

SPT COY



OC SPT COY, MAJ A Sparks and PTE Dilley leave a Caribou on Ex Swift Eagle

1985 has been a good year for Spt Coy. Individual and team efforts have seen our achievements increase over the year in number and diversity. From the sporting fields to outback Queensland the exploits of the Company have been recorded and have brought us credit.

Recon Platoon has come of age with successes such as the daring raids on the RAAF Radar Base and the AIMS installation as well as their resounding win in the Military Skills competition.

Pioneer Platoon has pioneered training in the Battalion on ODF security tasks such as road blocks and building reinforcement. They have improved the facilities at the FFBS Tully and constructed a new ammunition bunker at HRTA.

Signal Platoon has not been idle and once again have demonstrated their ability to maintain communications. Their Charters Towers to Townsville VHF Retrans exercise surprised many. Mortars on the other hand seemed to have an affinity with the far-outback. Exercise Wet Season saw them up to their elbows in mud as they learnt about 'Black Soil'. The successful conclusion to the

search for Gilbert's grave must be regarded as a personal triumph for Captain Justin Dwyer whose drive and enthusiasm saw his platoon create history.

Although at times distanced from Spt Coy, BHQ PL has always been there doing their job efficiently and quietly. Without their efforts little could be achieved by the companies. But sadly this year has seen many move on. Some have gone to other postings and others have sort the role of civilian. While the untimely death of Pte Paul Carter left us all shocked, the exploits of Pte Gould, Barney and Fred just left us stunned!

CHQ has strived to support the platoons throughout the year. The Q Store continues to be tightly controlled by SSgt Peter Weber ably assisted by LCpl Rick Canhan. The Orderly Room has seen Cpl Rowe move on and LCpl Gray take over. OJ and more recently Pte Lowe combine to churn out paperwork.

To all members of Spt Coy, thank you for your support and loyalty this year and to you and your families may I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. 69.



Pte's Whitney and Brazier prepare Mortar Pits



PNRS at FFBS



Cpl Daley leads the way



NBCD Training



Spt Coy drinks session



Time out — the best of friends

SIGNAL PLATOON



The RSO Capt Steve Mitchell and Cpl Dzienitz

In many ways 1985 proved an eventful but sometimes tiring year. Like most years in the Battalion there were lots of changes in manning and of course ideas. A new RSO and Radio Sgt, several new junior NCO's and a host of new soldiers. A mixed bag of personalities with some *real* 'characters' amongst them. A couple of them decided to leave without notice and some have been trying to leave all year. However they are so popular we have no intention of letting them go.

We had quite a few good exercises but probably not enough, the RSO assures us that this will be rectified next year. Some of the highlights are outlined below. I've refrained from using names to protect the innocent/no names, no pack drill etc.

Ex DALRYMPLES DELIGHT didn't have anything to do with the pub in town. Some of us didn't see a pub for four days, but it was a good escape from barracks routine and it gave us an opportunity to get to know the new platoon members and square away our long range HF comms. By experimenting with various types of antennae we managed to hold very clear conversations with 8/9 RAR at Shoalwater Bay and Glen Innes.

Preparation for the ODF deployment was very time consuming. No one seemed to be satisfied

with existing load lists and they changed several times before the majority were satisfied. Just prior to the big exercise the hierarchy decided to disappear and leave us in the lurch, the RSO to Surfers Paradise for eight weeks and Rad Sgt back to school for a bit of final polish. The junior NCO's refused to panic and got on with the job.

We managed to do some 'liaising' with the SES, Coastguard and the Police (on the right side of the law of course). Some of the lazier members of the platoon sat around the police stations in Townsville and Charters Towers for two days whilst the unlucky ones perched on top of wind blown, sun scorched hills to achieve VHF comms between the two cities. The results of this retrans/VHF exercise were quite good, we managed to establish communications over 120 km in eight hours.

Despite an RA Sigs detachment monitoring us during Ex Swift Eagle it certainly wasn't a case of 'Careful he Might Hear You'. The radio detachments got on with the job and received a favourable report.

If readers noticed a lack of handbags around Sig PI this year I'll let you in on a secret, we sold them to Pioneers who now loan them to Mortars and Recon (apparently for 'favours!').



