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12 Field Regiment (Vietnam) Association

INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 35 - 5/6/15

1. Correction:

Last issue, I welcomed Max Murray as a new member of the Association. Max tells me that I had unilaterally promoted him by saying he was a WO2 while he served in Vietnam. Being such a modest bloke, Murray wants the record corrected to show he was actually a Bombardier while in Vietnam, and the WO2 rank came later in his career.

I don't know ya give a bloke a promotion and he won't take it..... just no pleasing some people..... Just kidding – my apologies, Max.

2. Survey of Vets Regarding Hearing Loss:

Flood is drawing the attention of our Queensland members to a survey being conducted about hearing loss among Vets. The first two Attachments to this Bulletin give the details in case any member wants to participate.

3. Changes to Great Southern Railway Offers:

President Flood also wants our train-travelling members to be aware of recent changes to the benefits funded by the government to Vietnam Vets and their Carers. Please note the following from the TPI Association via the Victorian VVAA.

*Advice has been received through the TPI Association that **Great Southern Rail** is in the process of being sold by its UK based owners, Serco Group plc, to Australian owned Allegro Funds. The business of Great Southern Rail will continue to be developed with the change of ownership and specifically, no change to the entitlements of concession holders, including TPI's, will result from the change in ownership*

Also of note is the statement in the 2014 Federal Budget announcing that the funding for concessions on Great Southern Rail journeys will cease from 1 July 2016. This impact of the cessation of this concession beyond that date is still being assessed. All relevant stakeholders will be advised of the outcome once the impact for concession holders has been determined.

The TPI Association have further advised that this issue will be discussed at its next Committee meeting – more to follow! Hint - those planning to travel via Great Southern Rail to either Perth or Darwin may well need to do so before 1st July 2016. Peter Bright, Secretary VVAA Victorian Branch

4. WW1 Poems:

Beery has sent us a poem called Fromelles regarding the Australians in WW1 which he thought might be of interest to members. It is attached to this Bulletin and makes poignant reading.....

5. Ingleburn RSL Coral/Balmoral Service:

Once again, this event was of a very high standard and was well attended by our members. The following are reports from Cossie, and Chris Coape-Smith. A photo taken by Jill Maher is attached. Thanks Jill.

Fellas, as you know The Ingleburn RSL holds a Coral / Balmoral memorial service every year in May. The Ingleburn RSL has also supported our Association financially in many ways throughout the years. I have had the good fortune to attend all of their Coral memorial services, and they really do a great job in remembrance of those lost in the Battles 47 years ago. Yesterday was the first day that I have walked away from there without a drink or two under the belt and that was entirely my fault because I am off it!!!!!!!!!!

In this past year the RSL finally received the M2A2 Gun to place in their park that they had been waiting on for a very long time and they kindly asked our own Scrubber Ahearn to unveil it. Before the service started, a very unselfish Scrubber approached me and kindly asked me to assist him. Can you imagine my pride! I was over the moon. (Thanks mate, It was an honour!!!!!!!!!!)

So all in all, I got to lay the Association wreath after being invited to do so by John Beer, I helped Scrubber unveil the Gun, I had my photo taken with some of my mates in front of the gun and I got to meet and shake hands with our NSW Governor and I got to drive home safely with a blood reading of zero alcohol in my blood stream.

Thanks fellas for a wonderful day!!!!!!!!!! Kind regards, Cossie.

Just a quick report. Scrubber, Cossie, Bluey Scrubber Ahearn , Andy Forsdike and myself were the only members, along with John Beer of course.

The Governor was there and noted that he was in 1 RAR in IRAQ and knows what a fine Bn it is!

An Engineer gave a report on the Sappers in Balmoral and other areas they served.

Luckily, they had the M2A2 to be unveiled - otherwise Artillery wouldn't have been mentioned.

Bluey's wife took a photo of all of us in front of the M2A2 with the Governor. Regards Coapey

6. Ken Marsden's Report from Vietnam:

Our member Ken Marsden does great work in Vietnam helping, amongst other things, to set up and support schools there. The following is his latest report on progress, and I note that another member, Keith Foster, has given considerable assistance. On behalf of members, I thank all vets who are actively supporting communities in SE Asia.

