

## **Vale - Richard Morgan (Dick) Rothero**

*Provided by Colonel Arthur Burke  
Colonel Commandant - Northern Region*

Tragically, Richard Morgan (Dick) Rothero passed away suddenly on Friday evening 16th January 2004 at his home in the north Brisbane suburb of Kallangur. The brothers, Dave and Dick Rothero were household names around the Royal Regiment in the 1960s and 1970s. The details for the following vale have been provided by Dick's close friends Warren Cottee and Paddy Durnford.

Dick was born on the 12th June 1937. Enlisting in the Army in his 21st year in 1958 he was posted to 1st Field Regiment after basic training. Dick moved to Brisbane to join the new 4th Field Regiment at Wacol, he then served with 103rd Field Battery in Malaya (1961-1963). Again, but as a sergeant this time, Dick saw active service with 103rd Field Battery in South Vietnam (1966-1967). Thereafter he served with 123rd Training Battery at Holsworthy, the Tropical Trials Unit at Innisfail, 1st Field Regiment at Wacol and finally as a staff sergeant at 23rd Field Regiment in Sydney. Dick elected discharge in this rank after completing 20 years in 1978. He and wife Judy settled in Newcastle where Dick secured employment with the Newcastle Gas Company till he retired. They purchased a home in Kallangur Brisbane in November 2003.

Dick was looked upon as a father figure during his posting to 1st Field Regiment in the 1970s. The younger Numbers One would look up to him not only for advice but also to give shortcuts (not usually approved by the School of Artillery) that only experienced gun sergeants could give. Warren Cottee can recall Dick saying, 'Jesus BSM, why do I have to do the detachment commanders test? After all these years as a No 1, I should be exempt.'

Dick was a member of Sergeants' Messes for many years. On leaving the Mess following a couple or three drinks after work, normal farewells would include 'See you tomorrow Dick', 'Have a good night Dick', and the inevitable 'See ya Dick', to which he gave the standard reply, 'No you won't!' Dick was a soldiers' man, rarely angry, and could handle almost anything except Palladrine in the morning. He was the quieter of the two brothers and could be described as quiescent.

The Macquarie dictionary defines QUIESCENT as 'being at rest, quiet, or still, inactive or motionless' - old mates will vividly recall Dick squatting, a rolled cigarette in the corner of his mouth, a bush hat over one eye and a brew in hand - Richard Morgan Rothero with his bloody 30 inch waist! God we hated the way that man could dress - because of his height and build he could wear rags and get stick orderly. Nine out of ten times you could bet they were someone else's clothes anyway!

Vale Richard Morgan Rothero - St George Rugby League Club has lost a great supporter, Dave has lost his brother Gunner, and the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery has lost another of its characters that were the backbone of the Regiment in the 1960s and 1970s.