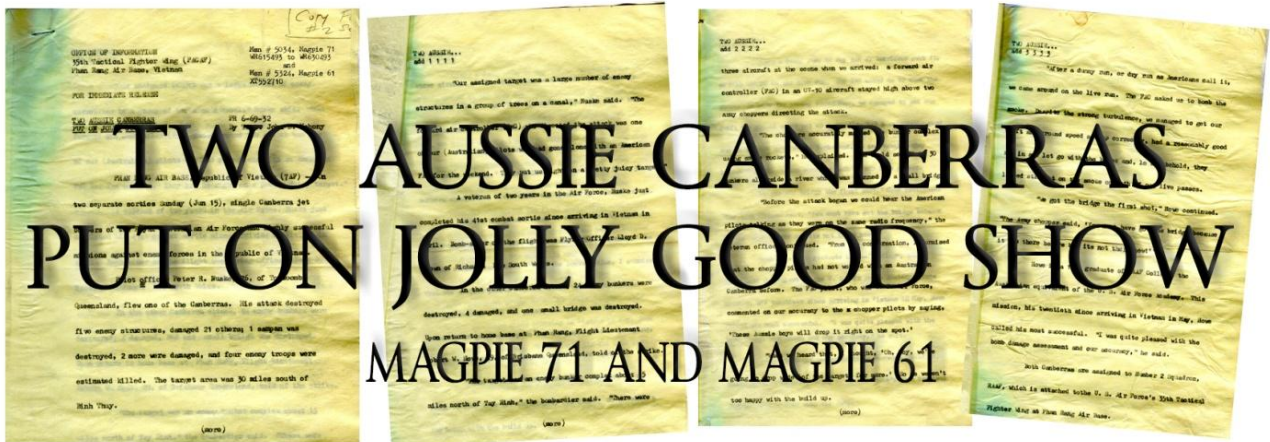


# Phan Rang AB Newsletter

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.  
 "Keeping the memories alive" Newsletter 193

- Two Aussie Canberras Put on a Jolly Good Show
- Certificate of an Operational Bombing Mission
- Phan Rang AB Physician Selected PACAF Flight Surgeon Of The Year
- Training In Australia - First in a series by Roger Lambert
- Use Of U.S. Coins To Begin June 1
- Say It Isn't So
- Doug's Comments



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| <p>OFFICE OF INFORMATION<br/>                 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing (PACAF)<br/>                 Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam</p> | <p>Msn # 5034, Magpie 71<br/>                 WR615493 to WR630493<br/>                 and<br/>                 Msn # 5324, Magpie 61<br/>                 XT552710</p> |
| <p><b>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</b></p>  |  |
| <p><u>TWO AUSSIE CANBERRAS</u><br/> <u>PUT ON JOLLY GOOD SHOW</u></p>  | <p>PR 6-69-32<br/>                 By TSgt. John B. Mahony</p>   |

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PHAN RANG AIR BASE, Republic of Vietnam (7AF) - On two separate sorties Sunday (Jun 15), single Canberra jet bombers of the Royal Australian Air Force had highly successful missions against enemy forces in the Republic of Vietnam.

Pilot officer Peter R. Nuske, 26, of Toowoomba Queensland, flew one of the Canberras. His attack destroyed five enemy structures, damaged 21 others; 1 sampan was destroyed, 2 more were damaged, and four enemy troops were estimated killed. The target area was 30 miles south of Binh Thuy.

“Our assigned target was a large number of enemy structures in a group of trees on a canal,” Nuske Said. “The forward air controller (FAC) who directed the attack was one of our (Australian) pilots who had gone alone with an American FAC for the weekend. They put us right on a pretty juicy target.”

A veteran of two years in the Air Force, Nuske just completed his 41<sup>st</sup> combat sortie since arriving in Vietnam in April. Bomb-aimer on the flight was Flying Officer Lloyd D. Brown of Richmond, New South Wales.

In the other Canberra attack, 24 enemy bunkers were destroyed, 4 damaged, and one small bridge was destroyed. Upon return to home base at Phan Rang, Flight Lieutenant **Robert W. Howe**, 29, of Brisbane, Queensland, told of the strike.

The target was an enemy bunker complex about 15 miles north of Tay Ninh,” the bombardier said. “There were three aircraft at the scene when we arrived: a forward air controller (FAC) in an OV-10 aircraft stayed high above two army choppers directing the attack.

“The choppers accurately marked the bunker complex using smoke rockets,” he explained. “We could see 20 to 30 bunkers alongside a river which was spanned by a small bridge.

