

# Private Wally .C. Burrows Diary

## The last day

30/4/1975

Dear Diary,

The last day has come I'm now coming back home to see my family. This morning we were walking the track back to camp in Indian file and I was leader at the start of our march. It was my turn to go to the back and there was Private Johnson looking at me. His skinny face and the fear in his eyes, he was scared, His skinny nose and those feared green eyes he said, "I don't want to die Wally". That was the last I saw of him. I walked to the back looking at the forestry around us then BANG! The five soldiers at the front including Private Johnson stepped on a land mine. Privates Johnson, Thomas, Peterson, Scott and Menzies were dead. I escaped death for the hundredth time.

We got back to camp and I was shaking and upset. I can't handle it, it's too tough, I want to see my children, my family. I've got a life to live not this garbage. I'm scared, I'm terrified, why me? I remember standing in that line were they chose us to go to war and there was this guy next to me and the way they were choosing he was next to be picked. He looked at me and said "I've got a family and kids. I can't do this. I'm scared and terrified. I won't please, don't make them choose me please". I looked at him and said we'll swap. So we did and now I was chosen to come here to die. There's no meaning to this. But I can't quit now. What about all those Vietnamese people dying? I can't let this happen. I have to do this for my children and for Australia.

I walked out the camp and sat down to think. I found a boulder two kilometers out of camp. I was looking out at the scenery around about midday. I heard a noise which came from the tall forest of trees. I was terrified it could be the North Vietnamese coming to get me. Then something emerged out of the bushes. Four Vietnamese soldiers staring at me, but wait, they were four Australian soldiers Private Keith, Private Mayo, Private Stevens and Private Price. Private Price was my best mate. He was always beside me when I'm in terrible danger and he probably saved my life ten times against the North Vietnamese. First time we met I was being shot at and I had to hide behind a tall tree. I knew I was dead. Five against one not a big chance. He walked out and bang with his battle rifle. Five North Vietnamese down. That was the first time I met him and now he has been there for me a thousand times. Private Keith, Mayo and Stevens are good friends of mine too. We have been together since the time they were sorting us out. We were now walking down the desert muddy track to get back to camp and then Private Price stopped we looked at him. He broke down and started screaming.

"NO! NO! NO!" Private Price kept repeating over and over again. "NO! NO!"

"What's wrong Price" Private Mayo called out to Private Price.

"Guys, I've stepped on a land mine" Private Price told us in a scared and fearful way. He started to tremble and shake violently. He knew he was going to die he looked at me with his ocean green eyes full of fear and hope.

He cried out "Run a way from here go back to camp and don't look back and tell everyone that I'm dead and Wally, tell my family that I love them!"

Without hesitation we ran and then I heard a massive explosion I couldn't help it and I looked back to see him blown up to smithereens. That is what got to me that day, the day I lost my best friend in the army.

## Epilogue

Wally Burrows did survive the Vietnam War he was lucky very lucky like this story shows. But the thing is Wally Burrows did not survive life unfortunately. But that's life. He was one of many soldiers to go over to Vietnam and fight for his life and others. The fact that he had to save Australia, South Vietnam, himself and his family would be one hard goal and surviving it is like one in a million.

So now because of Private Burrows and others like him in all the wars there have been I go to pay my respect for the dead and for the living otherwise if it wasn't from them there might not been a me. They went over to fight for Australia and that's who would should call heroes. Every year the ANZAC spirit is dying because people forget and don't care. Without these man there wouldn't be an us, wouldn't be a place to call home and there wouldn't be Australia. That's why every year I wear the greatest thing in the world on ANZAC day Private Burrows medals and I march with them and listen to the last post and look at the Australian flag because I'm proud of what they've done to protect me and Australia.

Life did give him something in return he had three daughters Tracey, Toni and Francene he always wanted a boy but that didn't happen. Then after some great years as a Truckee life struck and he was murdered on the 29/11/1997. He was 52 when he died. It was unbelievable that 1730907 Private W.C.Burrows died. When Private Burrows died he was happy and he's daughters grew up to live happily to but there one thing that Private Burrows didn't want is to die because he died to years after Francene had a baby. He would have wanted to see it grow up. It finally happened there was a boy in the Family. Private Burrows had a grandson he's grandson Kyle.

By Kyle Dayne Burrows Year 9 Maleny  
State High School