



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

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(Vietnam) Association**

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**President's Letter.**

Good Morning All.

Our Association is now in its sixth year and going strong. We had our AGM on the 25<sup>th</sup> March and had a fair roll up of 23 members. It was really good to see in consideration that our membership resides all over Australia. We had one honorary member travel from Toowoomba in Queensland and one of our member's travel all the way from Canberra, not to mention our Honourable Secretary who makes the jaunt to all our meetings from Melbourne. Never the less it was the second biggest roll up to an AGM since we were chartered.

The Executive Committee is  
**President:** Rob Costello.  
**Vice Pres:** Graham Floyd;  
**Secretary:** Ian Ryan;  
**Treasurer:** John Beer. The  
**Committee:** Laurie Bird, Ray Glover, Bob Lowry, Tony Marshall, David Prize-man and Graham Ryland.

We have a continuing problem with people not nominating or standing for positions and unfortunately all of us were elected unopposed. I am now into my fifth year as President and would be delighted if someone would stand for the position next year in Adelaide. I would like to thank our outgoing committee for a job well done, though not much has changed and we still retain Ian Ryan as Secretary and John Beer as Treasurer, both are to be commended for the job they have both done over the past 12 Months. I would also like to thank Ric Cranna our Past V.P. who added some sanity to our group. Ric is now President of Legacy

on the NSW central coast and unfortunately cannot find the time to carry out both tasks.

At our next Extraordinary General Meeting in April, 2011 we will discuss the use of Skype or some other format to carry out our meetings via the internet during the year. This will enable all the Committee to communicate on a party line free from their home on the computer. This great move forward will enable anyone who wishes to stand for the Committee anywhere with Australia. To do so, via their computer without the tyranny of distance. We hope this move will encourage more participation from Members. Please note, AGM meetings will still be carried out on an assembly basis.

We have made great inroads over the last couple of months with the Association now adding a Quarterly report to 104 Battery's "Germ Journal". To all those 104 Battery Boys the Germ Journal now appears under "Newsletters" on the 12 Field Regiment website and the Australian Artillery Association website.

For those who haven't entered our website lately please do, as our retail items are now at half price so we can clear stocks. Stocks are limited with some items. First in best dressed! Please refer to the website. Any item sold out will be removed from the site and will be replaced by others.

HQ Battery are now doing a quarterly report for our newsletter and I would love to see one from 104 Battery (both 1st & 2nd Tours) and A Battery Members as well (*Any volunteers?*). Please email or phone me or our Secretary if you can.

**Autumn 2011**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> March last, the Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk was officially opened at Seymour, Victoria. It had a turn out of many hundreds of Veterans and VIPs. It is an ambitious and worthwhile project being run by the Veterans and the local community. I would hope that our Association would be able to spare some dollars to add a central paver for the Association and our members could purchase their own paver for \$50.00 each to surround the central paver with additional pavers. More on that, in coming issues.

Don't forget the 2012 reunion in Adelaide from the 24<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> April. I would point out that the brief for this event is not final. I would point out that there may be some changes before the end of the year, however it gives a broad outline as to what will happen. Don't forget, this event is subsidised by your Association, is yet to be decided. It is in your interest to try to attend. We will forward a questionnaire as to whether you intend to attend.

It is our intention to march under the 12 Fd. Regt. banner.

**It is imperative the registration form is filled in and returned to our Secretary ASAP. PLEASE ASSIST!!!!**  
**It is important that we know how many are attending.**  
Registrations *close* 1<sup>st</sup> Jan., 2012. **NO LATE ENTRIES.**  
Please do it now. If you have to pull out prior, you will be able to do so. Payment will be required by late January and forwarded to our Treasurer.

Regards,  
Cossie.

## Opening of the new Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk at Seymour, Victoria, 30th March, 2011.



Pictured: The Minister for Veteran Affairs, The Hon. Hugh Delahunty M.P. & Maj.Gen. David McLachlan AO (retd.)

the gathering was also addressed by Mr. Ross Stewart, President of the Mitchell VVAA, the Mayor of the Mitchell Shire, Mr. Graeme Coppell and Ms. Cindy McLeish MP, Member for Seymour. Following the Dedication Service, Maj. Gen. Peter Haddad and Ms. McLeish unveiled the Cairn. The Cairn was asked to bid God's blessing on the memorial by Mon. Toms, Rev. Norman Hart and Rev. Don Kaus.

