

## AUSTRALIAN GUNNER OBITUARY RESOURCE

### Warren Charles (Barney) Barnard

19 July 1945 -16 August 2023

By Peter Bruce, OAM

Warren Charles Barnard, or Barney as he became known to his Army mates, joined the army at the age of 19 in July 1964. After his recruit training at the 1<sup>st</sup> Recruit Training Battalion, (1RTB) at Kapooka, Barney was allocated to Artillery and completed his Initial Employment Training at the School of Artillery, North Head in Sydney. His first unit posting was to 4<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, then located at Wacol in Brisbane. During this time, Barney completed more Artillery related courses and promotion to Sergeant prior to his deployment to Vietnam in June 1968.



During this tour with 108 Battery in Vietnam, Barney was employed as the Command Post Sergeant. His methodical approach to all things technical, saw the Battery achieve outstanding results in response to calls for fire. Barney integrated a mix of Regular Soldiers and National Serviceman into a first-class command post team. He remained an active member of the 108 Battery Association and attended all of their reunions.

After his tour of Vietnam in 1967/68 with 108 Field Battery, Barney was posted to the then Central Army Records Office (CARO) in Melbourne. This organisation was responsible for postings, promotions, and discharges of Army personnel. After two years with CARO Barney was posted to the School of Artillery at North Head in Sydney in July 1970. Here, he was an instructor on the Operator Command Post Field (OPCP Fd) courses conducted by Regimental Training Wing.

During 1971, 106 Field Battery which had returned from Vietnam in February, was warned out for deployment to Singapore. Major Jim Townley took over command during that year and pushed for several individuals to join the Battery. One of these was Warren Barnard. Jim Townley knew of Barney's expertise and organisational ability and wanted him in the Battery. Barney joined 106 Battery in Townsville in December 1971, just prior to the Battery's deployment to Singapore.

106 Battery became part of 28 Australian New Zealand United Kingdom Regiment (28 ANZUK Fd Regt) which supported Infantry units from Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. These units were the last surviving units of the Malaya campaign which first deployed to the Malayan Peninsula during the 1950's.

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While in Singapore, Barney was allocated as the Battery Commander's Assistant (BC's Ack) and was a vital part of the operational and training element of the Battery. Jim Townley relied on Barney immensely. Barney was involved in all operational, training, and social activities of the Battery. Being so far from traditional training schools in Australia, 106 Battery conducted their own training courses, and Barney was often selected as one of the key instructors of these courses. Singapore was an accompanied posting, ie families moved to, and lived in Singapore for the duration of the posting. Social life in Singapore revolved around the Battery and social events were a regular feature of the unit calendar.

A particular highlight of Barney's time in Singapore was as the Manager of the Battery's Australian Rules Football team. Barney's organisational skills came to the fore with this role. While others trained the team to eventually win the Grand Final in 1973, the behind-the-scenes operations of Barney and his team of helpers was instrumental in the social and on field success of the team.

On return to Australia in October 1973, Barney was posted to 23<sup>rd</sup> Field Regiment in Sydney. He had a brief posting to 8<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Medium Regiment at Holsworthy before returning to the School of Artillery in January 1975. He had returned to Regimental Training Wing (RTW) and as well as instructing on various courses, he was also nominated as the Senior Sergeant Major Instructor Gunnery (SMIG) and was instrumental in training the younger instructors. Barney's technical knowledge and attention to detail made him the ideal candidate for this position.

In 1977, Barney's professionalism and military knowledge saw him selected as a Prescribed Service Officer (PSO) commission and a posting to the Proof and Experimental Establishment (P&EE) Graytown. Here, Barney was a Gun Captain involved in proofing various equipment's and ammunition.

In January 1981, Barney was posted to the Land Warfare Centre, Canungra in Southern Queensland. Here, Barney was the Senior Instructor of Warrant Officer and Non-Commissioned Officers Wing which presented military training courses to prospective NCOs and Warrant Officers. Again, it was here that Barney became involved with the local Canungra Golf Club and oversaw the growth and achievements of that club.

