

1871

A Field Battery Association, Inc.

National Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2015



2015



President's Report for 2014 -2015

Members; once again it is with a heavy heart that I must report on the passing of five of our members, and they are Barry Handley, John Sheehan, Ian Uhlmann, Bill Liddell and Max Franklin. Ian Uhlmann and Bill Liddell were Sergeants with the Battery, on operational service during the Malayan Emergency 1957 – 1959, Barry Handley was also in the Battery at the same time. John Sheehan served with the Battery at Georges Heights, 1952 – 1954 and 1958; he served with the Infantry 1954 -1956 and probably went to Korea as reinforcement. Max Franklin served with the Battery from 1961 until 1967; he was promoted to gun Bombardier and served with the Battery in Malaysia during Confrontation, 1965 – 1967, on return to Australia, Max was promoted gun Sergeant and transferred to 102 Field Battery, Max was the Sergeant of # 6 gun which had a satchel charge put over the barrel at the Battle of Coral. May they all rest in peace? Ron Hart is back in the Wesley, Brisbane, go and pay Ron a visit and cheer him up.

Membership got a big boost this year with ex-Battery members from the late 80's, early 90's having an ANZAC Day in Brisbane, the largest turnout since I have been marching in the Brisbane ANZAC Day parade. They and other members of the Association got a visit out to First Regiment and 'A' Battery on the afternoon of the 24th. We all were made very welcome by the Commanding Officer, Lt Col Nick Foxall and the Battery Commander, Maj Matthew Hodda. Two of the twenty are serving members, one Bombardier and a Gunner; three became Life Members (Which included Matt Hodda). All we have to do is keep these new members. The CO and BC would like more old members to come out and pay them a visit (That's if you can get into Enoggera), you would have to phone them before hand and make arrangements.

The Henry Green room is not up to the standard it was at Holsworthy, with a lot of items missing, including one L5 Howitzer and two 4.2in Mortars. I hope that a lot of items are still stowed away somewhere. If you have the time, go out and give them a hand to restore this marvellous Battery museum.

It saddens me for the lack of support from some Battery members, who do not come along to our reunions; I

thought at one stage, that we were only going to get about twenty members. We finally got forty five. Remember, everyone at the first reunion wanted to come back to Sawtell. Next year we are supposed to go to Canberra but due to the poor attendance, I do not think this will happen, unless I can be persuaded attendance will increase.

We still have five members who are unfinancial for 13/14 and 34 from last year; please pay, so I do not have to send out reminders.

Out of our futures fund, your Committee thought it was appropriate that the 'A' Field Battery Association Inc; donate a thousand dollars to the Regimental Gunners Fund. We are a non-profit organization and we must show the Taxation Department that we are doing something with our money.

Next year there is the unveiling of the Boar War Memorial, and I think that the Battery should have a plaque on it, as the Battery was one of the units that was involved in that action serving nearly two years in South Africa. They were broken up into three sections, each section serving with a British column. Three members of the Bty died, one mortally wounded and two died of disease, one was kicked by a horse and his wound went gangrenous. In 1903 'A' Bty was presented with the Kings Colours for their outstanding service in the Boar War, later renamed the Kings Banner.

This year I decided that we would not have any written nominations from our Committee and that we would take all nominations from the floor, giving everyone a chance to nominate for your committee. If I am nominated for President, I will accept, but this will be my last year. This year I turn 79 and have had the privilege to have been your President for the last twelve years and I think a younger member should take this position on.

Finally I would like to thank your committee for their dedicated service to the 'A' Field Battery Association Inc; especially mentioning our Secretary, Robert Cunningham (Known as Mr Cummingham) for his diligent performance of his duties.

Thank you gentlemen, and all the best and good health for 2015/2016, and I declare all positions vacant and call on a previous Secretary, Mr Len Fanning to take the chair and conduct nominations for President.

Ron Bassan (President)

‘A’ Field Battery Association Inc. Annual General Meeting 2015.

Annual General Meeting: The Annual General meeting was held at the Sawtell RSL Club, Ltd; Sawtell, New South Wales, on the 12th of September 2015.

Meeting Opened: The meeting was opened by the President, Mr Ron Bassan at 1003 hours EST.

Present: As per the Attendance Book.

Apologies: Barry Campbell, Harry Cook, Reg Etienne, Lance Gilkinson, David Harris, Ron Hart, John Hoban, Kevin Lakey, Lloyd Mitchell, Kevin Mitchell, Max Vandyke, Don Green, Bob McEvoy, Jim Holmes, Kim Maczkowiach and Fred Rudduck.

Public Liability Insurance: The members were informed that under the Queensland Incorporation Act Rules, we do not have to hold Public Liability Insurance.

Departed Comrades: One minutes silence was observed a true and for the following departed comrades; Barry Handley, John Sheehan, Ian Uhlmann, Bill Liddell, Max Franklin and all departed comrades. May they rest in peace?

Minutes of Previous Meeting: The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting which was held at the Events Centre, Caloundra, Queensland, on Saturday 23rd of August 2014, were read by the Assistant Secretary, Mr Ray Alcorn and were confirmed as a true and accurate record by Mr John Barnes, seconded, by Mr Terry Jobson and carried.

Business Arising From Minutes: Discussed as read.

