

MAY 2019

"Sitrep, Over!"

To Perpetuate the Regiment

Last Chance to attend the RSARA Formal Dinner

Over the past two years the Association has conducted very successful Formal Dinners at the Colonel Light Gardens RSL, and it the intention to carry on that event this year, as long as enough interest is shown.

To make the night a success we require at least 40 expressions of interest, and once received the planning will go ahead. So far 17 members have registered. We need 40 to go ahead!



The venue is again at the Colonel Light Gardens RSL, and the date set is **Saturday 12th October @ 1900 for 1930 hrs.**

Cost is again set at \$45 per head, and that will cover your 2 course meal and all wine, beers



and soft drinks. Dress is FORMAL: That is: Dinner, Lounge Suit, Mess Dress or Polys for men and After 5 for ladies.

Attendance is not just for those of officer rank, but is open to ALL RANKS and their partners. This will be a great night of camaraderie and friendship, to be enjoyed by all.

If you would like to attend please register your interest with the Secretary David Laing on his email of davidlaing49@bigpond.com **NLT Friday 3rd May 2019**

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Special Points of Interest

- Who has NEVER ridden in an APC? Page 2,3 & 4
- See Page 6 for Merchandise available.
- Major Don Field has passed away. Page 8,9 & 10 contain his Vietnam-memoirs.
- Check out the Murray Bridge RSL Museum on Facebook.

WE NEED YOUR ANZAC DAY PHOTOS

If you're attending a Dawn Service or ANZAC Day march this year, please take a few pics and send them in to us for publication. Our favourite photographers may not always be there, so sometimes it's left up to you to capture some memories of this special day.

davidlaing49@bigpond.com

Fees and Merchandise can be paid by EFT through the following Bendigo Bank account:

RSAR Association

BSB 633 000

Acc. 1616 585 88

Cheques etc can be mailed to David Hope at:

The Treasurer RSAR Association
20 Katoomba Rd

Beaumont SA 5066

M113 - Australia's APC

From their first service in Vietnam, through to UN deployments and local exercises, the M113 family has protected and transported soldiers for 50 years.

On March 19, 1965, the first M113A1 vehicles were issued to the Royal Australian Armoured Corps.

That year the Armoured School and 1 Armd Regt were the only regular armoured units. Two Citizen Military Forces (CMF) units had one regular squadron each – 4/19 Prince of Wales Light Horse (Reconnaissance) and 2/14 Queensland Mounted Infantry (Anti-Tank).

1 Tp, A Sqn, 4/19PWLH, was the first unit to receive the new vehicles. The troop had less than two months to train on the new vehicles before five vehicles departed for Vietnam on May 27, 1965.

The M113A1 family had been ordered in 1963-64, although the vehicles were ordered separately from the radio and harness. This led to different delivery times, causing problems in Vietnam.

Vietnam – the M113A1's first war

The firepower and mobility of the armoured personnel carrier (APC) element deployed with 1RAR soon proved its worth. By September 1965, APC numbers had raised to 13, able to carry an infantry rifle company.

Meanwhile, 1 APC Sqn had been raised in Australia and relieved the troop in Vietnam in June 1966 as part of the new 1st Australian Task Force. 1 APC Sqn arrived with only two APC troops, and took over the PWLH vehicles to form 3 Tp.

The squadron's first major action came on August 18, 1966, when 3 Tp reacted with the task force reserve to relieve D Coy, 6RAR, at Long Tan. 3 Tp had only seven serviceable APCs – the rest of the worn-out PWLH carriers were in repair. 3 Tp was reinforced by three carriers from 2 Tp, which had no gun shields or intercom. 3 Tp also had outdated radios, which had problems communicating with the infantry and artillery. The radios and harness ordered with the vehicles still had not all arrived.

Long Tan accelerated a search for a protected station for APC crew commanders.

The US "bathtub" solution was not accepted and Army sought a turret. M74C cupolas were acquired and fitted but it was very cramped – only 20 were available and suffered from spares problems.

