



# HOLDFAST

MAY 2014 - Number 24

[www.tunnelrats.com.au](http://www.tunnelrats.com.au)

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE VIETNAM TUNNEL RATS ASSOCIATION INC



## MINE INCIDENT ON OPERATION MASSEY HARRIS 29 AUGUST 1970

As casualties are carried to the Dustoff choppers, Tunnel Rats from 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron take a well earned break. They'd just finished the arduous tasks of searching for any further mines and clearing safe lanes to the 14 casualties. In the foreground are (from left to right): SPR Brian Wakefield, SPR Darryel Binns (with hat), SPR Jock Quinn (in front with shirt open), and CPL "Ben" Beningfield (with mine detector). Full story inside.

# 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: [tunnelrat@optusnet.com.au](mailto:tunnelrat@optusnet.com.au)



## Holdfast Magazine

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## Why is this woman so happy?

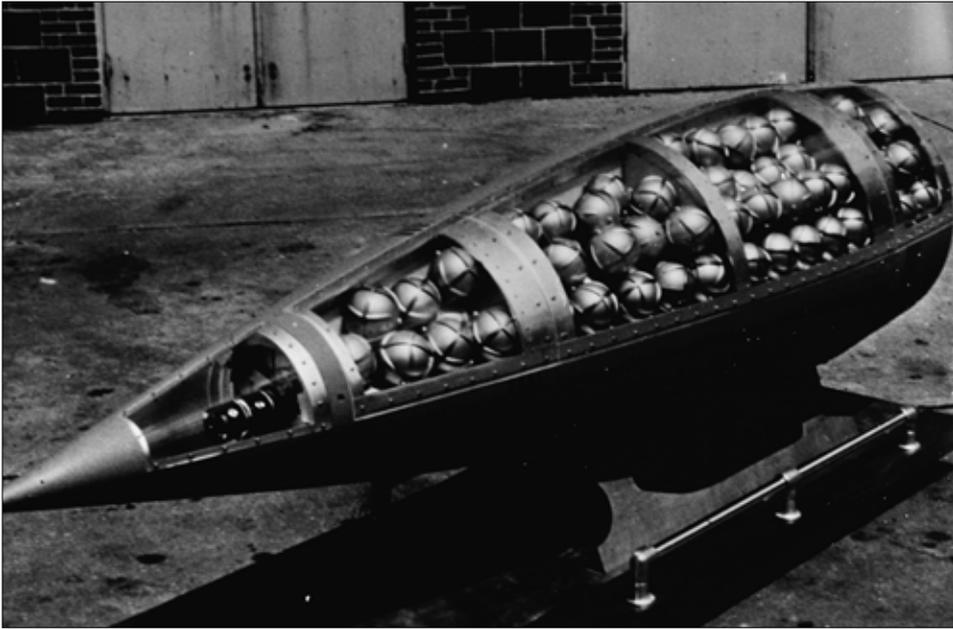
She's high as a kite, that's why. During the war era, many Vietnamese, mostly women, were hooked on Betel Nut. It was chewed, together with slaked lime powder, creating a leaf package known as a betel quid, which could also contain tobacco, cloves or nutmeg. The effect is a mild but pleasant high. The side effect is that it instantly turns your teeth red, and eventually turns them black. Sweet.



## "Bye Mum"

Heading off to Vietnam on a Qantas charter flight out of Sydney airport. They were night flights, but contrary to myth, this was not to sneak us out under darkness. We needed to leave at that time in order to arrive in Saigon (via Singapore) next day with enough time to catch a flight to Nui Dat base camp and be in-processed there in daylight hours.

## A cluster waiting to happen



Used for demonstration purposes, this cutaway view of a cluster bomb shows the nasty bomblets in place within the 'mother bomb'. The bomblets would be released mid-air, and as they fell a propellor fin would pop out, slowing the descent and arming the individual bomblet at the same time. We often found dozens of these strewn about the ground, unexploded. They were very dangerous to deal with as a further turn of the fin could complete the arming process, making the device live and very unpredictable. Best solution was to blow them up with C4 or just leave them alone if this was not tactically possible. Not knowing the danger, some brave souls brought them back to base for analysis!

## Artillery support



### No ducking this one

These 2.5 inch long darts come from splintex shells, fired by tanks and artillery. The shell consisted of approximately 8,000 flechettes arranged in five tiers, a time fuse, body shearing detonators, a central flash tube, a smokeless propellant charge with a dye marker contained in the base and a tracer element. The rounds were very effective in defending a base camp against massed attacking troops. They were also used successfully in attacks on enemy bunker systems. The rounds were given the name 'Beehive' because the noise of the flechettes moving through the air resembled that of a swarm of angry bees.



One of the Tunnel Rats on our tour back to Vietnam last November sent us this amazing photo of how an enterprising villager is using old bomb casings and aircraft fuel pods to support his hut. After the Tunnel Rats tour this adventurous Tunnel Rat had headed north to spend a week exploring Vietnam. He ended up spending a month travelling around, often staying in small villages with little more than a general store and a very basic restaurant. He was paying as little as US\$3 per night for a bed space in a village house. Breakfast in the restaurant cost even less. No credit cards accepted.



## “Incoming!”

A crew member from this United States Armoured Personnel Carrier took a photo just at the right time, as an incoming mortar round landed beside their APC. The soft earth took most of the blast, and miraculously nobody was even injured. Several men inside were hard of hearing for a few days - and perhaps later in life too. The photographer didn't know how good the photo was until weeks later when he eventually got the 35mm slides back from processing in the US. Three further mortar rounds were fired by the enemy, but fortunately they landed well away from the APCs. The enemy's mortars were relatively inaccurate, particularly in the wet season. They were always firing from unprepared positions and the baseplate would sink after the first round was fired.

## “It's crystal clear mate”



The light coloured bags on the left of this photo look like bags of CS crystals (tear gas crystals), so these two Tunnel Rats must be preparing to seed the enemy bunkers with the crystals to deny them access. This was done when it was not possible to blow up the bunkers at the time. This was in December 1969, can anyone help with the names of the two Sappers?

## “Is there anyone in there?”



While a Tunnel Rat enters an enemy bunker, an Infantryman 'has his back'. Searching enemy bunkers before setting them up for demolition was a regular task for Tunnel Rats. The Infantry welcomed the interlude, as it enabled them to sit back, make a brew and relax while the Sappers worked their butts off. We believe this photo is from July 1967.

## No more rice dumplings for Charlie

Rice Flambe: In a food denial operation in September 1970, Tunnel Rats place drums of fuel throughout an enemy rice paddi before setting them all off to destroy the rice.

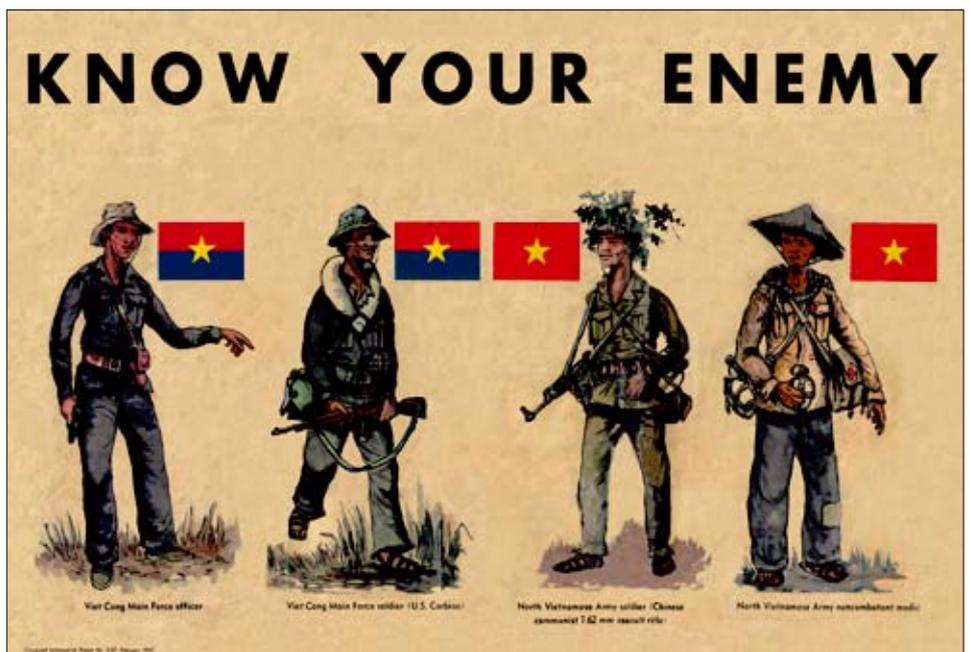


### MP's mongrel act

Military policeman checks the leave passes of Aussies heading into Vung Tau for a little fun and fivolyty.

## Missing poster found

RIGHT: This poster was pinned to the wall in the troop office of 2 TP 1FD SQN until the morning of 11 June 1970 - coincidentally the very morning Sapper Jim Marett was heading home at the end of his Vietnam tour. "I was up bright and early to make sure I didn't miss that Caribou flight out of Nui Dat on the first leg of the journey home," says Jim. "The poster caught my eye as an ideal souvenir, but I must apologise to the lads who thenceforth couldn't identify the enemy!" As small pay-back, a full size print, scanned and reprinted from the original poster is included with this issue of Holdfast.



## Emerging Rat

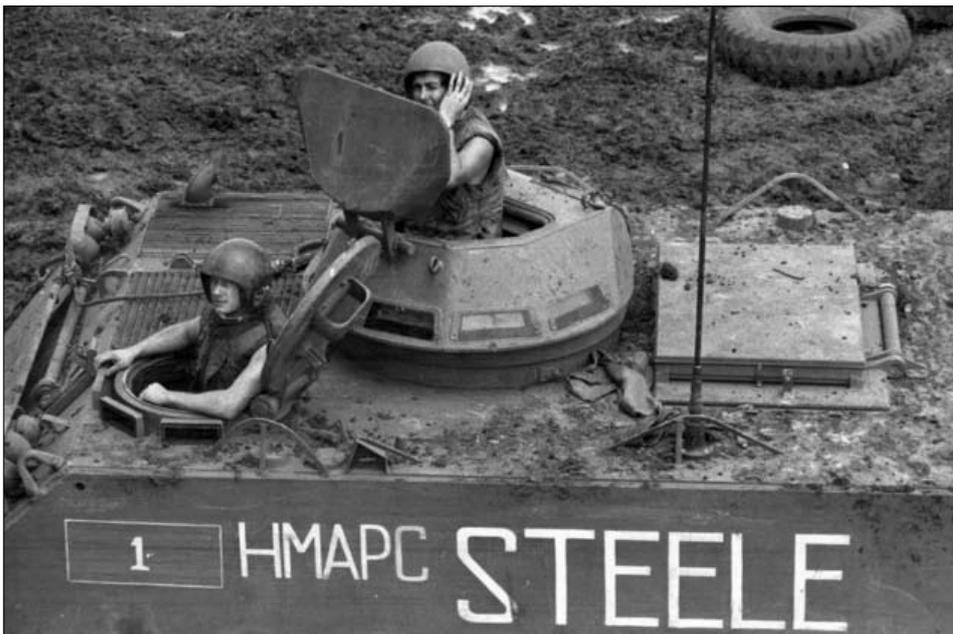
LEFT: A Tunnel Rat working with 8RAR exits from an enemy bunker after setting it up for demolition with C-4 plastic explosives. To create one single explosion, each bunker in the complex is linked with a ring-main of Detcord (the white cord seen to the left of the Sapper). This was in December 1969. Can anyone recognise the Sapper for us? He's most likely from 3 Troop as they worked with 8RAR at that time.

## VC Rice Cache

The basic diet for our Viet Cong and NVA enemy was rice, to which they would add a small amount of meat or vegetables. This meant they needed a lot of rice, and if a main force NVA unit of 500 men was moving around the area, this meant they needed a massive amount of rice. Naturally they had to hide this rice in caches dotted around the jungle. When Australian troops found these rice caches, we'd either destroy them or have the rice carted to villages for distribution. This latter solution could cause problems for the villagers though, when the VC found out they were eating their rice. The bottom photo shows the rice covered in waterproof plastic, which had also been covered in branches and leaves as camouflage. The top photo shows Tunnel Rats resting after searching the cache. The photos are from Allan Reid's collection (3FD TP 65-66). Can anyone identify any of the three lads in the photo? Allan's tour was from September 1965 till September 1966, so the photos would have been taken sometime during this period.