Inward and Outward Correspondence: The Inward and Outward Correspondence were read by the Assistant Secretary Mr. Ray Alcorn. It was moved by Mr. Terry Jobson that the inwards correspondence be received and the outward correspondence be endorsed, seconded by Mr. Ian Leven and carried.

Business Arising From Correspondence: Discussed as read.

Treasurer’s Report: The Treasurer, Mr Robert Cunningham, presented the Audited Report, which is attached. The Treasurer moved that the Audited Report be received, seconded by Mr. John Barnes and carried.

President’s Report: The President, Mr. Ron Bassan, presented his Report, which is attached. Mr. Ron Bassan moved that his report be received, seconded by Mr. Ray Alcorn and carried.

Positions Vacant: The President declared all

positions vacant and asked if it would be a show of hands or secret ballot. It was resolved for a show of hands. Mr Bassan asked Mr Len Fanning to take the chair and conduct the election of President.

Voting Positions:

President/Secretary: It was proposed by Mr. Terry Jobson that Mr. Ron Bassan be President/Secretary. Seconded by Mr. Ray Alcorn. Mr Bassan accepted. There being no further nominations, Mr. Fanning declared that Mr. Bassan was elected President/Secretary. Mr. Bassan resumed the chair and thanked Mr. Fanning and continued with the election of positions.

Vice President’s: It was proposed by Mr. Terry Jobson that Mr Ian Leven be a Vice President. Seconded by Mr. Rex Martin. Mr. Leven accepted. Mr Paul Forsyth proposed that Mr. Ray Alcorn be a Vice President. Seconded by Mr. Rex Martin. Ray Alcorn accepted. There being no further nominations, Mr. Leven and Mr. Alcorn were declared Vice Presidents.

Treasurer: It was proposed by Mr. Don Sinclair that Mr. Robert Cunningham be Treasurer. Seconded by Mr. Robert Noonan. Mr Cunningham accepted. There being no further nomination for Treasurer, Mr Cunningham was declared Treasurer.

Committee Members: It was proposed by Mr. John Pollock that Mr. Greg Kittelty be a Committee Member. Seconded By Mr. John Barnes. Mr. Kittelty accepted.

It was proposed by Mr. John Pollock that Mr Vince Greck be a Committee Member. Seconded by Mr. Robert Noonan. Mr Greck accepted. There being no further nominations for Committee, Mr Kittelty and Mr. Greck were declared Committee Members.

Non-Voting Positions:

Editor:	Mr. Ron Slaughter.
Assistant Editor:	Mr. Don Sinclair.
Liaison Officer (Qld):	Ray Alcorn.
Liaison Officer (NSW):	Robert Noonan.
Liaison Officer (ACT):	Clive Castles.
Liaison Officer (Vic)	Harry Cook.
Liaison Officer (Tas):	Alvin Conacher.
Liaison Officer (SA):	Robert McEvoy.
Liaison Officer (WA):	Max Ptolomey.
Liaison Officer (NT):	Peter Thomas.

Webmaster:	Peter Kimball.
Assistant Webmaster:	Vince Greck.
Auditor:	David Harris.
Advocate:	Len Fanning.
Patron:	Barry Campbell.

General Business: The President stated that general business should pertain to a General Meeting.

Peter Kimball spoke about the website and stated that if any member did not receive the Newsletter, they can obtain it on the website.

Robert Noonan spoke about the Recruit Training Centre march outs of new recruits at Kapooka. He suggested that a presentation for the best recruit of 41 Platoon be awarded by the Association. Decision to be discussed in Committee.

The President informed the meeting that another Gunner Dinner is being planned for 2017.

A discussion took place on the AGM 2016 venue if Canberra numbers were too low. Maroochydore was mentioned as an alternative but most people were not in favour of that venue. The members were also informed that in August 2016 a reunion was to be held in Canberra for Long Tan Day. This would conflict with our September AGM. Committee to discuss.

Meeting Closed: There being no further business the President closed the meeting at 1100hours EST and thanked the members for their attendance.

Assistant Secretary President

‘A’ Field Battery Association RAA, Inc.

Committee Meeting:

The meeting was held at Ron Bassan’s residence, 6 Harvey’s Road, Beaconsfield, Queensland, 4740 on Monday 20 July 2015.

Meeting Opened: The meeting was opened by the President, Mr Ron Bassan at 1000 hours EST.

Present: Ron Bassan, Bob Cunningham, Ray Alcorn. Greg Kittelty on video link.

Apologies: Ian Leven, Ron Hart.

Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting which was held at Daryl and Luanne Bassans’ residence, 21 Ascot Crescent, Samford, Queensland at 1000 hours EST Wednesday 25 March 2015 were read by the Assistant Secretary, Ray Alcorn and confirmed by Bob Cunningham and carried.

Inward and Outward Correspondence: The inward and outward correspondence was read by the Assistant Secretary, Ray Alcorn and it was moved by Greg Kittelty that the inwards correspondence be received and the outwards correspondence be endorsed. Seconded by Bob Cunningham and carried.

Business arising from the Correspondence:

Discussed as read.

Treasurer’s Report: The Treasurer, Mr Bob Cunningham, presented his report and it is attached. The Treasurer requested that the following cheques be passed for payment: 767035 and 767036. The Treasurer moved that the payments be approved and the report be received. Seconded by Ray Alcorn and carried.

