

1871 A Field Battery Association, Inc. National Newsletter AUGUST 2017 2017



From the President's Chair.

G'day Fellow members,

As usual I am sad to say that we have lost another two members, both are from the Malayan Emergency era, and they are; David Harris and Joe Rouse. There is a report on these two members in the newsletter and the committee's condolences go to the families of these two members. Another ex-Gunner who has passed away and a lot of people knew him is Bennett-Burleigh, I think Ben was 91 when he passed.

The new amendments were passed at our extraordinary General Meeting, and these will become law when they are passed by the Dept. of Fair Trading. We had eleven members present and five proxies in favour of the amendments; this gave us sixteen for the amendments and nil against. This gave us a quorum to proceed with the vote.

The new rule 4 (1) (a) will read: Ordinary Member – Ordinary Membership shall be to a person who has served in 'A' Battery RRAA and to immediate relatives of ex and serving members of 'A' Battery RRAA, who make written application, pays the annual membership subscription fee and is accepted by the committee of management. A membership badge shall be issued in the first year.

The new rule 4 (1) (e) will read: Associate Membership – Associate Membership shall be available to anyone who is interested in preserving the history of 'A' Battery RRAA, which was raised on the 1st August 1871 as part of the N.S.W. regular defences, and is still serving as part of the Australian Regular Army.

The Annual General Meeting and Reunion is getting closer and at this stage the numbers are very poor, if we do not get enough interest, then I will cancel it.



Being an Incorporated Body, we must have an AGM within six months of the end of the financial year.

Details of the Annual General meeting and reunion are in this newsletter, surprise me and make an effort to come along and enjoy yourself, also I extend an invitation to all 'A' Battery members to attend.

Gentlemen, I am sick and tired of you members sitting on your hands, doing nothing, not wanting to take on positions on the committee, Malayan members doing their own thing, Vietnam members doing their own thing, eighties/nineties doing their own thing, incidentally, of the fifteen members who joined in 2015, only one has renewed his membership. I suppose the Afghanistan members will want to do their own thing. I thought there was only one 'A' Bty association and this was for all members who have served or are still serving with the Bty. We have a member who was on the committee, but due to a lack of attendance is no longer a committee member and he has the association property illegally. He must hand the property over to the property officer.

I am not writing a President's Report this year, as I and the Treasurer wrote our resignation reports last year, I turned eighty last December and Bob Cunningham turns eighty this year and I think it is time younger people took up the reins, if no one wants the committee positions, then I will have no hesitation in shutting the association down, I have been President for fifteen years and I can't keep on going, nor can Bob. If the 'A' Bty Assn closes, then this will be a crying shame as 'A' Bty turns one hundred & forty seven on the first of August.

I hope there are a great number of members who will take what I have said, on board and act.

Ron (Tex) Bassan.



Maroochy Waterfront Camp & Conference Centre

Our Annual General Meeting and Reunion is to be held at the Maroochy Waterfront Camp & Conference Centre,

Maroochydore, Qld, on the 8th to 10th September 2017. The cost is \$236.50 per person, twin share. When you pay the cost ask the Heritage Bank teller to identify the payment with the word reunion.

The itinerary for the weekend is as follows:

Friday 8th. 1730hrs for 1800hrs, Barbecue (Barbecue Area).

Saturday 9th. 0800hrs, Breakfast, 1000hrs, Annual General Meeting (TV Room), 1100hrs, Morning Tea, 1245hrs, Lunch, 1530hrs, Afternoon Tea, 1830hrs, Semi Formal Dinner.

Sunday 9th. 0800hrs, Breakfast, after breakfast vacates rooms, say farewells and head home.

If you are attending this Reunion, please have your money to me by the 28th. August, as I have to make a 10% deposit 21 days before the function.

Next month, 30th June is the end of our financial year and there is still people who have not paid their annual subscription to the Assn, could you please rectify this and pay next years as well, or become paid Life Members, it will only cost you \$200.00 and you can forget subs for the rest of your life.

Regards, Ron (Tex) Bassan
'A' Field Battery Association

Located on the Sunshine Coast, just a hop, skip and jump from the Maroochydore CBD, and situated on the pristine banks of the stunning Maroochy River, Maroochy Waterfront Camp & Conference Centre

provides the ideal Queensland location, for your next school camp, sporting group camp, corporate group team-building or workshop, church retreat, private group function or community group activity.

With plenty of onsite outdoor water activities available in our lagoon and direct access to the Maroochy River, as well as room for indoor activities in the conference centre designed to seat 180 people, Maroochy Waterfront offer unparalleled and very exciting opportunities.

Maroochy Waterfront Camp & Conference Centre are group accommodation experts and have a package to suit every group, with affordable accommodation and full catering for groups from 15 to 128 people. You will find our amazing friendly staff are here to assist you in creating a personalised accommodation, catering and/or conference package, designed specifically to suit your needs.



