



Royal Australian Navy Band Association Magazine

Christmas Edition 2018

www.ranbandassoc.net



One
Happy
Santa....
Merry Christmas

A Magazine for Association members and serving Band members of the RAN



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Your Executive and Committee

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President::

Ralph Daines

Vice President:

John Widdicombe

Secretary:

John Lennon

Treasurer:

Ralph Daines

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Errol Hatch, Robert Bedwell, Bill Farrell.

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QLD: John Lennon

SA: Doug Drysdale

TAS: David Hardstaff

WA: Bill Farrell

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Another year, another successful reunion and the last edition for 2018. It's been a interesting year in that we have maintained our numbers and have (touch wood) had the least number of members pass away compared to previous years. Why do I mention this, well the reunion brought home the fact that age and distance does not go together. Those in their senior years did a wonderful job of getting to the Tweed and enjoying the weekend and it will I'm sure be difficult for some of them to do the same in 2020 when we head to Launceston.

What that means is the younger brigade needs to step up and be part of these special events. They are not just put on for the benefit of a few, I'm sure those that attended the weekend for the first time went away with great memories and a determination to be at the next knowing well that it might be the last time that they will get the chance.

I would like to thank John, Lleywah and his family for putting so much into the weekend and his band of Queensland volunteers that made the weekend memorable. The venue was perfect and the weather was typically Queensland. The Veterans Band was a success and again Ralph, Cheryle, Robert Bedwell and the volunteers got us through rehearsals and the concert with a minimum of fuss and was a raging success at Currumbin RSL. More of this to follow in the following pages of the magazine.

The new committee members have been elected and as the months progress will get more involved with the operations of the association and instil a bit of new blood into the tea. All is well for another successful year and now we are back into our two year cycle of reunions look forward to 2020.

All the best for the festive season and I look forward to seeing, hearing and reporting to you in the new year.

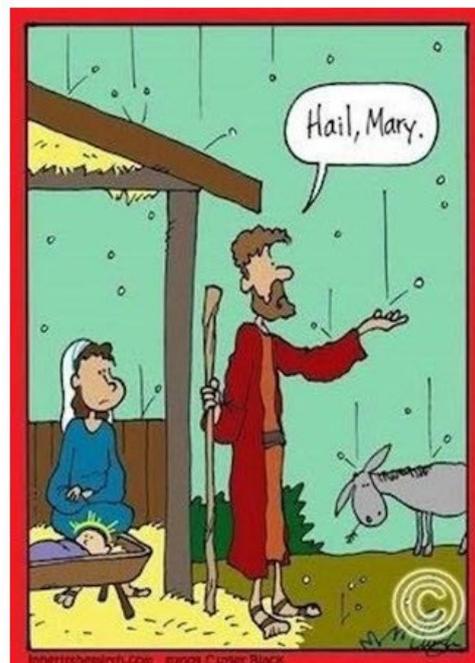
Regards,

Errol.

Front Cover

SANTA GETS SPOILT AGAIN

For some reason (could be the suit) Mal Codling gets to be our cover boy once again. This time he is surrounded by wife Gail and Sharon Hatch. The photo was taken at the Victorians Christmas lunch. More details inside.



Another reunion is now in the process of becoming a memory. Being intimately involved in the planning and organising of the reunion weekend in collaboration with the executive (Ralph & Errol) it has been a rewarding and satisfying experience. The success or otherwise of the reunion I will leave to other members to comment on. From my perspective I would not of changed a single thing we organised and the way we co ordinate our activities.

The Veterans Band Rehearsal, Meet & Greet, River Cruise, Veterans Band Concert, Brewery Tour, Formal Dinner & AGM all required a lot of co ordination and planning. The prime movers that made these functions work, were the members and partners that made the sandwiches, drove the buses and cars that moved people to and from events and activities, the raffle ticket sellers, the merchandise sellers, the band set up helpers (stands, staging, lending of amps, guitars etc etc) reception & welcoming people.

If I was to try and name all the people who helped make the weekend a success I can guarantee that I would forget someone. So to all those people can I pass on a big thank you and thanks to those members and partners who attended - without you we would not have had a reunion.

I am sure we all agree that the photographic memories and vale presentation by Errol was exceptional and was a highlight of the formal dinner. Can I also give a huge well done to our Army musician cousins who did a magnificent job at entertaining on Saturday night. It should not go without mentioning the huge effort put in by Ralph & Cheryle in organising & coordinating the Veterans band rehearsal & concert.

