



HOLDFAST

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OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE VIETNAM TUNNEL RATS ASSOCIATION INC.

At the Battle of Fire Support
Base Andersen ten Tunnel
Rats manned an overnight
listening post and only three
survived the night unhurt

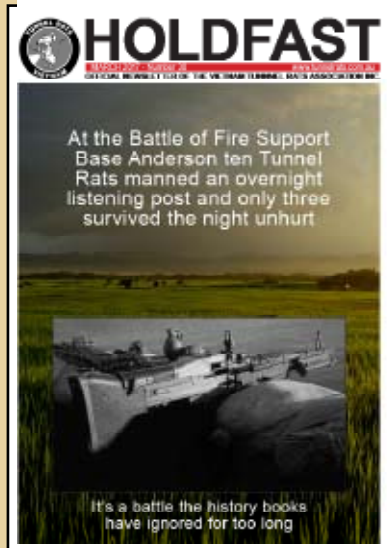


It's a battle the history books
have ignored for too long

Nostalgia Pages



Pages of great pics from the past to amaze and amuse. Photo contributions welcome. Send your favourite Vietnam pics (with descriptions, names and approx dates) to Jim Marett 43 Heyington Place Toorak Vic 3142 or by email to: tunnelrats.vietnam@gmail.com



Holdfast Magazine

Written and edited by Jim Marett and published quarterly by the Vietnam Tunnel Rats Association
43 Heyington Place
Toorak Vic 3142
Tel: 03-9824 4967
Mobile: 0403 041 962
tunnelrats.vietnam@gmail.com
www.tunnelrats.com.au

Sappers set sail on the mighty Mekong



In 1969 the two Tunnel Rats seen here at the back of the boat were attached to 5RAR as a Splinter Team, and as they were water-borne for this operation, they were also tasked with running the boat. The two Sappers are Darryl Lavis and Ted Podlich of 2 Troop 1 FD SQN. The rest of the crew are Grunts from 5RAR. Their role was to patrol river tributaries along the Mekong, and carry out nightly ambushes on river traffic suspected of ferrying weapons and military supplies. "By morning we often found ourselves stranded up in the mangroves like sitting ducks, due to the quick changing tides," recalls Darryl. "During daytime we transported the infantry patrols into the mangroves looking for possible weapons and food caches. We also searched and inspected fishing vessels," says Darryl. "If there was a lull in river traffic we tried our hand at fishing - using grenades!"

Ziggy catches some Zeeees



When you were out on patrol with the Infantry, sleep deprivation was part of the deal, so the ability to nap at any opportunity was essential to survival. Here 2 Troop Tunnel Rat, Ziggy Gniot (70/71) shows how its done, sleeping like a baby during a short break while on patrol with 7RAR.

"I'm out of here!"



Tunnel Rat John Nulty (3 Troop) was wounded in action on 19 April 1969. His wounds were serious enough to see him eventually evacuated by air back to Australia (top photo). In happier times, we see John (above) enjoying a brew while out on operations with the infantry.

That's the spirit!



Sometimes you just have to do what you have to do. In this case, for this soldier, it was important to keep the machine gun dry. A critical weapon in any enemy contact, it was always a 'tense moment' if the the M-60 stopped working. Over-heating or dirt collecting on the belt of ammunition were common causes.

"That one definately can't go!"



Tunnel Rat Kevin Connor of 2 Troop 69/70 is busy censoring his 35mm slides before sending them home. It's not just war scenes he's worried about, but also certain scenes in the bars of Vung Tau which may be misinterpreted by those at home!

This is how it starts



Troop BBQs start off civilised but end up in utter mayhem. This photo is taken so early in the piece the guys are all sober and their shirts haven't been ripped to shreds. From L to R: CAPT Jim Burrough, Sappers Gerry Wallbridge, Greg Gough, Butch Marsden and Kev Connor, all of 2 Troop 1969/70.

She's not winking at you



Vung Tau hooker, One-eyed Wai-Lin was notorious for her foul temper and her ability to rip you off in dice games and currency changing. Some guys took her on because they enjoyed a challenge, but nobody was ever able to find out how she lost her right eye. To ask was to risk life and limb.

Is this the first selfie?



By the looks of the composition of this photo, Sapper Marty McGrath may have been the first person ever to take a 'selfie'. Marty was a Tunnel Rat with 2 Troop in 69/70, and is seen here out on operations with Infantry in the swamps of the Rung Sat Secret Zone. This was an inhospitable maze of mangroves and mudflats, infested with mosquitoes. The enemy established camps in the zone, figuring the Australian troops would never venture in there. We did go in, but never with any great success.

Caribou does a little tailgating for fun



Hank Veenhuizen, a Tunnel Rat with 3TP 69/70 was flying in an RAAF Caribou from Saigon to Nui Dat after his R&R when the RAAF Caribou aircraft following them decided to see how close he could fly to them. Hank says the pilots were all smiles as they flew unbelievably close to the lowered rear ramp of the aircraft he was travelling in. To add to the drama, Hank's aircraft nearly landed with its wheels still up, dramatically pulling up at the last minute to go around again for another approach, finally landing safely. Hank says the two crews were laughing their heads off on the tarmac.

The dream pub where Diggers from across the decades gather



How good would it be - if you could walk into a pub and share a beer and a yarn with Diggers from every conflict, from the First World War to Afghanistan and Iraq today? And it would be even better of course if they were all Sappers. The bar would never close, the beer would flow endlessly, the stories would grow to (almost) beyond belief, and the comradeship would be unbreakable. Dreams are made of this. Let us know if you come across this place.

Weird stuff went on at Van Kiep



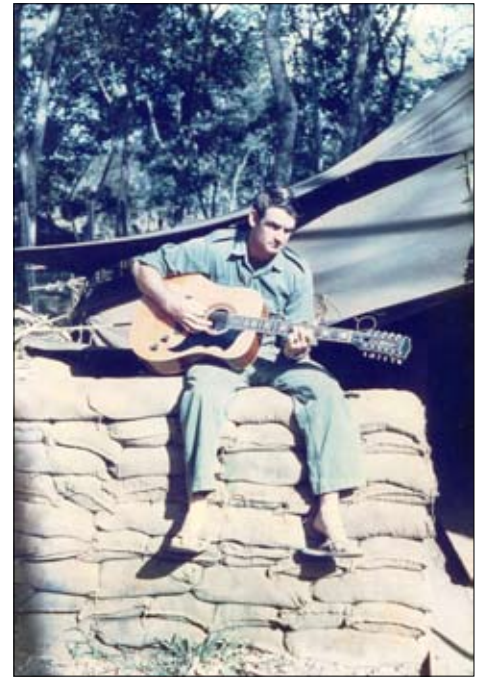
Van Kiep was a highly secure base in our area of operations, down near Long Phuoc Hai. The place was a forest of aerials and antennas, and it was always a mystery as to what went on there. This photo shows a bunker which housed a Decca Navigation system and that's the Decca team standing outside. The guy in the middle is ex-Australian Air Force, and the guy on the far right is team leader Christopher Rose, a Decca technician from the UK. Obviously they had some electronic navigation wizardry buzzing away in the bunker. Their choice of weapons is varied and they look rather posed and awkward holding them, indicating they were desk-jockeys rather than enjoying the delights of going out bush. No doubt they got to know nearby Vung Tau very well though.

The art of stretching out a Smoko



These 3 Troop 67/68 Tunnel Rats are enjoying one of the great traditions of the Australian Army, the Smoko. Senseless work around the base was always organised to keep us busy between operations out bush, but long Smoko sessions helped kill the boredom of raking leaves or painting rocks. Skilled Sappers could easily stretch a 10 minute Smoko to 30 minutes. Seen above (left to right) are: John Barker, Col Cuthbert and Gary Pohlner. Can anyone help us name the other lads?

3 Troop troubadour



Sapper Barry Gilbert of 3 Troop 67/68 strums a tune while sitting on the sandbags surrounding his tent at Nui Dat. It's a 12-string guitar so Barry must have been pretty skilled at the instrument. Wearing thongs he is probably multi-tasking, airing his feet to dry up the footrot we all suffered strolling through the bush for weeks on operations with the Infantry.

Fond memories



This bar was pretty flash in Vung Tau terms, coming complete with bar, hotel and restaurant, and there was even a rooftop bar on the top floor. It was well located too, on the corner of Tran Hung Road, right next to the iconic meeting point, The Flags. Beers were slightly more expensive here, but this was compensated for by the exceptional quality of the girls who worked the place.

"Move you swine!"



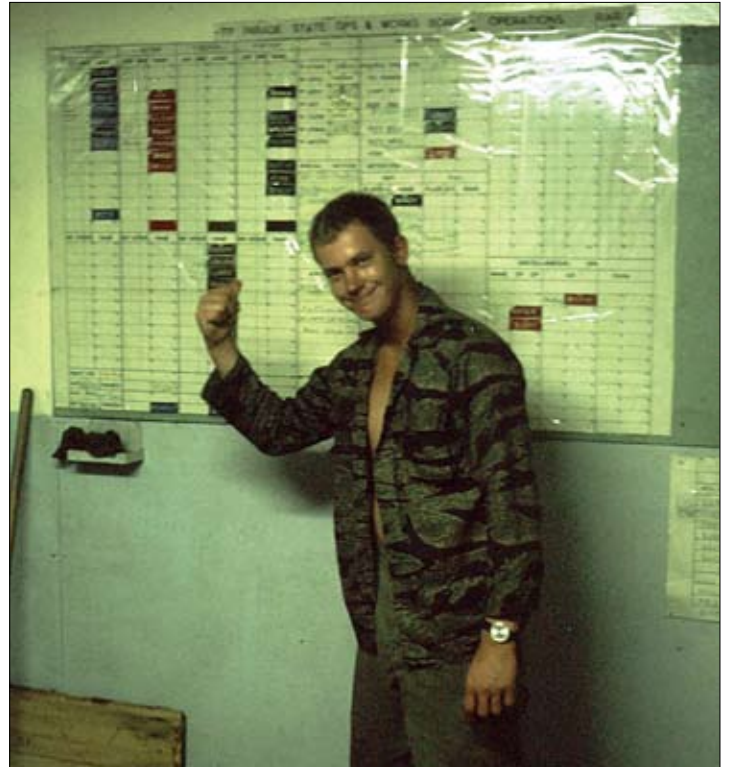
This pig was being led off to the Baria market by the young girl, but it refused to cross the newly built bridge (perhaps he was a bomb sniffing pig and had some professional concerns). These two Tunnel Rats offered their assistance but the pig reached a point where he wouldn't budge another inch. That's John Olsen of 3TP 69/70 leading the pig. Can anyone help us with the name of the brave Sapper sitting on the pig? By the way, the pig eventually made his own way across the bridge as soon as the Sappers moved away!

Maximum fire power



This was seen on the perimeter of a US Fire Support Base in Phuoc Tuy Province. It's an ingenious adaption of an aircraft mini-gun, capable of firing 6,000 rounds per minute. Any approaching VC would sure get a shock if this opened up on them. Photo: Hank Veenhuizen.

"WTF - Can you believe this!"



Bruce Bofinger, a Tunnel Rat with 2 Troop 69/70 has that look of someone who has just come in from operations, only to find he is heading out bush again, real soon! Bruce has just checked the Ops Board in the Troop office. This board displays where Troop members are allocated for each operation with the Infantry and Armoured units. The Troop staff who put the board together, literally decided your fate.