General Business: New Members: 20 New members were approved by the Committee as follows: Corey Bradley, Danny Campbell, Paul Crijns, Shane Crotty, Peter Denham, David Garrigan, Chris Haire, Garry Harding, Michael Hidden, Matthew Hodda, Simon Hodge, Paul Holstein, Michael O’Donnell, Stephen Orr, Cameron Stephenson, Matthew Truscott, Craig Wieland, Paul Winter, Ben Worgan, Peter Zannino.

Ray Alcorn moved that the above mentioned members be

accepted as members of the Association. Seconded by Bob Cunningham and carried.

Loan of Guns: The Deputy president of the Pioneer Fitzroy Highland District Branch of the Returned Services League requested the loan of the Association’s field guns for a time to be notified around May 2016. Bob Cunningham suggested that no attachments be sent with the guns. Ray Alcorn suggested that the RSL Branch be responsible for the movement of the guns and if possible insurance coverage. The Committee agreed to the loan.

Donation: Brig Warner, the Colonel Commandant of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery requested a donation to the Regimental Gunners Fund. Moved by Greg Kittelty that \$1000 be given from the Associations Futures Fund. Seconded by Bob Cunningham and carried.

AGM Sawtell: The Committee selected the menu for the AGM Sawtell functions in September 2015.

Canberra AGM 2016: The Committee recommended that a recce be conducted in Canberra to select suitable sites for function and accommodation etc. Ian Leven and Ron Bassan may conduct the recce in Feb/Mar 2016 and report back to the Committee.

Banner: Ray Alcorn raised the need for new light banners be produced and to include Afganistan. The Committee agreed to investigate.

Guns on Anzac Day March: Ray Alcorn suggested that a letter be forwarded to the Anzac Day Committee suggesting that the Association’s guns be placed in the front of the Association marchers. Ray Alcorn moved that the letter be written. Seconded by Bob Cunningham and carried.

Next Meeting: The next Committee meeting will be held after the conclusion of the AGM at Sawtell on Saturday 12 September 2015. Meeting Closed:

There being no further business, the President closed the meeting at 1131 hours EST.

President ..Ron Bassan.

Assistant Secretary ..Ray Alcorn

A Field Battery Association Inc.
Treasurer's Report
2014-2015

The Annual Fees and Life Subscriptions in this year's Annual Statement of Income and Expenses shows a healthy increase over last year. This result has been achieved with a lot of hard work by our President, Ron Bassan, during one of our invites to Enoggera where he encouraged 20 serving members of A Battery to join our Association. Three of whom have paid Life Subscriptions, in total \$940.00. In addition to this our Merchandise Manager, Don Sinclair, sold almost \$350.00 of Polo Shirts, Caps and Car Stickers. All together, a great result totalling \$1290.00. We can only hope they remain financial members and continue paying their \$20.00 Annual Fee, time will tell.

As I explained in last year's report, the vast difference between last year and this years Income and Expenses was due to the Sawtell 2012-13 members AGM reunion and the Caloundra RAA Gunner Dinner 2013-14 being cleared through our books in the same financial year.

Our current account is still at a healthy balance of \$5,166.93. Likewise our investment accounts now totalling \$34,405.27 made up of our Life Subscribers Fund \$19,804.83 and our Future Project Fund \$14,600.44. Altogether a good result for the year.

Thanks once again to all those members for their generous donations which is a great help to our reunion and other activities.

Members are always welcome to view our Books of Accounts which include all transactions, Auditors Report and Minutes of Meetings during this financial year.

R. Cunningham
Treasurer
12th September 2015

"A" Field Battery Assn. Inc.			
BALANCE SHEET			
Financial Year			
1st July 2014 to 30th June 2015			
Last Year			This Year
2013 - 2014			2014 - 2015
\$40,246.72	MEMBERS FUNDS		\$43,983.9'
	Represented by :-		
	CURRENT ASSETS		
\$100.00		Petty cash	\$100.00
\$6,025.80		Bank S21 account	\$5,166.93
\$29,127.35		Investment Accounts	\$34,405.27
\$3,021.67		Sales Stock at Cost	\$2,654.8'
\$38,274.82			\$42,327.0'
	NON CURRENT ASSETS		
\$1,117.00		Banners at Cost	\$1,117.00
\$250.00		25 Pr Gun at Cost	\$250.00
\$450.00		L5 Pac How. at Cost	\$450.00
\$154.90		Sony Recorder & Mic	\$154.90
\$1,971.90			\$1,971.90
\$40,246.72	TOTAL ASSETS		\$44,298.9'
	Less :-		
	CURRENT LIABILITIES		
\$0.00		Creditors	\$0.00
\$0.00		AGM Prepayments	\$234.00
		Petty Cash Refund	\$81.00
\$0.00	TOTAL LIABILITIES		\$315.00

A' FIELD BATTERY ASSN. INC.

