

1871



'A' Field Battery Association Inc. National Newsletter

The Road Runner - January 2022



The Road Runner makes its return?

NEWS FLASH, Beep Beep!

Salute to outgoing office bearer

President, Secretary, Newsletter Editor, you name it this man has done it. Ronald 'Tex' Bassan has unselfishly volunteered his time on these thankless roles for and within the 'A' Field Battery Association Incorporated; for you, our members and all those who have served under the 'A' umbrella.

Just look back through the archives and past newsletters to see what he has done for the Association. If it was not for Tex the Association would not be here today and in the healthy and financially stable state that it is. Tex says he will be spending a lot more time with his orchids and refining his stamp collection. The Association thanks you Tex for your service and commitment. Ubique!

From the Interim-Secretary/Editor



Tex in camp with his adopted pet, Princess



Tex in a Scout Armoured Car



25 Pounder Gun Detachment – (L-R) card case? Barney McHugh, Pud Gilkinson, Tex Bassan

Ronald "TEX" Bassan – We Thank You! "SEMPER PARATUS"



SITREP

Association Management Committee

"Put it over the tannoy!"

President's Report January 2022

Here we are in the new year with a lot of changes plus a lot of things that have stayed the same. Firstly, our secretary of years past, Tex Bassan, has finally been able to retire, to be succeeded by a relatively new member, Paul Johnston. This was effected at our last committee meeting in December. Paul's tenure in the position of secretary is interim, having been appointed, until the next elections in September at which time I am sure he will nominate and be elected. Paul is very keen to get involved and has taken on quite a few challenges and roles within the association, including secretary, newsletter editor, web administrator and event coordinator. We wish him good luck with this workload, and will give him all the assistance we can. It seems that covid-19 is with us for the foreseeable future. There are some optimists who would say we have it under control, however barring the use of a functional crystal ball I don't see how such predictions can be made with certainty. As a result, it may become the norm to hold our AGM's using Zoom rather than have a physical gathering. Even when such gatherings may seem to be preferred, there may still be a large cohort who are reticent to congregate. I class myself in this group, being in the age zone of maximum danger. Accordingly, there will always be a Zoom component to our AGMs from now on until such time as covid variants are a thing of the past. Some groups may be able to assemble in their local areas and attend via a group Zoom login.

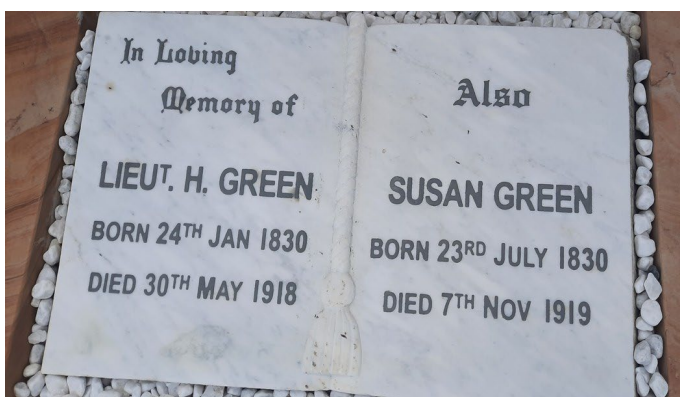
There is some good news on the Henry Green grave restoration front, a full story of the project is given under a separate heading in this newsletter. There are also several contributions from Paul Johnston to keep you educated, entertained and informed. Paul has also written some more details of himself in this section.

There is progress on the name change of the association as well. We are having a Special General Meeting (via Zoom) towards the end of March to enable the change. Full details are given on the Preamble page followed by the formal declaration of the meeting and how to attend later at the end of this newsletter.

Regards,

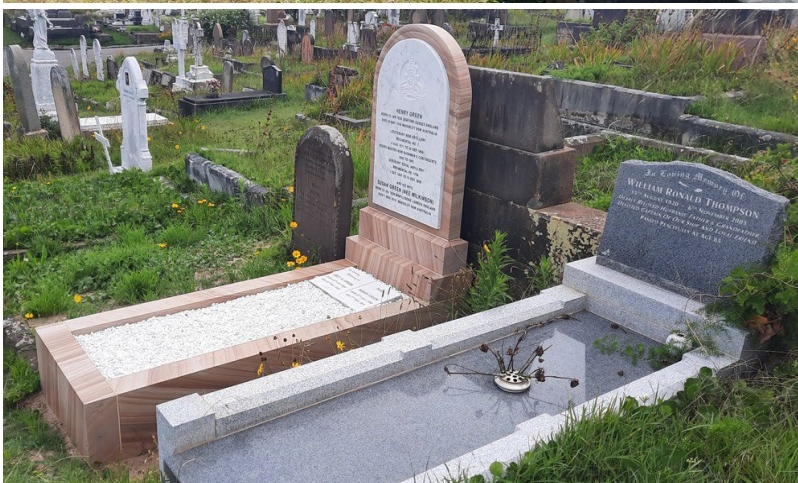
Robert "Dodger" Noonan
President
'A' Fd Bty Association Inc.

Henry Green Grave Restoration



As some of you may be aware, at the 2019 AGM in Enoggera Don Sinclair suggested that the association could take on the project of getting Henry Green's grave in Waverley cemetery brought up to a more fitting standard in time for the 150th anniversary of 'A' Bty. It was badly weather-beaten and hardly legible. So, we set out on this adventure. We had attempted to obtain government funding for the project but there was not one department that was either interested or capable of providing financial support to the project. While all this was going on, I was introduced (via email) to Ms. Sheila Green by the cemetery management. Ms. Green is the "Grantee of the Allotment". When I told the cemetery management of our plans, they suggested I contact her. It turned out that she and the family had also embarked on exactly the same project, with neither of us being aware of the other's intention at the time. She had also been met with the same brick wall we had when seeking funding. Some emails were hurriedly exchanged, and at the request of the family we bowed out of the project but with a promise to assist if it became necessary. For example, if there were unexpected expenses that needed to be met, we could take up a collection and/or make a donation out of association funds. As it turned out, this was unnecessary, and the project was completed last November. Those of us who were committee members at the planning stage will notice that the finished project is very similar in size, style and layout to what we had envisaged, with what I consider to be impeccable text content outlining Henry's full service career. Our only contribution to the project turned out to be a scalable computer file of the RAA hat badge for engraving onto the headstone by Heritage Monuments, the masons company who completed the work. Unfortunately, covid-19 raised its ugly head once again and the deadline of 1st August could not be met due to hold-ups in transporting materials and no doubt health issues among all the workers involved in the production of the stoneworks. Ms. Green has kindly consented to us publishing the photos of the completed restoration in our newsletter. They were taken by her grandson on a recent trip to Sydney. He is a serving member of the Australian Armed Forces and currently stationed in Townsville. The saga ends with Henry Green and his wife Susan now having a more suitable resting place than they had before, and there is now a more permanent record of Henry's service and his place in the history of the Royal Australian Artillery for all to see.

