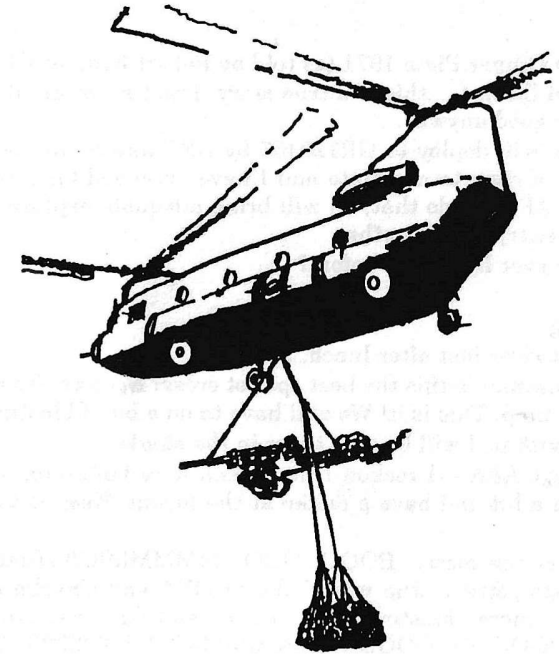


4 FIELD REGIMENT  
(SVN) ASSOCIATION  
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TAS  
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Please feel free to nominate for any of the vacant positions. Remember -- this newsletter will not work without your help.



4th Field Regiment (Vietnam)

Association

Bulletin No 7 September 1994



The Battle of The Dinner Plate 1971 (as told by Robert Sydney White)

With a little bit of license.....this is a true story. Don't shoot me if it is not exactly correct because it sounds good anyway.

BK....The Battery will deploy to GR123456 by APC and be in position by x000 mhrs etc etc. There will be a river to negotiate and I have arranged for a recce to be conducted by Sgt xxx from the APCs to do that, he will bring adequate explosives with him in case we have to blow any entry or exit paths.

BG....Has anyone ever been here before?

BK....No.

BG.... Just asking.

Battery arrives at river just after lunch.

BK to Sgt xxx Hmmm is this the best spot ot cross? Sgt xxx Yes sir did a real good recce straight from the map. This is it! We will have to do a bit of blasting though.

BK....OK get on with it, I will be over there in the shade.

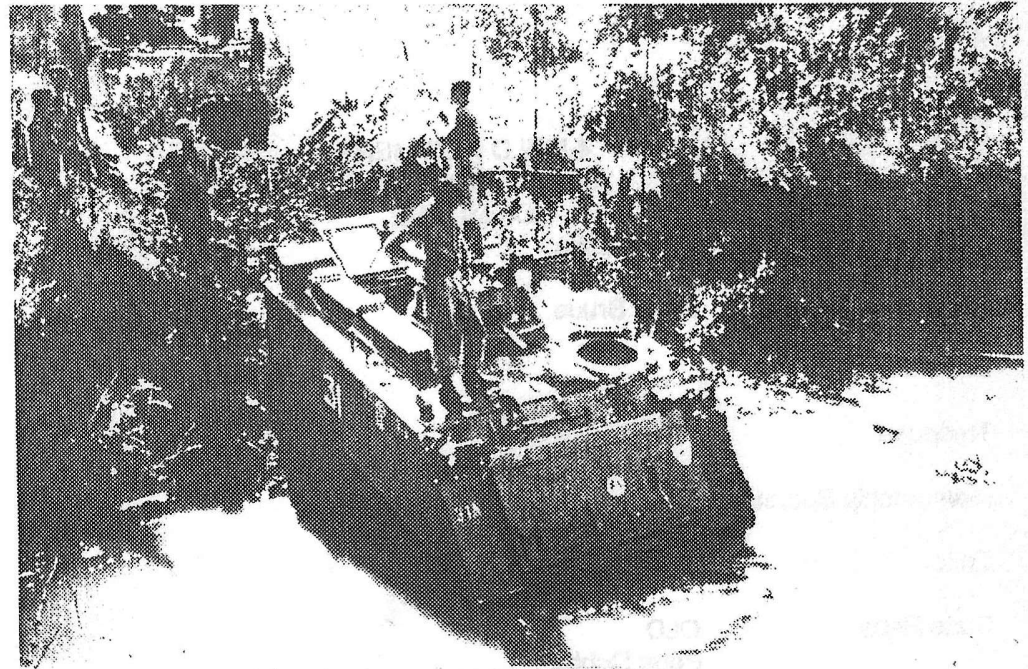
BG....quietly to Sgt AAA----I reckon I have been here before on another tour, I'm gonna slide downstream a bit and have a dekkko at the layout. Keep it to yourself and cover me bum.

