

## **Lieutenant Colonel Don Smith ED**

**By Brian Armour**

Lieutenant Colonel Donald McLeod Yeomans Smith (or DMcY as he was affectionately known) was born at Cooranbong NSW on 9 March 1934.

Don started his working life as an Apprentice Carpenter with Gavan and Shalala, a respected building firm. Don was able to put his workplace skills to good effect as he built his first two family homes at Ingleburn and then at Denham Court. He also met his wife Shirley through a workplace connection and they were married in September 1956, raising three children, Denise, Ross and Harry.

Don joined the CMF in the early 1950's as Gunner with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Anti-Tank Regt based at Belmore NSW. He rose through the ranks in the CMF to the rank of Captain in the (then) 23<sup>rd</sup> Fd Regt also based at Belmore. Nick Marshall who was Adjt of the Regt from 1963-65 remembers DMcY as a BK who came on to CMF FTD to replace him as Adjt when he left to take command of 101 Fd Bty.

A few years later in July 1967, I had my first meeting with DMcY when he arrived at Camp Terendak, Malacca, Malaysia to take over from David Gilroy as BK A Fd Bty. DMcY was in effect the 107 Fd Bty advance party who were taking over our role in 28 Comwel Inf Bde from October 1967.

On his return to Australia in 1969, he was promoted to Major and briefly commanded 107 Fd Bty on the departure of Don Quinn. He was subsequently posted to OTU Scheyville NSW as the Director Military Arts. Early in 1971 he had a brief tenure as 2IC 8<sup>th</sup> Mdm Regt before commencing active service in May 1971 as SO2 (Civil Affairs and PsyOps) on HQ 1 ATF.

Chris Hunter recalls "I thanked God for his arrival; he was a breath of fresh air; down to earth and sensible. Don taught me a great deal about being a good staff officer". He returned to Australia in January 1972 and was posted as 2IC 12<sup>th</sup> Fd Regt. In late 1974, he was posted as Maj Admin at the School of Artillery and remained in this appointment until he was promoted to Lt Col in 1976 as the Project Officer at WRE Salisbury SA.

Mick Crawford who was the CO/CI at the time recalls that DMcY took some convincing on the benefits of his promotion as he saw the Maj Admin's role at North Head as a "dream posting". In 1979, he returned to Sydney as SO1 (Pers) HQ FF Comd. This was to be one of his last postings before he retired from the Army in 1984.

On his return to civilian life, Don took on the role of NSW Executive Officer for the Australian Property Institute (API) and after 13 years of service in this role he retired in January 1998.

In his retirement, Don was an active member of both the North Balgowlah Golf Club and the Corps of Guides at North Fort. Cliff Dodds and John Macpherson echo the recollections of many people as to DMcY's dry wit and his commanding presence; used no doubt to great effect in entertaining his customers.

Don's death on 26 October 2011 at the age of 77 saw the Regiment lose a very personable, capable and widely respected person and leaves us the poorer for his passing.

I wish to acknowledge the contributions of the Gunners I have consulted and quoted in the Obituary and also source material from his brother Vic Smith, Arthur Burke, Alan Smith and Gail Sanders, the current NSW Executive officer of API.

RAAFHC