From the President



From your Editor/Interim-Secretary/Web Admin

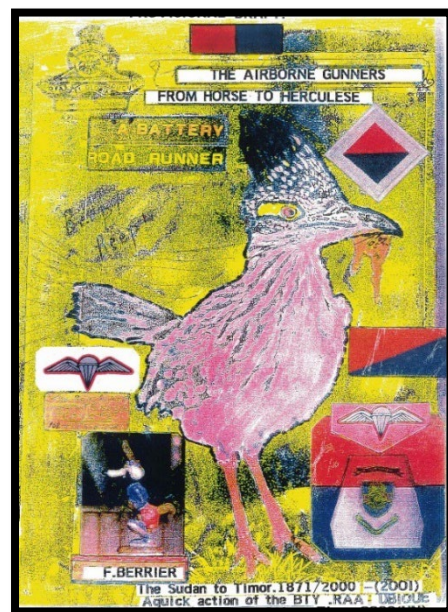
Hi all, I hope that you all had a great and safe Christmas break and that your New Year is to be better than the last. As you are probably already aware that on 8 November 2021 at the Associations Management Committee (MC) General Meeting, Ronald 'Tex' Bassan stood down from the position of Secretary. I understand that Tex has been looking for his replacement for some time. When a young whippersnapper like me came along and expressed my interest in the Association by becoming a Life Member in July 2021 Tex was eager to hand the Secretary position baton on. I am honoured to be allowed to serve this illustrious Association, rich in history and longevity as the newly appointed Associations Interim-Secretary. I personally thank Ronald 'Tex' Bassan for his long and outstanding service to the 'A' Field Battery Association Incorporated. I hope to catch up with Tex in the near future for a pink lemonade and to pick his brain on the 'A' Battery history that he knows and loves so well. However, I do have a complaint as my scanner and printer are already broken and my wife has been telling me that I spend more time behind the computer than I do with her. Oh, the commitment I have for my beloved 'A'yyyyy!

From the Interim-Secretary/Editor

'A' History Investigations.

When serving in 'A' Field Battery in the 1990s the Battery had a crude looking rag/newsletter called *The Road Runner*. Today in a hallway at 'A' Battery there is a large glass framed Road Runner dilapidated flag on display in the Henry Green Historical Collection. When visiting 'A' Battery in late 2021 I was approached by a couple of 'A' Battery young Lieutenants and Gunners asking if I knew the story behind *The Road Runner*. After explaining what I thought I knew of the origins of *The Road Runner*, I thought about how the gunner history, knowledge and pertinent gunnery information should be better imparted from yesteryear upon the soldiers/Gunners of today. After thinking about this and then asking a few questions I felt that we can partly blame the frantic modernising of the Australian Defence Force over the last 11 years. The current issues with intense new advanced equipment training and knowledge requirements can partially be a telling factor. However, I feel the main factors at play are the combination of the relocation of 'A' Battery from Holsworthy to Brisbane in 2010, and with the loss and damage of many Henry Green Room historical collection items due to the Brisbane floods while in storage and waiting in transit to the 1st Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery at Enoggera Barracks in Brisbane. When and where did *The Road Runner* originate from? Vietnam War era? Walt Disney gave authorisation to use *The Road Runner* as a logo but where is that paperwork? Which way does *The Road Runner* officially face? What is *The Year of the Road Runner* all about? These are just some of the questions that the current 'A' Battery personnel are asking. I have heard on the grape vine that *The Road Runner* originated from 'A' Battery's time in the Vietnam War, but then I see an old copy of an 'A' Battery newsletter called *Road Runner* from 1962. The Battery in the 1990s had an 'A' Battery *Road Runner* magazine put together by Frank Berrier. The old 'A' Field Battery RAA Association (NSW Branch) had a newsletter called the *ROAD RUNNERS* then it was renamed the *ROAD RUNNER*, and 'A' Field Battery Association (QLD Branch) had the newsletter "*Shell Drake*", then the national newsletter came along. Today the 'A' Battery Association sells as part of the Association's merchandise a \$10 DVD, "*The Year of the Road Runner*" ('A' Field Battery in Vietnam 1971). Association members please impart with your wisdom and knowledge. If any reader out there would like to give their version of how *The Road Runner* came about then please let us know?

From the Interim-Secretary/Editor



The 'A' Battery Bullion Banner

Before you ask:



bullion *NOUN*

1. **gold** or silver in **bulk** before coining, or valued by weight.
"gold bullion"
2. **ornamental braid or fringing** made with twists of gold or silver thread.
"bullion cords"

banner *NOUN* a long strip of cloth bearing a slogan or design, carried in a demonstration or procession or hung in a public place. *ADJECTIVE* excellent; outstanding.

All that is highlighted above in bold text, it is!

On 9 December 2021 Graham Hampton from the Australian Artillery Association (AAA) presented 'A' Battery, 1st Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery at Enoggera Barracks with a Bullion Banner.



