

AUSTRALIAN GUNNER OBITUARY RESOURCE

214585 Brian George Reeves

(12 May 1937 – 29 October 2013)

By Peter Bruce, OAM



Brian George (Speed) Reeves was born at the Junction, Merewether, Newcastle in New South Wales, the third child of Dorothy and Eric Reeves. Brian attended Junction Primary School and then Newcastle High. His working life started at Lysarts, in the office but then he decided the moving office was more appealing so took on driving taxi cabs in Newcastle – like his dad. Brian married Kerry in 1957 and soon after was blessed with a son and a daughter. Brian decided he needed more security for his family so in 1962 he joined the Australian Army.

Brian was allocated to Artillery and soon found himself as a Batman in 102 Field Battery in Holsworthy. In 1963 Brian deployed to Malaya with 102 Field Battery. Brian was able to take his family to Malaya with him for his two year posting. Brian deployed back to Malaya in 1967 with 107 Field Battery for a further two years. During this deployment Brian and Kerry celebrated the birth of their youngest daughter.

On return to Australia in late 1969, Brian was posted to 4 Field Regiment in Townsville. The Regiment was preparing for deployment to South Vietnam. Brian deployed on the 29th of April 1970 and was the Signals Staff Sergeant with 107 Field Battery. The Battery Commander at the time, George Salmon, referred to Brian as a “very competent and cheerful guy”. Brian returned to Australia on the 5th of May 1971. He was subsequently downgraded medically and reallocated to the Q Stream. Brian was posted to 2/15 Field Regiment at Batman Avenue in Melbourne and to 10 Medium Regiment in Geelong. During his time with 2/15 Field Regiment, Brian was involved with a musical commemoration concert at the Myer Music Bowl which involved some 120 musicians and 700 singers. The concert presented a musical commemoration of ANZAC and included Tchaikovsky’s 1812 Overture. 2/15 Field Regiment provided the gun support to the occasion and Brian was involved with the deployment and firing of the guns in conjunction with the concert performance of the 1812 Overture. Brian was then posted to Land Warfare Centre at Canungra where he accepted a PSO Commission in the Q Stream. While at Canungra, Brian was an avid golfer and was in fact the Club Captain of the Canungra Golf Club.

He was posted back to Batman Avenue as Quarter Master of 2/15 Field Regiment before a final posting to 1 Field Regiment in Brisbane in 1986/87.

An avid sportsman, Brian played Rugby League in his younger years and played Union with the Army whilst in Malaya. He resurrected an earlier passion for Tenpin Bowling

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whilst posted in Melbourne and achieved some personal bests. Townsville was the birth place of his golfing years which he continued well after his retirement on the Gold Coast. As a founding member, Brian loved playing golf and socialising with the Vietnam Vets Social Club, Golf Club, 'Frantic Floggers' at Mudgeeraba and even had a couple of years playing Lawn Bowls until health concerns made it too painful.

Brian was a proud and private person, however loved to help the TPI's as a Hospital Visiting Officer and in his true style, gave time for anyone who wanted to chat. Fulfilment came from helping, guiding and supporting others and of course his family. He took pride in decorating the grandkids birthday cakes each year – ie: using onion bags and toothpicks to make goal posts as part of a soccer theme, or simply cutting the cakes into the shape of the birthday number.

His love of animals, in particular his dogs often gave him some peace and comfort. Brian had great respect for the people who he worked with, both junior and senior members through the years as well as the Royal Australian Artillery itself. One of his fondest memories was as a Gunner when he first joined the Army and went out bush. It was the comradery between the guys that made him feel good. His nickname is in fact an oxymoron – Speed – because he was considered slow at making decisions. However, it was this attribute which earned him respect for his thorough, disciplined and ultimately best decisions. This would be equal to the surprise celebration of his and Kerry's 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Brian passed away peacefully at Allamanda Hospital, Gold Coast on Tuesday 29 October and his funeral service was held at Integrity Chapel, Parkwood Monday 4 November 2013. Brian is survived by wife of nearly 56 years, Kerry, children: Michael, Michele and Annette and four grandchildren: Daniel, Rachael, Kali and Mitchum. On Easter Saturday 2014, Brian's ashes were laid to rest at a private service in the Chapel Gardens War Graves areas at Allambie Memorial Park, Nerang on the Gold Coast.

Acknowledgements:

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