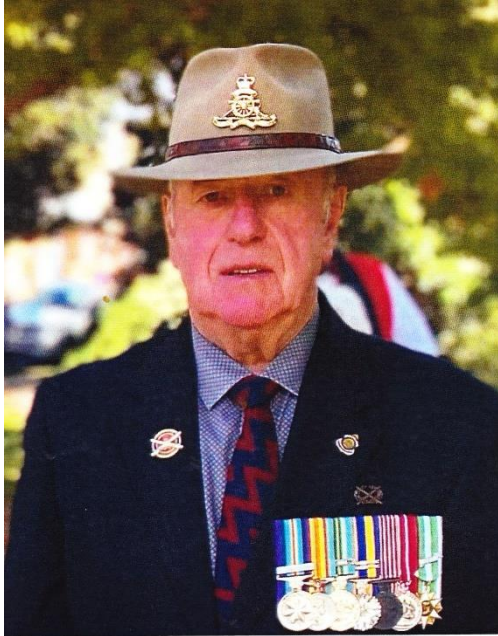
After two years at Canungra, Barney was posted to Melbourne and appointed Adjutant of 2nd/15th Field Regiment at Batman Avenue. This unit was an Army Reserve Unit and again Barney was instrumental in training and administration of soldiers in the unit. This unit also hosted the local Artillery Band and Barney became closely related to the band and a great supporter of their many appearances.

In January 1986, Barney remained in Melbourne for his next posting, and promotion to Major, to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army Recruiting Unit. He was responsible for the recruiting office in the city as well as many country Victorian recruiting stations. After two years with Recruiting in Melbourne, Barney was posted to District Support Unit Hobart in January 1988, and took over as the Officer Commanding, 6<sup>th</sup> Military District Support Unit. Barney elected discharge on 12 January 1992 after spending nearly 28 years in the Australian Army with three years overseas including operational service in South Vietnam.

During 1987, Barney had married his second wife Robyn. After discharge from the Army, Barney and Robyn and their two sons Aaron and Tom, moved to central Tasmania to a property called Kalangadoo. Barney continued playing golf at the local Campbelltown Golf

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Club where he took on the role of Secretary. In this role, he was instrumental in rewriting the Clubs constitution, spearheading their liquor licence application, and obtaining wastewater for course irrigation. Australian Rules Football remained a passion with him and the boys and Sundays were spent watching as many games as they could on the TV.



In 1997, Barny and his family moved to Bright in Northeast Victoria. Here, he was again actively involved in the local Golf Club and President and at times Secretary of the local RSL Sub-branch. He became a Legatee and was actively involved with Legacy in Bright and the local area until his death. Barny and another mate, Ray Nicholls, were also instrumental in establishing the Bright Men's Shed.

Barny died suddenly on 16 August 2023. He is survived by his wife Robyn; sons, James, Charles, Anthony, Aaron, and Thomas; daughter-in-law's, Kerry, Jessica, Esther and Taylah; Grandchildren, Seren, Scarlett, Ryan, Rose, William, Astrid, Emily, Daisy and Alexis.

A funeral service to celebrate the life of Barny was held at the Bright Football and Netball Club on Monday 28 August 2023. His service was well attended by family, friends, and Army mates. His son Aaron delivered an excellent eulogy and his long time Army mate Terry Walsh, conducted an RSL Tribute.

Barny's Military Honours and Awards include:

- Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasp Vietnam
- Vietnam Medal
- Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasp SE Asia
- Defence Force Service Medal with First and Second Clasp
- National Medal
- Australian Defence Medal
- Vietnam Campaign Medal
- Returned from Active Service Badge.

Barny is also eligible to receive the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation.

Acknowledgements:

- Mrs Robyn Barnard
- Aaron Barnard
- Terry Walsh (Ex 108 Battery Vietnam friend)
- John Wells, OAM (108 Battery Association)
- "Roger... Ready!" by Richard F Carter.