Woofers on a mission



The Tunnel Rats attached to Infantry in two-man Splinter Teams would sometimes witness the great work done by tracker dogs. They weren't trained to sniff out explosives, but they were very effective at sniffing out the enemy. They were most often used after a contact to follow the trail of escaping enemy, or when enemy bunkers were encountered, where the dogs could pick up the smell of the enemy from items left behind by the occupants.

A tribute to their troopmate

Sapper Ron Davies, a Tunnel Rat with 3 Troop 1FD SQN was killed in action on 28 May 1969 when he received fatal gunshot wounds during an ambush while on patrol with 9RAR. Ron was the team leader or 'Number One' of a two-man Splinter Team attached to the battalion. Ron had a keen interest in firearms, and during his tour had managed to 'souvenir' an enemy AK47 rifle in superb condition. Following the loss of their troopmate, members of 3 Troop had Ron's AK47 mounted onto a polished display board along with some AK47 rounds and an engraved metal plaque. The display was then hung in the Troop lines as a tribute to their lost comrade. Several of Ron's troopmates recall that Ron had premonitions he was going to be killed, and had spoken of this with them. Ron's 'Number Two' in the team, Sapper Richard Day also received gunshot wounds in the ambush, but recovered in hospital and returned to his troop. Sapper Day had only been in country for six weeks at the time of the incident.



Now, this is sexy



The designers got it right when they put this beast together. The Cobra gunship was jaw-dropping when you first saw it. And it was awe inspiring to see and hear in action. The sound of the mini-guns firing was once describes as "the devil throwing up".

Instant bridge drops out of the sky



The American land clearing team were working in the Australian area of operations, pushing down the jungle with their massive dozers to deny the enemy cover. When they came across this fast moving river and realised they had to cross it they simply called up HQ and had a bridge delivered by skycrane (see inset photo). Hank Veenhuizen witnessed the event, and says the bridge was lowered into place by the helicopter, unfolded then bolted in place and the dozers started crossing, all in under an hour!

A grim time of fallen Sappers and exceptional bravery in the little known battle of Fire Support Base Andersen

Early 1968 was a period of tragic losses for the Tunnel Rats of 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron Royal Australian Engineers. On 17 February ten of their Sappers were sent to form an overnight Listening Post 300m out from Fire Support Base Andersen. By early next morning four of these men had been killed in action and three had been wounded in action, leaving just three of the ten Sappers unhurt. To add to the tragedy, two of those unhurt would be killed in action in a mine incident just one month later. The following story is told by the Sappers who were there.



During the Tet Offensive of 1968, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army made three fierce attacks against Fire Support Base (FSB) Andersen near the village of Trang Bom on the north-eastern outskirts of Saigon. Andersen was an Australian base with additional New Zealand and American elements, and as part of Operation Coburg, the Australian Task Force (1ATF) had deliberately established the base astride predicted lines of movement for the communist forces.

Attacks on the base were expected, and the NVA and VC fulfilled those expectations, with three assaults on FSB Andersen between February 18 and 28 1968. Much has been written on the battles of Coral and Balmoral which took

place several months later, but little has been said and even less has been entered into the history books on the Battle of Fire Support Base Andersen.

For the Australian Sappers who served at FSB Andersen, this omission and the resulting lack of recognition adds unnecessary weight to the tragic losses they suffered on the first of those three assaults.

During the battle on the night of 17/18 February fierce grenade, mortar and rocket attacks were launched at Andersen by a tenacious and well trained enemy. The defending Australians, Kiwis and Americans were no less tenacious, pouring artillery, mortar, machine gun and small arms fire onto enemy mortar and rocket

ABOVE: A small time for mourning lost mates: (Left to right) Cpl Merv Dodd, Spr Chuck Bonzas, Spr John Hoskin, Spr Lyndon Stutley, Spr Barry McKay (partially hidden). Photo: Spr Peter Macdonald

launch sites, and engaging enemy soldiers as they threw themselves against the wire. The night saw seven Australian soldiers and one American killed in action, with dozens more wounded.

These casualties include those suffered by the overnight standing patrol or listening post sent 'outside the wire' of Andersen by the FSB defence command. The ten Sappers comprising that patrol were from 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron, Royal

Australian Engineers, and were performing an infantry role that night.

The knoll they were sent to was outside of the protective barbed wire defences of the base and was compromised in that it had been used previously as a listening post. The Sappers were ordered to take up a fixed position and their role was to provide an early warning listening post aimed at detecting advancing enemy forces. The terrain was rocky making it impossible to dig pits as protection from mortar, rocket or grenade attacks. Though their role was an important one for base defence, the patrol had been placed in a dangerously isolated and exposed area.

US and Australian Army Intelligence advised that elements of the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong were flowing through the area, moving to and from their targets in and around Saigon and Bien Hoa. The decision to continue the listening post patrols on the night of 17/18 February was extremely risky, and in the words of one of the survivors, Sapper Jack Lawson, they were "hung out to dry".

During the first enemy assault on FSB Andersen, shortly after midnight, in the early hours of 18 February, the listening post on the knoll received direct hits from enemy mortar and RPG (rocket propelled grenade) fire, devastating the patrol and destroying their radio.

Recently arrived in Vietnam, 3RAR was slotted into the end of Operation Coburg. The battalion had inherited FSB Andersen, with all its faults, from 1ATF who took the original decision to expand a base initially established by the Americans. This was the battalion's first major operation in-country and its first opportunity to work with the Sappers of 3 Troop.

"When 3 Troop arrived on FSB Anderson it was obvious someone had been there before us as the perimeter was fenced in barbed wire and the base was generally untidy," says Sapper Peter Macdonald. "Even at this early stage I pondered our purpose, it appeared our role on FSB Anderson was to act as infantry. We were combat engineers who work with infantry, we were not fully infantry trained."

It was around this time that the first sappers were utilized at FSB Andersen to mount the standing patrol outside of the wire, at a listening post originally established by the Americans, some 300m to the west of the base.

"Andersen was larger than a normal FSB due to the presence of the US Artillery Battery and the APCs, so it needed more protection and of course patrolling than a smaller FSB," says the former Company Commander, A Company 3RAR, now Major General (retired) Brian 'Hori' Howard. "The patrol program would have been worked out by the 3RAR Battalion HQ not 1ATF and I would have been surprised if the Engineer troop had not been included in it. After all, their stated secondary role was to operate as Infantry. However, be assured that they weren't tasked as Infantry but as well as Infantry."

MAJ Geoff Cohen, the 2 I/C of 3RAR was put in charge of the defence of FSB Andersen. He had approximately 500 troops under his command and dug in at the base. In addition to his Infantry, his force comprised a troop of APCs, two mortar tracks from A Sqn 3 Cav and the 3 Troop Engineers. The knoll situated outside the perimeter was an area of concern to Major Geoff Cohen and he insisted it would have to be covered. He reinforced the pe-

Four Tunnel Rats Killed in Action 18 February 1968



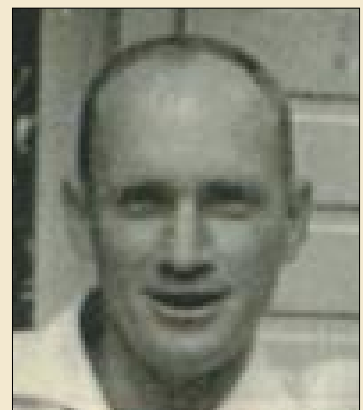
LCPL John Garrett



SPR Allan Pattison



SPR David Steen



SSGT Colin McLaughlin

rimeter facing the knoll with extra claymores. He also left instructions for a standing patrol to be positioned on the knoll to give early warning in the event of an attack.

Though there are numerous opinions, it is not clear who originally committed the Tunnel Rats of 3 Troop to this task.

"The standing patrol task was accepted by the Engineers as within their capabilities, as one of the shared responsibilities of base defence," said Lt Colonel John Kemp AM in late 2016. As Major Kemp in 1967-1968, John was the Officer Commanding 1 Field Squadron. "As it transpired, the level of combat training of whoever was on the standing patrols had nothing to do with the outcome. It all came down to fate and circumstance."

The first Section strength standing patrol provided by the 3 Troop Engineers was on the night of 16/17 February (the night prior to the attack), and after the toss of a coin, was provided by 10 Section under CPL Frank Sweeney and included (among others), Sappers Norm Cairns, Vic Underwood, Chuck Bonzas, John Hoskin and Brian Hopkins. Their night on the knoll was scary but uneventful. They returned to FSB Andersen on the morning of 17 February.

LCPL Barry Swain of the 3RAR Antitank and Tracker Platoon recalls that on that day (17 February) they were warned out by LT Colin Clarke that it was their turn to go out to the knoll. "We got ready with ammunition, rations and a radio," says Barry. "The Section commander was CPL Dan Shine, with LCPLs Hans Vanzwol and Barry Swain, and Privates Bruce Critchlow (M60) Ron Cruise, and Giuseppe Lacava. Then at about 1700h we were stood down and told that Engineers were to provide the patrol that night."



The knoll today, the site of the listening post where four Sappers lost their lives and three Sappers were wounded on 18 February 1968.

Sapper Barry Gilbert was at FSB Andersen in a Splinter Team with A Coy 3RAR, mainly conducting reconnaissance patrols. Barry had been trained as a radio operator and when he learned his Troop mates had been tasked to do standing patrols out at the listening post, he volunteered to go out with the radio. However Lance Corporal John Garrett, who was scheduled to be on the patrol that night, said that he would take the radio as Barry had already had his turn outside the wire with 3 RAR. Barry was understandably devastated when the boys were hit that night, not least at the realisation it could have been him but for the gesture by John Garrett.

So, the patrol set off be-

fore dark for the knoll, and in plain sight of the villagers of Trang Bom, not that this mattered as the enemy had known for some time where the listening post was located.

The patrol comprised ten Tunnel Rats from 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron: Staff Sergeant Colin McLaughlin age 38, the radio operator Lance Corporal John Garrett age 20, Sapper David Steen age 21, Sapper Allan Pattison age 19, Sapper Geoff Coombs age 22, Sapper Vince Tobin age 24, Sapper (later LCPL) Murray Walker age 22, Sapper Robert Creek age 22, Sapper Jack Lawson age 18 and Sapper Lyndon Stutley age 21.

"John Garrett had been instructed to radio to base any

activity that we observed or experienced, then return to base through the American sector as soon as practicable" recalls survivor Sapper Robert Creek.

"John had a signal torch, with red and green lenses to enable the Americans to identify us. We were heavily armed - my mate Jack Lawson carried the M60 machine gun, with me as his offside. I had never been so heavily laden in my life: a hand grenade in each top breast pocket, seven SLR magazines of 20 rounds each clipped to my belt, a continuous belt of machine gun rounds over my shoulder, a claymore mine complete with detonators, wire leads and hand generator, plus my rifle," said Robert.

"It was late afternoon as we walked along the dusty track and through the perimeter fence. Ahead was a long climb to an old quarry and then a banana plantation halfway up the hill. All of a sudden machine gun bullets rained in around us. We hit the deck, rolled off the track and crawled away. SSGT McLaughlin immediately radioed the base to let them know what happened. Whoever had fired on us stopped immediately and, after a short time we called out and crawled to each

other, very much aware of the possible danger. We regained the track and continued up the rise.