Don 'Saint' Sinclair and I, Paul Johnston, were there to witness this prestigious and outstanding Bullion Banner being displayed in all its glory and presented to 'A' Battery. The Battery Commander, Major Aaron Foster,

and the soldiers/Gunners of 'A' Battery received the banner with honour and expressed admiration to the AAA for the 'A' Battery Bullion Banner. The Battery praised Graham Hampton for his efforts in putting together and organising the making of the Bullion Banner. The Bullion Banner will be stored and displayed as part of the 'A' Battery Henry Green Historical Collection and will be brought out and carried on special occasions. Graham Hampton stated that the AAA has a long-term project to provide each Battery with a double-sided Bullion Banner which displays the Battery's logo. The Bullion Banner comes complete with a 9' pole, pike and tassels. These banners are not for ceremonial purposes. They are designed to boost esprit-de-corps and morale and be passed down from one generation to another over time. Seen in the photographs are Graham Hampton, Secretary/Webmaster of the AAA, presenting the banner to the 'A' Battery, 2021-2022 Battery Commander, Major Aaron Foster. *From the Interim-Secretary/Editor*



STOP PRESS

The Henry Green Room is no more!

'A' Battery moved from Holsworthy Barracks, Sydney to Enoggera Barracks, Brisbane in 2010. The Henry Green Room was packed up into a shipping container, and on arrival into Brisbane, was unloaded at the Port of Brisbane. Before the shipping container could be delivered to the new 'A' Battery location at the 1st Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery at Enoggera Barracks there was a great flooding event that tore through the Brisbane City and surrounding suburbs along the Brisbane River. As a result, the shipping container containing the Henry Green Room historical collection was partially submerged, and as the story goes, was found floating near the Brisbane River mouth. When the shipping container was found and recovered a majority of the Henry Green Room historical collection was water damaged. The recovery effort by 'A' Battery personnel at the time was frantic as the Battery was required to be up and running ASAP within the 1st Regiment, RAA.

Don 'Saint' Sinclair came to the rescue. As the 'Saint' was living in Manly, in Brisbane's Eastern Suburbs, he became heavily involved and was instrumental in the rebirthing of the Henry Green Room at the 1st Regiment. It was not until 2017, when the 1st Regiment was under command of Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Smith that the Henry Green Room found a new place of belonging within the construct of 1st Regiment. The 'Saint' volunteered his time and a large amount of his own funds to recreate a setting worthy of becoming the new Henry Green Room. The room was also used as the 1st Regiment conference/meeting room and therefore the wall space around the room was used with a limited capacity for display cabinetry. However, the new location of the Henry Green Room was short lived and in 2019-20 it was moved within the 'A' Battery Headquarters, into two hallways and a small lobby area. This move has turned out be a significant and better move, a master stroke, as there is plenty of wall space, and room for more display cabinetry. The fact is that 'A' Battery personnel and any visitors to the Battery walk down these two hallways all day, every day and therefore the Henry Green historical collection is proudly and permanently on display, and presented how it should be. As a result of the new location and construct of the Henry Green historical collection it is no longer in a room, and therefore 'A' Battery has renamed the Henry Green Room. It is now to be called the 'A' Battery Henry Green Historical Collection ('A' HGHC). As the historical collection has expanded over time the 2020-21 'A' Battery historian, Bombardier Jack Jennings, has been looking for funding to complete a number of 'A' HGHC projects. At present, and a good starting point, is new "'A' Battery Henry Green Historical Collection" signage. Another project is that 'A' Battery are putting together a new display which looks at 'A' Field Battery's deployment to Japan to occupy as part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force after the end of World War Two. Bombardier Jennings has been posted to the School of Artillery in 2022, as a result Lieutenant Robinson will be the 'A' Battery Historian looking after the 'A' HGHC for 2022-23.

From the Interim-Secretary/Editor



We Praise The 'Saint'

On Friday 3 December 2021 at the 'A' Battery Bullion Banner presentation; in recognition of hard work, time and dedication 'A' Battery Association presented Don 'Saint' Sinclair with an Appreciation Certificate and an Australian Artillery Association 150th Year Celebration Medallion Set. At the same time 'A' Battery presented the 'Saint' with an award for his expertise and dedication for being the unofficial 'A' Battery Association 'A' Battery Henry Green Historical Collection custodian over the last 11 years. He was overwhelmed by the presentation and the occasion.



Battery Commander Major Aaron Foster, Donald 'Saint' Sinclair, Paul Johnston



Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery 150th Year Anniversary 1871 – 2021 Medallion Set, and Certificate of Appreciation

Don 'Saint' Sinclair, on behalf of the 'A' Battery Association, we thank you for your service within and outside the Association and in particular your diligence in putting the Henry Green Room, now the 'A' Battery Henry Green Historical Collection, back together to display it as it should be, with gusto, prestige and glory!

From the Interim-Secretary/Editor

Family Finds a Personal Treasure Trove. British Commonwealth Occupation Force

In 2021 the 'A' Battery Henry Green Room Historical Collection ('A' HGHC) 'A' Battery Historian and Custodian, Bombardier Jack Jennings, made great inroads into gathering information on the 'A' Field Battery's deployment to Japan to occupy as part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force after the end of World War Two. On 5 January 2022 I received an email from Danny Concetta in Townsville who found our Association's contact details on the Association's webpage. Danny's father-in-law, Richard (Dick) Burke, had passed away and Danny had found out that Dick was in 'A' Field Battery during the occupation of Japan. Danny's mother-in-law gave him some of old photos from Dick's time in Japan. Danny has asked if the 'A' Battery Association was interested in the photographs. As a result, the Interim-Secretary will on receipt of the photographs scan and document the photographs which will be placed on the new Association website within the 'A' HGHC webpage. The original photographs will be presented to 'A' Battery, Battery Commander, for safe keeping and will form part of a new display concerning 'A' Battery's participation in British Commonwealth Occupation Force that had occupied Japan.

From the Interim-Secretary/Editor

'A' Frame Working Group.

It was decided at last year's AGM that a working group was to look at how and what the Association could do to attract membership, evolve and come up with new ideas. To date this has not occurred but let's start the discussion now, so send to the Interim-Secretary your suggestions.