“I say again, send two sets of earplugs”



It was noisy work clearing the mines from the Barrier minefield. HMAPC Steele was an APC which had a long axle slung off the side, filled with old rubber tyres. The APC was driven on a set pattern through the minefield and the bouncing tyres set off the mines. Somebody had to crew this damn thing, and they naturally turned to Sappers for the job. This crew consists of two Tunnel Rats from 68/69, Noddy Norris, left and Jim Castles.

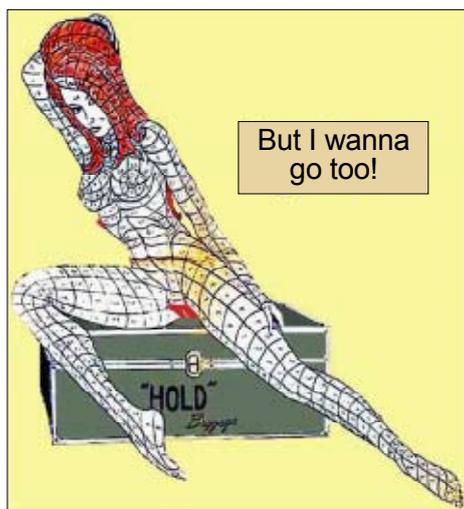


## Chopper down!

Tunnel Rats from 2TP search the wreckage of a “Huey” chopper of 9 Squadron RAAF. It crashed on 7 June 1971 after being hit by ground-fire during Operation Overlord. The captain, FLT LT Everitt Lance, and the gunner, CPL David Dubber were killed in the crash, and two other crewmen were injured. The sappers later used C4 explosives to destroy the wreckage to prevent any part of it from falling into enemy hands. Photo is from John Tick, who was Troop Officer of 2TP at the time.

# Counting the days

We all had a "Short Timer's Cal-ender" in our tent back at base camp. It was used to count down the days till you went home. It gave you a target to aim for, usually expressed as an erotic delight on the day of your arrival home (these were simple times!). The term "short" meant you didn't have many days left. There was an unwritten rule that you never started boasting how "short" you were until you were under 100 days. Once you were "short" you could rib other guys about how long their tour had to go; "Nobody's got 280 days and a wakie to go." The "wakie" referred to the morning you woke up to get on the plane back home - the silver bird of freedom (not Army green).



## SHORT-TIMER

79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97
78	125	124	123	122	121	120	119	118	117	116	115	114	113	112	111	110	109	98
77	126	211	210	209	208	207	206	205	204	203	202	201	200	199	198	197	108	99
76	127	212	211	210	209	208	207	206	205	204	203	202	201	200	199	198	107	100
75	128	213	212	211	210	209	208	207	206	205	204	203	202	201	200	199	106	101
74	129	214	213	212	211	210	209	208	207	206	205	204	203	202	201	200	105	102
73	130	215	214	213	212	211	210	209	208	207	206	205	204	203	202	201	104	103
72	131	216	215	214	213	212	211	210	209	208	207	206	205	204	203	202	103	104
71	132	217	216	215	214	213	212	211	210	209	208	207	206	205	204	203	102	105
70	133	218	217	216	215	214	213	212	211	210	209	208	207	206	205	204	101	106
69	134	219	218	217	216	215	214	213	212	211	210	209	208	207	206	205	100	107
68	135	220	219	218	217	216	215	214	213	212	211	210	209	208	207	206	99	108
67	136	221	220	219	218	217	216	215	214	213	212	211	210	209	208	207	98	109
66	137	222	221	220	219	218	217	216	215	214	213	212	211	210	209	208	97	110
65	138	223	222	221	220	219	218	217	216	215	214	213	212	211	210	209	96	111
64	139	224	223	222	221	220	219	218	217	216	215	214	213	212	211	210	95	112
63	140	225	224	223	222	221	220	219	218	217	216	215	214	213	212	211	94	113
62	141	226	225	224	223	222	221	220	219	218	217	216	215	214	213	212	93	114
61	142	227	226	225	224	223	222	221	220	219	218	217	216	215	214	213	92	115
60	143	228	227	226	225	224	223	222	221	220	219	218	217	216	215	214	91	116
59	144	229	228	227	226	225	224	223	222	221	220	219	218	217	216	215	90	117
58	145	230	229	228	227	226	225	224	223	222	221	220	219	218	217	216	89	118
57	146	231	230	229	228	227	226	225	224	223	222	221	220	219	218	217	88	119
56	147	232	231	230	229	228	227	226	225	224	223	222	221	220	219	218	87	120
55	148	233	232	231	230	229	228	227	226	225	224	223	222	221	220	219	86	121
54	149	234	233	232	231	230	229	228	227	226	225	224	223	222	221	220	85	122
53	150	235	234	233	232	231	230	229	228	227	226	225	224	223	222	221	84	123
52	151	236	235	234	233	232	231	230	229	228	227	226	225	224	223	222	83	124
51	152	237	236	235	234	233	232	231	230	229	228	227	226	225	224	223	82	125
50	153	238	237	236	235	234	233	232	231	230	229	228	227	226	225	224	81	126
49	154	239	238	237	236	235	234	233	232	231	230	229	228	227	226	225	80	127
48	155	240	239	238	237	236	235	234	233	232	231	230	229	228	227	226	79	128
47	156	241	240	239	238	237	236	235	234	233	232	231	230	229	228	227	78	129
46	157	242	241	240	239	238	237	236	235	234	233	232	231	230	229	228	77	130
45	158	243	242	241	240	239	238	237	236	235	234	233	232	231	230	229	76	131
44	159	244	243	242	241	240	239	238	237	236	235	234	233	232	231	230	75	132
43	160	245	244	243	242	241	240	239	238	237	236	235	234	233	232	231	74	133
42	161	246	245	244	243	242	241	240	239	238	237	236	235	234	233	232	73	134
41	162	247	246	245	244	243	242	241	240	239	238	237	236	235	234	233	72	135
40	163	248	247	246	245	244	243	242	241	240	239	238	237	236	235	234	71	136
39	164	249	248	247	246	245	244	243	242	241	240	239	238	237	236	235	70	137
38	165	250	249	248	247	246	245	244	243	242	241	240	239	238	237	236	69	138
37	166	251	250	249	248	247	246	245	244	243	242	241	240	239	238	237	68	139
36	167	252	251	250	249	248	247	246	245	244	243	242	241	240	239	238	67	140
35	168	253	252	251	250	249	248	247	246	245	244	243	242	241	240	239	66	141
34	169	254	253	252	251	250	249	248	247	246	245	244	243	242	241	240	65	142
33	170	255	254	253	252	251	250	249	248	247	246	245	244	243	242	241	64	143
32	171	256	255	254	253	252	251	250	249	248	247	246	245	244	243	242	63	144
31	172	257	256	255	254	253	252	251	250	249	248	247	246	245	244	243	62	145
30	173	258	257	256	255	254	253	252	251	250	249	248	247	246	245	244	61	146
29	174	259	258	257	256	255	254	253	252	251	250	249	248	247	246	245	60	147
28	175	260	259	258	257	256	255	254	253	252	251	250	249	248	247	246	59	148
27	176	261	260	259	258	257	256	255	254	253	252	251	250	249	248	247	58	149
26	177	262	261	260	259	258	257	256	255	254	253	252	251	250	249	248	57	150
25	178	263	262	261	260	259	258	257	256	255	254	253	252	251	250	249	56	151
24	179	264	263	262	261	260	259	258	257	256	255	254	253	252	251	250	55	152
23	180	265	264	263	262	261	260	259	258	257	256	255	254	253	252	251	54	153
22	181	266	265	264	263	262	261	260	259	258	257	256	255	254	253	252	53	154
21	182	267	266	265	264	263	262	261	260	259	258	257	256	255	254	253	52	155
20	183	268	267	266	265	264	263	262	261	260	259	258	257	256	255	254	51	156
19	184	269	268	267	266	265	264	263	262	261	260	259	258	257	256	255	50	157
18	185	270	269	268	267	266	265	264	263	262	261	260	259	258	257	256	49	158
17	186	271	270	269	268	267	266	265	264	263	262	261	260	259	258	257	48	159
16	187	272	271	270	269	268	267	266	265	264	263	262	261	260	259	258	47	160
15	188	273	272	271	270	269	268	267	266	265	264	263	262	261	260	259	46	161
14	189	274	273	272	271	270	269	268	267	266	265	264	263	262	261	260	45	162
13	190	275	274	273	272	271	270	269	268	267	266	265	264	263	262	261	44	163
12	191	276	275	274	273	272	271	270	269	268	267	266	265	264	263	262	43	164
11	192	277	276	275	274	273	272	271	270	269	268	267	266	265	264	263	42	165
10	193	278	277	276	275	274	273	272	271	270	269	268	267	266	265	264	41	166
9	194	279	278	277	276	275	274	273	272	271	270	269	268	267	266	265	40	167
8	195	280	279	278	277	276	275	274	273	272	271	270	269	268	267	266	39	168
7	196	281	280	279	278	277	276	275	274	273	272	271	270	269	268	267	38	169
6	197	282	281	280	279	278	277	276	275	274	273	272	271	270	269	268	37	170
5	198	283	282	281	280	279	278	277	276	275	274	273	272	271	270	269	36	171
4	199	284	283	282	281	280	279	278	277	276	275	274	2					



## “Ouch!”

This is one of many great photos provided to us by Karen Reid, wife of the late Allan Reid, a Tunnel Rat who served with 3FD TP in 65-66. We hope the Plantie was uninjured. Does anyone know the incident and where it took place? It looks like a hole was being prepared to construct a bunker, but it may have simply been a hole to keep the bulldozer below ground level as protection against RPGs. It looks like a fighting pit has been dug to the left of the main hole. The photo is a reminder of just how red the earth was in parts of Vietnam.

## No Go Zone

This is the bar at the Grand Hotel in Vung Tau, for officers only. It not only had poker machines, but also some of the most beautiful Vietnamese hookers in town. Infuriated by the inequality of only officers having access to these essentials of life, brave Tunnel Rats occasionally entered the premises illegally. As you came through the entrance to the bar you had to sign a book with your name and rank. For rank most put “SPR”, thinking the staff wouldn’t know what it meant, then names like “D Duck” and “M Mouse”. At most you’d get 30 minutes before being tossed out.



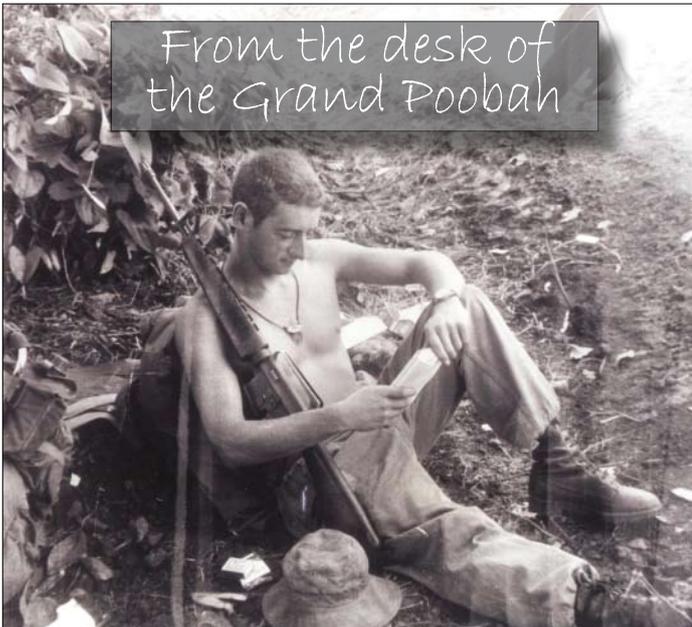
## Not exactly portable

ABOVE: This is an early prototype of the Starlight Scope night vision device, being tested in Vietnam. It’s a good thing the scientists cut the size right back before going into production, as this monster would have been a burden to take out bush. By gathering light from the stars and moon and amplifying it, the Starlight Scope gave you a green and grey tinted view which was clear enough to see movement. It gave off a soft high pitched hum while operating, which in the absolute silence of ambush, sounded alarmingly loud.



