

AUSTRALIAN GUNNER OBITUARY RESOURCE

Barry Arthur Hawkins

18 August 1938 – 8 January 2016

By Peter Bruce

Barry graduated from Officer Cadet School Portsea as a Second Lieutenant in 1958. His first posting was to 20th National Service Training Battalion followed by several years with 111th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery at Holsworthy in Sydney. In 1963 he moved from Air Defence Artillery to Field Artillery and joined 1st Field Regiment, also stationed at Holsworthy Barracks.

In September 1964, Barry was selected to visit South Vietnam where at this stage only Training Team members had been deployed. These visits were designed to give selected personnel an insight into what was happening in South Vietnam at the time.

Promoted Captain in 1965, Barry was posted with 102nd Field Battery in Malaya and was later employed as Staff Captain (Q) with Headquarters Far East Land Forces (FARELF) in Sabah and Sarawak.

Returning to Australia in late '65/early '66, Barry was posted to 12th Field Regiment at Holsworthy. In November 1966, Barry returned to South Vietnam to join 1st Field Regiment which had deployed earlier that year. Barry was posted as Battery Commander (BC) of Headquarters Battery.

In May 1967, Barry returned to Australia again and was posted as an instructor at the Officer Training Unit (OTU) Scheyville. OTU had been established to increase the number of junior officers required because of National Service. Originally designed to produce Infantry Platoon Commanders, the 22-week course produced many young officers to be employed in a variety of Corps including the RAA.

Back at Holsworthy, 19th Composite Regiment had been raised in 1968 to command the batteries left behind after 12th Field Regiment had deployed to South Vietnam. The batteries included 102nd Field Battery, 103rd Medium Battery, 131st Locating Battery and 123rd Training Battery. In 1969 Barry was appointed Adjutant of 19th Composite Regiment with Lieutenant Colonel (later Brigadier) Bill Silverstone as Commanding Officer. Barry was promoted to Major that same year and assumed command of 123rd Training Battery.

In 1970, Barry was selected to attend the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham in the UK. He was a student there for two years, returning to Australia in late 1971 to attend Army Staff College in 1972 where he achieved a 'B' pass. In 1973 he took up a posting as Second in Command (2IC) of 4th Field Regiment in Townsville. The regiment had completed its second tour of duty in South Vietnam in 1971 with the last of the batteries returning to Townsville in May 1971. 106th Field Battery had deployed to Singapore as part of 28th ANZUK Brigade in December 1971 and returned to Townsville in December 1973. Barry remained with 4th Field Regiment for two years.

Barry's final posting on promotion to Lieutenant Colonel was as a Staff Officer Grade One (SO1) at Defence Central in Canberra. Barry resigned from the Army on 23 November 1979. He died on 8 January 2016; the dearly beloved husband of Jill (deceased), much loved father of David (deceased), Liane, Kylie and Tara and devoted and loved grandfather. His funeral was held at the Southport Lawn Cemetery on 15 January 2016

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Acknowledgments

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