“Before the attack began we could hear the American pilots talking as they were on the same radio frequency,” the veteran officer continued. “From the conversation, I surmised that the chopper pilots had not worked an Australian

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Canberra before. The FAC pilot, who was U.S. Air Force, commented on our accuracy to the chopper pilots by saying, ‘These Aussie boys will drop it right on the spot.’

“When we heard that, I thought, ‘oh boy, we’re going to drop wide (of the target) for sure.’ So we weren’t too happy with the buildup.

“After a dummy run, or dry run as Americans call it, we came around on the live run. The FAC asked us to bomb the smoke. Despite the strong turbulence, we managed to get our drift and ground speed set up correctly, had a reasonably good run in and let go with the bombs and, lo and behold, they landed straight on the smoke on both of our live passes.

“We got the bridge the first shot,” Howe continued. “The Army chopper said, ‘You must have got the bridge because it was there before but it’s not there now!’”

Howe is a 1960 graduate of RAAF College, the Australian equivalent of the U.S. Air Force Academy. This mission, his twentieth since arriving in Vietnam in May, Howe called his most successful. “I was quite pleased with the bomb damage assessment and our accuracy,” he said.

Both Canberras are assigned to Number 2 Squadron, RAAF, which is attached to the U.S. Air Force’s 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang Air Base.

Flight Lieutenant Robert W. Howe



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**Certificate of an Operational Bombing Mission**

**On 18 January 1969 LAC (Leading Aircraftman) Kevin Neilsen, Number 2 Squadron RAAF was chosen to fly on an operational bombing mission on a Canberra bomber over South Vietnam. Here is his certificate**



*This is to certify that*

*A17497 IAC NEILSEN K. F.*

*flew as an observer on an operational bombing mission over South Vietnam on 18th January 1969.*

*The aircraft, a Canberra bomber carrying six M117 750 lb. bombs, was captained by Pilot Officer S. ROODHOUSE*

*The target was No 1:- 150 Viet Cong  
No 2:- VC Base Camp*



*[Signature]*  
*Commanding Officer  
No. 2 Squadron.*

**Kevin Neilsen says that “the night of the mission is was raining so hard, that the mission was nearly aborted. As we climbed out fo assigned height we went through the low cloud and the moon was incredible...I will never forget it.”**

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### **Phan Rang AB Physician Selected PACAF Flight Surgeon Of The Year**

*(Phan Fare, The Happy Valley Weekly May 23, 1971)*

A Phan Rang AB physician has been named the Pacific Air Forces Flight Surgeon of the Year. Taking the top command medical achievement award from among 113 flight surgeons in the vast Pacific theater is Dr. (Capt.) James P. O’Neal. The announcement was made by Dr. (Lt. Gen.) Alonzo A. Towner, Air Force Surgeon General, during a recent meeting of the Society of U.S. Air Force Flight Surgeons.

The 29-year-old physician, is assigned to the 35<sup>th</sup> USAF Dispensary here, and serves as the “family doc” for the F-100 Super Sabre pilots of the 352<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron. Doctor O’Neal has been in the Air Force for two years, serving the past 11 months at this coastal Vietnam base, 165 miles northeast of Saigon. He came to Happy Valley, home of the 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, from Ellsworth AFB, S.D.

General Towner cited Captain O’Neal for his “outstanding medical accomplishments within his command, and his demonstration of the highest standards of professional skill, personal integrity and unselfish concern in serving the men who fly.

The quiet, soft-spoken bachelor graduated from Pompano Beach (Fla.) High School in 1960 and went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry and biology from Davidson College, Davidson, N.C., in 1964. He received his M.D. shingle in 1968 from the Tulane University School of Medicine at New Orleans, La.

While stationed at Ellsworth AFB as a flight surgeon, he actively participated in the disaster medicine program and developed the skills necessary to effectively direct a medical disaster response team. These qualifications were put to a severe test during an actual B-52 Stratofortress bomber crash there when several crewmembers were trapped in the wreckage. Doctor O’Neal directed the medical rescue operation and personally assisted in pulling out the trapped fliers. He was awarded the Airman’s Medal for this life-saving effort.

Realizing it took more than sick call consultations to gain a rapport with the fliers and an appreciation of the unique mental and physical stresses placed on aircrew members, the young

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physician initiated a program of daily visitations to the base’s B-52 alert facility (I believe this was a typo and it should be B-57 alert facility.) These calls usually took place after his normal hospital duty hours. At Ellsworth, he also developed a new and comprehensive system for occupational medicine inspections of base facilities, which repeatedly disclosed and resolved significant hazardous health situations.