## Who said “Charlie don’t surf”

Tunnel Rats had to blow up some weird stuff during their tours, but very few of us got to sink enemy sampans. This boat had been used by the VC to transport supplies and weapons and was found camouflaged inland from a beach. Does anyone know this operation and the Sappers on the job?



### The newsletter

Apologies for the lateness of Holdfast again. It was partly caused by the aftermath of our debacle a year ago when we sent the membership cards out before everyone had paid. This caused many to think they had paid and made chasing payment a nightmare we didn't need. Anyway, we're back on track after that tactical error, with lessons duly learnt.

In our enclosed membership renewal form we provide the opportunity for you to pay a reduced membership fee if you feel at all aggrieved at the fewer newsletters over the last 12 months.

### Special Operations Engineer Regiment

The second reason for our delay, is actually a good one. We've been in discussions for some time now with the Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER) about formally establishing close ties between SOER and the Tunnel Rats.

The last few months have seen this move much closer to fruition and we thought it worth holding up the newsletter while we ironed out various details.

We cover those details in this issue, and I'm sure we'll all agree that the Tunnel Rats are privileged to be associated with the SOER lads, and that the new development is a win/win situation, with great benefits all round.

We plan a range of regular activities centred on Sydney, where SOER are based. These will be a mix of official visits and casual get-togethers, some as simple as turning up at the North Bondi RSL or the SOER Boozer on a specific day, to mix, tell waries and maybe solve the world's problems at the same time.

One of the activities we are working on is a mentoring trip to Vietnam, where we invite SOER

members to join us on our pilgrimage. Our past Tunnel Rat trips to Vietnam with CER and SOER members included have already proven to be therapeutic to both the current serving members, and the Vietnam veterans.

On these trips the young Sappers get to see that even four decades later, we trek to our old base camp to honour our fallen comrades with a remembrance ceremony. They see the incredible comradeship we enjoy, and they see that when we're together, despite our age, we can be in the very place where we were at war, and be there behaving like 20 year olds again, remembering the good times, and the bad times. They also see us having a beer with our former enemy – who after all, were soldiers doing their duty, just as we were.

Having the young Sappers with us on the trip is also great therapy for us old Sappers. We see ourselves in their young faces. We share stories of incredible similarity, from wars 40 years apart. Having a few beers and a chat with these lads after a day of touring in Vietnam is pure gold.

Stay tuned for details on this special SOER – Tunnel Rats mentoring trip. The first half of next year is the most likely timing.

### ANZAC Day

On a different, but related front, we intend to revue our ANZAC Day activities to ensure we are marching under our banner in as many big cities as possible. We have lost track of some of the banners we sent out over the years, so those that have banners, please let us know the status of the banner and about your local activities on ANZAC Day.

### The list

Our list of Tunnel Rats published with each issue of Holdfast has been a tremendous asset in us reconnecting with each other. We are doing some housekeeping on the list to bring it up to date. If you are a member and your name is not on the list, let us know. Likewise, if you know of a former Tunnel Rat and he is not on the list, let us know so we can maximise the communication between us all.

Send details (Troop, year, phone number and address) to Graeme Gartside at [ggart@internode.on.net](mailto:ggart@internode.on.net) or call 08 8725 6900 or post to 9 Park Street Mt Gambier SA 5290.

### Congratulations

We congratulate Tunnel Rat, LT COL John Hopman (69/70) on his appointment as Representative Colonel Commandant of the Special Operations Engineer Regiment - a great honour for John and for the Tunnel Rats (see page 15).

*Jim Marett*

*2 Troop 1 FD SQN 69/70*

## Mine incident miracle on Operation Massey Harris

On the day before Operation Massey Harris commenced, the Armoured Personnel Carrier "13 Alpha" was fitted with armour plate to its floor. This move proved a godsend when the APC hit an anti-tank mine on 29 August 1970, the first day of the operation. There were many casualties, but the armour plate did its job of saving lives and reducing injuries.



*ABOVE: The explosion lifted the APC 2.5 metres off the ground and dropped it onto the rear of a Centurion tank of A Squadron, 1 Armoured Regiment. The blast killed one South Vietnamese bushman scout aboard the APC and wounded fourteen Australians and one New Zealand soldier. Casualties could have been far worse had the APC not been fitted with belly armour and sponson reinforcement. The APC, nicknamed 'The Nympho', was from B Squadron, 3 Cavalry Regiment.*



Surname	Initials	Rank	Number	Unit	Coy/PI	DOC	Age	Corp	CAT
Bridley	P.L.	Pte	3797060	HQ1ATF	D&E	70.08.29	22	RAINF	WIA
Campion	P.B.	Gnr	NZ42440	161BTY		70.08.29		RNZA	WIA
Chalk	D.J.	Cpl	157567	B3CAV	D&E	70.08.29	20	RAAC	WIA#
Freestone	J.B.	Pte	1735932	HQ1ATF	D&E	70.08.29	21	RAINF	WIA#
Harrington	P.	Pte	39993	HQ1ATF	D&E	70.08.29	21	RAINF	WIA
Hayward	L.R.	Pte	4721184	HQ1ATF	D&E	70.08.29	21	RAINF	WIA#
Kittyeya	D.R.	Pte	5716848	HQ1ATF	D&E	70.08.29	22	RAINF	WIA
Page	R.R.	LCpl	312939	A1AR		70.08.29	27	RAAC	WIA
Peck	J.S.	Tpr	3162739	A1AR		70.08.29		RAAC	WIA
Rok	R.	Pte	2792695	HQ1ATF	D&E	70.08.29	22	RAINF	WIA#
Ryan	T.J.	LCpl	18449	HQ1ATF	D&E	70.08.29	25	RAINF	WIA#
Slocombe	B.P.	Tpr	1201981	B3CAV	D&E	70.08.29	20	RAAC	WIA#
Turner	M.	Pte	2793652	HQ1ATF	D&E	70.08.29	21	RAINF	WIA#

*ABOVE: The Australian casualty list from the mine incident on 29 August 1970. Seven of the 13 wounded were evacuated to Australia due to the severity of their wounds. LEFT: The last of the wounded are placed into the dustoff chopper as two Tunnel Rats (holding mine detectors over their shoulders) take a break from their mine clearing tasks.*



*These men are just minutes away from an event that will change their lives forever*

*TOP LEFT: The wrecked interior of the APC after hitting the mine. TOP RIGHT: The crater created by the mine. LEFT: Fate takes hold. This photograph was taken just minutes before the APC hit the mine. The crew and passengers of the APC had no idea they were heading towards an enemy anti-tank mine. The explosion will lift the 13 ton vehicle 2.5 metres into the air, flipping off those riding on top. Those inside, in the confined space of the APC would suffer the worst injuries. As was common practice, the floor of the APC was covered with a layer of filled sandbags as further protection against mines. Along with the new armour plate, this worked, but those injured inside suffered severe sand blasting to their skin.*

All photos by legendary Australian photo-journalist Denis Gibbons

## Closer bonds formed with our SOER Comrades

For some years now a strong bond and a valuable relationship has been developing between the Vietnam Tunnel Rats Association and the Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER).

The tasks the SOER carried out in Afghanistan are a mirror image of what our tasks were in Vietnam.

In Vietnam the Tunnel Rats were attached to Infantry Battalions and Armoured units and were tasked with searching for and clearing mines and booby traps, plus tunnel and bunker searching, demolitions and bomb disposal.

In Afghanistan the SOER lads were attached to SAS and Commando units and were tasked with searching for and clearing IEDs (mines and booby traps), plus cave, bunker and structure searching, demolitions and bomb disposal. They continue this role today, together with SAS and Commando units on international and domestic deployments.

Both the Tunnel Rats and the SOER suffered casualty rates well above the average in their respective theatres of war.

Many of the SOER lads are right now suffering from the physical and mental aftermath of their tours in Afghanistan. Many did multiple tours, and as in any war, many saw and did things most human beings are thankfully sheltered from ever experiencing.

The relationship between the Tunnel Rats and SOER comes through a combination of mutual respect and that vein of Sapper spirit which runs through us and connects us forever.

Perhaps no other group of men than the Tunnel Rats are better prepared to help the



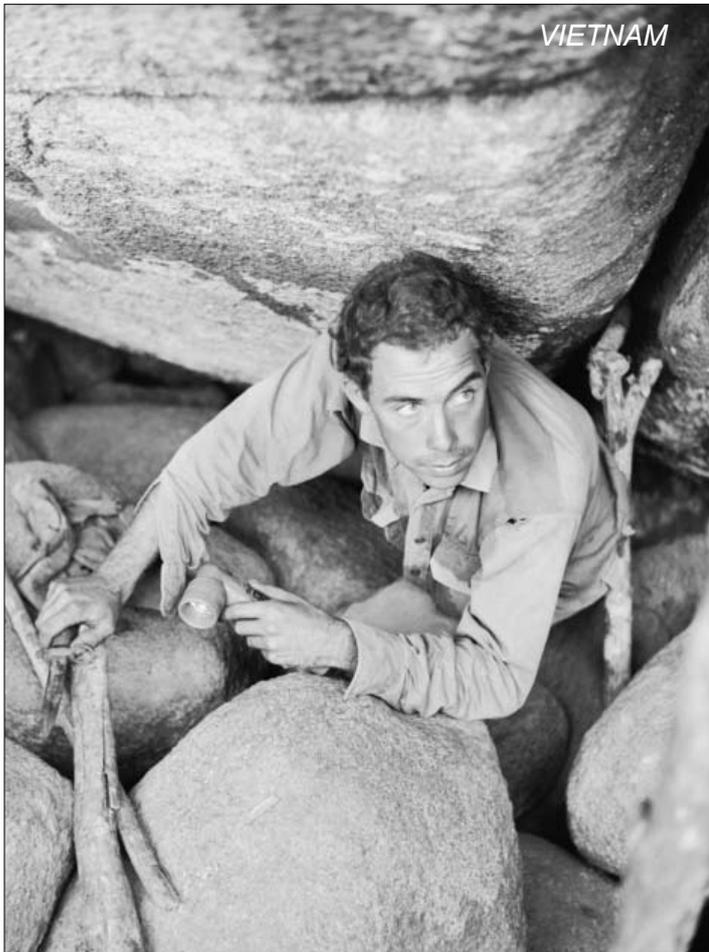
SOER lads who are suffering, to pull through their dark days. And we aim to pick up the baton and do just that.

We don't want a repeat of the bad old days. Almost every Tunnel Rat had experiences on return from Vietnam where he was badly let down by government, the RSL, WW2 Veterans, friends or even family.

