



173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE ASSOCIATION

CHAPTER 23

1RAR GROUP VIETNAM 1965-66

Editor: Ray Payne OAM



Volume 8 Issue 82

March - April 2015

Honour those who were only 19 with the **VETERANS REMEMBERED**

Exclusive Masterpiece Clock

Inscribed with
"We would
do anything
for a mate,
anything
except leave
him on the
battlefield"

Pvte. G. McMahon,
6th Battalion
R.A.R.



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CHAPTER ANNUAL RAFFLE:

1ST PRIZE - Helicopter Clock - Number 206 of 1962

2ND PRIZE - \$200 Coles Myer Gift Card or Fuel Card

3RD PRIZE - \$100 Coles Myer Gift Card or Fuel Card

Drawn on 11th July 2015 at our Greenbank RSL Club Meeting.

Remember, all cheques payable to: 173D Airborne Brigade Association - Chapter 23

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ray Hughes OAM

Another year has passed and although we sometimes don't like to admit that we are getting older, there is one significant event that will bring us all back to earth this year. The 50th anniversary of the deployment of the 1 RAR Group to South Vietnam under the operational control of the US 173D Airborne Brigade (Sep)



It is wonderful that we can keep up friendships that were made back then through our Chapter 23 meetings and gatherings.

Our January meeting at Coorparoo R.S.L. was a little disappointing as the venue was very crowded and the Air Conditioning was not working. After lunch not many stayed for fellowship as there was only limited seating in the bar area. A shame but something we can address next year.

February saw our away meeting at Evans Head and we had a great roll up. Lots of fun and many friends of Chapter members joined in. Evans Head is a great spot and you don't have to use your car if you don't wish to. The seas were pretty rough which meant that the boats couldn't get out but the local whiting was available fresh and at a good price. I urge you all to think about attending this away meeting next year.

Our Redcliffe raffle is still a bit of a worry but Jeff and Graham are working through things at the moment, with some ideas that Ray, Mick, Jeff and I discussed. Hopefully we can solve the manning problems as it would be a huge blow to us to lose the raffles.

Once again I hope that you are all well and look forward to seeing you at our March meeting at Sherwood R.S.L. Commencing at 10:00am. Donations for our monthly meeting raffles are always appreciated.

Kind regards, Ray

EXTRA RAFFLE TICKETS

If you can sell extra tickets to your mates at the Club or on ANZAC Day, we have extras.

If you use the front page to show what we are raffling it will help.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Ray Payne OAM

We recovered from what was a very successful reunion in Melbourne and finished our year with another terrific Christmas Party. The Tweed Heads Bowls



Club function manager told me when I booked for this year that the staff really enjoy working on our function. That was nice to hear.

We are having a great deal of difficulty staffing our Redcliffe raffle and it looks as though we will soon

lose it. That means the loss of \$5000pa and will mean that we won't be able to subsidise our functions and activities. As our membership is just about all life members we don't receive much in the way of dues. In order to continue with the newsletter and other administration costs we need good support of our annual raffle.

Speaking of the Annual Raffle you have no doubt seen the front page and the 1st Prize. We really need your support, if you can sell extra tickets to your mates at the club or on ANZAC Day we have extra books available just ask. Please ensure that all butts and funds are returned before 1st July, if you can get them back earlier that would help great to reduce the work load.

Please be sure to note that we have moved our April meeting from Nerang RSL to the Lions Supporters Club. We did so at the request of the RSL as a young bride had lost her deposit and venue when the place went broke. I was glad we could help her out.

This edition has only one page of the Quartermaster's stock it's not because he's slack, quite the contrary, he's the most motivated QM I've ever met ... no its only because I don't have the room in this edition, we need to keep it to 12 pages to keep the cost down.

This year we commemorate the 50th Anniversary of our deployment to South Vietnam ... June and September are the anniversary dates for most of us. I was hoping that the CGWP Unit Commendation would have been approved by the Minister by now, but still we patiently wait. Unfortunately that's all we can do.

See you all soon. Ray



CHAPTER CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our Christmas party was again held at the Tweed Heads Bowls Club, it would be hard to find a better venue. We were treated to a superb three course meal followed by cheese platters on each table. Members enjoyed all of this for \$30.00pp and \$1.00 drinks.

Our 'Hamper Fairies', Julie, Gail and Jan once again put together over 40 Christmas hampers that were presented as lucky door prizes. There were many happy smiling faces as the hampers were drawn.