In 1966, Army started trials with the T-50 turret, which could be fitted with two .30 machine guns or a .50/.30 combination. This proved an adequate short-term solution, but the decision to fit all APCs with T-50 turrets caused problems for the next 30 years. In November 1966, all ARA RAAC regiments were numbered sequentially, so 1 Armd Regt was joined by 2 and 3 Cav Regts.

3 Cav Regt was raised in January 1967 with two squadrons – one in Vietnam and one training in Australia.

The M113A1s and their crews performed exceptionally well in Vietnam, but the M113A1s were light armoured vehicles.

During Operation Bribie, in February 1967, one APC was destroyed by three hits from 75mm recoilless rifle and another destroyed by a mine made from a five-inch shell that blew the engine through the driver's compartment. Mines were to remain the main threat in Vietnam, requiring a belly armour program.

3 Cav Regt began to withdraw from Vietnam in late 1971, with the last APC troop leaving country in May 1972.



M113AS4 - A New Era.

Service in Australia

Back in Australia, the M113A1 became the Army's light armoured fighting vehicle (AFV).

From 1967, a unique Australian vehicle had been developed by fitting a Saladin armoured car turret to an M113A1, adopted as the fire support vehicle (FSV).

Specialist tracked light reconnaissance vehicles (LRV) were rejected and the M113A1 APC became the APC/LRV.

As the ARA adapted to service in Australia, in 1972 the decision was made to equip all CMF units with the M113A1 vehicles.

The simple and robust M113A1 proved an ideal vehicle for the CMF. Easy to maintain and drive, it permitted part-time soldiers with limited training time an opportunity to focus on tactics.

In 1973, the CMF became the Army Reserve.

A new FSV based on the British Scorpion turret was accepted for service in 1976. It was the first RAAC AFV fitted with a passive (image intensifying) night sight. It was soon redesignated the medium reconnaissance vehicle (MRV).



As well as ARA reconnaissance squadrons, reserve RAAC units were issued MRV or the Saladin FSV to reintroduce full bore gunnery to the reserve force. In 1976, 5/7RAR began trialling mechanised infantry, with such success that the role became permanent and in 1 Bde the infantry operated its own M113A1 vehicles.

The mechanised role survived the de-linking of the battalions in 2007 but under Plan Beersheba the battalions converted back to light infantry in 2013. Armoured mobility will now be provided by RAAC APC units.

The focus on operations in Australia led to increasing interest in wheeled AFV.

In 1980, Project Waler examined replacing the Army's fleet of Light AFV. Both wheeled and tracked vehicles were considered. The Defence of Australia paper of 1987 focused on Northern Australia, leading to plans to relocate 2 Cav Regt to Darwin and re-equip it with wheeled AFV, leaving a reduced M113 fleet of about 600, some of which would be upgraded.

It was not until 1992 that plans to purchase sufficient ASLAVs to equip 2 Cav Regt were announced. The M113 upgrade project was to see many changes before anything happened.

Exercises such as Kangaroo '89 involved 1 Armd Regt, 2 Cav Regt and B Sqn 3/4 Cav Regt deploying to northern Australia with M113A1 vehicles, as well as the 1 Armd Regt Leopard tanks. "

UN deployments

In 1992-93, the Australian Government contributed to UN forces in Somalia. 1RAR Group formed the main part of Operation Solace, including elements of B Sqn, 3/4 Cav Regt. The manning cap meant that only a reduced squadron with two APC troops could deploy.

The M113A1 family performed well once again, albeit the squadron had serious problems with maintenance, especially the supply of track link, in conditions where RAN sea transport was limited.

M113 - From Vietnam to NOW!

In 1994-95, the government accepted a further UN request for assistance in Rwanda. Operation Tamar initially involved a company of 2/4RAR deployed with a section of three APCs, plus a fitters' vehicle. This was to be the first time RAAC AFVs were painted UN white.