Coordinating an event like this, including venue selection, rehearsal venue, music distribution, advertisement, transport & meals, requires a huge amount of work. The evening concert was a success and I am sure that they would have had feelings of both satisfaction and relief. These events are always challenging trying to get the balance between content and rehearsal time available.

Over the course of the weekend I made it my task to

attend every activity. The tweed river cruise and Aardvark brewery tour were both well attended and I can't recall anyone being disappointed with these events.

I would like to say a special thanks to Guy Scruton who pulled out all stops to make the brewery tour a great success. The \$20 cost, I am sure you would have to agree, was amazing value for money. The ginger cider was a hit with many who attended including myself who has already put an order in for Christmas.

One of the successes of the reunion was the raffle draws on Thursday & Saturday night which was well supported. This allowed us to budget for the open bar on both nights. Thank you to all our corporate sponsors and in particular those members who made some very generous donations to the raffle prize pool. As we move towards Launceston in 2020 please give some thought to making a donation towards the raffle prize pool.

I am looking forward to attending the next reunion in Launceston and have already decided that it would either start or end with an extended stay in Tasmania. It would be great if we could get enough likeminded caravanning members to form a convoy and tour Tasmania together. I can only guess that the brass players would have to lead the convoy.

Until the next addition please be safe and above all keep well.

John Lennon Secretary

Secretary - RAN Band Association



As this year comes to a close, I would like to wish all members a very Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year and a very big thank you to the members of the Committee who put such a lot of effort into making this Association as successful as it is.

October saw the Association celebrate 25 years with a very successful reunion in Tweed Heads, it was great to see so many old faces after such a long time. The efforts of the organising committee were first class, especially John Lennon and Errol Hatch and Ken McCallum for giving his time to drive the Bus. John and Leywah Lennon plus family were fantastic with their assistance at both the Meet & Greet and Dinner, thank you all for a job well done.

The one sour note for the Reunion's Official Dinner, was for the first time in the Association's history that a RAN BAND based in that area, did not perform for our Members and Guests. RAN Band Brisbane was tasked to assist the Association but found more excuses than a politician to knock back our requests. This Association for many years have sponsored awards for the RAN Band Reservists but on this occasion could not find a trio to entertain us. The one bright note for the evening was that our friends at Army Band Brisbane stepped up at short notice and supplied a Brilliant Brass Quartet much to the crowd's delight. Thank you, Danny, Chris, Bill & Michael and Major Stephen Button & WO Rod Fry.

I would like to congratulate Brian Ellis and Robert Bedwell for being accepted as Life Members. It has been pointed out to me that we have had a rush of Life Members in the past few years, true, but as the Association had not had a

Constitution prior to 2013 and no criteria for Life Membership, but as we have all that now any Member that fits the criteria can be nominated and the due process will be followed, not everyone that has been nominated has been successful.

As part of the 25th Celebrations the Veterans Band performed to a packed house of mostly paying guests at Currumbin Palm Beach RSL on Friday 28th October and what a show, 52 old and bold muso's entertaining an audience of very appreciative people for more than 2 hours. "You are welcome here anytime you want", President of the club. We made a small profit of \$300 which is being donated to the Veterans Support Centre at Currumbin. A big thanks to Jim Stathis for his role helping us at the Club, Vic Knowles for arranging rehearsal space, the "Tea Ladies" who made many sandwiches at rehearsal under the command of my wife Cheryle and to all the performers who did us all proud.

As a result of the General Meeting discussions I have made an Organisational chart to show what each of our Committee members are responsible for and added to this are a number of volunteers who have made it clear to us that they would like to assist and have been added to Sub Committees. This is a result of a need to have more younger members in the wings ready to step up to the Committee and also more voices to be listened to in important areas, in the running the Association now and into the future.

Once again Merry Christmas and a safe holiday period.

Ralph Daines

RANBA | TREASURERS REPORT: Errol Hatch

This will be my last report as Treasurer for the association and I am happy to hand the reigns over to Ralph. It is a temporary position he has taken as we find a new member to take the position long term. The result from the reunion was excellent with members taking in as many of the functions as possible and putting their hands in their pockets at raffle time in the Friday and Saturday.

On general business we have had a good response to our subs payments for 2018/19 but there still a few to clear their account. Statements will be issued shortly so those that have not paid can bring themselves into current.

The following page gives you a statement of our finances

for the 2017/18 period and was tabled at the AGM at the reunion. It shows the crossover again of our reunions that have happened in the last two years whereby deposits have fallen in the financial year before the reunion. This should be less confusing when Launceston occurs as we will be in a true 2 year cycle.

It been a pleasure working as your treasurer and I hand over to Ralph knowing we have a vibrant membership and we continue to grow the Association.

