

# Half Circle



Number 119 - November 2016

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:

**Barrie Taylor** - ongoing oncology treatment

**Geoff Ford** - Kevin Mulligan has advised that our C Coy 1969 Vietnam Stretcher Bearer Geoff Ford is not travelling very well. As you would know, Geoff battled a number of illnesses, then throat cancer. At our Canberra reunion, he was improving, but sadly, things have not gone his way, and his prognosis is not good. If you would like to send Geoff a message of support, please contact him at [maggienut@hotmail.com](mailto:maggienut@hotmail.com), 6 Grimison Avenue Griffith NSW 2680, 0417 717 314, or (02) 6962-2156. Fordy has always supported us, and it is now time to return the favour. Please consider our mate. *Thanks, Don*



## TRAVELLING ABOUT: DENNIS (DIGGER) NEVINS:

I'm off out west tomorrow (8 Oct 16), my last trip for the year. I only got back two weeks ago with my granddaughter "Fleabag". We had a bummer of a time as I got bogged for four and a half days. On the second night it poured a beauty and I had to put Fleabag in the ute as there was 6 inches of water running under us.

On the fifth day I said to Fleabag we have to walk to nearest station 32km away. She's only 12 but she's a wonderful bush walker. I woke the Fleabag at picaninny daylight and we ate two tomatoes each, the tucker was getting low and we left at 0500. We got to the station mail box at 0900, a distance of 19 km, when a vehicle came down the road. They were station people north

of Adavale. They were doing a 400 km round trip to get supplies from Charleville. That afternoon the one-man copper at Adavale winched us out. The country - when we were there - was drowning in water! The cattle and graziers are pretty happy.

**RAY AND CATHY FITZPATRICK** – a road trip from their northern NSW base – destination unknown.

**GEOFF AND LIZ STORM** – From Barham to Moree NSW – family visit.

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### **FROM THE LIBRARY OF THE ADVENTURES OF JACK BRADD**

#### **THE COKE MACHINE:**

In 1970, post-Vietnam, things were quiet in the Battalion. Jack had re-joined 5RAR, and was given the task of supervising Grounds Maintenance, and other associated tasks. His off-sider was Gary (Mat) Mateer.

One of the tasks was to fill and maintain the coke machine, located at the entrance to Admin Coy HQ. The machine had six buttons, all offering a different type of soft drink. At that time, a soft drink cost about 15 cents, so all drinks were sold for 20 cents.

“**Selection Number 1**”, however, was always marked “**Out of Order**”. Smart diggers soon discovered that if they inserted their 20-cent coin into the machine and pressed “**Selection 1**”, a can of VB would drop into the bottom chute!

A can of beer at the time was 25 cents. Jack’s reasoning was that if a digger only had to pay 20 cents for a beer, those silly enough to drink soft drinks should subsidise them.

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#### **ALSO FROM DIGGER NEVINS – THIS WAS A PART OF MY ADDRESS AT JACK BRADD’S FUNERAL:**

Jack always referred to me as the mug machine gunner. He had this wonderful theory that who anyone volunteers to carry the M60 and actually likes it must be a mug. I was only one of a few who did the complete tour as a gunner, and to this day when asked what my role was in the funny farm I always use Jack’s words, I was a mug machine gunner. Its Operation Kings Cross 1969 and Jack has finished the last watch on sentry, he comes to wake the mug gunner. I hear the rustling of the hutchie, I then smell the whiff of bad breath, I then feel the whiskers against my face, then the section commander proceeds to give me a wet kiss on my left cheek. From the mug gunner comes the flurry of arms, I jack myself up and call him a flaming mongrel. With that, Jack sits back on his heels and with a big belly laugh tells me I’m the prettiest machine gunner he has ever had. As previously stated by many, a bloody rogue.

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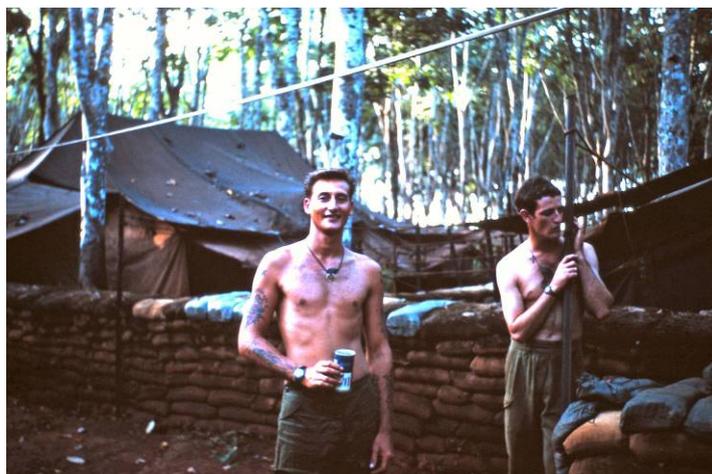
**FROM TAFFY CHEESEMAN** – Whilst I understand that Half Circle is designed to be a forum where we keep in touch with each other, I have asked that some articles which I have submitted and have been added to the 5RAR website, be again brought to your attention. Just click on the icons to open these. Best wishes to all my old colleagues, Taffy.

A night ambush in the village of Dat Do -  
[http://www.5rar.asn.au/soldiers/cheeseman\\_1.htm](http://www.5rar.asn.au/soldiers/cheeseman_1.htm)

Searching & clearing the caves Nui Thi Vai Mountains -  
[http://www.5rar.asn.au/soldiers/cheeseman\\_7.htm](http://www.5rar.asn.au/soldiers/cheeseman_7.htm)

Rules of Engagement –  
[http://www.5rar.asn.au/soldiers/cheeseman\\_5.htm](http://www.5rar.asn.au/soldiers/cheeseman_5.htm)

***Ed's note: It is strongly recommended that we all regularly refer to the 5RAR website. This is the Battalion's official record of our history. Half Circle is designed to be an informal means for us to communicate with each other, have a laugh, and maintain our bond***



Taffy Cheeseman, Vietnam 1969. Who is the digger with him – Dave Jackson?

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**REPRODUCED FROM HALF CIRCLE NUMBER 46 – OCTOBER 2010:**

David Wilkins writes: My Jungle Shadow

One of the highlights of researching and compiling the recent 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of “*The Year of the Tigers*” was to meet up with some former comrades-in-arms, many of whom I hadn’t seen since we returned from active service and marched through Sydney on 10 March 1970. One such meeting occurred in Wyoming near Gosford, NSW, where I visited my former jungle shadow from 1969-70, Don Frohmuller, and his wife Carolin. Almost everywhere I went during operations with C Company in Vietnam, Don was either with me or nearby. He really was my jungle shadow. So, having spent hundreds of hours

together in close company while in the Vietnam scrub it was great to catch up after all these years. I enclose a photo from that very pleasant reunion.

During my visit to Don and Carolin I obtained a wealth of photographs that have contributed to C Company's coverage in the new book, so a lot of you Half Circle readers can thank Don for having your ugly mugs included in the rogues' gallery.



Dave Wilkins with Don Frohmuller



Half Circle was compiled and edited by Don Harrod – [donharrod@bigpond.com](mailto:donharrod@bigpond.com), 0418 423 313, with help from Ben Oram, Dennis Nevins Barrie Taylor, Geoff Storm, John Skinner (D Coy), Taffy Cheeseman, Kevin Mulligan, David Wilkins, **and powered by the Lambs Valley Wine Company, Hunter Valley, NSW.**