Rainzee was once again our Santa and what a great job he does. Prior to his entry into the function room he wandered the club and kissed all the ladies ... what a hit he was. Santa gave out presents to everyone with the able help of elves, Margaret & Sandra.



As well as hampers Santa gave out gifts for everyone ... Toni & Ray Swanson receive theirs.



Dawn & Alex McKean



Helen & Gordon Nielson



Charles & Cathy Geljon



Trish & Ray Hughes OAM



Ray & Barbara Lawrence



Our fabulous Hamper Fairies -Gail & Julie.

'Blue Lanyard, Green Valley'.

The Rice Bowl Operation

Lex McAulay sales@banner-books.com.au

You might have received an e-mail from Ray Payne about a book I just finished on the operation we did in November-December 1965 in 'the Rice Bowl', which involved securing Duc Hanh and Vo Xu and finding the rice caches.

There was enough interest to go ahead and have some copies printed.

These are now available.

The book is 'Blue Lanyard, Green Valley'.

The book describes the planning and execution of Operation 'New Life 65', and the subsequent sortie into the Hat Dich area, with a look at what 1RAR did in the 55 Days from mid-November to the end of the tunnel operation in January – no other battalion in SVN did what we did in those days.

Appendices include the calendar of events, HQ locations and post-operation reports.

I was amazed to see how much artillery was fired. They must have thought the stuff was going rusty.

The price is \$55.00 which includes postage within Australia.

Some people want two copies, but the postage need not be paid for a second copy, so make the total for two \$99.00.

I'm not making money from our experiences, as printing costs and GST must be paid, Australia Post is a profitable arm of government and even registering the book for the ISBN number costs a fee, plus by law a copy must be provided at no expense to them to the National and State (of publication) libraries.

You can send a cheque to:

Banner Books,

122 Walker Street

MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650,

Or card detail by phone to 07-4123-0255

Or e-mail if you wish, sales@banner-books.com.au

Or direct deposit to:

National Australia Bank

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Account 50 703 1500

Banner Books

If you do the direct bank thing, please advise by e-mail with a postal address for delivery.

The book will arrive in the 3kg Australia Post red-white satchel, by parcel post contractor if door to door.

Hotel discounts for RSL members



In appreciation for the important role of our diggers, Accor is offering members of the Returned Servicemen's League (RSL) and their families special discounts for stays at over 150 hotels throughout April. Rates start from \$60 per room per night at selected Ibis hotels to \$80 for Mercure and Novotel, \$100 at Pullman, \$110 for selected Sofitel and \$145 for Quay West hotels. Residents with a valid RSL membership card can enjoy these discounts for stays at a range of hotels.

The RSL member offer is available for stays from **1-30 April 2015** and only for bookings made online at www.accorasiapacificpartners.com/RSLAnzac. A maximum of two rooms can be booked per booking and a valid Australian RSL membership card must be presented at check-in. Subject to availability and terms and conditions apply.

Maybe if you are planning to hit the big-smoke for ANZAC Day this deal may help ... you can only try.



CHAPTER XI AWAY MEETING LIGHTNING RIDGE

Chapter XI is holding an away meeting at Lightning Ridge over the weekend of 6th 7th 8th March 2015

The meeting will start at 11:00am on Saturday 7th this will be followed by a BBQ etc.

The Chapter invites any veterans and their partners in the area to join us for the weekend or a day.

We are staying at the Opal Caravan Park www.opalcaravanpark.com

I will be arriving Friday and leaving Monday. There is plenty to see and do in the area

When booking mention you are with Chapter X1 173rd Airborne brigade Association Group.

Neil Cromarty - Secretary - Chapter XI



EVANS HEAD GATHERING 2015

SILVER SANDS HOLIDAY PARK

6th –9th February inclusive. (4 Nights)



We started the official fun from the 6th February and continue through until we say farewell on the morning of the 10th. Many chapter members stayed from the 2nd until the 12th. We had a great crowd with 42 attending.

We planned quite a few things to entertain ourselves, we use a marque on site (No 76) as the gathering 'chat' point, if anyone was not doing anything they headed for the marque as there is always someone to chat with and enjoy tea & coffee at any time of the day.

