



"A" Field Battery Association Inc.



National Newsletter

Incorporating Road Runner & Shell Drake Newsletters.

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From The President's Chair.



G'day fellow members.

In this newsletter I have a great deal to report to you and the first item is:-

- (a) On the 1st August 2006 on the occasion of the Battery's 135th Birthday, 'A' Field Battery Association Inc., are laying a plaque in the pathway of the western wall at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT. The plaque will be dedicated to all those who have served and to all those who have died. All past and present members are invited to attend and I urge as many members as possible to come along to this solemn occasion. I know it is going to be cold at this time of the year but when you think of where we used to go train (Tianjara for starters, with snow on the ground, or rain) I think we all could make the sacrifice. The service will start at 10:00hrs. and will take approximately thirty (30) minutes, after which morning tea will be served then after the morning tea a guided tour of the Memorial has been organized. If there is enough interest in staying at Canberra for another day, we will try to get a visit to the Trelour Centre, Mitchell, on the 2nd August. The Trelour Centre houses items that people have not seen at the AWM.

The Battery Commander, BSM and twenty personnel are coming from the Battery and we hope to have all living Ex-Battery Commanders and BSM's at the service.

If you are intending to come to the dedication, could you please inform the Association's Secretary. Her address is, 6 Harveys Road, Beaconsfield, Qld. 4740 A.S.A.P. and if you require to participate in the tour on the 2nd. If anyone wishes to book accommodation, we have a member in Canberra who is willing to make arrangements on your behalf. Contact: Lofty Castles on 02.6247.5264.

- (b) On the 8th-9th of September 2006, is our annual get together and AGM at the Maroochydore Coach House. Anyone who is contemplating coming along should let Bonnie (Secretary) know by the beginning of July.

We will be away from the 13th July until the 9th/10th August. This weekend is a great get together, so think about coming along, you never know who you will meet.

Nomination forms will be in the next newsletter, so if you want to see a particular person on the committee, make sure you nominate them. Remember, the only time a nomination will be taken from the floor is when a written nomination is not forthcoming for a particular position.

Annual subs are due from the 1st August, so please pay them promptly, as it costs money to send out reminder notices. If any of the Life Members would like to make a donation, it will be greatly appreciated, as it costs money to run the Association.

- (a) Next year is the 50th Anniversary of the Battery going to the Malayan Emergency. To mark this occasion the Committee has decided that the annual reunion should be in Sydney and we could liaise with the Battery to hold an open day and a visit to the Henry Green Room Museum. If it is at all possible, we will try to organize a visit to the Artillery Museum, North Fort, Manly. More information will be forthcoming at a later date.
- (b) The Treasurer has asked me to remind you all that he has plenty of 'A' Battery car stickers. The cost is \$4.00 each or two for \$6.00, so contact Brian for purchases.

I hope that everyone enjoyed ANZAC DAY and didn't have too many lemonades, I know I had a good time and quite a few drinks with Jeffrey Haack, Keith Towing, ex BC of 104 Battery in Vietnam, second tour. The turnout in Brisbane was poor this year; the crowds were larger than I have seen, if only we could attract more of you ex "A" Battery members to come along to make the day great.

Don't forget Don (Saint) Sinclair's book is on sale for \$40.00. The Book is on the tour of Malaya, 1957-59 and is a great read, boy, it brought back some memories.

I think that this is enough from me for this newsletter, so until next time, all the best and hope to see you all in Canberra and Maroochydore.

Tex Bassan
President.



THE GUNNERS' THUNDERBOX NETWORK.

Where information is gathered, analytically processed & distributed.

Sick Report:

Received news very recently that old stalwart, John Worboys is in hospital and is not in a good way. Wife Lyn is holding up very well and has her daughter there for support. Lyn has requested that she does not want a lot of visitors there at one time as John gets very tired quickly. The 'Worbs' is in: Ward 6, John Flynn Hospital, Bilinga, Qld. 4225. More to follow when news at hand.