From the Interim-Secretary/Editor

ANZAC DAY 2022 CO-ORD

LOOKING FOR YOUR SUPPORT, ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

“You served; you deserve!” If you have worn the uniform and served under the ‘A’ frame (‘A’ Field Battery and/or ‘A’ Battery) regardless if you have deployed on operations or not, then you have the right to march on ANZAC Day. On the new website, that will go live on 27 March 2022, there will be a Commemorations Event Page. Within that webpage there will be an ANZAC Day Parade Notice Board and a Remembrance Day Notice Board. Members are then able to contact the Secretary to put up notices for various locations around Australia so that the organising of gatherings or just to meet up to mark the commemoration event can occur. For example: The RSL QLD Brisbane ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee have asked ‘A’ Battery Association to be the lead association/civilian organisation in the 2022 ANZAC Day March in recognition of the 150th RAA Anniversary. In this case the ‘A’ Battery QLD Coordinator will be organising the rally point for ‘A’ Battery’s participation in the parade and also organising a venue for lemon, lime and bitters, and other refreshments afterwards at a venue to be yet determined. Any ideas?



If you're thinking about attending the Brisbane 2022 ANZAC Day March then please send us an email so that the ‘A’ Battery QLD Coordinator can register your name and plan a venue for the after event catch-up.

Please email: a.bty.qldcoord@australianartilleryassociation.com

Remembrance Day

The 'A' Battery Association, QLD Coordinator, Paul Johnston, and 'A' Battery Association Life Member, Chris Flavel, represented the Association at the 1st Regiment, RAA, 2021 Remembrance Day Service. Other guests included the Representative Colonel Commandant of The Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery, BRIG S (Don) Roach, AM (Retired) and RAA Association (QLD Branch), LT COL Ron West (Retired). The 7th Brigade, Brigadier Jason Blain and Brigade RSM WO1 Matthew Bold also attended.



The 1st Regiment, Commanding Officer, LTCOL James Groves and acting-RSM, MG WO1 Matthew Dawson were the primary speakers. Despite being restricted by COVID-19 safe limitations, there was a large turn out on the day. "We will remember them". Ubique!

From the Interim-Secretary/Editor



2021 RAA Awards

The 1st Regiment, RAA, Commanding Officer LTCOL James Jones presented BDR Jack Jennings from 'A' Battery his award for the 2021 RAA Junior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year. The 'A' Battery Association congratulates BDR Jennings on being bestowed the award. BDR Jennings has been posted to the School of Artillery in 2022. The Association wishes BDR Jennings all the best on his posting and to the rest of his outstanding career. UBIQUE!



Junior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year for 2021
is BDR Jack Jennings, from 'A' Battery

THIS IS YOUR NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

For this newsletter to become truly national and have substance to be more appealing and relevant to its members we must have input from our members from all over Australia. At present it appears there is a distinct lack of interest and motivation to do this. How can we change this? Send your ideas to a.bty.secretary@australianartilleryassociation.com



'A' new Facebook page. Why?



@afdbty | 'A' Field Battery Association
Incorporated | The old permanent Facebook
Page Banner licenced under GoDaddy |
Page created - April 8, 2016



@a.bty.association.inc | 'A' Battery
Association | The new look alternating
picture Facebook Page Banner |
Page created - December 6, 2021

The question has been asked a number of times recently, why do we have a new Facebook page? Well, a long story short and know doubt there is more to it behind the scenes, but this has been the information gathering so far with enquires and asking the questions and dealing with Facebook (META) and GoDaddy Australia. The old @afdbty Facebook page was created under licence through GoDaddy and the last post made was on 20 March 2019 and the account is still visible, but you cannot make a comment on the page as it is suspended. Why was it done this way? It may have been graphics design with the banner construct and then it went from there. Somebody out there may know different. The GoDaddy annual fee was not paid at some stage, two years in a row, so then GoDaddy suspended the Facebook account access; however, the Association was not made aware of this action taking place. When the Web Administrator started to make enquires online about getting the Facebook account back up and running via Facebook, before it was realised that it was licenced through GoDaddy, then all of a sudden, a link popped up informing that a third party just bought the licence for the Facebook page. Originally the annual fee through GoDaddy was \$36.00. However, the third party wanted \$150.00 for our Association to purchase its licence/naming rights back. I then tried to contacted Facebook, no reply and no replies since. GoDaddy will not take action to remove or permanently deactivate the account and then indicated that our Association would have to wait 12 months. Then stated that the third party will probably not pay the annual service fee renewal and the Facebook account should come back online as available. GoDaddy also stated that our Association would need to keep checking on the account to see when it comes back online/comes available. This understanding is complete 'hog wash' as every time the Facebook page account was checked the third party started to increase the cost of reactivation and purchase of ownership licence. The asking price is now \$1500.00. GoDaddy was informed of this, and they replied that they cannot and will not do anything about it until the third party stops paying the annual fee for the Facebook page because the third party currently have the rights to the Facebook page. But we, the Association, are moving on! As having been appointed as the Interim-Secretary, and the Management Committee had also previously appointed I as the Newsletter Editor, and Web Administrator I feel that I can bring to the table fresh motivation, experience and IT experience. My intent is to modernise the Association and drag it, be it kicking and shouting, into a new era with a fresh look and more importantly add an upgraded and responsive delivery of information. This starts with our new Facebook page @a.bty.association.inc .

From the Web Administrator/Newsletter Editor



From The Archives – Year 2002

Prelude. These next two articles are relevant to 'A' Battery's long history and have been picked out of an old 2002 Royal Australian Artillery Liaison Letter. These old articles remind us of 'A' Battery's rich and proud history, and reinvigorates with relevance to one's association with serving within and under the banner of the 'A'.