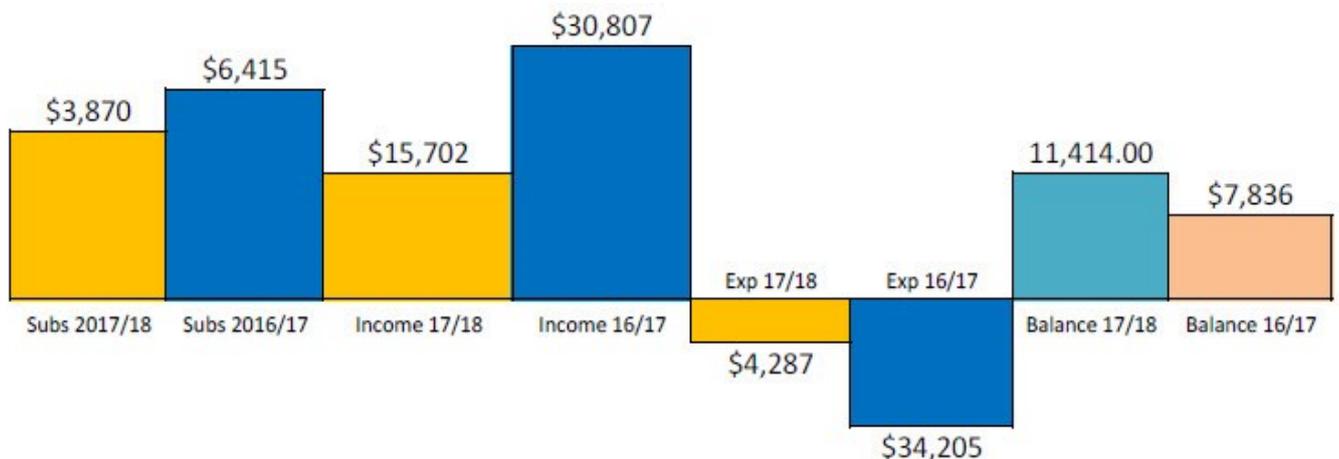
Regards,

Errol.



Royal Australian Navy Band Financials 2017/2018

Brought Forward:	ANZ	2017/2018	2016/2017
		\$7,836.79	\$11,235.08
<u>Income</u>			
Subscriptions		\$3,870.00	\$6,415.00
Donations		\$50.00	\$1,075.00
2017 Reunion		\$0.00	\$16,785.00
2018 Reunion		\$3,945.00	\$0.00
Museum Raffle		\$0.00	\$3,695.00
Merchandise		\$0.00	\$368.00
Vets Band (Inc Donations)		\$0.00	\$2,469.00
Sub Total		\$7,865.00	\$30,807.00
TOTAL		\$15,701.79	\$42,042.08
<u>Expenses</u>			
Bank Fees		\$0.00	\$0.00
Printing & Setup		\$1,619.10	\$1,790.93
Post		\$499.50	\$620.35
Stationery		\$0.00	\$527.00
Merch Purchases		\$0.00	\$80.00
Museum		\$660.92	\$7,545.62
2018 Reunion		\$1,300.00	\$0.00
2017 Reunion (All Functions)		\$0.00	\$19,732.39
2017 Museum Tour (Buses/Lunch)		\$0.00	\$2,300.00
Veterans Band		\$0.00	\$1,609.00
TOTAL		\$4,287.52	\$34,205.29
Closing Bank Balance		\$11,414.27	\$7,836.79
(Veterans Band Portion of Balance)		\$3,778.47	\$3,778.47
Balance as of 30/6/2018		\$11,414.27	\$7,836.79





All Ships Reunion, Ballina 2018

Another successful All Ships reunion was held in Ballina just after our reunion and again it was well attended by ex Bandies.

Some of the attendees pictured were, (from Left),

Gordon Crompton, Jim Hawkins, Dizzy Gillespie, Brian Ellis, Geoff Dawson, Ken McCallum and Blue McNally. I hear Shina Wright also attended the event.

RANBA | QUEENSLAND REPORT: John Lennon

We now have another Qld reunion put to bed and look forward to Tasmania hosting the next reunion in 2020. When organising the Qld reunion I was very mindful of the exceptional efforts put in by the Victorian members in getting behind Errol which contributing to the success of the Melbourne reunion. Can I say that I was not disappointed in the help offered and given by all our Qld members who contributed to the smooth running and success of our Qld reunion. I would also like to thank Leywah & our daughters Lisa and Melinda and our granddaughter Samantha for all their help over the reunion weekend. I must also acknowledge Clive Smith (NSW Member) and Ken McCallum, who with Leywah did an amazing job at selling raffle tickets. A shout out also for Ken McCallum for his bus driving.