Had Curly and Noelene McMahon call in and stay over with the Ed & his wife for a few days here in Paradise (Forster) in early March. They had been meandering down far into the Deep South for a while and on their way back called in to see a few old comrades. Curly reports on the following:

Dick Dugan – Moderately disabled and now living in a nursing home in Coonabarabran, NSW.

Ken (Crash) Kennedy – Spoke with him on the phone as he was too ill to visit. Recently had two blood transfusions and is diagnosed as having leukemia. Is now back home.

Peter Seddon – Peter and his good wife both using quad pushers to move around. Both living in a retirement village in Canberra and as Curly stated, both very cheerful.



Of Interest:

Received email from Albie Sheridan in S.A. that he has now received his “Pingat Jasa Malaysia” medal.

Editor has heard from quite a few people that they have received same. Good to see the government of the day looking after our interests!! Next thing you know, we will all be receiving our ADM...



The Editor’s recent cruising travels to Malayasia/Thailand/Singapore.



Remember the “old Bazaar” on Penang in the Mid ‘50’s early ‘60’s. This multi storied building is now what stands there. It is called the “Kumtar”. Hope the spelling of it is close.



This is what the up-dated “bum boat” looks like now. Yes, it is carrying explosives.



The Penang/Butterworth ferries are still running.



Looking south from George Town. The bridge running from Prai on the mainland to Penang.



Looking east from George Town to Butterworth.



ANZAC Day 2006 Around The Commonwealth.

Report from John Smith - NSW:

Greetings fellow Association Members, well guys, ANZAC Day has come and gone.

We all had a great time with a good roll up from the “older chaps” not to mention a terrific attendance from the Battery serving members. It was good to see Frank Berrier, (he rode in the Land Rover with his grand son), together with a couple of other guys (that’s what the Rover is for). Good to see Dave (Huey) Spark, Clive Ralfe, Ron Hassell to mention just a few.

Once again the march took for ages to move along and in the breaks I could hear the boys’ in the group tossing coins playing two-up to pass the time. After the parade we adjourned to the Hotel Coronation in Park St. where everybody enjoyed themselves.

As you may have read earlier, the “A” Battery Memorial Plaque laying plans at the Canberra Museum is going well, we will be up for about \$1000.00 for the event and will most probably need donations’, however the Association President will let you all know about these particular proceedings in due course. Incidentally, the date has been set for Tuesday 1st August of this year, so please take note of that date. There will be a good roll-up from the Battery and I am hoping that there will be a good response from the Association members as the dedication will be a time to remember. Hope to see as many as possible attending.

The NSW members have from time to time a get together at the Granville RSL Club. If there is anyone from anywhere that would like to attend, could you please give me a ring, (John Smith – 02.4739.2215) and I will give you the information when next we meet. We would like to see you there.

That’s it from me for the present, now that I don’t have much to do from this end and I do miss the contact that I did have with the NSW group, though I’m pleased to see the Association expanding.

Until next time, regards to all.

Smithy.



Bernie Wine-Huey Spark



Clive Ralfe



John Knight



Mark Wine-Photographer



? – John Smith & Frank Berrier



Some of Young Guns Ladies



Who!!!



Some of the Young Guns.



Ray Clarke & Clive Ralfe



Ron Hassell



Forster-NSW
Rex Martin (Ed)
John Lynch – Navy
Ron Wallingford – N/S



Gympie-Qld.
Standing L to R: John Mottershead, Russ Mory Fontaine, Peter Kimball, Graham Johns & Andy Cobb. Kneeling: Tony Pearce.

The Saint Reports - Brisbane:

ANZAC Day was the usual success with old faces, all smiling and telling the same yarns. We had the 25 pounder leading the Artillery contingent with the bent and broken riding in the back of the Studebaker 6x6. We would have liked to see many more members attending, but we say that every year. Next year we will have another gun, an **L5 (105 mm)** that is to undergo a complete rebuild and join the **25 pounder** on the parade. The celebrations took place at our usual venue, but as we have to share the premises with other units it does get quite crowded, which is probably why some of us stay to last, so as to get a comfortable chair.

Anyway, a great time was had by all. Regards,

Saint.



