	THE EYES and EARS No.0013 – 23/12/09 "FIRST PUBLISHED 22nd JULY 1967 at Nui Dat, South Vietnam"	
Editor contact email: three-zero@hotmail.com Ed – Paul 'Dicko' Dickson		

Government Statisticians are predicting that January may be late in coming in 2010 due to global warming and the fact that the tilt of the earth on its axis means that the sun gets to Western Australia later than Lord Howe Island. So if their prognostications are correct Easter may have to be cancelled due to uncertainties of political will and the curtain-fade factor in Queensland.



.SEASON'S GREETINGS...



Arty Tac, LP's, Survey, Radar, Transport and Workshop...



We start of this edition with some Season's wishes from...

.Warwick Brooker sends this -



Locators and families & friends of locators -
I thought you'd appreciate a Christmas message from the survey lines at Nui Dat - the year is 1967.

We hope you all enjoy a safe and sober Christmas / New Year season and that twenty-ten treats you kindly, even generously!

Our very best wishes for a blessed Christmastime celebration!

Brookey & Family

. **Stuart Sporn** sent this from the warm north – ‘You have a Cool Yule’

. **Keith Ayliffe** does his Santa thing – ‘G’day out there in Locator Land.

Best wishes to all of you and your families. Have a great festive season and may you all have a fantastic new year.....
Best Regards. Keith’

. **Dave Doyle** chimed in with this -

♥ *merry Christmas AND A Happy new year from both of us henry and loey are staying home*

. **Peter Gault** wishes some of the BEST news you can get – ‘Hi Dicko I had the scan on Monday & got the results yesterday. They could not have been better all the tumours in my lungs have nearly disappeared & there is no sign of Cancer anywhere else .I still have to have more treatment over the next few months but that’s OK because I know the chemo is doing its job Anyway Dicko we hope you & your family have a great Christmas & a happy New Year
Regards Pappy’

Heard and seen...

These items are in response to Ed’s email concerning – ‘Dec E&E’s Deadline’... ‘blah, blah...so if there is anything you want to get off your chest, find out who did borrow your shaving gear in Kapooka and didn’t return it, send any messages (we’ve got a couple of Christmas/New Year ones to put in this edition so far) etc. Dicko’

. **Bert Blink thinks** now is as good time as any to put this out – ‘Hi Dicko, This might be of interest. It was something compiled for Geoff Blackwell after an argument we had about with whom the Kiwi infantry fought in Vietnam.

"The two NZ Companies were V & W Company & initially when it was muted they were going to Vietnam V Company wanted to be joined to the South Korean Army (whom they were fighting alongside in Malaysia at the time) the reason being they didn’t want to fight alongside National Servicemen. So much for them reading Newspapers and reading about the Battle of Long Tan, maybe they thought all the Nashos in D Company were moved to a safe area to make cups of Tea.

V & W Companies went to Vietnam in late ’67 where they were briefly attached to 6 RAR, before joining 2 RAR to form 2 RAR/NZ as the ANZAC Battalion in March ’68. When 2 RAR left the two NZ companies then successively formed the ANZAC Battalion with 4 RAR then 6 RAR then 2 RAR. I am assuming that like 161 Bty the companies rotated infantry on a regular basis from 1 RNZIR"

Source <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/war/vietnam-war/anzac-battalion> Bert’ Ed – now what was Geoff thinking?

. **Bob King has** a real problem which he needs help with – ‘Hi Paul, This comes to my memory...

I woke one morning after a group of 131 left for home. Missing was a US military jacket which I had just swapped with a GI...Bob’ Ed – OK ‘fess up, it’s been over 40 years, it has to be someone tall and thin!

Then there was another topic when “Canungra” was mentioned -

.Subject: CANUNGRA

How’s this for a story in the latest Army Newspaper? A letter to the Editor - It obviously wasn’t a big deal for the ADF.

"On November 1, Battle Wing Canungra closed its doors and was re-rolled into the nucleus of the Combat Training Centre (Live) with a move to Townsville thrown in. But make no mistake BWC is closed. A Closing Parade marked this sad day in history.

Battle Wing Canungra in one form or another has been at the forefront of training soldiers and preparing them for war. Between 1942-1946 it was known as the Jungle Warfare Centre, training and preparing soldiers being sent to the jungles of New Guinea.