Since his arrival in Vietnam, Captain O’Neil has become a “flight” surgeon in the true sense of the title, logging more than 34 missions in the F-100 fighter while accompanying 35<sup>th</sup> TFW pilots on combat strikes against enemy targets throughout Southeast Asia. He also has flown an additional 11 missions in other base aircraft for a total of 85 flying hours in Vietnam. Whether actively flying combat missions, enthusiastically participating in squadron activities, or being available around-the-clock to provide medical care, Captain O’Neal has become accepted as a true member of the fighter pilots fraternity here.

A former 352<sup>nd</sup> TFS commander, Lt. Col. James L. Johnson Jr. of Litchfield Park, Ariz., said of Doctor O’Neal, “I have observed fight surgeon associations with pilot personnel in nine different squadrons during my career, and none involved themselves more fully in the particular specialties of flight medicine than has Captain ‘Neal. He established an excellent rapport with his comrades-in-arms, and has earned their lasting respect, admiration and friendship.”

Another squadron commander, Lt. Col. John L. O’Donnell Jr. of Lafayette, La., commented, “He has offered a very mature and stable source of mental strength and assistance to aircrews engaged in the stress and anxiety of a combat environment...He has gained this knowledge through repeated flight into high threat target areas in our F-100s.”

Here at Phan Rang, the PACAF Flight Surgeon of the Year has developed a disease monitoring system for the outpatient clinic. The system has been particularly effective in enabling the dispensary staff to detect and investigate disease outbreaks during the initial stages rather than after the peak of the patients have been treated. The value of these public health principles in this tropical area is self-evident. He also has been very active in the wing’s flying safety, life support, and newcomers orientation programs.

The nomination by Dr. (Lt. Col.) Royce Moser Jr. of Versailles, Mo., commander of the 35<sup>th</sup>

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Dispensary stated in part, “Captain O’Neal’s outstanding accomplishments in all aspects of aerospace medicine, from direct aircrew support to the less personal, but equally important areas of public health, occupation medicine and flying safety mark his as one of the Air Force’s finest flight surgeons.”

What was Doctor O’Neal’s reaction to his selection for the command’s top medical award: “It case as a total surprise to me,” said the noticeably shook surgeon “and I’m flabbergasted! It’s overwhelming to think that someone would consider me worthy of such a tremendous honor.”

Well, someone did; he was; and he is- - the PACAF Flight Surgeon of the Year.

**(Note:** This story was also published in *Phan Rang Newsletter 27* under the title **“Phan Rang Doctor Cited as Flight Surgeon of Year”** from the *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, Sunday, June 13, 1971. The story while the same is completely different from the Phan Fare version that appears above. James O’Neal as of this writing (March 2020) is obviously retired. O’Neal previously practiced emergency medicine for 29 years at DeKalb Medical Center and also served as the regional medical director for EMS throughout the metro Atlanta area. In a Georgia Health Report dated July 8, 2017, Gov. Nathan Deal on Friday appointed Dr. J. Patrick O’Neal as the interim commissioner of the Department of Public Health. O’Neal replaces Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, 70, who headed the department since 2011. O’Neal has been director of health protection for the agency and previously worked as the medical director for the division’s Office of EMS/Trauma. Before joining the department, he was a doctor of emergency medicine at DeKalb Medical Center for 29 years after serving as director of the outpatient clinic at the Medical Center of Central Georgia for two years. According to the agencies web site, he no longer heads that agency as of March 2019.)



**J. Patrick O’Neal M.D.**

Preface

**The Australian Army's  
experience in the  
Vietnam War**



Vietnam was Australia's longest war, and among its most controversial and divisive. The brunt of the ten year Australian commitment was borne by the Army, in terms of the forces committed and the casualties incurred and we've never heard their story. You've been exposed to the American experience in the Vietnam War, but now we need to recognize the fact and the role played by one of our most important allies in the conflict of the twentieth century. **Roger Lambert** Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Platoon Commander, 9 Platoon, C Company, 5th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment 1969-70 with the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment was originally introduced in Phan Rang Newsletter 186 and continued with 191 and 192. Beginning with this issue Roger will describe the Australian experience from his perspective and since the Vietnam War was not a single undifferentiated entity his experiences and those who served under him represents what they experienced was determined by when and where they were and their duties. It's important for us that are traveling to Australia to know and all Americans to understand the contributions and sacrifices that our most important ally made and continues to make. The first article “**Training in Australia**” is the first in the series.

