

ALOHA — EXERCISE PACIFIC BOND '81

MAJ P.M. GUMBLEY

Chipped beef and doughnuts with maple syrup, just the thing to impress 110 weary Australians on their first morning in Hawaii. Following thirteen long hours of flying, breakfast was to be the start of the culture shock awaiting A Company on Exercise Pacific Bond '81.

Not that culture shock was to be a one-sided phenomenon. Our short polyesters impressed the GI's no end: "They've sent goddamned boy scouts." There were other problems too: "Hey Aussie, where are all your black guys?"

Commencing in early April A Company and attachments participated in an intensive month of training and diversions. In conjunction with two US rifle companies from Fort Lewis, Washington State (Co. A 3-60 Inf. Regt. and Co. C 2-39 Inf. Regt.) we were hosted by 1-21 Infantry Battalion "Gimlets". Our tented home was Area X at the 25th Infantry Divisions' Schofield Barracks.

Area X is unlikely to be listed in any Hawaiian tourist brochure. Rumour has it that the Barrack areas were given an alphabetical priority, with Y being the garbage dump/trash pile and Z being the sewerage farm/s.... heap.



Examining The TOW Missile system at a weapons display in front of our luxurious accommodation at area X.

Any short comings in the accommodation were quickly compensated for by our hosts hospitality and a busy training programme. Following a week of equipment issues and familiarisation and tours of the Barracks area we were despatched to the Kahuku Mountains to prepare ourselves for a series of test exercises or ARTEP's.

Scuttling mongeese, guava bush, steep gulches and occasional glimpses of Sunset Beach helped to remind us that we were a long way from High Range.

Late in the week the Brigade Commander visited our Q store back in camp and mistaking the stacked cartons of XXXX stubbies for something more lethal, insisted that the explosives be removed to a safe area!

Week three found us island hopping on the ARTEP circuit, flying first class all the way. First off, to the island of Kauai for an interesting night attack into the sand dunes followed by a limited retrograde manoeuvre (withdrawal). Back to Oahu the next day for something a little different, a night, heliborne raid on a disused missile site. This proved to be a challenging mission which we completed most successfully according to our assessors. It was to be followed up later by another successful if not noisier raid on an extensive tunnel system.

Our final ARTEP phase found us on the big island of Hawaii, stumbling across the lava flows and enjoying the brisk mountain air at one of the island's less popular tourist attractions.

Away from the lava flows fifteen intrepid volunteers embarked upon an Air Assault Course, testing their heads for heights and learning the intricacies of airmobile operations, rappelling and slung loads along with animal invitations and sing-a-longs. After adjusting to American course technique and 'psyching' procedure some valuable lessons were learned. Even the failures improved their singing.



Sgt. DePass and his slaves, doing platoon training.

But so much for training, all work and no play makes Jack... etc. The weekends offered numerous diversions with PX shopping and tours to sights including the Polynesian Cultural Centre and the USS Arizona Memorial. Fifty lucky digs hitched a lift with the US Air Force to the island of Maui for a

weekend rubbing shoulders with the rich and suntanned.

There was also the hospitality of the Services' Clubs and Waikiki, with gum chewing ladies extending their warm greeting: "Hi guy, wanna date?" Not to mention the more Asiatic entertainments to be found in the downtown end of Hotel Street. (Question- You didn't go to any of those places did you? Answer- No dear)

In our final week major activities included an ANZAC day parade at the Punchbowl War Memorial, an introduction to the Marines at Kanehoe, range practices including familiarisation with the AKM ("Hey, you gotta wear a steel hat. No way those soft hats 'll stop a slug") and a sports competition, the Galactic Gimlets Sports Extravaganza.



Hey Gronk, Where's the ball?



Okay now we got the ball, what the hell do we do with it!

All in all Pacific Bond '81 was quite an experience. The scale of the US resources in manpower (Heavens knows they are going to need the reinforcements), and equipment especially aircraft was impressive so too was their interest in us and their hospitality.

ODD SPOTS: HAWAIIAN SIGHTSEEING GUIDE

Don't forget to see:

- * Lovely ladies chewing gum "Sure you don't wanna date honey?"
- * Air assault Tim Simkin chase sharks in a mud puddle!
- * GI's carrying 20 kilos of hi fi gear.
- * the girls at Wheeler Air Force Base.
- * The loo where you can sit back and do your washing at the same time.
- * The girls at the Rose and Crown.
- * The bar that sells champagne for only \$100.00 a bottle.
- * Lady GI's at the Central Issuing Facility.
- * Space invader games in the Battalion CP.
- * Blue haired ladies on Maui Beach.
- * The guard jiving and flying high.
- * An Air Assault Sergeant.
- * Lambie forming the Soldiers Trade Union.
- * A gimlet stick.
- * The big bust.



Lambie and his trade union movement?