

1871

A Field Battery Association, Inc.

National Newsletter

AUGUST 2011

President Ron Bassan's Report



From the President's Chair

G'day everyone,
First of all, Happy 140th Birthday to all our members for the 1st August.

'A' Bty had birthday celebrations on the 5th at the Gunners Bar, 1 Regt RAA, Enoggera.

The Association got an open invitation to attend these celebrations and I put an invitation to come to this event on Shell Drake. Twelve of our members came along to these celebrations and I think they enjoyed themselves.

The Bty showed us how the new digital system works and the types of ammunition used in the M777A2 guns (I think when we were Gunners we used bow and arrows). The system has changed so much under this new system, voice communications are only used as a backup.

We were shown the Bty's new equipment, i.e.: Mack gun tractors, Bushmaster armoured vehicles (Which the gun crews travel in), even the CP

is set up in a Bushmaster, and of course the new guns and what a marvellous piece of equipment. (Only costs \$1 million per gun).

After the demonstrations we were invited to the Gunners Bar at the 1 Regt's canteen.

A barbecue was enjoyed by all with a few drinks and yes Gunners haven't changed, they still like their grog.

The Commanding Officer, Lt Col Dave Kelly (A former Bty Commander and Life Member of the Association) addressed the Bty and guests and presented a L/Bdr with his two stripes, then one of the Gnr's read the history of the Bty and then I was invited to address the assembled soldiers.

All in all it was a great celebration for the Bty's 140th.

Your Committee had a meeting on the 20th June in Mackay, Qld. The main items on the agenda were finalising details for our reunion at Sawtell, N.S.W...

At this time of writing, 13th Aug, there are 130 people attending, they are from all parts of Australia and I think they will enjoy themselves, Jacko says that Sawtell Township and RSL is a lovely place and I am going down on the 9th September to check it out and liaise with the RSL.

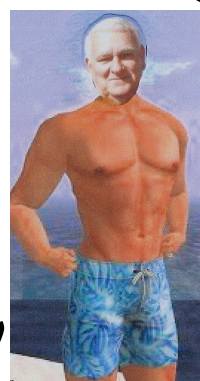
If there is anyone who intended or changed their mind to come to the reunion, please contact me and as long as the money is in my hands by the 28th August, you will be accepted.

The Bty Commander, Maj Simon Hompas, has submitted his apology, as he will be away on a course.

The BSM, WO2 Dave Nutini, has also submitted his apology, as he will be on long service leave. We still might have a rep from the Bty, we will have to wait and see.

That's all for now as Butch wants to get the newsletter to press, see you all at Sawtell. Semper Paratus Tex

A Gathering of Gunners
SUNNY
Sawtell
12th to 14th Sept. 2011



Why a Corporal is called a Bombardier in Artillery.

When artillery pieces were first invented in the 15th Century they were called bombards and they were very erratic, a lot of the time instead of killing the enemy, they exploded and killed the person who fired it.

So the army would not lose their most experienced soldiers, they left this job to the most junior NCO, a Lance Corporal, and called him a Bombardier.

This title remained in the Royal Artillery and when the NSW Artillery, 'A' Field Battery was formed they used the same title as the R.A... The establishment had 2 Captains, 2 Lieutenants, 1 BSM, 1 BQMS, 4 Sergeants, 4 Corporals, 4 Bombardiers and 82 Gunners.

It was not until between the 1st and 2nd world wars that the title changed when Corporal's were changed to Bombardier and bombardiers were changed to Lance Bombardier and Artillery Brigades were changed to Regiments.

The grades of lance-bombardier were not strictly ranks, but were appointments, held by selected gunners, and usually carrying extra pay.

The appointment was made by the man's commanding officer and could be taken away by him for disciplinary reasons, unlike full bombardiers who could only be demoted by order of a court martial.