The second rotation came from 5/7RAR, which took over the vehicles in location. More planning In 1994, Army agreed on a M113 upgrade to consist of:

- Phase 1 – suspension and engine cooling modifications to M113A2 standard. New turret with power traverse and elevation with single. M2HB QCB .50 machine gun. Spall liners and a cooled drinking water system were to be fitted, and the crew commander and driver provided with night-vision goggles.

- Phase 2 – to move to M113A3 standard. This included a new engine and transmission, external fuel cells, appliqué armour and climate control system for crew compartment. In 1996, the MRV was retired. 2 Cav Regt was already equipping with the ASLAV, signalling the end of the M113A1 in the medium reconnaissance role.

In 1998, the first four M113A2 vehicles were delivered from upgrade. At this point, the Phase 1 upgrade was halted and combined with Phase 2, the new vehicle to be known as the M113AS3.

One more operation for M113A1

In September 1999, the Australian Government sent a force to East Timor to secure the country while the UN prepared a peace-keeping force to take over. The Australian component of Interfet on Operation Warden included 2RAR and 3RAR, supported by B Sqn, 3/4 Cav Regt. After securing Dili, Australian forces moved to the area of the border. 2 Cav Regt ASLAVs were deployed but had problems with the narrow streets, tending to damage buildings when going around corners. The M113A1, being shorter and, when necessary, able to skid-turn, had no such problems. The ASLAVs were withdrawn – they were to have their turn in Iraq and Afghanistan – and the M113A1 soldiered on. With the two Australian battalions on the border, a third battalion was required to secure Dili and its surrounds. 5/7RAR (Mech) deployed with its M113A1s and proved the advantages of armoured mobility in the security role.

When Interfet withdrew, 5/7RAR became the first Australian battalion on Operation Tanager. Subsequent Australian battalion deployments were supported by RAAC APC elements until 2002.

Towards M113AS4

The M113AS3 concept was further modified, with a lengthened version to be called the M113AS4, while the short version remained the AS3.

CO 2 Cav Regt Lt-Col James Davis said 259 M113AS4 variants were procured as APCs, fitters vehicles and Armoured Logistics Vehicles.

"The unstretched A3 versions are used as ambulance, command, recovery and mortar vehicles," he said.

"The upgraded M113 family have a new engine, drive train, electrical and fuel systems, as well as a redesigned internal layout to accommodate safe stowage in a variety of situations.

"The APC version has a new electrically operated turret with day/night weapon sights. The AS4 vehicle is lengthened, with the six, rather than five, pairs of road wheels each side providing an instant identification feature."

The M113AS3/4 is planned to serve until at least 2025.




EXPLORE UNLEY LIFE

UNLEY MUSEUM

Life. Unley's Own, Returning Home

An exhibition based on the thesis, *Unley's Own - Returning Home* by Sandra Kearney, explores the personal stories of returned soldiers of the 27th Australian Infantry Battalion, "Unley's Own" after service on the front during WWI.

What happened to these men, how were their lives affected, where did they end up? Find out more through stories, photographs, objects and treasured souvenirs.




Exhibition launch and address by Sandra Kearney

THURSDAY, 9TH MAY 5-7PM

UNLEY MUSEUM 80 EDMUND AVE, UNLEY



FREE, no bookings required, refreshments included

EXHIBITION OPEN 9 MAY - 3 OCTOBER 2019



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Contact Steve at sandglarkins@outlook.com to express your interest and obtain more details.





Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc

RSAR Association Inc
The Secretary David Laing
Riverglen Marina RSD 3152A
White Sands SA 5253

We're on the web

www.rsara.asn.au

Phone: 0407 791822

E-mail: davidlaing49@bigpond.com



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Association Merchandise available



- Regimental Tie \$20 plus \$3 postage
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Other items like Polo Tops, Stubby Holders and Engraved Timber Shields also available. POR.

