

Half Circle



Number 130 - October 2017

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.



AT THE RAP:

Barrie Taylor – Hi everyone, I am still around and on oncology treatment. I am one of the 20% who won't be on the escalator heading upstairs for a few years. My dedicated oncologist, Prof Miles Prince has persevered with the treatment which I have been on now for over three years, which involves infusing the antibodies of 220 people into me every four weeks. At long last it is working and suppressing the cancer. My nerves are growing back in my abdomen, feet, legs, hands and face. The cancer I have is incurable at this time, but Miles is optimistic that in coming years there will be a cure. My request is that they should hurry up, as I want to see St Kilda win a Grand Final before they put me on that escalator to Heaven. All the best to my C Coy colleagues.

Wally Magalas – ongoing oncology treatment

Ian Leis – recovering from shoulder surgery

Peter Molloy – spinal nerve treatment to alleviate pain related to the amputated leg.



TRAVELLING ABOUT:

Ben Oram, Eric Hamlin and Max Postle are currently on the road, travelling about to locate old mates. They were last heard of heading towards Bingara (Reg Smith's old stamping ground), and on to Tamworth to locate Colin Summerfield.

THE NEXT 9 PLATOON REUNION:

Blue Schafer has advised that the next 9PL reunion will be as follows:

DATES – Monday 22nd October 2018 to Friday 26th October 2018

PLACE - Mildura, Victoria – on the banks of the mighty Murray River

ACCOMMODATION – All Seasons Holiday Park. The tariff is about \$100 per night for cabins. Those caravanning will also be well catered for

ACTIVITIES - *Monday 22nd* – arrival, dinner at the Gateway Tavern, about 100 metres from the Holiday Park. *Tuesday 23rd* – plans are underway for a boat trip along the Murray River. *Wednesday 24th* – a free day – possible winery trip, touring (shopping for the wives??). *Thursday 25th* – the 9PL Golf Day. *Friday 26th* – head for home, or those who wish to stay on may do so.

NOTIFICATION – Please contact Blue Schafer (whether you can attend or not) as soon as you can, as he needs to know approximate numbers. Contact Blue on 0412 432 464, or by email at bjschafer@bigpond.com

Correction: Re the picture of our escort ships in Half Circle No 129. The caption should read, top to bottom “HMAS Sydney III, HMAS Supply and HMAS Derwent. “Supply” was a Tide Class Fleet Tanker, and “Derwent” was a Daring Class Destroyer. *Thanks to Roger Lambert for this information.*

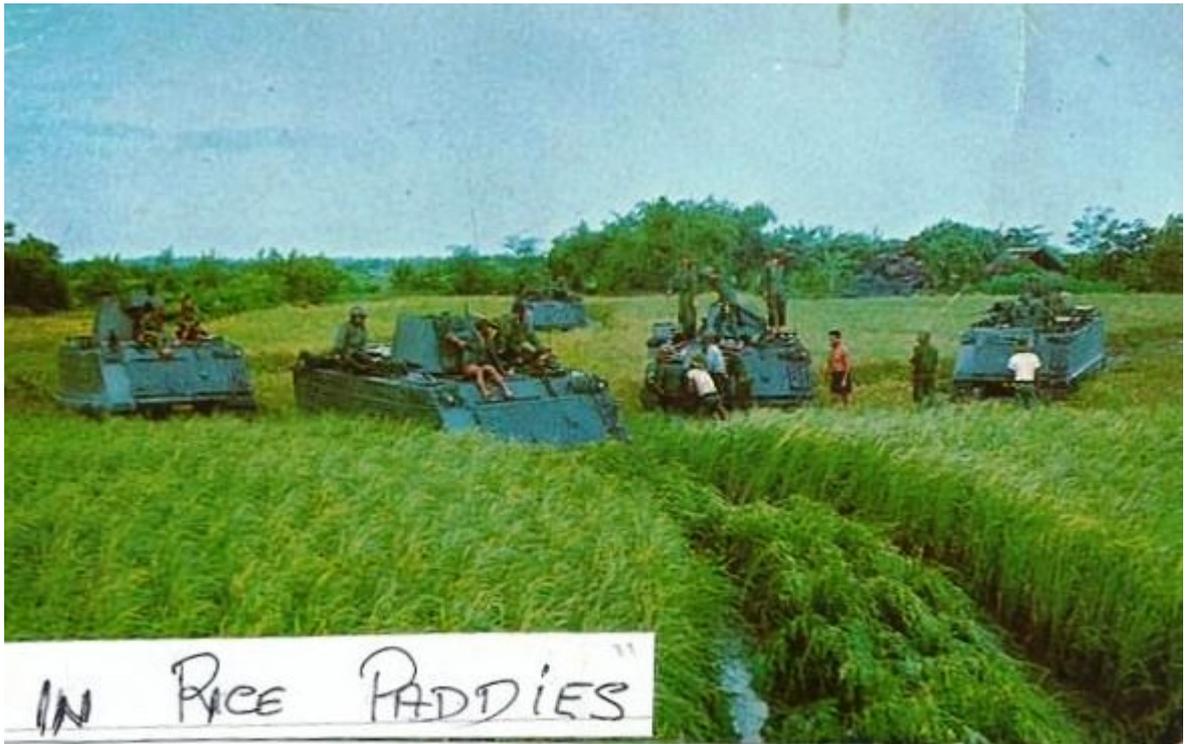
Got nothing to do? Here’s a tip: Recently I needed to research a bloke’s service, and I tried all the usual avenues, 5RAR Association, Nominal Roll of Vietnam Veterans, the internet, etc. Then I stumbled on it – our own current edition of The Year of the Tigers! David Wilkins has done an outstanding job of putting this publication together, and when you take the time to look at every page, you will be amazed. Show me a comparable publication – you may be looking for a while. Ed