Just have a look at this list of those attending the Sawtell Re-union, it will be one of our most successful since the Rooty Hill days. If you are tempted to meet up with all these old friends you should contact Tex ASAP and we will see you there.

Dave & Beryl Adams	Ian & Lyn Brown	Brian Czislawski	Vince Greck
Ian & Wendy Leven	Lloyd Mitchell	Rod & Lorraine Simpson	Ian & Robyn Wheeler
Ray & Lorraine Alcorn	Tom & Sheila Caldwell	Ray Davis	Don & Kay Green
Kym Maczkowiack	Daryl & Maureen Patch	Ron Slaughter	Rachelle Wheeler
Rod & Margaret Althaus	Barry Campbell	Bill & Mrs. Downie	Judy Harden
Barry & Carol Marr	Bruce Ping Kee	John & Beverley Smith	John Wilkinson
Reg & Sylvia Anderson	Alvin Conacher	Len & Elva Fanning	Ron & Sue Hart
Graeme & Denise Martin	Mike & Maureen Pitman	Don & Beverley Spearpoint	Trevor Willis
John & Mrs. Barnes	Clive & Margaret Connor	Chris & Therese Flavel	Phil & Colleen. Haynes
Rex & Noelene Martin	Brian & Joy Privett	Peter & Mrs. Suckling	Robert Higgs
Ron Bassan	Harry & Ivy Cook	Maurice & Adriana. Fontaine	John Hoban
Bernie & Joaly McBarron	John & Carolyn Pollitt	Denis & Elizabeth Thurgood	David & Liz Jackson
Arthur & Shirley Bretherto	Doug Collins	Paul & Lindel Forsyth	Frank & Jill. Kaesler
Robert McEvoy	Ian & Mrs. Robertson	Warren & Susan Trautner	Bayne Kelly
Anthony Borg	Wayne Cowie	David Gibson	Paul & Elizabeth Kennedy
Bernie & Noelene McMahon	Noal Rodda	Len & Janet. Trump	Peter & Kaye Kimball
Norman & Deanna Bostock	Laurie & Sue. Crestini	Peter Gibson	Greg & Margaret Kittelty
Brian & Margaret Miller	Fred Rudduck	Max Vandyke	Greg Laird
David Broome	Bob Cunningham	Lance Gilkinson	Kevin & Pat Lakey
Kevin & Robyn Mobbs	Don & Carol Sinclair	Peter Walton	

The AGM and Re-union at Sawtell 2011 Programme of Events

Monday 12th September 2011

5.30pm Meet and greet at Sawtell RSL Club

Tuesday 13th September

10.00 am AGM at Sawtell RSL Club

Lunch: Own Arrangements. There are some quite nice dining places in the RSL.

5.30 pm Memorial Service at Cenotaph. Dress will be Coat and tie and full size medals. Service conducted by Padre Len Trump

7.00 for 7.30 AGM Dinner

at Sawtell RSL Princess Room. This venue is the club's largest and is modelled on the "Love Boat" theme. With a capacity of 875 it features numerous concerts and events. Dress is semi formal with miniatures.

Wednesday 14th September

8.00 am Recovery Breakfast at Sawtell RSL, for \$14, you will get: Scrambled eggs, crispy bacon, sausages, tomatoes,

mushrooms, hash browns, baked beans, croissants and pastries, assorted plain and fruit toast, muesli, cereals, yoghurt, fruit juices, coffee and tea

9.30 am Bus Trip leaves Sawtell RSL

6.30 pm Bar-B-Q at Sawtell Golf Club

The modern air conditioned clubhouse is the perfect place for a relaxing drink, fine food .

Total costs:

MEET & GREET\$10
DINNER\$40,
RECOVERY BREAKFAST...\$15
BARBECUE\$20
BUS TRIP\$25

TOTAL per HEAD.....\$110.00.