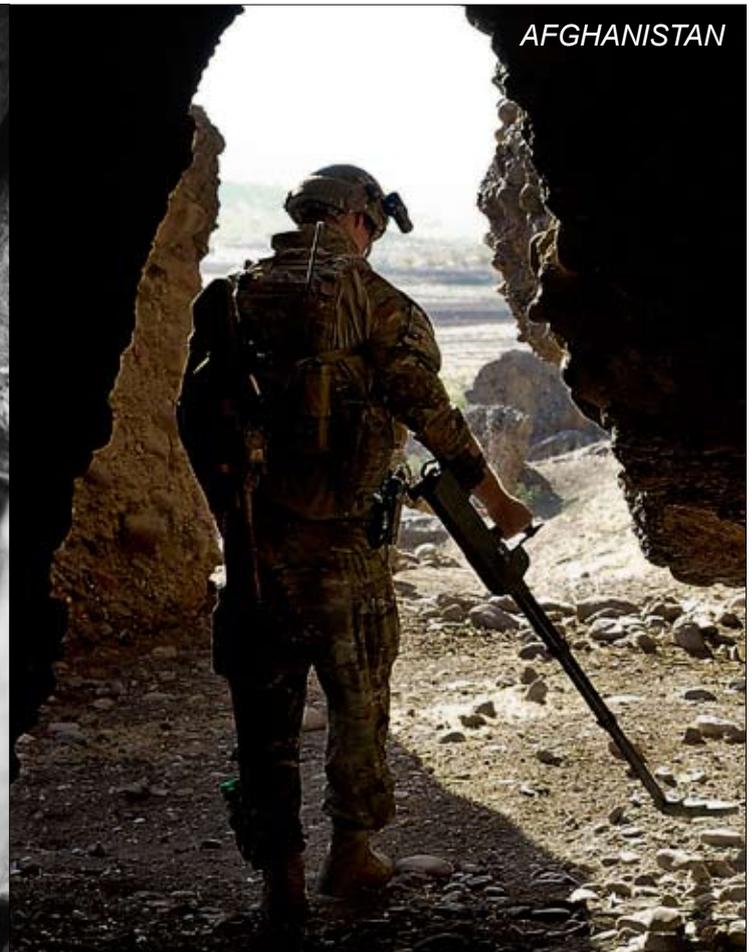
The government and the Army, and particularly SOER are looking after the Afghanistan veterans well, but it's clear some of those lads need more sup-

port. Let's show Australia how Vietnam era Sappers can gather around their fellow Sappers and help lift them through the tough times after their service in Afghanistan.

And this is a win/win situation, with very positive benefits for the Vietnam Tunnel Rats. Every one of us who has spent time with the SOER lads agrees it is an inspiring and rejuvenating experience. They are smarter, fitter and better trained than we were, but in every one of them we see ourselves at our peak some four



VIETNAM



AFGHANISTAN



VIETNAM



AFGHANISTAN

decades ago. Doing a tough job well, and getting on with it, while at the same time, being brushed with that magic sense of Sapper mischief.

#### **What we intend to do:**

We will open our membership up to current and former members of SOER (including of course those who served under its former name of Incident Response Regiment).

Later this year we will have an official visit to SOER where we will participate in a presentation to the Regiment on how we operated in Vietnam, highlighting the similarities of our roles. We will also outline the ways in which we will be available to help mentor and counsel the SOER lads – which may often be as simple and effective as having a few beers and telling

a few waries together – one on one.

**Activities we will explore over the coming months will include:**

- \* Tunnel Rats members to set up welfare/mateship support for those members of SOER affected by PTSD or other psychological injury. To be delivered through:
- \* Regular informal get togethers

in Sydney, possibly at the SOER Boozer "Axe & Shield" or North Bondi RSL, to relax, share a beer and tell a few 'waries'.

\* Phone tree, where SOER members are able to contact Tunnel Rats for a chat or to get together at any time.

\* Referral of members transitioning from SOER or the army, to members of the Tunnel Rats in their local area, or vice versa.

\* A mentoring trip to Vietnam. Our past Tunnel Rat trips to Vietnam with CER and SOER members included have already proven to be therapeutic to both the current serving members, and the Vietnam veterans.

\* A regular calendar of events to be agreed to and incorporated into SOER social calendar, possibly including Anzac Day.

\* Explore the possibility of SOER members marching with the Tunnel Rats on ANZAC Day, with appropriate changes to the Tunnel Rats banner reflecting this. (This is how the SAS have accommodated their Afghanistan Veterans on ANZAC Days.)

\* Coverage of SOER in Holdfast newsletter.

### Our Tunnel Rats logo

The much loved logo of the Rat with torch and pistol will of course remain the same. The wording encircling the logo would change to read (at the top) "TUNNEL RATS", and at the bottom "VIETNAM – AFGHANISTAN".

Our marching banners would reflect these amendments as well.

A major benefit of this relationship with SOER will be that our Tunnel Rats Association will continue on, long after the last Vietnam Tunnel Rat falls off his perch.

For decades after we have all gone to that great Sapper sanctuary in the sky, the Af-



ghanistan Veterans from SOER will be proudly parading our banner on ANZAC Days across the nation.

If you have any suggestions on helping us make this development work to the maximum benefit of our SOER comrades and the Vietnam era Tunnel Rats, let us know.

### TUNNEL RATS



VIETNAM - AFGHANISTAN

## Prestigious appointment for Tunnel Rat

Tunnel Rat, LT Colonel John Hopman has been appointed Representative Colonel Commandant (RCC) of the Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER). John served as Troop Officer of 2 Troop 1 Field Squadron in Vietnam, 1969 – 1970.

This prestigious appointment is not only an honour for John, but for the Tunnel Rats as well. John was one of the earliest members to join the Vietnam Tunnel Rats Association, and he has been a keen and active supporter ever since.

The SOER is a highly capable Special Operations Command (SOCOMD) unit based at Holsworthy NSW, providing leading edge mobility, survivability and specialist capabilities in support of Special Operations both domestically and on operations overseas. The capability of the SOER is an integral part of SOCOMD's contribution to defending Australian interests and the government's counter terrorism response.

Historically a senior retired officer fills the role of RCC, as a sort of 'elder statesman' of the Regiment. The officer is titled Colonel Commandant, regardless of his retirement rank.

A RCC provides a link between serving and former members of the Regiment. They have no role in the chain of command but are a valuable source of advice and counsel for all ranks.

The RCC plays an important part in maintaining the well-being of the Regiment. Their wide experience within the Corps and the Army in general allows them to provide positive input on Regimental matters. They also provide an important link between the Regiment and ex service asso-



TOP: 2 Troop office Vietnam 1969 - LT John Hopman (centre) coping a good-natured chiding from Sappers "Jock" McMullen (left) and Bruce Bofinger (right). ABOVE: Quick to get onto the good stuff. John Hopman tries out the SOER weapon of choice, the silenced M-4 carbine, at the SOER range near Holsworthy.

ciations that will also improve the esprit de corps within the unit.

Duties of the RCC include: Providing advice when required on issues relating to esprit de corps, customs, traditions and heritage; Liaising with ex service associations and providing feedback on unit related association issues; Fostering relationships between the unit and ex service associations; And representing the unit at ceremonial activities.

We congratulate John on his appointment, and we thank LT COL Hugh Meggitt, the CO of SOER for honouring John and our association in this way. Well done Sappers.



SOER logo

## Trip back to Vietnam declared the “best one yet”

Our trip back to Vietnam late last year was a huge success, with over 60 on the tour, including 13 current serving Combat Engineers.

Without doubt, having the 13 young Sappers with us on the tour was a key highlight. Nothing does an old Sapper’s heart as much good as seeing that the young Sappers of today are just like we were! Rebellious, ready to have fun at the drop of a hat, but down to business whenever required.

We’ve had substantial feedback that coming on our tours is an exceptionally positive experience for the Combat Engineers who have served in Afghanistan. PTSD is a huge issue currently, and coming on our tours the young soldiers see how even over 40 years later, we band together and travel all that distance to honour our fallen.

They also see the level of comradeship we enjoy - the bonds that just won’t be broken. Ever. And, importantly, they see us acting up and having fun like we’re 20 year olds again, despite our age - and doing this in the very land where we fought. Very therapeutic.

We are already discussing with elements of the Army about running another tour, sooner rather than later, aimed specifically at us inviting and mentoring young Sappers on the trip.

Another key highlight of the tour related to CPL Bob Bowtell, who was the first Australian Tunnel Rat killed in Vietnam. Bob was with 3FD TP and was killed in action in a tunnel in the Ho Bo Woods area, near Cu Chi.

On this tour we were privileged to have with us Bob’s son Michael Bowtell, and Bob’s grandson Sapper Christopher Bowtell, a current serving Combat Engineer with 2CER, and a Veteran of the Afghanistan War.

Stay tuned for details on the next tour, where we’ll mentor the young Sappers of today by sharing our experiences in Vietnam - good and bad.

A date within the first half of next year is likely for the tour. Save your pennies and start working on that leave pass.

CAPTIONS (this page, from the top down):  
Lunch at Nui Dat with some bad boys from the NVA and VC; LT COL Yanis Atrons (in shorts) hooks into the tucker at our BBQ buffet at Nui Dat; We pay our respects at the Long Tan cross; Waiting to place a wreath at the location where CPL Bob Bowtell was killed in 1966 are his grandson Chris (in the singlet) and son Michael (in the cap). A moving moment for us all.





CAPTIONS (this page, clockwise from bottom left): Foundations of the old 1 FD SQN officers and sergeants mess at Nui Dat; Big welcome for the Rats at the Rex Hotel in Vung Tau; Mr. Ha (Senior), former NVA, father of our tour organiser Mr. Ha, and leader of entertainment group comprising former NVA; a painted rock found in old 2TP area with some names still readable, including Scott, Gartside and Power; Graeme Pengelly 2TP 70/71 selects to lay the wreath of his mate Peter Penneyston who was KIA by an enemy booby trap on 2 August 1970.

Current serving Combat Engineers help us honour o



The rock back in April 1970 when Chaplain General Vertigan blessed the memorial positioned in front of the 1FD SQN HQ building at Nui Dat

## ur 36 fallen comrades in a unique service at Nui Dat



Thirteen young Combat Engineers from RAE units around Australia at our remembrance service held at the ceremonial rock which still sits in place at the old 1 FD SQN HQ area at Nui Dat. We placed 36 wreaths at the rock, each bearing the name and photo of one of the Tunnel Rats KIA in Vietnam. The current serving Sappers played key roles in the ceremony, and each laid a wreath in memory of our mates. Photo Left to right: LT Ben Turner 1 FD SQN, SPR "D" of SOER, SPR Andrew Thompson, SPR Dalton Gilbee, SPR Bryce Maybury & SPR Edward De Graaf of 1 FD SQN, SPR "T" of SOER, SPR Tom Bain, SPR Jack Dugand, SPR Anthony Ballantyne & SPR Christopher Donaldson of 1 FD SQN, SPR Chris Bowtell & Sapper Matthew Delossa of 2CER. Security regulations require the faces of SOER members to be obscured.



ABOVE: After laying a wreath at the actual site of his 1969 mine incident, Phil Baxter gave a moving talk on what took place that day



Old habits die hard. Walking to the site of Phil Baxter's mine incident, without anyone even suggesting there could be old mines around, we all just automatically fell into single file!



ABOVE: At the Cu Chi rifle range, SPR Chris Donaldson of 1 CER pumps a few rounds through "The Pig" - the M-60 7.62mm machine gun. MIDDLE RIGHT: Mr Ha (Senior), on the left, with some of his NVA comrades at our BBQ and piss-up at Nui Dat; RIGHT: It's late at night in Vung Tau but the young Sappers from 1 FD SQN insist that Rodney O'Regan (2 TP 70/71) come out for "just one more beer". Of course he said yes, and of course it wasn't just one beer.



## Side trip to Coral and Balmoral

Taking place between 12 May and 6 June 1968, the battles at FSB Coral and FSB Balmoral involved some of the heaviest fighting experienced by Australian troops in Vietnam.

Norm Cairns, a Tunnel Rat with 3 Troop was at both of those battles, and recently arranged a visit to the old battle sites.

Norm arranged the visit as an add-on to the November 2013 Tunnel Rats tour.

The local authorities have erected two memorials, side by side at Coral to remember the 29 Australian and 72 NVA troops KIA in total at the two FSB's.

In the Australian memorial there is a photograph and family message for GNR Ian Scott KIA at Coral. The tribute was placed there over three years ago and has not been interfered with.

Amazingly, Norm's group came across an old M79 grenade round on the ground just in front of where 11 platoon D Coy 3 RAR were dug in at Balmoral. A local had pointed it out to the group and then moved to pick it up. "He was told in good old fashioned Sapper language to leave it where it was," says Norm. "He seemed oblivious to the danger, but we finally convinced him."

During the war, both Coral and Balmoral were open, cleared areas, but they are both now rubber plantations. It is easy to identify the main battle ground at Balmoral because of the B52 bomb craters that still remain, and the position has been confirmed by GPS reading.

"I was really pleased to find out that all NVA bodies at Balmoral have since been removed from the bomb crater in which we placed them and have been properly buried," says Norm.