"At the pre-determined location among the banana trees we lay in a defensive arc, in pairs, waiting, listening in silence, very tense, with the sounds of the night surrounding us. Nine o'clock, ten o'clock, eleven o'clock. Time ticked away very slowly. We dozed on and off and, apart from the annoying buzz of mosquitoes all we heard was the occasional suppressed whisper of a mate. Still nothing happened, recalls Robert.

Back inside the base, 10 Section Sappers Norm Cairns and Vic Underwood were manning their Troop's M60 machine gun on top of their bunker on the perimeter, waiting and looking out into the dark. Troop Officer 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron LT Peter Perry was sitting on the top of his bunker with CAPT Dick Lippert, the 3RAR Doctor, again waiting and watching.

Sapper Peter MacDonald recalls how Section Corporal Merv Dodd informed the section members on his return from a briefing that two battalions of the North Vietnam Army had been detected and

The enemy were superbly trained and well equipped



The enemy moving through the area during Operation Coburg comprised thousands of main force NVA and Viet Cong troops. These included the 84A Artillery Regiment NVA equipped with 122-millimetre rocket launchers and 82-millimetre mortars, plus Viet Cong 5 Division troops including 274 and 275 infantry Regiments and a small element of the Dong Nai Regiment.

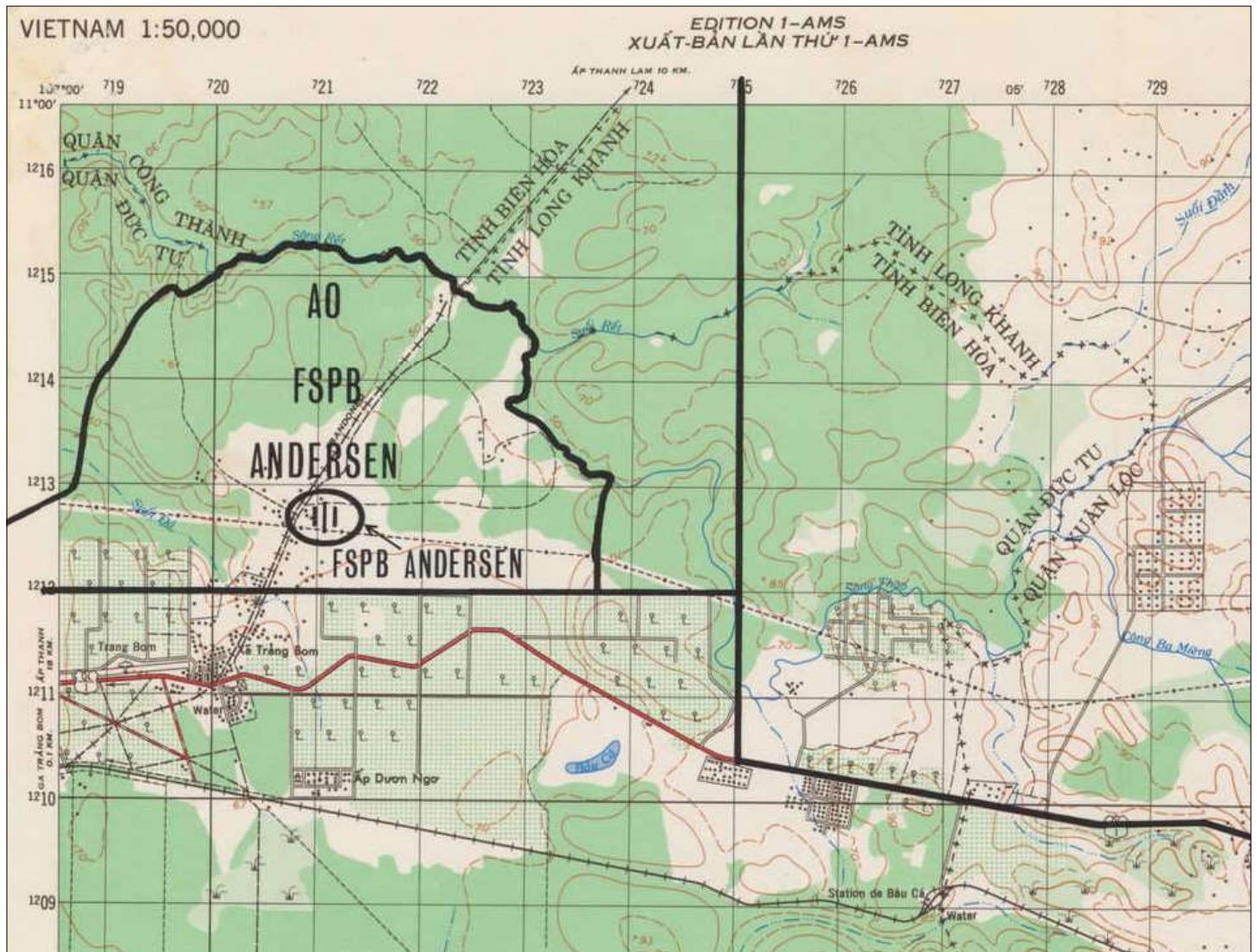
They were equipped with Chinese made AK47 assault rifles, rocket launchers plus ample supplies of ammunition, mines, grenades and explosives, and were aggressive and well trained.

Even when faced with serious losses they bounced back and, if they chose to fight, did so with tenacity and skill. They wore an assortment of uniforms from green or blue-grey to black, and, while not well fed, had caches of rice hidden locally for their use. They staged through numerous well constructed base camps with connecting communication trenches and some surgical and dressing stations.

They tended to move in small groups accompanied by local guides, often under cover of night along well planned trail systems and river crossings. The Australians used knowledge of enemy tactics to successfully set up night ambush positions.



The road leading to the listening post knoll area today.



were moving south. "He also mentioned strong VC movement had been detected in the area and we needed to be prepared," says Peter. "The thought of what could happen was disturbing."

Meanwhile, in the 3RAR Command bunker, a message was received that enemy activity could be expected in the early hours of the morning on the 18th. A coded message from Hanoi had been intercepted, ordering the communists in the south to launch an attack at 0300hr on the 18 February. Intelligence also indicated that the VC had distributed three tons of ammunition among their units and had conducted propaganda talks in the Bien Hoa area. Adding to the intrigue was the information that workers at all the Saigon shipping companies were refusing to work on

the docks on the 18th. It was suggested that this information be called to the attention of the base commander.

So, the stage was set for the first of the enemy assaults on FSB Andersen.

The first attack on the 18th was preceded by a heavy rocket and mortar barrage on the base at around 1am, followed by two waves of VC infantry, each of company size. This attack focused on the south-west perimeter manned by elements of 3RAR including their mortar platoon, plus an American artillery battery.

The perimeter wire was breached but the attack was repulsed by mortar counter-battery fire, claymore mines and heavy machine-gun fire from armoured personnel carriers and the American gunners. The communist mortar barrage

ABOVE: Military map of the area encompassing Fire Support Base Andersen and the nearby village of Trang Bom

had a devastating effect, falling among the American and New Zealand gun positions, the 3RAR area including the mortar lines, and scoring a direct hit on the Australian Engineer standing patrol out on the knoll.

"The gunners had settled down for the night," says Ian McGibbon, author of 'New Zealand's Vietnam War: A history of combat, commitment and controversy'. "About midnight Battalion Commander Jim Shelton and Battery Commander Tony Martin were sitting in the CO's tent admiring the stars and sipping coffee when a green signal flare arced

ominously across the base.

"At 1am a shower of mortars and RPGs heralded the first of two assaults on the base by a determined enemy force. Mortar bombs fell on the Australians then 'walked' across the base and onto the standing patrol, which, caught in the open, suffered serious casualties.

"Five minutes later another green flare went up, and Viet Cong waiting behind a paddy bund to the south-west surged forward against the US Battery, the mortar platoon and the unit echelon area. After hurling grenades, they penetrated the wire and managed to get into a gap between the mortars and the American battery. Although this presented some difficulties in bringing fire to bear, the attack was halted by machine gun fire.

"The second assault, both north and south-west, was halted in front of the wire. This was followed, after a brief respite, by another barrage on the American and New Zealand gun positions.

"About 150 mortar bombs landed in the firebase during the two-hour action, inflicting considerable damage on three American 155mm guns and vehicles and Australian APCs. Although none of the New Zealand gunners were injured, 3RAR was not so fortunate, losing 7 men killed and 25 wounded (these figures include the Engineer Listening Post casualties on the knoll).

"The deficiencies in the firebase defences having been starkly revealed, next day the digging was furious," recalls Ian.

Lt Peter Perry recalls that first green flare, fired at about midnight from the south west of his position. "This was in fairly close proximity to where our patrol was located," says Perry. "As nothing further eventuated within the next 40 odd minutes and after a radio

check with John (LCPL Garrett) I hit the pillow - when all of a sudden the first two enemy mortar rounds were launched. All hell broke loose. We began receiving RPGs and machine gun fire followed by two ground assaults, primarily against the US guns. The enemy mortar bombs were cleverly walked through the base from east to south west passing beyond our perimeter and through to our standing patrol position."

Sapper Norm Cairns was at FSB Andersen and recalls when the green flare went up. "We were all on tenterhooks," says Norm. "Then all of a sudden we heard the pop of the primary charges and the first enemy mortar bombs dropped into the base, well back behind us. Vic Underwood and I had climbed to the top of our bunker to see if we could locate where they were being fired



ABOVE: Photo taken at the time of 'Stand To' at Fire Support Base Anderson on the night of the first attack, 17/18 February 1968

from, when our field telephone rang. It was an officer who proceeded to tell Vic he thought we were being mortared - stating the bleeding obvious, just as one of the bombs landed virtually under our feet at the foot of our sandbag wall. We were immediately knocked back by the blast, arse over head, but luckily the sandbags took the shrapnel."

Norm and Vic were shaken up but, with ears ringing and dust and leaves swirling around them, somehow alive. "In the best ANZAC tradition Vic gets up with the telephone still in his hand," recalls Norm. "And with his dry sense of hu-

mour replies to the officer: 'You think we are being mortared Sir! Sir, I can tell you with absolute fxxxing certainty that we are being mortared!' - and we both pissed ourselves laughing, for which we were later given a dressing down."

"Our thoughts soon turned to defence and turning back any frontal attack," recalls Vic Underwood. "Norm and I got in behind the M60 and flicked off the safety catch. We picked up the source of an enemy heavy machine gun out in the night and brought our M60 fire onto it. After we had fired about one and a half belts the enemy gun fell silent."

Sapper Robert Creek recalls the start of the first attack vividly. "Around midnight came a small popping sound as the enemy set off a green flare, high in the sky, high above the Fire Support Base. It hung like a bright green lantern for what seemed a very long time, lighting up the whole base - tents, store bunkers, the artillery, helipad, sentry boxes and razor wire fencing, all against a blackened night sky.

"The enemy had set up a mortar base on the hill behind us and fired over our heads to the other side of the base. At least two perimeter sectors of the Base were under attack. The night crackled with small arms fire and the explosions of grenades. The noise was deafening like a tropical thunderstorm but the deadly lightning strikes were rifle fire and light and heavy machine gun fire. RPG and mortar shells were exploding and peppering the air with shrapnel," Says Robert.