On a sad note our Qld member Bevan Andrews wife Isabel

lost her battle with a number of health issues and passed away in late October. I am sure Bevan will be going through a difficult time and our thoughts and prayers go out to him.

We were all heartened by the attendance of Jim & Nancye McDonough at the Veterans Band Concert at Currumbin RSL. Jim & Nancye had to pull out of attending the reunion due to Jim having a fall and hospitalisation in addition to Nancye overcoming a illness. We wish them both a speedy and full recovery. Our thoughts are also with Rick Watson who is suffering from health issues as is Phil Martin, and hope that they both get on top of these issues.

John Lennon

QLD Representative

RANBA | JEREMY O'DRISCOLL By Bill Farrell

JEREMY O'DRISCOLL:

Members who were present at our last Annual General Meeting in Tweed Heads will remember the unanimous carrying of a motion to award Honorary Life Membership to Perth businessman, Jeremy O' Driscoll. Over the past 10 years, Jeremy has freely given thousands of dollars to our funds to assist in any way the Committee saw fit.

After the decision, President Ralph requested that I write an article about this benefactor for our magazine, which I agreed would be a sound and one which I would be very happy to undertake. Unfortunately, I have to first report that Jeremy passed away on Tuesday 20th of November after suffering a fall a fortnight earlier. What happened is a complete mystery, because he was found unconscious on the driveway of his daughter's home when she returned from work. He was taken to Royal Perth Hospital where he

was placed in an induced coma from which he did not recover.

Jeremy was the complete gentleman in all respects, very loyal, honest, down to earth whose handshake would seal any size commitment and above all, extremely generous. He was a Past President of the Swan Districts Rotary Club to which the writer also belongs. He was the owner of OZTRAC, a Perth based company which specialized in the selling of earthmoving and mining equipment which is used in The Pilbara and Kimberley regions of Northern Western Australia. This company was one of the premier sponsors of "Opera Under the Stars," an annual of the Perth concert calendar. In addition to OZTRAC, his business interests included West Kimberley Fuels, Clan Contracting and Broome Pipelines and he was willing and generous donor to the Broome and Derby communities.

RANBA | JEREMY O'DRISCOLL By Bill Farrell

It was mentioned that Jeremy was a very good pilot. During his time in The Kimberley, he was known to have had the Highway blocked off at both ends – north and south – with 2 of his work vehicles to enable him to land his plane on the Highway. Prior to that, he had his workers remove the posts from the sides of the road so that the wings would not be damaged. Four years ago he was also inducted into the Australian truckers Hall of Fame.

His generosity to our Association commenced in early 2008 prior to the Veterans Band first visit to Singapore and has burgeoned from that point. It came about over a cup of coffee in his office when he asked what was going on. I answered that we were going to Singapore and he queried whether he could be of any assistance. In what way was my reply and he said, financially. My answer was that every little bit helps. He immediately wrote a cheque for \$1,000.00.

An invitation had been extended to him to attend the Perth Reunion dinner, but he was overseas at the time. President Ralph's letter and the Life Membership pin were handed to his widow, Nanette, at the funeral which was

attended by well over 200 people. Although no-one in the Association, with the exception of Maxine and I, knew him, all members can be assured that he was well deserving of the Life Membership conferred on him. The sad part about it is that he never knew.

Bill Farrell, AM



RANBA | THE WESTERN FRONT: Bill Farrell

NEWS FROM THE WESTERN FRONT:

G'day from the Western Front where the Second Test against India is currently being played, giving you a good idea when this epistle is being written. Medical news first, and Fred Brewer has had surgery on a badly damaged right hand thus curtailing his driving ability. Second on the list is Bill Middleton who is back in the sick books. Both these members were unable to attend our Xmas Luncheon which was held on 12th. December.

At the time of writing, the correspondent's wife, Maxine, is recovering from a traumatic fall in the garden when she struck her forehead on a rock, causing a large cut and extreme bruising which has spread down her face. However, she has not lost her sense of humour. It has to be reported that the old man of the sea, Ted Lincoln, was present at the luncheon with wife Shirley who has been in the wars, injured attempting to cut a tree down.

Adventurous lot over here! Twenty members and wives attended the luncheon and cameraman Buck Buchanan did his best to capture all present and hopefully a montage of shots will be published along with this article to bring the smiling faces from the West over to our Eastern brothers. One of the main reasons for our luncheon is to present the

Farrell/Lincoln Trophy to the selected musician from the RAN Band WA.

