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21 December, 2022

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Submission to Inquiry - Private Colin David Ellard

Part 1 – Name of Inquiry

Name of Inquiry *

Medallic Recognition for service with Rifle Company Butterworth

Part 2 – About the Submitter

Title or Rank *

Private

Given Names *

Colin David

Surname *

Ellard

Post-nominals (if applicable)

Street Number and Name *

[REDACTED]

Suburb *

[REDACTED]

Postcode *

[REDACTED]

State *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Primary Contact Number *

[REDACTED]

Secondary Contact Number

Is the Submission on behalf of an organisation? If yes, please provide details:

no

Part 3 – Desired outcome

Provide a summary of your submission:

This submission is in support of the Rifle Company Butterworth 1971 to 1989 submission. Attached is a statement of what occurred one day during my deployment to RCB in 1975. I believe that my service was warlike and a AASM is duly warranted.

Part 4 - Your submission and Supporting Documentation

File Attached: Snags-Statement.docx

Part 5 – Consent and declaration

✓ I consent to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal making my submission publicly available.

✓ I also consent to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal:

- using information contained in my submission to conduct research;
- providing a copy of my submission to a person or organisation considered by the Tribunal to be appropriate; and
- providing a copy of my submission to a person or organisation the subject of adverse comment in the submission;
- using content in my submission in its report to Government.

The Tribunal will decide which person or organisation is appropriate, and this may include:

1. persons or organisations required to assist with the inquiry; and
2. persons or organisations with an interest in the inquiry.

✓ I declare that the information I have provided is correct.