15 Pounder BL Gun

Used by 'A' Battery During the Boer War 'A' Battery, the oldest continuously serving permanent unit of the Australia Army traces its lineage back to 1 August 1871. In 1885 it formed part of the NSW Contingent to the Sudan where it received six 9-pounder Rifled Muzzle Loading (RML) guns from the British. These guns continued in use with the unit until 1897 when they were fired for the last time at a camp at Narrabeen, Sydney in June. Six 12-pounder Breech Loading (BL) had been ordered from England but had not been delivered. When General French, newly arrived Commandant NSW Military Forces, learnt of this and knowing that in the RA the 12-pounder had just been succeeded by the 15-pounder (a very similar gun, different only in its capacity to take the heavier shell, he was able to cancel the 12-pounder order and get the 15-pounders. These arrived in Sydney in July 1897 and came into service with 'A' Battery soon after. In December 1899, the battery departed for South Africa and with it went the six 15-pounder BL guns (serial numbers 786-791). In August 1901 the unit returned to Sydney and in November 1904 was presented with the King's Banner, in recognition of its service in the Boer War. When the new 18-pounder Quick Firing (QF) guns were introduced in 1906 there was a redistribution of guns among the Batteries of the recently formed Federal Military Force. 'A' battery as a permanent unit would have been a priority to receive the new guns and it would appear that it's 15-pounders were redistributed to a Militia battery in Tasmania. Sometime after the conclusion of World War 1 in 1918 these guns were given to local Councils for use as Memorial Guns. By 1980 only one of these guns was known to still exist. Situated at Ross in central Tasmania it was in need of urgent maintenance. The RAA Historical Society sought permission from the Ross Council to recover the gun for the National Artillery Museum. This was refused but did result in the Council restoring the gun, and maintaining it since. Then this year, Keith Glyde, a member of the RAA Historical Company informed us of another one of the guns. An approach to the Kentish Historical Society was made through Land Command Artillery, followed by a visit by the Master Gunner. The scene was set and following further negotiations agreement was obtained to exchange the gun. Work is now progressing on preparing the gun for exchange. Why had this gun gone unnoticed for so long? Originally it had formed part of the Memorial at Sheffield (near Launceston) but many years ago went missing. It is assumed the wheels had rotted away and the Council removed it. Then around 1995, whilst digging a hole at the local dump the operator uncovered the gun, which was recovered back to the Local Museum and restored. Considering its treatment, the gun and carriage are in good condition. Its original wheels are confined to history now, but this is a minor (but costly) consequence. Page 97 Royal Australian Artillery Liaison Letter, 2002 Although it would have been ideal to complete the swap in time for the centenary of the end of the Boer War, we are delighted to know that such a significant item has been added to our collection. The support of Land Command Artillery, Army History Unit, 23 Field Regt and the RAA Association Tasmania is appreciated in successfully bringing this result. The vigilance of Keith Glyde is applauded and gratefully acknowledged.

This article is courtesy of the 2002 Royal Australian Artillery Liaison Letter



This is the 15 Pounder BL Gun that was recovered in 1995. Photo courtesy of the 2002 Royal Australian Artillery Liaison Letter



A 15 Pounder BL Gun manned by members of 'A' Battery during the Boer War. Photo courtesy of the Australian War Memorial

Commemoration of the Centenary of the Anglo-Boer War by 2109824 SGT Dennis Theiss

Prelude: SGT Dennis Theiss from 'A' Field Battery visited South Africa as part of the Australian

Contingent that participated in the Commemoration of the Centenary of the Anglo-Boer War.

On the 27 May 2002 the contingent arrived at Johannesburg International Airport. We were met by the Second Secretary Australian High Commission and Lieutenant Colonel H. Pfeiffer SANDF (INT). The party then proceeded to the Hotel Villa Via, PRETORIA, where we were to be accommodated. Weapons and the banner box were secured within the Australian High Commission facility. Introductory briefs were conducted, followed by dinner. We then retired for evening. The 28 May 2002 consisted of a 1000 h visit to DENEL Industries at their subsidiary company, KENTRON, production plant. After an introductory brief, we proceeded on a tour of non-sensitive areas of the plant. After lunch the contingent moved to the outskirts of Pretoria where we commenced a guided tour of an historical fort complex followed by the Voortrekker Memorial. We returned to the motel and changed attire for a Bar-B-Que dinner held at the Army Reserve Artillery museum. The 29 May 2002 was devoted to a tour of the Pielensberg Wildlife Park. We were allowed a 30-minute stop for mementos at a roadside market on the return trip to Pretoria. On the 30 May 2002 we were able to organise an hour visit to one of the local shopping centres. The contingent then moved to Saxonwald, Johannesburg for parade rehearsals with the SANDF Presidential Guard and the British Highland Band. A tour of the War Museum, which is collocated with the Anglo-Boer War memorial site, completed the day's activities. The evening was to finish with a function at the SANDF HQ, in attendance where the DCA SANDF and Major General Leahy (DCA). Another significant event that took place on 31 May 2002 was the South African Postal Service launch of the commemorative issue of the Anglo-Boer War stamps. The venue for the launch and official reception was Melrose House, Johannesburg. Melrose House was used as Kitcheners HQ throughout the campaign. At the completion of ceremonies all members of the contingent were presented with a collection of commemorative stamps and medals. The contingent then moved to the site of the Diamond Hill Memorial. Later that evening, a few members from the contingent sampled dinner at a local pub. On 1 June 2002 at 1125h we moved to the Anglo-Boer War Memorial in preparation for the parade. The ADF banner party, with myself as left escort, led the parade into position. The parade was followed by a reception held at the War Memorial. We then returned to the motel, as the next morning would be an early start for the move to Natal. The morning of 2 June 2002 held a five-hour drive to the Battlefields Bed and Breakfast. Dropping our gear and heading straight out to tour the ISLANDUWANA battlefield. This was the area where the movie ZULU DAWN depicted the battle between Zulu and British forces. The tour guide, a Mr Peter Naish, gave an outstanding interpretation of events using his theatrical flair to excellent effect. The morning of 3 June 2002 was another early start for a tour of Rourke's Drift. This is the area depicted in the movie ZULU; however, the movie was filmed over 50km from this site. Mr Naish was our tour guide, and he was again outstanding. Time was now running short, and we still had a five-hour return trip to Johannesburg. The contingent arrived at Johannesburg International Airport where the Second Secretary Australian High Commission and Lieutenant Colonel H. Pfeiffer met us. Lieutenant Colonel Pfeiffer presented members with some small gifts on behalf of the SA.

This article is courtesy of the 2002 Royal Australian Artillery Liaison Letter and with approval from Mr Dennis Theiss.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Who cut the Don 10? If you would like to value add to The Road Runner National Newsletter in future newsletters, be it praise or controversial, then please send it in. Let it rip! Have your say as it is your newsletter.

