



**PATRON: Major General B W (Hori) Howard AO MC ESM (Ret'd.)**

## **President's Report AGM 23 June 2019**

### ***Introduction***

Our Association has enjoyed a most positive and rewarding year since our last AGM which was conducted at the Caboolture RSL on Thursday 21 June, 2018. The day was highlighted by the naming and opening ceremony of the 'Sgt Frank Wust Bridge' in honour of our late PNG WWII Veteran and President.

### ***Association activities 2018 – 2019***

#### ***Amendment to Future Brisbane ANZAC Day March.***

In 2018 the Qld Govt. decided that future Brisbane ANZAC Day marches would NOT be given increased financial support. Extra funding would be the responsibility of RSL's, Veterans and associated groups.

As a result of positive representations by Secretary, Kev Horton, Greg Farr and myself on behalf of the Association and many others who supported the ANZAC Day March Committee, this decision was annulled. This was confirmed in writing by the Qld Premier dated 2 Oct 2018. The Qld Govt. would provide \$150 000 annually to cover the costs involved in the conduct of the ANZAC Day March in Brisbane. Kev Horton made direct representation to Ms Fiona Simpson MP for Maroochydore, whilst I wrote and complained to Terry Sweetman, (ex NS) Correspondent with the Sunday Mail and also to Peter Gleeson, Editor, Courier Mail Qld. As a result, positive articles supporting these concerns were published. OUR EFFORTS WERE SUCCESSFUL .....THE QLD GOVT. AGREED TO PAY.

#### ***The PNGDF 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Medal***

In view of failed attempts up to 2015 to have this medal recognised for former Australian PIR members, I, as President, attempted to have the Award resolved by my personal letters in 2018 to the following:

1. The Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove (personal military friend)
2. Chief of the Defence Force, General Angus Campbell
3. Minister for Veteran Affairs, The Honourable Darren Chester MP

Regrettably, all my personal efforts and those by the Medal Committee ably led by Russ Wade had at that point failed. Relative correspondence and replies are held by the Secretary. As a result, our Patron, Maj Gen Hori Howard recommended that direct liaison with the PNG Govt. through the PNG High Commission in Canberra was essential for success in securing this recognition. Immediate liaison with Maj Gen P.M. Jeffery, a good friend and former PIR OC/CO and GG, was requested by me to assist. He immediately agreed to do so and liaison was effected with the PNG High Commission in Canberra. If this attempt fails, EM TASOL LONG MI – no gat more!

#### ***KOKODA DAY 8 AUG 2018***

The Remembrance Day was well supported at the Cascade Gardens Memorial Wall by Assn Members, Dignitaries and friends. Of significance was the attendance by PNG representative, Mr Lahui Ako and LtCol M Pears MC, a former CO 1PIR and former Assn Patron.

Mr Ako delivered an excellent address to the assembled guests. In addition, LtCol Pears delivered a personal message from our GG, Sir Peter Cosgrove, whose uncle, a RAAF veteran is buried in Bomana War Cemetery, Port Moresby.

Again, Army Cadets from TSS provided the Catafalque Party in replica WWI dress, together with the choir.

Six new pavers as instigated by LtCol Pears, to honour highly decorated PNG Veterans, were officially commemorated by the President, Vice President and Secretary with input from Peter Jesser (History Officer).

A framed, signed, Honorary Membership Certificate was presented to Mr Ako at this ceremony by Secretary Kev Horton. He was most appreciative of this gesture by the Assn. Afterwards a most enjoyable luncheon was conducted by the Southport RSL Club. It should be noted that the Surfers' Paradise RSL Club was not the host for the 2018 Service or Lunch, hence the new venue.

### ***THE SOUTHPORT SCHOOL (TSS) PASSING OUT PARADE - Wed 24 Oct 2018***

My wife, Barbara and I represented the Assn at the Annual Passing Out Parade by TSS Army, Navy and Air Force Cadets, which was very well executed on their oval. In the evening a Formal Mixed Dining-in Night Dinner was enjoyed in the school gymnasium.

### ***100<sup>th</sup> ARMISTICE DAY ANNIVERSARY 11 Nov 2018***

This was celebrated at the ANZAC Memorial in Brisbane and attended by Assn. members. A beautiful wreath, prepared by Christine Ivey, was laid by me on behalf of the Assn. The ceremony was followed by an informal lunch at an adjacent restaurant. Confirmatory photos are included in *ARMY NIUS*.

### ***ANZAC DAY 25 April 2019***

At 0900hrs our Assn Remembrance Ceremony was conducted at the renovated PNG bronze memorial in the Brisbane ANZAC Square Gardens. Christine Ivey again provided a beautiful Bougainvillea wreath which was laid by me on behalf of the Assn. Photos were included in the *ARMY NIUS*. Regrettably our PNG Ladies did not attend, however a PNG correspondent from Popondetta covered the activity.

### ***CONCLUSION***

*ARMY NIUS* newsletters produced by Ian Ogston are welcome throughout the year by all Assn. members. Thank you, Ian.

My thanks to Vice-president, Greg Ivey, for his loyal support with all our Assn. activities and plans.

My thanks also to secretary Kev Horton for his invaluable assistance, support and recording of key administrative details.

GENTLEMEN, WITHOUT YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT THE ASSN COULD NOT FUNCTION!!

***Major D D Graham (Retd)***

***President 23 June 2019***