If you have left it till the last moment, you may have missed out as there are over 130 attending but you can try contacting Tex, he may be able to help

Secretary: Ron Bassan. (contacts on back page)

The AGM at the Sawtell RSL on 13th. September commences at 10.00 am. If you are nominating someone for the committee please make sure Tex has this nomination form before 29th. August

'A' Field Battery Association Inc.....Nomination Form for Committee

We, the undersigned financial members of 'A' Fd Bty Assn Inc. Hereby nominate:

***.....for the**

position of ...*.....

Proposer*.....Signature.....

Seconder*.....Signature.....

I,*.....A financial member of 'A' Fd Bty Assn Inc.

Accept nomination.....(Signature of Candidate)

*** Please Print, and send to Ron Bassan...6 Harveys Rd. Beaconsfield, Qld. 4740. before 29th. August**



They shall not grow 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.

KEN. AGNEW
TOM. BANFIELD
CLARE. (BONNIE) BASSAN
TREVOR. BEER
FRANK. BERRIER
S.J. BLANCH (OAS. Malaya)
DOUG N. BRYAN
GORDON CARMICHAEL
TOM. CARRUTHERS
KEITH. CHRISTENSEN
RICHARD. DUGGAN
R.M. DUCAT (OAS. Malaya)
PAT. DALY
TOM. DAWSON
JOHN. DOWNES
GEORGE. FORSYTHE
M.K. FUSSELL (KIA, Afghanistan)
ROBERT J. (BOB) GRAY
NEIL HARDEN
MICK. HARKEN
B.D. HENDERSON (OAS. Malaya)
KEN. KENNEDY
BOBBY. LEWIS
JOHN. MACDONALD
I.G. MATHERS (KIA. Vietnam)
E.J. (LOFTY) MOORE
R.J. PARKER (OAS. Vietnam)
R.J. (JIM) PONTING
DAVE. QUIRK
PETER. RAINSBURY
CLIVE. RALFE
BRIAN. SCOTT
PETER. SEDDON
ALAN. SINGH
R. F. SMITH
BRIAN. WHISKER
JOHN. WHITELAW. AO,CBE
BERNARD. (PLONKY) WINE
GUS. WOOLFE
JOHN. WORBOYS



Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Ninian Bryan (Retd)

passed away in Melbourne on Sunday 19 June
2011.

Doug was born on 26 August 1929 and his
record of postings include:

- 13.12.50 - Graduated from RMC Duntroon
- 19.9.51 - 14 NS Trg Bn
- 21.5.52 - Instr S of A
- 6.10.52 - RAA Trg Tp
- 29.12.52 - Instr S of A
- 23.3.53 - 4 RAR (Inf rft)
- 23.7.53 - 2 RAR
- 7.4.54 - 1 RAR
- 24.7.54 - 1 Fd Regt
- 20.5.55 - Adj 13 Fd Regt
- 4.7.57 - 1 Fd Regt
- 1.9.57 - A Fd Bty
- 8.12.58 - A Fd Bty AAF FARELF
- 23.10.59 - SC A HQ E Comd
- 12.7.61 - OCI Admin MARSU
- 17.6.64 - Aust Staff College
- 17.11.64 - Instr JTC
- 27.5.66 - AQMG D Qtg AHQ
- 24.1.72 - CO HQ AIS E Comd
- 1.78 - SO1 (Accn) HQ 3 MD
- 19.8.79 - Retired

Another Artilleryman gone to that Great Gun
Park up above at nearly 82 years of age.

Aged 81, Doug passed away unexpectedly at
home Sunday June 19th, 2011.

Husband of Glenys (dec)

brother of Heather and Stuart, father of Fiona,
Dugald and Louise.

Loving Grandpa

of Alex, Max, Katie, Georgia, Adrienne, Jemma
and Elana.

Their Journey's Just Begun

Don't think of them as gone away,
their journey's just begun,
life holds so many facets-
this earth is only one.

And think of them as living
in the hearts of those they touched...
for nothing loved is ever lost-
and they were loved so much.

