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1st Battalion Battle Group Reunion .. Warning Order

The 48th Anniversary Reunion 2016 in Tweed Heads Gold Coast

The principal organiser is me (Pepe) and a small committee

Note these dates please

The dates are Wed 11 May to 12 May 2016

Twin Towns Club

Cnr Griffith Street and Wharf Street, Coolangatta, QLD 4225

Phone: 07 5536 2277 Email: www.twintowns.com.au

The venue for the M & G and the Dinner is in the Twin Towns Club.

I suggest you sign up for a temporary membership (it's for a week) when you first enter the Club or for the M & G so you are not delayed entry at the Dinner or anytime afterwards.

Meet and Greet Wednesday 11 May

5pm - 7pm. Look for the signs in the entrances & on 3rd floor.

The M&G is on the 3rd Floor. Parking is nearby & under the club in 2 areas.

Twin Towns is a very big Club with several dining options & bars. They have dancing opportunities & intra-day live shows which are usually very good on The Stage 7 days a week.

The reason we can't have Fri or Sat night is because of the Live shows they have there in the larger auditoriums. (There's a closed function on Fri night)

There is a Best of the BEE GEES show on 14 May Sat night at 8.30 that you might like.

Memorial Service & Dinner Thursday 12th May

The Memorial Service will be is just 100 metres West of the Club near the foreshore broad walk overlooking the small inlet off the Tweed River.

4.15pm Form up 100m East of the Club (towards the sea !!) on the foreshore.

4.30pm March Off to Vietnam Veterans Memorial for service.

4.45pm Service to commence

6pm Drinks prior to the Dinner which should commence at 6.30pm in the Twin Towns but in the top floor **Auditorium.**

Costs are \$85 Single and Couple are \$165 including a Raffle ticket.

Please note all the accommodation is very central to the Club and many are easy walking to get to. You can get other flat or apartment style accommodation details from the NSW Tweed Heads Tourism or on the Net through Trip Advisor, Booking.com, Hotels Combined & Expedia.

Those travelling by plane should look out for cheap flights into Coolangatta Airport and note that trains from Brisbane run right into the Gold Coast with the line ending at Varsity and then catch a bus to Tweed. Buses regularly run along the Gold Coast Highway from top to bottom & from the Airport & Railway stations. The Cooly airport is only 10 mins to Twin Towns Club with the bus from Varsity taking about 15-20 Mins.

Accommodation

All those in the attached list have been contacted and will do a 'discounted' price for us so refer to the "Coral Reunion" or "Battle of Coral Reunion". Remember they did this 6 mths ago.

We have arranged a 3 day deal with Mantra Twin Towns (formerly Outrigger) for \$159 per day for Twin, Q or K **with brekky** which is very good especially if you like a full breakfast for each included and just very a short walk to the Club to get it. Mantra is directly opposite across the road to Twin Towns Club.

The best way to use the interactive booking form & send to them via email to twin-towns.conf@Mantra.com.au or by faxing the form to us or posting it.

Guests are also welcome to call us on 1800 19 20 20 to make their booking.

They just need to **quote 'Coral Reunion' and the dates** to get the discounted rates.

You can also get other details from the **Tweed Tourism Centre Ph 07 5536 6737** re local aspects & activities. They do not do Accomodation bookings but will just obviously pass you the info.

Check out the deals on the Net BUT as always, make sure you know **all** the inclusions.

Other Activities on the Gold Coast

Twin Towns has the "Best of BEE GEES" Show 8.30 on Sat 14 May.

Book on line or phone 1800 014 014

If you like a bit of Australiana, then take a look at Australian Outback Spectacular

Or, Take look at the many art studios in or near the GC.

Or, even go see Sea World or Tamborine Mountain or Murwillumbah ...lots to see on the GC

Future Reunion Matters

Following my request for help to plan the Program through until 2018, at the Reunion just gone I'm pleased to say that Tony Scott has put his hand up for 2017 Reunion in Tassie but he said it could be more expensive than the last couple of years due to the suitable venue being more expensive. We'll make every effort to keep the costs down.

I am putting in a submission for some of the Anzac Commemorations funding for the coming Re-unions over 2016 & 2017. But knowing the issues we've had in the past..I won't hold my breath.

The 2018 Reunion 50th Reunion will be a really big show. It would be nice to share it with with 3 Bn who share the Lavarack lines with 1 Bn, the Arty, Truckers etc; & Engineers and Air-force all having a presence up there.