"The sky lit up like day

as flares fired from the base burned underneath their cotton canopies and floated over the jungle before coming down to earth. The Viet Cong mortar crew lifted their sights and lobbed their projectiles with great accuracy. Their mortar explosions cut a path of destruction across the FSB, each explosion coming closer to us," recalls Robert.

"Then all of a sudden a massive explosion deafened us as shrapnel flew and intense cries of pain filled the air. Banana trees fell amongst us. The enemy mortar crew had scored a direct hit on our position and before we could recover from the shock, another round exploded behind us, smashing

and crashing more banana trees. The enemy mortar crew were still adjusting their sights and firing.

"With ears ringing and mates calling for help, we yelled back and forward to each other, recalls Robert. "Two didn't reply - Sapper Allan Pattison, a popular bloke from Kadina S.A., and Sapper David Steen from the Falklands. They were gone quickly, and we thank God for that. SSGT McLaughlin followed them some time later.

"The young Lance Corporal John Garrett called out to the Staff Sergeant but he didn't answer. John also became concerned about us, and called out to ask if we were all right. As his pain got worse he became



RIGHT: Accurate enemy mortar fire landed over 150 mortar rounds across Fire Support Base Andersen and the nearby knoll where the ten Sappers were situated

delirious and his voice weaker. He was still wearing bits of the radio that hadn't been blown away. His main concerns were for us. He was a real soldier – concerned for his mates despite his mortal wounds. We called to him, offering the only thing we could – reassuring words. We hoped that the VC couldn't hear his cries over the noise of the battle for I am sure that, if they had, we would not be here today.

"Small arms fire continued to crackle, interspersed by light and heavy machine gun fire. A helicopter gunship swept very low over us, its search beacon sweeping the jungle fringe. Bullets with tracer spat from its sides, and flames spat out of pods as underslung rockets were fired and exploded in the jungle below.

"Then came a dramatic lull, a few minutes of spasmodic firing, then silence. The battle stopped as quickly as it started. A lone bird made a mournful cry in the silence that filled the approaching humid dawn.

"Next to me, Sapper Jack Lawson called out in pain. As he tried to turn towards me, a piece of shrapnel ripped into his hip, unnoticed until then by himself as he went about his duty. I quickly went to his assistance, grabbing at the field bandage taped to the butt of my rifle, but my left arm collapsed under me. I too had been hit but didn't know it. We applied bandages to each other and reassured each other that we were OK.

"Meanwhile, Sapper Murray Walker and a mate who had not been wounded, crawled across and told us of the injuries inflicted on the others," recalls Robert. Two had worn the full force of the explosion, their organs exposed and bodies lying at acute angles, covered in blood."

At around this time, LT

Peter Perry's radio operator told him they had lost contact with the standing patrol after the mortar barrage. "I kept on trying to contact them during breaks in the fighting and whenever I could get on the command radio network," recalls Perry. "No response came."

The survivors out on the knoll quickly realised they needed to get word back to the base. "Murray and a wounded but insistent Jack set off immediately," recalls Robert Creek. "They ran from cover to cover using their instinctive bushcraft skills, equipped only with their rifles and a few magazines of ammo. They soon crawled into a clump of scrub relatively close to the wire gate they had exited fourteen hours before.

"At about the same time, Johnny Garrett, the regular soldier with the stripe, cried out for the last time and took his leave of us.

"From opposite the wire gate which he knew was booby trapped, Murray called out loudly to the Americans, identifying himself as an Australian soldier. A southern drawl was quick to respond, thinking it was a deception by the VC: 'Show yourself or we shoot' said the American, and with great anxiety the two Aussies stood up then ran at the coiled Dannel wire, clearing it with ease.

LCPL Barry Swain of 3RAR vividly remembers the two Engineers yelling out loudly after the attack. "They were screaming at the top of their voices; 'we are Aussies and we are coming in.' and they were yelling it over and over again until they were behind the wire," says Barry. "It was dark and not long before stand-to on the morning of the 18th. Dan, Hans and myself shiver to think that it could have been our group who were decimated. The memory will be with us forever."

Sapper Robert Creek re-

Spooky was called in to help fend off the attack



Former Artillery Forward Observer (FO), Colonel Mike Harvey RNZ Artillery (retired), recalls how during the night of the attack he deployed a Douglas AC47 (DC3) Spooky known as Puff the Magic Dragon: "The aircraft had three 7.62mm miniguns and flares. I would indicate the target (mortar base plates) and Spooky would engage its guns. Even with the tracers spaced apart, the fire looked like a stream of red water from a hose. The aircraft also assisted by dropping a flare which lit up the battlefield like day. Spooky would then circle the FSB, firing at the designated targets and when it reached the starting point, drop another flare."



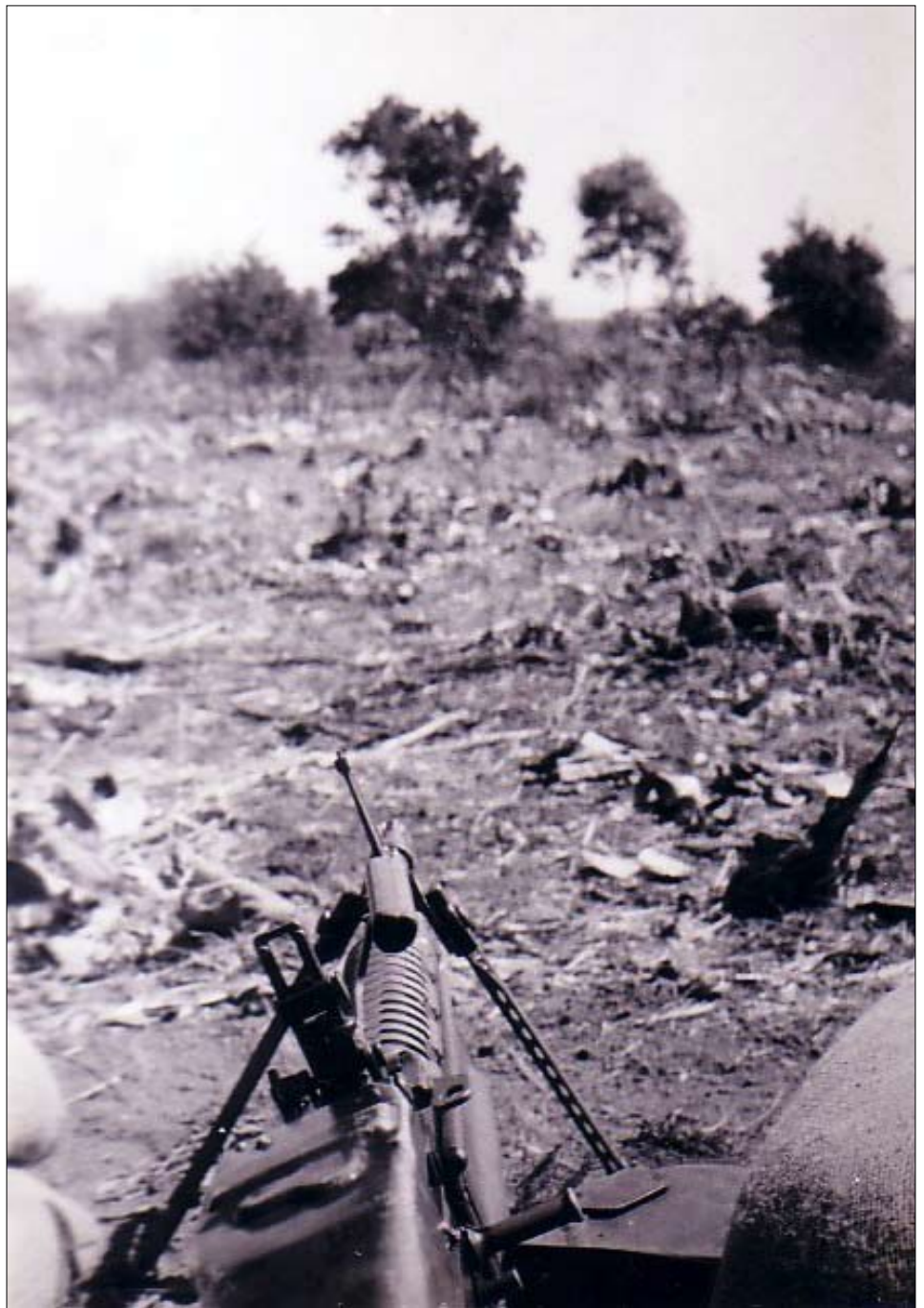
members that, once inside the base, the two Sappers were taken to the 3RAR Command Post and interviewed by MAJ Ian Hands and LT Perry. "Jack was immediately sent to the Regimental Aid Post for treatment of his wounds, while Murray Walker was asked to direct an infantry platoon back out to the knoll to recover the remainder of the Engineer section, living and dead," says Robert.

3 Platoon, A Company 3RAR led by LT Harry Clarson was tasked with going out to the knoll with Murray.

"As we went out in the night to recover the Engineer patrol my main fears were not of the enemy, but the Americans," recalls Harry. "Their idea of a clearing patrol was to brass everything up for ten minutes outside of their perimeter with all the firepower they had. Unlike us they never actually sent anyone outside to have a look to see if any enemy were about. The continuing eerie, ever changing light from the Snoopy flares, in my mind, only served to make us better targets for the Yanks.

Sapper Robert Creek remembers the moment the 3 Platoon patrol arrived at the knoll: "From our position behind a fallen banana tree, Sapper Lyndon Stutley and I could hear a strange sound, a brushing, rustling sound," says Robert. "With the machine gun cocked and our rifles at the ready, we lay tensed, our trigger fingers quivering. Then at point blank range, directly in front of us we heard a voice; 'Where are you?' It was Murray and the platoon of infantrymen come to gather us up and take us back to the base.

Corporal Jack Davies, the A Company medic, was attached to 3 Platoon and was also on the recovery patrol. "As I moved into the position I felt that I was in the killing ground of



a perfect ambush site," recalls Jack. "The patrol had received a direct mortar or RPG hit as well as possibly small arms fire. The patrol quickly formed a perimeter, located the engineer's bodies and was greeted with a scene of devastation."

"My Platoon Sergeant John Hoffman organised the recovery of the bodies of the Engineers onto the stretchers," recalls (former) LT Harry Clarson. "Meantime I was keeping a very anxious eye on the surrounding scrub for any signs of enemy presence."

"The four bodies were

ABOVE: Next morning, looking out from a machine gun position at Fire Support Base Andersen.

picked up by their clothes and carefully placed on two stretchers," recalls Robert Creek. "One body on top of the other - what else could be done? Their arms dangled lifelessly over the edges as the infantrymen took turns to carry the stretchers. The sight of those squashed bodies of our friends, who were alive just a few hours before was too much for me. I doubled over, fell to my knees

and started crying uncontrollably, letting my rifle fall to the ground. To this day that sight of my deceased friends, just lying there in a dishevelled heap is as clear as it was then and often brings tears to my eyes."

For LT Clarson the anxiety continued as they slowly moved back to the FSB perimeter with their heavy burden. "My anxiety increased as we approached the American position. Would they be so spooked as to brass us up as we came back? Fortunately not, and it was then that I really appreciated the courage of the two Sappers (Walker and Lawson) who had earlier come back in through the American perimeter to report the destruction of the standing patrol."

For his actions that night and later during Operation Pinaroo, Sapper Murray Walker was awarded a Mention in Despatches.