**TRAINING IN  
AUSTRALIA**

BATTLE EFFICIENCY COURSE, JUNGLE TRAINING CENTRE (JTC), CANUNGRA

**Background**

In November 1942 the Army established the Land Headquarters Training Centre (Jungle Warfare), at Canungra. The Centre consisted of a Reinforcement Training Centre, an Independent Company Training Centre (formerly at Wilson's Promontory in Victoria) and a



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Tactical School, to meet the needs of combat in the demanding environment of Papua New Guinea.



Its first commandant was Colonel (COL) A. B. ('Bandy') MacDonald, pre-war commanding officer of the Darwin Mobile Force. By May 1943, when it was at the height of its activity, there were 2,000 reinforcements organized into eight training companies from which 500 soldiers a week graduated for service in New Guinea. There was also a Commando Training Battalion supplying reinforcements for the independent companies and an officer-training program which turned out 60 platoon commanders every six weeks. Training was

realistic and physically demanding, and instructors were drawn from men with recent combat experience in either the Middle East, South-West Pacific, or both. The Centre was closed in 1946.

The Centre was reopened in 1954 to meet the Army's training needs for service in south-east Asia (the Malayan Emergency). The site was expanded and the Centre divided into three sections: one to train officers and NCOs in jungle tactics, a second to train units in operations under jungle conditions and a third to test doctrine and produce training manuals. From 1955 to 1957, the commandant was Colonel F. P. Serong, later first commanding officer of the Australian Army Training Team, Vietnam.

The calibre of instructors was again very high, the Chief Instructor being Lieutenant Colonel (LTCOL) George Warfe, who had won an MC in New Guinea and a DSO in Borneo, and who had also served in the Malayan Emergency. In 1960, the School of Tactics and Administration was relocated to Canungra from Seymour in Victoria, broadening the Centre's functions as all officers now attended promotion courses there.

During the Vietnam War, the Jungle Training Centre (JTC) became the major training venue for

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the Army as it prepared units for active service, once again in South-East Asia. Companies were put through increasingly demanding training exercises throughout which all individuals and units were assessed for readiness for active service. At the height of the Vietnam War, Canungra was at its peak expansion and capable of dealing with up to 10,000 students on courses annually. The military area occupied some 15,826 acres, the barracks occupying some 247 acres with the remaining area used for field training.

With the wind-down after the withdrawal from Vietnam and the gradual re-orientation away from jungle warfare towards the defence of Australia, JTC was renamed the Land Warfare Centre (LWC) in June 1975. It also incorporated the School of Military Intelligence and the Warrant Officer and Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Wing, and hosted students on military cooperation programs from various regional and allied armies.

### **The Battle Efficiency Course**

As previously mentioned, during the Malaya, Malaysia and South Vietnam campaigns, every Infantry unit and with very few exceptions, all individual Arms reinforcement personnel destined for active service in these campaigns were required to undergo prescribed periods of training at JTC before being assessed as suitable for active service. This training was called the Battle Efficiency Course (BE) and was conducted by Battle Wing of JTC under the command of a LTCOL as Chief Instructor (CI).

During the Vietnam conflict, two versions of the three week BE course were conducted; one for a subunit (company) of an Infantry battalion and the second, a course for groups of individual reinforcements, usually of around Company strength.

I was selected to be part of the Battalion’s Cadre in 1968. We were to undergo the BE Course and then stay at JTC to put the remainder of the Battalion through the training.

From memory, we boarded hired coaches at Holsworthy Barracks after the evening meal and drove through the night, heading for Canungra. We headed up the Pacific Highway and at some stage into the journey, probably after Coffs Harbour or thereabouts, we had to ask the driver to pull to the side of the road for a ‘relief stop’ in the wee small hours (no pun intended). Of course, this had nothing to do with the liberal amounts of Coke being consumed by certain parties with a splash of Bundy to ward off the evening chill.

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*Picture the scene of a bus load of officers and SNCOs lined up along the side of the bus using the culvert as a temporary urinal. The ‘steam’ that emanated from the joint ‘relief operation’ would have led any passing motorists to believe that the coach may have been on fire!* The call of nature answered, we proceeded on to Southport where we had breakfast before heading into the hinterland and to JTC.