We held the Evans Head Olympics ... everyone competed in all events with points allocated to the winners of each event. The competition was hotly contested, not to say we didn't have lots of fun and laughter, because that was certainly the case. The Olympic events were held over three days with some of the events being Bocce, modified croquet, the golf ladder, ping pong, thong toss and many others. By the third day we had a tie for Champion between Charles & Geoff, a count back could split them so they were both declared champions, given their gold medal and a bottle of wine. Sandra Hall won the ladies events.

We held a BBQ at the camp kitchen, the new kitchen has four BBQs and good facilities ... I must thank the members who cleaned up all the BBQs, great job fellas. We have most 'happy hours' at the marque, but with the Bowls Club and the RSL Club both backing up to the park we enjoyed their hospitality. Some of the ladies played bingo at the Bowls club when it was on. The bowls club has a fabulous Chinese restaurant, which most of us dined at a few times. The Chapter subsidised one of our Chinese meals. Both club held raffles and a number of our members had good wins.

Most mornings some members left for an early morning walk along the beach or around the streets checking out the homes. Coffee and the shops is always on the agenda for the ladies.

One of our novelty events that really had us rolling with laughter was our 'Mystery Box Party'. This was a simple game ... everyone had to bring a \$5.00 novelty gift in a box ... any size box. When your name is drawn you pick and open your box, if you don't want your gift you can swap it with anyone who has already opened theirs they can't refuse to swap. This is such a fun game, best I've ever played.

Another fun event we organised was truly fun but also assisted local charities. We selected a theme and then members had to spend \$10.00 in the local Op Shops and purchase an outfit to fit with the theme ... this year the theme was Royalty. Once dressed we all walked to the Bowls Club where a member of the staff was asked to nominate the best male and female. Us doing this was so well received by the club and its members, they were very taken by the fact we were game to do it, but more so that we were assisting their local charities, quite a bit of kudos for the 173d. Our winners were Jan & Doug Stapleton.

Another game we played was run by Gail & Jan it was a whole new version of 'pin the tail on the donkey'. As the ladies were blindfolded the fun started and the men laughed not realising that their turn would be next.

We have decided to do it all again next year with the majority already booked in from the 1st February until the 15th February for two weeks of fun. The official gathering will still be four days and our HQ will be Site 76. Think seriously about joining with us for what is really a most enjoyable holiday. Remember, we are not that old that fun cannot be a major part of our lives.

Gallery on next pages.



Jeff Hufer, Gordon Nielson, Ron Evans



Happy Hour is part of the deal



John Vincent, Doug Stapleton



Box Party fun



Box Party gathering ... great fun



Julie has selected her mystery box



Its nice in the shade



Dawn quite excited about her mystery gift ... she didn't keep it long!!



So did you win Dawn? Guess not!



Who called it pin the tail on the donkey?



Jeff playing ladder golf Not bad mate!



Haven't lost the touch ... but I wasn't allowed to touch



Julie said tall people had an advantage ... give her a step.



Jeff still trying



Go Sandra ... great effort



Ron needed a hand ... he stuck them on the hand!!!



BBQ before our trivia night



All the outfits bought for \$10.00



Olympic Games Champions ... Geoff & Charles



Evans Heads was once again a great event that provided members with a great deal of fun and many many laughs.

I wish to offer my thanks to two ladies, Gail & Jan, these two helped ensure that we were always entertained by their crazy antics ... thanks you ladies we all love you!

VALE

Timothy Hocart McCOMBE OAM

24/5/1945 to 31/1/2015

Tim at the time of his passing he was NSW State President of Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association NSW Branch of Australia Inc and the Federal President of the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia Inc. A member of DVA's National Advisory Committee. He was a member of the VVCS National Advisory Committee for many years.

He served with 4 RAR in Malaysia and Borneo in 1964 and in Vietnam with 2 RAR in 1967 where he was seriously wounded and lost a leg. He returned home on a Hercules transport plane and spent 12 months in Hospital followed by 18 months of rehabilitation. He joined the VVFA after hitting a low point, this slowly become a full-time commitment.

Mr Graham Edwards, former Federal MP and Vietnam Veteran said on 31/1/2015 "Tim was a champion of Vietnam Veterans and fought the issues without fear or favour and pursued successive governments on many fronts. None less than over the issue of Agent Orange.

He stands tall in the veteran community and his passing will have a profound effect on generations of veterans whose lives are improved because of his work, commitment and enduring pursuit of justice and fairness on behalf of those who served and their families."