Letters to the editor, send to a.bty.newsletter@australianartilleryassociation.com

Controversy Corner

‘A’ Under the Microscope

Fortune favours the brave, have your say!



‘A’ prelude to the controversy. The story of Australian Artillery enfoldes many histories of many organisations that ultimately came together to forge what is now the RAA. It cannot be forgotten that each Colony of Australia raised their own artillery forces for the protection of the vast proto-nation of Australia: and with the departure of the last British forces in 1870, the die was cast for each Colony to take the matter of defence of their coastline and their communities permanently into their own hands. This step sowed the need to prepare dedicated and technically professional Australian Artillery forces, which the Colonies would need to raise and train themselves.

01 August 1871, when the NSW Colonial Government funded and raised its first permanent battery, is therefore a special anniversary for every Australian, not just for Gunners; as it marks the date from when Australia's colonial governments made that permanent commitment to their own self-defence – one of the hallmarks of sovereignty and nationhood.

The other Colonies also raised permanent batteries to complement their existing volunteer and militia artilleries, as the demands for self-defence grew across Australia. Each Colony felt the cost of these technically complex investments - and with it, the realisation of the benefits of cooperation, economy of effort and concentration of force. This realisation in turn sparked motives for federating into a collective self-defence. That such motives for federation were strongest in the military strategic context is evidenced by the creation by Royal Assent of the Regiments of Royal Australian Artillery - binding the artilleries of Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales from July 1899 - a full eighteen months before the proclamation of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901.

In the years that followed, these gun regiments gradually combined with all other Australian artillery forces – volunteer and militia, garrison and field across all the fledgling States – steadily harnessing the intrinsic power of artillery on the battlefield, which is expressed by a uniting philosophy of rapidly combining the effects of many as one, through a single command and control. Over 150 years of distinguished service, this united force has evolved to become today's RAA.

Each year, 01 August unites all Regiments and Gunners, serving and former, across all States and Territories, as the date that captures and symbolises the beginnings of the Australian Artillery. This year, the RAA recognises all forms of former and current service to our community and the Nation by Australia's Gunners – Volunteer, Militia, Reserve, Permanent and Regular; at home, and overseas; defending assaults from the sea, in the sky, and on land; advising, defending, and supporting their comrades; and most importantly, always: accurate, responsive, dependable, and joint.

Article from the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company, Cutler Research Centre.

‘A’ under the microscope. The author of the following article was by the Chairman of the RAA Regimental History Committee, John Cox. **The article disputes the ‘A’ Battery birthday of 1871, stating evidence that it should be 22 August 1876.** This subject has raised its ugly head a number of times before. I am unsure what the long term ramifications of this tell-tail has led to, if any! I was not aware of this issue before, until I stumbled across it recently. No doubt other members maybe unaware this was disputed. As I understand it, that the 1 August 1871 will remain as ‘A’ Battery's birthdate. In the next issue of *The Road Runner* I will no doubt have further to add to this story. I also understand this ‘A’ Battery birthdate dispute was behind why “Est 1871” was not included on the new Bullion Banner and why it is not displayed on the current ‘A’ Battery plaque and signage, as it once was.

Australian Artillery - Celebrating 150 Years – 1 August 2021

The Australian Artillery 'Birthdate' – 1 August 1871



- Why 1 August 1871?
 - Our gunner history predates Australian Federation on 1 Jan 1901.
 - The defence of colonial ports was a priority from the outset.
 - Gunners manned coast artillery and provided mobile field artillery.
 - Great Britain withdrew garrison troops from the Colonies to save costs and force the Colonies to fund their own defences from the 1840's to the 1860's.
 - Colonies recognised their volunteer gunner units alone were not adequate.
 - Colonies funded and raised their own permanent artillery batteries from 1871.
 - On 1 August 1871, the NSW Colonial Secretary's Office proclaimed the raising of a Permanent Military Force that included one battery of artillery, to be called the 'New South Wales Artillery'.
- It is not known when and how all Australian gunners accepted a common national date of celebration:
 - Colonial pride became State pride after 1901; and not surprisingly States continued to celebrate their own adopted 'birthdates'.
 - At least NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia each celebrated important dates from a history that predated Federation; and some continue to this day.
 - Interstate rivalry played a major role in a lack of consensus for adoption of a common date, probably until after World War 2.
 - It is assessed that the Regiment's nationwide acceptance of 1 August 1871 could have occurred as late as the early 1960's.
 - Was it related to a submission leading to the 19 September 1962 renaming of the RAA to 'The Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery'?
- Possible dates of celebration for a symbolic 'birthdate' considered, but discounted probably included:
 - 14 July 1899 – Queen Victoria assented to the titles of the Permanent Artillery Forces of NSW, Victoria and Queensland being changed to Regiments of the Royal Australian Artillery.
 - 1 Jan 1901 - Federation
 - 1 March 1901 – Australian Army Birthday
 - 22 October 1903 – Assent of the first Australian Defence Act

'A' Battery's Birthday – 22 August 1876

- The lineage of 'A' Battery is traced back to the raising of a second battery of permanent artillery in NSW.
 - No. 2 Battery NSW Artillery was raised on 22 August 1876.
 - No. 2 Battery NSW Artillery was renamed 'A' Battery on 24 June 1893.
 - Because of the renaming, 'A' Battery is entitled to claim No 2 Battery's birthdate as its birthdate.
 - From 1876 to 2019 'A' Battery had many name changes.
- **'A' Battery's official birthday is 22 August 1876.**
- The original battery of the NSW Artillery was given the name No. 1 Battery 'NSW Artillery when No.2 Battery was raised.
- A further battery, No.3 Battery NSW Artillery was raised 13 June 1877.
- No. 1 and No. 3 Batteries NSW Artillery had no long-term successors due to subsequent organisational changes and disbandment.
- **It is accurate to state "A Battery perpetuates the history of the original permanent NSW Artillery"; but it is incorrect to assign a 1 August 1871 birthdate to 'A' Battery.**
- 'A' Battery is the longest continually serving permanent unit in the Australian Army.
 - Note: Some Reserve units can claim longer continuous service.