A couple of years ago, I had asked the 1Bn & 3 Bn to host our Fiftyth Reunion in Townsville in 2018. While they have indicated YES, it is subject to any deployment constraints and what Army wants or will support. DVA are also thinking about doing it in Canberra like in 2008 so it is not fixed at all yet.

I have someone helping me with this project so more on this later on. We will seek & expect some special funds from DVA to assist with this one being the 50th & the biggest battle of the Vietnam War.! Start saving for this one.

The Trip to Vietnam.

In addition, following a few requests from some in our group I have a plan for another trip for us back to Vietnam in late Sep 2018 & it will clash monetarily and personal time wise with the 50th Anniversary Reunion. However, despite that monetary conflict, the show at the last Reunion of over 40 hands in support of such a trip in 2018 has meant that the Vietnam Tour is now firmly on the agenda for 2018. So...I have commenced preparations and will have a draft tour itinerary and approximate dates ready for the 2016 Reunion.

I was trying to set it up so that there were a couple of options to choose from according to both the time you have and the budget but after a bit of a discussion with a few very keen to go, "we" have decided to settle on just one option. Option 1: 18-20 days including Saigon, Nui Dat, Vung Tau & Coral & the areas travelling Nth up to Hanoi including Ha Long Bay & Dien Bien Phu for around \$3500-\$4000pp. Individuals could make their own arrangements to add an extension into either Cambodia and/or Thailand or into China.

Air fares these days are best done under your own arrangements to arrive on or before the start day. Prices are simply an indicative guess at this stage as things will change both in the A \$ value, air fares and general cost rises in Vietnam. But rest assured I'll be looking to reduce these prices to ensure max attendee numbers being either 28 or 40 max so it'll be first in best dressed. I have set up a Vietnam Tour interest Registration for those that want to book a seat now. Just send me an email or letter.

Please don't phone me as I need something in writing to refer back on.

Airing of the Coral Documentary

Fox History Channel has the Doco and we expect it to be shown on 24 April or within a day of that. It will only be on the History Channel. Sorry but that is the commercial facts. I'll confirm at the Reunion and by email in the next Newsletter which day it will be actually be shown. You can get someone with Fox to record it for you.

Mail Outs - A Major Cost Consideration.

Since Australia Post has increased their mail costs to \$1 for general mail with a "regular" delivery (2 days longer than priority which is 1-4 days!) and a current mail out of around 450, you can see we have a funding problem with the current two mailouts and for those attending Reunions requiring about 200-300 Receipt letters.

So that is \$450 + \$450 + 200 = \$1100 just for the stamps! Plus the Newsletter printing which is around \$500 x 2 each year.

At this stage we can't get any "charity" discount so overall it is now an expensive process.

So...solutions time!!

1. We could only mail out once with the Warning Order to promote the next Reunion. Saves one mail out but would create a longer 'contact' gap which is likely to cause us to lose contact as people move into retirement places or back to family locations & forget to let us know. Don't want to lose contact so.... Not so good.,
2. We institute an Interactive Reunion Registration on email which allows members to fill out & email their Registration to Ray & Ray can email back the Receipt.

This year we have in fact instituted such a form which you can use right now. See Attached.

3. We encourage all our members to allow us to contact them **on the Net** by sending me their Email address.

Currently we have just short of 500 emailers but there are some of that group who do not want a regular email contact unless it is about the Reunion or similar. So to maximise the use of email contact, we (me) will have to set up TWO email lists for this to happen. One for regular contact & one for fairly infrequent & Newsletter emails (which has the potential extra problem of people changing email providers & not telling us so we lose connection). It is not as simple as it seems.

Any "left field" suggestions are most welcome ...email me please.

Reunion Registration and Raffle

The Reunion Registration Form is attached, please complete and forward sooner than later and Ray Curtis will send you the Receipt.

Note: Registrations close on 20 April

Again you will find *your Entry Ticket includes your \$5 entry into the Raffle.*

You can elect to buy more tickets (please do!). or simply Donate some \$s .

Dinner Entry Tickets are \$85 a Single and \$165 a Couple which includes the raffle tickets.

Your Registration will be acknowledged in Ray's Receipt with your Ticket Numbers & with your Raffle Ticket numbers going into the Raffle box as Registrations are confirmed.

The Battle of FSPB Coral Unit Citation for Gallantry UCG.

Pushed a long by some Reunion members but in particular from Alan (Jack) PARR (Mor Pl Base Plate Sig Op), I joined together with Jack to progress a Submission to have the Battle of

Coral formally recognised for the great battle that it was. I was joined by Neil Weeks & George Hulse (representing the “other” units and attachments).

