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## 12 Field Regiment (Vietnam) Association INFORMATION BULLETIN #13 - 15/06/13

### 1. A Message from President Flood (who is still on R & R around Australia):

*The Association can rightfully be proud at the manner in which we were represented at the IRAR Coral Reunion at Rockhampton and at the Coral Day at Ingleburn. On behalf of all members I thank those responsible for their efforts both prior and during those events.*

*Neil Mangels and John Beer have been very busy on our behalf organising/coordinating the 2014 reunion. Once Neil and John have finalised all of the finer details this information will be passed on to you all.*

*I must say that my trifecta for 2013 is looking good – NSW, Swans & Storm. I am not sure after the last AFL round if the Crows-supporting Secretary is now in debit at 48 Crownies or 24. Everyone stay well.*

### 2. New Members:

We're pleased to welcome Ross Kannar as a new Ordinary Member of the Association. Ross served with 104 Battery in Vietnam from May 1968 to May 1969, so many of you probably already know him.

### 3. Coral Day at Ingleburn RSL:

It was another great day to commemorate Coral at Ingleburn RSL on 16<sup>th</sup> May. Many thanks to those members who were able to attend and represent the fighting Artillery! The following is a brief report from our Treasurer John Beer, who is also Treasurer of the Ingleburn Sub Branch of the RSL:

*"Our Sub Branch's Coral/Balmoral service was a success with 250 attending which was 150 more than the previous year. The association had a number of representatives attending:*

*Cossie (who laid a wreath on behalf of the association); Blue Ericsson; Larry Darcy; Don Tait – (who presented the commemorative address which was very well received.); John Beer.*

### 4. The IRAR Coral Reunion at Rockhampton:

As expected, this event was a huge success. Those who attended (including many from our Association representing Arty) had a ball, and the whole event achieved its aim of spreading awareness of the Coral/Balmoral battles amongst the media and the general public. The following is a summary of reports from our member Charlie Bartkus, a resident of Rocky and member of the organising committee:

*The Memorial Service at the Cenotaph, Rockhampton Botanical Gardens, Saturday 25th May.*

*"It was a very moving ceremony where the KIA were given great honour and respect. Each one was named and some details given regarding age when killed, and their background when called up or enlisted. I was asked to read the poem "What my medals mean". I choked in a few places, and was told later it came across as quite appropriate.*

*It was a great service, with the focus being on the Veterans and no real time given to Pollies for their ramblings. Everyone has spoken very appreciatively of the Service.*

*The public had gathered at the cenotaph, waiting on the arrival of the Veterans. We had formed up some little way from the Cenotaph, marched up, in ranks to the 1 RAR band, separated at the top of a pathway and marched around in different direction to meet up again at the Cenotaph. We then stood somewhat at attention through the whole service. It was very moving.*

*(One very welcome attendee was a young man named Louis Magnausen,) school captain of The Cathedral College, Rockhampton. His father had contacted me saying his son wanted to lay a wreath as a mark of respect on behalf of the school. He asked us if that would be OK prior to asking his Principal. Of course we thought that was fine. After the service I gave him a DVD "They'll come looking for you" for the school and a copy of a brief rundown about Coral, as well as a pen with our Service medal ribbon colours, for himself."*

### Race Day.

*"The race sponsored by 12 Field Regiment (Vietnam) Association was won by No.2 Covert Charmour paying \$8 the win and \$3 the place. Second and third respectively were No.5 Maximum Command and No.3 Isis Devil.*

*The owners received our magnificent trophy and Cossie and I had great pleasure in pointing out how valuable it was. They also got the DVD and a brief account of the battle and its significance. From memory they had just recently bought the horse and were not yet registered as the owners. They were 4 young fellows from Muttaborra and they promised me that they would read the material and watch the DVD.*

*The race day was a magnificent success. About 180 of our people attended, and in the end, just raved about the experience, and the concept about doing something different at a reunion. We filled the grandstand bar area. Everyone had a great time. All comments were very positive. The Jockey Club management were very impressed with how we related to them and how we organised everything. They were also very good to us. The local racing people were absolutely blown away with what we did. They had never seen or experienced the effort put in for a mid-week provincial race day. No one ever expected to be presented with such magnificent trophies. We had trophies for every race, including winning owners, trainers, and jockeys, as well as DVDs for all three, although all three did not present after each race. The Local organising committee set out to arrange, not only a great reunion but a much better awareness of the Battle of Coral. We think we did alright. There was an article in the local press three Saturdays in a row, either about the battle or the Reunion. Newspaper, and TV journalists, have been given and shown great interest in the DVD and the history of the battle."*

### Reunion Dinner.

*"The reunion dinner was a great success. The 1 RAR Band was magnificent and they were honoured to be a part of our celebrations. Everyone had a magnificent time. Most comments were like the Sydney Olympics, "The Best Ever".*

*Sunday was a bus trip to Capricorn Coast. 3 bus loads I think. A great trip, beautiful weather, excellent scenery, including seeing an eagles nest on top of a light pole at Roslyn Bay.*

*Lunch was at Emu Park RSL. A great BBQ and musical entertainment by local artists. A feature was an art exhibition by local artist Ross Coulson. Ross was in 1RAR 1968 and passed away about 18 months ago. Also at Emu Park on that day was a display of hundreds of classic cars. (My dream is to now own a 1968 Mustang.)"*

### Feedback.

*Charlie also reports that since the event, they have received excellent feedback via emails, Facebook and post, from official attendees, members of the public, and local businesses.*

### Photographs.

*Attached to this Information Bulletin are several selected photographs, but there are heaps more on the Association website for those interested.*

## **5. Online Auction:**

The online auction to sell the magnificent framed photograph of an M2A2 in Vietnam was very successful and raised \$200 for Association funds. Congratulations to the successful bidder, member Ian (Cappers) Caporn from 104 Battery Vietnam 1971. And a big "thank-you" to member Ben Dwyer who donated the picture and also arranged transport up to Cappers in far-off Hammersley, WA.

## **6. Vale Brian Murtagh:**

Sadly I have to advise the death of our member Brian Murtagh (MID) who passed away on 25<sup>th</sup> May at the age of 79. Many of you will remember him for his role at Coral and as 2IC of the regiment. Brian lived at Browns Plains and is survived by his wife Betty, children and 8 grandchildren. RIP.

## **7. Missing mates:**

- A fellow Vet (Harry Crosby) from 104 Sig Squadron is trying to find an old mate (who may be deceased). The "missing" vet is John Roderick McDonell who initially was posted to 4 Field Regiment in November '67, and then was part of 12 Field Regt. in Vietnam from April to October '68. I can't place him in 102 battery, so it's probable he was in 104. Can any members help Harry? Please get back to me (Trev Bryant) if you know anything and I'll pass it on.
- A DVA Advocate and vet, is interested in establishing the cause of death for Roderick Thomas Ross Parker who served in Vietnam with A Battery from 28<sup>th</sup> January to 20<sup>th</sup> September, 1971. He died just one month after returning from Vietnam on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1971. If any members knew Rod, especially his cause of death, would they please get back to me ASAP.

## **8. Message from the Q Store (or is it the PX?):**

Our manager-of-merchandise Laurie Bird is keen to sell off some of his accumulated stocks of shirts and other knick knacks. He's usually as tight as the proverbial fish's orifice, but just this once he is prepared to cover the postage costs of all stuff sold during June. 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](mailto:lawrence.bird@bigpond.com) or by ringing him on (02) 4954 8248.