VALE

Dennis James (Danny) HARGANS

5/5.1934 to 16/2/2015



Danny passed away in the company of his family in hospital at approximately 10:30pm on Monday (16/2), following a very long battle with cancer. Danny served with 1RAR 65-66 and was an inaugural member of Chapter 23 of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association.

Danny and his wife, Ruby, established a special fund (*Snag Fund*) which was available for Chapter members in time of need. Danny was a highly respected member of the Chapter who put up a very brave fight. His health precluded him from travelling to meetings, but was delighted when the chapter travelled to Childers his home town. Danny will most certainly be missed.

MEETING VENUES 2015

Mar 14th	Sherwood RSL Club	10:00 am Start
Apr 11th	Lions Supporters Club	VENUE CHANGED
May 9th	Bribie Island RSL Club	
June 13th	Sandgate RSL Club	
July 11th	Greenbank RSL Club	Christmas in July
Aug 8th	Redcliffe RSL	Annual Anniversary Lunch
Sept 10 th -13th	Yamba - Blue Dolphin	Away Meeting
Oct 10th	Yeronga Services Club	
Nov 14th	Lions Club	AGM & President's Lunch
Dec 12th	Tweed Heads Bowls Club	Christmas Party

MAIL ORDERS:

Contact Jeff Hufer on 07 3359 1519, or at email jeff.hufer@optusnet.com.au.
Email orders preferred. Please give return address and telephone details at the time.

Mail orders will attract a Postage & Packaging surcharge.

PLEASE!!! Don't send money with orders. I will invoice separately.

Aussie/Sth Vietnam Flag Decal.

\$4.00



Classic Winged Badge Decal.

\$3.00



173D Ass'n Badge Decal. **\$3.00**



4 Colour Ribbon on Australia Viet Vet Decal.
Small: 9.5cm x 7cm. **\$3.00**



4 Ribbon Decal.
Large: 30cm x 5.5cm. **\$5.00**
Small: 16cm x 3 cm. **\$3.00**



Army Combat Badge Decal.

\$2.00



Aussie Flag If You Don't Love It LEAVE Decal. **\$4.00**



Warning: Premises Guarded by Viet Vet Decal.
It's Big. 18.5cm x 12.5. **\$4.00**

Bumper Sticker. **\$1.00**



Proud Veteran Decal **\$4.00**



Royal Australian Regiment Decal

\$5.00



Dysfunctional Veteran
-Leave Me Alone

\$4.00



Infantry Combat Badge

ICB Decal

\$4.00



New Decal In Stock:
Army below Rising Sun Badge.



Agent Orange Health Club Decal.

\$4.00



New Decal In Stock:
Australian Flag with Australian Vietnam Veter-

The full range is always available at our Chapter meetings.

Memorial Foundation to Honor Medal of Honor Recipients

On 13 June 2015, at the 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial located on the National Infantry Museum's Walk of Honor, the 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Foundation Board of Directors will add the names of the two warriors to the Memorial's Medal of Honor granite panel. The ceremony will take place at 1000 hours.

The ceremony will honor Kyle White and Ryan Pitts, who both received the Medal of Honor in 2014 for heroic actions while serving in Company C, 2-503d Infantry in 2007-2008. White was honored for actions on 9 November 2007 and Pitts for actions on 13 July 2008. The names of these two warriors will be the 15th and 16th names on this panel and with MoH recipient Salvatore Guinta are the second and third names added for actions in the Afghanistan theater

Sky Soldiers of all generations and their families, and friends of Sky Soldiers are invited to attend the ceremony..



MoH recipient Salvatore Guinta stands at the 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Medal of Honor Panel in 2011



CHAPTER 23

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"All we do, we do for a mate who can't"

Foundation's Scholarship Program

A new webpage for our Foundation's Scholarship Program has been added to our Association's website. Please cut and paste the link into your browser:

<https://www.skysoldier.net/Scholarship-Program>

To download the 2015 Scholarship Application, Please cut and paste the link into your browser:

<https://www.skysoldier.net/Resources/Documents/The%20Herd%20Scholarship%20Application%202015.pdf>

The "Important Deadlines" are listed on page two of the application.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMITTANCE ADVICE:

Annual \$25.00 Life Membership \$200.00

Name: Membership No:

Address: State: P/C:

Please cheques/money orders payable to: Int. Society of the 173d Airborne Brigade and post to:

Ray Payne
2 Flemington St
BANORA POINT NSW 2486