- 'A' Battery continues to be central to the history of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery, evoking long service while providing leading contributions to gunner esprit de corps.
- An article in the DRA Liaison Letter October 1962, *The History of 'A' Field Battery Royal Australian Artillery*, by WO2 L J Johnstone could be the source of long run misunderstanding, and the adoption of an incorrect birthdate for 'A' Battery.
- The Regiment corrected 'RAA Standing Orders' in 2014 when made aware of the correct information by the Regimental History Committee.

John Cox, Chairman, RAA Regimental History Committee, March 2020 – v3

Summary of Changes in Title for A Battery RAA 1876-2019 (by Keith Glyde)

22.08.1876 No 2 Battery, New South Wales Artillery

09.01.1891 Field Battery, New South Wales Artillery
 24.06.1893 A Battery, Brigade Division Field Artillery
 07.09.1899 A Battery, New South Wales Regiment of Royal Australian Artillery (Field)
 01.07.1902 A Battery, Royal Australian Artillery
 09.01.1903 A Instructional Cadre, Royal Australian Artillery
 01.12.1910 No 1 Battery, Australian Field Artillery (Permanent)
 25.04.1911 No 1 Battery, Royal Australian Field Artillery
 14.10.1920 1st Battery, Royal Australian Field Artillery
 01.07.1927 1st Field Battery, Royal Australian Artillery
 19.07.1930 1st Field Cadre, Royal Australian Artillery
 31.01.1936 1st Field Cadre, Royal Australian Artillery Regiment
 01.02.1939 A Field Battery
 27.02.1942 Depot Battery, Army School of Artillery (Field)
 29.05.1942 Depot Battery, Headquarters Allied Land Forces School of Artillery (Field, Medium & Survey)
 09.08.1943 2nd Australian Mountain Battery (Mechanised)
 05.11.1943 2nd Australian Mountain Battery (Mechanised) (Australian Imperial Force)
 22.10.1945 2nd Mountain Battery
 02.02.1946 A Field Battery, Royal Australian Artillery Regiment
 15.09.1949 A Field Battery, Royal Australian Artillery
 31.01.1955 100th (A) Field Battery, Royal Australian Artillery
 08.12.1958 A Field Battery, Royal Australian Artillery
 01.01.2011 A Battery, Royal Australian Artillery



EVOLUTION OF THE PERMANENT NSW ARTILLERY AND 'A' BATTERY

SELECT REFERENCES:

1 Aug 1871 Proclamation of the NSW Artillery (original Battery)
22 Aug 1876 Raising of No.2 Battery, NSW Artillery
 24 Jun 1893 Renaming of No. 2 Battery to 'A' Battery, NSW Regiment
 7 Sep 1899 Conferral of title 'A' Battery, NSW Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery (Field)
 1 Aug 1932 Celebration of 61st Anniversary

DISCLAIMER: This newsletter is produced for the membership of 'A' Field Battery Association Incorporated. Readers should not act, nor refrain from acting solely on the basis of information in this newsletter, on any matter. Neither the 'A' Field Battery Association Incorporated nor the Editor accepts any responsibility for actions taken by readers. Views expressed by the authors contained in the newsletter, are not necessarily the views of the Association.

Inclusion and Acculturation Go Hand-in-Hand

Could I? Would I? Should I? Those are three questions I consciously reorganised continually when I became aware that the 'A' Field Battery Association Incorporated had difficulty in attracting members, and current membership not stepping up into Management Committee (MC) positions. Consciously I felt that if I didn't step up, then who would? If I didn't then what would become of the Association in the near future. It appears that over the past number of years the Associations membership had decreased significantly, and new membership had almost been a near non-existent, if any a very slow trickle. This is a great concern to me and the MC.

Hence why the MC is proposing an Association "name change" to become inclusive and attractive to the current generation of Gunners and soldiers. The MC is looking at adopting new policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for Gunners and soldiers who have served and/or are serving under the banner of the 'A', that might otherwise be excluded or marginalised because of the "Field" component of the Associations current name. When you have been given the opportunity to serve under the 'A' frame then the state and action of including or of being included within the Association group and structure is a rite of passage to a distinct and exclusive culture of current and ex-military personnel. Acculturation is a process of social, psychological, and cultural change that stems from the balancing of two cultures while adapting to the prevailing culture of the society which the Association has to do to stay viable and true to attract and maintain its membership base. The Association needs to adopt, acquire, and adjust to the current cultural environment with expedience that is required to attract a younger membership base. The current older membership of the Association has to understand that they/we will not be around forever, and they/we need to understand the differing culture and then incorporate change to evolve into the new more prevalent culture by participating in aspects of the more prevalent culture. However, we still need to maintain and hold onto our original cultural values and traditions, that intertwine the best of both worlds. For the Association to stay alive, to flourish, and to expand we must embrace change and understand the effects of acculturation at multiple levels in both the devotee of the prevailing culture and those who are assimilating into the culture. To do this we as an association must be willing to change to be relevant to the current volume and range of subject matter and queries being addressed and tasks undertaken on a regular basis. A key role of the MC is to support and mentor those more junior and/or less experienced historians who are keen to capture the history and experiences of not just their time serving within and under the 'A' banner but also the experiences and history of others who have served under the 'A' frame. At present I believe the Association is in a rut of being traditionalistic and archconservative. As the Interim- Secretary my intent is not meant to be derisive, however; a simple "Name Change" is not going revolutionise the Association and its dwindling membership. It is only one small step of many that the Association needs to take to become visible and viable to the 'A' Veterans and the current serving personnel of 'A' Battery. The MC must take decisive action and embrace change with expedience if it is to survive. But on the other hand, if the younger members are not prepared to step up to the plate and become more involved with the running of the Association then the Association will eventually close its doors. *Fire Mission all available!*" *A deep and meaningful, from the Interim-Secretary/Editor*



Major Aaron Foster Paul Johnston Warrant Officer Class Two Kim Kimes
Battery Commander (BC) (Interim-Secretary) Battery Sergeant Major (BSM)



Photo courtesy of RSL QLD



MERCHANDISE PRICE LIST

'A' Field Battery Association Incorporated

*Note: All prices are for goods only. Postage will be extra and will vary depending on weight of order.

