

**Michael Gillespie (1/65) Rob Youl (2/65) & Neil Leckie (3/68)**

Michael Joseph Gillespie was born on 17 June 1945 in Brisbane, Qld, and attended Norman Park Convent School from 1951 to 1955 and Villanova College from 1956 to 1961. At Villanova he was a School Prefect and in the Cadet Corps. He played 1st XV Rugby at school and was interested in all sports. He was graded 'better than most' by his Headmaster. Michael was granted a Scholarship to RMC in 1962. He was attested at RMC on 24 Jan 1963 as Staff Cadet 2196. He was warned at the end of his second term that his exam results were unsatisfactory. At the end of 1963 he had failed in all five academic and one military subjects. He was Discharged 25 Feb 1964.

Michael (*below*) was subsequently called up for National Service, and being a Queenslander, commenced at 1 RTB Kapooka on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1965. On 16<sup>th</sup> July he commenced training at OTU Scheyville with the first class, Class 1/65.



Col. Geddes required that each Platoon come up with a song based on either the Battalion slow march, *Never Never, Row the boat ashore*, or the quick march *Gundagai*. Each group then had to present their song to the assembled Staff and Cadets in the Cadets Mess. The majority of songs were described as 'absolute rubbish'. Mick and Colin Clark collaborated on their version and with their crew hit the nail on the head with their effort. Col. Geddes was in stitches, along with the rest of the assembly, because the lyrics described so accurately

4

what each of the Cadets thought of the training at OTU. The song gave a little bit of levity to what was considered at the time a deadly serious endeavour.

Mick wrote a song of which he was very proud. There is some suggestion that the song was a modification of an RMC Marching song, but RMC has no record of such a song.

Mick graduated on 18<sup>th</sup> December, Graduate Number 37, and was posted to 2 RAR. On 6<sup>th</sup> June 1966 he commenced his tour of duty in South Vietnam with 6 RAR. On 9<sup>th</sup> January 1967 he was Medivaced from C Coy 6 RAR with Malaria. He returned to Australia. Mick took up parachuting and on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1967 near Townsville, while returning from a jump, he was killed in a car accident. Sadly, Michael's brother, another Army Officer, was also killed in a car accident after returning from South Vietnam.

Michael Gillespie, Class 1/65, author of The OTU Song. RIP, Mick!