

SAPPER ROBERT NITSCHKE – GREENOCK

Vietnam

Robert Nitschke, 20 years old, received his papers in March 1969 citing that he had been called for National Service. By 2 October 1969 Robert was at the Keswick barracks in Adelaide being deployed for training and soon boarding a plane for Mangalore, near Puckapunyal in Victoria.

After basic training, Robert was posted to the School of Military Engineering in Sydney and completed a battle efficiency course in Queensland, before being deployed to Vietnam in July 1970. A stopover in Singapore, then flying into Saigon, Vietnam, then onto the final hot and humid destination of Nui Dat.

Robert was posted to one of the engineering squadrons, 1 Field Squadron, aided in the construction of roads and infrastructure operating heavy machinery like bulldozers, loaders, graders, backhoes. They even had armoured personnel carriers, a mine-clearing tank and a lease on an American M48 Paton tank for clearing mines and booby traps.

Robert was discharged on 2 October 1971 and on returning home, resumed his job at Laucke Mill. His experience with machinery operation led to a successful career as a plant operator at various mines and project across Australia.

Robert has kept in touch with some of his fellow troop members who served with him in Vietnam.



Image provided by Robert Nitschke
Information provided courtesy of The Leader Newspaper