You've done *WHAT?*

As an ex-serviceman I value my friendship with the men and women I served with, and that includes 7 years with the Regiment and a further 15 years with the Australian Army Cadet Corps. All were fantastic years, with some being the highlight of my Army career.

I can recall sleeping on "dongers" at Torrens Parade Ground on 24th April, rising at 0400 hrs and traveling to Largs RSL for the Dawn Service Catafalque Party, followed by the Gunfire Breakfast cooked by the WW2 and Korean War veterans and their wives. A tot of rum in our coffee warmed the cockles of one's heart, and then it was back into the trucks to return to Torrens to form up for the main ANZAC Day march.

After the march most of us would head inside TTD and change into civvies and then catch up with mates for a snag on bread and a beer or 3, before drifting off to our own local RSL or watering hole. It was a day of remembrance, commemoration and camaraderie, ending only when your money ran out or it got dark!

The Get Together at Torrens Parade Ground after the march is part of the ANZAC Day tradition in Adelaide, and will continue as long as the march itself, BUT.....this year was a little different. On a recent Friday night a lot of us received a message via Facebook, of all carriers, that the traditional "ANZAC on Torrens" event had been cancelled by RSL SA/NT, due to a perceived monetary loss of funds on the day! They weren't making money, so they cancelled it! No consultation with members. No Plan B. Cancelled. On FACEBOOK!

I have written previously about that exact same event, which had a single Army Cadet Unit cooking snags and onion on bread, an ex-AIF Club and the 10/27 Battalion OR's Mess selling cans of beer and softies, and making a tidy sum for all concerned, with 10% of the profits going to the RSL, who, incidentally, did nothing on the day apart from allow the use of the Parade Ground, which they didn't own anyway!

5 or 6 years of that and the RSL saw a way to make more money from this event by running it themselves, so they sacked the Cadet Unit and the soldiers in their beer tents, and took it on themselves! Big mistake fellas! They employed a heap of young people dressed in black and hiked up the prices of their drinks, only to find out they had to pay these employees DOUBLE TIME AND A HALF for Public Holiday rates, and "surprise, surprise" they made a loss!

I'm angry about the way RSL came to their decision, and I'm angry about their lack of empathy for all those who would march to remember those who paid the supreme sacrifice. Having nowhere to go after the Adelaide march would have been a slap in the face of mateship and camaraderie. Thankfully, Veterans SA have picked up the pieces and will conduct a successful event, that we can all be proud of.

It's not all about making a profit, is it?

David Laing - Editor

VALE Major Don Field (Retd)

It is with the utmost regret that I advise of the sad passing of Major Don Field (Retd) 18th April after a long illness. 421766 Don Field served initially with The Adelaide Rifles, 1 Royal South Australia Regiment, then 10 Battalion, RSAR where he was OC of A Company, and before that E Company of 27 Battalion RSAR at Alberton.

Don was fortunate to be one of the officers picked for a stint in Vietnam as a CMF Observer, and write fondly of his time with Bravo Company 6 RAR in 1967. (Page 8, 9 & 10 contain excerpts of Don's memories of that tour. Ed)

I was fortunate to have Don as my OC when I was first posted to A Company 10 RSAR at Alberton in 1973, and he was succeeded shortly after by another favourite mate of mine, the late Trevor Phillips. Both Don and Trevor were my mentors throughout my early Army career.

Don was a staunch supporter of the Royal South Australia Regiment Association, and was a founding member of the re-born association in 2008.

He is already sadly missed by those who served with and under him. Our most sincere condolences go to Shirley and extended family.



ABOVE: Don at the 2013 ANZAC Day march. Forming up with the RSAR Association



Left: Don Field in 1967 as a young Captain with 1 RSAR



Don & Shirley at the 43 RSAR Reunion in 2012 at Keswick Barracks.