This letter from The Saint was also sent as an email.

The Maroochydore AGM will be held on the Friday 8th. September to Sunday 10th. September. The cost of \$236.50 per person twin share. Please have your money to Tex by the 28th. Of August. This can be done at the Heritage Bank using BSB 638070 Account No. 8732884 and get the teller to put Reunion on it

I am writing this note to all members of the A Field Battery Assoc. Inc. To try to help you understand the situation that our Committee now finds itself in.

Our members are ageing, a lot have passed away, but no new members have come forward to pick up the baton. Now I that if you are getting on and have health issues it is hard to get involved with the work and time it takes to help. I know because like many members I am fast approaching the time to get my OBE.

I am afraid that our members have no idea of the cost in time and money it takes to keep our association running. And if all falls on the shoulders of just a few. Well I must inform you that if we keep going as we are now, the end is nigh. I know about the lifters and the leaners, and it has to change now

Our AGM is coming up and as usual the lifters have been busy getting things ready. Our venue is the “camp” ay Maroochydore where we have had so many good times before, but the place was getting a little shabby and so were the amenities, not to mention the management. I know the ladies were not keen in staying there, but we blokes didn’t mind. We have lived in a lot worse.

Three members have taken the time to inspect the camp as we were informed it had been completely renovated and refurbished. Ron Hart did the first inspection and gave glowing reports. Sometime later my wife Carol and I visited the venue and spent half a day there talking to the new management and having a look around. There has been a lot of money spent on the the old place with new furniture and more fittings in all the rooms. They also offer three meals a day with morning and afternoon teas.

The management is now one of the family of the original owners and builders of the premises, including including the hotel and the lake. Most of the surrounding land is still owned by them. They are very keen to ensure that their assets are kept in good condition and are being used. The place has been booked by our President as a lot of you have asked if we could go back again. Well were the bloody hell are you all???. We only have a few more days left to pay our deposit, which is over a thousand dollars. If we do and have to cancel we lose our money. In fact a few of us have even suggested to our President that we cancel now. But where do we go ?. We are a registered and incorporated body so we have to have a by law and AGM.

One other thing is that is that some people who have said they were coming but are not going to stay with the rest of us. Now this has really pissed me right off. This is a reunion , you know we get together as old mates and enjoy each others company. Oneof our members said he was keen to go back to the old venue as we are all together and not running of to other accommodation. We eat together, sleep together and piss each other off together.

As far as I’m concerned this is just not on . And if you don’t want to share your mates company, I wouldn’t care if tou don’t come at all.

For years we were looking forward to handing over the reins to new younger members. Remember the big do we put on for the Vietnam vets, Lot of work and money. They never came back. I get the feeling that they think they are special veterans and so have their own association. Well I don’t think they are special, so if they are happier having their own little club go for it. But remember that A Field Battery is almost heritage listed and will be here for a very long time to come. When all you Vietnam vets die none of your little organisations will exist. And stop thinkinking your special, You lost !

Okay so it looks like I’m not very happy. Of course I’m not bloody happy . I was there on the first day when we decided to form this Association and a lot of us have put our soul into it. And now there is a very good chance it is all going to disappear. So it’s up to you blokes. Ring Tex, tell him you are coming, send your money. It will certainly make his day. And mine.

Don’t worry I still love you all. Saint

My brother David Gibson is currently overseas but before he left he asked me to email you the ANZAC Day photos from a wet Melbourne parade.

It was the first time they have marched under their new A Bty Banner.

I am Davids twin brother Peter, Lbdr with HQ Bty, i think we were the only twins in 12Fd 71 tour. Hope all is well with you.

Rgds Peter Gibson

. Dave Mcauley. Trevor Willis, Chris O'Rourke



**Trevor Willis, David Gibson,
George Bozines**



**David Chalk. David Gibson, Chris
O'Rourke, George Bozines,**

One for the Gunners!

US Marines from Marine Rotational Force Darwin brief members of 5th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment on the M327 120mm Towed Rifled Mortar.

The M327 is the largest internally transportable indirect fire support weapon able to be moved by helicopter or towed behind a vehicle, and then manhandled into position by its 5-man crew. It fills the gap between the 155mm howitzer and 60mm mortar to provide indirect fire support to troops on the ground.

With a range of 8km for standard munitions up to 16km with new extended range ordnance, it can fire GPS guided rounds that can fall within 2-10m of the target. Another interesting aspect is that rounds can accurately hit targets on reverse slopes by shaping the trajectory using stabilizing fins and canards.

Marine Expeditionary forces such as those that are working with Australian troops now and during the upcoming Exercise Talisman Saber* will be operating the M327... with great interest from Aussie gunners, no doubt!



More photographs from Don Gibson

I understand my brother Peter has sent you photographs so I hope this helps.