E. Brennerman



Old unit, new tricks

THE Army's oldest continually serving regular unit has leapt forward, successfully fielding and operating the M77A2 lightweight howitzer during Exercise Diamond Strike last month.

After A Bty, 1 Regt RAA's relocation from Sydney to Brisbane in January, it has been a non-stop year for the gunners.

Commitments to disaster relief and training exercises were completed before the gunners undertook a robust training package delivered by the School of Arty to qualify everyone on the new equipment.

A Bty is the first unit to be reequipped with the new 155mm M77A2 artillery, upgrading from the 105mm L119.

The transition to the new gun was a quantum leap in terms of capability, according to battery captain Capt Chris Lingard. "It is the dawning of a new era of gunnery for the RAA," he said.

Innovations such as GPS and inertial navigation systems built into the gun have replaced the traditional means of orientating and directing the guns.

Command post staff are also getting to grips with the power of the Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System (AFATDS) as both a battle management and fire-control system.

Forward observers from 104 and 105 Observation Post Btys were also exposed to new procedures and benefits of the digital systems that will become fully realised when tied in with the Digital Terminal Control System in the near future.

The fall of shot from the new gun was impressive and consistent. Bty commander Maj Simon Hompas said the gunners were reaping the benefits of new propellant



Rounds away: Gunners from A Bty fire the 155mm M77A2 for the first time during Ex Diamond Strike.

technology provided as part of the Modular Artillery Charge System.

"There is no longer a need to burn excess charge increments and handling on the gun line has been made safer thanks to its user-friendly features and ergonomic packaging," he said. "Land 17 has delivered more than a new gun – we are now at the forefront of the RAA's modernisation plan with new guns capable of firing advanced munitions, enhanced protection through the use of Bushmasters, all enabled by a digital backbone for operating in the modern environment."

"Our challenge now is to build upon the momentum we have generated in the lead up to this year's Exercise Talisman Sabre."

A Bty this year reaches 140 years of continuous service, making it the regular Army's oldest unit.

You may now be out of the Australian Defence Force, but you can still stay in touch. The touchbase website has information and links that can help you in civilian life, from jobs and finances to health and well-being.

Sign up to [Find Your Mates](#) and subscribe to the quarterly e-newsletter to get in contact with family and friends and receive stories written especially for the ex-service community – covering topics and people that are of interest to you and your family.

www.touchbase.gov.au



Merdeka 54th. Anniversary

On the night of August 30, 1957, crowds gathered at the Royal Selangor Club Padang in Kuala Lumpur to witness the handover of power from the British.

Prime Minister-designate Tunku Abdul Rahman arrived at 11:58 pm and joined members of the Alliance Party's youth divisions in observing two minutes of darkness. On the stroke of midnight, the lights were switched back on, and the Union Flag in the square was lowered. The new Flag of Malaya was raised as the national anthem *Negaraku* was played.

On the morning of Saturday, August 31, 1957, the festivities moved to the newly-completed Merdeka Stadium. More than 20,000 people witnessed the ceremony, which began at 9:30 am.

Those in attendance included



rulers of the Malay states, foreign dignitaries, members of the federal cabinet and citizens.

The Queen's representative, the Duke of Gloucester presented Tunku Abdul Rahman with the instrument of independence. Tunku then proceeded to read the Proclamation of Independence, which culminated in the chanting of 'Merdeka' seven times with the crowd joining in.

The ceremony continued with the raising of the National Flag of Malaya accompanied by the national anthem and a 21-gun salute.

Britain considers holding Malaya 'massacre' inquiry.

Thursday 28 July 2011

Britain is considering holding an inquiry into an alleged 'massacre' of unarmed Malayan villagers by UK troops in 1948, reversing an earlier decision.

The about face comes three months after the British Government turned down a request from Malaysian activists to investigate the killings, which took place during an anti-communist operation in the Malayan Emergency.