Annual Statement of Income & Expenses
1st JULY 2014- 30th JUNE 2015

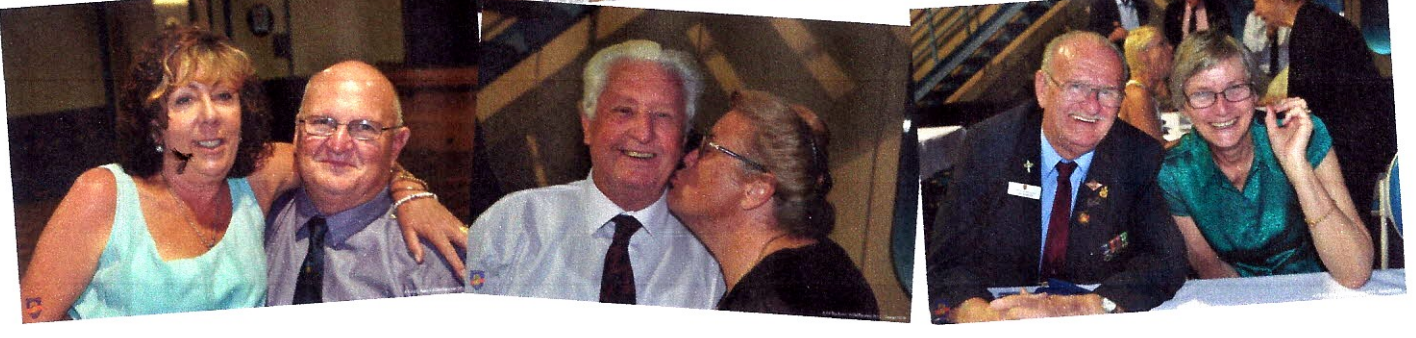
Last Year		This Year	
Balance 1 July 2013	\$6,225.03	Balance 1 July 2014	\$6,025.80
Income	\$1,020.00	Annual Fees	\$1,640.00
	\$800.00	Life Subscriptions	\$1,600.00
		Shirts	\$310.00
		Caps	\$15.00
		Badges	
		Name Tags	
	\$21.00	Stickers	\$24.00
		Plaque	
	\$100.00	"A" Batt Book	
		"A" Batt CD & DVD	
		Postage Merchandise	
	\$1,609.00	Merchandise General	
	\$250.00	Donations	\$375.00
	\$8,960.00	Bus/Boat Trips	\$286.00
	\$2,000.00	AGM Dinner	\$234.00
	\$0.61	Term Deposit	
		Interest - S21 Account	\$0.59
	\$14,760.61	TOTAL INCOME	\$4,484.59
Expenses	\$950.40	T'Fer.to Term dep	\$800.00
	\$6,220.20	Chq.767029-767031	\$328.21
	\$370.56	T'Fer.to Term dep	\$400.00
	\$7,418.68	Chq.767032-767033	\$322.70
		Chq.767034-767036	\$492.55
		T'Fer.to Term dep	\$3,000.00
	\$14,959.84	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$5,343.46
Balance 30th June 2014	\$6,025.80	Balance as at 30th June 2015	\$5,166.93
	\$6,025.80	Bank Operating Account	\$5,166.93
	\$17,930.95	Term Deposit 491118 LSF	\$19,804.83
	\$11,196.40	Term Deposit 526411 FPF	\$14,600.44
	\$100.00	Petty Cash	\$100.00
	\$35,253.15	Total Available Funds	\$39,672.20



2015 - AGM SAWTELL, NSW

A FIELD BATTERY RAA
EST. 1871

SUDAN	BOUGANVILLE
SOUTH AFRICA	JAPAN
GALLIPOLI	MALAYA
FRANCE	MALAYSIA
BELGIUM	VIET NAM
NEW GUINEA	EAST TIMOR



An interesting report from our NSW Liaison Officer Dodger Noonan detailing his visit to Kapooka Training Centre a suburb in the south-west of Wagga Wagga, New South Wales.

Margaret and I travelled to Wagga on Thursday 6th August, booked into the RSL motel and made contact with Brian Stewart. Brian is a member of the RSL sub-branch and has a lot to do with the local returned servicemen's community in Wagga. He also has a pass which allows him to enter Kapooka unescorted as well as sign in other people and escort them while they are in the camp precincts. This freedom of movement greatly enhances the attendance at the march out parades as we didn't have to stand in line and wait for the army busses to take us to the parade ground. We were able to drive our own cars onto the base as long as Brian was escorting us in his car. It also allowed us to visit the officers mess for afternoon tea immediately after the parade.

On the morning of the parade, Friday 7th, I visited the RSL sub-branch's office, a house bought for the purpose by the RSL club and adjacent the club itself. There was a regular Friday morning tea attended by about 15 or 20 serving and ex-servicemen with several ladies who provided the catering services for us.

At this gathering I met, amongst others, an ex-British army officer, David Williams, who had been posted to 6 Light Regiment during our time in Malaysia '65 - '67. I obtained his email address and sent him a copy of our May newsletter, to which he replied that it was a very professional-looking one and would be pleased to be on the mailing list for future issues.

He also remembered, on seeing the name in print, one "Seaweed McDonald" as being a TARA in A Bty's command post during his tenure in the regiment. Seaweed will be pleased to know his name has travelled far and wide and back to Oz again.

Coffee and scones were well received by all and the ladies volunteered to do the dishes.

I suspect it was a case of everyone else taking one step backwards instead of the ladies stepping forward for this task.

The 41 Platoon march out was of a Reserve Forces group and so was conducted in the afternoon session.

