

1st Tour Vietnam

1 June 1968 - 31 May 1969

By the end of October 1967, the Battalion was back in Australia at Enoggera, part of 6 Task Force (TF) 1 Division (Div). On 9 January 1968, Lieutenant Colonel L.R. Greville, DSO took command of 4RAR from Lieutenant Colonel C.H.A. East, MBE and looked after the Battalion until 30 September 1969. It was 18 November 1966 until 17 October 1969 that WO1 G. Toghill was posted as the Regimental Sergeant Major. Training also began in earnest at this time and followed the traditional cycle consisting of a deployment to the Jungle Training Centre, Canungra, followed by sub-unit training, then Battalion exercises, finally resulting in a testing exercise at Shoalwater Bay in April.



'DEPLOYING TO SOUTH VIETNAM'

On 13 May 1968, an advance party from 4RAR moved by air to South Vietnam. The main body of the Battalion arrived on the Troop Carrier HMAS Sydney on 1 June 1968. They relieved 2RAR at the 1st Australian Task Force Base, Nui Dat, Phuoc Tuy Province. Victor and Whisky Companies from the Royal New Zealand Infantry regiment (RNZIR), joined 4RAR, hence it became 4RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Battalion. This union was particularly successful as it gave the Battalion extra manning by consisting of five rifle companies. Additional Signalmen, Mortarmen and Pioneers were also provided.

During its year long tour in South Vietnam the completed 11 major operations and five operations of company size. It also maintained a company group at all times on the Horseshoe feature four miles south east of Nui Dat. The scope of operations was widely varied to include offensive reconnaissances in force, defensive operations (mainly in the Long Binh - Bien Hoa area), destruction of enemy assets, pacification and food denial operations. During the tour of duty, over 200 enemy were killed for the loss of nineteen 4RAR/NZ (ANZAC) soldiers killed.



'4RAR AT WORK...'

The Battalion returned home to Australia to Enoggera in May 1969, as part of 6TF, 1 Div and later relocated to Townsville, as part of 3TF, 1 Div in December 1969. The Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel J.C. Hughes, DSO, MC, took over the Battalion from 1 October 1969 until 5 April 1972 and the RSM handed over the Battalion to WO1 J.M. Healy, 17 October 1969 until 27 May 1970.

2nd Tour Vietnam

23 May 1971 - December 1971

The Battalion's advance party departed Australia on 30 April 1971, for the unit's second tour of Vietnam only this time lead by Lieutenant Colonel Hughes and the RSM WO1 W.T.C. Thompson who took over on 1 June 1970 and looked after the men until 14 August 1973. During the voyage the infantrymen of the Battalion, 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. The New Zealanders joined the advance party at Nui Dat in early May 1971, having come from Singapore. The main body arrived on 22 May 1971, and operations began soon after the Battalion concentrated at Nui Dat. The Battalion relieved 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) at midnight on 23 May 1971.

4RAR/NZ (ANZAC), after a week settling in and 'in theatre training', moved to the bush for the remaining seven and a half months of its tour. This meant the soldiers spent their tour entirely on operations during the monsoon season. The ANZAC Battalion conducted nine operations against their main targets, the 274 Viet Cong (VC) Main Force Regiment and the 33rd North Vietnamese Army Regiment.



'...AND AT PLAY'

Back and forth in the jungle and rubber plantations went the soldiers of the ANZAC Battalion tracking, ambushing and attacking enemy bunker positions. The Battalion was actively engaged on operations until 9 December 1971 - nine operations in all. For two months it was the only Battalion left in the theatre of operations.

On 18 August 1971, Prime Minister W. McMahon announced the withdrawal of troops by Christmas, and in December 1971, the Battalion less Delta Coy and 1 Troop, B SQN, 3 Cav Regt returned to Townsville, Australia on the troop carrier HMAS Sydney. Delta Coy remained at Vung Tau until 13 March 1972.



'WORKING AGAIN!...'

For 4RAR/NZ (ANZAC), this final tour gave the Battalion the honour of being the last ANZAC Battalion to serve in South Vietnam (also 4RAR was the last Battalion to leave Borneo in 1966). As the last Battalion out of South Vietnam, it was witness to unique circumstances of the withdrawal, none of them being foreseen during the deployment to South Vietnam. During its tour of duty the Battalion killed 91 enemy and captured 5 for the loss of eight 4RAR/NZ (ANZAC) soldiers.

The Battalion returned to Australia to take over the rear lines in Lavarack Barracks, currently occupied by 2RAR today, and went on a much earned rest. After returning to work, the Battalion continued training on exercises around Mount Spec, Tropical Trials Establishment at Cowley Beach and High Range Training Area. It was during this period that the Battalion was looked after by Major E.H. Stevenson (Administering Command) from 6 April 1972 until

7 July 1972 and in turn handed over to the new Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel L.D. Johnson on 8 July 1972, who held that position until the linking on 15 August 1973.



'...AND PLAYING AGAIN!'