



AUSTRALIAN ARMY APPRENTICES ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

ACT Incorporation No: A04404

GPO Box 2072, CANBERRA, ACT, 2601 www.austarmyapprentice.org

Patron: Brigadier David Luhrs, CSC

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Date: April 2012

PRESIDENTS UPDATE

Hello and I hope all is well with you and your family. It has now been approximately six months since our AGM and I am coming to terms with the added time burden of being President of our Association. I would like to take this opportunity to apologise to you for not corresponding with you prior to this. I will endeavour to communicate on a more regular basis in the future.

Your Committee has had two meetings since the AGM, both of them in Canberra, and much has been discussed. One of the most pleasing results of the Committee's efforts has been a steady 10% plus growth in membership over the last couple of years. Craig Malcolm (31st ET) does a power of work as Membership Secretary and as President I am most grateful for his efforts. We currently have 587 financial members with many renewals still **not in**. Please get them back to us asap and remember to fill out all the required information.

We have had the wash up from a very successful major Apprentice reunion which was organised and run very professionally by the two Franks – Poole and Maloney. Frank Maloney did a wonderful job as MC on the night of the dinner and it was great to hear from our new Patron Brig Dave Luhrs and from our retiring Patron Lt Gen Ken Gillespie. Life membership was also endowed on Frank Poole and Jack Westernhagen for their unstinted support and work for the Association since its inception. The two Franks were well assisted by a number of individuals who worked quietly in the background and did a lot of work that largely went unseen. I thank you all for your help and support.

I am pleased to announce that Peter Muir (25th) has stuck his hand up to lead the Association in its endeavours with regard to the Balcombe heritage program. We are in good hands with Peter and I am sure his professional qualities will make this event a success. Peter has taken over the reins from Barry Teal who unfortunately fell ill last year. On behalf of the membership I thank you Barry for your work in getting the project as far as you did and for the sacrifices you made for the Association in general. We are looking at early May 2013 for the dedication of the Balcombe Gates function to be held at Balcombe and this will be held in conjunction with the local Mornington Council and other Corps Associations. Following this it is our intention to hold a function/dinner of our own at a suitably sized venue close by and hopefully to march through Mornington exercising our old rights to Freedom of the City. Mark it in your diaries and organise your intakes for your own reunion the day/night before. More information to follow soon.

Our Apprentice Memorial at Bandiana continues to grow. The gates have been removed, sand blasted to remove rust, powder coated and replaced. The Memorial Wall construction is underway waiting for the glazed black bricks to arrive. When complete this wall will hold plaques and other memorabilia directly associated with Apprentices KIA. The KIA plaque that was located beside the RAEME memorial has been gifted to the Association by RAEME and it and the stone that holds it are now located at the front of the Apprentice Memorial. We still have more work to do as funding becomes available. Thank you to those of you who have donated to the Memorial fund with your membership renewals and as straight donations. The Apprentice flag was flown at half mast at the Memorial on ANZAC Day. There is still the opportunity to have inscribed pavers and personal plaques incorporated into the Memorial and for Memorial Plaques to be placed on the relevant School wall. Details, prices and applications can be found on our Website (www.austarmyapprentice.org).

Our Website which has served us well to date is the subject of debate between Committee members at present. We are looking at implementing some changes to the site to make it easier for you to purchase membership, merchandise, function attendance etc which will in turn make it easier for Owen

Reynolds, our Treasurer, to keep our books in order – because believe it or not some members just send money with no reference as to what it is for. Ian Morris has done a lot of work on our Payment Gateway and we are nearing our test stage, so in the not too distant future, giving us your contributions will be even easier.

Another area we are looking into is establishing a presence on Facebook. I am reliably informed that Facebook has advantages for groups like ours, however it does come with extra work for our volunteers who already give plenty. It is probably fair to say that I am not an expert on this medium but I can see value for our Association by having another avenue of communication with our members particularly the later intakes, and I mean no disrespect to the early intakes when I say this.

If you have visited the Website recently you may know that the merchandise page has been temporarily taken down. We are reviewing our range and very soon will have the new range up on the site and for sale.

Regionally, we are in need of two Regional Representatives. Geoff Martin from SA and Paul Martyn Jones from Sydney have both stepped down. Currently we have 21 members in SA and 120 in Sydney. The positions are not particularly onerous, however the Committee would like the Rep to organise at least one regional function per year. Assistance will be given so the new rep will not be alone.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA REGIONAL GET TOGETHER

A get together of Western Australia based appies is to be held at –

SAS HOUSE

SAT 26th MAY 2012

2.30pm to 6pm

RSVP BRIAN COOPER ASAP BY EMAIL (bfcooper@bigpond.com)

Finger food will be provided and of course the bar will be open. Cost will be \$15.00 per head – drinks at bar prices.

Make sure you let all your networks know about this as soon as you can. Last year in early April the Vic based appies had over 50 attend a three hour get together and Canberra hold regular luncheons that attract up to 30 + Apprentices and South Queensland holds a grand BBQ once a year that attracts almost 100 people, so lets see if the sand groppers can better these results.

SEE YOU THERE.

Finally, I invite and look forward to your responses and any offers of help in regard to filling the vacant Regional Rep positions.

I can be contacted by email at president@austarmyapprentice.org

Kind Regards

Lucas McGann

President AAAA Inc.