We met with the Platoon Commander, Lt. Peter Blake, at the VIP's stand prior to the parade. The parade was slightly less ceremonial than the regular forces parades in that arms were not carried and the troops' uniform was normal daily wear rather than ceremonial dress. Nonetheless, the level of drill was of the highest order and was performed flawlessly. The band was of reduced numbers although this could have been due to other commitments by some members.

The band's comedy skit at the end of the parade was also not conducted.

The Edmondson Club was open to all visitors for a smorgasbord light meal (sandwiches, party finger food, etc) rather than a sit-down hot meal. No meal tickets were required on this occasion.

A proposal put forward by Brian Stewart was that our Association provide an award for the most outstanding recruit, a "soldiers' soldier" type of thing.

His thoughts are that it could be a short list of names, one provided by each section, and the winner chosen from this list by the training staff. That way the whole platoon is involved in the choice. The award itself could be a wooden backboard containing an A Fd. Bty unit plaque, with the surrounding area left for smaller individual nameplates of each of the winners of the award. This trophy would be kept at the barracks and presented at the parade march out to the winning recruit. I would also suggest a smaller trophy engraved with the award and name of the winner to be kept by the recruit himself.

This matter needs to be discussed at length by the committee and all the finer details worked out, including costing and logistics of engraving, transport, storage at Kapooka, etc. It would probably require someone representing the Association to attend each 41 platoon marchout to do the presentation, although since Brian is a local he could probably fill in if none of us could attend on any particular occasion. Regards, Dodger Noonan



The Australian Army Band Kapooka provides musical support to the Army Recruit Training Centre and to the Riverina community

Australian Artillery Association has decided to hold another National Gunner Dinner on the 27th May 2017.

The dinner will once again be held at The Event Centre in Caloundra given the suitability of the facility to hold such a large catered event; the close proximity of the 1st Regiment and 20th Surveillance and Target Acquisition Regiment and Royal Australian Artillery Band of the 1st Regiment and one of our principal organizer's is a local which enables the event to be well managed in the lead up and execution of the 2017 National Gunner Dinner.

The full details of the dinner can be found on our website at www.australianartilleryassociation.com. Our aim on this occasion is not only to bring the Gunner community together again, and this time we are hoping for a turnout of between 400 and 600, we intend to use the event to raise funds for the Regiments. All monies raised by the dinner will be donated to each of the Regiments, inclusive of the School of Artillery and the Royal Australian Artillery Regimental Fund. Once again all promotional material used at the dinner such as banners (which will be of a generic type, themed Artillery) and other items will be gifted to the Regiments at the completion of the event.

To enable us to get the word out there to



as many people as possible it would be greatly appreciated if you would place a notice in your next few Newsletters using the attached image and place an ad on your associations website (should you maintain a website).

The Australian Artillery Association recently designed and had made a Lapel Badge featuring the logo "Once a Gunner Always a Gunner". The profits from the sale of this Lapel Badge are all to be returned to the Regiment in one form or another and to date we have made the following donations:

- a. \$500 has been donated to the RAA Regimental Fund,
- b. \$500 has been donated to the 'Veterans of the Street Australia' appeal, and
- c. We are currently in the process of providing assistance to one of the Batteries by way of designing and gifting them a number of pull up banners. With the continued sale of the Lapel Badges coupled with other initiatives we hope to be able to outfit all of the Batteries within the Regiments over time (should that be permitted and they so desire to be outfitted). Kind Regards, Ubique, Kim Mr Kim McGrath President Australian Artillery Association Your assistance in helping us get word of the 2017 National Gunner Dinner spread as far and wide as possible is sincerely greatly appreciated.

Originally sent in by Ian Levin as an email. A song about PTSD and the loss of servicemen to suicide on the internet where you can view the movie and listen to the song on You Tube



JP Cormier Song on PTSD Reaches 700 thousand on Facebook. Released as Single

Cape Breton, NS – April 11, 2014 – JP Cormier's about the effects of PTSD on Canadian soldiers returning from Afghanistan has touched hundreds of thousands in a few days. An official video and song has just been released to help raise funds for Paws for Thought, a charity that supplies a service dog companion to people suffering from PTSD.

JP felt the need to record the video in his home and post it on Facebook and since then there have been accolades for his touching words coming from everywhere. Things just took off from there.

Home Town Battlefield Lyrics.

He got home from service as the spring began its turn
12 long months away
He folded up his uniform with the medals tucked inside
Started living for today
But the present could not find him, nor could his wife and kids
He was there but he was gone
Soon his only comfort was a bottle and his gun
Something right that went so wrong
and silence keeps on coming as the movie plays again

you can smell that yellow dust and death hanging on
the wind
and we thought the war was over, but the headlines
do reveal

That another soldier died today on the hometown
battlefield

He sits outside the courthouse with his pant legs tucked away
No one knows his name

One wrong step there in the sand put him where he is today
One more just the same

All his memories live there in the space below his knees
Back when he was whole

But that IED didn't just relieve him of his legs
It blew apart his soul

And if you're wearing loafers you ain't walked the burning
sands

And you ain't never had to shoot another living man

It don't matter if we won

It don't matter if we lost

They were following their orders

No matter the cost

So I remember what they've given when I see my flag unfurled
Free against the sky

And the way we seem to lose them when they get back to the
world

Can someone tell me why

JP Cormier

Max Vandyke has informed us that Don Donkin has been released from hospital after spending time in there for a broken hip. Max says that things are looking a lot better

Heroic gunners saved the day and Australia's war at Battle for Coral, now there's a push to reward them. August 16, 2015

A push is underway to have Australian gunners who repelled one of the biggest enemy attacks of the Vietnam War honoured for their role. The men overcame catastrophic command and intelligence failures to win the Battle of Coral in May 1968 but have received little recognition.

