

IN MEMORANDUM

Last issue we asked if anyone know the whereabouts of **Norn Fletcher**. Ted McEvoy told us the sad news that Norm had passed away some years ago, back in the late 90's and that he had attended the funeral. Ted said that Norm had been living in the Richmond/Windsor area and he believed that he died as a result of severe asthma.

What a terrible shame because he was a bloody great bloke.....

John Sambrooks advises the sad news that **Kevin (Obie) O'Brien** has passed away. Kev had been ill for a long time, and had spent the past year or so in a nursing home in the Port Macquarie area.

Kevin Ignatius O'Brien was born in April 1934, which made him 75 years old. He served in Vietnam with 35 Sqn from June 1969 to April 1970 as a Corporal Engine Fitter. John Sambrooks says, "I was in Vietnam with Kevin. Like a lot of us back then, he certainly liked a beer on a hot, cold, windy, wet or dry day but he knew the Caribou engine inside and out". Kev was farewelled on the 22 October in Port Macquarie.



Gary Olsen advises the passing of **John Howes**. John served in No 2 Squadron at Butterworth as an Armament Fitter. He was buried in Nambour (Qld) on Friday 18 September.

Bob Hambling advises that it is his very sad duty to inform you that **Duncan Patterson** recently passed away peacefully in his sleep at the Greenslopes Repatriation Hospital in Brisbane at the age of 81.

Duncan had prostate cancer for a long time and it was kept in check with pills and/or injections. Recently he began to get severe lower back pain. He kept this in check with pain-killing tablets but a blood test indicated that his PSA, which is an indication of the level of activity of the cancer, had gone from a comfortable 8 to over 120. The test also indicated a swollen liver and a bladder infection. He also looked very pale and was very lethargic.

Radiation oncology treatment was arranged and was due to start. However, after a couple of days at home he started to have chest pain whenever he tried to swallow, which also meant that now he could not swallow his medication. I took him to the emergency department of the

hospital, and he was admitted for treatment. His passing in this way prevented long periods of pain and discomfort, and I believe was fortuitous.

He was cremated and his remains interred at the Albany Creek (Qld) Lawn Cemetery.

Ernie Gimm advises the sad news:

It is with regret that I advise you of the passing of **Hugh Hartley Dixon** in Tamworth on Friday 2nd October 2009. He was only 62 years old.

His ex wife Narelle and their children, Liam, Karmen and Shane, travelled to Tamworth to arrange for Hugh's funeral which was held on the 12th October 2009 at the Lincoln Grove Memorial Gardens Cemetery, Gunnedah Road, Tamworth.

Hugh's ex wife advised that he joined the Army in 1966 at age 19 and went to Vietnam with the 547 Signal Troop from February 1967 to February 1968, as a signaller. On return, he elected discharge and joined the RAAF 7 months later as a Signals Operator. He retired from the RAAF about 7 years ago.

John Harcourt-Rigg advised that he lived with Hugh as a 'single' in Little Sai Wan during 74-75. He says: Hugh was a real decent sort of guy. Sure, like many of us, he could be "trying at times". I remember him throwing a typewriter out of the window at Little Sai Wan in temper. But I must say that he was always a good bloke with me and good company. I tried on many occasions to contact Hugh. I thought he retired to around Penrith way. I was looking in the wrong area. He will be missed".

And:

ex-SGT **Andrew James 'Shorty' Dearman** died at his home in Midvale, Perth, on 30 July 2009 at the young age of 65. Andrew was a SIGSOP and had numerous postings in his 20+ years of service, including Base Support Flight Vietnam, (June 1966 to Jan 1967), RAAF Base Butterworth, RAAF Base Pearce and RAAF Unit Hong Kong. He resigned from the RAAF around 1982. Andrew is survived by his ex-wife Jan, children Christopher and Jody, and three grandchildren.

And:

The passing of yet another Djinnang member, **Ian Chalkley**. Ian lived in Meadow Springs over in the West. Ian's funeral was held at the Simplicity Funerals Chapel in Mandurah WA on Tuesday 22 September.

Ted McEvoy sent us the following which appeared in the West Australian on the 17th November and was written by Malcolm Quekett. It concerns a remarkable Australian...

Vale Jack Sue,

A quiet hero and a brave man of action

There are times when a man's heroics are of such magnitude that they logically belong in the world of fiction. Jack Wong Sue's wartime deeds fall into such a category. But they were fact.

Mr Sue, who died yesterday, (16th November) aged 84, was reluctant to talk much about his own efforts, but his actions speak for themselves. Sent behind enemy lines during WWII with the [Z Special Unit](#) of the Services Reconnaissance Department, agent AKR 13's team of seven agents was charged with getting information on Japanese troop movements as a prelude to the Australian invasion of Borneo. Borneo was occupied by 37,000 troops of the Japanese Imperial Army and so those sent from Fremantle in 1944 aboard the USS Tuna on operation Agas 1 were issued with "L-tablets", lethal capsules which would bring death in 30 seconds. They were to be swallowed if captured to avoid interrogation and torture.



The unit trained Chinese and Malay guerilla fighters and harassed the Japanese, killing many. They gathered information for Operation Kingfisher, the plan to rescue the Australian and British prisoners of war at the infamous [Sandakan camp](#).

Mr Sue had to reconnoitre the camp and the landscape and the images of the emaciated Australian soldiers remained with him. The rescue plan was later cancelled.

In June 1945, in desperate need of intelligence, Mr Sue, dressed as a Chinese coolie, walked into a railway station which was crawling with Japanese troops. He found the Japanese-appointed Chinese station master, spoke to him in Chinese, made threats and walked out with vital intelligence. The act won him the Distinguished Conduct Medal.



Jack Sue – second from left

But, feeling ashamed by his threats, he searched for years after the war for the station master. In the late 1990s, Mr Sue found the man's family and apologised to them for what he had said.

He was born in Perth in 1925. His father was a Chinese doctor. Schooled at Perth Boys School, Mr Sue, a sea scout, would ferry in US crews from their Catalina flying boats as the war loomed. At 14 he played piano for the troops at the City Hotel. Sent a white feather at the age of 16, he put his age up and joined the Norwegian merchant navy. He then tried to join the Royal Australian Navy, but was refused because of his Chinese parentage.

After the war Mr Sue remained tied to the ocean, starting Jack Sue WA Skindivers in 1951, and was a key figure in the world of scuba diving for decades. Mr Sue was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in the General Division in 2006.

He had three wives and seven children.

Mr Sue's son Barry said yesterday his father had no idea of fear "He was not one to brag about himself, he was very humble," Barry Sue said. "He's lived the life of 10 men." Ray Krakouer, 87, a friend of Mr Sue's for 50 years, summed up his mate simply: "He was a good Australian. There was no better Australian than Jack Sue. He was fair dinkum."