In 1954, it was renamed BWC and to the fateful day on November 1 it conducted the necessary training required to prepare soldiers for overseas service.

The soldiers that passed through here included personnel being deployed to Malaysia (then Malaya) or on their way to Vietnam.

This type of training continued through to the present day in the form of SUTs (sub-unit training) as well as conducting pre-deployment training for units deploying to Timor.

This included training officers and soldiers of other nations through the JOCCIT program, here at Canungra or Overseas. The countries included Philippines, Thailand, Fiji and NZ. As you can see and probably already know BWC has a long and distinguished history. So that brings me to the point of this letter - why this closing was not covered by Army, considering this was a milestone in history. I was assured by my unit that the media was contacted and would be in attendance, for some unforeseen reason this did not occur. I realise that you are very busy covering events like gumboot throwing and piano playing. I think it is a sad reflection of the military and the way some soldiers think when you close a unit down with this amount of history with a shrug of the shoulders and say well that’s it.

Could you explain to me why this did occur?

Sgt Robert Jackson CTC (L), Canungra QLD

Editor’s Note: I have no record or recollection of being contacted by Battle Wing Canungra about the closing parade.

At present I have only five reporters to cover the entire Army, here in Australia and around the world. If I had known of the parade, I would have attempted to arrange coverage.

This facility is now an Intelligence centre.

. **Steve Boutlis isn't one** to let a story slip by and this one was on Canungra – 'Hi, Dicko.

I just checked my med docs as I had reported in at the RAP at Cunungra and the Doc. is stamped "Jungle Training Centre, Cunungra", (JTC).

I well remember arriving there after a crappy overnight train ride and attending the indoctrination session. We were told how we were going to be made super fit superb jungle fighters after losing a "stone" in weight and binging on the equivalent in muscle!

Unfortunately, the lashings of bacon at breakfast put on two stone of fat on my already unhealthy body.

I cannot remember with whom from 131 I went.

The first three mile run in combat gear was a killer and the NCOs literally kicked us up off the ground. The prick busted my watch with one of his kicks!

I well remember:

the freezing nights during which the "fire" buckets froze solid; the freezing water in the creek when we did the parallel rope crossing and fell off; jumping off the tower; doing the river crossings; the "pig pen" at the end of the corrugated pipe along the confidence (obstacle) course; the 100 foot tall barbed wire fences (they looked a hundred feet high!) that we had to scale; the notorious "V" rope; flash bangs thrown into our tents during the night and grabbing our gear to bug out in pitch blackness; and the ambushes (oh how I loved the ambushes!); forgetting to count the rounds fired and doing umpteen push-ups.

The JTC was when I first questioned my invincibility and it was during the ambushes that I became convinced that I would not survive Vietnam. If I could not see the bastards in practice, how was I going to see them in real life?! This could have been a premonition for the first survey in Nam when we, in Land Rovers, were taken up the wrong track which was surrounded by thick jungle and progressively became narrower. We had to reverse out because it was too narrow to turn around. Ideal ambush spot!

On the last weekend (?) before returning to Holsworthy, we hitchhiked to Southport where I had my first taste of XXXX (because they couldn't spell beer?)

As with all events viewed in hind-sight, it was a grand time. Did it prepare me for Nam? Thankfully, I didn't have to find out. Cheers, Boots.'

. **Grahame Dignam sent** this in and I just thought it was good - 'A Pole goes to the ophthalmologist who shows him the following eye chart:

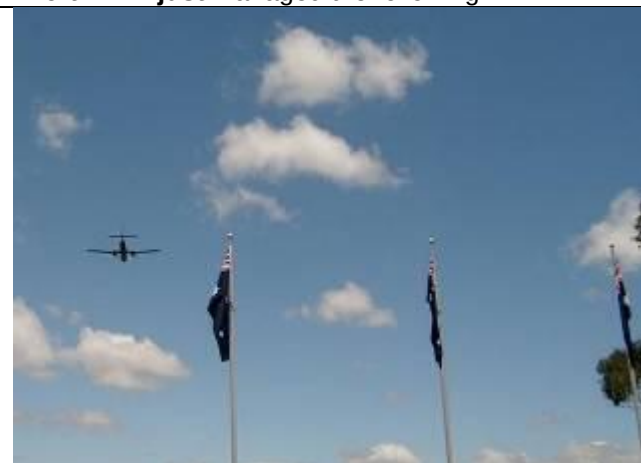
C Z W X N Q S T A C Z

"Can you read this?" the doctor asks.