The Cadre was accommodated in tents on Battle Ridge and, as many would recall, this separated us from the main barracks and the creature comforts of the respective Officers’ and Sergeants’ Messes. I have no doubt that this ‘exile’ was a deliberate action and formed part of our ‘acclimatization’ to the rigors of what was to come over the next three weeks of our BE Course.

For the Cadre, JTC was to be ‘home’ for the next two months as we progressively put Battalion Headquarters, the Rifle Companies, Support and Admin Companies through the Course.

### **The Course**

I never retained the course syllabus so readers will forgive me if my memory isn’t what it used to be but, as I recall, the BE Course consisted of:

- Physical Training;
- Classroom lectures on Australia’s involvement in the Vietnam conflict (from the ‘Domino Theory’ to the ‘Gulf of Tonkin Incident’), ambushing and other infantry tactics.
- Muscle Toughening Course;
- Confidence Course;
- Obstacle Crossing Course;
- Weapon Handling and Shooting;
- Booby Traps;
- Navigation;
- Field craft; and
- Infantry Minor Tactics.

Many would recall that the Battle Wing instructor giving the lecture on our involvement in the Vietnam conflict had a D&E Platoon digger hidden behind the theatre curtain and, at the

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appointed time in the lecture (the Tonkin Incident), the bugger discharged a 7.62mm blank. Needless to say, it scared the living daylight out of the majority of the audience.

As you will read later, I was given responsibility for the Week One BE Course training, so I used the same ‘tactic’ as the blank in my lecture on our involvement as well as when I gave the lecture on ambushing. **Worked a treat!**

**Physical Training.** For the Cadre, physical training (PT) was conducted every morning when the course was in camp. I don’t recall whether there were any Physical Training Instructors (PTIs) on the strength of Battle Wing or the Centre at that time but I am aware that PTIs did come onto the Centre’s strength at a later date.

Besides PT, movement between lectures, training lessons and the various courses was always done at the double. Little wonder we were as ‘fit as Mallee bulls’. (*Mallee Bull - To be very fit and strong. The Mallee is very arid beef country in Victoria/South Australia.*)

**The Muscle Toughening Course.** The Muscle Toughening Course was a series of rope traversing and climbing systems suspended from trees and began with a twelve foot (3.65 metre) smooth wooden plank wall. From memory, we did this course twice.

The first run though was considered an introduction; dress was jungle greens (JGs) and boots. The second time through was done in patrol order. Of course, this was a precursor to the infamous Confidence Course.



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### **The ‘Burma Bridge’, Confidence Course, Jungle Training Centre**

**The Confidence Course.** The Confidence Course was a series of some twenty obstacles which were constructed along a creek line on the northern side of the barracks. Again, from memory, the course was around half a mile in length (800 or so metres). The course involved going over, through or under a series of obstacles as well as vertical climbs and horizontal traverses. Like the Muscle Toughening Course, one run through was done in ‘clean fatigue’ and the next in patrol order.

The course obstacles included balance beams, tunnel crawls, horizontal and vertical cargo nets, coiled barbed wire fences, a ten foot (3.05 metre) vertical wall, monkey bars, rope traverse, a thirty foot high (9.14 metre) horizontal rope bridge, the “Burma Bridge”, a six foot (1.8 metre) wall climb as well as the dreaded drop into the water-filled “Bear Pit” with whatever it happened to contain at the time ...whatever was in the pit can only be left to the imagination as it never seemed to be flushed out.

I don’t recall that there were many obstacles that were not filled with water or involved going through, over or into water or across muddy ground.

Machine guns firing live ammunition into adjacent pits along the course, the discharge of coloured smoke grenades and the shouts from the instructors all added to the combat realism of the Confidence Course. Even though the course was timed, troops were all expected to assist their mates who may have been experiencing difficulties at particular obstacles.

And, as many will remember, the course culminated in the jump from the thirty foot (9.14 metre) tower into the Coomera River.

**Obstacle Course.** The Obstacle Course was a series of large vertical man-made and natural obstacles over a distance of again approximately half a mile (800 meters). It commenced with a river crossing using improvised flotation devices. Obstacles included a variety of high log walls, a vertical cliff face and others. Teamwork was essential with groups having to work together to successfully negotiate the course. I cannot quite recall but I think that this was a timed course as well.

**Weapon Handling and Shooting.** Weapon handling involved the revision and testing of all

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infantry section weapons including stripping and assembly. Shooting involved firing of section weapons by day and night and the throwing of grenades, all on conventional and fairly realistic jungle ranges such as the Snap Gallery.