The "Batang Kali massacre" occurred in a village in central Selangor state on Dec 12, 1948, when 14 members of the Scots Guards are alleged to have killed 24 unarmed ethnic Chinese and set fire to their village on a rubber plantation.

"The [British Government has] decided to reconsider the decision ... that no inquiry would be established or other investigation undertaken into the incident at Batang Kali in 1948," said a letter from London that was sent to activists in Malaysia who have been campaigning for an inquiry.

An official at the British High Commission in Kuala Lumpur confirmed the contents of the letter, but said there was no guarantee an inquiry would be ordered.

"We must not pre-empt the

outcome of the reconsideration process which we expect will take several weeks," she told the AFP news agency, adding that she could not say why the decision was being reviewed.

A spokesman for the activists, who have been campaigning for an investigation since 1993, welcomed the decision and urged a speedy resolution to the issue.

"The British Government must act quickly instead of simply dragging their feet until the surviving witnesses, who are very old, are no more," said Quek Ngee Meng, adding that one of the witnesses died last week.

Mr Quek said that his group had traced nine former British soldiers and four Malaysians who were witnesses to the events but that this pool will dwindle if the legal process takes too long.

He said the shooting was explained away in 1948 with the then Malayan attorney general saying an inquiry had been held and the troops



The "Batang Kali massacre" occurred in a village in central Selangor state on Dec 12, 1948, when 14 members of the Scots Guards are alleged to have killed 24 unarmed ethnic Chinese and set fire to their village on a rubber plantation.

Photo: LEICESTER NEWS SERVICE

vindicated, although no trace of this investigation has been found.

The massacre remained largely forgotten until a British newspaper in 1970 ran an explosive account of the killings, publishing sworn affidavits by several soldiers involved who admitted the villagers were shot in cold blood.

The revelations provoked uproar in Britain but a promised investigation was later dropped after a change in government. .



Notice of Motion

At the Sawtell AGM I will be suggesting that we incorporate advertisements in future newsletters.

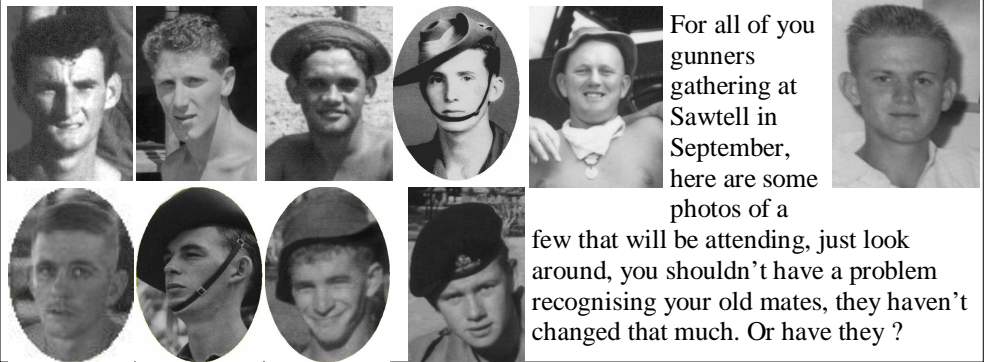
The ads

will be approximately this size and no more than one per page.

This newsletter has a nationwide distribution of about 290, comprising email and postal recipients so it should be an attractive proposition for companies wishing to advertise their product.

The estimated cost of \$40 or \$60 per year means that the sponsor's ad will appear every quarter making it a very reasonable \$10 or \$15 per edition.

Hope you support this motion.
Ron Slaughter. (Editor)



For all of you gunners gathering at Sawtell in September, here are some photos of a

few that will be attending, just look around, you shouldn't have a problem recognising your old mates, they haven't changed that much. Or have they ?

"Cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey".

No, it's not as coarse and rude as it might appear!

In the bygone days of the British Navy, warships carried cannon and, of course, the cannon balls to go with them. It was always the practice to keep a stockpile close to the cannon.

