

Introduction

For 4 RAR/NZ, this final tour gave us the honour of being the last ANZAC Battalion to serve in South Vietnam. As the last battalion, we were caught up in all the strange circumstances of the withdrawal, none of them being foreseeable as we sailed to South Vietnam. During the voyage, the infantrymen, one hundred and forty-one of them, who had previously seen service in South Vietnam, trained on the flight deck of the carrier, keeping in top condition, while the Kiwi's—one hundred and sixty-three—had already joined the advance party at Nui Dat in early May, having come from Singapore.

For the ANZAC Battalion, this was to be an historic tour in more ways than one. In the Sergeants' Mess were twenty-four NCO's who had joined 4 RAR on the founding day, 1 February, 1964 at Woodside, South Australia. Nearly fifty soldiers were on their third consecutive operational tour with 4 RAR and another nine commenced their third tour of South Vietnam.

However . . . as the latest team, we flew into Nui Dat becoming a part of 1st Australian Task Force and after a week of settling in and "In theatre training", moved to the bush for the remaining seven and a half months that we served in country. This meant the soldiers spent their tour entirely on operations—always in the gloom of the monsoon season—and always on the move after their targets, the 274 VC Main Force Regiment and the 33rd North Vietnamese Army Regiment.

Back and forth in the jungle and rubber plantations went the soldiers of the ANZAC Battalion tracking, ambushing and attacking the enemy main bunker positions—nine operations in all.