

GUNNERS NORTH (RAA ASSOCIATION NORTH QUEENSLAND)

GUNNER'S GOSSIP Mar 2009 NEWSLETTER



Best Regards to all Gunners

Gunners North 2009 Calendar

Updated Calendar:

DATE	EVENT	REMARKS
25 Apr 09	Anzac Day	0530hr - Dawn Service at Lavarack Barracks Golf Club. 1000hr – March on the Strand 1200hr – Lavarack Messes open
Aug 09	Gunner Dinner	Exact date and loc TBA soon

News from the Regiment

Since the last edition the 4 Fd Regt Op Herrick gunners attached to 29 Commando Regt have been involved in several engagements in Helmand Province, Afghanistan including a direct fire mission defending the Gun Line.





If anyone wishes to send any mail or morale parcels (up to 2kg) to the lads, the address is as follows:

8239078 SGT Simon Hastings or 8269855 WO2 Paul Boswell
AFPO 14
Op Slipper/Op Herrick
Australian Defence Force
NSW
2890

Note: Any parcels must have a dangerous goods declaration attached and must be presented in person to post offices.

Aussie lapel pins, Aussie stickers, (appropriate magazines), vegemite etc would be appreciated.



Back in Australia the Regiment finished 2008 with Ex Long Guns with 161 Fd Bty RNZA, 8/12 Mdm Regt and 1 Fd Regt. This culminated in a Gymkhana and an inter- Regiment gun race.....won by 4 Fd Regt.



Kiwi Gunners in action at High Range



COs 1 Fd, 4 Fd and 8/12 Mdm Regt



161 Bty pre race Haka



4 Fd Regt



161 Bty



161 First over the line, however 2nd on points

Chau Pha Lines currently look like a Fire Support Base, hence the relocation of ANZAC Day. The familiar OR's mess, MI Block and the gun bays (at last) have disappeared in the rebuild. For those who haven't visited Lavarack for a while the old SGT's mess is now the District Support Group's Business Centre and the old Officer's mess now belongs to Joint Movement Group.



Above : Paddy Durnford awards 4 Fd Regt Best Soldier 2008 prize to GNR John Anu.

Right: 4 Fd Regt's Best Junior Officer 2008, and Best Soldier 2008, John Anu



4th Field Regiment Open Day 2009

The Open Day was a fantastic day that was well attended by friends and family members of 4 Fd Regt. Rob Webber and I took our families along for the days activities.

We started the day "at the sharp end" meeting the FO party and having a look at all the amazing toys the FO party now has. Made me a bit envious, wish we had these toys 20 years ago.

Our next stop was at the BIR range. Here we had demonstrations of weapons, the Hamel Guns (6 rds FFE) and assorted other displays (including an simulated ground attack).

We had an "Iron Chef" competition to see who could make a 5 man rat pack edible. Some very interesting ideas and recipes came out of that!

These open days are a fantastic way of having the families of members involved, showing what is involved in being a soldier in 4 Fd Regt is all about. A fantastic time was had by all!

Rod (Scoop) Burgess



Former Bren gunners Rob and Rod coming to terms with the Minimi



NEVER TOO YOUNG ... Connor Clancy, 3, looks the part Photos: EVAN MORGAN

'Friendly fire' down at the Range

DEFENCE force families saw the awesome power of Australia's military at a 'friendly fire' day at High Range on Saturday.

The weapons were live when the Lavarack-based 4th Field Regiment demonstrated their artillery capability at the army training area off Herveys Range Rd.

Visitors took a hands-on approach to their short conscription and revelled in the chance to don camouflage paint and fire weapons.

Regiment members took part in a skirmish exercise against a simulated enemy attacking friendly forces as their families looked on.

Commanding officer of the 4th Field Regiment Lt-Col Andy Combes said the family day was also planned to boost the defence force welfare support network.

"Any support measure, contact or activity that enhances those networks in a bid to build mutual trust and respect between the regiment and members' families is crucial for an effective fighting force," he said.



Melissa Upton tries this one for size



Barbara Briskey and Gnr Clint Martin at High Range



Bdr Shane Groves with Tara Watters

Correspondence in

The following correspondence (hard copy/ email) has been received, much of it courtesy of Ken Borgess and Eldon Bryant. If you wish to view the newsletters mentioned please contact me and I can send/ email them you.

