



AUSTRALIAN ARMY APPRENTICES ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

ACT Incorporation No: A04404

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AAAA INC AGM 2015

WEBMASTER'S REPORT

Introduction

It has been another very busy year with the main activity being the Website Redevelopment project. The major milestone was reached with the completion of the project after nearly two years effort.

Completion of Website Redevelopment Project

Following much effort by a small group on the Committee (Ian Morris and Jeff Heron) the new Association Website went live at about 1100 hrs on 10 Mar 2015. Like all major software releases there were bound to be teething problems. We had a very vexatious problem with the "Login/Registration" function. Many users found it impossible to access the "Members Only" area because of this issue. On the old website we had a "pretend" login for the Members Only Area where everyone had the same username and password of "member" and "aasappy" (not a very secure approach). One of the improvements in the new website design was to have a more secure Login/Registration system. The old "member/aasappy" logins were cancelled for everyone and everyone has to register using a new "Username" and "Password" of their own choice. Unfortunately this was not made plain on the login form and apologies to everyone who had difficulties because of this.

Also related to the "Registration" function, the website was flooded with hundreds of fake registrations. These fake registrations are caused by rogue software programs called "Robots" or "Bots" that search the internet for any site where they can create a fake registration. Not only does this distort our membership figures but they can also have a darker purpose. The fake registrations have to be deleted as quickly as possible which is a very onerous task. There are usually fairly simple ways to prevent fake registrations in the first place, however the way our website is built we could not apply any of these simple fixes. In the long run we will be able to. However in the meantime the only way to deal with the fake registrations was to disable the registration process completely. This was done and for the time being, anyone can freely access any part of the website without logging in or registering. We will eventually restrict access to the "Members Only" area with a proper login registration system.

Adding further to our problems the website was hacked around the end of April. It was a particularly nasty virus and all the usual avenues of support failed to provide a solution. Thanks to the help of President Harry Hoger in locating a website consultancy that specialised in these situations we were able to restore the website to normal operation.

We also installed additional security measures and so far we have had relatively trouble free operation.

Future Tasks

There are always enhancements and routine maintenance that must be performed to keep a website running well. Of particular need (some) of these future tasks are as follows:

- a. Online Membership Application and renewal.
- b. Online merchandise sales.
- c. Availability of the SPAASSM collection
- d. Enhancements to the "Contact" form.
- e. Enhancements to the "Photo" pages
- f. Count down timer for major events.
- g. A "What's New" banner
- h. Facility to allow a team approach for website maintenance.
- i. And no doubt, many more tasks that will arise.

Ian Morris
Webmaster
27 Sep 2015