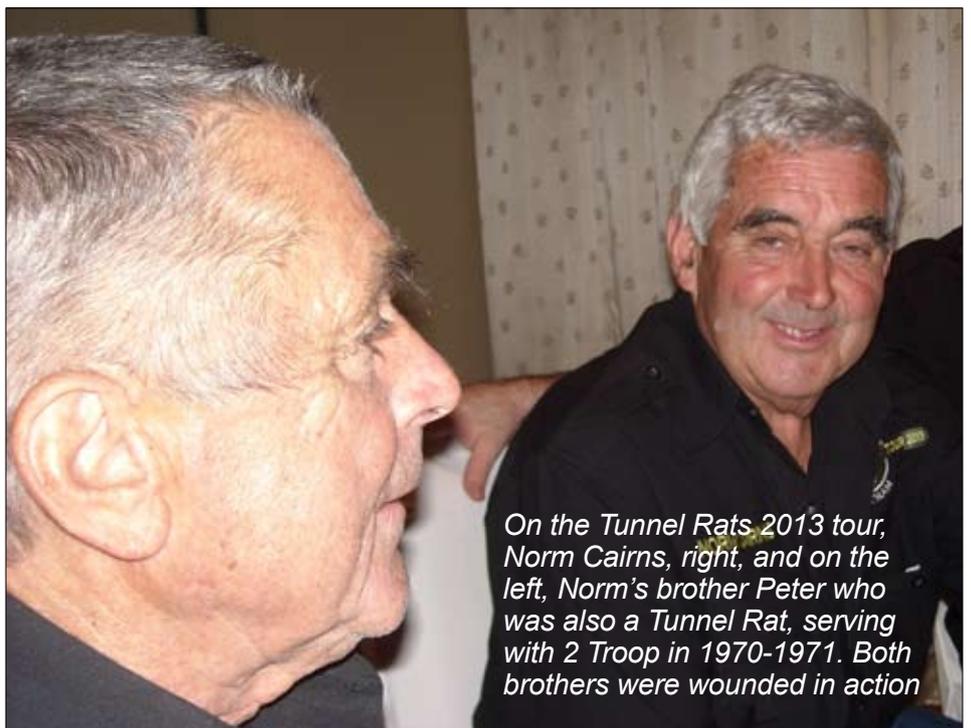
*The memorial to the Australians KIA at Coral*



*The memorial to the NVA KIA at Coral*



*Old M-79 grenade round found at the Balmoral site*



*On the Tunnel Rats 2013 tour, Norm Cairns, right, and on the left, Norm's brother Peter who was also a Tunnel Rat, serving with 2 Troop in 1970-1971. Both brothers were wounded in action*

## Bunkering-down in Dat Do



Developments in Dat Do set the Tunnel Rats on a path involving them in a string of mine incidents, with even the Squadron OC, Major Rex Rowe pinning a mine himself.

For Australian forces, the town of Dat Do was never a friendly environment. Unlike many other towns and villages in our area of operations, Dat Do just had a bad feeling about it.

On 15 May 1969, that bad feeling turned to reality when in broad daylight, a large group of Viet Cong infiltrated Dat Do and occupied part of the village. The enemy group comprised men from our regular adversary, D445 Battalion and C25 Company.

The local territorial forces put up little opposition. The district chief requested assistance from the task force, but asked that the Australians refrain from entering the town to allow the RF/PF and ARVN forces to deal with the enemy.

A simple decision to build some defensive bunkers around Dat Do triggered months of mine warfare misery for Aussie troops

All companies of 9RAR, including C Company at the Horseshoe, were brought in to place a cordon around the village. They were joined by the task force ready reaction force, the New Zealanders of W Company, 4RAR/NZ, and a troop of APCs. Each of these units had their attached Tunnel Rat teams with them – Splinter Teams with the Infantry, and Mini Teams carrying mine detectors with the APCs.

The cordon remained in position overnight. At daylight, five RF companies and two ARVN companies swept through the village. They failed to locate the Viet Cong who had most probably mingled with the civil-

*Major Rex Rowe (right), the Commanding Officer of 1 Field Squadron, discusses the bunker building job with Lieutenant Garry Jesser (centre), and Warrant Officer Class 2 Leo Power*

ians and withdrawn under cover of darkness, leaving five of their dead behind. Twelve RF soldiers were killed and 27 were wounded in the actions.

### **Bunker construction**

The Task Force Commander, Brigadier Pearson was disturbed by the ease with which D445 Battalion had entered Dat Do. It was simply unacceptable that after three years of Australian operations in Phuoc Tuy, the communist provincial unit was able to enter and remain in a district capital virtually unmolested for 36 hours.

Pearson decided that additional measures were necessary to secure the village. On 18 May he discussed his proposals

with Major Rex Rowe, the Officer Commanding, 1 Field Squadron. Rex then carried out a detailed air and ground reconnaissance of Dat Do, accompanied by the American district adviser.

A plan evolved to stiffen the defences of the village by enclosing it within a ring of mutually supporting underground bunkers that the local village forces could then occupy.

The task force hoped the presence of the bunkers would encourage the regional forces to leave their compounds and participate more actively in village security. The bunkers would also provide permanent observation of those sections of the barrier minefield that ran around the outskirts of Dat Do.

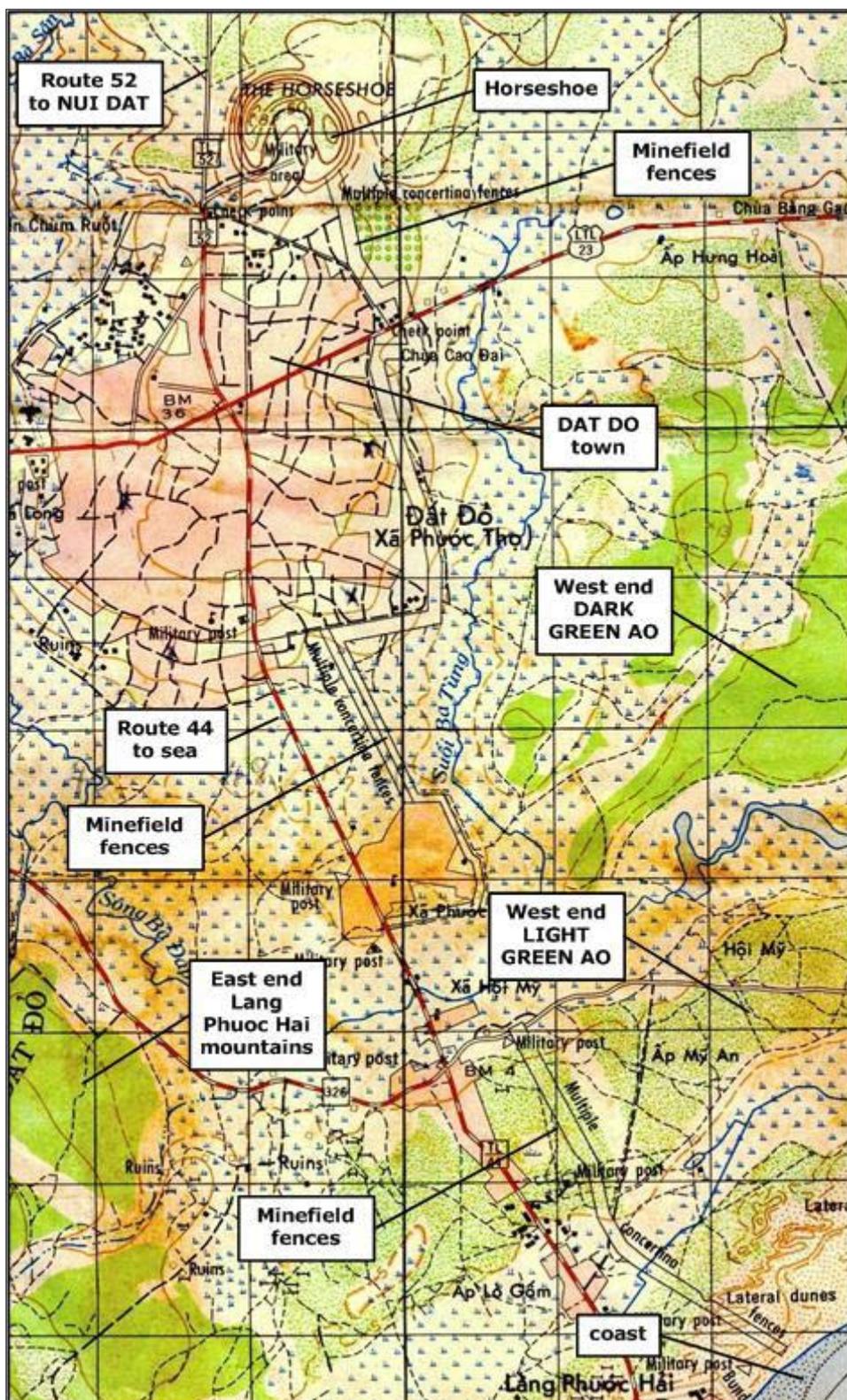
The task would require a major effort from the engineers, and 9RAR would provide training in fieldcraft and patrolling for the territorial forces, in readiness for occupying the bunkers. When everything was complete, Dat Do would take on the characteristics of a defended village.

Work on bunker construction began on 21 May with a team of Tunnel Rats from 1 Troop, 1 Field Squadron, RAE, under Lieutenant Garry Jesser. Though this task was a break from normal duties, the men of 1 Troop knew this was going to be equally as hazardous as walking with the Grunts or riding with the Tankies.

Overnight protection and construction labour were provided by Regional Force soldiers, who were plainly neither motivated nor reliable.

"All are apprehensive regarding the protection and labour arrangements", noted the 1 Field Squadron commander's diary for that day, "but Task Force has decided we should try it".

The Engineers' forebod-

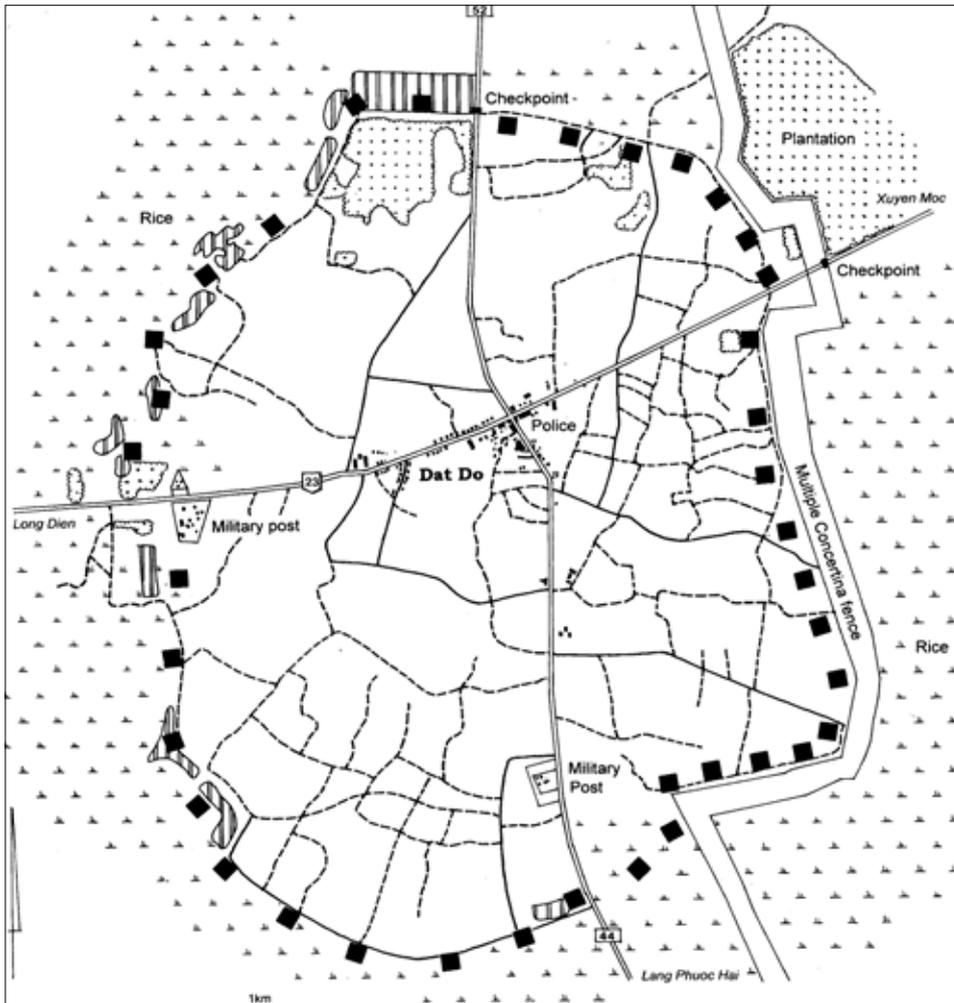


ings proved justified. On the following morning, there was a loud explosion as a South Vietnamese soldier detonated an M16 mine amongst a cluster of four of these "Jumping Jack" mines at the worksite.

