



ON TARGET MAY 2007

Despatches from the Museum Manager

Infrastructure

Through the efforts of Bill Tainsh the Museum now has a comprehensive environment monitoring system installed throughout our numerous buildings and tunnels. This will allow us access to temperature, humidity, dust, vibration and other data and help us argue for improvements such as air-conditioning and humidity control in our key areas such as the Library and Artillery Hall. Thank you and well done Bill. Please pass on my regards to Ralph and Shirley who did a great job installing the system. They have both joined the North Fort Mess as Honorary Members.

North Fort Café

Despite a number of teething problems which we are working to resolve, the Café continues to improve in operations and continues to attract increasing numbers of visitors to the Museum. The very real concerns of a number of Volunteers are being addressed and hopefully we will have a positive outcome in this regard. The continuing success of the Café is critical to the continuing successful operation of the Museum.

Exhibitions

The Air OP Display was officially opened on Sunday the 18th of March by Major General John Whitelaw. A crowd of over 120 people attended the opening of this display on a unique part of the history of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery. We were fortunate to have a significant number of surviving Air Op pilots from the Korea and Vietnam Wars attend, including four recipients of the Distinguished Flying Cross, a unique decoration rarely awarded to Army personnel. Congratulations and well done to John Saltwell, Dick Knight and John McPherson for an excellent job in preparing the display and organising the official opening. Major Craig Youll took some excellent photos.

Also on this occasion the HOR Brigadier Gerard Fogarty officially named Artillery Hall the "Whitelaw Artillery Hall" to recognise the unique contribution Major General Whitelaw and the Whitelaw family have made to the history of the Regiment, the preservation of that history, and the contributions General Whitelaw has made to the RAA National Museum. This was the HOR's last official duty before taking up his appointment as Commander MEAO. We wish him well and a safe return.

Brigadier Phil Winter has assumed the appointment of HOR and we look forward to him visiting the Museum in the near future.

The Anti-Tank Display continues to be improved by WO2 Peter Armstrong and BDR Ross Kohlhagen with the assistance of a number of volunteers and the ARMCO team refurbishing these weapons.

The AD / Locators Hangar under the management of WO2 Peter Armstrong has been cleared of non relevant guns and has made a quantum leap toward completion with the addition of the refurbished 3.7 inch HAA Gun, the 3 inch 20 cwt AA Gun and the complete Rapier Missile System. These three key equipments are in excellent order and are a credit to the perseverance, skill and dedication of the teams who have produced such excellent results. Jeff and Laurie please pass on my appreciation and congratulations to your teams for a first class job on these weapons. Peter, please pass on my thanks to WO2 Neil Dalley for a fantastic job in setting up the Rapier Missile System. John Cochrane was very impressed.

The Gunners Display Rotunda, not unlike a Joern Utzon edifice, is nearing completion under the expert craftsmanship of the two Bills. Your skill and patience is incredible and the finished project appears not far off. A great job gentlemen.

Tour Guiding Review

The Café operating from Wednesday to Sunday has significantly increased our visitor numbers. A trial of new guided tour times of 1030, 1130, 1300, and 1400 on Wed, Sat and Sun is in progress. As well a self guided “Mini Tour” has been introduced on Thurs and Fri. The increased visitor numbers have also highlighted some security and OH&S concerns and issues and these are being addressed. I welcome your feedback and suggestions on these changes to Museum operations.

ANZAC DAY

Despite the rain it was great to see a large turnout of “Gunners” on ANZAC DAY. I had the pleasure of catching up with Gordon Glasscock, the 83 years young President of the Coastal Artillery Association. I have known Gordon for almost forty years as a family friend and workmate on the Sydney Waterfront. Gordon served in Darwin in WW2 on 6 inch Coastal Artillery Guns and is a great friend of Laurie Manning. A great venue at the Sporter’s Bar saw a lot of Gunners enjoy good company and a great day.

Regards to All,
John Gallagher
Major
Manager