Meanwhile back at the recce....BOOOOOOMMMMMM!!!!!!That should give us a good entry point. Smoke settles....the whole bloody NVA and Charlie are now awake. Seems we need a bit more blasting....not quite suitable yet...an even bigger bloody BBBBOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMM!!!!!!That should do it.

BK...OK Sgt bbbb we will have you across first. Crank up lets have you. BBBRRRRMMMM BBBRRRRMMMM BBBRRRRMMMM (loudly) Sgt bbbb J...S C...ST just made it but we cant get up the other bank it's too steep. We will need to blow an exit point. By the way ---keep in my tracks its' bloody deep in the middle.

Sgt xxx (who was travelling with Sgt bbb's track) I'll set up to blow an exit point mate we'll have you out of there in no time. Sgt bbb is not happy at this stage--his track is bogged to the a#\*+> his gun is drowned and he is vulnerable now that Charlie and his mates have been woken up.On the other side of the river (Runnin Bear) the remainder of the battery is getting fidgety because they are standing around like old m\*:%!s. The BG has not yet returned and Sgt yyyy is getting concerned for his welfare.

GPO to BK...Sir do you think we should go into some sort of local defence setup?..its getting late and we are not progressing as quickly as we should. BK to GPO...I'll tell you when Mr 456, this deployment is my baby and is going to plan. SAAARNT gggg...crank



## *Presidents Page*

G'day Guys

Well, Bo Plenty has done another great job producing Bulletin No 7. You will notice the date of Sep 1994 - well that's how long I've been sitting on it. All a matter of time and priorities I suppose.

Some good news. Gabby Hayes - now retired and living in Brisbane - has volunteered to take over treasurer duties. He and his wife Kerry, plus son David who has set up a data base for us, have agreed to run the books. Currently we have \$860.00 in the kitty. I'll have to get hold of some more envelopes for this newsletter plus postage of course. A lot of our funds come from members who have paid up as life members. I've spoken about this in the past but basically, anyone who has paid a donation of \$100.00 or more is up for life membership. A list of life members is attached.

As for the rest, there are quite a few who regularly send in their \$5.00 annual subs, but there are also quite a few who haven't put in a thing since we started. I realize there are those who are happy with their own Battery organization so after discussions with the new treasurer, we have decided that if you don't pay your subs - you're off the mailing list. So - get your 1995 subs - all \$5.00 of it - into Gabby Hayes at: 74 CAMELIA AVE, EVERTON HILLS QLD 4053,

If you have a touch of the guilts about the last year or so, you might like to include a few extra dollars. Which brings us to the next issue - editor of our bulletin. John (Jo) Plenty has done a great job over the last couple of issues, but circumstances now preclude him from continuing. What we now need is someone else to take over as editor and really get our newsletter up and running. Of course its useless haveing an editor unless there is something to put in the bloody thing, so get scratching and do up an article or two. Either send them to Gabby with your subs, or drop me a line here in Melbourne.

John Wilson has moved out of Townsville to be surrounded by golf clubs at Ballina. John and Denise are enjoying life in a more moderate climate. John's golf is on the improve too. In his spare time he will eventually take over as secretary of the 4 Fd old Boys.

News from the personnel front. Dennis Byrne is now retired. Kevin O'Brien is now Brigadier O'Brien and is Director General Recruiting in Canberra.

PJ Smith is out of the Army living in Sydney. Ian McNaughton is somewhere in Darwin. Steve Yates was awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross as CO, Civil Liaison Unit Darwin. Tom Beynon is still touring Australia somewhere (Gee he writes a great letter).

Sad to advise that Billy Bostock passed away late last year.

