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12 Field Regiment (Vietnam) Association

INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 61 28th July 2017

1. A Lesson for the Media:

Both Flood and Rick Polley sent us this little article penned by Trevor “Stinkfeet” Bennet just prior to Anzac Day. Thanks fellas.

Dear Australian media, It's time for an education.

Just some things that current and former, members of the Australian and New Zealand Defence Force would like to point out prior to ANZAC Day on Tuesday 25 April:

- 1. We commemorate ANZAC Day, not celebrate it. It's not a bloody party.*
- 2. Wednesday 25th April 2018 marks the 103rd anniversary of the landing of ANZAC Soldiers, Sailors, Medical personnel and animals on Gallipoli.*
- 3. Sailors rowed Soldiers ashore during the Gallipoli landings, under heavy fire, without outboard motors. The little boats they used are called 'lighters'.*
- 4. It's a bugle, not a trumpet, and the Last Post is sounded, not played. It's not a bloody dance tune.*
- 5. Not every serviceman/woman was a 'soldier'. Some were Sailors, Airmen and Nursing Sisters. Please take the time to ascertain what Service they served in, and use the correct terminology. It means a lot to them/us!!!*
- 6. No I am not wearing my father's medals, they are mine. I earned them during Active Service while you were enjoying all the comforts that I was dreaming of.*
- 7. They're medals, not badges. They're citations, not pins.*
- 8. Please don't try to draw comparisons between civilians and war veterans, I've never seen a civilian perform acts of heroism whilst under fire to protect their fellow service personnel, flag and Country.*
- 9. Medals, ribbons and Unit Citations are EARNED, not WON. It's not a bloody chook raffle. They are awarded to the recipient, not given to them.*
- 10. The RED POPPY symbolises peace, death and sleep of the fallen servicemen/woman. While the PURPLE Poppy represents remembrance of the animal victims of war. Learn the difference.*

2.

11. *'Lest We Forget' isn't a throwaway line, it actually has meaning: it's an expression of remembrance, par excellence. It has dignified origins, a rich history.*

12. *Yes, I am allowed to wear my 'Return From Active Service' badge on any day of the year that I choose to wear it.*

13. *Australian and New Zealand soldiers didn't retreat from Gallipoli, they withdrew.*

14. *It doesn't matter which side you wear your Poppy on, as long as it's worn with pride.*

15. *The 'Ode' comes from the poem "For the Fallen", which was written by Laurence Binyon. The verse, which is commonly known as 'The Ode Of Remembrance', is as follows:*

*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."*

Lest We Forget Here endeth the lesson.

All good points, but one that Stinkfeet missed was: "It is Anzac Day, not ANZAC Day. ANZAC is an acronym, not a word. Check your dictionary.

2 News About our Welfare Officer:

Cossie has sent us an email to alert us to the fact that our esteemed Welfare Officer Rick Cranna has himself been poorly. Thanks Cossie.

It appears that Rick was doing what good Welfare Officers do, and was checking up on Rex Ward, who had suffered a stroke some time ago. Hearing Rex's story, Rick decided he had better get himself checked out, just in case.....

Well, it turns out that Rick had an artery to his heart which was 99% blocked and he was immediately wheeled in to have a stent inserted. And this week, he is going in to have another stent inserted in another artery. All this in spite of the fact that Rick had felt no pain or other symptoms, much to the cardiologist's surprise.

Anyway, Rick says there's an important lesson here for all of us – get your heart health regularly checked, EVEN IF YOU HAVE NO APPARENT SYMPTOMS. Great advice Rick. Thanks. And good luck from us all for a speedy recovery.

3. Definitive List of Australian Casualties in the Vietnam War:

Graham Rylands has sent us the following link to a website that shows the total list of all diggers wounded/injured in Vietnam.

<http://www.thecasualtylist.com/>

4. 1RAR's Appeal for the Granting of a UCG for Coral:

For those members interested in the progress of 1RAR's appeal, the following is the latest report from Jack Parr:

Hello Everyone,

Many times have I said that 'Every Day is a Good Day' and that some days are better than others. Today is one of those days. I contacted DHAAT this morning and they advised that there have been over 140 submissions to the Battle of Coral Balmoral Inquiry. They were expecting a few more to arrive by slow mail.

Everyone is to be congratulated on this fine effort. You have done well. It has all come together and we are looking good.

The process now is the Tribunal will sort through and read the submissions. They will decide on who they would like to appear in person at a hearing. Hearings are likely to be held in the major centres but that also depends on who and where they wish to talk to. Likewise they may conduct interviews over the phone. We now have a wait time for this to be organized.

For your information the Inquiry Panel will consist of 4 members:

Chair: Mark Sullivan

Members: David Ashley ex-Army, Graham 'Bert' Mowbray ex-Federal Magistrates Court, Air Vice Marshall (Rtd) John Quaife. You can access their profiles on the DHAAT Website:

<https://defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au/about/current-chair-and-members/>

Finally I would like to thank everyone very much for responding to my call and putting in your submission. Could you please pass this info on to your network.

'Rest Easy' Jack Parr. Ex Mortar PLT 1RAR 1968

5. 50th Anniversary Tour of the Coral and Balmoral Sites:

Leonie Jones has sent us this message regarding an organized tour of the battle sites – ideal for those members wanting to do something special to mark the 50th anniversary next year. The flyer containing all the information is attached to this Bulletin.

Hi Trevor

Wonder if you could include this flyer in the next newsletter. It's a tour designed by Walter Pearson that takes in Coral Balmoral as well as other major significant places. I've been on this tour - that photo was taken on the tour I was on with Cossie, Blackie and some other 102 larrikins. Needless to say, we had a ball. Highly recommend this tour with Walter, he's an ex-vet and his knowledge is fantastic. Well worth the trip.

*Cheers
Leonie*

6. The Future of the Association:

Many thanks to those members who responded to our message with your suggestions and ideas. And a special thank you to those 4 members who put their names forward to serve on any future committee. Your interest is appreciated.

Unfortunately, no-one has yet put his hand up to take on any of the soon-to-be-vacant executive roles. We are still looking for a new President/Public Officer, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. In addition, Rick Cranna has advised that he will be stepping down from the Welfare Office role at the same time as the current executives step down – the November AGM - so we are also looking for someone to nominate himself for that job. In the absence of committed and capable members prepared to take these roles after the AGM in November, this Association cannot continue.

As previously advised, it is necessary that anyone contemplating taking on these jobs puts in his Nomination Form before 31st July 2017.

7. Secretary's Leave:

Just to let you know that I'll be away on Leave from Monday 3rd July to about 20th July. I'll be sleeping out on the edge of the Simpson Desert without emails or phone, so I won't be able to handle any Association business during that time.

By all means send me emails, but I won't be able to answer them until after I get back. In the meantime, Beery will handle any emergencies that might come up.

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.