Now, cannon balls, as we know, are round, and if left on deck to their own devices would roll all over the place.

In order to prevent this, they were placed inside a brass rectangle, about two inches high, and piled on top of each other to form a pyramid, similar to the way a shopkeeper would display oranges.



This retainer was called a brass monkey.

Cannon balls were usually made out of cast iron and in very cold weather the brass would contract more rapidly than the iron. If it got cold

enough, the cannon balls would actually fall off the monkey.

Hence we arrive at the expression, "It's cold enough to freeze the cannon balls off a brass monkey."

Your editor is extremely sceptical with this rather sanitised explanation and is convinced that the people responsible for this load of bollocks, are absolutely nuts.

**This is a letter from our 101
Field Battery mate David
Troedel**

Hi Don & Ron,

I thought that the article in the 'A' Newsletter by Don was very good and a reminder of our past at the School of Artillery.

Maybe you could make this an ongoing segment and ask your members to send in their stories.



David Troedel

had arrived by bus (I don't think that he handled my explanation very well) He then allocated me a bed space in room 6, A Wing and gave me the RO's to read (which was about a foot thick) and told me that I had to read and understand them by lunch time.

went off his brain, told me that he went to church every Sunday and did not get a day in lieu and neither would I.

A few days later I passed the RSM and he asked me if I had organised my day in lieu, on telling him that the Bull had told me that I was not entitled he got a bit agitated and said he would sort it out.

The Bull called me in and told me that I would get the day in lieu but not until I went to the regiment which was only a couple of weeks away.

It would certainly be an eye opener for the Gunners of today. I will start it off with three stories that concerned me when at the school from August to November 1958.

Storey Story 1.

I enlisted in the ARA straight from 20 National Service Training Battalion at Puckapunyal on 30th July 1958, corps enlisted into the RAA.

After 7 days leave I was put on a train to Sydney and on arriving at the RTO at Central Station was told to catch the bus outside the station to Circular Quay and catch the Manly Ferry, then catch the bus up to North Head. The bus stopped in the archway and I got off carrying a kit bag and a suitcase, it was probably about 1000hrs by then.

The first person I saw was WO2 Storey who just happened to come through the door to the archway, he wanted to know who I was and why I

Storey Story 2.

Just prior to finishing our Basic Gunnery course they called for volunteers to attend a church service in Manly as a CMF Battalion was laying up their colours, of course we all volunteered, but come Sunday morning the bus pulled up to take us to the church and there were only 3 of us.

Kim Williams the RSM was there and not a very happy chap. So he went and got his car, a grey Rover and after making sure we all removed our web belts before we got in drove us to the church and back

He told us that we would get a day in lieu for that day and to see the BSM, Corps Training Wing.

I approached the Bull and he



Storey Story 3.

On the Thursday before we marched out to the regiment we were given some time off in the afternoon to pack, the Bull came into the room to see what I was doing and then observed smoke coming from under the bed in the middle of the room, it was Duckshit Dunstan, who was on kitchen duties and was given some time off before tea.

He was lying on the floor under the bed smoking and the Bull was not very impressed to say the least.

I am sure that there are plenty of stories that could be told while we are all still able to remember.

Editors note. A very good suggestion from David, now all we need is a few of our gunners to respond with some old stories, that can be fulla bull, have lotsa bull, a bitta bull or even no bull.

To start the ball rolling here is one based on a true story, well a little bit true. Send yours to the Editor, it will be published and you never know it could win a prize

This all happened a few years go when The Saint, Bob Cunningham, and Butch Slaughter were renovating our 25 Pounder at Enoggera Barracks.

Everything on the gun had been welded up for display in front of Ithaca RSL Club, being out in the open for so many years had not helped.

One of the more difficult procedures was dismantling the breech block after all the welds had been grinded off, Butch was holding the breech block while Saint wielded the big sledge hammer. His aim was a bit off during one swing and Butch's wrist got in the way

He could see a big blue bruise starting to appear and Saint enquired. "Did that hurt?"