"Read it?" the Pole replies.

"I know the guy!"

. **Bert Blink just** managed the following...



Hi Paul

On Friday I went to see the last flight by the Caribou A4-140 over the AWM.

Unfortunately someone forgot to tell us it was flying from behind the War Memorial so before we all figured this out it was coming from behind us & was over our heads and starting to climb.

Never mind here is a picture. Bert

. **Memories –**

Billiards, Robert form 1968 "Bananas in the Minefield" – 'Geoff Blackwell happened to mention to Paul about a 131 Bty mine clearing operation performed by 4 members of the 31D LP team, namely Geoff (Darkshaft) Blackwell, Stan (Pablo) Briggs, Behram (Baz) Guzder and Robert (Snooker) Billiards. It must have been sometime in November or December 1967, and I am sure that Pablo would give us the exact date.

The 31D team did a couple of ventures outside of our position, firstly to cut down a tree which was directly to our front and would have been a great spot from which to fire an RPG right into the front of our brand new remodelled LP on the top of post 4. On this trip we also came across a Banana plantation, or possibly just wild ones on our way back. They were very nice so we did at least one more trip out there to collect a bunch. You might well know that this was an extremely perilous patrol as we had to walk down past 3 US manned guard posts where they had M60's pointed in our direction. I think that we may have let the 1/83rd duty officer know of our trip, but we didn't let Blue Leader or Arty TAC know as they may have stopped us!! The patrols were extremely successful as the tree was felled on one trip and we managed to have a good supply of those sweet little bananas.

The memory is not too clear but I also seem to remember on one of these trips walking through possibly a 5RAR ambush position as they were assimilating to the bush conditions and this position being relatively safe (except maybe for the

septics). Really strange situation and lucky the sun had been up for a short time and they were possibly stood down. Then again maybe it was a protection party for the Grunts collecting bananas!

Anyway we were walking back in between the 1/83rd compound and Hoa Long and we noticed a freshly cleared bit of ground with a small hole in the middle. It was very baffling for us Arty LP and Signallers. We being well trained diggers suggested to Geoff, since he had all the experience in the Arty Intelligence (is that an oxymoron) section, that he start poking around where the ground was freshly packed with his bayonet. We had all seen those WWII movies where they use a bayonet to find the mine and lift it out, so what more training did we need?? The bayonet touched something and the ground gave off a lot of smoke (well it looked like a lot at the time) and a strange noise so Pablo, Guz and I hit the deck away from Geoff who was left holding the bayonet. Fortunately there wasn't any big bang and we weren't going to dig any further to find what it was. It may have just been one of those small plastic mines, or it could have been a fuse to a larger IAD that was a dud. Geoff had some scratches on his hand and we decided that we would let the Engineers know next time we found one of these as they possibly had more experience at determining what these things are.

What a story it would have been if it did go off with a big bang – four soldiers killed/wounded while stealing bananas from local farmers just outside of the Hoa Long village!!

Ed – Unless you want to hear from me again, how about some more memories from any period about **anything**?

. **Locating Artillery Assoc**...notes taken from their website –

- Committee meetings are held regularly at Paddington RSL commencing at 1115 hrs. The next Committee Meeting will be on 7 February 2010 and Members are cordially invited to attend. More details will be available in the next issue of the *Associations Newsletter* LOCREP.
- Work parties at the RAA National Museum are normally held on the last Sunday of each month. All future dates will be confirmed in the *Associations Newsletter*.
The next work party is on 31 January 2010. Work parties commence at 0900 hrs and conclude with an *Association-funded BBQ* at 1400 hrs at the North Fort.

. **Ernie Newbold gets a** Guernsey this month with a joke... **CAR TROUBLE**

A blonde pushes her BMW into a gas station. She tells the mechanic it died.

After he works on it for a few minutes, it is Idling smoothly

She says, "What's the story?"

He replies, "Just crap in the carburetor."

She asks, "How often do I have to do that?"