Unfortunately, this year's recipient was at work thus being unable to attend so the presentation was carried out by CPO Natalie Erskine at their rehearsal. The winner was AB Carl Harper, an extremely talented trombonist and arranger who tries for excellence in every bar he plays and is a great help to other members of the Band in many ways.

A testimonial concerning his ability was written to be presented to him along with the Trophy. Western Australian members who attended the Tweed Heads Reunion all agreed that it was an excellent event and they are already talking about the next on in Launceston.

Greetings are sent from The Wild West to all members wishing you a happy, holy and above all a safe Festive Season with the hope that 2019 brings peace, joy and happiness to everyone.

Bill Farrell.

From the 'POWER' of the crow!

As the crow flies or as we are commonly known here in Adelaide South Australia as the 'Crow-eaters'. For those who have not made a visit to Adelaide recently should consider packing their bags and come to South Aussie for a holiday. Adelaide is changing rapidly, especially with the new river bank development which will be as good as, if not better than Melbourne and Brisbane's dated river bank precinct.

Adelaide's southern side with the Festival Centre, Convention Centre, restaurants, bars and northern side with the magnificent Adelaide Oval is a site and place not to be missed. South Australia has always been a destination to explore being surrounded by some of the best wine regions in the world, glorious beaches and fishing spots with the added magnificent outback destinations if you head west or north to the Flinders Ranges.

Gold Coast Reunion

Once again a tremendous amount of work and organizing had gone into the planning of the recent RANBA reunion held on the Gold Coast. The thankless work of endless hours of voluntary time put in by John Lennon, Ralph Daines and Errol Hatch was enormous.

To me and I'm sure others were very disappointed with the late changes to the reunion plans which had to be changed and organized around the Veteran Band commitments. This includes rehearsal dates, times, venue booking and set-up requirements. When late changes occur, travel arrangements and commitments are in disarray and that can be the same for a band rehearsal -sound check and performance.

Veterans Band

Yes we are all getting older, some of us are still playing regularly and others play their instruments when ever or never. However, it is always great to get together and play our instruments like the old days and even playing the 'SOS'. At times we sound very good and at times we sound a bit ordinary, to be 'kind'.

We are very fortunate to have ex members of the Australian Army Band and our honorary association members to

help out. A band is always made up of individuals that come together as ONE. Some have egos and most of us just enjoy playing our instruments as good as we can. If one is not a team player then he or she will be on the outer.

Committee

Being on a committee has no benefits except you can speak up and have a say on issues and planning and hopefully we make the right decisions on behalf of all. However you can only please some of the people some of the time and not 'all of the people all of the time'. The key to a good committee and management is good planning and good communication.

At the end of the day a decision must be made, it may be unpopular, however if there has been good communication and you have had the opportunity to have say and put your opinion forward, at least you have been heard and you accept the umpires decision.

Future Reunions

It's important to keep in touch and catch up with old mates and friends and I mean real friends who would do anything for each other as we are like family. Knowing how members are, their health and family issues are very important to us all. Maybe the way to go is to send out a survey a review to see what we thought and think about reunions and the format.

Everything from accommodation, meals, the band, the meet and greet, the main dinner night, etc, etc. Should the meet and greet just be on the same night, like a wedding, before you move into the dinner?

Could the meet and greet be, roll up any time of the day for cake, sandwiches and coffee? There are many possibilities, but one thing is for sure we should be thinking about our health which includes what we eat and drink.

That's my say,

Merry Christmas & Go POWER.

Doug Drysdale

(Well Said Doug -Editor)



The scenic Torrens River looking into the ever growing Adelaide skyline.

Greetings from Tasmania, Let me start this missive by congratulating John Lennon and his team for a great reunion on the Gold Coast. BZ John.

Since the reunion time has been taken up down here with the Centenary of Anzac commitments, with concerts held in both the north and the South of the state. There was such a big show in Longford that most of the musicians from Launceston were involved leaving no bugler for the main service in Launceston. After being contacted by Brian, I drove up to do it and this places us in great stead with the Launceston RSL Club as they were not happy at the prospect of no Bugler.

Consequently we expect great support from them during our reunion down here in Tassie. Speaking of which, things are in the very early stages at present, Brian has to meet with events Tasmania in the new year to check our proposed times don't clash with other events programmed.

If more than one major event occur at the same time it can be difficult to arrange accommodation and venues for our events and organise discounts. The proposed itinerary, and I stress this is very much a proposal in its infancy is;

The proposal is that the re-union would be held are from the 15th to the 18th of October, 2020.