Don and good mate Ian Carnachan at the 2018 EOY BBQ at Keswick Barracks. Ian was CSM under Don at A Coy Alberton

Vietnam Remembered - Don Fields memories

Mon 6 Feb 67

Emplane Richmond RAAF Hercules C130. Overnight Darwin.

Tue 7 Feb 67

Deplane Vung Tau Airport South Vietnam. Task Force briefing at 1 ALSG Vung Tau. Caribou flight from Vung Tau to Nui Dat

Wed 8 Feb 67

Attached to B Coy 6 RAR, issued with jungle kit, weapons, ammo and rations. Briefing at BHQ.

Thu 9 Feb 67

Platoon 24hr patrol. Set up check point to check civilian ID Cards. That night set up and occupied an ambush position. Activity in front of ambush position but no en contact

Fri 10 Feb 67

Returned to Nui Dat 0730hrs. Check fire and service weapons. Fired M79 canister and HE, fired Claymore mine. Briefing for Coy 24hr patrol.

Sat 11 Feb 67

En had been reported operating in the area. B Coy was to carry out a Sweep & Clear operation in the Song Tow area. Left Nui Dat 0700hrs. Found bridge and hut used by en and arranged for demolition by Engineers. Found en camp with Panji Pits, documents and a quantity of rice. Set up a night ambush position including Claymore mines and trip flares. Occupied site 1900hrs. Trip flare was set off and en heard on our front but no contact.

Sun 12 Feb 67

Left ambush site 0700hrs, patrolled approx 8km to helicopter LZ. En were observed moving about our abandoned ambush site. Attempt made to register mortar fire on en but ineffective. Returned to base by helicopter, cleaned weapons and equipment, make and mend. Briefing at BHQ Tactical Operations Centre. Went with work party to Baria Township to purchase canteen supplies. Helicopter recce flight of TFAOR (Possum)

Mon 13 Feb 67

Visit to 101 Fd Bty and Engineer Unit. Left Nui Dat at 1600hrs for platoon patrol and night ambush. Set up ambush location and used the Starlight Scope infra red night telescope. Pig ran through the ambush site. Artillery Fire Tasks were fired all night on our front and at 0530hrs amplified Vietnamese voices were heard but nothing could be seen.

Tue 14 Feb 67

Returned to Nui Dat 0800hrs. Rest Day for Coy, make and mend, serviced weapons, washed clothes.

Wed 15 Feb 67

Work Party to Baria for Coy stores. Int Section briefing re M60 ammo problems and trace metal detection kits etc. TF Conference for Operation Dalby

Thu 16 Feb 67

Operation Dalby: Battalion assault on a suspected VC staging area North of Dat Do. LZ for the assault was given Arty bombardment and strafed by helicopter gunships. Landed on the LZ at first light and formed Coy RV. I was attached to Coy HQ. After moving ap-prox 400m first contact made by 5 PI B Coy with estimated 4 en. Brief fire fight one en wounded leaving a blood trail. En withdrew from a camp containing prepared bunkers including two with overhead cover. Rice, documents, medical supplies and ammo were captured. Second camp found surrounded by Panji Pits and this camp was destroyed. En observed withdrawing and mortars were used to attempt to cut off their withdrawal. Flank-ing unit (C Coy) captured 4 VC in a cave on a river bank. Coy was split up into platoon patrols with a search and destroy mission back to the RV for withdrawal by helicopter that evening. At Nui Dat that night isolated shots were heard on the Base perimeter.

Fri 17 Feb 67

Rest Day, make and mend, clean weapons etc. Coy put on 15 minutes stand-by for possible task as a blocking force against an estimated 2 Coys of VC. The Coy was sent out in the field whilst I had to report to BHQ to arrange my return to Australia. My requests to re-join the Coy were refused because the Coy had been fired on when landing in the LZ and was currently in contact with the en. In operations over the next 24hrs the Coy lost 2 KIA and 17 WIA (reported at that time).

