

Lieutenant Colonel B.A. Pearson RFD, ED

Provided by Brigadier D.I. Perry RFD, ED (Retd)
Colonel Commandant Southern Region

Lieutenant Colonel Bernie Pearson was not well known outside the Sovereign State, however he was well known to, and respected by, those that served with him for his 28 years in the Active Army Reserve. His outstanding characteristic was his determination to ensure that those that served under him received all the support and conditions that they were entitled to regardless of method, and whilst this endeared him to his troops, it often caused significant angst with his superiors.

On 10th June 1961 he enlisted as a 20 year old to 2nd Field Regiment at Batman Avenue and was posted as a signaller at Headquarters Battery. Shortly after enlistment he was posted to the Officer Cadet Training Unit and returned to Q Battery, 2nd Field Regiment as a Sergeant operator command post field. Within 12 months he was commissioned and became gun position officer of 2nd Field Battery.

Following a series of Regimental appointments, including survey and signals officer he was promoted captain and posted as Staff Officer Grade Three Operations at Headquarters Royal Australian Artillery 3rd Division and subsequently Staff Officer Grade Three Administration at Headquarters 4th Brigade. He was then posted to 15th Field Regiment at Frankston where performed the role of forward observer and battery captain in 23rd Battery.

This was followed by attendance at Reserve Command and Staff College (RCSC) where he qualified as a major and was subsequently posted as Staff Officer Grade Three Artillery at Headquarters 3rd Division then as Staff Officer Grade Two Operations at Headquarters Royal Australian Artillery 3rd Division and subsequently he was appointed battery commander Headquarters Battery 2nd/15th Field Regiment. He then went on to serve in 10th Medium Regiment as battery commander of Headquarters Battery and 37th Medium Battery. He returned to RCSC as an intermediate course instructor, and then was posted back to 10th Medium Regiment as battery commander 39th Medium Battery and then brigade major Headquarters 4th Brigade followed by a further battery commander appointment of 132nd Divisional Locating Battery.

Following his promotion to lieutenant colonel he was appointed to Command Melbourne University Regiment and after 3 years in that appointment retired to the Inactive Reserve on 26th September 1989.

Lieutenant Colonel Pearson was a serial volunteer and following his retirement from the Army Reserve he threw himself into the Country Fire Authority (CFA) with a vengeance and using his signals and staff skills soon rose to key appointments in that organisation.

At the time of his sudden death, on 26th May 2008 at the age of 67 he was President of Victorian Rural Fire Brigades Association, President of the Romsey District Fire Brigade Group, 1st Deputy Group Officer (Romsey Group) and Secretary of the Springfield Fire Brigade. In addition, he had recently been interviewed for a position as a member of the CFA Board and a final decision was imminent at that time.

The funeral service was formally conducted by the CFA and the military eulogy was delivered by Brigadier D.I. Perry RFD, ED (Retd). As a measure of the regard in which he was held by his community, the CFA and his Army colleagues the congregation was in excess of 800.