Graham Claughton - never too far away from horses - now runs a TAB in Melbourne. Alan Green was a bit crook there last year. Had to go under the knife for Jack the Dancer. Kev Lakey - now Major Lakey is SI RTW at the S of Arty. Sandy Nall is still out at Cameron Corner, but now lives in Tibooburra. Brian Swift has moved to Brisbane and is now Director, Media and Public Relations, Queensland Police. Terry Waters is back in Sydney, after a stint in South Africa. I'm sure there is a lot more news to be told, so don't be shy, lets keep the momentum going. Drop me a line with any news. Have you all written to DEFPAC, PO Box 5182AA, MELBOURNE VICTORIA 3001, to find out if you got your Holiday Leave Loading from Vietnam. I did - but apparently quite a few did not. Include your Army number, unit and dates in/out of SVN.

Some of you would have received a letter or two from Alan Johnston of 106 Bty who has spent considerable time and effort - not to mention money, in collating a history of 106 Bty in SVN. He is also interested in stores of life after SVN. Alan would love to hear from ex turtles at 5 Netley St MORLEY 6062 or phone (09) 276 136.

Haven't heard any news about ANZAC Day gatherings, but all the old haunts will be frequented I suppose. Brisbane and Sydney seem to do very well, but Melbourne always seem pretty quiet. For those in Melbourne, the depot of 2/10 Mdm Regt at 8 Chapel St East St Kilkda will be open if you want to drop in.

Well gang, that's about all I've got for now. If anyone wants to talk to me on any of the above give us a call on (03) 526 4203 (BH) or 866 6396 (AH). There is always a spot on the "committee" if you are interested.

Regards to all,  
Peter Bruce.

P.S. Anyone like to organise the next reunion?

PPS Harry Dainton advises that the WA Branch of our Old Boys Assoc are to meet at SASSALAR'S Tavern, City Arcade(Upper Level) Perth, straight after the march on ANZAC Day. Harry is contactable on 272 1336 (AH) or 480 2444 (BH).

**LIFE MEMBERS**

Don Donkin  
Brian Swift  
Bert Downes  
Peter Van Der Meer  
John Wilson

**Donations (Incl Subs) received since Jan 94**

J.W. Plenty, Max Beck, Brian Slattery, Geoff Dunkley, Alan Betts, Chris Reid, Arped Briglec, Greg Lloyd, Ian Prewett, Ray Harper, John Pritchard, Dave Holmes, Chris Trimble, Les Cooper, Rex Ratcliffe.





up!!!Get moving, Sgt fff will be out there in a minute and I want you right up his a./;'s er I want you right behind him. BBBRRMMMM, BBBRRRRmmmm (was there something I had to tell him about keeping in line or something) BBBRRRRRRMMMM BBBBLLLLLOOOOPPPP BBBRRRRMMMM BBBBLLOOOPPPP SPLUTTER COUGH BALOOBALOOPAAALLLOOO.

(if you think reading this sh.../.; is bad try typing it) Everyone on top of the track J>>S B>>>>DY C>>>T Drowned in action.

Boooom (that's all that was left) HHMMMM Seems we need some more explosive, did'nt quite do the job (says Sgt ssss) Let us pause here for a moment and recap just in case you may be losing the plot ( I certainly am)

One track got stuck at the exit point on one side of the river

One track got stuck in the middle of the river

Four tracks all up one anothers bum on the other side of the river plus one ACV

One BG missing

No more explosive

The shadows are getting very long

BK to GPO ...Now is the time Mrklklkl to get some local defence up and going, let me know when its' done. GPO to BK....Sir, what are we gunna do about the guns in the river..BK ..include them in your local defence plan you bloody dope.

DDDAARRRRRKNNNNEEEEESSSS FFFFFFFFAAAAAALLLLLLSSSSSSSSSS We can hear the curfew gun from NUI DAT firing the illum shell....the battery is all quiet and into night routine....including the poor silly buggers in the river.

Ever so quietly a large hairy figure slips into the defensive ring, the BG is back, smiling smugly, he briefs SgtRTRTR that his suspicions were correct there is a flat rock crossing about two feet deep just up the river. No use trying tonight best wait until first light. Sgt frfrfr tells the BG what has happened in his absence , the BG sh,\*&^%ts himself laughing. THE NIGHT ROLLS ON.....Somewhere between 0100 and 0200 a fresh breeze springs up. Close to the bty is a large stand of bamboo, as we all know (well nearly all) bamboo has a tendency to rattle when wind blows through it.

It must have been a long hard day for Sgt ththyg the battery flare maniac, because at this time he had been staring into the darkness and straining his ears and eyes to the utmost like all good soldiers on sentry do and the rattle of bamboo stirred him into action. The stresses of long and arduous combat had stretched his nerves like guitar strings and convinced him that the whole bloody NVA was "coming to get us".





