



Chair Report 13th October 2012

This report outlines the many activities and progress of the RAAHC over the last 12 months. During the last year the RAAHC Board of Directors has further reviewed the best way ahead for the Company in light of our experiences over the last 2 years. We have confirmed a corporate plan for the RAAHC for the next 5 years, which we will again review in early December. This will ensure we remain focused on those activities that most appropriately meet our national aim. I welcome Members' comments on the Plan which is shown on our website and indeed any input to assist us in our vision to be a lead organisation in the preservation of Australia's artillery history and heritage. Consequently, we have approached a wide range of Artillery related associations and invited them to work with us to preserve our history.

As part of our rationalization, earlier this year we adjusted our complicated membership structure. Most RAAHC members are now registered as ordinary members with a 12 month or 5 year subscription. All members will also now receive the combined RAA Liaison Letter and Cannonball and have access to the Members' area on the website. I thank you all for your understanding during this change.

Members have responded positively to the continued development of our website www.artilleryhistory.org.au as a primary means of providing information on the Company and Australia's artillery history and heritage to Members and other interested individuals. We will continue this development, including providing more specific information for Members in the members' only area. We have also recently launched our periodic e-newsletter "Airburst" and encourage you all to register for this to be automatically distributed to you.

As outlined in the financial report, during 2012 the RAAHC has also undertaken a revaluation of its assets. This includes all those RAAHC items in the artillery collection at Bandiana, those at North Fort including the RAAHC Library and the Memorial Walk itself and those on loan around Australia. This valuation has been approved by the Finance Committee and is based on the figures used by the Australian Army History Unit (AAHU), advice from experts and logical estimations where applicable. It will be reviewed and updated annually. RAAHC policy remains that in the future all its assets should be made available to responsible organisations around Australia, including the AAHU, that can most appropriately maintain and display the items.

In this respect much of the RAAHC collection is now stored at Bandiana under the care of a curator and the AAHU. Over the last 12 months, the RAAHC and the AAHU have agreed on the ownership of many of the items transferred from North Fort to Bandiana when the Australian Army Artillery Museum (AAAM) was closed in December 2010. Discussions continue on other items. The RAAHC also continues to identify with the AAHU which items will be included in the new AAAM as part of a new combined Armour/Artillery Museum to be built at Puckapunyal. Some RAAHC items not required or appropriate for the AAAM will then be offered to other responsible organisations around Australia.

Unfortunately construction of the new combined museum is delayed. Defence has advised that due to financial restrictions construction may now not commence until 2021. This is over a decade after the Army decided to close the Museum at North Head. In conjunction with the RAA Regimental Committee, we are working to advance this date and in the interim to arrange some temporary displays of the artillery collection.

I am pleased to report that we have developed a very healthy relationship with the Sydney Harbor Federation Trust (SHFT) that facilitates our presence at North Fort and provides a climate of mutual support. We have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding with SHFT that protects our assets at North Fort, particularly the valuable collection in the RAAHC library and the Australian Memorial Walk. They are working with us well to ensure a good dedication of the Walk in the 1st December.

In all it has again been a demanding year for the Board but I consider the RAAHC is now well placed to better support Australian Artillery history and heritage, further develop our national membership base, and establish appropriate artillery links around Australia. Finally, I wish once again to thank all those who have contributed to the progress that we have made this year. I wish to especially mention our librarian Danny Toplis, recently retired "Cannonball" Editor Alan Smith and our new Editor Steve Nicolls, as well as Graham Hampton and Graeme Hall, plus all the RAAHC Directors and our other volunteers for their hard work. Last, but certainly not least, a special thank you to our Honorary Auditor Bill Neill and our Honorary Solicitor Margaret Pavey.

Thank you all,



Major General Tim Ford, AO (Retd)