In 2009 there seemed to be an opportunity to submit a proposal but again their “rules” about backdating awards applied. However, in more recent times we have seen a number of “back-dated” pre-1975 awards of Meritorious Service and gallantry ones and still newer ones where they do not only apply to individual units but to a 'war like' Battle Group (of many units & attachments) which would definitely be similar our TF Coral/Balmoral Battle Group. So the precedence has been set. Although 12 Fd Regt (Ian Ahearn & Co) did present a Unit Citation proposal in 2012 but just for 102 Bty and that was not accepted. That was then ...this is now.

So, here we go.

Jack & I were as one with driving & producing a **Unit Citation for Gallantry (UCG)** Submission that argues strongly for the recognition of this battle as the biggest, bloodiest, most costly & longest continuous all-out fight in the Vietnam War for Australians.

After many, many, many, many emails and phone calls and periodic meetings and much research and assistance from many people, **WE have finally produced the Submission for the UCG.** Jack Parr (Mortar Sig on first night) has been inspirational in his persistence and dedication to the task. We are all indebted to him.

I was pleased with the responses we got from some of the blokes & other units wishing to add something to the story. Not all inputs were able to be included otherwise we would have written a book and not a Submission but they did help reinforce what we had on record or thought. Some will believe they saw some aspects somewhat differently at the time & their view may well be true but can conflict with other views of the same incident which is not uncommon. So please accept that in the spirit intended we have done our best to be inclusive and as accurate as we could.. We had to keep focussed on the bigger battle picture.

Clearly we are proud of what we have finally produced and really hope that is was all worth our collective efforts to finally get it approved.

As you receive this, Defence will have received our Submission.

The next step is to complete our Nominal Rolls (mostly now done), in anticipation of success.

We'll keep you up to date at future Reunions & on the Net.

Wish us luck !!! Lets get it done this year ! But we know the Defence “system” will buck at this at first. So, we know it will take more time and more energy ..Watch this space !! Wait out !

Future Reunions.

We NEED to discuss what we will do after 2018?

Where & Whether we keep the **annual** Reunion convention.

I'll raise this at the next AGM in May 2016. Your thoughts could be sent to me.

Any offers to arrange future Reunions are very welcome.

Passing Parade VALE:

It's an obvious fact that we will all eventually fall off the twig at some time and we have lost a few more this year. I do this so you know who has passed on.

I've had confirmation of the following earlier Deceased Vets.

Bill Farquharson 102 Bty, Barry Hibbard, Eric Bishop 1 Armd LAD, Bob Acquire HQ Bty, andmore recently,

Ken Bott 11 Pl D Coy, Alan Good 102 Bty FO Sig C Coy, Warren J Miller, Rod Quarrel 1 Pl A Coy, and Ivan Everett 8 Pl C Coy,

Your Duty is done fellas... Rest in Peace.

and....

"If you realise each day is a gift, you may be near my age.

As I enjoy my twilight years, I am often struck by the inevitability that the party must end.

There will be a clear, cold morning when there isn't any "more."

No more hugs, no more special moments to celebrate together, no more phone calls just to chat. It seems to me that one of the important things to do before that morning comes, is to let every one of your family and friends know that you care for them."

by Clint Eastwood&... Me. !!

My Thanks

Again my thanks to **Ray Curtis** who helps me with the Reunion work & in particular the Registrations and minds the Reunion funds... he really does very good work and willingly which I really appreciate. Thanks Ray!!

Life is for living while we can, so...

Keep Smiling...have FUN... Good health... & ...keep in touch when you move ...

CheersGarry (Pepe) Prendergast *Together then ...together again*

.....

Some Jokes to brighten your day....

I haven't lost my mind or forgotten anything ...its in my 'Cloud' or on a hard disk somewhere !

.....
A German lorry driver in a pub in Newcastle gobbing off about how lazy the British are, he drives his load from Hamburg, goes through Holland, Belgium, up to Newcastle and back to Hamburg in two days.

This old Geordie man mutters... "Ay! Way back man... I used to pick up my load in Newcastle drop off in Hamburg and be back in Newcastle the same day."

The German trucker snorted and said... "Oh Yeah....what rig were you driving?"

The old fella replied... "A LANCASTER BOMBER !!!"