Thurs 15th : Rehearsal, but only if enough members/friends can form a band that would do us justice in the public eye and wanting to perform a concert during the weekend at a venue tba. Several Rehearsal venues are available and there are various venues for a concert to be held in the Launceston area. Depending on weather, two thoughts come to mind, the rotunda in the City Park or maybe at a Vineyard. There are plenty of indoor venues.

Friday 16th: Meet and Greet from 6pm at the Launceston RSL. This will be subject to the RSL renovations being completed. Again, other venues are available if needed.

Saturday 17th: Trip organised for those who would like to see a bit of Launceston and its surrounds/ or a Tamar river trip. Saturday afternoon concert, venue to be confirmed/ announced. Saturday evening, Formal Dinner. Venue to be confirmed/announced.

Sunday 18th: BBQ at possibly the RSL and also the AGM again venue to be confirmed/announced.

It is no good getting prices this early for accommodation in Launceston, but we will be seeking deals with various accommodation venues, including the Casino and The International Hotel. We will also be trying to give you as much info on realistic prices at several accommodation venues.

There are magnificent sightseeing places around our beautiful city, such as the Cataract Gorge, our beautiful City Park and above all our magnificent old heritage buildings, plus many other interesting sites and ladies, there is plenty of good shopping.

As yet it is very early stages, but the wheels are turning. Each member/friend of the Association will be sent plenty of information in plenty of time to organise your accommodation and airfares/ferry travel. In the next few months as venues and times are sorted out, you will all be informed. If people are thinking of making it a holiday, rental cars and rental campervans are available for those who are interested. There are caravan parks with cabins available in and around Launceston, with some towns offering free caravanning sites on their show grounds. There is also a Caravan park very near to the RSL to save on Taxi fares etc.

These dates are not confirmed as yet, as we do not want to compete with a large event at the same time, which would restrict availability and also influence prices. (I did not say that). We Taswegians would never try to squeeze an extra dollar out of you Big Island Simple Folk. (Brian's words not mine).

You will all be kept in the loop as quickly as info comes to hand. That is very important for those who wish to bring their own caravans and campers over on with the TT Line.

Brian and I are in discussions with companies down here to try and arrange sponsorship where appropriate and hopefully this will reduce costs.

We already have been given support by the magazine Tasmania 40° South who can offer advertising space to venues etc. as an offset for sponsorship so that is a great start. This company will also offer a deal to any member who wants to subscribe to the magazine, five issues for the cost of four so if any member wishes to start their trip to Tassie early contact accounts@fortysouth.com.au to arrange this deal.

Hope to see you in Tassie in 2020.

Havachat



The museum finished the year on a high with the visit of the Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Michael Noonan. He unveiled an honour board to the Originators of the Museum and volunteers that have served over the many years of its life.



It was an honour to be present as the C.N. takes a keen interest in the museum and especially now that the Cerberus museum is one of the few remaining that is open to the public.



Receiving an award for distinguished service was John de Douglas and this was also presented by the C.N.

With the retirement of WO Marty Grogan (who also received a distinguished service award) and LTCDR Jan Gallagher we are a ship without a leader until our new appointment starts in the New year. He is CPO Brian Gordon and is well known to the museum staff and will pick up the reigns where Marty left off. Jan and Marty will return as volunteers in 2019 adding to an already wealth of experience.

The year has brought more visitors to the museum than past even though the access is a nightmare to organise. Especially if groups arrive un-announced or arrive individually as one large group did. The convoy and time spent at the museum was restricted by the time it took to get them in. But that's how it works now days.

So What's ahead in 2019.

We will start to upgrade our display as it has been 2 years and a fresh look is always of interest to those that are frequent visitors. I will be coordinating with the Band Master at the cinema and moving some of the display to there making way for our next display which will be history of major events.

More on this in the new year.

Merry Christmas from all at the Museum.



The Mexicans Christmas Lunch

The last calendar event for the Victorian membership was held at the Seaford RSL on Sunday the 2nd of December. With such short notice (after the successful reunion) attendance was a little down but those that came enjoyed the afternoon. Again there were some familiar and some new faces in the group amongst them Ken Ekin (1970's), Brother of Terry who was over from Adelaide after the sad occasion of the passing of their brother Barry. It was good to catch up with him after 50 years since we last met and he mentioned about his next venture to Malaysia to live.

As stated, numbers were down but the apologies were for good reasons, family functions, cruises and a few not in good health.

The Nurses were on a cruise, Bill & Carmel Post had a bout of flue, Doug Antonoff, Steve Cottier, John Karr, Peter Blackwell, Yogi Soutar, Nellie Gwynne, Les Kent, and Dale Granger just to note a few had other engagements but sent their best wishes for the festive season.