Pic #1: Baron Czislowski, Curly McMahon, Tex Bassan, Bob Cunningham, Gordon Alderson
Kneeling: Saint Sinclair & Bubbles Alcorn.

Pic #2: The Baron & Curly (backs to camera) at the waterhole.

Pic #3: Bubles Alcorn, Jesse James (105), Bob Cunningham, Barry Stark.



The following is printed in this issue with permission of the Uc-da- loi Gazette.

CELEBRATING A VISIT FROM A “VIET VET”

A letter from Jamaya Pearce of the Year 10 students at Forster Campus.

‘Just another Vietnam Veteran’. That would have been the typical response 30 years ago, when a soldier entered the local R.S.L. in search for a “coldie”, according to Rob Campbell. But times are changing and to a new generation, the phrase ‘Vietnam Veteran’ has a new meaning. In the minds of a group of teenagers, these two little words mean strength, courage, pride and a bitter past that shouldn’t be tolerated or directed again towards any returned serviceman, who came to our school and shed light upon the unforgivable turmoil that was awaiting him and thousands of other returned servicemen when they returned to their homeland from Vietnam.

As Mr. Campbell told us of his ordeal and frustration, the hardened man was courageously struggling through his painful memories. Silence fell over the crowd of a hundred or more. As we sat in bewilderment as he explained the hell those men suffered when they were in the firing line and then again when they returned home when some members of this divided nation spat in their faces and drowned them in insults. These people must have been ignorant of the pain and traumatic stress they were causing.

The reality of Rob’s situation hit hard when this agonizing statement flew out of his mouth. “For God’s sake kids, don’t do this to the kids in Iraq, what they did to us. Just don’t!”

So Rob and the thousands of other Vietnam Veterans out there, we thank you. Times are changing; opinions are changing and in spite of what’s been said, we are proud of you, proud to be Australian and proud to be in your presence.

Does it really take a roomful of 15 year olds to erase the past and turn the prejudice around and finally, give a little respect? We hope we can be a small part of this growing respect.

Rob, thanks for your time and your sacrifice. We can read about Vietnam in books, we can listen to our teachers tell the stories, but nothing will ever equal the learning that we experience from your visit.

Note: Robert (Rob) Campbell is the current President of: Great Lakes Sub-Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association NSW Inc. (Affiliated with the VVFA)



What Every Man 50 Years and Over Should Be Aware Of.

Prostate Cancer.

1. Prostate cancer affects most men at some stage in their lives. Many will die from it but many more will die with it, without ever knowing.
2. Prostate cancer kills more men each year than breast cancer kills women, yet men know nothing about it and virtually nothing is done by Governments’ to educate men about this disease.
3. Every man over 50 should have a blood test to ascertain their PSA levels. “PSA” is Prostate Specific Antigens in the blood and if the figure (count) is higher than **6** you should start **reading** about cancer.
4. DVA puts out a good book called ‘**Localized Prostate Cancer**’ and is free from any DVA office.
5. Many men, unaware of prostate testing procedures, are suddenly diagnosed and then it can be too late.
6. I would encourage every man in his fifties and over to get tested and get the literature from the DVA.

Ray (Bubbles) Alcorn.

I would like to thank Ray for sharing this most important piece of informative medical advice with all of us and knowing how Ray must have felt when he was diagnosed with this terrible disease and to have the courage to write us all a warning on how to do something about it. This brings to mind, if you remember the TV ad sometime ago, relating to women’s breast cancer, when that great late Australian authoress, Sara Henderson said, “Don’t be a bloody fool... Go and get a check up **now.**”



Editor



Anybody from any era with the Battery, if you have any photos' you would like to share with the Association on our WEB site, could you kindly forward them to our webmaster, Peter (Kimbo) Kimball either by email or post, he would be very appreciative of you for doing so. But remember, if you can, please attach persons' names and title, where and when the pic was taken.



An Air Force F-16 fighter pilot trainee was up on a solo flight and decided to have some fun with a QANTAS 747 airliner.