Greetings, just a quick note to let you all know that my charity work in Vietnam is still going with great results, two new schools have been built in the last three months and another is planned for June.

I would like to publicly thank Keith Foster ex102 for his generous donation which will go a long way in paying for the next school, thanks Keith. I intend going back in September for six weeks. Cheers to all...Ken

7. ANZACS in Concert:

Member Clarence Ormsby, an entertainer and Kiwi Vietnam vet living in NSW, is conducting a series of concerts in recognition of the Centenary of Anzac. The attached flyer explains what is happening and contains an invitation for any of our members to contact Clarence and arrange for a concert performance in their own community/club/ organisation.

8. Welfare Reports:

Once again, Welfare Officer Rick Cranna is asking members to keep him informed of any of their health and welfare issues, and those of their Vet mates and families. His report is only as good as the information he is given, so please let him have any news that may be of interest to other members. You can contact him on (02) 4384 5570 or at rgcranna@bigpond.com

While we're on the subject of Rick Cranna, we're very pleased to advise that Rick, who has long been a tireless worker for Legacy, has recently been elected as a NSW Director on the board of Legacy Australia. What a well-deserved honour! Well done Rick, and our heartiest congratulations.

9. Membership Fees:

Over the last few months, the committee has been sending out Reminder Notices and follow-ups to members with overdue membership fees. We have had a terrific response, and we thank all of those members who have got back to us to bring their fees up to date.

In the meantime, if you have been advised that you are in arrears with your fees, but still haven't responded with your payment, you have run out of time. Please make the effort to get those arrears to us urgently within the next few days, or this Information Bulletin will have to be the last communication from us.

Once again, we apologise that we let our management of fees get so far behind and we're sorry if it caused any inconvenience. It won't happen again and in future, everyone with overdue fees at the end of our financial years, will receive a reminder.

On that note, I take the opportunity to remind members that the old membership category called Perpetual Member no longer exists. That type of membership was removed by the changes to Rules as approved unanimously by members at a Special General Meeting in 2012. The result is that all members previously recorded as "Perpetual", were re-classified as Ordinary Members and assigned a 10-year term rather than considered to be in perpetuity.

As a result of this, the first group of ex-perpetual members, that is those who paid their \$100 fee before 31st August 2006, will have their 10-year terms begin to expire from 1st September next year (2016). You will all receive notification of this at the time. The remainder of ex-perpetual members will expire in 2017 or later.

10. Citation Awarded to Australian Units, Vietnam 1965 and 1966:

We are aware that some members who have seen bits and pieces relating to this award are concerned about the inaccuracy in describing the units involved. Flood has provided this explanation:

*Some of you may be aware that the Governor-General recently approved the awarding of the **REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CROSS OF GALLANTRY WITH PALM UNIT CITATION** to those Australian units that served under the command of the US 173rd Airborne Brigade SVN 5 May 1965 – 31 May 1966.*

*One of the units listed is: **Battery Section, 4th Field Regiment LAD RAEME (and re-designated in country to 105th Field Battery 12th Field Regiment LAD RAEME)***

*This entry is an historical error. How it occurred, who knows, but steps are being taken to amend reference to "**12th Field Regiment LAD RAEME**".*

11. Merchandise:

QM Laurie Bird reminds everyone that we have ordered another 12 All-weather Jackets and they are still at the very competitive price of \$55 including postage..

Also don't forget the usual shirts (\$27), caps (\$15) and ties (\$27) etc. that are still available, as well as the CD featuring the 102 Battery theme song The Toucan Battery Blues, and a tribute song to the Centenary of Anzac called Lone Pine Lament (\$10).

To order please contact Laurie Bird on his email address birdlawrence@outlook.com or phone 02 49548248

The Association acknowledges the ongoing support of the Ingleburn sub-Branch of the RSL in the publication of these Bulletins, and thanks them for their assistance.