Sat 18 Feb 67

Admin duties in Nui Dat including sorting and labeling clothing and equipment of killed and wounded personnel which had been returned from the battlefield.

Sun 19 Feb 67

Returned weapons, equipment and stores prior to marching out. Rest Day for Coy.

Mon 20 Feb 67

Left Vung Tau by Hercules C130 at 1300hrs.

Tue 21 Feb 67

Transit at Butterworth (Malaysia).

VIETNAM REMEMBERED - Don Fields memories

Wed 22 Feb 67

Transit at Butterworth (Malaysia).

Thu 23 Feb 67

Cleared Customs at Darwin and deplaned at Richmond.

Fri 24 Feb 67

Arrived Adelaide.

VIETNAM REMEMBERED – ADDENDUM

G'Day Barrie, (Newman)

As I suggested to you at the Observer's Dinner, my report on my Vietnam visit was a rather hasty and churlish effort in response to your requests at that time.

I have been back to the note books which I used in Vietnam and have compiled an addendum of those matters which left an impression on me. Some criticisms have not been included as not being all that important.

SOME IMPRESSIONS

ASLG AT VUNG TAU

A huge fenced area. About 1200 personnel and containing vast quantities of stores and equipment. The area had a very comfortable mess and other permanent buildings. I noticed a line of about 50 to 60, D6 Caterpillar Bulldozers parked in lines. At that time, the D6 was the largest bulldozer in general use in South Australia.

TF BASE AT NUI DAT

Located in a former rubber plantation with dying foliage. Some sealed roads and permanent buildings. Scale A showers and tent accommodation protected by sand bags. There were Company Officer's and Sergeant's messes, a Company kitchen and mess which held some PX store items for sale. Rations were a combination of fresh and tinned. Movies were available from time to time.

PERSONNEL

The majority of the soldiers were National Servicemen and I had the opportunity to talk with them. Most had been in Country for about eight months and were looking forward to going home. I did not hear anyone complain about having been posted to Vietnam and morale seemed to be very high. I did not see any examples of bias or discrimination against National Servicemen by the Regular staff. The Platoon Commanders, whom I assumed were National Servicemen, were well regarded and respected by their soldiers and the Regular staff.

ORTHOGRAPHIC MAPS

A combination of air photo and cadastral details laminated in waterproof material. I had never used these before and found them most beneficial in the field. I understand that these maps could be updated fairly easily.

STANDARD PROCEDURES

Stand-to and Stand-down were strictly observed including on operations. Similarly, test firing of weapons before proceeding outside the TF perimeter was enforced.

Debriefs of operations were always carried out at various levels but I did not take part in any.

Contact and other immediate action drills were executed much as I had been taught, but with some minor modifications resulting from local experience.

For night ambushes, a minimum of 30% stand-to all night was adopted and upgraded depending upon operational circumstances.

Ration, water and ammo scales were laid down for each operation.

On operations, the soldiers always seemed to have US Ration packs available. The tinned bread, individual steaks, apple pies etc. looked delicious but were heavy and very bulky and I preferred the Australian packs.

NIGHT AMBUSHES

My experience with night ambushes was a mixed bag. On the first occasion, there was activity to the front of the ambush site, but no enemy contact. On the second ambush, I used the "starlight" night vision scope for the first time whilst on sentry roster. Unfortunately, on this ambush, a trip flare was accidentally set off during the night, making any chance of a successful outcome very remote.

On the next occasion, an animal (pig?) ran through the ambush site which certainly woke everybody up, but again compromised the ambush position. Extraction next day was by helicopter, with the LZ being secured by Arty.

VIETNAM REMEMBERED—Don Fields memories

WEATHER

Very hot and humid, but could get chilly at night. The Province was in drought and therefore water had to be carried on the man (min of 4 bottles /man/day) Resupply was normally by helicopter with some loss of security as a result. Patrolling was very hot and exhausting. My newly issued GP Boots were very inflexible and I had to wear two pairs of socks for some comfort.

