

B COMPANY



Major Lee OC B Coy

1985 saw many new faces with CHQ. MAJ Lee, WO2 Harvey and LCPL Carter arrived in February, Capt Heald left the Company on a jobex with Capt Rhodes from C Coy and Spt Sect had a complete change over by August.

The shark has been quiet in 1985. A trip to Mt Spec to begin the year was child's play. It looked as if we would have a dry trip to Tully in March but of course it rained enough in the last two days to cut the road out.

Ex Eager Eaglet provided high points in administration. Charles Quinton and Nutshell Minor were abandoned by both the Company and Ronnie RAAF to wait through the night on an old position. Doc Newlands has been improving his sidestep since 35 Sqn launched a danger close hot box air attack on him. We were pleased to receive B Company's hot boxes, and A Company's and C Company's and D Company's. On the operational front Maj Lee (brother of Bruce) perpetrated so many acts of bravery that the Bravo Company Bravery Cross was stuck. This is worn by the OC to all B Company social events.

May saw B Company learning/teaching 3/4 Sqn the finer points of infantry/armour co-operation. 'Cringing' Kindles won his name during the live firing phase.

A week in High Range live firing showed us just how much rain can fall in three hours. It also proved that Cpl Boston cannot fire the 84 mm with the safety catch applied no matter how hard he tries and that Pte Nelson can sharpen a knife blade to nothing inside a week.

Building 547 (CHQ) was christened during a six week stint in camp. It is now referred to as The Goodship Bravo. Pte Howard had 5 throws from the bridge to the engine room to break the champagne.

Ex Northern Warrior/Swift Eagle saw B Coy once again lead the Battalion initial insertion. Air mobile ops and the close country around Paluma Dam provided the best training of the year.

Providing enemy support to 3 RAR in SWBTA in September was not demanding or consistently exciting. Rain is still the best thing to fall from the sky.

October brings BRL and specialist courses. ODF Company and DFACC duties over the block leave period will provide a good working up period for 1986.

Our thanks to the regulars from Signals, Medical and Transport Platoons. We look forward to working with you in 1986.

1986 — the year of the SHARK



PTE Trembath and PTE Hoffrichter go to ground

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A short break in training on NBCD

For 4PL 1985 has been a year of mixed fortunes and a great many new faces.

This aside the platoon is developing and next year is full of promise.

Unfortunately some of the real characters within the platoon will soon be leaving us and they all will be missed. Monte, Swannee and Knuckles (alias RAMBO) are all 'wimping' south. Moose has decided to give the hard life a miss and join the Public Service. Monty and Sammo are also seeking discharge. This is going to leave Smithy with no one to share his fun times — Poor Smithy! Taity eventually succumbed to the endless hours of thumb screws and bright lights and has decided to give the firm another three years service.

Looking back on 1985 several highlights come to mind.

First there was the close country (sorry.... wet weather ops) training at FFBS Tully. Then the Bn ODF Exercise in April. After some vital man power changes it was off to SWBTA for Ex First Circle with 3/4 CAV. Chanky showed us how to catch fish.

June was a busy month highlighted by 43 + 1km fun stroll around HRTA and a busy shooting schedule. Whenty was kind enough to give the boys a perfect flag pole climbing demo. Mil Skills followed with little success.

In August along came Ex Swift Eagle which involved a "base camp" on Hill 525 navigation training at Paluma and for those few lucky enough "special training" at the BMA.

Finally Ex Strategic Vision at SWBTA came along in September. No one could be blamed for thinking that 4PL conducted some survival training here with a post Exercise tally of one shark, three pigs, three snakes and 19 fish. Bozzo gave a perfect demo of close recon techniques and the platoon caught up to the latest events in all the mid afternoon soaps.

Still ahead in 1985 is the specialists courses for those involved and BRL. We will all return at the end of November to take up ODF and DFACC responsibilities in December '85/January '86. Hopefully Trevor will be able to take more than five minutes in the sun by then.

