



12 Field Regiment (Vietnam) Association (A Branch of the NSW RAA Association)

12 Field Regiment

In this issue:

- **Presidents Letter**
Page 1
- **2008 Coral Com-
memoration Photos**
Page 2
- **Where are they now?**
Foxtrot Gun Page 3
- **104 Battery**
Newsletter Page 3
- **Welcome to New**
Members Page 4
- **Vietnam Veterans'**
Family Study Page 4
- **Vietnam Veterans' Day**
Page 4

Regular Feature

Where are they now?

*See your old mates today
and yesterday!*

What were they doing?

What are they doing now?

Send pictures of yourself or someone you want to embarrass (nicely!) with text to:

jallen@datamasteranz.com

Advertise your Business in the Association's Newsletter.

Ring John Allen on 0407 672849 or email jallen@datamasteranz.com

President's Letter

Gentlemen and Ladies

At the time of writing (18 May), the Association is celebrating its second anniversary. We are now approaching 300 members and I am confident that, given the success of the Coral/Balmoral Commemorations in Canberra, our membership will continue to grow.

Not unexpectedly, much of the Winter Edition will focus on the Canberra events. I was very impressed with the attendance of such a wide range of sub-units of the Regiment as well as 1RAR and 3RAR veterans and their families.

It is not widely known that the Army did not have any comprehensive record of gunners who served at FSB Coral and Balmoral. We are all deeply obliged to Neil and Elizabeth Mangels who worked tirelessly to identify those present so that they could be invited by DVA to attend the various official functions in Canberra.

I also acknowledge those people, from gunners and private soldiers to Brigadiers and Colonels, who participated in the organization of the various unit functions and events such as the 12 Field Regiment Commemorative plaque.

I will summarise the events which took place over three days for those who were unable to attend.

Parliament House Reception

The official reception in the Great Hall on Monday evening was so well attended that the crowd spilled back into the Parliament House foyer. While this was a great kick-off for the following functions, I

was disappointed that the speeches seemed to suggest that there were no gunners at Coral and Balmoral! A few words in the right ears seemed to fix this oversight at subsequent events.

ANZAC Parade

The Coral/Balmoral Memorial Service was held at the Australian Vietnam Forces Memorial in ANZAC Parade.

The parade of unit banners was preceded by four towed guns representing 102 Battery. This ceremony was heavily covered by the print and television media.

After speeches and wreath laying, the vets and families (mainly) walked to the Australian War Memorial for the :

12 Field Regiment Plaque Dedication ceremony.

Delivering the Commemorative Address, Don Tait spoke about the Coral and Balmoral engagements and also reflected on the first tour of the Regiment in Vietnam. The commemorative plaque was unveiled by Mal Hundt, John Sullivan, Rod Baldwin, John Dellaca, Peter Geelen and Ron (Tex) Bassan and was dedicated by Fr John Tinkler. After this ceremony, we broke up into groups and were escorted through the War Museum by AWM staff.

Max Franklin and his boys posed for photos in front of Foxtrot gun (without the gun-sight—but that's another story!). (See photos, Page 4)

Dinner that night at Rydges Eaglehawk was well-attended by 180 gunners and wives, with an increasing number of

Winter 2008

sons and daughters attending. The prototype of the 102nd (Coral) Field Battery plaque was displayed. (See Page 4)

Max Franklin and Larry Davenport did a great job as our auctioneers and provided us with a great laugh at the same time.

Presentation of the 102nd (Coral) Field Battery RAA Honour Title

On Wednesday, the Mt Pleasant RAA National Memorial was a most fitting venue for the presentation of the Honour Title "Coral" by the Governor-General to Lt Col Craig Furini, Commanding Officer 8th/12th Medium Regiment RAA on behalf of 102nd Field Battery.

This was a most memorable event—a beautiful day, the magpie surveying us all from the top of the flag pole, the Huey flying over the top of us, the magnificent view of Canberra from this dedicated site.

A Minute gun (M2A2 Howitzer) was fired in memory of Gunners Sawtell and Scott, both of HQ Battery.

Ian Ahearn gave a great address—have a look at it on the website or I will send it to you snail mail on request.

The last night was an informal dinner at the **Federal Golf Club**. I thank Scrubber Ahearn and the staff of the club for making the night so enjoyable.

The three days were spent with great mates and families. Wouldn't have missed it for quids!

Ubique

Rob (Cossie) Costello

2008 Coral Commemoration Photos



Day 1, Bus 1 1 RAR and 3 RAR veterans of Coral let Ian Ryan (rear) ride with the experts to Parliament House on Monday evening, 12 May.



Day 2 The Hurry Up and Wait period at the Vietnam Forces Memorial on Tuesday, 13 May. There are no prizes for identifying yourself here!



Day 2 March past by Honour Guard at Australian Vietnam Forces Memorial



Prime Minister Ian Rudd and Opposition Representative Bronwyn Bishop lay wreaths at Australian Vietnam Forces Memorial, ANZAC Parade.



Day 2 Dedication of commemorative plaque at Western Courtyard, Australian War Memorial.