Former artillery officer Ian "Scrubber" Ahearn, who was the gun position officer with 102 Field Battery at Fire Support Base Coral wants his men awarded with a Unit Citation for Gallantry and he also wants errors of fact in the Official War History corrected.

His campaign features in a new honours thesis by Mark Jamieson who interviewed seven veterans of the battle in detail about their experiences between May 12 and June 6, 1968. Twenty five Australian soldiers were killed in action at Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral, including 11 between 2.30am and 5.30am, on the first morning at Coral on May 13.

On the eve of Vietnam Veterans Day this Tuesday (Aug 18) Mr Jamieson said Coral was the biggest Australian battle of the war and was won by the skills and bravery of the 100 or so men who fought it. "My focus with this thesis is to get the true story out about what actually happened," Mr Jamieson said. "If Coral had been overrun it would have changed the course of Australia's war in Vietnam."

Veteran Robert Costello told Mr Jamieson that he did not believe there was any chance of recognition for the artillerymen "It seems as though the artillery were never there and it was us who took the brunt of the attack. We do get aggrieved in the fact that the gunners are always forgotten about," Mr Costello said.

Co-author of the official history, and one of the Australian War Memorial chief historians, Ashley Ekins said there were errors of fact and omissions and that they would be corrected in future editions. He said Coral was a total stuff up and it was only skill and courage that saved the gunners from being overrun. "They fought valiantly in a touch and go situation," Mr Ekins said. He denied that the history was skewed to protect the reputation of any officer.

As the history says, Mr Ahearn and his men were landed in the wrong place, without adequate gun stores or barbed wire and no claymore mines and trip flares. And somehow allied intelligence had missed two Divisions of North Vietnam and Vietcong troops pushing south to reinforce Saigon. About 1000 men from that force that attacked 102 Battery's position at 2.30am on May 13 in a bid to clear their way to Saigon. "We had no idea what we were getting into and we were in no way ready for what happened to us," Mr Ahearn



102 Field Battery officers ... at FSB Coral left to right Captrtain Don Tait, 2nd Lieutenant Bob Lowry, 2nd Lieutenant Matt Cleland, Lieutenant Ian "Scrubber" Ahearn and Captain Dave Brook.

artillery rounds to be fired over his head. Those rounds contain 6000 darts and had never been fired before by Australian gunners. Five rounds later the enemy guns fell silent and at daylight the troops found 54 enemy bodies riddle with the darts. After three hours of intense fighting helicopter gunships and a Snoopy ground attack aircraft arrived and pushed the enemy back.

Mr Ahearn said he wrote 12 award citations after the battle and just one medal was awarded. A recent submission for a Unit Citation was rejected by former Army Chief Lieutenant General David Morrison, who never served in combat. "The people who saved the day were the diggers and the gunners who stood their ground," Mr Ahearn said.

said. "The first we knew of the enemy force was vertical tracer fire guiding in their reinforcements."

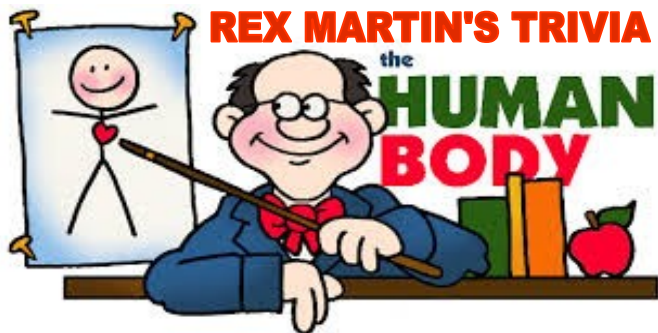
At 2.30am a sentry reported "hundreds and hundreds" of NVA standing up 100 metres from their position. "Then they attacked," he said

The 1st Battalion's mortar platoon bore the brunt of the attack and lost six dead and 12 wounded before the commanding officer requested Splintex 105mm

102 Field Battery's Echo Gun at Coral behind a typical bund.



Bravo gun .. at Coral on the morning of May 13, 1968, with two blown tyres and damage to the gun trail



The Human Body is a treasure trove of mysteries – one that still confounds doctors and scientists about the details of its working. It's not an overstatement to say that every part of your body is a miracle. Here are 50 facts about your body, some of which may leave you stunned.