The cat, also known as PTE Quintus Ramus, having a snooze.



Vietnamese children begging for cigarettes



Photos courtesy of Ian Leis



FROM DENNIS NEVINS – THE POOLAMACCA GHOST

Poolamacca Station is around 38 miles north of Broken Hill, my father Ken Nevins purchased it after WW2 from his winnings in Two Up. I grew up on this historical station, the homestead and woolshed are built of solid rock and date back to 1860. My bedroom was above the plonk cellar and because of that my father would tease me about the boogie man who lived below. Needless to say I was petrified at night, the station had no mains power so at night it was total darkness.

Came the time that my room was being painted so I had to sleep in a room that was beside the cellar stairs. On the first night there was a brilliant full moon so I could see outside the window clearly. I have no idea of the time but I heard loud footsteps coming up the cellar stairs, they were slow and heavy and clearly had the sound of metal on the cement steps. (In those times miners and well sinkers wore steel caps on the bottom of their leather boots).

I sat up petrified as a man appeared I wanted to scream but couldn't, At the time I was about 7. I watched him get to the top of the stairs, he looked tired and was slouched forward, he was around 6 ft 1 and was wearing a long coat around knee level. I saw him turn left and head towards the governess quarters.

Next morning at breakfast I told my parent's what I saw, my mother was understanding but the old fella said I'd been drinking to many pannikins of black tea. Come forward to the late 1980s and there are new owners. I told the ghost experience to the father, he asked me not to tell his daughter as she had seen the ghost as well, she also slept in my room. She was so scared she blocked off the window that looked over the cellar with stacked books.

Last month I return to the station, the place means a lot to me. I met a traditional elder and a young bloke, after pleasantries I ask about the ghost, the young bloke says straight off that he's dressed in a long coat and a hat, (Because of time factor I do not remember a hat) he also refuses to sleep inside the homestead. He then

explained when a visitor turned up at night that he asked who was the bloke at the gate with a long coat and hat.

The elder who wanted nothing to do with the conversation explained why, he awoke one night being pressed down on the bed by a man in a coat and wearing a hat. He said like me he couldn't scream, he said he was petrified and didn't want to talk anymore.

A bit of research by my daughter Sara came up with news clipping of a Sundowner by the name of John Harris who was working 12 feet down a well on Campbell's Creek, the creek is about a mile from the homestead. According to the clipping dated 19 May 1893 the well fell in and buried John Harris alive. He was on his last day of work and had 3 days' pay in his pocket.

I have no doubt in May a man could be wearing a long coat as the temperature at that time is quite nippy especially in a wet well.

We feel that Harris is the ghost and feeling of the elder being pushed down was the same feeling that Harris felt being buried alive.

It's for each person to make up their own mind on this story but let me say I believe in the Poolamacca ghost.

I would also advise no one to camp near Brewery Well at night because if you do you will hear the sound of digging. I often wonder what went wrong in that well.

Today Poolamacca is no longer operating as a sheep station and is now in the hands of traditional people. I was a fortunate man to have grown up on this wonderful station.

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