary:

1ARU- 1st Australian Reinforcement Unit (at Nui Dat)

RTA- return to Australia

Stokes Litter- A stretcher winched down from "Dustoff" ambulance helicopter for evacuating wounded soldiers. The wounded man was strapped into the litter and winched to the helicopter either in a horizontal or vertical position.



(To be continued)

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**CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESSES:** Emails to **Ken Leggett, Andy Kakafikas and Peter (Blue) McHugh** have bounced back. If you can assist with a current email address, or know of any member not receiving Half Circle, please let your editor know. **ALSO, IF YOU CHANGE ANY OF YOUR PERSONAL OR CONTACT DETAILS, PLEASE LET THE 5RAR ASSOCIATION KNOW. I will help you if you require. Contact me! Don.**

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Jack and Jill went into town to fetch some chips and sweeties.  
Now he can't keep his heart rate down and she's got diabetes.

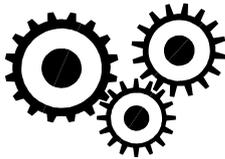
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**Roger Lambert** has written two articles which have been placed on the Mushroom Club website. This site has been created by Gary Townsend (7PL first tour) - [www.cgtownsend.com/](http://www.cgtownsend.com/). Roger's articles are "Closing the Mushroom Club", and "Blondes, Bombs and Bunkers". Thanks Roger, a bit more of our history has been preserved.

Speaking of the "Mushroom Club" website, Gary has kindly offered to expand the site to include **both** tours of Vietnam, so C Company's history can be preserved. More on this in the next issue of "Half Circle".

**Note:** for those whose memory needs a bit of WD40 or similar, our boozier in Nui Dat was called the Mushroom Club, after been aptly? named by our first tour C Company colleagues.

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### "COGS IN THE WHEEL"

This is a new item for Half Circle - we want to list a particular job carried out in C Company, or perhaps our Battalion - one job each month. To get the ball rolling, here's an idea of one of the roles carried out:

**THE ORDERLY ROOM.** The average digger had the opinion that the Orderly Room was where a shiny-arsed clerk sat and marked roll books, etc. Partly correct, but the Orderly Room Cpl did a little bit more. Here are some of the tasks:

1. 0630 - Compile and telephone through a daily parade state to BHQ. This enabled BHQ to assess manpower in the field, numbers on base duties, those on leave, wounded, hospitalised, etc. It also provided information for procuring of rations, water, clothing, medicines, transport and many other logistical items for those on operations.
2. 0700 - Calling a Company parade. This enabled the accounting for all personnel in the Nui Dat base (LOBs), and the issuing of the morning dose of paludrine and dapsone, the anti-malarial drugs.
3. 0730 - Breakfast, changing of manning of the Company CP and gun picquets and weapon cleaning.
4. 0800 - The first of several daily trips to BHQ. This would involve picking up correspondence to or from BHQ, including any variation authorities for Diggers' pay.
5. 0830 - 1600 - general correspondence, updating of records, booking of R&R leave to suit operational and soldiers' requirements, compiling returns for the Company 2IC and BHQ, dispatch of outgoing mail from the field and Nui Dat, receiving of incoming mail including sorting into platoon lots and delivering it to the Q Store for delivery with resupplies, typing Contact Incident Reports

from the OC, preparation of payroll, rosters for gun picquets, rosters for the Company CP, personnel inquiries (both written and personal), hospital visits to wounded or sick personnel,

6. 1600 - thirty minutes of sport (e.g. volleyball, etc).
7. 1630 - afternoon anti-malarial drugs and ablutions
8. 1700 - evening meal (usually at Admin Company)
9. 1800 - 2400 - manning the Company CP until relieved by a LOB. This could also involve manning a gun picquet from 1800 - 0730, depending on personnel.
10. Quite regularly, participation would be required in a TAOR (Tactical Area of Responsibility) Patrol, leaving Nui Dat at 1600, and returning at 0800 the next day.
11. Close liaison with the CQMS, who had general responsibility for the conduct of LOBs, depending on the operational demands placed on him.
12. Attendance at the OCs "O" Groups when the Company was in Nui Dat, and carrying out administrative tasks as directed.
13. Compiling of A4s (charge sheets) for the CSM, for those poor diggers who were unfortunate enough to have been caught for just being diggers!
14. Close liaison with the Company 2IC, either personally or usually by instructions issued by him from the field.
15. Maintaining morale.

The above list is not complete, as it is hard to remember exactly what was done 43 years ago, but may provide some insight.

**NEXT MONTH - THE SECTION COMMANDER.**

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**MAJOR DAVID FRENCH**, the current Operations Officer and former Commander of Combat Team Charlie (C Company) in Afghanistan, has advised that he is leaving 5RAR after five years service, to attend Staff College in Canberra. We all thank Dave for his outstanding efforts as OC of C Company, his ready availability to communicate with the old "Tigers", and his genuine friendship. We offer Dave every good wish for his future success, and we will no doubt be hearing more of the name David French in the future. More in the next "Half Circle".

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**IN THE NEXT EDITION OF HALF CIRCLE:**

1. There will be a questionnaire on when you last visited the 5RAR website - [www.5rar.asn.au](http://www.5rar.asn.au)
2. Tenders will be called to provide humour for the next twelve months.

Half Circle was compiled and edited by Don Harrod - [donharrod@bigpond.com](mailto:donharrod@bigpond.com)  
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