LT Peter Perry had no idea what time it was when he crawled from man to man among the rest of his troop to deliver the devastating news. "The dead were removed to Long Binh, where CPL Dave Cook and I flew later that day to make formal identifications. The wounded were evacuated to Vung Tau from where Robert Creek was subsequently medivac'd to Melbourne. The others returned to Nui Dat," recalls Perry.

Sapper Peter Macdonald spent the early stages of his time at Anderson working with A Coy 3RAR on standing patrols north of the FSB. "I had two shell scrapes, one with 3 Troop and the other with 3RAR," recalls Peter. "I would be informed late afternoon if I was staying with 3 Troop or heading off to A Coy. On the night of the first attack on Anderson I was out on a standing patrol with members of A Coy. It was a moon-lit night and from



ABOVE: One of the New Zealand Regiment's guns damaged in the overnight action. BELOW: Looking out over the battle scene next morning from within Fire Support Base Andersen



our position we had clear 180 degree vision.

"We had just settled down and within 10 minutes found ourselves in the centre of significant movement of VC. One group set up approximately 30 metres from our position and commenced firing mortars into the FSB. There was nothing we could do without being

heard or sighted. Radio contact was attempted in a bid to transmit the VC position, but was unsuccessful. We just had to wait it out. When the VC had moved on we packed up and headed back to the FSB. On return to my 3RAR position, the sight I was greeted with made me fully appreciate the term 'when your number is up'.

A mortar had landed alongside my shell scrape destroying it and killing an A Coy member in an adjacent bunker.

"On my return to the 3 Troop area at the FSB I was informed of the Engineer's standing patrol and the loss of our four mates," recalls Peter. "In mourning our loss we attempted to rationalize the outcome. The situation was horrific but also surreal - and an issue that has haunted all of us since. Unanswered was that the FSB Commanders were aware that VC and regular troops were in the vicinity of Anderson, yet small observation standing patrols consisting of inexperienced 3 Troop Sappers were sent out on the nights of 16/17 and 17/18 February."

Those killed in action on the knoll were Staff Sergeant CW McLaughlin, Lance Corporal JE Garrett, Sapper AG Pattison, Sapper DJ Steen. Those wounded were Sapper Murray Walker, Sapper Robert Creek and Sapper Jack Lawson. The three unhurt, but seriously traumatised members of the patrol were Sapper Lyndon Stutley, Sapper GJ Geoff Coombs and Sapper VJ Vince Tobin.

In a cruel twist of fate, two of those unhurt on the knoll, Sappers GJ Coombs and VJ Tobin were to be killed in action one month later in a mine incident in the Long Hai Mountains. Dark days indeed for the proud men of 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron RAE, who in a period of about one month, gave up so many of their men killed or wounded in support of operations conducted by 3RAR.

Sapper Norm Cairns recalls the morning after the battle well. "The Boss, Major Kemp flew out to Andersen from Nui Dat that morning to see his Sappers, and his opening words were; 'Tough night boys' - I'll never forget those words."



PHOTOS: The morning after the battle. (Top): Enemy ordnance picked up during sweeps outside the perimeter of Fire Support Base Andersen. Middle: The devastated landscape after a night of enemy and defensive fire. Bottom: The grim duty of searching enemy bodies outside the wire.

And the terrible toll on 3 Troop continued



Sapper Peter MacDonald was deployed again after Operation Coburg as a Tunnel Rat attached to 3RAR on Operation Pinaroo in the Long Hai Mountains. On 15 March 1968 Sapper MacDonald was caught in a VC ambush and suffered a severe gunshot wound to his right arm. He was kept alive in the field by the expertise of 3RAR medic, Corporal Jack Davis who coincidentally was on the patrol that recovered the devastated Sappers from the knoll outside FSB Andersen on 18 February 1968.

Peter was dusted off from the Long Hai Mountains to the Australian Hospital at Vung Tau but his wounds were so severe that he had to be medically evacuated to Australia. His situation was serious, but his thoughts were with two very close and special friends who had lost their lives: Geoff Coombs and Vince Tobin who went through the horrors of the standing patrol at Andersen, were both killed

in a mine incident on Operation Pinaroo in the Long Hai Mountains.

"I first met Geoff and Vince at the School of Military Engineering during our Corps training, and later in our three month stay in Holding Troop at SME prior to being posted to 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron in Vietnam," says Peter. "We became close friends and in Vietnam we all shared the same tent and worked together.

"After the decimation at Andersen, Geoff, Vince and I discussed the issues. Understandably they were both traumatised by the event and considered themselves lucky to be alive - but might not be so fortunate next time. After considering their families and friends back home, they approached Captain Viv Morgan seeking a transfer to the much safer 21 Engineer Support Troop, and this was granted.

"Unfortunately the transfer could not be completed until their replacements had qualified through the mines training

A poignant photo taken at a 3 Troop BBQ prior to Operation Coburg. (Left to right): Sapper Geoff Coombs, KIA 22 Mar 1968. Sapper David Steen, KIA 18 Feb 1968. Sapper Vince Tobin, KIA 22 Mar 1968, aged 24.

room at 1 Field Squadron, and in the meantime all of 3 Troop, including Geoff and Vince, were deployed again in Combat Engineer roles detecting and disarming mines and booby traps on Operation Pinaroo," recalls Peter.

"Geoff and Vince were working together when they responded to a call for help from an Infantry patrol that had walked into enemy land mines a short distance from their position. Selflessly and courageously, in their haste to respond to the calls for their assistance, they themselves came into contact with a freshly laid M16 mine on the edge of a new bomb crater, and they were killed instantly. My memory of my two great mates has been with me ever since."

The first attack inspired rapid improvements to the defence of FSB Andersen



After the first attack, an extra infantry company was brought in, the communications were improved with extra radios, additional defensive fire support was installed and civilians were prevented from approaching the base. The work stood the defenders in good stead when, three nights later, the enemy attacked again, this time without mortar support. They were halted short of the wire in a two hour fire-fight. Yet another attack was forestalled on 27 February when quick work by the mortars and artillery broke up the attacking force before it reached the base.



Aftermath of the Operation

Operation Coburg ended on 1 March 1968 with 3RAR redeploying to Nui Dat by air, while the Kiwi Artillery Gunners and the 3 Troop Sappers rode back on top of the 3 Cav Armoured Personnel Carriers.

The Operation had cost the Australians 17 killed and 61 wounded, while allied casualties included two New Zealanders and one American killed, and eight New Zealanders and six Americans wounded. Viet Cong and NVA casualties included at least 145 killed, 110 wounded and 5 captured, with many more casualties removed from the battlefield.

Large quantities of weapons and equipment were also captured by the Australians. Overall, Coburg was considered a success by both the Australian and American Commands. Although they had been inserted too late to prevent the attacks during Tet, 1ATF had disrupted enemy lines of communication, limiting their freedom of maneuver to attack the Long Binh–Bien Hoa complex, while the Australians had also successfully interdicted the Viet Cong withdrawal, causing heavy casualties.

In reality the NVA and VC forces were not finished by any means: Next up they would



Fire Support Base Andersen the morning after the battle (left to right): SPR Merv Dodd (back to the camera), SPR Murray Walker, SPR Vic Underwood, then two members of the US artillery unit at the base. In the background is one of the artillery unit's trucks which was damaged during the attack

meet the 1ATF forces again on Operation Pinaroo, then launch more FSB assaults during the battles of Coral-Balmoral 12th May – 6th June 1968.

The Battle of Fire Support Base Andersen has left a lifelong legacy for all of the Australian, New Zealand and American soldiers involved, whether Infantry, Artillery, Engineers and Armour. Those who died during the fighting lost their young lives full of promise, and left behind wives, children, girlfriends, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and friends, all of whom had to cope with the tragic loss.

For most, the effects of that loss go on to this day. It is the families of the fallen that have borne the greatest cost of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

For the comrades of those who died, the loss and the cost continues, for they still see the faces and hear the voices of their lost mates. The comradeship within the Tunnel Rats who served in Vietnam is intense and unbreakable. For the 3 Troop Sappers, the standing patrol tragedy and the attacks on Andersen added a new depth and dimension to that bond.

It is hoped that this article may in some way allow the Battle of Fire Support Base Andersen to be better known in the Australian Community and the Australian Army, and the service and sacrifice of those who fell, better recognised.

Dedication:

To all who fought and died at Fire Support Base Andersen, especially the Sappers of 3 Troop, 1 Field Squadron Royal Australian Engineers. To the Late Mrs Norma Meehan, whose treasured lost son John Garrett died a brave Australian Soldier at Andersen – may they both rest in peace.

Honour Roll

Fire Support Base Andersen, South Vietnam, 1968 - "To Honour These Men and Remember Them"

Inside the Wire:

Private TJ De Vries Van Leeuwen 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, KIA 18th February 1968.

Private JA Doherty 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, KIA 18th February 1968.

Lance Bombardier JL Menz Detachment, 131 Divisional Locating Battery, Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery KIA 18th February 1968.

Specialist 4 Orville W Heightland Jr. B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 35th Field Artillery, US Army, KIA 18th February 1968.

Outside the Wire:

The Standing Patrol, 11 Section, 3 Troop, 1 Field Squadron, Royal Australian Engineers:

Staff Sergeant CW McLaughlin, KIA 18th February 1968.

Lance Corporal JE Garrett, KIA 18th February 1968.

Sapper AG Pattison, KIA 18th February 1968.

Sapper DJ Steen KIA 18th February 1968

On Operation Pinaroo one month later:

Sapper GJ Coombs, 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron RAE, KIA 22nd March 1968.

Sapper VJ Tobin, 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron RAE, KIA 22nd March 1968.

Comments today from two former Infantry leaders



CO 3RAR, LT COL Jim Shelton (right), with General William C. Westmoreland, Commander, US Military Assistance Command (left)

"3RAR had a very high regard for the Engineer support during our tour of duty in Vietnam and in particular at Andersen and in the enemy Secret Zone in the Long Hai hills," recalls former 3RAR CO Brigadier Jim Shelton. "When I attended Viv Morgan's funeral my thoughts were about FSB Andersen," says BRIG Shelton.



MAJ GEN Hori Howard: "I have never forgotten the sad incident with the Engineer Section, but it could have been any of us - I had the privilege of working with Cpl Merv Dodds and his excellent section on several occasions during 1968, and with Capt Viv Morgan and Sgt 'Jonah' Jones of 3 Troop in the Long Hais. I have always had great respect for our Engineer comrades, no matter what role they were performing."

References:

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Witness the 3 Troop bond



There is a remarkable video on YouTube about the special bond between 3 Troop Veterans. To view the video simply go to www.youtube.com and type the following code into the search window: **v=8fx8-QiNmbA**

We visited the historic knoll located 300m from the Fire Support Base Andersen site

The Vietnam Tunnel Rats Association was able to secure approval from the Government of Vietnam for a Tunnel Rats tour group to visit Trang Bom and the knoll, the site of the standing patrol, and to conduct a memorial service there. This was carried out in November 2016 when 55 of us visited the site. We held a remembrance ceremony and, placed wreaths for each of the four Sappers killed in action there on 18 February 1968. Wreaths were also placed on behalf of the Vietnam Tunnel Rats Association, 1CER and SOER who were represented on the tour. We thank the Vietnamese people for this great privilege. We also acknowledge the brave North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong soldiers who fought at Andersen and understand that their pain at the loss of comrades is no less than ours.