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The beginning of '85 brought a large turnover of staff; a new Pl Comd, Lt "Deckchair" Dechow and Pl Sgt "Skull" Helmrich to give a creative spark for the year. A dry trip to Tully gave a large number of new soldiers their first look at North Queensland. April and Eager Eaglet gave us an unforgettably freezing wet miserable night next to Keelbottom waiting for a RAAF airdrop of fresh rations (i.e. stew). Better still we got A, C and D's as well! Sgt Helmrich suffered hundreds of mite bites on his ankles (more anti-mite?!). Next to Shoalwater with 3/4 Cav and APC's — During live firing Drummo tried catching a burst of .50 Cal in his teeth and most of the diggers tried their hands at crashing APC's! June already, with the exercises really coming thick and fast cramming Enemy for RAAF survival (fish in a barrel?) Coy livefiring (burnt out barrels!) and Mt Vince! A PR film in July gave a few members a chance to trip the light fantastic; in fact "Thommo" got 3 seconds exposure tripping over and falling down! (Magnum watch out!) Mil Skills snuck in at the end with 5 Sect having the dubious honour (?) of being first within the Coy, unfortunately the Coy as a whole did not do as well. Jimmy McGuire swanned to Europe in exchange for Cpl Cecil (don't laugh) "Jock" Burnett who shared

Exercises Swift Eagle and Northern Warrior with us (who can forget the Sarge's "VC" for grenading a pit by himself — groan!) Our feet barely touch ground and its down to SWBTA for 3 weeks as enemy for 3 RAR's Strategic Vision! The large group of march ins who arrived 2 days prior to Swift Eagle really are getting their money's worth! Perhaps we didn't shine during Mil Skills but we showed 3 RAR that 2/4 RAR produces professional soldiers of a high standard; at times to our host's embarrassment! Remember Lt Dechow calling on 3 RAR's IntCpl who later claimed to have repulsed singlehandedly an almost overwhelming attack on BHQ. If that's "PARA" we'll keep the jungle! Finally back to Lavarack and a spot of S/D. A short rest only and we're back into it with courses in October and a promise of an interesting Christmas as we stay back on DFACC. All the best for "Stumpy" Payne as he tries his luck at the Queen's Medal and to those who left us, Brookie, Thommo, Barry, Hewie and the rest, here's to you guys!

O.M. Glover,
Cpl 5Pl



"Come on... Back to the War!"

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The platoon got off to a lightning start in 1985 — undermanned and on duties!! However in February the IET's arrived and we set off for Mt Spec to learn the ways of jungle and gympie, and prepare for the FFBS at Tully. During this time Pte Gillen demonstrated his bravery and dependance by deliberately (so he says) missing his hootchie, the track plan and the perimeter cord obscured in the night and sleeping in the rain. Tully was unusually dry, but the rain on the last 2 days cut the roads, and threatened the Coy with a stranded weekend without rations.

The battalions designation of ODF meant endless DPI checks and of course our favourite the ODF tests!!! Naturally, a good time was had by all, even the ones that ended up near unconscious in an Ambulance during the "warm" 15 km run. The second ODF test concluded with 6 PI emerging as the highest scoring PI in the Bn, so that was a consolation.

Ex Eager Eagle's, highlight apart from the rain and a heliborne "Hot" insertion, was an ambush as spectacular as New Year's Day fireworks display,

in which the PI consumed the entire Coy's Pyro's. It was soon after this we went to Shoalwater Bay with the 3/4 Cav on Ex First Circle a training exercise to revise lost skills on Inf/APC co-operation using live ammo. A good exercise with heaps of 50/30 cal shoots and a rude nude BBQ on the beach on the last day. As for July, we won't talk about the Mil Skills competition!! Ex "Sludgie Budgie" taught the PI actually how large Paluma Dam is, especially when your patrolling around it.

September saw the Coy at SWBTA again, playing enemy for 3 RAR on Ex Strategic Vision. It was then that the superiority of an ODF PI over an airborne Bn was shown. It was noticed inside one of our harbour's that paratroopers legs do burn when hit at close range by big flares. So much for "Death from Above"!! It should be noted that the "para" flare was fired by a 3 RAR Para.

Throughout the year, we lost some old platoon members and gained a lot of new ones. Some are on Civilian Street now, and some are in other Coy (unlucky!!!) A young platoon, we are looking forward to doing it strong next year!!