Official Wreaths were laid by The Hon. Hugh Dela-



From L. to R. Ian Ryan, David Keall, Bruce Hicks, Rob "Cossie" Costello, Dennis "Pommie" Fisher, Ian Warren and Larry Darcy. Missing from the picture was John Phoenix (John was involved with the organizers for the day).

It was great to see so veterans and their families at the opening of stage 1 of the new Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk at Seymour in Victoria, especially 8 of our members from the Association.

It was attended by some 300 or more people and dignitaries. The centre was opened by the RSL President, Maj.Gen. David McLachlan AO (retd.). The centre is a replica of the Luscombe Bowl, which for many would be remembered as the place where we saw Little Pattie, Johnnie Chester, Pat Carroll, Olivia Newton-John and many others who gave of their time to entertain the Diggers at Nui Dat and Vung Tau.

The welcome was given by the Master of Ceremonies, Councillor Bill Melbourne from the Shire of Mitchell and



The unveiled Cairn and the Catafalque Party. Standing to the right were the President of the RSL and the Mitchell Shire President

hunity; Capt. Mark Hill, Commanding Officer, HMAS Cerberus; Brig. Mark Holmes, Commander LWDC and Air Comm. John Hewitson, CDA/AFTG RAAF Williams. Apologies were received from the Premier of Victoria, Mr. Ted Ballieu, MLA.

Those present on the day retired to catch up with old mates at the RSL in Seymour and to partake of some of the wonderful refreshments so magnificently catered for by the ladies and members of the club. It was a great day had by all.

**Foot note:** This is the first stage to be developed by the Shire. Personalized bricks can be purchased for the price of \$50.00 each. (Any interest, please see the attached form for additional information).

In discussion, with a few beers under the belt, it was thought it would be a great idea if the Artillery/Armoured Museum could be relocated to an area previously owned by the Commonwealth Government in Seymour itself, where it would far more accessible than Puckapunyal. *Any thoughts????*

**Photographs on ANZAC Day 2011 from around the Country.**



L-R: Ron Hedges, Mick (Schultz) Kurtz, Tom East (at rear), Vic Page (front), Gary Soper, Rod Orford & Mick O'Meara in Cairns, QLD.

L-R: Peter Daff, Richard Duldig ( Sunglasses ) Terry O'Neill, Tony Townsend, Kelvin Ferris ( Blue tie and Glasses ) Tony Kilsce (Beard) in Perth, W.A.

Members from 4 & 12 Field Regiments., including some of our members, Frank Corcoran, Michael Fowler, Robin Parkinson, Bruce Hicks & Ian Ryan at The Shrine, Victoria.



L—R: Vic Williams, Graham Ryland & David Dalton in Sydney, NSW.

Tom Carmody & Steve Lewis in Innisfail, QLD.

Far L.— R: Graham Ryland, Geoff Weismantel & Ken Moore (back to camera) in Sydney,



Les Partridge, former RSM at Unley, S.A..Still cuts a dashing figure at 82.



L-R: Ian Caporn, Tracy Knighton, John (Pasko) Paskulich, Don Hunter, Tony (Enzo) Ferraro, Ian MacAuley, & Bill Keith Smith.



Doug Arnold flying the flag with his grandchildren, Kyan, Flynn & Liam. Central country Queensland at Agnes Water.

## Change of Address???

It appears some members are changing email addresses and not notifying us of the change as we are getting many bounce backs on the newsletter when we send it out on email.

If you are getting your newsletter via snail mail and you used to get it by email, **we must not have your current email address.**

*If you have an email* and you are still receiving your newsletter by mail could you please notify your Secretary, Ian Ryan by email at the following email address:-

[ianryan@hotmail.com](mailto:ianryan@hotmail.com)

Postage has gone up and it is wasteful to send them by post if you have email facilities.

It would be great if you have a relative or friend's e-mail address to forward urgent alerts, in the case of a death etc..