Tiger Rag
Ram Ramblings
The Artillery News (RAA Assn of Tasmania)
The RA Family newsletters Dec and Feb

From Mike Prowse

Hello Ken,

I write at this time in the hope that you can be of assistance to me.

Am a member of the RAA Association in South Australia, having been a member of 48 Bty & would like to make contact with former Regular component members who served with Battery.

Jeremy Palmer, Vic Shields, Paul McLean, Steve Cornish, Paddy Durnford Jnr,

Any help with my request would be greatly appreciated.

Regards,

Mike Prowse (Fossil)

Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA) March Newsletter

Some good articles in this issue. Reproduced below:

POLICY FOR THE TREATMENT OF MULTIPLE DISABILITIES UNDER THE MILITARY REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION SCHEME

Recently the High Court granted special leave for an applicant to appeal a 2008 Federal Court decision which had upheld Comcare's policy for the treatment of multiple disabilities under the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Scheme. Basically, the applicant injured first her left knee, then her right knee in work-related injuries. Each was assessed as a 10% disability but, because of the interpretation of the Act by Comcare, together the injuries are considered to produce the same level of disability to the same bodily system or function, so she was assessed as only 10% disabled.

In February 2008 the Association, in a response to the circulation of a draft of the 2nd edition of Comcare's *Permanent Impairment Guide* for comment, objected to that interpretation, which had been in use for several years. The draft Guide says: "Where two or more injuries give rise to the impairment of the **same** bodily system or function, it is necessary to determine the degree of impairment which results from each injury. These separate impairments **may not be combined**. However compensation is not payable in respect of impairment to a bodily system or function arising from subsequent injuries unless there is a 10% increase in the degree

of impairment of the bodily system of [sic] function (subsection 24(7) of the SRC Act).”
[NB: **Bold** type is as used in the Comcare draft guide.]

By granting leave to appeal, the High Court seems to have expressed interest in the matter *and* it

has not thrown out the case on legal grounds, so there seems to be an arguable case that the

Comcare interpretation may be wrong in law.

Coincidentally, the Association understands that the new edition of the *Comcare Permanent*

Impairment Guide has not yet been promulgated but notes that the High Court case may have

some influence on the next edition.

AMALGAMATION OF ALL THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND MILITARY SUPERANNUATION BOARDS

A response has been received from Senator Sherry to the Association’s letter opposing the amalgamation of all the public service and military superannuation boards. The Association opposed the amalgamation on the grounds that the expertise required by the military schemes, particularly death and disability aspects, is specialized.

Senator Sherry has advised that “ the board will have the requisite skills to govern in the best interests of all members. For example, the board will have the capacity to establish a policy

committee to consider specific military requirements, such as the disability and death benefits payable to military personnel.” This sounds like a separate board that isn’t called a board !

RESERVE PERSONNEL RETURNING FROM ACTIVE SERVICE

The Association is developing a short paper on the problems for reserve personnel of having to return almost immediately from active service to the incomprehension of their civilian workplaces and friends, and often without the psychological support provided by local ADF unit structures. The BBC has been reporting significant problems for UK reservists returning from active service in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Association will further consider this matter in the coming months.

SUPERANNUATION INDEXATION AND THE STIMULUS PACKAGE

Although the Association welcomes the inclusion of substantial funding for Defence housing in recent announcement of measures to stimulate the economy, we are disappointed that the Prime Minister did not take the opportunity to fix the long standing grievances of Defence Force personnel by eliminating the discounted indexing on ADF superannuation, punitive rules for repayment of lump sums and by extending the same tax treatment to them as it has to the rest of the community.

Readers are reminded that over the last ten years, parliamentarians’ superannuation and the age pension have increased by nearly double the indexation rate for ADF superannuation and this is viewed as a discriminatory measure by both serving and retired members of the ADF superannuation schemes. Fairness and equity maybe the trademark that the Federal Government wants to be known by, but current members of the Australian Defence Force superannuation schemes are still looking for it !

