

Exercise Long Look - By Sgt S Bennion Glosters



"ME TARZAN"

Exercise Long Look is an exchange for four months of approx 120 British soldiers with their counterparts in the Australian Army.

This year I was fortunate to be selected as the member from my Regiment, the 1st Battalion the Gloucestershire Regiment.

The Regiment are presently serving in the British sector in West Berlin, one hundred and twenty miles into communist East Germany.

The journey from Berlin to Townsville took five days including an overnight stop in Darwin and Sydney. On arrival I was attached to the Mortar Platoon under the watchful eye of Sgt "Symo" Symons, my host for the duration of my stay.

I arrived in the Battalion at the time of a large course period and found myself instructing on the Basic Mortar Course being conducted by the Platoon. Even though the course ran for four weeks it didn't stop "Symo" and myself visiting units around Townsville and Cairns. On the visit to Cairns we managed a day on the Barrier Reef at Green Island.

On the completion of the Mortar Course the Battalion had a two week stand down period. During this time I

was despatched by RAAF courier to the four corners of Australia to visit Sydney, Canberra, Adelaide and Perth. I was very fortunate to have my stand down extended, thanks to Major Lee, to enable me to have approx five to six days in each of the cities.

Accommodation and transport was all booked through the Battalion Movements and the MCO Townsville. I had an excellent time including a good look at the America's Cup in its early stages at Perth.

On return from the trip I was informed that I would in fact be leaving early for the UK and Germany due to the visit of the Pope to Australia. It seems he needed the aeroplane

However this didn't deter the ODF who despatched all long lookers from Townsville on K86. At the time of writing I am waiting to move to the exercise area to take part in the K86 exercise, again with the Mortar Platoon.

The exercise has been a real eye opener and I have done things I could only dream about years ago. For example, walking over the Sydney harbour bridge, visiting the famous Opera House and the infamous Kings Cross.

On the military side, of which "Long Look" is really all about, the Australian and British Army measure up to be at equal, standing with a high degree of professionalism and competence.

The hospitality shown to myself during the exercise has been second to none, and I would like to pass on my thanks to the RSM and members of the Sgts Mess, Support Company and most of all to Symo who ensured that I got around and had a "Fair dinkum exercise."



CPL Wheatley receiving the trophy for the fastest time over the obstacle course. The trophy was made by PNR PL.