ABOVE: Seen at the knoll where the Sappers were hit by enemy mortars on 18 February 1968 are five Tunnel Rats from our tour group who were at FSB Andersen on that fateful night: (left to right) Chuck Bonzas, Glenn Weise, John Hoskin, Norm Cairns, and Barry Gilbert.

Next year is the 50th anniversary year of this incident and the Tunnel Rats tour back to Vietnam in March 2018 will again visit this site and hold a remembrance ceremony there.

Conclusion - from a Sapper Perspective

For the Sappers involved, there are many unanswered questions on the Battle of Fire Support Base Andersen. The most fundamental question is to ask why this battle and its aftermath have received little or no coverage in the books and journals compiled by historians since the conflict.

For the Australian Task Force, this battle was a significant event from a military and strategic point of view. This was the very first time an Australian base in Vietnam had come under enemy ground assault.

The lack of information on the battle began early in the piece, with the 3RAR Commander's Diary giving little detail of the event unfolding throughout the night. There is even a bewildering gap in entries between 0100h when the action began and 0525h when clearing and cleaning up procedures commenced. By comparison, the 1RAR Commander's Diary for the key night of the Battle at Fire Support Base Coral several months later on 13 May 1968 has 19 highly detailed entries between 0010h when the attack started and 0630h when it subsided.

Building up to the night of the battle there was a lot of intelligence information indicating thousands of enemy would be sweeping through the area. In fact this was the very reason US Commanders had asked Australian forces to set

up a base in the path of the expected enemy movement. In view of this, questions arise on whether it was wise to set up a remote listening post manned solely by Sappers. Yes, Sappers patrolled and fought with the Infantry on a regular basis, but they didn't receive even 10 percent of the concentrated infantry tactics and contact drills essential to survival when the proverbial hits the fan. Sappers quickly learnt to follow the example of their infantry comrades, particularly when enemy contact broke out – but a team of Sappers on their own is not a well-oiled Infantry force.

Questions arise too, about the lack of response when contact was lost with the ten-man listening post. Their radio had been destroyed by the mortar barrage. We can find no mention of any consideration being given to forming a patrol to go out and see what had happened to the ten Sappers. Every Sapper who has been attached to Infantry can attest to how rigorously and rapidly an Infantry Company Commander will send help to an element of his force in trouble during an enemy contact. Yet the Sappers were just left there, to the point where two of them had to risk their lives in a desperate move back to the FSB to seek help for their wounded mates. As one of those wounded, Jack Lawson states: "We were hung out to dry!"

A special note of thanks

This article was compiled by the Vietnam Tunnel Rats Association Inc. We thank the Sappers of 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron who contributed personal accounts of the events of 17/18 February 1968. For some this was a difficult and highly emotional exercise. We acknowledge that

without their contribution this story would never have been told. We also thank Peter 'Roo Dog' Scott (2TP 69/70) for the extraordinary job he has done in researching and gathering in the information, enabling us to publish such a detailed account of the story from a Sapper perspective.

Lack of recognition for 1 Field Squadron RAE



Subsequent to Operation Coburg, the Royal Australian Regiment and the 3rd Cavalry Regiment were awarded the Battle Honour "Bien Hoa", one of only five Battle Honours presented to Australian units during the Vietnam War.

Virtually the entire 1 Field Squadron was intimately involved at all times during the whole of Operation Coburg. Sapper Splinter Teams and Mini Teams accompanied each infantry and armoured unit on the operation. Sappers were on the perimeter of FSB Andersen throughout all of the enemy assaults. The standing patrol of ten Sappers was decimated while acting as infantry at the FSB Andersen listening post, with four Sappers killed and three Sappers wounded by enemy fire. Despite this involvement, including the supreme sacrifice paid by four of our Sappers, the Battle Honour 'Bien Hoa' was not extended to 1 Field Squadron RAE.

This exclusion from due recognition of the Combat Engineer elements on Operation Coburg is a grotesque oversight. It is an insult to the skilled and dedicated Sappers who fought just as bravely and suffered the same grim consequences as their Infantry and Armoured comrades.

Our Tunnel Rats tour last November was another huge success

There were 55 on our latest tour back to Vietnam, including nine current serving Combat Engineers. Incredibly the tours just keep getting better, with this one rated the best ever. The comradeship throughout was priceless.



ABOVE: Ceremony at The Rock at 1FD SQN HQ, Nui Dat honouring our fallen mates. TOP RIGHT: 'Magic moments' at our designated boozer across the road from our hotel in Saigon, The Grand. RIGHT: 'Dutchy' (left) distracts our Piper, Ross Brewer while Norm Cairns attempts to solve the eternal mystery. BELOW: Group photo following the concert given for us by former NVA.





TOP: Dinner by the pool at the Palace Hotel Vung Tau following the concert by the former NVA. **ABOVE:** Our BBQ lunch in the rubber following the remembrance ceremony at Nui Dat. **BELOW:** Our group after the remembrance ceremony we held at the Long Tan Cross.



TOP: RSM 1CER Al Lewis and his dad, Merv Lewis help cart our rice and milk powder donation into the Baria orphanage. **MIDDLE:** Robert Engstrom honours his brother Sapper Ronald Engstrom, KIA at this location in January 1970. **ABOVE:** "Houston we have a problem" - Graeme Pengelly gets stuck for words on our visit to the Cu Chi Tunnels

Jethro gets a lift out of Mates4Mates

By Jethro Thompson

*Tunnel Rat Vietnam - 1 Troop
1 Field Squadron 1967*

A couple of years back I was rather annoyed to hear how much money the RSL was putting out to assist our post Vietnam war veterans. I can't recall the League ever buying me a beer, when I joined the RSL in 1968.

Unlike many other members of the League in Queensland, I made the effort to find out what I could about the RSL supported organization, known as Mates 4 Mates (M4M), before adding my voice to bagging it at my RSL Sub Branch meetings.

It didn't take long to realise how much work was being done to assist our younger veterans and a few Vietnam Veterans as well. The success being achieved was obvious, and I immediately recognized a role for myself. With my years of experience in welfare I knew I could help.

I signed up, went through the induction process and became an unofficial mentor to younger veterans



Since joining I have experienced the pleasure of seeing veterans slowly turning their lives around, and most importantly, my own life has improved beyond all expectation.

My physical well-being and weight loss has not only impressed friends and family but my endocrinologist and cardiologist are very impressed with the im-

provement in my health.

Twice a week you'll find me pumping iron under close qualified supervision in the gym. I'm now able to bench press 40Kg wearing my artificial arm. My routine takes about forty minutes to complete. Additionally, I attend a yoga session twice a week. My wife Perle, who is also a member, accompanies me once a week to the M4M Family Recovery Centre at Milton and derives much benefit too.

Hello sailor!

Ten days prior to Christmas I was privileged to join thirty-eight other mates and staff on the Tall Ship 'Tenacious' for three nights and four days, sailing up the east coast between Sydney Harbour and Newcastle.

Far from a luxury cruise, all hands had to work around the clock and as required. As a member of the Forward Starboard

TOP: "Hoist him to the yard-arm!" Jethro living dangerously on board Tall Ship Tenacious.

BELOW: Jethro meets Rocco and it's love at first sight.



Watch, I was not much good at hauling on the ropes as sails went up or down, however I was required to take a place at the end of the rope and try to prevent it from fouling as it gathered on the deck.

On one occasion I did something right and got a thumbs up from the captain, a lovely no nonsense English lady. When I found myself unexpectedly swinging in the rigging however, I don't think the captain was too pleased.

Accommodation was a little cramped and long showers were out of the question. In my case, showering in calm water was fine, but standing on one leg is not easy on a rocking and rolling deck.

My previous army experience was extremely helpful when tasked to polish the ship's bell. You could have shaved in front of it once the young cadet officer and I had finished, however, I'd forgotten how terrible Brasso smells.

To avoid an approaching storm we headed into Broken Bay for shelter. Relaxing in calm water we appreciated an on-deck evening dinner but, as no one in the group had adequate fishing skill or luck, fresh fish was not part of the meal.

Many on board took the opportunity to climb the rigging up to a Crows Nest and take in the views. Myself and another Mate were hoisted up in our wheelchairs, I felt like a Barnacled Buccaneer.

Three nights and four days of adventure sailing on the Tall Ship 'Tenacious' left me with a few rope burns and a nasty blister on my palm.

All have healed nicely with the aid of a little TLC from my lovely wife Perle.

Horsing around

Four delightful days in Victoria at Yarra Valley Trails accompanied by my wife Perle was the next great experience I enjoyed



courtesy of Mates4Mates. Four couples were selected to participate in the Equine Therapy course early this year. The course is designed to make you more aware of yourself, particularly in terms of behaviour, attitude and awareness of others in your life. While the course facilitators spend many hours with you during the day, it's the horse that brings out your successes and failings.

I only agreed to participate because Perle, having a strong likeness for horses expressed a desire to attend. At the first discussion group my view was that I didn't think I would get much out of the course. The facilitators said I'll be surprised, and within

TOP: Tall Ship Tenacious under full sail. ABOVE: Perle and her horse lead the team down the trail in the Yarra Valley

24 hours I knew how right they were.

Everyone involved with organizing the course, the accommodation and transport, had attended superbly to every detail, making all eight participants on the course feel welcome and as comfortable as possible.

Even the horses were prepared for my arrival. Glen, the owner of the property and the horses had hired a wheelchair the week prior to expose his horses to a wheelchair bound person.



The one horse that was identified as being a little too agitated was relocated. Glen even had a Portalo portable toilet brought in for me, making life on the farm that much easier

I have to confess that I felt extremely vulnerable entering the corral for the first time. All eight participants spread out and waited for a horse to select them to be their partner. The horses approached us cautiously, smelling us all over, and if the horse liked you he stayed with you. Thoughts of rejection were flowing through my head - it's one thing to be rejected by a 'sheila', that was par for the course, but by a horse, how would I live it down!

As I sat motionless, mainly through fear brought on by a feeling of helplessness in the event the exercise turns pear shaped, I watched four or five horse come towards me. At this point I'm thinking I'm well out of my depth, and a very large, cold beer would have been good at the time, but it's a dry course so that was out of the question.

When the biggest horse in the corral took a liking to me, he turned on the others and shunted them away. It was a moment of



satisfaction and joy as I realized I was being claimed by Rocco, the leader of the pack and obviously a great judge of character.

During the course, bonding with Rocco was a very tangible experience; I could genuinely feel an affection developing between us. Apart from Perle, none of the people present were really acquainted with me, so I only felt a little bit silly adjusting my mannerisms to have Rocco respond to my requests. Simply put, if I didn't speak in a way acceptable to Rocco, my requests were ignored.

The success of the course is such that now I don't mind shar-

TOP: The crew of Tall Ship Tenacious at the dock prior to sailing. ABOVE: Perle (centre) and her team out on the Yarra Valley trail with the horses.

ing my experience with you.

Mates 4 Mates have dipped deeply into their kitty to provide two wonderful opportunities to enrich my life and empower Perle and I to look to the future with confidence.

Should you have an opportunity to join or support the organization, I encourage you to do so. Maybe one day we'll do something totally unexpected together.

SAPPER SNIPPETS

March with us under the Tunnel Rats banner in Melbourne this ANZAC Day



Each year now for over a decade the Tunnel Rats have been marching under their own banner in Melbourne.