Pte Langabeer, Pte Walker and Pte Vestjens — Pnr Pl



Obstacle course Military Skills competition

MORTAR PLATOON

The hectic programme for 1985 commenced with a trip to the Gulf country, on exercise 'Wet Season'. The aim of the exercise was to evaluate the problems of operating in North Australia during the wet season. Due to the numerous occasions that vehicles became hopelessly bogged, it became all too clear to members of the PI, that mobility was severely restricted, to say the least. If the weather was uninviting, the reception of a certain old bull was no warmer as Sgt Rasmus, Pte Graveson and Pte Crawford will well remember. Talk about out of the frying pan and into the fire, with our boots barely dry, the PI headed off for a second soaking at Tully.

From there the PI was in support of the Bn during ex 'Eager Eagle'. The continual rain and mist did little for morale and even less for communication and the PI's reflexes were tested with a round landing almost on the aiming post.

Next we found ourselves heading south to Shoal Water Bay where we spent ten days assessing if a 5th class ride with 3/4 Cav was better than a 1st class walk. We also managed to conduct live firing support for mounted company attacks. On the final night of the exercise we all sampled Sgt Hindmarsh's fine weather forecasting need-less to say we all spent a wet night without 'hoochie's'

With the 5th class ride assessed, it was time to try out the 1st class walk. The PI conducted a 40 km man-pack carrying full mortar equipment and two

live rounds per man. Around the 35 km mark it was the general consensus of the PI that the 5th class ride was less painful than the 1st class walk!

As a result of the Bn Mil Skills competition, mortars emerged as the champion PI. Our two sections ably lead by Cpl Skaines and Symons tied for 3rd place out of a total of 31 sections.

The Bn then deployed on Ex 'Northern Warrior' which found us undergoing an identity change and donning our Musorian caps. This was a great learning experience for all members of the PI especially when Blue Kestle and Maca McClure found they could swing through the jungle with greater ease than Tarzan. Pity there was no Jane to be found anywhere!

The PI will be farewelling several of its prominent figures at the end of the year. Sgt 'Cyclone' O'Brien will be leaving Mortars after 10½ years invaluable service and will be taking up a posting as a WO2 with 3 RNSWR in Canberra. Also heading to our national capital is Captain Dwyer who will be taking over the position of Regimental ADJT. From all of us in the PI, Good luck.

What was overall a very successful year for mortar platoon was marred by the sudden death of Pte Paul Carter in August. Mortar PI would like to dedicate their achievements throughout the year in memory of Paul, a comrade who will be greatly missed.



"40 km manpack with two live rounds and still smiling?"

PNR PL

1. The Assault pioneer Platoon maintained their reputation for "Flexibility at all costs," "hard work when required" and "if you can't make it work — blow it up" in 1985.
2. The year was jam packed with:
 - a. transferring parts of High Range during several demolition practices;
 - b. enjoying the wind, surf and sand of Cowley Beach in MK1 Assault Craft;
 - c. rebuilding some of FFBS, Tully;
 - d. constructing the new Battle Innoculation Range to rifle companies delight;
 - e. completing stage III of the 250 man Camp (by adding an "Ammo Bunker");
 - f. fencing off FSB FRAN with CAT 3 to stop the Musorians infiltrating; and
 - g. running the 1/85 Aslt Pnr Cse.
3. Along with the specialist tasks that the Pioneers were employed in, we made our new Sergeant, the bearded Papa Smerf smile by coming second in the champion platoon competition.

Cpl Pete Daly's sections record of 195 for the Marksmanship Event will stand for a few years! Well done to Pte "Langers" Langabeers in achieving his crossed rifles.

4. Cpl Jeff Ingalls and his "ODF Secion" enjoyed their interlude with the Deltones in New Guinea. Professional liaison was conducted with the RPIR Pioneers over many cans of SP Lager they say. LCpl Mark Irons, the sections Public Relations Dep., was most successful.
5. Many faces have come and gone from the platoon during the year. Notables like Paddy Lockton, Bull Trimble, Rick Messina, Blue Cadzow, Fred Skriveris, Glen Cleghorne and Griggys will certainly be missed next year.
6. From all indications 1986 will be up to the same standard as this year. It seems that in anticipation the eager eyes of pioneers are all ready to find targets for next years demolition practices, so lock your cars!



