

EXERCISE PACIFIC BOND '84

A nervous round of applause launched B Company into Exercise Pacific Bond on 5th April '84 as the charter Boeing 707 belonging to the virtually unknown South Pacific Islands Airway made a perfect take-off from Garbutt RAAF Base.

"It's something different" soon became a typical comment from, and of, the 140 personnel who made the trip to Schofield Barracks, home of the United States 25th Infantry Division on the Hawaiian Island of Oahu.

If those who made the trip thought they were going to use and see nothing but the latest equipment straight out of the Defence journals, then there must have been some disappointments. There were many surprises, like the all ranks messing, the American way of doing PT, the bayonet assault course, the MILES system, the terrain in the Kahukus Training Area, prices in the PX, and signing for all meals and field rations.

The disappointments were less numerous: The ride from Hickham Air Force Base to Schofield Barracks in what amounted to a cattle truck, the price of drinks in the better bars in downtown Honolulu, the low alcoholic content of American beer, and difficulties by some US personnel in understanding "Strine". The biggest disappointment of all was the weather, and the term "liquid sunshine", soon became vogue.

Highlights of the exchange included instruction on TOW (the Tube Launched Optically Tracked Wire Command Linked Guided Missile System), and MILES (Multiple Integrated Laser Equipment Sensors), which was used during the field exercise.

It was a nervous SSGT Schonrock who signed for \$300,000 worth of MILES equipment, comprising a body harness containing laser sensors, the rifle-mounted transmitters and the "God-Guns". The God-Guns became highly sought after because of their ability to "kill" or "un-kill" as the user, (usually an umpire) saw fit. In the words of the OC the main advantage of using MILES on exercise was that every shot had to be aimed, and there was no argument with the umpire and his "God-Gun".

Climax of the five day ARTEP (Army Training and Evaluation Programme) was the "Gung-Ho" assault on a Company position by Lt Pat Byrne's fighting 4th Platoon across open ground against tremendous odds, not the least of which was a well dug-in enemy. It was vintage WW1 stuff.

The Company's ability to impress on the parade ground came to the fore on ANZAC Day when despite torrential rain we mounted a Colour Party, Honour Guard and Catafalque Party for the annual Commemorative Service organised by The Australian Consulate at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, a daunting venue containing

the graves of some 26,000 US servicemen and women and the names of another 26,280 Missing in Action. While the 40 soldiers who took part in the ceremony drew high praise for their drill and discipline from Brigadiers and three-star Generals, the remaining 100 non-participants from the contingent seated at the rear attracted very favourable comments from diplomatic and military guests for sitting fast throughout tropical cloud bursts which sent most others scurrying for cover.

The wind-down for Exercise Pacific Bond included an inter-section competition on the confidence course which was almost won by a section from 103 Sig Squadron. Such embarrassment was saved by Cpl Bennett's section, which completed the gruelling course in 14m and 15s. Another highlight was the booze cruise, which, if nothing else, showed that the OC and Lieutenants Weaver and Byrne possessed some previously unrecognised talent as entertainers.

Entertainment was also plentiful during the murder ball (they call it combat football), match against B Company, 1/5th, the top acts being Pte Lam's de-bagging of an opposing player, numerous attempts by US personnel to play the bagpipes, and the consumption of 51 cartons of beer — 36 of them Australia's native drink — Fosters. All in all the trip was certainly an experience. Many areas of the US system are not all that different to what we know in Australia. Confusion only reigned supreme on odd occasions.

And then there was Waikiki, ahhh Waikiki. One wonders if it will ever be the same. It was this idyllic location that one of the exercise goals, namely to enjoy the delights of our host nation, was most definitely achieved.

A couple of the more memorable aspects of the tour and considered worthy of special mention were:

1. The "entertainment" graciously provided in all messes to help its patrons relax and enjoy their relaxation time. To find this sort of entertainment most of us generally have to visit Kings Cross.
2. Watching each and every member of the contingent for the first few months negotiating not only the left hand drive American vehicles, but also driving on the wrong side of the road. I think Hawaii has some very sympathetic and considerate traffic cops.
3. The enterprising NCO who decided to corner the Australian market of American issue GP boots. At last count this ingenious person had acquired some 5 pairs of these sought after boots. It seemed he may have experienced some problem PORTERING them back to Australia, but reliable sources advise this



"The Tourists"

minor problem was as simple as climbing a tree, or telegraph pole, or...

4. The great Kahuku Mountain Range experience. Particularly the NBC stage. Unfortunately exposure to NBC not being the "custom of our country" assured us of a hassle free time.
5. And then there was the cultural side of the exchange. Visits to the USS Arizona memorial a grim and dramatic reminder of 7 December 1941, and the Polynesian Cultural Centre where we experienced the true culture and history of the Hawaiian population.

All in all. Exercise Pacific Bond '84 was certainly an unforgettable experience. Surprisingly enough there are many similarities between the Australian and American systems, so most of the time everything went off quite smoothly. On the other times where a few hiccups occurred, these were generally handled with either "she'll be right mate", or "sorry, that is not the custom of our country".

Much was learnt, many good friends were made and many ideas traded (not to mention American Cam Greens, Poncho Liners, Coy T-shirts etc. etc).

To our American hosts, 1st Bn, 5th Inf Regt, 25 US Inf Div, we are very grateful and aloha from us all in the land of OZ.



The boys leave for Hawaii.

Anthropological stages of man

It seems when the Creator was making the world He called man aside and bestowed upon him twenty years of normal sex life.

Man was horrified at "only 20 years", but the Creator didn't budge.

That was all He would grant Him.

Then He called the monkey and gave him 20 years.

"But I don't need 20 years," said the monkey.

"Ten years is plenty."

Man spoke up and said, "Can't I have the other ten years?". The monkey agreed.

Then He called the lion and gave him 20 years. The lion said he only needed 10 years.

Again the man asked, "Can't I have the other ten years?" "Of course!" roared the lion.

Then came the donkey. He was given 20 years, but

like the others said he only needed ten years.

Man asked again for the spare ten years and again received them.

This explains why man has 20 years normal sex life, ten years monkeying around, ten years lion about it and ten years making an ass of himself.