Ian Ryan  
Secretary.

## **IMPORTANT:**

### **New**

### **Membership**

**If you know of anyone who may be interested in becoming a member of our Association or perhaps have lapsed their membership, please encourage them to join.**

## **Update on the Army Combat Badge.**

For those who are wondering what is happening with your ACB application, I have been informed by Major Greg Metcalf, that the section responsible for the processing applications is under manned and it would appear approval will still be 4 – 5 months away. Not wanting to be somewhat cynical but knowing the Army, we may see them by Christmas, 2011, *hopefully!!!!*

If you have not yet applied nor received an ACB, *please contact* the Secretary.

## **News from the West, Mick Austin.**

As discussed, here are a few snippets of news on a few of our WA compatriots:

I recently decided to go to my first RSL meeting (after being in the RSL since the 80s'). I was pleased to discover Steve Fletcher (ex-104) is the Treasurer and I also ran into Geoff (Tex) Thomas (Ex-HQ Bty. & F.O. for 104 Bty.). Both are happy and well.

Caught up with Arthur Penn (ex-HQ Bty.) a couple of months ago. He had a new lady in his life and is very sprightly.

Twice in the past 6 months I have run into Reg Collinson (ex-HQ Bty.) who is actually an Eastern Stater who finally saw the light and now resides in Perth.

I am looking forward to the Anzac Day period as Alan Bloom (ex-HQ Bty.) is coming from Melbourne and will stay with both Jimmy Callaghan (ex-HQ Bty.) and I. We will all be together for the Anzac parade in Perth and then Jimmy will take Bloomy back to a country town Koorda for a few days. I hope to have a game of golf with Bloomy before he returns.

Finally, DVA are supporting Veterans in Perth to get fit and well by giving them the opportunity to engage in what is known as "Vario Wellness Clinics" at the Gymnasium of Edith Cowan University. Twice weekly veterans attend a 1 hour Gym session. I only started three weeks ago and thoroughly enjoying it.

I just thought of something that may interest some of the 102 Bty. blokes. Do they remember Normie Brown (5411656 "Mad Dog"). Well Norm was discharged after Vietnam as a Gunner. He obtained a degree in Psychology in Queensland and re-joined with a Commission in the Intelligence Corps. I am sorry, but I do not have actual dates for these events but in 1985, Norm spent time as a Troop Captain in the S. A. S., doing a stint in Iraq. The last time I saw Norm was at the "Welcome Home Parade" in 1989. He was a Major. I imagine he is out now but I think he had quite a remarkable military career.

I am still to catch up with the" other five West Australians " !!!!.— Mick Austin.

## **Are you receiving your entitlements?**

It has been brought to my attention that a number of Members are having difficulty claiming supplementary benefits arising from their DVA Repatriation Benefits.

Examples of this are largely State-based (NSW government departments and RTA in particular) where staff have refused to process driver's licence transfers and/or renewals and, in one case, motor vehicle registration transfer from wife to husband.

In the cases of licence transfers from one State to another (change in principal place of residence), staff have refused to process the transfer on the basis that a Blue (veterans pension) Card was required and that a Gold (repatriation benefit) Card did NOT entitle the bearer to a free transaction. This decision was confirmed by the supervisor at the RTA branch.

The Member involved rang DVA to confirm that he was entitled to a fee exemption and returned to the RTA where his licence transfer was properly auctioned.

Regarding motor vehicle registration

transfer, a Member was told that the vehicle could not be transferred to his name because his name on the RTA database and his Gold Card were not identical! The RTA demanded that the registration fee be paid.

After four visits to the RTA office, the Member demanded the matter be referred to the branch Manager. Upon investigation, it was found that another RTA office had incorrectly entered the Member's name in the database.

Stupid bureaucratic responses by (some) government staff is not unusual, but some Veterans may react strongly to this type of incompetence or ignorance of Veterans' concessions.

If any Members are having difficulties accessing local or State Government concessions attached to their Gold Card, would you please contact me so that that we can make the appropriate approaches to the DVA via various Advocates throughout the country and the government departments concerned.

Please contact the Secretary, Ian Ryan, if you need assistance.