

AUSTRALIAN GUNNER OBITUARY RESOURCE

Major Manson James (Mick) Richards

By Colonel A. R. Bourke, OAM (Retd)



105th Battery Association's Life Member, 2411938 Major Manson James (Mick) Richards passed away in Mudgeeraba, Queensland on 15 July 2018. Mick had been in poor health for some time and a bad fall causing a head injury hastened the end of his mortal life just after his 75th birthday.

Mick was born in Nyngan, NSW on 2 July 1943 and enlisted in the Army on 28 February 1960, just after his 17th birthday. He served a year with the newly integrated CMF/ARA 131st Divisional Locating Battery spread across West Pymble, Manly and North

Fort, NSW. In 1962, he joined 4th Field Regiment at Wacol, Brisbane and placed in Survey Troop of Headquarters Battery. Mick attended a Regimental Survey Course at the School of Artillery in 1962 and completed an Advanced Artillery Survey Course in 1964. Mick was then promoted to Bombardier and joined 105th Field Battery for its 1965-66 tour of duty in South Vietnam. Mick spent some time in Lt (Then Temporary Captain) Alan Hutchinson's Forward Observer Party.

Returning to Australia on 24 September 1966, the then Bombardier Richards remained in the Brisbane area with 4th, and then 1st Field Regiment. In July 1967 Mick was selected with several other RAA soldiers to attend a six-month course at the Bureau of Meteorology from where they qualified as 'Weather Officers'. This was the forerunner to the RAA developing a Met Section at the School of Artillery. Previously, met reports had been obtained from RAAF sources. Mick remained at the School of Artillery in Met Section until he was commissioned through the Administrative and Technical stream on 9 November 1970. He was then posted to the newly titled 8th Medium Regiment at Holsworthy. In December 1972, Mick was posted as the training officer of 132nd Divisional Locating Battery, located at Brighton, Victoria where he remained until late 1974. He was then posted as Battery Captain of 131st Divisional Locating Battery, then at Holsworthy, where he remained until 1978.

The then Captain Richards was appointed Senior Instructor of Warrant Officers' Wing at Land Warfare Centre, Canungra and served there from 1978 for the next two years. Posted to Headquarters Training Command, Sydney in 1980 in the course development area, he was promoted major and appointed the SO2 Training Systems later that year. Mick's final posting began in 1984 as Coordination Major in the Directorate General of Army Training, Operations Branch, Army Office in Canberra. On 1 June 1986 after 26 years of dedicated service Major Mick Richards hung up his spurs at 43 years of age.

Mick had married Carmel and in retirement they settled in Mudgeeraba on the Gold Coast in Queensland. Mick's final parade was held in his family's home locality of Port Macquarie on the NSW north coast.

Vale Major Manson James (Mick) Richards - professional and veteran soldier, dedicated and loyal officer, loved husband and family man. Gone to the Great Gun Park up above at only 75 years young.

Acknowledgements:

- The original obituary for Mick Richards was written by Arthur Burke and slightly amended by Peter Bruce with information compiled by David Troedel.

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- 'End of Mission' by Darrel Kelly.
- Geoffrey Jebb for his recollections of time spent with Mick.