We get a good turn-up and after the march a bus picks us up beside the Shrine to take us to a great suburban pub close to the city where we have a few ales, tell endless war stories and some of us even last out till dinner time and beyond!

If you're a Tunnel Rat and not thrilled about the ANZAC Day march arrangements in your town or city, head to Melbourne where the welcome mat is out and waiting for you. There's no need to book, just turn up at the forming up point, meet some old mates and march with us through the streets of Melbourne and up to the iconic Shrine.

We expect the meeting up point to be in Collins Street near the corner of Swanston Street, alongside the side of the Town Hall. Usually march off is around 11am, but best to turn up around 10am.

Closer to the day, if you want to check more accurate information on the forming up point and marching off time, give Jim Marett a call on 0403 041 962. See you there!

Start saving for the next Tunnel Rats tour back to Vietnam early next year

It's on again, and as usual this tour will somehow be even better than the exceptional tours we've enjoyed in the past. Mid March 2018 is the likely timing, but full details will be in our next issue of Holdfast. It will be the 50th year since the Battle of FSB Andersen, so a ceremony at the site will be a must, as will be our pilgrimage to 'The Rock' at 1FD SQN, Nui Dat. Current serving Combat Engineers will again be invited to join us. It's time for us old Tunnel Rats to start lobbying for that leave pass.

Mark your diary for a national Tunnel Rats reunion later this year

It's time for our next grand gathering. We've had trips back to Vietnam and to various unit visits, but our last full blown national reunion was in Sydney way back in 2012. It's time to gather the clan, and let the Rats loose, this time on the delights of the Holsworthy – Liverpool area.

We believe it's important for us all to tour the new School of Military Engineering (SME), including its now world standard museum, and while we're at SME we will hold a remembrance ceremony at the Vietnam Memorial there to honour our fallen.



And conveniently nearby is the Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER). We enjoy a close and special relationship with SOER and we hope to arrange a full day visit to the unit, including some exceptional activities.

The reunion will run for four days, with welcome drinks on Day 1, the Army base visits on Days 2 and 3, then people can drift home on Day 4, with perhaps a farewell lunch that day. The plan is to stay in motels close to Holsworthy Army base, as we are hoping Army will provide transport for us each day to and from our accommodation and the bases.

Details are light on at this stage as our discussions with SME and SOER are ongoing, but full details will be in the next issue of Holdfast. We expect the event to be a blokes only affair as essentially we'll be visiting Army bases then gathering at the end of the day for a few beers and a bit of dinner. Likely timing is September this year.



Tunnel Rats List

All list enquires to Graeme Gartside (contact details below)

This is our latest list of former Tunnel Rats. If you are not on the list and wish to be, please send your details (Troop, year, phone number and address) to Graeme Gartside at email: ggart@internode.on.net or by mail to Graeme Gartside, 9 Park Street Mt Gambier SA 5290

3 Field Troop (1965-66)

Ian Biddolph 02 4472 9434
 Alan Christie 07 5494 6628
 Brian Cleary 0438239387
 Allan S Coleman 07 4687 7975
 Bill Corby 07 5502 1193
 John "Tex" Cotter 07 4723 1244
 "Meggsie" Dennis 0413 193 584
 Des Evans 07 4128 2390
 Ray Forster 07 3409 1907
 Geoff Green 03 6272 8167
 Barry Harford 08 8088 4371
 Sandy MacGregor 02 9457 7133
 Frank Mallard 0408183325
 Keith Mills 07 4770 7267
 John Opie 0427280703
 Bernie Pollard 08 9248 3178
 Bill Unmeopa 08 9300 5561
 Snow Wilson Jnr 02 6649 3998

Chief Engineer Vietnam

John Hutcheson MC 0417224850

OC 1 Field Squadron

John Kemp 02 6288 3428
 Rex Rowe 0419 251 420

1 Troop (1966-67)

Ray Burton 08 8268 4575
 Ron Carroll 0408884327
 Joe Cazez 07 3710 8102
 Allan S Coleman 07 4661 1924
 Graham Cook 02 4390 5159
 Alan Hammond 0423491091
 Cul Hart 0439536631
 Ken Jolley 02 6624 4066
 Barry Kelly 07 4661 2898
 Axel Kraft 08 9572 9597
 Peter McTiernan 02 6557 5211
 David Martin 02 6379 6097
 Gavin Menzies 02 6584 7257
 John Olsen 0414433341
 Ron Rockliffe 02 9789 4302
 Trevor Shelley 0419784954
 "Jethro" Thompson 0732168906
 Ross Tulloh 0418223345
 Graham Zalewska-Moon
 (Poland phone: 48-815177391)

1 Troop (1967-68)

Billy Adams 03 5974 2916
 Henry Baggaley 0419902268
 Reg Bament 02 6948 2524
 Bruce Bevan 0402334614
 Neville Bartels 07 4055 9871
 Col Campbell 0417658770
 Dave Campbell 07 4225 6310
 Bob Coleman 03 5332 0975
 Ross Comben 08 9535 2273
 Jack Green 07 3278 8719
 Norm Hitchcock (Canada)
 1-250-2455137
 Ray Kenny 07 3881 3648
 Peter Koch 04 3822 3100
 Brian Lewis 07 3880 0376

"Paddy" Maddigan 07 5485 1918
 Mike McCallum 02 6288 5113
 John Neal 02 9982 6694
 Barry O'Rourke 0409546717
 Clive Pearsall 03 9459 4470
 Terry Perkins 0413343168
 Alan Rantall 03 9434 2031
 Ivan Scully 03 9802 0977
 Peter Sheehan 03 9390 2834
 Carlton "CP" Smith 0448000334
 Jim Trower 0418842744

1 Troop (1968-69)

Ray Bellinger 0407952670
 Adrian Black 0417756729
 Mike Bruggemann 0409441992
 Peter Carrodus 02 9759 6383
 Albert Eyssens 03 9769 9715
 Ken Ford 0418669689
 Peter Hollis 02 6581 5401
 George Hulse 07 3399 7659
 Robert Laird 0408561748
 Brian Lamb 02 6059 6947
 Kent Luttrell 0408387641
 Kerry McCormick 03 6344 5291
 Keith Murley 0429729764
 Alan Paynter 03 5975 7130
 Richard Reilly 02 6262 7374
 Colin Spies 07 4743 4676
 Garry Von Stanke 08 8725 5648
 Cliff Truelove 02 6495 7844
 Ken Wheatley 07 4774 0045
 Bob Wooley 03 6264 1485
 David Wright 03 9435 4131

1 Troop (1969-70)

Kevin Atkinson 08 9041 1571
 Larry Batze 07 4033 2025
 Mervyn Chesson 0419806323
 Allan S Coleman 07 4687 7975
 Phil Cooper 0439 955 207
 John Felton 07 4661 8679
 Graeme Fletcher 0408822489
 Brian Forbes 0412047937
 Jon Fuller 02 4774 1674
 P. "Guts" Geisel 07 4092 1735
 Terry Gleeson 0458 232 886
 Graham Harvey 0418889739
 Trevor Kelly 08 9538 1184
 Des McKenzie 07 5448 3400
 Anthony Marriott 03 6257 0279
 Doug Myers 0421904562
 Paul Ryan 0429165974
 Les Slater 08 9361 0603
 Max Slater 0412 772 849
 Vic Smith 0432916485
 Dave Sturmer 0422664942

1 Troop (1970-71)

Mick Augustus 07 3205 7401
 Dan Brindley 02 6643 1693
 Ian Cambell 03 9870 0313
 Ray "Brute" Carroll 08 9342 3596
 Phil Duffy 0406020382

Harry Ednie 0408391371
 Robin Farrell 0409265470
 Bruce Fraser 07 5499 0508
 Garth Griffiths 0435902386
 "Paddy" Healy 02 4930 7541
 Peter Krause 02 6723 2835
 John Lewis 07 3425 1524
 R Loxton 0419944755
 Barry Meldrum 03 5427 1162
 Roger Newman 07 5450 6054
 Peter North 08 9279 5905
 Dennis Pegg 03 6224 9090
 Bob Pfeiffer 07 5464 5221
 John Pritchard 02 9837 7482
 John Severyn 0407008610
 Garry Shoemark 02 6546 6778
 Garry Sutcliffe 07 4684 3229
 Donald Stringer 07 41559 515
 Paul Taylor (NZ) (64)42990915
 Terry Ward 02 6566 6163
 Jim Weston 02 4987 7179
 John Wright 03 6398 6211

2 Troop (1966-1967)

Richard Beck 07 3208 5808
 David Buring 02 6254 6689
 Ron Cain 02 6586 1412
 Graeme Carey 02 6056 0997
 Terry Gribbin 03 9722 9717
 Alan Hammond 0423491091
 Peter Hegarty 07 4168 5644
 Graeme Leach 07 4777 8627
 Ken McCann 0409938830
 Rod McClennan 07 3267 6907
 Noel McDuffie 0427051678
 Bob McKinnon 07 3267 0310
 Peter Matthews 03 6250 3686
 Warren Morrow 0418427947
 Mick Shannon 08 8552 1746
 Bob Sweeney 08 9248 4432

2 Troop (1967-1968)

William Adams 0400405751
 M. Ballantyne 08 8298 2515
 John Beningfield 07 4778 4473
 Peter Bennett 0418915550
 Dennis Burge 08 8281 2270
 Kenneth Butler 0414897889
 Harry Cooling 07 4778 2013
 Garry Cosgrove 02 4845 5153
 Geoff Craven 03 5629 5224
 Peter Fontanini 0438 881 940
 Roland Gloss 02 6367 5324
 John Goldfinch 02 6674 0855
 Paul Grills 07 4162 5235
 John Jasinski 0435799426
 Ron Johnston 07 3351 1609
 Eddie Josephs 0417882491
 Lew Jordan 03 6397 3261
 Ray Kenny 07 3881 3648
 John Kiley 02 4228 4068
 David Kitley 02 4735 4991
 Bernard Ladyman 08 9795 7900
 Warren McBurnie 02 6687 7030
 Stephen McHenry 08 9344 6939
 Eric McKerrow (Silent number)
 Dave McNair 08 9725 2821
 Kevin Moon 0423005756
 Tony Parmenter 0417856877
 Gary Phillips 07 5474 0614
 Brian Rankin 07 4775 5095
 Hans Rehorn 03 5623 5572

Andrew Rogers 08 8087 5671
 Mick Robotham 0439144876
 Geoff Russell 02 6342 1292
 Robert Russell 03 5975 5329
 Brian Sheehan 03 9336 3137
 Carlton "CP" Smith 0448000334
 John Trambly 0428659048
 John Willis 03 9363 7878
 "Snow" Wilson 08 9752 2935

