

Ian George Mathers was born in Brisbane on 3 January 1949. He



completed his secondary education at Brisbane Grammar School before attending the Sydney University where he graduated with a Bachelor of Economics in 1970. Before entering the Army as a National Serviceman 2794496 at 1 RTB Kapooka on 28 January 1970 Ian had been employed by the Colonial Sugar Refinery Company (now CSR Ltd)



from January 1966 and was Assistant to the General Manger from June 1967 to March 1968. He commenced at OTU with Class 1/70 on 13 February and graduated on 15 July. The following day he was allocated to the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery and posted to the School of Artillery.

On 1 October Ian was posted to 12 Field Regiment, however, on 23 December, he flew to Vietnam and the following day was attached to 4 Field Regiment. On the Regiment's return to Australia, Ian was transferred to the replacement unit, his former unit 12 Field Regiment, on 8 March 1971.



He was initially employed on the gun line at Fire Support Bases (right, with glasses) but in May 1971 he was attached to B Coy 3 RAR as the Forward Observer. He went with B Coy on Operation Overlord.

On 7 June 1971 5 Pl, B Coy, was involved in a heavy engagement with a bunker system in the Long Khanh area. Company HQ moved up to 5 Pl and Ian went forward to 5 Pl to assist in the control of artillery fire. Moving into a better position to control the artillery, Ian inadvertently moved into a fire-lane near the platoon commander when he was killed. In the same incident two RAAF crew members died when their resupply 'Huey' helicopter was shot down and burst into flames, while fourteen men were wounded.

Ian's name was projected onto the exterior of the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra on 25 May 2021. It will also be projected again on 4 August and 29 October in 2021 and on 24 February 2022. Additional information from Greg Gilbert, ex-12 Field Regiment.