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12 Field Regiment (Vietnam) Association

INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 16 8th October 2013

1. Max Franklin's 60th Wedding Anniversary:

Member Max Franklin (102 Bty. 1968) has sent us this report on his 60th Wedding Anniversary. Sounds like a memorable event. Heartiest congratulations from us all to Max and Win.

"WIN & I now belong to the old farts club. We had a do at the BLUE FINS club last sat with 32 family and friends with good food and heaps of grog.

And to make our day Pat our Terry started enquires about 5 mths ago with our local member and we ended up with a card from the Queen and one from the GG and one from the x PM , and our local member. WIN was floating about 2 ft of the ground. and on the 30 nov we are off on a 7 day cruise .

So a good time was had by all. So ta ta for now qldmax."

2. Dan Cudmore's Experiences:

Member Lois Knox has drawn our attention to the attached magazine article about member Dan Cudmore which has some valuable health lessons for us all. Well done, Dan. You're an inspiration!!

"I have been chatting to Dan who is overseas tomorrow to run another marathon and do some cycling. He sent me an article about himself and how he has confronted serious health issues.

I suggested that I send to you as an article for the Regiment newsletter....it may stimulate someone to have a good health checkup. Kindest regards. Lois."

3. Change to the Committee:

Members are advised that Rick Cranna has resigned from the Committee due to his enormous work load, especially relating to his fine work for Legacy. Rick has been a terrific and valued contributor to the Committee and he will be greatly missed. We wish him well in continuing his charity work. Obviously he remains a member of the Association, and to our great relief is keen to continue his wonderful work as our Welfare Officer. Thanks for everything, Rick!

(Members should note that this creates another vacancy on the Committee, making four in total, so if any of you fancy being on the Committee, you are very welcome to nominate for consideration at the AGM in November.)

4. Cossie's Trip to Victoria:

Rob Costello has recently returned from a long and rewarding trip to Victoria in which he caught up with a number of local Association members. Here's his report and there are a couple of photos attached.

Good Day folks, Kathryn and I last week went on a trek to Victoria primarily to see old mates and pick up a new toy (lawnmower for myself. We had stops at Bight, Seymour, Apollo bay and Benalla. At Bright we had a couple of days with Pommie and Hennie Fisher. We then travelled to Seymour to have a look at progress on the Vietnam Memorial Walk (were our pavers are not put into place yet)and then on to Benalla where we had a few hours with Bruce (MyDog) and Helen Morris and then down the Great Ocean Road to Apollo Bay. After a couple of days we then went on to Geelong to pick up my new toy lawn mower, back to Bright and spent a few hours at their RSL with Pommie for a drink or two.

When we were in Bright last March for the opening of the Seymour walk we gave the Bright RSL a few trinkets for their display cabinet and a 102 Toucan for their wall, all are in place now and displayed within the few snaps that are attached. Hope you are all well!!!!

Regards, Cossie and Kathryn.

5. Issues with the Gold Card:

Member Dodger Noonan wants to draw our attention to the fact that there have been instances of medical institutions not recognizing the Gold Card. The TPI Association is interested in our feedback as per the following memo from them:

"In recent times there has been some reports of Specialists not accepting the Gold Card, in the past the TPI Federation has had an input into addressing this issue by providing information to DVA and Government. We need accurate details when this occurs to enable us to compile a submission to DVA/Government. If you are made aware of this could you please provide the following, the doctors name, the date it occurred, the town/city and the specialist area IE: vascular, orthopaedic etc and pass this information to me. This is an important matter and the sooner it is dealt with the better. Could you please send this on to as many veterans as possible. Cheers and thanks. Blue Ryan

6. Obit: Steve Blake:

Noted publisher, photographer, author and member of our Association, Steve Lewis, has submitted this tender obituary for his mate Steve Blake who died recently:

I was saddened by the not unexpected news of Steve's passing as Rob Woodforth had warned me it was imminent. I knew Steve fairly well as we were both reos and flew up and back together ... October 8 1968 and March 11 1969. Steve's airline ticket home is featured on the penultimate page of 'My Vietnam'.

It is hard to imagine how he ended his last days, riddled with cancer, for as a youth he was an absolute Adonis. Tall, tanned and cheery, he looked like he could win a rugby match single handedly and then go out and give Joe Frasier a run for his money over 10 rounds.

I took dozens of slides of him when we were on the wire together during Tet '69, mostly posed silhouette style stuff as the sun was setting. He was a great model.

I don't remember him spending a lot of time at The Dat as I think he was a sig. I know at times he was attached to some nearby US units (from some photos he gave me when I was compiling the book).

The last time I saw him was in 2001 when he lived on a houseboat moored in the Southport Yacht Club. I had lunch with Steve and Rob and subsequently he supplied several photos for me.

Vale Steve.

7. Malaria Treatment: Use of 12 Field Regiment in Trials:

President Flood has come across information regarding medical experiments for treating malaria that were conducted in Vietnam, and used members of 12 Field Regiment as guinea pigs. While it is too long ago for any of us to get too indignant about the whole thing, it still leaves a nasty taste that we were never asked permission or even advised about it..... (See Records attached to this Bulletin.)

Trev, this is worth distributing to our members as 102 & 104 were part of the trial (unknown by members). What I do recall from FSB Flinders is contracting malaria-like symptoms, as did several others, not serious enough according to the MO to be MEDEVAC.

Mission in Vietnam records that; "Flinders tested the battery's morale - sickness etc".

It is amazing what is stored in the grey matter that can be recalled with a suitable prompt.

Stay well Flood & Jude

8. Reminders:

- The erotic calendars featuring nude photos of Vietnam vets (yuck!!!) which were described last issue, are still available. Funds raised assist the Cockatoo (no pun intended....) Rise War Veterans Retreat. Contact www.menatarandpeace.com.au or Greg on 0409418332.
- The AGM and SGM on 12 November at Ingleburn RSL is fast approaching. At this late stage, we still do not have a definite quorum of attendees, so PLEASE make the effort to attend. We need you. Let Trev Bryant know if you are coming. Thanks.
- The 2014 Reunion is all locked in, but so far there have only been a few deposits received. Please make the commitment and let us have your deposits ASAP. Thank you.
- Merchandise: Another reminder from Quartermaster Lawrie Bird that the Association still has embroidered polo and chambray shirts available at good prices. He reminds us that they would be ideal to wear at the Reunion next year. So, if you're in the market for some quality Association-badged clothing or other memorabilia, please go to the website, see what's available and lodge your order, or alternatively you can order on-line at lawrence.bird@bigpond.com or by ringing him on (02) 4954 8248.
- We again apologise to members who receive their Information Bulletins via Australia Post that we can't include all the attached information like photographs and documents that we send to our email members. But a reminder that if you are particularly interested in any of the attachments referred to, please contact Trev Bryant and he will get them printed and post them to you.