DFWA BLOG: TRANSPORT OF ADF MEMBERS TO AND FROM OPERATIONAL ZONES

A blog has been established on the DFWA website inviting comment on current issues. The Association has received a report from an ADF family member expressing concern about the reliability of chartered aircraft being used to transport ADF members to and from operational zones. The Association is investigating this matter and has been invited comment on the blog (www.dfwf.org.au/have_your_say).

Vale

Courtesy of Arthur Burke OAM:

Barry O'Neill

The sad passing of Gunner Air OP pilot Barry O'Neill follows. His RAA postings included:

1957-59 105 Fd Bty, 1 Fd Regt

1967-68 SORA 2 HQ RAA 3 Div

1970 2IC 8 Mdm Regt (including a period as administrative commander)

He had been ADC to the Governor General of Australia in 1960-61, was MA to the VCGS in 1972 and promoted lieutenant colonel in 1973 and resigned in 1980.

Barry was the IO on HQ AFV in 1970 and a member of AATTV in 1971.

From Cynthia Ponting:

Jim Ponting - BSM, HQ. Battery, 12 Field Regiment, Vietnam, 1971

It is with much sadness that I advise that Jim departed this life at 1700 hrs today [Tuesday 20th] for the 'great parade ground in the sky'. Jim put up a courageous fight over the past 8 weeks just as we would all have expected from him. Upon his diagnosis he said 'don't you fall apart on me' - a huge 'ask' but I hope I have fulfilled his expectations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your unwavering support during this time and in fact for the 22 years Jim and I were together, [we celebrated our 20th Wedding Anniversary last Wednesday 14th January].

As soon as funeral arrangements are finalised I will advise you.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could pass on this message for me.

Fondest regards to all - my everlasting thanks for your friendship

Cynthia

Other news

Operation CARE has recently been rolled out across the ADF. An excerpt of the release is below.

Operation CARE is funded and administered by the Returned Services League (RSL) and Service Clubs Association and demonstrates support for ADF members. This scheme has been underway in the Army since 2006 and is now available across the ADF.

3. Operation CARE is funded and administered by the Returned Services League (RSL) & Services Clubs Association and provides a benefit for ADF members wounded in action, and their families, by providing an appropriate holiday/respice period on the members' repatriation to Australia¹. Operation CARE specifically seeks to facilitate a member who has suffered physical wounds, as a consequence of direct conflict with an opposing force, to spend a quiet time of recuperation with his/her family to assist in the healing process and to give time for contemplation and adjustment for the future. The assistance provided to the ADF member and his/her family under this Scheme is considered an important adjunct to a member's health care and rehabilitation plan. The surviving spouse or partner, and their families, of members killed in action or as a result of enemy action, will also be considered for the scheme.

Veterans will find the article below interesting. For the full article click on the hyperlink.

Trauma risk for Australian soldiers

Julie-Anne Davies | *March 27, 2009*

Article from: [The Australian](#)

AUSTRALIAN troops suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder are being discharged back into civilian life with inadequate support, at the risk of further damage to their mental health.

And experts warn that a new generation of veterans with PTSD after service in the Middle East, Afghanistan, East Timor and Solomons Islands will emerge in the next five years with severe mental health disorders.

[Trauma risk for Australian soldiers | The Australian](#)

Attention all reservists:

The Deputy Chief of Army has issued a Directive (05-09) that all Army Reservists should read.

INTERIM ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR ARES MEMBERS INJURED DURING RESERVE SERVICE

1. The PACMAN (Vol 1, Chap 3, Div 1) specifies the circumstances in which members of the Reserve can be paid. It currently does not provide for payment of ARTS to ARes members who are injured or rendered ill while undertaking Reserve service and are not fit for duty.
2. ARes members in this circumstance are required to wait for acceptance of a compensation claim by Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) (and for compensation payments to commence), or rely on sick leave from their civilian employer for income.
3. AHQ and Personnel Policy Employment Conditions (PPEC) Branch are taking action to amend the PACMAN to make provision for continuation of pay to ARes members who are injured or become ill as a result of their ADF service. Work is also underway with DVA to streamline the ADF/DVA interface and to raise the priority of ARes claims. The review process and subsequent amendments to policy will take several months to complete.

More information is available in the Directive – available on the DRN.