"No! you dumb unsaintly bludger," Butch fumed, "can't you see the big bloody bruise?"

Hearing this, the Saint dropped the sledge, leaned against the gun and screamed. "What a cruel and witless remark, carrying on over a couple of slightly bruised knuckles. I would hate to have seen a sook like you at North Head and copping a few dozen lashes from the cat o' nine tails as you are strapped to the pole in the middle of the parade ground.



Yes I can just see it as Bull Storey walks up after the first dozen and yells in your ear. "Well, how does that feel Butchie, my little boy?"

"Ooh sir, it stings," he would blubber.

The Bull turns to the gunners and imitates the squeaky voice. "Slaughter says, ooh! sir the whip lashes sting," raucous laughter from the gunners, "What say we dip the old whip in a bucket of vinegar, and see how he likes that?" "Yeah, yeah," chorus the gunners, "give him the old vinegar stroke."

"And I s'pose my little pet wants table salt on the whip cuts, instead of that nasty old cooking salt," The Bull hissed into his ear. "Yes please sir, and could you make it Saxa table salt." Butch whimpered.

"Give Slaughter another 50 lashes, only this time use the cat o' ten tails," thundered the furious Bull Storey

Just then Major Red Ned walks out onto the parade ground and announces. "There will be no cat o' ten tails used on this parade ground Warrant Officer Storey." "It's for Butch Slaughter, and he is in RAEME Sir." "Carry on then Sergeant Major"

This entry will possibly score 9 out of 10, mainly because of the F O B (Full of Bull) content, or maybe the Mike Hoffman pencil drawing has an added attraction.



London, England. June 1919.

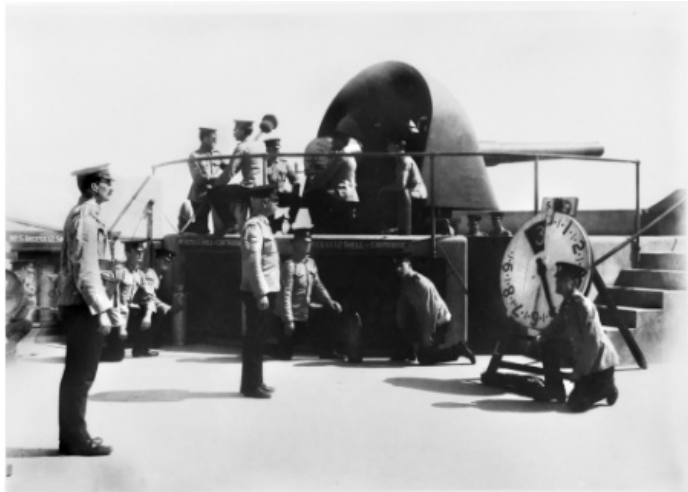
The artillery have always been good at sport, as confirmed by this historical photo of the Army cricket team containing four from Artillery

Group portrait of members of the AIF Cricket Eleven, which toured the United Kingdom from May to September, 1919, at Lords Ground.

Back row, left to right: Staff Sgt C. S. Winning, Dental Section, AIF Headquarters (HQ); Sgt H. S. Love, Australian Army Service Corps (AASC); Gnr J. T. Murray, 103rd Battery; Gnr E. Bull, 26th Battery; Lieut J. M. Gregory, 4th Divisional Artillery; Capt. E. J. Long, Deputy Assistant Provost Marshal, Weymouth; Cpl E. A. Oldfield.

Middle row: Capt C. T. Docker, General List; Capt C. E. Pellew, 27th Battalion; Lance Cpl H. L. Collins, 10th AASC; Capt C. B. Willis, Dental Section; Sgt A. W. Lampard, 10th AASC; Capt W. L. Trennery, 17th Battalion.