Please contact Robert (Dodger) Noonan by email: a.bty.president@australianartilleryassociation.com

Item	Price (Each)	Comments
Caps	\$15.00	
Car Windscreen Stickers	2 for \$6.00	
Badges, Plaque	\$25.00	
Plaques, Complete	\$40.00	
Books "Malayan Episode"	\$20.00	
Shirts, Polo (New Pattern)	\$35.00	Sizes S to XXXL, XL Back in Stock
Shirts, Polo (Old Pattern)	\$35.00	
DVD, "Malayan Episode"	\$10.00	
DVD, "The L5 Pack Howitzer Restoration"	\$10.00	
DVD, "Cinesound Newsreels, October 1958"	\$10.00	
DVD, "The Year of the Road Runner"	\$10.00	
DVD, "The Gun"	\$10.00	
Vietnam Veteran bumper sticker	\$3.00	
UCG bumper sticker	\$3.00	



2022 Committee Contacts

'A' Battery Association

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President - Robert (Dodger) Noonan - a.bty.president@australianartilleryassociation.com

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Committee Member – Don Green



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The best way to share your messages or photos is to contact the 'A' Field Battery Association Incorporated Web Administrator. Want to keep up with the latest, then put the following website address into your web browser favourites: <http://afdbty.australianartilleryassociation.com>

To join the Association '**MEMBERSHIP**':
https://www.afieldbattery.com/documents/membership_application.pdf

‘A’ Fd Bty Association Inc.

Preamble to Motion to Change the Association’s Name.

At the last Annual General Meeting on 11th September 2021, a motion was put to alter the name of the association to ‘A’ Bty Association Inc. The only change is to remove the “Field” component of the name. The motion was discussed, viewpoints were put both for and against the motion, and at length a vote was held. The motion was decided in the affirmative, that is, to change the association’s name according to the motion.

Subsequent investigation revealed that the QLD Department of Fair Trading have guidelines for such a name change, which we were unaware of at the time of the motion being put to the AGM. As a result, we can only claim that the vote held at the AGM was a “motion of intent” to change the name. The actual motion to change the name must be announced to the membership prior to a general meeting with enough time given for submissions to be made to the committee in writing.

The formal announcement of the Special General Meeting is on the next page with the details of how and when it is to be held. Attendance at this meeting by all members is encouraged wherever possible. If you are unable to attend via a Zoom app yourself, perhaps you know another member nearby who you could visit and have a local covid-safe gathering using their internet device, be it computer, laptop, notepad, smart phone etc. There is a free Zoom app for all of these devices which can be used to access this meeting. Bear in mind that all attendees should be within the camera’s view on their device if more than one person is attending at any one site. This is to facilitate the counting of hands when a vote is called for.

The reason for the name change is to more accurately reflect the current equipment of the Battery, both now and into the future. ‘A’ Bty has at various times in its past, been a coastal defence battery, a mountain battery, a light battery (mortars), a field battery (25 lbr and 105 mm), and currently 155 mm medium artillery battery. The only constant among all the changes is the name of ‘A’ Bty RAA. It is to this end that the name change is deemed to be appropriate, and to maintain our relevance to past and future ‘A’ Bty personnel regardless of the equipment they use at the time.

The three motions to be put to the membership are 1) to change the name by dropping the word “Field”, 2) to alter the constitution to reflect the name change, and 3) to seek exemption from using Incorporated or Inc in our name on non-essential documents.

The third motion put to the meeting for ratification is to seek exemption from the QLD Department of Fair Trading to not use the word Incorporated or Inc on other than essential documents. Passing of this motion will only mean we have permission from the membership to apply for such exemption. It is not automatically given and may be refused for any reason. If granted, it becomes optional to use Incorporated on our merchandise, etc.

The constitution change will only entail doing a global search to find every occurrence of the phrase “‘A’ Fd Bty” and replace it with “‘A’ Bty”. There will be no other changes to the constitution as a result of these three motions.

I would urge all members to attend the meeting and to vote in favour of all the motions.

Robert Noonan
President
‘A’ Fd Bty Association Inc.

‘A’ Fd Bty Association Inc.

Notice of Special General Meeting.

Notice is hereby given of the Special General Meeting of members of the association to vote on the following three motions:-

1. To change the name of the association from ‘A’ Field Battery Association Incorporated (‘A’ Fd Bty Association Inc.) to ‘A’ Battery Association Incorporated (‘A’ Bty Association Inc.)
2. To alter the association’s constitution to reflect the name change.
3. To give permission for the committee to seek exemption from using the word Incorporated or Inc on non-essential documents from the QLD Department of Fair Trading.

The reasons for the motions are laid out in the preamble on the previous page.

Arguments for and against any motion may be submitted in writing by any member to the secretary of the association for consideration and discussion at the meeting by the attendees. Submissions must be received by the secretary by close of business on Friday 18th March 2022. Members making such submissions are not compelled to attend if it is beyond their capability to do so, but attendance is encouraged. There is no provision for proxy voting. There will be no other business conducted at this meeting, and motions from any of the attendees will not be accepted at this meeting.

If the motions are passed, the committee will proceed with the regulatory activities to register the change of name with the QLD Department of Fair Trading and with the Heritage Bank for the association’s bank accounts. We will also apply for the stated exemption in non-essential documents.

The Special General Meeting will be held via Zoom conference on Saturday 26th March 2022 at 10.00 am EST (11 am EDST) and the expected duration of the meeting is approximately one hour although it may be extended if circumstances require it. The Zoom meeting details are as follows:-

When: Mar 26, 2022 10:00 AM Brisbane (11 AM Daylight Saving Time)

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tJYtcu-trzwrEt2tcDTT7vcYjOFCPiDJneei>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

The meeting will be opened 30 minutes prior to nominated start time to give members the chance to adjust their settings for the Zoom meeting. A brief transcript and the results of the Special General Meeting will be published in the April newsletter.

Robert Noonan
President
‘A’ Fd Bty Association Inc.