A FEW CRITICISMS

The harbor locations used for preparation of meals etc. prior to moving into an ambush position, seemed to me, on some occasions, to be far too close to the ambush site. In one instance, this was only 50 metres or so. On the same subject, there did not seem to be any restrictions on smoking or cooking in the harbor.

Field hygiene, in some instances, was a fairly half- hearted effort. When I questioned the extent of bash, burn and bury, I was assured that the existing method was the norm as the locals generally dug up dump sites when vacated by the Australians.

SWEEP AND CLEAR

On a Company sized sweep and clear operation, we came across a camp of enemy bunkers with camouflaged Panji pits located on the approaches. These Panji pits were precisely constructed and deadly. Four of the bunkers were solidly constructed with over-head cover. We recovered a quantity of rice, ammunition and some documents. I wondered just how many staging/resupply posts like this were located throughout the Task Force area of responsibility.

SEARCH AND DESTROY

As a result of intelligence reports of enemy activities of up to squad size north of Dat Do, the Battalion was ordered to undertake a search and destroy operation in the area.

On this operation, I was travelling with B Coy HQ, the leading Company. 5 Platoon, our point platoon, contacted approx, 4 Viet Cong and a fire fight ensued. At least one of the enemy was wounded and they beat a hasty retreat dragging their wounded and leaving a heavy blood trail.

We followed closely behind 5 Pl and I was surprised at the vivid contrast between the blood trail and the green foliage. We subsequently lost the trail. Later on in this operation we located an enemy camp, some bunkers with overhead cover and with camouflaged panji pits on the approaches. We located a quantity of rice, some tools and documents.

This was the largest operation I was involved in and certainly the most spectacular. Our forces were inserted and extracted by helicopter, with the insertion and extraction being supported by artillery and helicopter gunships using rockets and machineguns in a close support role. A very noisy and dusty procedure but one which got the adrenalin flowing.

SORTING AND LABELLING EQUIPMENT OF WOUNDED PERSONNEL

I assisted with this most unpleasant task and one which demonstrated the damage which could be done by small arms weapons.

MY HOST COMPANY, B COY 6RAR

The OC, MAJ McKay, 2IC, CAPT Stevenson, Platoon Commanders, LT J Sullivan, LT J O'Halloran, LT Short, CSM, WO2 K Davison and CQMS J McDonald kindly assisted me in various ways.

I am most appreciative of the assistance and guidance given to me by the experienced Coy Sergeants Henry Chisholm, Max Smith, Merv McCulloch and Butch Brady, who were always ready to share their time and knowledge with me and to answer my never ending questions.

APPRECIATION

I am very grateful to the Army for making my visit possible. I certainly learned a great deal from the experience.

Finally, I appreciate the efforts made by CAPT Barrie Newman, MAJ Geoff Lawrie and CAPT Ron Pearson in collecting, collating and publishing "Vietnam Remembered"

MAJ D K Field (Retd)

Don was a forward thinker and planner to the nth degree. He was well respected by his peers and his men alike. He and Shirley were "an item" since they were 16 years old and stayed together since those days. Our sincere condolences go to Shirley and family. Rest In Peace Major Field. Your Duty is Done.

David Laing - Editor, Secretary RSAR Association.

A young country soldier writes home.....

Dear Mum & Dad,

I am well. Hope youse are too. Tell me big brothers Doug and Phil that the Army is better than workin' on the farm - tell them to get in bloody quick smart before the jobs are all gone! I wuz a bit slow in settling down at first, because ya don't hafta get outta bed until 6am. But I like sleeping in now, cuz all ya gotta do before brekky is make ya bed and shine ya boots and clean ya uniform. No bloody cows to milk, no calves to feed, no feed to stack - nothin'!! Ya haz gotta shower though, but its not so bad, coz there's lotsa hot water and even a light to see what ya doing!