They had been laid at the entrance of one of the holes dug for a bunker. The mines killed two Vietnamese soldiers and wound-

ed seven others, including three Australian Tunnel Rats.

Amongst the severely wounded were Corporal Peter Hollis, Sapper Alan Smith and Sapper Peter Bramble, all from 1 Troop. Although in pain and unable to move, Peter Hollis warned others not to enter the area because he suspected there were more mines. He then



*The defences totalled 38 bunkers, including thirty 4-man and seven 15-man bunkers, plus 10,500 metres of wire obstacle. The barrier minefield, skirting the eastern edge of Dat Do, is marked 'Multiple Concertina Fence'.*

calmly directed clearing teams to the safest approaches. He was later mentioned in despatches for his courage and concern for his men.

The wounded were evacuated to 1 Australian Field Hospital at Vung Tau. Peter Bramble died later that day from his wounds, Alan Smith was eventually air evacuated back to Australia, and Peter Hollis recovered from his wounds and returned to duty with 1 Troop.

The territorial soldiers' protection had been ineffective. These troops were responsible for guarding and ambushing the area during the night to prevent the enemy planting mines. Clearly they had not done so.

Work on the bunkers was

paused while the general area was cleared, during which time four further mines were found. It was clear that this process would have to be repeated each day.

The next day, more mines were detonated, injuring a number of local Vietnamese Troops, but no Australians. The Tunnel Rats cleared the mined area and found four more M16 mines, which they destroyed on the spot.

Pearson had had enough. Unable to rely on the territorial forces, on 24 May he sent D Company, 9RAR, to protect the engineers in Dat Do. The AO was extended to the south as bunker construction progressed and the Assault Pioneer Platoon later joined D Company.

D Company laid ambushes and commenced what they called 'soft shoe' night patrols within the built-up area of Dat Do. Accompanied by personnel from the National Police Field Force, the company patrolled the lanes, thoroughfares and vegetable gardens. They made no contact with the enemy but their presence appeared to keep the Viet Cong clear of the areas patrolled.

The soldiers of D Company also occupied the bunkers during construction. When each group of five bunkers was ready, with barbed wire protection and cleared fields of fire, they were handed over to the district forces, and D Company and the engineers moved to a new group of bunkers.

Support Troop engineers used bulldozers to clear the ground before work commenced in order to detonate mines laid overnight by the Viet Cong. In spite of all these defensive measures, as bunker construction and land clearing continued, so did the mine incidents. Casualties mounted among Australian infantry and engineers as well as local Vietnamese forces.

Some RF companies refused to patrol areas for fear of mines and the Australians had to clear them first with APCs and infantry. On 25 May, a bulldozer operating near the southernmost bunkers at Dat Do detonated a cluster of three mines, wounding three soldiers, including the driver, Sapper John Ricardo of 21 Engineer Support troop.

On the same day, as B Company, 9RAR followed up a contact on the north-eastern fringe of the Long Hais, soldiers of 4 Platoon triggered an M16 mine, wounding two men. One of them, Paul Reidy, died of his wounds in a dustoff helicopter

during evacuation to hospital.

Twenty minutes after 4 Platoon's incident, 12 Platoon triggered an M16 mine on the outskirts of Dat Do, wounding three more soldiers. Two further mines were found at the site.

Three days later, on 28 May, while clearing a track with a splinter team in the northern Long Hais, Sapper Ronald Davies was killed and two other soldiers were wounded in a Viet Cong ambush. Amongst those wounded was the other member of the Splinter Team, Sapper Raymond Day.

On the morning of 30 May, as bunker construction continued, a district office jeep detonated an M16 mine at the eastern edge of Dat Do, killing the Deputy District Chief and wounding his driver and four soldiers of II Platoon, D Company.

Rex Rowe went immediately to assist a severely wounded man who was thrashing about on the ground, and he noticed the prongs of another M16 mine close by. While another officer restrained the wounded man, Rex put a safety pin in the mine, helping prevent any further casualties.

The following morning, a truck detonated two of a cluster of four M16 mines in the south-eastern corner of Dat Do, wounding seven soldiers of the 9RAR Assault Pioneer Platoon riding on board. The road had been cleared by mine detectors on the previous day.

It seemed that the villagers of Dat Do were either NLF sympathisers or had succumbed to Viet Cong pressure. They did little to assist the Australians. Although many were obviously aware of the location of recently planted mines, they stood silently by when soldiers moved towards the danger areas.



TOP: In May 1969, Sapper Ken Wheatley (right) works on one of the bunkers around Dat Do with a member of the local RF forces. ABOVE: Peter Hollis today: (left to right) Gary Degering, John Fuller (front), Peter Hollis, Max Goiser and Terry Gleeson, all Tunnel Rats from 1 Troop, 1 Field Squadron. Max and Terry helped clear safe lanes to the wounded at the Dat Do mine incident on 22 May 1969

Few responded to questioning, which was perplexing for the Australian soldiers and their leaders. They believed they were there to help restore normality to an embattled community, to provide security and to help create the conditions to permit social and economic advancement. Yet the people remained impassive as Australian troops were randomly

killed and maimed by a faceless opponent.

Some villagers obviously collaborated with the NLF. Brigadier Pearson insisted on the replacement of one RF company deployed on the defences after it was discovered from a Hoi Chanh informant that the company allowed the Viet Cong to infiltrate between their bunkers

nightly on their way to and from Dat Do.

For a short period, Pearson's bunker strategy appeared to succeed in curtailing the enemy's control over Dat Do. The communist history of Dong Nai province concedes that the bunkers; "created great difficulties for us in penetrating the hamlets".

"Food and equipment could not be supplied to the base, and from the middle of 1969, the cadres and soldiers of Long Dat ran out of rice and had to eat leaves and roots in the jungle," says the communist history.

By the middle of 1969 the local Viet Cong party committee resolved to defeat the bunker system around Dat Do, and to resort to more extensive use of the M16 mines they had lifted from the minefield.

Australian casualties increased sharply, leading to the decision, according to some accounts, to withdraw Australian soldiers from pacification operations around Dat Do. At the end of August, as the Australians pulled out of the region, the Viet Cong stepped up activities to eliminate the bunker defences.

The bunkers themselves remained 'sitting targets for the Viet Cong', recalled Major Rowe, and the enemy grew increasingly bold. In the early hours of 3 October an element of D445 Battalion assaulted four bunkers from within Dat Do; they killed five RF soldiers, wounded two and seized M16 mines and weapons before withdrawing, leaving the bunkers partially destroyed.

On the night of 16/17 October, Viet Cong sapper teams destroyed another four bunkers. Four days later, in the early hours of 20 October the enemy attacked again with small arms and RPGs. They blew up three bunkers using large petrol charges



*Sapper Phillip Longbottom of Support Troop 1 Field Squadron drives a bulldozer to create an opening in the ground for one of the new bunkers at Dat Do*

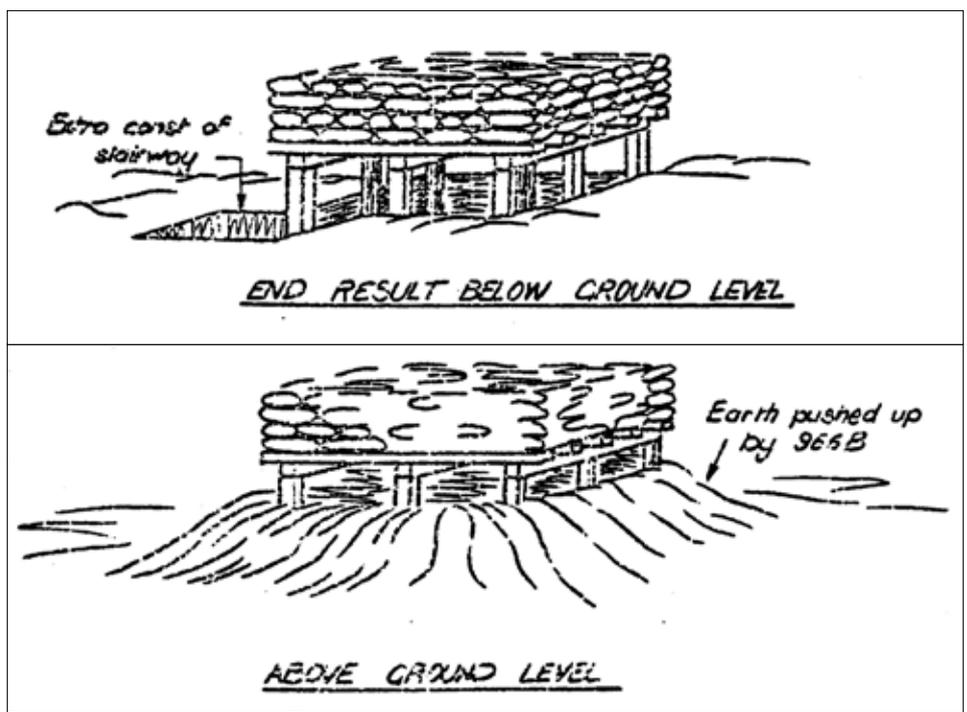
that completely destroyed them. It was clear that D445 Battalion was relying on inside information and guides from Dat Do. Four out of five attacks on the bunkers originated inside the village.

Pearson's initiative to seal off Dat Do with bunkers had failed, largely through the inadequacies of the local defence forces. A continuous Australian military presence was required to make it work, but this was never feasible, given the limited resources of the task force.

The bunkers eventually

became little more than housing or storage spaces, the Viet Cong influence continued to grow in the town, and Dat Do remained a place where Aussies felt decidedly uncomfortable.

*Acknowledgement: With extracts from the official history of Australia's Vietnam War volume: "Fighting to the finish".*



## “I’d kill for a milkshake and a meat pie”

*A nostalgic look at our dining options while out bush in Vietnam*



*Allan Reid, a Tunnel Rat with 3 Field Troop 1965-1966 cooks up a storm while out bush with 1RAR*

When we went out bush on operations with Infantry or Armoured we relied on American C-Rations for our sustenance. There were some Australian ration packs available, but they were few and far between.

Most of us who served as Tunnel rats were out bush 75 per cent or more of our year in Vietnam, so for close to 300 days we were dining on these delights. So just what were we eating?

Normally we’d carry three days rations in our pack unless the Infantry Commander was particularly cruel and opted for having us carry five days rations.

Helicopters would bring the cardboard cases of C-Rations out to wherever we were, often requiring us to create a

single chopper landing zone by blowing down a few trees.

The chopper was always welcome, not only for the tucker and water it brought in, but also the mail from home they delivered as well.

The cartons of C-Rations would be split amongst the troops, setting off bargaining and

bartering sessions over who got the prime items - the food that was actually edible.

Each C-Ration carton contained 12 smaller boxes, each containing what was described as a “Meal Combat Individual”.

Each individual meal box provided approximately 1200 calories, which wasn’t bad when you consider that today a Big Mac and fries comes in at 810 calories.

There were three styles of meals (B1, B2 and B3), and over the years the contents may have varied slightly, but essentially these meals comprised:

### **B-1 Units**

**Meat Choices** (in small cans): Either Beef Steak, Ham and Eggs, Ham Slices or Turkey Loaf.

**Fruit:** Either Applesauce, Fruit



Cocktail, Peaches or Pears plus Crackers, Peanut Butter, a chocolate candy disc and an Accessory Pack.

