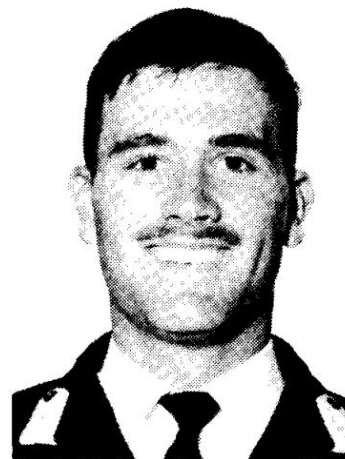


Gavan Connell was born in Melbourne on 1 August 1950, a brother to Peter and Margaret. He completed his secondary Education at St Patrick's College, Ballarat. Before entering the Army on 27 January 1971 as National Serviceman 3800694, Gavan was a student. He commenced OTU with Bridges Company in Class 1/71 on 12 February 1971, graduating on 15 July. He was allocated to the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and posted to the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. On 20 October 1972 Gavan transferred to the Australian Regular Army, then on 4 May 1973 he transferred to the Armoured Corps and posted to B Squadron, 3 Cavalry Regiment. Gavan served with the ARA until 29 January 1991 when he transferred to the Army Reserve in Tasmania, where he discharged with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel on 31 March 1999.



In 2005 Gavan and his wife moved to Mexico. Gavan died suddenly of a heart attack at home in Prospero, Mexico, on 9 October 2020. He leaves behind his wife Lorena, children Cy, Matthew and Alexandra and grandchildren Maisie, Archer, Leo and Harriet. He will be sadly missed by both his Australian and Mexican families.

Many classmates responded to the sad news of Gavan's sudden passing:

Frank Le Faucheur: 'He always looked super-fit, to the end!'

Phil Biencourt: 'He always had a positive and friendly attitude no matter how hard things were going.'

Doug Miller: 'Some of us knew Gavan a bit better than I did when we were at OTU. Your testimony bears witness to his calibre – the kind that helped all of us to survive and dare I say it, grow. I only got to be a bit closer to him while canvassing for participants to join us at next year's 50th anniversary reunion in Manly. It was then that I realised he was living in Mexico – and then also that I understood how keen he was to make that special trip back here next year to be with us all.'

John Forwood: 'Next door neighbour and Bridges brother to Bluey Kuhl, Jim Kelaher and myself. Gavan was totally reliable, a great friend who never had a bad day and still looked 20 at his last reunion!'

Geoff Noble: 'We saw him four years ago in Mexico. He was happy and looked very well. We had lunch and spent the afternoon together. Very sad and surprising passing.'

Greg Elliot: 'So very sorry to hear of Gavin's passing. Met him in the 4/70 Snr-1/71 Jnr Term at Scheyville and then at Lavarack Barrack Barracks in Townsville where we became close mates. In touch on and off over the years but caught up with he and his son in Perth in recent years and has been mentioned he was much the same old Gavan as he was in our Army days and still had that twinkle and sense of larrikin in his eye!!'





Gavan Connell and OTU 'Brothers':
John Forwood, Jim Kelaher and Ian Kuhl