We brought those that could not attend the reunion up to date with what happened and who attended and the afternoon as always went quickly before goodbyes and Christmas well wishes were conveyed as we all departed for the last time in 2018.

Thanks to Terry and Lorraine for looking after the Victorians interests in 2018 and we look forward to a busy calendar in 2019.

Errol.



Reunion Tweed Heads 2018

The thought of getting out of Melbourne for a few days couldn't come soon enough and to head to the sunny Tweed even better. The reunion actually crept up very quickly and the organizing committee headed by John Lennon had a few concerns regarding numbers a couple of weeks out. But as usual the last minute booking gave us good numbers for what was to be a very successful and enjoyable weekend.

Day 1 Thursday the 25th October

Starting out a little different to past reunions we had our first encounter at the Mudgeeraba Music Centre where the Veterans Band had their first rehearsal. It was like a mini meet and greet and the facilities were outstanding and those of us that have lesser quality rehearsal studios jealous. It didn't take long before banter crept in and the Trumpet section exerted its presence. With plenty to get through we were under way by 10am. As always it was loud but acceptable as a first blow with such a large band. The program wasn't overwhelming and followed a popular style theme that I'm sure our audience would appreciate

The technical difficulty level made it accessible to all players of all ages in the band so Ralph did a good job of selection. Apart from the Aircon turning off every now and again we got through our first session.

While we were making a noise an army of volunteers were making lunch. Along with us came the wives and partners and their creativeness gave an assortment of sandwiches the Gold Coast Hilton would be proud to serve.

The ladies even followed up with making sure we ate them all which sort of told me that if they were that good at selling raffle tickets we would do very well at the functions.

We completed the rehearsal at about 3pm with a couple of charts not looked through but we were assured we would get to see them before the gig. With the kitchen and band room cleaned we all departed back to the Twin Towns or wherever to get ready for our first official function the Meet and Greet.

Meet & Greet

The Visions Room at the Twin Towns was the venue for the Meet & Greet and the guests started flowing in from just after 7pm. Family faces from the days rehearsal were there in numbers but quite a few that weren't in the band met for the first time at the Meet and Greet. The bar was open and the finger food came out so it was quite a buzzing room with pockets of members enjoying each others company. The raffle sellers were out in force and doing what they do best, getting those wallets to open up. The selection of prizes was out-





standing. From gift vouchers to a Coffee machine, Trumpet to Gift trays, John and Ralph made sure there was plenty to select from.

Short introductory and thank you speeches by Ralph and John to the volunteers got us into the raffle draw. As I was nominated to call the draw while John got members to pull the stubs out of the box little did I know what was about to happen.

The first number came out and it took a few seconds before it was acknowledged by a member. The second stub was called and there was a shout from the rear of the room and Sharon Hatch appear all bubbly (because she doesn't win many raffles and she had had a few Bubbly's). She disappeared to the raffle table and selected something. Next stub was drawn and there was that shout again, who would return but Sharon Hatch (didn't even get a chance to have a sip of bubbly). Off she went to the table and selected another prize.

Apologies from me as I did not fix it I'm only calling the numbers remember. With a total of 13 prizes to be drawn we moved on. Good to see the prizes were going to a variety of members, but wait at the 8th stub call (or thereabouts) was that familiar shout from the back it was Sharon Hatch again. Well this was getting a bit embarrassing., nothing I could do John & Ken were pulling the stubs.

Well you wouldn't believe it, the 10th draw got, you guessed it, a shout from the back, it was that bloody Sharon Hatch again. There were a group of Queenslanders getting a bit ropeable as none of the colours let alone their numbers were coming up while that Victorian was clearing the table. Off she went to the table for another selection.

Well the remainder of the prizes didn't go to Victoria thank heavens and the crowd settled down. After finishing the draw I went back to our little Bar table to find all the largest prizes that was on the table had been selected. Fine, but we flew up from Melbourne and a Coffee Machine, Trumpet, Large Masterfoods selection tray and a very treasured Navy counterpane was not going to fit into our baggage and secondly we weren't going home , we were flying straight to Japan from the reunion. We compromised and gave back the Coffee Machine for another go at the raffle, passed on the Masterfood tray to Dizzy to use on their continued trip around Australia and the counterpane was going to the museum as we don't have a collection of them.

The Trumpet, it became carry on baggage.....

The Meet and Greet concluded and members made there way into the club where they continued into the early hours of the morning listening to the live band or just enjoying a drink around the bar.