### B-2 Units

Meat Choices (in larger cans): Either Beans and Wieners, Spaghetti and Ground Meat, Beefsteak with Potatoes and Gravy, Ham and Lima Beans or Meatballs and Beans.

Plus Crackers, Cheese Spread, a Fruit Cake, Pecan Roll or Pound Cake, plus an Accessory Pack.

### B-3 Units

Meat Choices (in small cans): Either Boned Chicken, Chicken and Noodles, Meat Loaf or Spiced Beef. Plus Bread, Cookies, Cocoa Beverage Powder, Jam and an Accessory Pack.

The Accessory pack which came with each of the meals was a foil pack containing: A plastic spoon, paper sachets of salt, pepper, instant coffee, sugar and creamer (powdered milk), Chicklets chewing gum, moisture resistant matches, toilet paper and a 4/smokes pack of cigarettes which would be one of the following brands: Winston, Marlboro, Salem, Pall Mall, Camel, Chesterfield, Kent, Lucky Strike or Kool.

Four can openers were provided in each case of 12 meals. This opener was known as a "P38", but the Australian version of the opener was larger, easier to operate and incorporated a spoon (if you were desperate).

Generally the meals weren't too bad, especially if somebody from home sent you Worcestershire sauce to spice things up a little. Some of the lads discovered Tabasco sauce, becoming addicted to it during their tour, and remaining fans of the ultra-hot sauce to this day.

A few of the meals were simply inedible, and experienced



Diggers quickly and generously passed these on to guys freshly arrived in country. Prime among these crook meals was Ham and Lima beans, which even the new guys would try only once.

Another dud was Beefsteak with Potatoes and Gravy, which was adorned with congealed fat which never seemed to melt away no matter how much you heated the can.

The more popular meals like the Chicken and Noodles, the pound cake, peaches and fruit cocktail were prized items and worth their weight in gold. They were regularly bartered in

spirited swap sessions during meal breaks or "Smoko" stops.

The main meal items were designed to be heated, but sometimes the tactical situation meant you didn't have time to heat them, or the cooking smells would give away our position. In these cases they were eaten cold, which was pretty ugly.

The Ham and Eggs, the beans and weenies, and the Spaghetti and Ground Meat were the least offensive if you had to eat something cold, but anything else was only for the brave.

Heating the meals and water required a small "stove",



*TOP: C-Rations being unpacked and sorted before being choppered out to troops in the field. ABOVE: A bargaining session after resupply out bush*

which was issued or improvised from used C Ration cans. This device held the heating substance, either chemical heating tablets or C-4 plastic explosive, which burned very hot and fast, making it ideal for quick meals. Cooking with C-4 was perfectly safe, but frightened the daylighters out of many on seeing it for the first time.

The C-Rations, with their cans and paper and foil packs created a huge amount of trash, which we always crushed and buried after each meal while out on operations. We weren't being early environmentalists, we were hiding our activities from the enemy, and denying them the empty cans which they could

fill with melted explosives to convert them into booby traps.

The amount of coffee, tea and hot chocolate supplied was more than ample, but the dilemma was in having enough water to make the drinks.

We carried eight water bottles and this had to last three days before the chopper came in with a resupply. The eight bottles was for everything – drinking, cooking, washing and shaving, and it was an unwritten rule that if you ran out you could not expect your mate to top you up.

During the wet season we could top up from running creeks, adding purification pills in the bottles to kill the bugs. The pills added their own unique

chemical taste.

In addition to the C-Rations, every now and then while out bush we received a Sundries Pack or "SP". This contained writing paper, envelopes, pens, toothbrushes and paste, chewing gum, M&M's, Hershey bars, assorted cartons of cigarettes, and strangely, cigars and chewing tobacco!

The ultimate treat while out bush however was when they flew out salad rolls and "gofers" (cans of soft drink). It usually only happened once on a four or six week operation, and the ration was one roll and one can per man. It seems a small thing nowadays, but at the time it was paradise compared to those damn C-Rations.



#### **How to make a C-Ration stove**

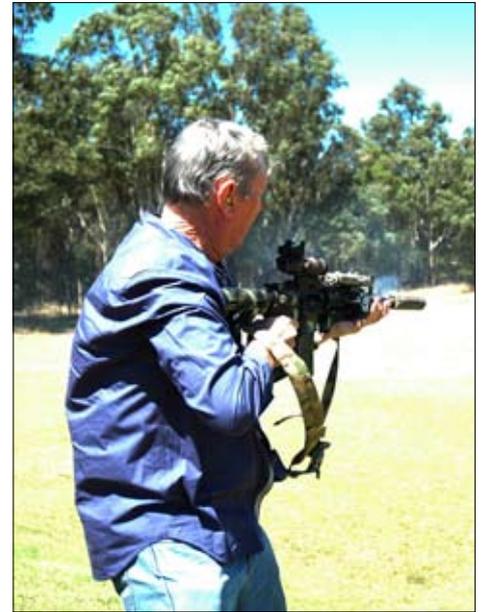
The small cans included in the C-Ration meals were ideal for making a stove. Using an old fashioned piercing can opener you could punch a series of closely spaced holes around the top and bottom rims of the can. This provided enough ventilation for the stove to operate. You placed the heating tablet or C-4 plastic explosive in the bottom of the can, sat the item you wanted to cook on top of the can, and away you went. The stove was usually tied to the back pack or placed in one of the larger pack pockets and used repeatedly until the metal began to fail.

# SAPPER SNIPPETS



## Why is this Sapper smiling?

He's strolling through a massive marijuana plantation, that's why. Sapper Matthew Dellosa is a Combat Engineer with 2CER, and was on deployment with them to Afghanistan last year. The patrol he was on came across the marijuana plantation when it was at its peak and ready for harvest. Money raised from drug activities is a key source of revenue for the Taliban in Afghanistan, so the crop was destroyed. We're not sure what it is that's filling Matthew's utility pouches.



## Roo Dog lets rip on the range

Peter "Roo Dog" Scott was on a "Friends of the Regiment" visit to SOER recently, and had the privilege of firing the M-4 carbine on their range. Peter served as a Tunnel Rat in 1969/70. He picked up the M-4 like he was born with it, but did wimp out and resort to earplugs despite the M-4 being fitted with a silencer!

## Tunnel Rat honoured with government award in Papua New Guinea



Trevor Shelley served as a Tunnel Rat in Vietnam with 1 Troop in 1966-1967. Post Vietnam he has had close ties with Papua New Guinea, often working on long stints in remote bush areas. The PNG government recently thanked Trevor for his efforts, by awarding him the Logohu Medal for services to Rural Development. Trevor is seen at the right of the photo after receiving his medal at Government House PNG. And below is his impressive box of bling. Well done Sapper Shelley.





### Darryl inks up for the Rats

Darryl Lavis served as a Tunnel Rat in Vietnam in 1968-1969. Normally a modest man, Darryl has thrown caution to the wind and inked up with a superb Tunnel Rat tattoo. Ever hopeful, Darryl says he kept the extent of the design above rolled-up shirt level, just in case he gets called up again. That's the spirit! We hope that Darryl has set a bit of a trend, and that we'll see many more of us proudly inking up. Send us your Tunnel Rat tattoo photos for the pages of Holdfast.

### RSM relaxes with the lads

The Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER) recently held its 2nd birthday dinner, and 12 Tunnel Rats were invited to attend the black tie affair. The Tunnel Rats were kindly accommodated at the nearby 2 Commando Sergeants Mess. A highlight of the trip was when the RSM of SOER dropped in and sat around the breakfast table with the lads for a chat. Cool. In the photo, from left to right, Tunnel Rats Peter Cairns, 2TP 70/71, and Mal Botfield, 3TP 70/71, and the RSM of SOER WO1 Scott Middlemis. In the background are details of decorated members of 2 Commando Regiment.



### Lost Sappers immortalised on canvas

The painting above is of Sapper Jacob Moerland, 21, Sapper Darren Smith, 25, and their explosives detection dog Herbie. All three were killed in action in Afghanistan on 7 June 2010 by an improvised explosive device. The painting was created by former Tunnel Rat, Dave Sturmer, for the RAE foundation which auctioned the work to raise funds. Dave served with 1 Troop in Vietnam from April 1969 till December 1969 when he was evacuated home after being wounded for the second time on his tour. Dave seeks solace in painting these days, and devotes most of his skills to depicting current day Combat Engineers at work.

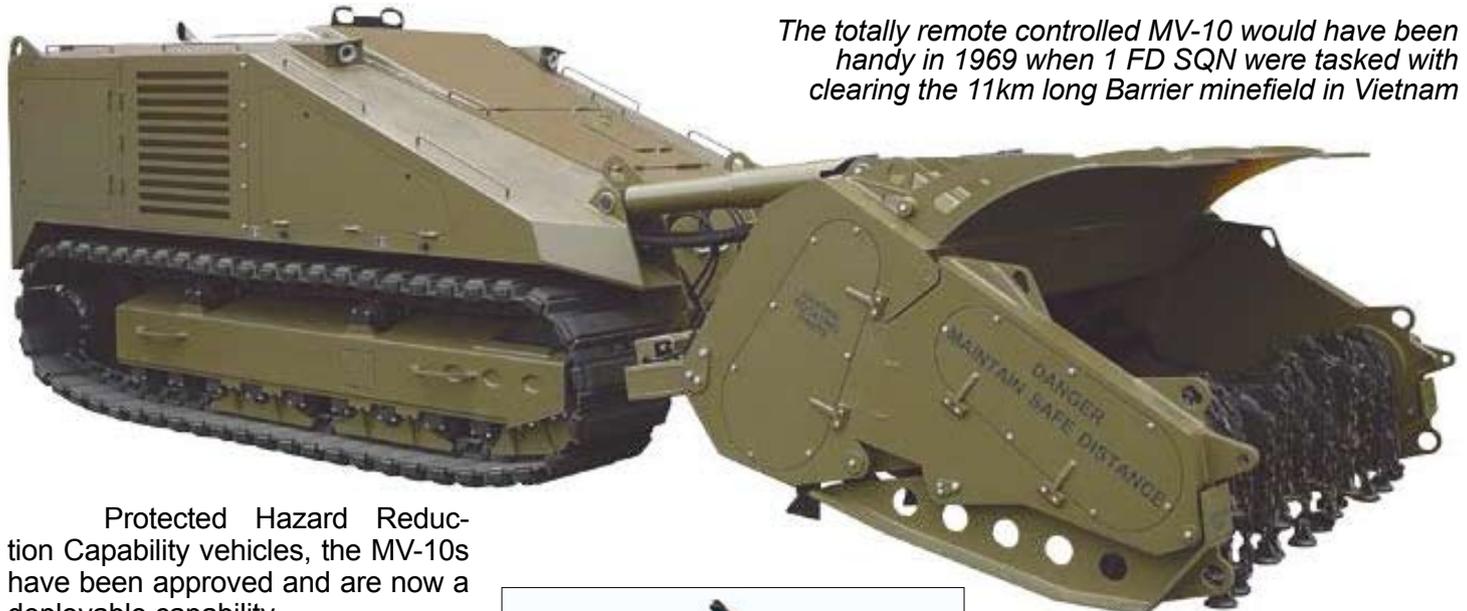


## Rodney rocks up to Government House to get a gong from the GG

Tunnel Rat Rodney O'Regan (Vietnam 70/71) was honoured with the Order of Australia Medal this year. The award was in recognition of his extensive work over many years in support of Vietnam Veterans, and also for his extraordinary work with the Light Horse re-enactment group which he carries out not only in Australia, but also on the old WW1 battlefields in Europe and the Middle East. Normally media shy, Rodney is seen here with the NSW Governor General, Her Excellency Professor The Honourable Marie Bashir AC CVO, on the day Rodney was presented with the award. Well done Sapper.