1. It is possible for your body to survive without a surprisingly large fraction of its internal organs. Even if you lose your stomach, your spleen, 75% of your liver, 80% of your intestines, one kidney, one lung, and virtually every organ from your pelvic and groin area, you wouldn't be very healthy, but you would live.
2. During your lifetime, you will produce enough saliva to fill two swimming pools. Actually, saliva is more important than you realise. If your saliva cannot dissolve something, you cannot taste it.
3. The largest cell in the human body is the female egg and the smallest is the male sperm. The egg is actually the only cell in the body that is visible by the naked eye.
4. The strongest muscle in the human body is the tongue and the hardest bone is the jawbone.
5. Human feet have 52 bones, accounting for one quarter of all the human body's bones.
6. Feet have 500,000 sweat glands and can produce more than a pint of sweat a day.
7. The acid in your stomach is strong enough to dissolve razor blades. The reason it doesn't eat away at your stomach is that the cells of your stomach wall renew themselves so frequently that you get a new stomach lining every three to four days.
8. The human lungs contain approximately 2,400 kilometers (1,500 mi) of airways and 300 to 500 million hollow cavities, having a total surface area of about 70 square meters, roughly the same area as one side of a tennis court. Furthermore, if all of the capillaries that surround the lung cavities were unwound and laid end to end, they would extend for about 992 kilometers. Also, your left lung is smaller than your right lung to make room for your heart.
9. Sneezes regularly exceed 100 mph, while coughs clock in at about 60 mph.
10. Your body gives off enough heat in 30 minutes to bring half a gallon of water to a boil.
11. Your body has enough iron in it to make a nail 3 inches long.
12. Earwax production is necessary for good ear health. It protects the delicate inner ear from bacteria, fungus, dirt and even insects. It also cleans and lubricates the ear canal.
13. Everyone has a unique smell, except for identical twins, who smell the same.
14. Your teeth start growing 6 months before you are born. This is why one out of every 2,000 newborn infants has a tooth when they are born.
15. A baby's head is one-quarter of its total length, but by the age of 25 will only be one-eighth of its total length. This is because people's heads grow at a much slower rate than the rest of their bodies.
16. Babies are born with 300 bones, but by adulthood the number is reduced to 206. Some of the bones, like skull bones, get fused into each other, bringing down the total number.
17. It's not possible to tickle yourself. This is because when you attempt to tickle yourself you are totally aware of the exact time and manner in which the tickling will occur, unlike when someone else tickles you.
18. Less than one third of the human race has 20-20 vision. This means that two out of three people cannot see perfectly.
19. Your nose can remember 50,000 different scents. But if you are a woman, you are a better smeller than men, and will remain a better smeller throughout your life.



20. The human body is estimated to have 60,000 miles of blood vessels.
21. The three things pregnant women dream most of during their first trimester are frogs, worms and potted plants. Scientists have no idea why this is so, but attribute it to the growing imbalance of hormones in the body during pregnancy.
22. The life span of a human hair is 3 to 7 years on average. Every day the average person loses 60-100 strands of hair. But don't worry, you must lose over 50% of your scalp hairs before it is apparent to anyone.
23. The human brain cell can hold 5 times as much information as an encyclopedia. Your brain uses 20% of the oxygen that enters your bloodstream, and is itself made up of 80% water. Though it interprets pain signals from the rest of the body, the brain itself cannot feel pain.
24. The tooth is the only part of the human body that can't repair itself.
25. Your eyes are always the same size from birth but your nose and ears never stop growing.
26. By 60 years of age, 60% of men and 40% of women will snore.
27. We are about 1 cm taller in the morning than in the evening, because during normal activities during the day, the cartilage in our knees and other areas slowly compress.
28. The brain operates on the same amount of power as 10-watt light bulb, even while you are sleeping. In fact, the brain is much more active at night than during the day.
29. Nerve impulses to and from the brain travel as fast as 170 miles per hour. Neurons continue to grow throughout human life. Information travels at different speeds within different types of neurons.
30. It is a fact that people who dream more often and more vividly, on an average have a higher Intelligence Quotient.
31. The fastest growing nail is on the middle finger.
32. Facial hair grows faster than any other hair on the body. This is true for women as well as men.
33. There are as many hairs per square inch on your body as a chimpanzee.
34. A human fetus acquires fingerprints at the age of three months.
35. By the age of 60, most people will have lost about half their taste buds.
36. About 32 million bacteria call every inch of your skin home. But don't worry, a majority of these are harmless or even helpful bacteria.
37. The colder the room you sleep in, the higher the chances are that you'll have a bad dream.
38. Human lips have a reddish color because of the great concentration of tiny capillaries just below the skin.
39. Three hundred million cells die in the human body every minute.
40. Like fingerprints, every individual has an unique tongue print that can be used for identification.
41. A human head remains conscious for about 15 to 20 seconds after it has been decapitated. (I didn't need to know this)
42. It takes 17 muscles to smile and 43 to frown.
43. Humans can make do longer without food than sleep. Provided there is water, the average human could survive a month to two months without food depending on their body fat and other factors. Sleep deprived people, however, start experiencing radical personality and psychological changes after only a few sleepless days. The longest recorded time anyone has ever gone without sleep is 11 days, at the end of which the experimenter was awake, but stumbled over words, hallucinated and frequently forgot what he was doing.
44. The most common blood type in the world is Type O. The rarest blood type, A-H or Bombay blood, due to the location of its discovery, has been found in less than hundred people since it was discovered.
45. Every human spent about half an hour after being conceived, as a single cell. Shortly afterward, the cells begin rapidly dividing and begin forming the components of a tiny embryo.
46. Right-handed people live, on average, nine years longer than left-handed people do.
47. Your ears secrete more earwax when you are afraid than when you aren't.
48. Koalas and primates are the only animals with unique fingerprints.
49. Humans are the only animals to produce emotional tears.
50. The human heart creates enough pressure to squirt blood 30 feet in the air.