PNR's go for broke — Mil Skills



Car for Sale!

RECON PLATOON

Marched Out

Sgt Dow — Delta
Cpl Pickett — Dis
LCpl Herbert — Dis
Pte Crossling — Dis

Pte Hubber — RAAMC
Lt Weaver — ?
Lt Fitzgerald ?
Pte Elliot — Dis
Pte Upson — Alpha

1985 started off for the platoon in Malaysia as part of A Coy.

Where the platoon attempted to aid the waining Malaysian economy by purchasing and consuming as much beer as possible, and getting in and causing as much trouble as a PI could! There were a few trips away from Butterworth such as 5 days in Bangkok — without visiting a single temple or cultural show, but sussing out the odd one or two bars.

2 trips to Langkawi Island — visiting the world famous "Hullo Dow Goffa Shop" and island exploration. And the usual 4 days in Singapore — observing Shims and consuming even more beer. For the 3 months spent in Malaysia by the platoon I think everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves, but were glad to get back to Australia and some well earned leave.

The next major occurence for the PI was Ex Eager Eaglet where Cpl Brady and 63A were dispatched to Bredden air strip to locate the Bn, and Sgt Dow led the infamous 63B fighting patrol, terrorising the speed yards area of high range and killing or capturing anything that moved. Sgt Dow proved so successful at these tactics he slid over to the Deltones to lead even bigger fighting patrols. Ian on behalf of all the PI thanks for your leadership and knowledge we wish you all the best.

Shortly after the Ex the PI lost the popular Pte Crossling who was posted to Vic. and discharged.

Next came two small PI Exercises the first of these was to capture a prisoner and collect data on an installation around town, which had some humorous moments with Pte Tarrant dragging the just caught prisoner virtually thru the window of his car. (to find out later he was a Sqn Ldr.)

The second Ex involved the PI doing an amphibious landing at Cape Cleveland and gathering info on the A.I.M.S. complex which also had its lighter moments e.g. Route marches and mountain climbing. Both these Ex were completed with varying degrees of success, but undoubtedly they were different and of good TRG value.

It was also around this time that the platoon lost it most respected member Cpl Mick Pickett, all

were sad to see him go. But due to medical reasons he elected discharge — Mick all the best.

In his place the PI received Cpl Robinson along with a supply of "New Blood" who were promptly taken under the wing of such class acts as Rees, Stanton, Quinn and Woods to be shown how things worked, (or more likely how to avoid doing anything!)

The PI also received a surprise return visit from Roger Herbert who after completing the SAS CADRE, Para and Patrolling courses decided that the army was not for him. So he returned to us to await Discharge, and is now up to no good somewhere in South Africa.

Next came the Bn Mil Skills with the platoon supplying one section (virtually the whole PI anyway!) who under Cpl's Robinson and Brady trained hard and achieved the desired results, by coming first, but this was no real surprise to the PI it was deserved.

For these efforts Robbo and the boys won a return trip for nine to Singleton, and the chance to do it all again.

The next major activity for the PI was Ex Northern Warrior, which had the PI guarding BHQ for the first week, then 63A & 63B were deployed to there patrol A.O.'s — Alpha to the Beach and Bravo to Mt Spec.

While Cpl Green and his trusty Snipers remained to guard the fire base.

It was a good exercise for the patrols to practice there patrolling techniques and comms skills. The troops from 63A were given a bit of a giggle when Pte Hicks gave them a "demo" of how to do a "Karabina" run-down without the aid of Karabina or rope — result 1 x 30' fall and 1 x Casavac for Pte Hicks.

The remainder of the year was taken up with preparation for courses — Cpl Dennis Green running pre course Sniper training and the rest of the PI preparing for the Recon Course.

Overall it was a good year for the PI that went quite fast and was enjoyed by "most".

That was the year for Recon PI, or some parts of it. It is now time for a well earned break for Xmas so on behalf of Sgt Geary and the rest of the NCO's I would like to wish all the PI a Merry Xmas.

Cpl Brady.