**Booby Traps.** Lessons on the enemy’s use of improvised booby traps from the use of sharpened bamboo stakes (the punji trap) were taught. More sophisticated use of unexploded ordinance to create home-made grenades, claymore-type mines and trip wires.

Who remembers being asked by the instructor to take down the red range flag from the pole at the end of the lesson only to detonate the booby trap under the pressure plate at the base of the flag pole?

**Navigation.** Map reading and navigation was revised and practised. Navigation exercises were conducted by day and night.

**Fieldcraft.** Fieldcraft was demonstrated and practiced at all levels.

**Infantry Minor Tactics.** Infantry minor tactics were demonstrated and rehearsed at all levels. This included:

- Section and platoon formation drills on the Padang (many will recall the demonstrations by the D&E Platoon, Battle Wing in their colour-coded helmets (scouts, Section Commander, gun group and riflemen) as they went through staggered file, arrowhead and the other formations) ;
- Patrolling;
- Contact drills;
- Section attack;
- Platoon attack;
- Ambushing by day and night; and
- Counter MT ambush drills (remember the instruction regarding taking rings off or if they wouldn’t come off, taping them up to prevent injury when leaping from the trucks?)

This series of instruction culminated in the Battle Inoculation Range which involved section attacks on defended positions with blank rounds whilst Vickers machine guns fired live rounds

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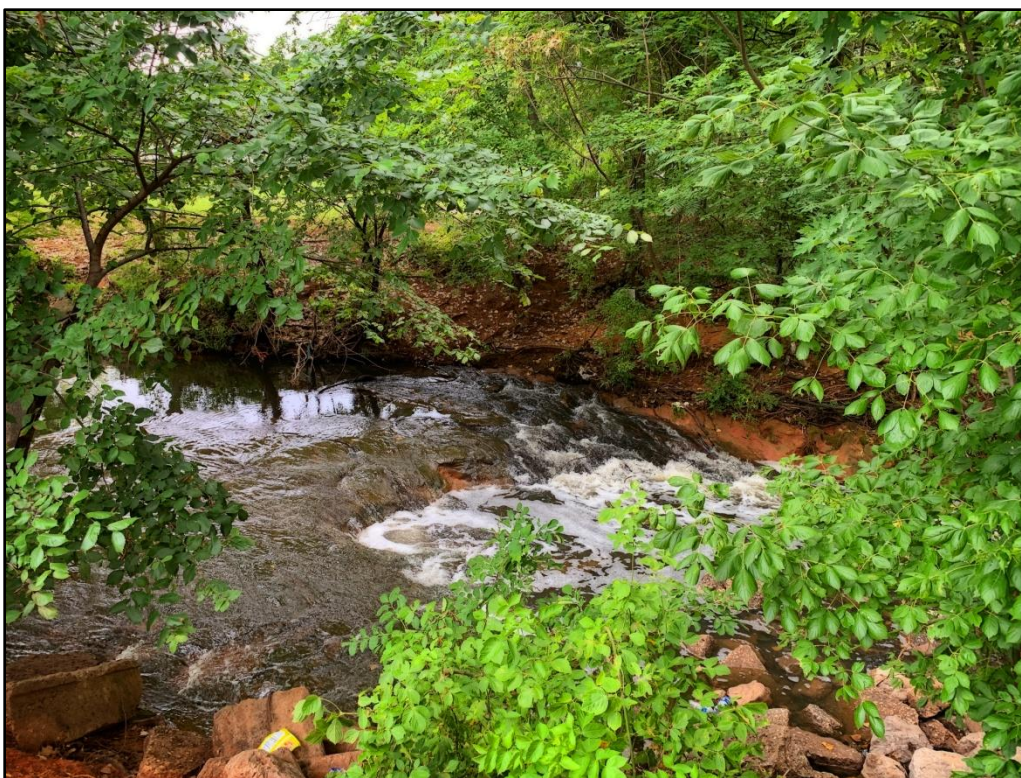
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overhead and explosive charges were fired on both sides of the attacking force and smoke grenades were detonated by Battle Wing Instructional Staff.

**Tested and Assessed Tactical Exercises.** Two exercises were then conducted in the border ranges astride the Queensland and New South Wales borders.

The first exercise was normally at Levers Plateau and involved being trucked into an RV and a long hard climb up to the plateau. Infantry minor tactics and navigation were continuously practiced.