.....
Into a Belfast pub comes Paddy Murphy, looking like he'd just been run over by a train. His arm is in a sling, his nose is broken, his face is cut and bruised and he's walking with a limp

"What happened to you?" asks Sean, the bartender.

" Jamie O'Conner and me had a fight," says Paddy.

"That little shit, O'Conner," says Sean, "he couldn't do that to you. He must have had something in his hand."

"That he did," says Paddy, "a shovel is what he had, and a terrible lickin' he gave me with it."

" Well," says Sean, "you should have defended yourself, didn't you have something in your hand?"

"That I did," said Paddy. "Mrs. O'Conner's breast, and a thing of beauty it was, but useless in a fight."

Two guys in their mid-twenties while sitting at my bar last night.

One of the guys says to his buddy:

"Man you look tired."

His buddy says:

"Mate I'm exhausted. My girlfriend and I have sex all the time.

She's after me 3 and 4 times a day.

She wants sex before breakfast, sex before I go to work, when I come home she's tearing my shirt off as I come through the door.

She's got her hands down my pants after dinner.

She even joins me in the shower almost every night. I just don't know what to do."

I'm sitting a couple of stools down & overheard the conversation.

I looked over at the two young men and with the wisdom of my years & said,

"Marry her. That'll put a stop to all that shit !!"

.....

Shortly after British Airways flight had reached its cruising altitude, the Captain announced: Ladies and Gentlemen, this is Captain. Welcome to Flight 293, non-stop from London Heathrow to Toronto. The weather ahead is good, so we should have a smooth uneventful flight. So sit back, relax and..... OH, MY GOD !!!

Silence followed!

Some moments later the captain came back on the intercom.

'Ladies and gentlemen, I'm sorry if I scared you.

While I was talking to you, a flight attendant accidentally spilled a cup of hot coffee in my lap. You should see the front of my pants!'

One Irish passenger yelled out

You stupid bloody git ! You should see the back of mine!

.....
Accommodation for Twin Towns area in Tweed Heads

Note these are all serviced by the Twin Towns Courtesy & local bus service & use your Pension or Senior card discount.

Ask for Coral Reunion Discount (some won't) but ASK...some below are already discounted

Wharf St is the main road in from the Sth. If you want Apartments or other then use the Net or Tourist Centre to find them.

Close to Twin Towns Club & Mantra (very easy walking distance)

Coolangatta Sands Hostel (Across the road from T T Club) 2.0-3.0* 07 5536 7472 www.coolangattasandshostel.com.au Private rooms Q or Twin \$60 Q + 1 \$80 (Incl Cont Breaky)

Ocean Plaza Resort Apartments w Kitchen (5 min walk & on Cooly beach) 4*+ 07 5536 999
2 Br 2 bath 2 nights \$189 Q + 2, 3 Br 3 Bath \$295 2 nights Q + 4 Each reducing \$10/ni for longer stay
oceanbeachplazerresort.com.au

Tweed Ultima Holiday Apartments w kitchen (across the road from TT Club) 4* 07 5599 3500
www.tweedultima.com.au 1 Br \$\$165/n 2 Br 2 Bath Q + 2 \$175/n

(& very near the Tweed Heads Bowls Club & shopping centre)

Tweed Central Motel 91 Wharf St 3.5* 07 5536 6620 6 min walk

www.tweedcentralmotel.com.au Q \$99 to Q + 3 \$135 plus Breaky **extra**

Cooks Endeavour Motor In 26 Francis St 3.5 07 5536 5399 6 min walk www.cooksendeavourmotorinn.com Q \$105 - Q +3 \$145 Q + 4 \$160 **Full Breaky \$13**

Blue Pelican Motel 115 Wharf St 3.5* 07 5536 1777 10 min walk www.bluepelicanmotel.com.au \$119 Q to family twin at \$170 + **Breaky \$13-15**

Tweed Heads Vegas Motel 123 Wharf St 4*+ 07 5599 0399 www.tweedheadsvegasmotel.com.au Q \$130 up to \$145 delux with spa + **breaky extra \$13**

Comfort Inn Tweed Heads 129 Wharf St 3-4* 07 5599 4111 comfortinnth.com.au Q \$125 -\$145 **Breakfast \$12**

Tweed Harbour Motor Inn 135 Wharf St 3.5-4* 07 55366066 www.tweedharbourmotel.com.au Q \$120 - \$145 + **Breaky extra**

About 2 Km away from Twin Towns (10-15 min in car or in the local buses)

Also on the way into Tweed from the Sth. (old Pacific Hwy)