Vale: 41577 Captain William Cram LIDDELL OAM (Bill)

His funeral was on Wednesday 2nd September at the Castlebrook Crematorium, Windsor Road, Rouse Hill, NSW.

William Liddell was born in Adelaide in January 1932. He was indentured as an apprentice motor mechanic in 1948. In 1949, he enlisted in the Citizens Military Forces (CMF), 'Q' Battery, 13 Field Regiment, South Australia.

On completion of his apprenticeship in 1953 he discharged from the CMF and enlisted in the Australian Regular Army as a recruit, entering the 1st Recruit Training Battalion (Kapooka) in February 1953. He continued to serve until retiring in 1987 aged 55. His total continuous service, 37 years and 4 months.

He was promoted Bombardier in 1954, Sergeant in 1955, Warrant Officer Class Two in 1964 and Warrant Officer Class One in 1969 then received a Prescribed Service Officer commission in 1981.

Bill was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the Queens Birthday Honours List in 1977 for Services to the Australian Army.

Overseas Service:

"A" Field Battery Malaya 1957

102 Field Battery Malaya 1963

School of Artillery United Kingdom and Germany from 1964 to 1966

South Vietnam 1969

On his retirement he was employed with the NSW Branch of the Retired Services League (RSL), Security Manager, Darling Harbour NSW prior to full retirement in 1995.



Bill Liddell at Lintang

Vale 3410998 Sergeant Maxwell John Franklin

Born on 18th. January 1934 in Carlton, Victoria Max was 18 years of age when called up for the National Service Scheme in the 1950s, this created a yearn for further service and he enlisted in the ARA in 1961 at the age of 27. Appointed to the RAA he quickly rose through the ranks and was a temporary sergeant in 102 Battery when it went to Vietnam in March 1968.

He was serving at Fire Support Base Coral on 13th. May 1968 when North Vietnamese Army attacked the unfinished infantry mortar position at about 3.30 am, it was attacked following a brief barrage. The 1RAR mortar position was over-run along with 102 Battery's six 105 mm M2A2 howitzers. With the aid of air support the attack was beaten off and the captured gun pit retaken. Eleven Australians were killed and 28 wounded while the attackers lost more than 52 bodies left behind. A further three Australians died in patrol on the 14th. May.

Sergeant Franklin returned to Australia, served with Army Guided Weapons Trial Unit around 1972, was promoted to staff sergeant and later took his discharge 13th. February 1981.

Our sincere condolences to Max Franklin's widow Winifred and family.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL P02950.002

**Identified in the photograph from left are,
3410998 Sgt Maxwell John Franklin; 441126
Gunner (Gnr) Kevin Frederick (Ken) Walker;
4719292 Gnr Alan James Good; 217101 Gnr
John Edward Schwarze; CP Staff 2786889 Gnr
Robert John (Bob) Costello**



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.
Lest we forget.



KEN. AGNEW
LES ASHBY
TOM. BANFIELD
CLARE. (BONNIE) BASSAN
TREVOR. BEER
FRANK. BERRIER
S.J. BLANCH (OAS. Malaya)
DOUG N. BRYAN
MALCOLM J. BUGG
GORDON CARMICHAEL
TOM. CARRUTHERS
KEITH. CHRISTENSEN
REG CLATWORTHY
RICHARD. DUGGAN
R.M. DUCAT (OAS. Malaya)
PAT. DALY
TOM. DAWSON
JOHN. DOWNES
BEVAN FILCE
MAURICE FONTAINE
GEORGE. FORSYTHE
MAX. FRANKLIN
M.K. FUSSELL (KIA, Afghanistan)
ROBERT J. (BOB) GRAY
BARRY HANDLEY
NEIL HARDEN
MICK. HARKEN
B.D. HENDERSON (OAS. Malaya)
REG KELLY

KEN. KENNEDY
BOBBY. LEWIS
BILL LIDDELL OAM
JOHN. MACDONALD
BARRY MARR
I.G. MATHERS (KIA. Vietnam)
IAN. MEIBUSCH A.M
JACK MILLIGAN
E.J. (LOFTY) MOORE
BRIAN. MURTAGH
R.J. PARKER (OAS. Vietnam)
R.J. (JIM) PONTING
DAVE. QUIRK
PETER. RAINSBURY
CLIVE. RALFE
JOHN SALMON
BRIAN. SCOTT
PETER. SEDDON
JOHN SHEEHAN
ALBERT (ALBY) SHERIDAN
ALAN. SINGH
NOEL. SMALL
R. F. SMITH
BRIAN. WHISKER
JOHN. WHITELAW. AO,CBE
BERNARD. (PLONKY) WINE
GUS. WOOLFE
JOHN. WORBOYS

In Memory of Our Departed Comrades

This page is to pay tribute, as we honour those members of A Field Battery who have passed away but are by no means forgotten. We remember them as friends and comrades in happy and sad times. Most of them we knew as young soldiers, in later years developed a close friendship as we grew older

If you know of a departed A Field Battery member who is not listed here, please contact us and we will update the list. Thank you.

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