**Typical terrain, Lever’s Plateau**

It was during this phase of the Cadre’s training that I gained a healthy respect for the strength and stamina of our machine gunners. Irrespective of rank, we were all allocated typical Section roles – scout, Section Commander, machine gunner, rifleman. I was nominated as a machine gunner and climbing that seeming endless cliff to the plateau was no easy task, as fit as I was then.

And of course, when reaching the top and the plateau, what’s waiting for us but a carefully

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sited and planned ‘enemy’ contact. The ‘enemy’ was provided by soldiers from the D&E Platoon.

I dutifully brought the gun into action only to be berated by an instructor to unfold the bipod to direct accurate suppressive ‘fire’ at the ‘enemy’. He obviously couldn’t see that I had adopted a good fire position behind a substantial log and had the gun supported by said log. “Unfold the bipod!” he ordered. ‘We’re being bloody well shot at you idiot and you’ve just made me stop supporting fire for my Section’, is what I thought but did not say!

The final exercise was conducted at the Wiangaree State Forest in dense rain forest which for most of the year was wet, hot, humid and muddy. Remember that delightful plant aptly named “Wait Awhile”?

Similar but more demanding field craft and tactics practiced at Levers Plateau were then conducted under test conditions and sub-units and sub-unit members were assessed and reported on. In fact, as I seem to recall, we were being assessed from the time we set foot in JTC.

### **Allocation of Troops to Task**

At the conclusion to the Cadre’s training, we were allocated specific weeks of training to enable us to put the entire Battalion through the BE Course. I was allocated to Week One training and so all of those devious tests of strength and endurance such as the Muscle Toughening Course, the Confidence Course, the Obstacle Crossing Course as well as weapon handling and shooting came under my auspices, ably assisted by the nominated SNCOs.

It was an onerous but rewarding time, working both day and night in conducting the Week One training. If there was one stand out in my mind, it was the **‘never give up’** attitude displayed by the officers, SNCOs, junior NCOs and soldiers and the unstinting assistance that they gave each other to successfully complete the challenges that confronted them. ***I’m confident that it was that camaraderie, not only from Week One but the entire BE Course, that was carried into country and made the “Tigers” the tight, formidable fighting force it proved to be during operations.***



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Of course there was that water jump from the tower, especially daunting for the non-swimmers, that are indelibly etched in my mind. Not one refusal. Of course, all knew that a refusal meant that you failed the course. And, as the instructor, you were not permitted to touch, push or otherwise propel a soldier off the tower.

One very quickly identified those soldiers who were going to experience difficulties in jumping. My technique was to stand next to the soldier, get him to stand on the edge of the tower's platform and to focus his eyes straight ahead at the Asian 'village' on the hillside opposite. A few reassuring words about the divers being in the water to assist and how we had never drowned anyone to date usually did the trick. ***That and the fact that sometimes my shoulder was too close to the soldier's and may have come into contact with his shoulder causing him to overbalance.*** As I said earlier, we never had one refusal!

The only downside to the Cadre experience was not being with 'my boys' during their ongoing training back at Holsworthy although being reunited with them when Charlie Company's turn came to do the BE Course was a great pick-me-up to say the least.

### **Later Years**

Little did I know that in the late seventies, I would be posted to JTC as the Staff Officer Grade 2 Personnel on the Headquarters staff and later, when the Centre became LWC, I was reassigned as the Staff Officer Grade 2 Operations. They were both rewarding postings from both a professional and social perspective. Why social perspective? Firstly, the Centre staff were a very close-knit community and secondly, many mates, both Arms and Services, came through Canungra on the TAC 3 officer training courses.

Of course, Battle Wing was still there as were the tent lines on Battle Ridge and of course, the Confidence Course and the water jump tower remained. And yes, they were still being put to very good use.

During my time at JTC/LWC, that Australian movie **“The Odd Angry Shot”** was filmed using locations in the barracks as well as the close training area and Canungra Village itself. Both the Gorge Road and Beechmont Road were sign-posted from the coast with directional arrows and the letters **“TOAS”** – they must have left a lot of people bewildered as to what the signs meant if they were not aware of the filming.

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### **LWC Today**

Today, while the title LWC has been retained, the Centre is a subordinate training establishment of the Royal Military College (RMC) of Australia. The current LWC consists of a Headquarters, Officer Training Wing, Warrant Officer and Non Commissioned Officer Academy, and Education Wing. The mission of the LWC is to provide post ab initio components of the All Corps Officer Training Continuum and All Corps Soldier Training Continuum to selected individuals in order to support the generation of Army's foundation war fighting capability.