The Air Force jock whizzed his fighter past the airliner, did two loops and shot up vertically and came back down next to the 747, got on his radio frequency and said to the QANTAS pilot, "Hey there mister airline pilot... what did you think of that?"

The QANTAS pilot responded. "That was impressive mister fighter pilot... but watch this."

The 747 droned along for about 15 minutes and then the pilot came back on the radio and said, "What did you think about that?"

The F-16 pilot asked, "Think about what? What did you do?"

The QANTAS pilot responded, "I got up, stretched my legs, went to the back, poured myself a cup of coffee, went to the head and relieved myself, got a layover date with the flight attendant with the most gorgeous breasts and strolled back to the cockpit. Any questions."

Definition of a fishing net: A lot of holes held together with pieces of string.

Newly promoted Lieutenant to Old Gunner: "What is your name?"

OG: "Daryl Primrose."

Lt. "When speaking to an officer, you should always add 'Sir'. Now I'll ask you again, what is your name?"

OG: Sir Daryl Primrose."

A mechanic was removing the cylinder head from the engine of a Jaguar when he spotted a well-known heart surgeon in his garage. The surgeon was waiting for the service manager to come and take a look at his car.

The mechanic shouted across the garage, "Hey, Doc, could I ask you a question?" The surgeon, a bit surprised, walked over to the mechanic.

The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hand on a rag and asked, "So Doc, take a look at this engine. I open up its heart, take valves out, fix 'em, put 'em back in and when I finish, it works just like new. So, how come I get such a small salary and you get really big bucks when you and I are doing basically the same work?"

The surgeon paused, smiled and leaned over and then whispered to the mechanic, "Try doing it with the engine running."

There is a committee report and a piece of history supplied by John Whitelaw that makes interesting reading.

Ok Members, I hope you all get something out of this Newsletter and don't forget, any piece of news, yarns, photos', who's crook or in hospital, who's passed on, change of address (very important) we would like to hear about it. You can contact the President or our web master, Peter Kimball or maybe you contact your most humble Editor Rex Martin. Just give any of us a phone call, email or post. Hope to see you in Canberra and later at Maroochydoore, until then, be good to each other, have a hug and down brown ale...

Secretary Bonnie would like to know who is going to the AGM this coming September so as she can arrange accommodation. The cost this year is either \$50 or \$50.50 per night per person. This includes Dinner & Breakfast. Also if you wish you have a single, a single supp. Or a double or a Twin share.



Editor.

“A FIELD BATTERY, ASSOCIATION; INC.

COMMITTEE MEETING

Held at 60 Topsail Street, Banksia Beach Bribie Island, Qld

On Thursday 2nd February 2006.

Meeting Opened: 1010 hours

Present: Ron Bassan, Bonnie Bassan, and Brian Czislawski. Don Callaghan by telephone hook up.

Apologies: John Smith, Bernie McMahon, Ray Alcorn and Peter Kimball.

Visitors: Don Sinclair and Bob Cunningham.

Previous Minutes: The Secretary read the previous Committee Minutes.

Moved by Brian Czislawski and Seconded by Clare Bassan That the minutes read were a true and accurate record of that Meeting. Carried.

Business Arising: Secretary to respond to Blue Foley's letter and inform him that the association is for all members, no matter how long they were in the Bty. Letter was sent to Beatrice Dawson and giving her Tom's Life Membership Certificate. Leave in abeyance the Pingat Jasa Malaysian Medal. The Committee recommended that we write to the Minister for Veteran's Affairs, about the Infantry Combat Badge, as soon as we hear from Ray Alcorn.

Inwards Correspondence: Christmas card from Brigadier Fogarty AM. Head of Regt. Letters and or emails: Anne and Neil Whybrow, Liaison Letter(Spring Edition), Alvin Conacher, Rod Althaus and Arthur Bretherton.

Outward Correspondence: Letters and or emails, Tony Foley, Rex Martin, President's Letter for Newsletter, Gen. Whitelaw, Brian Miller, Alvin Conacher, Max Ptolomey, Barry Marr, Arthur Bretherton, John Downes and Secretary's Letter for Newsletter.