Day 2 Friday the 26th

Friday started with a pleasant tour of the Tweed River and the turnout was excellent. The weather was perfect and the breeze offered that relief for those that sat up top of the boat. We meandered up the Tweed with a morning tea and a guided tour of all the interesting points along the way. We arrived at Tumbulgum and disembarked straight into the historic pub where staff were waiting for the onslaught (obviously it is a well rehearsed event) While we were enjoying an ale or two the captain on board had started up the BBQ getting ready for our return trip and lunch.

Underway again the members enjoyed a welcomed lunch and the return to Wharf Street was a relaxing hour away. Once on terra firma our mission was to get back to the hotels and prepare for the evenings concert at the Currumbin RSL.

Ken McCallum was well into his Bus shuttle by 5pm and there were only stragglers left to bring from Twin Towns to the RSL so nobody was left behind. The room for the concert was not what I imagined, it was a long narrow room and the band took a fair amount of space but they were confident that the 200 or so guests would fit in. Sound check happened and yes we didn't get to run through the couple of pieces we missed at rehearsal, but hey, we are professional musicians, what's a bit of sight-reading.

The concert went off without a hitch (none that we are going to tell you) and the audience enjoyed it immensely. The RSL welcomed us back at any time in the future. It was also great to see Jim and Nanyce McDonough at the concert as they had to withdraw from the reunion due to health issues. With the concert out the way members made there way back to their accommodation and ventured off to the Club or other venues in the Tweed.

Day 3 Saturday the 27th

An important event on the reunion calendar was the visit to Guy Scruton's Aardvark and Arrow Brewery. This was well attended and members had a great time sampling the beers and Ales and then topping it off with a fantastic spit roast lunch.

A big thanks to Guy for putting it on and I'm sure that there were plenty of memories taken from the day and that the taste buds were tingling. There was plenty of mention of the outstanding flavours available as I brought the last remaining members back to Twin Towns.



Association Dinner

We were back in the Visions room for our Association dinner and the formalities commenced with an excellent entrée and the bar opening once more. The setting was highlighted with images from members being displayed on the big screen and a wonderful Brass quartet supplied by the Army Band, yes the Army Band. After a main course we acknowledged those that have left us with a visual display of their names followed by the Last Post. Speeches by our President followed and he had the privilege to welcome into Life membership of the Association, Brian Ellis and Robert Bedwell. Their endless work to the association over its many years was acknowledged and received a warm applause by the members and partners.

The quintet then took us through a bit of memory lane material before the raffle draw commenced. The prizes again were outstanding especially the hand made Rocking horse from Trevor Williamson. There were also prize donations from members and they were acknowledged on the night. The draw went off without a hitch, meaning Sharon Hatch didn't win a damn thing even though we bought more tickets than Thursday night due to the hard sell by Clive Smith then Ken McCallum.

I think even the audience were relieved especially those Queenslanders as they did pick up a prize or two. The evening finished as quick as it started and as this was our last official social gathering we said our goodbyes to those that were leaving before our 10am AGM

Day 4 Sunday the 28th

Our AGM commenced at 10am and we had a good turn out of members. AGM's are not what they use to be where interjections objections and ideas from the floor flew thick and fast. There is definitely a bit more decorum in the event. Important issues were covered though, be the next reunion in Launceston and the need to review the cost to members to attend and style of events that are put on. The ratio of members attending is dwindling and it is the 70's generation that are becoming more dominant in the attendance stakes. This was evident over the weekend and we need to consider the next generations aspirations on being a member of the association.

Sorry I got misled there for a minute. Other significant events were the passing of the Treasurer position to Ralph which is a temporary thing while we find a long term member interested in taking the position. Also new committee members and State representatives were appointed before Brian Ellis took the floor to give a basic outline to the next reunion and questions from the floor as to time of the year. A hard questions for Brian to answer seeing he had only been given



the official baton minutes earlier.

With the formalities over the meeting was officially closed and members said their goodbyes and made their way to their next destination, either home, onward around Australia or overseas for a break.

A special thanks must go to the Lennon family for a stress free weekend and to John's army of volunteers who made the weekend most memorable. To Ralph & Cheryle for their creative talents that make the weekend flow without seemingly a hitch. To Robert Bedwell for his leadership with the Baton and to you our members for being part of another successful weekend

Bring on Launceston whenever it might be through the year of 2020.

PS: Sorry if I forgot to thank somebody.

Errol.

Oh yes, Japan was fantastic and the Trumpet made it home in one piece along with a Japanese Shamisen (Guitar) and stacks of other little gifties.





**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY
ORGANISATIONAL CHART -**

BAND ASSOCIATION INC

December 2018

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