Arabella Motor Inn 9 Minjungbal Dr 3.5-4* 07 555524 3111 www.arabellamotorinn.com.au Q \$85 Q + 2 \$110 definite Discounts for extra length of stay

Tweed Waters Motel tweedwatersmotel.com.au 13 Minjungbal Dr 3.5-4* 07 5524 7367 Q \$95 Family Q + 2 \$150 may include Brekky depending on length of stay

The River Road Motel Q \$75 - \$80 15-19 Minjungbal Dr 3.5-4.0* 07 55243403

Sundowner Twin Towns Motel 21 Minjungbal Dr 3.5* www.twintownsmotel.com.au Q \$110-\$135

Calico Court Motel 29 Minjungbal Dr 3.5-4* www.calicocourtmotel.com.au Q \$110 - \$145

City Lights Motel 35 Minjungbal Dr 3.5+* www.citylightsmotel.com.au Q \$90 - \$100 - \$140 family 07 55243108

Caravan Parks

Closest to the furthest from Twin Towns. (There are 4 others but much much further out).

Kirra Caravan Park.

7-10 min drive Nth of Twin Towns. Local buses & GC Buses go nearby. Close to airport. Pet friendly. But ask about conditions

www.tchp.com.au 07 5667 2740 10 Charlotte St Coolangatta

Boyds Bay Caravan Park.

3 Dry Dock Rd. 12-15 mins drive along old Pacific Hwy or catch the Twin Towns Bus 12 mins Van Site \$41- \$45 on W/end. Lodges \$70. Villas 2Br \$144 or 4 day long stay rate \$\$280-\$340 www.tchp.com.au & look for it. Pet Friendly BUT ask first. Backs onto water.

Tweed Billabong Big 4 Park

07 5524 2444 www.tweedbillabong.com.au

5 mins further out along Dr Dock Rd but not Pet friendly. Van Site \$44 Cabins & Villas avail.

Colonial Tweed Holiday Park 07 5524 2999 www.colonialtweed.com.au Not pet friendly Van site \$35 - \$32 for 7 days Cabins available. Is across the road to the river.

And...there is the House Boat Hire option for something different. !!

Berger House Boats Ph 07 5524 3222 www.bergerhouseboats.com.au Boyds Bay House boats Ph 5599 1436 www.goldcoasthouseboats.com.au and ...There are a few others vendors

Car Hire. There are many many car hire options varying from \$27 to \$40 & up per day.

Airport & Railway Shuttle Service. 1300 655 655 www.gcshuttle.com.au

There is a Gold Coast Shuttle Bus Service (several) from Airport or from Varsity Railway Station (Bus 765) to your place or a central place near Twin Towns. Present your DVA Travel Card or Pension card or Seniors card for a discount or maybe travel free.

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Coral Reunion Registration Form

Please complete all details so we can **check our records** and produce new name tags for newcomers/lost tags.
All personal details will be treated confidentially.

PERSONAL DETAILS:

2016

Surname of Attendee:

Given Name:

Preferred name or nickname:

Partner's Name

Unit:

Sub-Unit:

Address:

State:

P/Code:

Mobile Phone:

E-mail:

1ST AND LAST NAME/S OF ACCOMPANYING PERSON/S:

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS:

My special dietary need is:

COST DETAILS: (Includes a Raffle Ticket)

Cost: \$85.00 single \$ 165.00 couple Other a head \$ - Donation (insert \$ Amount)

Insert Number

Single (enter number attending) \$ -

Couple (enter 1 for each couple) \$ -

Donation \$ - \$ -

Other Activity:

YES NO 0 Total \$ -

YES NO I will pay direct through Electronic Transfer to the "Coral Reunion Account"

St George BSB 112-808 A/c 002103134 (Coral Reunion). You must include your Name.

YES NO I will pay with a Cheque/Money Order made out to "Coral Reunion"

I include payment for my/our dinner registration and other activity.

The Payment Amount I'm sending/transferring TOTAL (Dinner and Other Activity): \$ -

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM TO:

Ray Curtis 7/9 Coral Drive Jerrabomberra NSW P/Code 2619

A receipt will be sent once money has been cleared into the "Coral Reunion Account".

If NOT recieved after 4 weeks please contact Ray Curtis.

Phone: 0457825290 Email: rsandray4@bigpond.com

RECEIPT AND REGISTRATION TICKETS AND RAFFLE NUMBERS

Dinner Registration Ticket Numbers:

Raffle Ticket Numbers:

Total Receipts: \$ -