Without batting an eye lid and with scant regard for his own safety, he was on his feet and fired a white flare into the bamboo with the intention of revealing the position of the bad guys.

All the stupid SOB did was light us up for all the world to see (most of all the NVA who did not exist) The source of alarm was discovered....about four or five scrawny looking bush pigs.

FIRST LIGHT BG to BK (whisper whisper etc etc) BK I have done another recon and there is a better crossing point further up river Sgt bhhbgf will move to recover the tracks ...etc etc etc.

THEN JUST WHAT THE BK DID NOT NEED (Or did he) WAS THE SOUND OF A HELICOPTER APPROACHING CARRYING A VERY VERY FAMILIAR AND MOST FEARSOME FIGURE WITH A RATHER LARGE BIKE HANDLE MOUSTACHE.

IN CONCLUSION I ASK ....WERE YOU THERE? DID IT HAPPEN? AND IS IT NEAR ENOUGH TO THE TRUTH? (Thank god we can still have a bloody good laugh about these sorts of things, photos of this incident are inside the back cover)

#### A LETTER FROM OUR PATRON

Dear Peter,

Please find enclosed cheque for \$100.00 for life membership of our association. Moira and I are enjoying retirement and our soon to be 8 grandchildren. Hope life is being good to. OK A SHORT SKETCH FROM THE PAST Picture the scene November 1968 I had just returned from the 50th anniversary of Armistice Day in Paris where I spent 10 wonderful days with the Aust Army contingent. On return to North Head I was informed I was to proceed forthwith to take up my new appointment--RSM 4 Field Regiment Townsville. Moira and the kids said "TOWNSVILLE" God they were pleased. The Army sent me by normal means, three nights and three days later I arrived by train in Townsville.

Do you remember Townsville mid November 1968? 6am hot, dusty, backwoodsie. I was met by the duty driver in what could be described as a poorly maintained and dirty Land Rover in which I was conveyed to Barracks--a dry treeless barracks. There was no one to meet me and after wandering around for awhile a young steward assured me there were empty rooms upstairs. I filled in time unpacking my gear and while doing so one of the bachelor Sergeants arrived home and said to someone downstairs "Who is upstairs

unpacking?". The reply came back "Its' the new RSM" to which the Sergeant said "Oh the bastards not going to live in is he?". I could see this was not going to be a good day. Walking slowly out of my room and leaning over the balcony I said "Not only is the bastard going to live in he is also going to look after the Orderly Sergeants roster"---silence from below. More about my first day as RSM \$ FD REGT next issue.

Best wishes as ever  
Your friendly Ex RSM  
D W DONKIN



#### LETTERS FROM

Tom and Noeleen Beynon...or more like a short story.

after six months..enjoying the easy lifestyle in Darwin....continuous humidity a bit of a problem....Noeleen is "housemaid" during the week and weekends....planning return trip to Tassie come xmas 94....but may not be until easter 95....Fannie Bay gaol makes hair stand on end....Artillery museum worth a visit in Darwin....may go over to Singapore seeing as we are so close....NEXT LETTER....this will be our last letter from Darwin....heading south via the west coast in late June....Tom is convinced there are no fish in Darwin area or is that he just cant' catch 'em Anzac ceremony in Darwin is different....cenotaph is where the first bomb fell on Darwin....amazing that Australian public was never told the truth about the Japanese raids on Darwin....Well folks I honestly do not know where we'll be for or next chapter "around Australia", so will see you when we see you regards Tom and Noeleen.

John and Denise Wilson

have moved to 9/3 Jameson Ave East Ballina 2478 only 800 meters from the first tee Ballina golf club and close to the beach and shopping centre

Ray and Morna Harper

now living at unit 199 Carlyle Gardens Bargara 4670

Chris Reid feeling guilty about not writing....has got itchy feet....enjoyed article from Bluey Forsyth

Geof Dunkley pleased to now of the existance of the news letter....is planning a return trip to SVN this year....has lived in VIC,TAS,and now NSW....

To the editor of the JOURNAL WITH NO NAME....the graphics in our newsletter *are that good*....do you need help with yours?

Photos on the next page are from Alan Johnston in Perth (top) 106 Bty get together and Lindsay Walpole in Adelaide at this years ANZAC DAY march.(bottom)