Front row: Gnr J. M. Taylor, 101st Howitzer Battery; Warrant Officer W. S. Stirling, AIF Headquarters, Records Section. They are wearing the official team blazer with the AIF rising sun emblem on the pocket.



Australia's first shot in the Great War.

The crew which fired on the German merchant ship, SS Pfalz at 1245 hours, 5 August 1914.

Back row, left to right: Gnr. A Brown; Sgt. C R Carter; Gnr W Carlin; Gnr F J Mealey; Bdr. J Purdue; Gnr J Russell; Bdr J Edwards; Bdr H L Hope.

Front row: Gnr A Murray; Capt. M D Williams; Gnr V Quirk; Cpl. W W Young; Company Sgt Major E H Wheeler; Cpl J J Jack; Gnr J Gregory; Gnr J Ryan. The ship had been trying to escape into Bass Strait through Port Phillip Heads until stopped by this warning shot. "

Guns a blast from past

Northern Star 11th. July 2011

It's not the kind of thing military hardware enthusiasts will be allowed to install in their front gardens, but the Federal Government is looking for new homes for 39 of its obsolete Vietnam-era Howitzers.

Defence Materiel Minister Jason Clare has announced the guns will be offered to RSL clubs and historical organisations willing to cough up \$16,000 to cover transport and installation costs – and just to disappoint those keen for a little 105mm target practice in the backyard – to render them inoperative. "The M2A2 Howitzer gun has provided outstanding service to Australia, and making them available will help to preserve this important part of our military history," Mr Clare said. "The Howitzers have been a vital component of Australia's arsenal. They were critical in providing close artillery fire support to the Australian Army in Vietnam."

Lismore RSL Sub-branch honorary secretary Wilson McClelland cautiously welcomed the idea, but warned the cost could make it prohibitive to acquire one of the guns.

With a range of 11,200 metres, the Howitzer was introduced into Australian service in 1967 to replace the famous 25-Pounder Field

Gun – like the one currently on display at the Lismore Cenotaph.

Australian and New Zealand troops using 24 Howitzers in Vietnam succeeded in re-taking a region held by enemy forces for seven years.

"During the six years they were in Vietnam, the Howitzers fired thousands of 105mm rounds," Mr Clare said. "In July 1967, they provided invaluable artillery support to the biggest allied offensive in the Phuoc Tuy Province."

The Howitzers have not been deployed since Vietnam, but have remained in service.

The tender for their disposal is expected to be released next month.



Gunners from the 8th/12th Medium Regiment fire their M2A2 Howitzers during enactment of the WWII bombing of Darwin for a commemorative service at the city's Cenotaph

August 6th, would have been Lucille Ball's 100th birthday. She died on April 26, 1989 at the age of 77.

During her life, the red-haired comedienne and actress was associated with a number of unusual tales, she told Dick Cavett in an interview in 1974 that she once picked up communications between Japanese spies through the fillings in her teeth.

She said she had been travelling home from the television studio and heard what she thought was "tapping." She stated that "as I backed up it got stronger."

The next morning, I reported it to the authorities and upon investigation, they found a Japanese radio transmitter that had been buried and was actively transmitting codes back to the Japanese."

Television's Mythbusters would later debunk her claim.



"A" FIELD BATTERY ASSOCIATION. Inc. COMMITTEE 2010 - 2011

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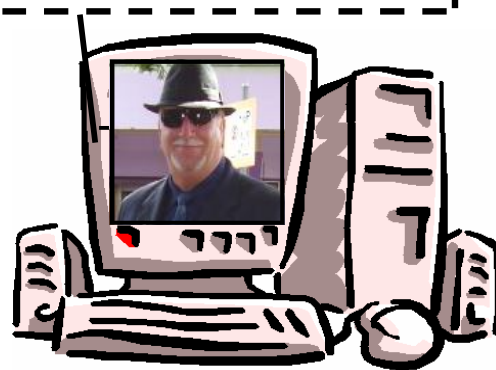
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