Discussion of Correspondence: Discussed as read.

Moved by Ron Bassan that that the inwards correspondence be received and the outwards be endorsed, seconded by Don Callaghan. Carried.

Treasurer's Report:

1. Bank reconciliation – Dec 05:

Cashbook	\$5830.78	Bank Statement	\$5629.43
Income	\$ 878.89	+ Cash on hand	\$ Nil
Total	\$6709.67	- Unpresented cheques	\$ 890.00
Expenses	\$ 205.24		

If Ron is still President next financial year, he would like to see membership raised to \$20 and re open life membership to \$200.

There was discussion on documentation of gun, Brian has all the details and CES. There was to be a handover of the gun to 1 Fd Regt prior to ANZAC DAY 2005. there was supposed to be paperwork presented before handover, this could not be done and so there was an unofficial handover by our Property Officer, Don Sinclair to the Commanding Officer 1 Field Regiment RAA.

We are now the proud owners of a Pack Howitzer.

Membership was discussed and it was agreed that it is coming along quite well. It was moved by Brian Czisowski that we purchase 24 life membership badges.

Seconded by Clare Bassan. Carried.

It was moved by Ron Bassan that outstanding Petty Cash for the Secretary be paid and that it be topped up to \$100. Seconded. Brian Czisowski. Carried.

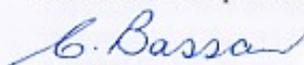
It was moved by Brian Czisowski that Don Sinclair be reimbursed \$130.26 for life membership badges, which have already been obtained. Seconded. Don Callaghan. Carried.

It was moved by Brian Czisowski that Don Sinclair be added to the Committee as a voting member, until Ray Alcorn is well enough to resume his position. Seconded. Clare Bassan. Carried. The President Abstained from voting as he believed it was against our Constitution.

It was moved by Brian Czisowski that a letter be sent to Barry Campbell, asking him if he would make contact with the new BC, BSM and BG and informing them that he is our Liaison Officer with the Battery. Seconded. Don Sinclair. Carried.

It was resolved that a letter be sent to the Battery Commander, A Fd Bty, informing him that our Liaison Officer with the Bty is Lt Col B.J. Campbell (Retd).

There being no further business the meeting was closed by the President at 1255 hours and Mrs Sinclair provided a scrumptious lunch.


Hon Secretary


Hon President

General Staff, 2nd. Dist. Base

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MONTHLY ARTILLERY CONFERENCE.

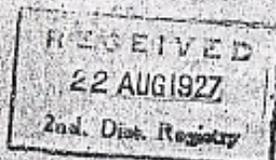
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JULY, 1927.



PRESENT :-

- Lt.-Colonel E.K. SMART, D.S.O. M.C. - Staff Corps. General Staff, Artillery Section.
- Major G.A. VASEY, D.S.O. - Staff Corps, B.M. 4th Div. Artillery.
- Captain R.H. ROBINSON - Staff Corps, B.M. 3rd Div. Artillery.
- Captain D. MACKEY, M.C. - Staff Corps. General Staff, Artillery Section.
- Captain G.R.L. ADAMS - Staff Corps. Adjutant XIII Brigade, A. F. A.
- Lieutenant A.E. KNOX - Staff Corps. 3rd Division.
- Lieutenant A.W. WALSH - Adjutant XV Brigade, A.F.A.
- Lieutenant J.K. COFFEY - Staff Corps. Adjutant II Brigade, A. F. A.
- Lieutenant W.L. RAW - Staff Corps. Adjutant IV Brigade, A. F. A.
- Lieutenant H.G.F. HARLOCK - Staff Corps. Adjutant III Medium Brigade, A. G. A.



SENIOR OFFICERS COAST ARTILLERY COURSE.

Lt.-Colonel E.K. Smart, D.S.O. M.C., gave a resume of the work done on this course. He referred to the lengthened range by modern coast defence guns and the attendant problems of rangefinding and observation, also to the means of meeting modern forms of attack including attack by aircraft light surface craft, and attack by vessels using smoke and gas to assist them.