Name

Colin David Ellard

Date

21/12/2022

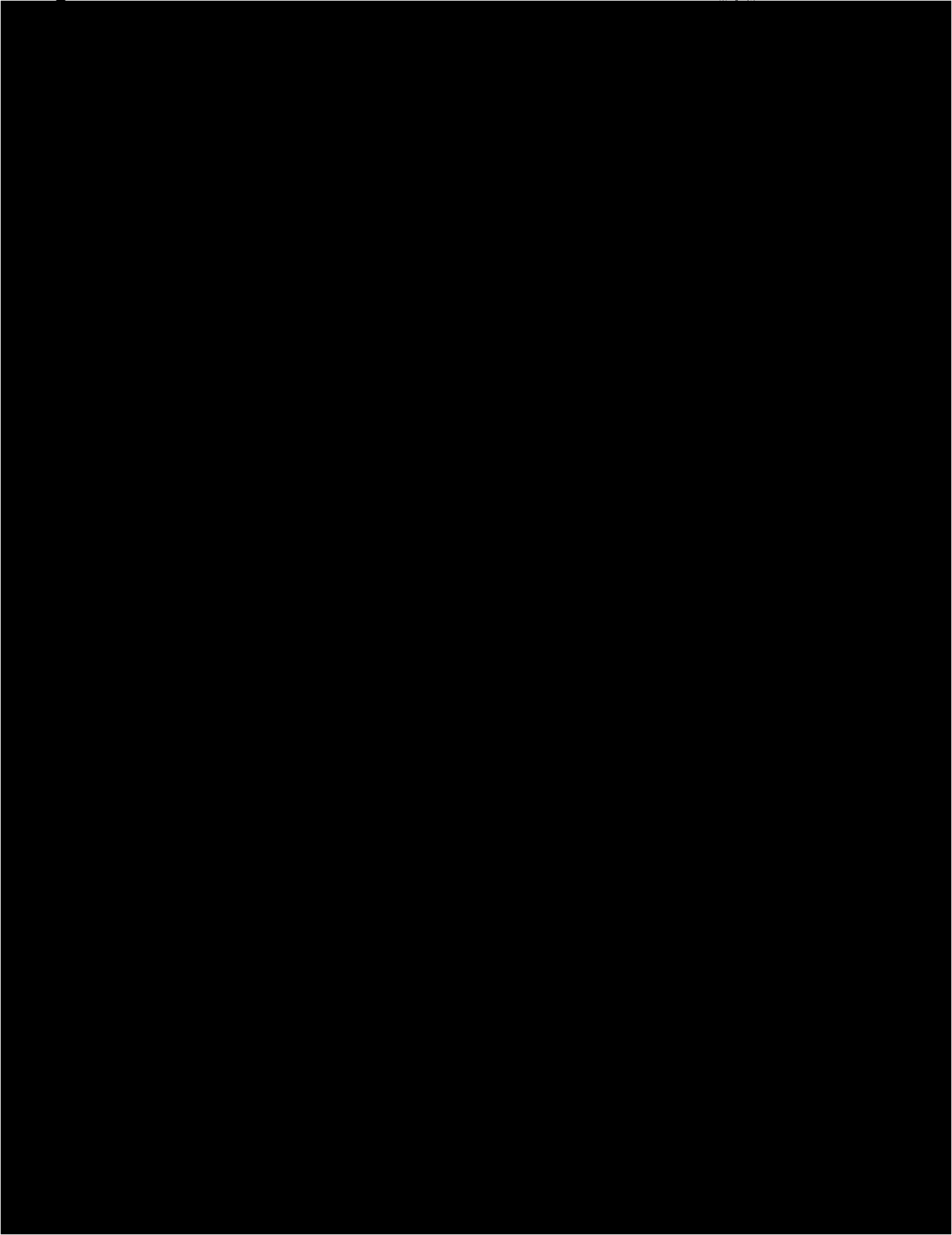
*Private Colin David
Ellard*

Signed by Private Colin David Ellard

Signed on: 21 December, 2022

Signature Certificate

 LEGALLY SIGNED USING



My name is Colin David Ellard. I served in the Australian Army from 6 Feb 1974 to Jan 1978. During that period, I served with A Company, 2/4 RAR at Rifle Company Butterworth during the period 10 March 1975 to 3 June 1975.

This is my submission to support the appeal to have war service recognition during my time at RAAF Base Butterworth. I support this submission.

My recollection of events is as follows:

- 1, During mid-April 1975 on a Sunday, I was resting in the lines by myself as the rest of my section was in Penang on R&R. One of the platoon sergeants (SGT John Bryce) entered my room and instructed me to dress in my greens and webbing, then draw my personal weapon (an M60 machine gun and 200 rounds of 7.62, live link ammunition and a box of link ammunition. This was a total of 700 rounds of M60 live ammunition. I was then instructed by SGT Bryce to get into the back of a RAAF Base Butterworth truck where we were taken to a hanger near the Control Tower.
2. At this location there were two C130 Hercules aircraft with engines running on the tarmac. There was a total of ten of us including SGT Bryce, 2 LT Broughton and myself. We were instructed to embark the two aircraft. Five soldiers on each aircraft. At this point in time, I had no idea what was happening or where we were going. I was instructed by a FSgt crewman to remove live rounds from the M60 which I did. The two C130s then departed Butterworth.
3. I was instructed to take my place inside the aircraft near the ramp which I did. About 40 minutes into the flight we were informed by SGT Bryce that we about to land at Saigon Airport; however; we were not aware of our job ahead.
4. When our C130 was on approach to Saigon Airport I saw a large number of tanks with a North Vietnamese (NVA) star on the sides. We saw that Saigon was surrounded by NVA tanks. On landing at Saigon Airport the C130 taxied to the terminal when the rear ramp was opened. It should be noted that the aircraft did not stop moving. I saw a large number of people running to the C130 and I was then briefed by SGT Bryce not to allow people with weapons onto the aircraft. I saw a large number of military and civilian weapons being carried by the people attempting to get onto the aircraft.
5. At this point I chambered a round into my M60 as protection from the people getting on. As these people were getting onto the C130 ramp I collected the weapons and discarded them by throwing them into the crowd of people behind the aircraft. Once the aircraft was full the FSgt closed the ramp and there were people hanging off the end of the ramp. After take off from Saigon, I notice a lot of fingers on the bottom ramp. The top ramp was partially opened by the FSgt and I was instructed to remove the fingers on ramp by kicking them out of the rear of the aircraft which I did.
6. SGT Bryce then told me that the flight was going to "The Delta" to drop of the people on board (referred to as refugees by SGT Bryce). We landed approximately 20 minutes from Saigon on a dirt runway. Once the C130 had stopped I disembarked from the front door and was instructed to stand guard at one of the wingtips. The passengers (refugees) then disembarked the aircraft and were met by a local official who directed from there. After 15 minutes the aircraft was then heading back to Saigon. I recall that this procedure of collecting refugees from Saigon happened three times that day.
7. On our fourth trip back to Saigon SGT Bryce advised us that we could not land in Saigon and that the aircraft will be going to Danang. We landed at Danang Airport and there was no one to be seen and after about five minutes we saw a large number of people coming out of a hanger and running

towards our C130. We then followed the same procedure that we did in Saigon by loading refugees and discarding weapons.

8. On take-off there was a number of small motorcycles, push bikes and people on the runway in front of our aircraft, The C130 continued its take-off running over people. Motor bikes and push bikes. The aircraft then continued to the Delta whilst I removed fingers from the tailgate again. We did two lifts from Danang to the Delta. We were then advised that we should not have been there as Green Australian uniforms were not allowed in Vietnam and we were to be dropped off at a location in Manila. We were located in Manila for approximately four hours until our C130 returned and then flew back to Butterworth. It should be noted that whilst at Manila we were given a large amount of alcohol to consume.

9. We were advised by an Army officer that this mission was not to be discussed and that officially did not happen.

Conclusion: All of this occurred on one day while I was a member of A Coy 2/4RAR located at RAAF Base Butterworth. This is just one incident of many whilst I was at Butterworth in 1975. I believe that our service was warlike in is worthy of medallic upgrade to AASM.

Colin David Ellard

21 December 2022