At brekky ya get cereal, fruit and eggs but there's no kanga-roo steaks or possum stew like wot Mum makes. You don't get fed again until noon and by that time all the city boys are buggered because we've been on a 'route march' - geez its only just like

walking to the windmill in the back paddock!!

This one will kill me brothers Doug and Phil with laughter. I keep getting medals for shootin' - dunno why. The bullseye is as big as a bloody possum's bum and it don't move and it's not firing back at ya like the Johnsons did when our big scrubber bull got into their prize cows before the Ekka last year! All ya gotta do is make yourself comfortable and hit the target - it's a piece of piss!! You don't even load your own cartridges, they comes in little boxes, and ya don't have to steady yourself against the rollbar of the roo shooting truck when you reload!

Sometimes ya gotta wrestle with the city boys and I gotta be real careful coz they break easy - it's not like fighting with Doug and Phil and Jack and Boori and Steve and Muzza all at once like we do at home after the muster.

Turns out I'm not a bad boxer either and it looks like I'm the best the platoon's got, and I've only been beaten by this one bloke from the Engineers - he's 6 foot 5 and 15 stone and three pick handles across the shoulders and as ya know I'm only 5 foot 7 and eight stone wringin' wet, but I ought him till the other blokes carried me off to the boozier.

I can't complain about the Army - tell the boys to get in quick before word gets around how bloody good it is.

Your loving daughter,

Sheila

Sent in by RSARA Committee member SGT Mark Blondell

Photo from somewhere on the internet. So sue me :-)

CPL DAVE'S PAGE

The Devil Made Me Do It!

While walking down the street one day a Member of Parliament is tragically hit by a truck and dies. His soul arrives in heaven and is met by St. Peter at the entrance.

'Welcome to heaven,' says St. Peter.

'Before you settle in, it seems there is a problem. We seldom see a high official around these parts, you see, so we're not sure what to do with you.'

'No problem, just let me in,' says the man.

'Well, I'd like to, but I have orders from higher up. What we'll do is have you spend one day in hell and one in heaven. Then you can choose where to spend eternity.'

'Really, I've made up my mind. I want to be in heaven,' says the MP.

'I'm sorry, but we have our rules.'

And with that, St. Peter escorts him to the elevator and he went down, down, down to hell. The doors open and he found himself in the middle of a green golf course. In the distance is a clubhouse and standing in front of it are all his friends and other politicians who had worked with him.

Everyone is very happy and dressed in evening dress. They run to greet him, shake his hand, and reminisce about the good times they had while getting rich at the expense of the people.

They played a friendly game of golf and then dined on lobster, caviar and champagne.

Also present is the Devil, who really is a very friendly & nice guy who has a good time dancing and telling jokes. They are having such a good time that before he realizes it, it's time to go.

Everyone gives him a hearty farewell and wave whilst the elevator rises....

The elevator rises and the door opens in heaven where St. Peter is waiting for him.

'Now it's time to visit heaven.'

So, 24 hours pass with the MP joining a group of contented souls moving from cloud to cloud, playing the harp and singing. They have a good time and, before he realizes it, the 24 hours have gone by and St. Peter returns.

'Well, then, you've spent a day in hell and another in heaven. Now choose your eternity.'

The MP reflects for a minute, then he answers: 'Well, I would never have said it before, I mean heaven has been delightful, but I think I would be better off in hell.'

So St. Peter escorts him to the elevator and he goes down, down, down to hell.

When the doors open he's in the middle of a barren land covered with waste and garbage.

He sees all his friends, dressed in rags, picking up the trash and putting it in black bags as more trash falls from above.

The Devil comes over to him and puts his arm around his shoulder. 'I don't understand,' stammers the MP.

'Yesterday I was here and there was a golf course and clubhouse, and we ate lobster and caviar, drank champagne, danced and had a great time. Now there's just a wasteland full of garbage and my friends look miserable. What happened?'

The Devil looks at him, smiles and says, 'Yesterday we were campaigning..

Today you voted'.