The majority of the command elements of LWC and two of its subordinate units are principally located at Kokoda Barracks, Canungra and the remainder of the unit is collocated with major army concentrations in Darwin, Townsville, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.

The Centre now provides training to over 3,000 Army members annually. For soldiers, this includes the Junior Leaders Course, followed by Subject One Sergeant and Subject One Warrant Officer courses, and culminates in the Regimental Sergeant Major course. Officer training includes the All Corps Captains and Major courses, the Advanced Operations Course and the Pre-Command Course. Additionally, Education Wing provides Training Systems courses and the Royal Australian Army Education Corps training continuum of courses.

The emblem of LWC remains that of JTC and is the Hydra. The significance of the Hydra is that often when you attempt to solve problems in land warfare, you create other problems. Great strength and ingenuity are needed if the solution is to be definitive and lasting.

## **“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN**

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 193 “...keeping the memories alive”

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### **Use Of U.S. Coins To Begin June 1**

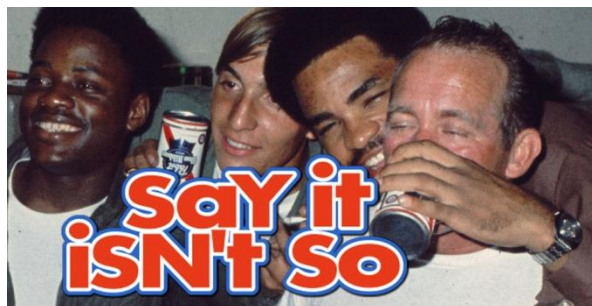
*(Phan Fare, The Happy Valley Weekly, May 23, 1971)*

U.S. quarters, dimes and nickels will be placed in circulation Vietnam-wide effective June 1, according to Capt. Frederick L. Ashworth, base finance officer.

The first installment of coins, worth \$5,000 will be distributed to the base exchange, snack bar, officer and enlisted clubs, and the mess halls. The coins will not be available at the American Express banking facility. Pennies are presently in circulation and will not be affected by the change-over.

Phan Rang AB personnel are requested to keep the coins circulating so that the change-over will proceed smoothly. It will occur gradually over the next few months, and both the U.S. coins and the present MPC paper money will be honored until the conversion is completed.

Base Exchange officials caution that the cashier lines will move slowly until the employees become proficient in handling the coins.



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### Say It Isn't So...As seen on Facebook

**David Knighton wrote:** After the new building, at the Ammo Holding Area was completed, the NCOIC didn't like the rocks that were around a sign besides the building. He decided they should be painted white. After some poor Airman painted them the NCO came out and turned one over and saw it wasn't painted. He got upset and told us to paint the bottoms of the rocks also because "a general is coming to the base to inspect us". You know the usual B.S. that we got told over and over again. Well, we said "okay Sarge". He left and we just turned the rocks back over with the white side up. He never did inspect them again and the general never showed up. Never had that problem on Night Shift. **All the NCO's on that shift cared about was completing the mission.**

**Doug's Comments:** If you are looking for **2020 Phan Rang Reunion** information the latest information that I have is in Phan Rang Newsletter 192. New information that I didn't include in that issue is that Bruce Gordon will be our key-note speaker...you know the guy that liked "The Spirit of Attack" and even wrote a book about it. Rick Learst a professional photographer and a newcomer to our reunion will be the Official Reunion Photographer and I hear that his wife Ruth is a very talented vocalist and if we ask her nicely she may perform the National Anthem for us. Maybe Ruth and Cindy Weber, another acclaimed singer, could do a duet. We have so many people volunteering to do things it really astounds me. I'm always reminded of the old axiom 'never volunteer' and I always wondered why. I come from a very small town and maybe my memory doesn't serve me well, but everyone volunteered for something. It added to the quality of life that made living in a small town enjoyable and the same thing can be said for our Phan Rang Group. The board always gets kudos for doing the job they were elected to do, but really the people that attend the reunions and support everything throughout the year and their generosity is unsurpassed really deserve the praise.

Roger Lambert, the author of "*Training in Australia*" who lives in Sydney indicated that he hopes to travel to Canberra to join our group during our visit to the Australian War Memorial in April. This newsletter was composed and all graphics by Douglas Severt unless otherwise stated. To see a list of all previous newsletters click [here](#). To unsubscribe to Phan Rang News, mailto:mailto:[dougsevert@cox.net](mailto:dougsevert@cox.net) and put 'unsubscribe' in subject line.