Day 3 Presentation of Honour Title by Governor General Sir Michael Jeffrey to Lt Col. Furini, CO of 8/12 Medium Regt RAA as custodian

Where are they now! Foxtrot Gun, 102 Battery



Forty years ago, on the morning of 13 May, 1968, (left to right) Sgt Max Franklin, Ken Walker, Alan Good and John Schwartze await the extraction of Foxtrot gun after the first attack on FSB Coral. Visitor at far right not identified.



On 13 May, 2008, Max Franklin, Tony King, Greg Aylson and John Schwartze pose in front of Foxtrot gun at the Australian War Memorial.

104 Battery



This report will be short and sweet due to the Coral/Balmoral commemoration in Canberra having been the focus of the Committee's attention since well before the AGM in February.

My sincere congratulations to our President, Rob Costello and other Committee Members involved in the organisation of the 12 Field Regiment (Vietnam) Association component of those unforgettable events.

We now look forward to getting down to some hard work in attending to all the tasks that have been on hold for the past few months. One of our aims will be building the

membership of the Association and hopefully involving more ex-members of the Batteries which constituted the Regiment during its existence, namely 102, 104, 161, HQ battery plus "A" Battery and 131 Div Loc Battery.

One of the initiatives, for those Batteries interested, will be the establishment of sub-unit Steering Committees which will focus on special events and functions specifically for their sub-unit. Examples of these activities would include ANZAC day, Vietnam Veterans Day or any other special event in the history of your unit.

This will allow the sub-units to operate as virtual Associations under the auspices of 12 Field Regiment (Vietnam) Association, but without the additional costs of incorporation, public liability insurance etc etc.

The sub-units will have access to the quarterly Newsletter to address issues specific

to the sub-units, and other material can forwarded to the Editor for inclusion in the general interest area of the newsletter.

The only cost will be the initial joining fee and our annual subscription to the Association.

We will be investigating various means to encourage all ex-members of 12 Field Regiment to join us and make our Association an even more worthwhile organisation for our members. One of the best ways of increasing our membership and maintaining contact with our non-member gunner mates is to invite them to join.

Give them your copy of the Newsletter; tell them about the great times we have getting together or get the Secretary to send them an application form!

Keep your heads up (or down, as the case may be!)

John Sullivan

Units of
12 Field Regiment
RAA

Your unit or sub-unit
can establish your own
sub-association under
the auspices of
12 Field Regiment
(Vietnam) Association

Contact any member of
the Executive Committee
for further information.

Vietnam Vet Family Study

The Commonwealth Government has commenced research into the health of families of veterans who served in Vietnam.

The study will seek to identify and compare the physical, mental and social health outcomes of partners/ex-partners, children and step-children of Army Vietnam Veterans and a comparison group of Army personnel of the Vietnam era but who did not serve in Vietnam.

The first stage of the study will focus on the offspring of Army personnel. Ten thousand invitations to participate will be sent to EACH target group. Recipients will be asked to encourage their children to register and participate in this study. Under the Privacy Act, the Department cannot approach offspring directly.

It is estimated that some 60,000 personnel served in

Vietnam and that 85,000 offspring were born after deployment. Approximately 40,000 Army personnel served in Vietnam.

Previous studies had very low participation rates by offspring (1%). DVA is encouraging higher levels of participation to ensure the Vietnam Veterans' Family Health Study will be based on a statistically valid sample.

Veterans or family members who are not part of the sample can voluntarily participate. Their data will not be used as part of the comparison sample, but will be reported separately.

The Department has established a information help line (1800 502 302) or email healthstudy@dva.gov.au for enquiries. Your participation is encouraged.

New Members

Max Vandyke,
104 Bty 1971
6 Timms Close
Edensor Park NSW 2176
No email address

John Beer
A Bty
81 Fawcett Street,
Glenfield NSW 2167
jbe51622@bigpond.net.au

Thomas East
104/HQ Bty
P O Box 6
Aloomba Qld 4871
t.east@cairns.qld.gov.au

Neil McDonald
4 Field Regiment
Unit 131, 6 Melville Pk Dve
Berwick VIC 3806
nms66119@bigpond.net.au

Reg Neville
12 Field Regt LAD
5653 Bruxner Highway
Mummulgum NSW 2469
brian123@hotmail.net.au

Michael Crawford
104 Bty
87 Macwood Road
Smiths Lake NSW 2428

WELCOME

Vietnam Veterans Day—Sunday 17 August

Two very special venues for Vietnam Vets this year.

1 Ouyen , Victoria

The second smallest town in Victoria, "Ouyen" will be holding the smallest commemorative event in Australia for Vietnam Veterans on the V.V. weekend commencing Friday 15th of August through to Monday the 18th of August 2008.

On VV Day, all marchers should form up out-

side the Shire Council Office. March off at 11.00am sharp.

A very comprehensive program for the weekend is available from Rob Costello.

Please contact him if you are going. (02-4930 3359 or cossie0102@bigpond.com)

2 Springwood, Blue Mountains

The VV Association at Springwood is

organizing the Vietnam Veterans Day march which commences at 11.30am.

104 Battery will participate for the first time. Meeting place is the Fire station at the bottom of the main street

Beating the Retreat begins 4.45pm.

Advise John Sullivan if you propose to attend. (02-986 48370 or john.sullivan@ingres.com)