Sorry I did not get this to you for the May Edition, we were getting ready for our trip to Canada.

Peter tells me he had trouble getting the photos through to you as well.



Boat Trip to Seal Rock – “A” Fd Bty Reunion March 2017



Members of “A” Fd Bty Vietnam (add 46 years) around the M2A2 – “The King of the Battle Field”



Larry’s Boys – Al Russell, Trev Willis, Larry Darcy, Chris O’Rourke & Ron Redding



The Ladies who keep us on the straight and narrow!



Touring the Island: Dave & Di Chalk, Sue & Lawrie Crestani, David & Rita Gibson & John Sheedy



David & Gus presenting the photograph to the Vietnam National Museum



DAVID (BANGER) HARRIS

The latest sad news on the passing of one of our A Field Battery members was that we have lost one of our favourites with 2nd. Lieutenant David (Banger) Harris passed away on Friday 16th. June

Our sincere condolences are offered to David's wife Anne Harris and we inform her that Banger was one of the most popular of the Officers we had serving in Malaya during 1957 to 1959



Joe Rouse has passed away and this disturbing story from Don Sinclair gives an insight to his complicated later life.

Joe left the army, got married, and took up truck driving. He bought his own truck and started a business which from his story ,was

successful. But the drink had a firm hold on him and he was eventually diagnosed as an alcoholic.

His business started to slide and he broke up with his wife. When I found him he had a house at Sanctuary Bay on the South Coast of Sydney with his dogs. He lived alone but had a daughter who lived not far away, who kept an eye on him. His hobby was restoring old furniture and had a fair sized workshop in the yard. From what I saw he was doing great work. He kept to himself and of course never touched alcohol. But I had the idea that his drinking had done him damage and he was not a well man.

We spent a day with him and had some great talks about old times in Malaya. Although I rang him quite often, of late he never answered his phone. He was one of the good blokes and a great mate. My wife Carol knew Joe well from our time together in Sydney, and when he bought this enormous old American sedan, the three of us would go for drives down the coast. We spent a lot of time together on leave in Malaya, as he did not mix with a lot of people. **He will be missed. Good bye Joe. RIP**



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
HARRY COOK
DON DONKIN MBE
RICHARD. DUGGAN
R.M. DUCAT (OAS. Malaya)
PAT. DALY
RAY DAVIS
TOM. DAWSON
JOHN. DOWNES
NOEL EGAN
BEVAN FILCE
MAURICE FONTAINE
GEORGE. FORSYTHE
MAX. FRANKLIN

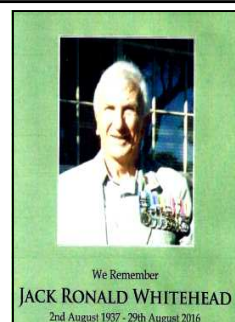
M.K. FUSSELL (KIA,
Afghanistan)
LANCE GILKINSON
ROBERT J. (BOB) GRAY
BARRY HANDLEY
NEIL HARDEN
MICK. HARKEN
DAVID (BANGER)HARRIS
RON HART
B.D. HENDERSON (OAS.
Malaya)
REG KELLY
KEN. KENNEDY
JOHN KNIGHT
BOBBY. LEWIS
BILL LIDDELL OAM
JOHN. MACDONALD
BARRY MARR
I.G. MATHERS (KIA.
Vietnam)
IAN. MEIBUSCH A.M
KEVIN MITCHELL
JACK MILLIGAN
E.J. (LOFTY) MOORE
BRIAN. MURTAGH
R.J. PARKE (OAS. Vietnam)
JIM PONTING

DAVE. QUIRK
PETER. RAINSBURY
JOHN FRAKLAN RAINEY
CLIVE. RALFE
JOE ROUSE
JOHN SALMON
BRIAN. SCOTT
PETER. SEDDON
JOHN SHEEHAN
ALBERT (ALBY)
SHERIDAN
ALAN. SINGH
NOEL. SMALL
R. F. SMITH
LESLEY (SQUIZZY)
TAYLOR
IAN UHLMANN
DONALD DAVID WEIR
BRIAN. WHISKER
JACK WHITEHEAD
JOHN. WHITELAW.
AO,CBE
BERNARD. (PLONKY)
WINE
GUS. WOOLFE
JOHN. WORBOYS

Sadly there has been three more names added to our growing list of departed members. Ray Davis, Noel Egan, Jack Whitehead and David Harris

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 and others, in later years developed a close friendship as we grew older



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Log on to our website and you can read the latest and all the past newsletters
 An amazing collection of photographs and news items covering the 1940s to the present day with A Field Battery. **This website is addictive, with the news, links, notice board and a great selection of music while you browse away.** One of the best websites available and kept up to date by Kimbo.

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<http://afdbty.australianartilleryassociation.com>



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