

PNGVR President's report for 2021 AGM

Good morning and welcome to our 2021 AGM .

I am disappointed that I not present today to meet with you and present my report. I am presently marooned in Sydney at the pleasure of Queensland's Premier. I hope I may return to Brisbane soon.

The Association has been well managed and members and friends well served during the past year, because you have long serving, able Office Bearers and Committee members.

Our membership remains stable, losing a few to death or debilitating illness and adding the odd new ex-PNGVR soldier as member. Since our 2020 AGM, to our knowledge, five members have died, two fewer than reported last AGM - perhaps we got healthier during our home quarantines?

Those deceased were: Robert Robinson (November 20), Bob Harvey-Hall (March 21), Brian Jones (May 21) , Peter Langman (June 21) and Rick Giddings (October 21) - Lest we Forget.

The Association's activities were limited in the past year due to corona virus restrictions, hopefully, these restrictions will soon be lifted so the Association may resume normal business.

The following outlines the Association's activities since our 2020 AGM:

- 1 Two major functions, being ANZAC Day march and reunion and today's 70th Anniversary of the formation of PNGVR luncheon
- 2 Publication and distributions of 6 issues of Harim Tok, our 16 page newsletter
- 3 Administration and maintenance of our website www.pngvr.weebly.com
- 4 Administration of our Facebook page
- 5 The Museum had limited openings; for the public the first Saturday of each month was continued but group tours were fewer
- 6 Six committee meetings held
- 7 Two fund raising Bunnings sausage sizzles conducted
- 8 Attendance of kindred organisation's events and commemorations occurred, as allowed
- 9 Contact with aged and frail members was maintained, though restricted.

All activities were reported in Harim Tok Tok, Facebook and the web site - please keep informed by regularly looking at these media.

Our last committee meeting and BYO luncheon for the year will be held in the Museum at 10am Saturday, 22th November - all members who are interested are welcome to attend.

Our newsletter Harim Tok Tok remains the main means of communicating with our wide-flung membership, and it continues to grow in popularity amongst members and others. Editor Bob Collins has produced 72 issues over the past 12 years, thank you Bob.

Kieran Nelson administers our face book with timely postings of information and notifications, thank you Kieran.

Canberra based member, Trevor Connell, efficiently maintains our website, thank you Trevor.

Our Military Museum Curators Paul Brown and Colin Gould continue to maintain the Museum to a high standard. We are indebted to Paul and Colin for their ongoing work and much time devoted to the Museum – the Museum has become a focus for many of our activities. The Association's legacy to the community is our military museum which will ensure the histories of our two unique units and the enduring relationship between Australia and PNG are not forgotten. The pressing issues for the Museum remain its tenure and succession, without tenure succession cannot be resolved. It is understood we will be granted a long term lease soon, which will allow us to move forward with our succession plans.

Despite limited fund raising opportunities, our financial position is sound with thanks to Treasurer and Grants Officer Kieran Nelson. I also thank those who have helped at the Museum and Sausage sizzles.

We were fortunate to receive a substantial, unsolicited donation from the Veterans Support and Advocacy Service Australia (VSASA) last month. VSASA was being voluntarily wound up as its members were unable to carry on. The Museum received the donation because VSASA was impressed with our Museum and the work of the Association, assisted by the rapport developed by Paul Brown with VSASA members during their visit to our Museum – well done Paul.

On behalf of our members, I thank the outgoing Committee members; Vice-president and Harim Tok Tok Editor Bob Collins; Secretary and Assistant Museum Curator Colin Gould; Treasurer, Grants Officer and Facebook Administrator Kieran Nelson; Museum Curator and Welfare Officer Paul Brown, Webmaster Trevor Connell and committee members Peter Rogers DFC, Mike Griffin, Tony Boulter and Peter Rogers (the younger). We are appreciative of our Honorary Chaplain Ron McDonald and Honorary Solicitor Craig Ray who are always available when needed. Our Patron Major General John Pearn graciously continues to provide engaged support and encouragement to us, thank you Sir.

As an Association, I feel sure we continue to meet and exceed the stated objectives of our constitution and the expectations of the community.

I wish our incoming office bearers and committee members every success in 2021-2022.

Phil Ainsworth, 23 October 2021