2 Troop (1968-1969)

Bob Austin 02 6644 9237
 Ross Bachmann 07 5495 1443
 Don Beale 02 6971 2424
 Richard Branch 0409496294
 Harold Bromley 03 9726 8625
 Peter Brunton 03 5156 5531
 Jim Castles 02 9639 2941
 Harry Claassen 07 3273 6701
 Peter Clayton 0418 823 266
 John Coe 07 4776 5585
 Rod Crane 08 9530 3083
 John Douglas 0433747401
 Robert Earl 02 4990 3601
 Brian Forbes 0412047937
 John Gilmore 08 9795 6847
 Stan Golubenko 03 9361 2721
 Paul Grills 07 4162 5235
 Geoff Handley 0427931791
 Ross Hansen 0409225721
 Wayne Hynson 0425720696
 Ray Jurkiewicz 07 3886 9054
 Brian Lamb 02 6059 6947
 Phil Lamb 08 8564 2001
 Wayne Lambley 07 3851 1837
 Darryl Lavis 08 8263 9548
 Peter Laws 02 4942 8131
 Bud Lewis 0400012255
 Rick Martin 02 6928 4253
 Bill Matheson 0428959044
 Bill Morris 08 9384 2686
 Don Nicholls 0407919993
 Colin Norris 02 4627 1180
 Bob O'Connor 0418742219
 Terry O'Donnell 0417371632
 Rod Palmer 0417672643
 David Pannach (Hong Kong)
 852-2892 2714
 Allan Pearson 07 3812 0943
 Gary Phillips 07-5474 0164
 Ted Podlich 07 3862 9002
 Daryl Porteous 07 4973 7663
 Mick Weston 07 5444 3307
 Ray White 03 9740 7141

2 Troop (1969-1970)

"Arab" Avotins 07 4129 8012
 Bruce Bofinger 02 4872 3175
 Frank Brady 02 6555 5200
 David Brook 03 9546 2868
 Jim Burrough 0400884633
 Ron Coman 07 3355 7279
 Kevin Connor 0408 748 172
 Garry Cosgrove 02 4845 5153
 Arthur Davies 07 3408 1556
 Grumpy Foster 07 4041 2321
 Graeme Gartside 08 8725 6900
 Doug George 0419475246
 Greg Gough 0417 911 173
 Brad Hannaford 08 8389 2217
 John Hopman 02 9398 5258
 Chris Koulouris 02 4952 6341



Remember this? - Claymore mine kit

Bill Lamb 0418 424 208
 Mick Loughlin 07 4060 3039
 Mick Lee 07 5543 5001
 Marty McGrath 02 6059 1204
 Jim Marett 03 9824 4967
 Bob Ottery 03 5199 2516
 Bevan Percival 07 5573 6925
 Pedro Piromanski 08 9306 8169
 Ian Pitt 03 5349 2018
 Jack Power 07 4955 3761
 Colin Redacliff 02 9673 0597
 Rolf Schaefer 08 8962 1391
 Brian "BC" Scott 07 3204 5691
 Peter Scott (219) 02 4341 3782
 "Roo Dog" Scott 0400799577
 Les Shelley 07 3264 4041
 Jimmy Shugg 08 9776 1471
 Bob Smith 07 5456 1194
 Mick Van Poeteren 03 9437 7386
 Gerry Wallbridge 03 9803 4223
 Dennis Wilson 08 8659 1189
 Stephen Wilson 07 5538 2179

2 Troop (1970-1971)

Bruce Arrow 02 6288 3872
 Mick Bergin 0427742175
 Graham Besford 03 9439 2661
 Mal Botfield 02 9872 2594
 John Brady 02 6888 1192
 David Briggs 08 9537 6956
 Keith Burley 07 5543 0990
 Peter Cairns 03 6267 4646
 Brian Christian 07 4778 6602
 Grahame Clark 0408533869
 Dennis Coghlan 0429938445
 "Sam" Collins 08 8262 6107
 Ron Cook 0414508686
 Jock Coultts 08 9279 1946
 Bill Craig 08 9530 1008
 Denis Crawford 03 9497 3256
 John Cross 02 4757 2273
 Robin Date 03 9783 3202
 Gino De Bari 08 9437 5641
 Tom Dodds 040672260
 Des Evans 07 4128 2390
 Bruce Fenwick 02 4977 2917
 Ray Fulton 03 6288 1176

Ziggy Gniot 0418 885 830
 Bob Hamblyn 08 8672 3930
 Cec Harris 02 6629 3373
 Paddy Healy 02 4930 7541
 Kevin Hodge 08 8322 2619
 Paul Jones 02 6231 5963
 Jim Kelton 0488972139
 Kevin Lappin 07 3273 8614
 Gary McClintock 07 4788 0123
 Peter McCole 03 5155 9368
 Bob McGlinn 07 5426 1597
 Ian McLean 02 6286 3928
 Jeff Maddock 03 5987 3850
 Leon Madeley 07 5497 1038
 Bill Marshall 07 5545 0389
 Rod O'Regan 0419431779
 Graeme Pengelly 0407 138 124
 Des Polden 03 6223 3830
 Keith Ramsay 0439856933
 Mick Rasmussen 0428 790 645
 Ron Reid 0427 461 297
 Gary Sangster 0427224099
 John Scanlan 0488 132 903
 Peter Schreiber 02 6569 3390
 Garry Shoemark 02 6546 6778
 Alex Skowronski 0407954570
 John Smith 0400032502
 Roy Sojan 08 9926 1235
 John Stonehouse 08 9653 1895
 Peter Swanson 0401392617
 John Tick 04 3898 7262
 Harry Eustace 0408515270
 Steve Walton 07 3205 9494
 Terry Wake 07 4786 2625
 Dave Young 0418425429

2 Troop (1971-72)

Warren Pantall 0417 096 802
3 Troop (1967-68)
 Ken Arnold 02 6974 1181
 Dennis Baker 08 89527281
 Chuck Bonzas 0407866487
 Bruce Breddin 0418766759
 Norm Cairns 03 6267 4629
 Kerry Caughey 03 5971 4188
 David Clark 08 8388 7728
 Bob Coleman 03 5332 0975

Jim Dowson 03 5662 3291
 Bob Embrey 07 3351 1222
 Peter Fontanini 0438881940
 Barry Gilbert 03 5023 6657
 Brian Hopkins 08 9751 4946
 John Hoskin 0417886100
 Jack Lawson 0429 798 673
 Peter MacDonald 08 9448 5418
 Barrie Morgan 0437861945
 Michael O'Hearn 0429327509
 Gary Pohlner 0427172900
 Peter Pont 07 4095 0150
 Tom Simons 03 6344 6058
 Kevin Shugg 0411144500
 Mervyn Spear 0431212960
 Frank Sweeney 07 3882 6025
 Brian Thomson 0428551368
 Vic Underwood 0429 907 989
 Murray Walker 08 9332 6410
 Glenn Weise 0488741174
 Mick Woodhams 08 9459 0130
 Bob Yewen 07 5532 4560
 Ken Young 0409124096

3 Troop (1968-69)

Geoff Box 08 9731 2757
 Col Campbell 0417658770
 Barry Chambers 0401119999
 Neil Garrett 03 5798 1522
 Brian Glyde 02 4455 7404
 Peter Graham 0428325182
 Peter Gray 02 4285 8877
 Derwyn Hage 0408802038
 John Hollis 02 6662 6660
 "Sam" Houston 07 5495 5480
 Phil Lamb 08 8564 2001
 Ian Lauder 08 9419 5375
 Kent Luttrell 0408387641
 John Murphy 08 9493 3771
 John Nulty 02 6927 3535
 Ted O'Malley 0428243351
 Barry Parnell 07 4947 1976
 Bob Pritchard 07 4779 0608
 Art Richardson 03 9314 8216
 Greg Roberts 03 5941 2269
 Walter Schwartz 0439512322
 Don Shields 08 8297 8619
 Tony Toussaint 0417249235
 Ray Vanderheiden 02 4776 1373
 Wal Warby 0418240394
 Ray White 03 9740 7141

Three Troop (1969-70)

Chris Brooks 0407186207
 Jim Burrough 0400884633
 Terry Cartlidge 0411252859
 Bruce Crawford 02 6628 0846
 Richard Day 08 8088 4129
 Phil Devine 0439066012
 Bob Done 0407485888
 Ray Fulton 03 6288 1176
 Graham Fromm 08 8532 2561
 Doug George 0419475246
 Graham Harvey 07 5445 2636
 Trevor Hughes 0419883281
 Darrel Jensen 0428387203
 Rod Kirby 07 4973 7726
 Peter Knight 02 6247 6272
 Gerry Lyall 07 3343 4725
 Phil McCann 0417423450
 Chris MacGregor 02 4472 3250
 Norm Martin 02 4953 1331

Jock Meldrum MID 0424924909
 Roelof Methorst 0416834846
 Gary Miller MM 0407586241
 "Jacko" Miller 03 6267 4411
 Chris Muller 0458650113
 Danny Mulvany 08 9356 6890
 Vin Neale 03 9786 1549
 Peter Phillips 0429362935
 G. Rentmeester 03 9735 5236
 Brian "BC" Scott 07 3204 5691
 Paul Scott 02 6656 0730
 Gordon Temby 0419954658
 Peter Thorp MID 02 6288 0008
 "Curly" Tuttleby 08 8953 2335
 Hank Veenhuizen 0407 487 167
 "Wonzer" White 02 9833 0580

Three Troop (1970-71)

Robert Allardice 0439076891
 Steve Armbrust 0407695247
 Errol Armitage 07 5598 8018
 Geoff Ansell 0448013712
 Bob Bament 02 6071 3527
 Mike Barnett 02 9869 7132
 John Beningfield 07 4778 4473
 Darryel Binns 0417170171
 Trevor Boaden 0448160944
 Mal Botfield 02 9872 2594
 Ian Campbell 03 9870 0313
 Brian Christian 07 4778 6602
 Bob Clare 03 5439 5532
 Graeme Clarke 07 4128 4660
 Ted Clarke 0438225844
 Allan J Coleman 02 9838 4848
 Steve Collett 08 9371 0075
 John Davey 07 3378 4316
 Chris Ellis 08 9398 1718
 Kevin Hodge 08 8322 2619
 John Jones 08 8357 5226
 Kenny Laughton 08 8297 4010
 Garry Lourigan 02 4844 5545
 R. McKenzie-Clark 08 9729 1162
 Robert McLeay 0429861122
 "Jock" Meldrum 0424924909
 Roelof Methorst 0416834846
 Carlo Mikkelsen

(New Zealand) 0064 9 3776322
 Ben Passarelli 0411340236
 Robert Reed 07 3351 4440
 Paul Scott 02 6656 0730
 Les Shelley 07 3264 4041
 John Steen 0419772375
 John Tatler 0405188717
 Gordon Temby 08 9757 2016
 Peter Vandenberg 03 9798 3947
 Brian Wakefield 08 8537 0293
 Peter Weingott 07 3378 2770
 David Wilson 0401726090

Three Troop (1971-72)

Bradley Bauer 0749281152
 Trevor "Zip" Button 0434332789
 Ron Byron 0439910568
 Mike Dutton 0438627140
 Brenton J Smith 0408806685

US Tunnel Rats

Stephen "Shorty" Menendez
 menendez@toast.net

John Thiel
 drjthiel@gmail.com

Mark Morrison
 lmorrison18@cox.net

3 TROOP 1FD SQN REUNION 2018 - BUNBURY WA



The next 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron reunion is to be held in Bunbury, West Australia in April 2018. Mark it on your calendar now and plan ahead to be there. If you would like to come along or need further information, contact the organisers by email, post or phone:

Email:

threetrp1fld@outlook.com

Post:

Julie & Geoff BOX, PO Box 488 Donnybrook WA 6239

Phone:

Geoff & Julie (08) 9731 2757

Danny & Glenys Mulvany (08) 9356 6890



HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL THERE