. **Birthdays in the Battery**...crikey there must have been bad blackouts in the month of March for a few years going on the number of blokes having birthdays in December. **David Dougherty** and **Keven Bush** gave the 1st a nudge, then the late *Raymond Minns* and Clive Dreis are happy to share the 3rd, **Alan Robb** keeps the 6th to himself, the late *Anthony O'Mara* comes along with **Terry Westaway** on the 7th, the 8th belongs to the late *Robert White*, **Andrew Opie** claims the 9th to himself, Hans Weber by coming in the 10th beat both Peter Fletcher and **Tom King** on the 14th, **Phillip Perrin** got a uniform on the 16th, **Tony Goldsmith** nabs the 17th, Jim Hogno shares the 18th with the late *Tom Checkley*, then there comes a trifecta on the 19th with Geoff Blackwell, Peter Gault and the late *Rodney Beasley*, **Rob Retrot** was flat-footed on the 21st, **John McGregor** and RAEME's **Michael Burgess** claim the 22nd, famed wit and raconteur Ron Evans got in on Christmas eve and **Stewart McAlpine** was the present under the tree on the 25th, **Chris Bouilly** at least let his Mum enjoy Christmas Day by arriving on Boxing Day, **Lionel Outen** and **John Martin** got the double on the 28th, and **Brian Hawkey** and **Fred Lennon** jus made it with two days to spare on the 29th.

Ed – Surely we can round up these **17 Blokes** before they all get too old to care! There's **1GGG75** of them on the list! We're going to require as many members as possible soon to support the existence of the LAA linked website

. **Lost, Found...**

. **Kevin Maker** got back to us re info on "Doc" Halliday – 'Dicko, Frank "Doc" Halliday is alive and well and living at Metford (Maitland) NSW. I am in regular contact with him.

If any one wishes to contact him then please let me know. Regards, Kevin R. Maker'

. **Keith Ayliffe** came good as usual and got us contact with Wally Franklin who responded with - 'HI PAUL, WOULD LOVE TO GO ON LIST AND RECEIVE NEWSLETTERS MY DETAILS LISTED. CHEERS WALLY FRANKLIN'

. **Vale - Frank Pepper... 20th Anniversary...**

Ian Amos recalls...Frank spent his time in SVN with B radar. He was an ARA member and only 19 in 1967. He came and went on the same flights as myself and several others (12/09/67 and 17/09/68). Frank was married at the time of his death and his widow attended the next Anzac march. I don't think he had any children. As far as I know she hasn't been seen since.

Frank did work for the Railways on Central station (where I met him once) but on second thoughts I think he left there shortly before the accident and went to Australia Post.



The Last Post
216683 Bdr Pepper, Francis
131 Divisional Locating Battery
Bravo Radar – SVN 1967-68
16.09.48 – 27.12.89
Lest We Forget



This is the 20th Anniversary of the Wentworthville rail derailment in which Frank was the only passenger killed. Wentworthville is situated around 28kms from Sydney on the Main Western line. On December 27, 1989, an eight car Emu Plains bound set became derailed just to the east of the station. Three of the eight carriages derailed, D6127 (the rear car) being destroyed by the impact with the platform. A rail that shifted as a result of nearby maintenance work is believed to have caused the derailment of the Penrith-bound Tangara express at Wentworthville on Wednesday. The train was travelling at 95km/hr was well under the normal speed limit of 115 km/h. Mr Francis Pepper, 41 years of age, of Blacktown later died of spinal injuries in Westmead Hospital.

. **Locator Profiles** – we’ve received 32 and we’ve sent out 30... **Ed** - Thanks fellas and keep ‘em coming.

Ed has no homespun philosophy this month – “Thank God for that!” I hear you say...I think it’s just time to be with family and friends and tick another 12 months off. So, I genuinely wish you all a great Festive Season and thank you for your contributions and interaction. Let’s see what 2010 brings and how we can improve things from this end.

Guys keep items and especially photos coming in – we’re desperate for PHOTOS with stories. They contributions don’t have to be historical stuff as its great just to keep in touch with what you’re up these days.

“Gunners believe the world consists of two types of people; other gunners and targets.”
- *Unknown*

. **One more of Henry’s** to finish off with...



Editor contact email: three-zero@hotmail.com **Ed** – Paul ‘Dicko’ Dickson