MARCH OF 1ST FIELD BATTERY R. A. A. FROM
CANBERRA TO SYDNEY - 11/5/27 TO 22/5/27.

The following is an extract from a report by the
Veterinary Officer who accompanied the battery :- *Maj. W. Coulter, DCM*

The 1st Battery, R.A.F.A., commenced a trek from Canberra on the 11th May and reached Victoria Barracks, Sydney, on 22nd May. No casualties were recorded and all horses reached their destination fit and well. A few minor cases were attended to on the route and consisted principally of bruised soles usually at the "seat of corn" probably due to travelling on rough unformed roads. In one severe case that went lame on the day marching to Goulburn it was found necessary to have a suitable surgical shoe forged at Goulburn. The O.C., Battery, approved of the expense 6/- being incurred and the horse worked to Sydney without further trouble. Other cases were attended to by the Battery Farrier. In some cases there were indications of breast collar rubs on shoulders but the skin was not allowed to become broken, judicious changes were made in the teams and horses used as rides by Nos. 1. Farrier, Trumpeter, etc., took the place of the affected horses and enabled the sholders to become hardened. However the Battery S.M. only had to call on his supports, i.e., the rides mentioned, and he did not have to call on his reserves, viz., officers chargers, but this could have been done if necessary. In one case of shoulder rub it was found to be due to harness newly taken out of Ordnance at Canberra and used before any preliminary cleaning and attention was possible. The dubbing and grease used as dressing forms a mat on the shoulders and if not noticed with quickly develop into sore shoulders. This may be of some significance in view of the fact that abnormal numbers of gall cases occur in camps of Militia training probably through the same cause.

March discipline was excellent and I cannot speak too highly of the O.C.'s disposition for the care of the horses and the conservation of their energy on the march. In one instance only about two miles an hour was averaged on the days march owing to the hilly nature of the country and the rough uneven surface of the road necessitating in some portions of trees being fixed to the vehicles in order to sprag them down hill. I consider that any attempt at accelerating the pace or making better time would have been catastrophic for distress and exhaustion would have occurred and held up the remainder. Look-outs were posted at the ends of the line at each halt to prevent the possibility of motorists coming suddenly on the horses. A halt of ten minutes in each hour was taken and this enabled N.C.O.'s. to look round their teams and report to

/officers

officers and adjustments could be made in time, if necessary. About one hour halt was taken at mid-day and horses watered out of canvas buckets without unharnessing and about a three quarter feed was given.

Stable routine was efficient and regularly carried out. On arriving at the camping ground each evening the horses were at once unharnessed and placed on breast lines and heel roped, circulation was restored to pressure parts and a thorough rough wiping all over was given until the horses were cooled off. It must be noted that horses commenced the march in soft condition with thick unclipped coats and they lathered and sweated freely with a consequent disposition toward distress and exhaustion. When sufficiently cooled off they were watered and then at once placed on lines and heel roped and afterwards fed. I consider that the freedom from injuries, kicks, etc., was due to prompt heelroping and the entire absence of medical cases was attributed to the stable routine observed.

Feeding arrangements were looked after by an officer specially detailed by the O.C. for that purpose. In consequence every horse got his complete fixed ration as every feed was worked out to the ration scale allotted. It was considered advisable that the mid-day three quarter feed before mentioned should be given enroute even though the end of the days march was only an hour distant in order that each horse should have time to eat and assimilate his ration, otherwise one feed would be merging into another and a certain amount of wastage and deficiency in the ration would occur with consequent loss of condition and energy. The quality of the feed supplied was good. In one instance an inferior grade of wheaten was delivered and the Battery Captain, who was responsible for supplies, endeavoured to have it changed, without result. The inferiority lay in the broken and thin quality with low nutritive value but with no dust or mustiness and under the circumstances it was passed and fed to the horses.

The water supply throughout was plentiful and suitable.

I consider the satisfactory result of the trek from a veterinary point of view was due to the management and keenness of the O.C. his officers and Warrant Officer for the welfare of the animals, together with the willing response and interest of the other ranks.