## New Mine Sweeper is on a roll with our Combat Engineers



*The totally remote controlled MV-10 would have been handy in 1969 when 1 FD SQN were tasked with clearing the 11km long Barrier minefield in Vietnam*

Protected Hazard Reduction Capability vehicles, the MV-10s have been approved and are now a deployable capability.

The system can clear all types of anti-personnel mines and anti-tank mines with an operator using the machine via remote control and a camera that shows multiple angles of view.

The MV-10s, which weigh 19 tonnes, have been delivered to 1CER in Darwin, 2CER in Brisbane and 3CER in Townsville.

The design was accepted last November, providing Army with a fully deployable capability.

A variety of tools can be used with the MV-10s including rollers, flail/tiller, and a blade/gripper tool which can move obstacles such as motor vehicles suspected of concealing IEDs.

The machine can penetrate soil up to 60cm and anti-personnel



*The remote control device looks like something out of Star Wars. This is the civilian version and we suspect the Army ones are drab green rather than red*

and anti-tank mines are destroyed by the force of the tools. The MV-10's flail/tiller works in a single sweep, therefore reducing time deployed in potentially dangerous locations. It is

specifically designed to clear minefields and absorb explosive forces.

The MV-10 is ideal for clearing an area for forward operating base construction, or for returning landmine affected areas to local populations for safe use.

The machine does not need to stop after an anti-personnel landmine is destroyed – the flail may lose a chain, but clearance can continue unhindered.

The MV-10 is hardened to protect necessary areas on the vehicle, but as an unmanned vehicle it does not require additional armour that would usually weigh down manned vehicles.

The MV-10 is manufactured by DOK-ING of Zagreb in Croatia.

## Tunnel Rats attend flash SOER birthday dinner

LT COL Hugh Meggitt, the CO of the Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER) kindly invited 12 Tunnel Rats to the Regiment's recent formal Birthday Dinner. It was a privilege for us to be invited to the black tie affair, which saw the current serving men and women in their finest mess dress attire. The CO was clearly risking the very real possibility that the Tunnel Rats would commit every social blunder in the book, but we performed (relatively) superbly. The announcement was made at the dinner of the appointment of Tunnel Rat, LT COL John Hopman as Representative Colonel Commandant of SOER. We cover this honour to John and the Tunnel Rats in this issue..



PHOTOS (clockwise from bottom left): Canadian serviceman attached to SOER (left) with Mal Botfield 3TP 70/71; Phil Baxter MM 1TP 68/69 (left) spinning a "warie" with a young SOER Captain; Diners at the big table, with Noddy Norris 2TP 68/69 (far right) ignoring 100s of years of port drinking tradition and sticking stubbornly to beer; Trio (left to right) CAPT Erica Hansch, Adjutant of SOER, Jethro Thompson 1TP 66/67 and Jim Marett 2TP 69/70; Next day the Tunnel Rats had a long lazy Sapper's lunch at the North Bondi RSL, favoured haunt of the SOER - (left to right) Peter Cairns 2TP 70/71, Peter "Roo Dog" Scott 2TP 69/70 and Sapper "D" of SOER.

## 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 call 08 8725 6900 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 07 5500 6363  
 Allan S Coleman 07 4661 1924  
 Bill Corby 07 5502 1193  
 John "Tex" Cotter 07 4723 1244  
 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 08 9377 4560  
 Keith Mills 07 4770 7267  
 Warren Murray 02 6059 8142  
 John Opie 0427280703  
 Bernie Pollard 08 9248 3178  
 Ross Thorburn 0408413204  
 Bill Unmeopa 08 9300 5561  
 Snow Wilson Jnr 02 6649 3998

### OC's 1 Field Squadron

John Kemp 02 6288 3428  
 Rex Rowe 0419 251 420

### 1 Troop (1966-67)

Nick Burgerhof 07 3271 1592  
 Ray Burton 08 8268 4575  
 Ron Carroll 0408884327  
 Joe Cazez 07 3710 8102  
 Allan S Coleman 07 4661 1924  
 Grahame Cook 02 4390 5159  
 Mick George 02 6882 8574  
 Alan Hammond 0423491091  
 Cul Hart 0413300120  
 Neil Innes MM 02 9875 2962  
 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 07 5433 0482  
 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 03 5987 2828  
 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)

Phil Baxter MM 02 4625 6213  
 Ray Bellinger 0407952670  
 Adrian Black 0417756729  
 Mike Bruggemann 0409441992  
 Peter Carrodus 02 9759 6383  
 Albert Eyssens 03 9769 9715  
 Ken Ford 02 6645 2738  
 Max Goiser 02 9792 1765  
 Peter Hollis 02 6581 5401  
 George Hulse 07 3399 7659  
 Robert Laird 03 6356 1748  
 Brian Lamb 02 6059 6947  
 Kent Luttrell 0408387641  
 Kerry McCormick 03 6344 5291  
 Keith Murley 0429729764  
 Allan 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  
 Allan S Coleman 07 4661 1924  
 Paul Cook 02 4946 5321  
 Phil Cooper 0439 955 207  
 Garry Degering 03 9796 0136  
 John Felton 07 4661 8679  
 Grahame Fletcher 0408822489  
 Brian Forbes 0412047937  
 Jon Fuller 02 4774 1674  
 P. "Guts" Geisel 07 4092 1735  
 Terry Gleeson 03 5623 2886  
 Trevor Kelly 08 9538 1184  
 Des McKenzie 07 5448 3400  
 Anthony Marriott 03 6257 0279  
 Doug Myers 0421904562  
 Les Slater 08 9361 0603  
 Max Slater 0412 772 849  
 Vic Smith 0432916485  
 Dave Sturmer 02 8407 9812

### 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 03 5866 2644  
 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  
 Geoff Maddock 03 5442 2875  
 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 4151 2659  
 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  
 Bill Harrigan 08 9447 1127  
 Peter Hegarty 07 4169 0372  
 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  
 Stan Shepherd 0412 232 197  
 Bob Sweeney 08 9248 4432

### 2 Troop (1967-1968)

M. Ballantyne 08 8298 2515  
 John Beningfield 07 4778 4473  
 Peter Bennett 0418915550  
 Dennis Burge 08 8281 2270  
 Kenneth Butler 0414897889  
 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  
 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  
 Robert Knowles 08 9535 6416  
 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 0419539174  
 Tony Parmenter 0417856877

Brian Rankin 07 4775 5095  
 Hans Rehorn 03 5623 5572  
 Andrew Rogers 08 8087 5671  
 Mick Rowbotham 03 9439 7566  
 Geoff Russell 02 6342 1292  
 Robert Russell 03 5975 5329  
 Brian Sheehan 03 9336 3137  
 Carlton "CP" Smith 0448000334  
 John Tramby 0428659048  
 John Willis 03 9363 7878  
 "Snow" Wilson 08 9752 2935

### 2 Troop (1968-1969)

Janis Atrons +371 2944 6521  
 (This is Janis's mobile in Latvia)  
 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 03 5593 1791  
 Ross Hansen 07 3202 7540  
 Wayne Hynson 03 5245 6898  
 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 07 3881 1230  
 Rick Martin 02 6928 4253  
 Bill Matheson 0428959044  
 Bill Morris 08 9384 2686  
 Don Nicholls 02 9579 4126  
 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  
 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 4861 5715  
 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  
 Roy Elbourne 02 4868 1493  
 Grumpy Foster 07 4041 2321  
 Graeme Gartside 08 8725 6900  
 Doug George 0419475246

**Ready to roll**

Greg Gough 0417 911 173  
 Brad Hannaford 08 8389 2217  
 John Hopman 02 9398 5258  
 Chris Koulouris 02 4952 6341  
 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 07 5535 6290  
 Les Shelley 07 3264 4041  
 Jimmy Shugg 08 9776 1471  
 Bob Smith 07 5456 1194  
 Mick Van Poeteren 03 9435 0383  
 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 03 5974 2175  
 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  
 Graham Clark 0408533869  
 Dennis Coghlan 08 9724 1380  
 "Sam" Collins 08 8262 6107  
 Ron Cook 03 8787 7377  
 Jock Coutts 08 9279 1946  
 Bill Craig 08 9530 1008  
 Denis Crawford 03 9497 3256  
 John Crocker 07 3206 7995  
 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 3530  
 Ray Fulton 03 6288 1176  
 Ziggy Griot 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 02 6948 3927  
 Kevin Lappin 07 3273 8614  
 Gary McClintock 07 4788 0123  
 Peter McCole 03 5155 9368  
 Bob McGlenn 07 5426 1597  
 Ian McLean 02 6286 3928  
 Jeff Maddock 03 5442 2875  
 Leon Madeley 07 5497 1038  
 Bill Marshall 07 5545 0389  
 Rod O'Regan 02 6550 6068  
 Graeme Pengelly 0407 138 124  
 Des Polden 03 6223 3830  
 Keith Ramsay 02 6585 6503  
 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 02 4283 3439

**2 Troop (1971-72)**

Warren Pantall 0417 096 802

**3 Troop (1966-67)**

Wilfred Eyles 02 4390 0150

**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  
 Barry Gilbert 03 5023 6657  
 Brian Hopkins 0401829744  
 John Hoskin 08 8270 3002  
 Jack Lawson 0429 798 673  
 Peter MacDonald 08 9448 5418  
 Barrie Morgan 0437861945  
 Michael O'Hearn 02 4932 7509  
 Gary Pohlner 0427172900  
 Peter Pont 07 4095 0150  
 Tom Simons 03 6344 6058  
 Kevin Shugg 0411144500  
 Mervyn Spear 08 94539232  
 Frank Sweeney 07 3882 6025  
 Brian Thomson 0428551368  
 Vic Underwood 0429 907 989  
 Murray Walker 08 9332 6410  
 Glenn Weise 0427 741 170  
 Mick Woodhams 08 9459 0130  
 Bob Yewen 07 5532 4560  
 Ken Young 02 9602 5204

**3 Troop (1968-69)**

Geoff Box 08 9731 2757  
 Col Campbell 0417658770  
 Barry Chambers 08 8927 8237  
 Neil Garrett 03 5798 1522  
 Brian Glyde 02 4455 7404  
 Peter Gray 02 4285 8877  
 Derwyn Hage 0408 802 038  
 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 07 4054 3472  
 Barry Parnell 07 4947 1976  
 Bob Pritchard 07 4779 0608  
 Greg Roberts 03 5941 2269  
 Walter Schwartz 0439512322  
 Don Shields 08 8297 8619  
 Ray Vanderheiden 02 4776 1373  
 Wal Warby 0418240394  
 Ray White 03 9740 7141

**Three Troop (1969-70)**

Tony Bower-Miles 0412 317 306  
 Chris Brooks 08 9271 2811  
 Jim Burrough 0400884633  
 Terry Carlidge 03 5367 1472  
 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 07 5532 3497  
 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 07 5495 5647  
 "Jacko" Miller 03 6267 4411  
 Chris Muller 07 4653 0457  
 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 08 9757 2016  
 Peter Thorp MID 02 6288 0008  
 "Curly" Tuttleby 02 6681 4133  
 Hank Veenhuizen 0407 487 167  
 "Wonzer" White 02 9833 0580

**Three Troop (1970-71)**

Steve Armbrust 07 5545 1073  
 Errol Armitage 0427 855 482  
 Geoff Ansell 0448 013 712  
 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 03 5682 2584  
 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  
 Kenny Laughton 08 8297 4010  
 Garry Lourigan 02 4844 5545  
 R. McKenzie-Clark 08 9729 1162  
 Robert McLeay 03 5386 1122  
 "Jock" Meldrum 0424924909  
 Roelof Methorst 0416834846  
 Carlo Mikkelsen  
 (New Zealand) 0064 9 4797857  
 Ben Passarelli 02 9610 3949  
 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  
 David Wilson 07 3855 1370

**Three Troop (1971-72)**

Trevor "Zip" Button 08 95615363  
 Ron Byron 02 6653 4791  
 Mike Dutton 0438627140  
 Brenton J Smith 08 8536 2923

**US Tunnel Rats**  
 Stephen "Shorty" Menendez  
 menendez@toast.net

John Thiel  
 drjthiel@gmail.com

Mark Morrison  
 lmorrison18@cox.net

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