

## PNGVR President's report to 2019 AGM

Good morning and welcome all to our 2019 AGM, our 30th since the Association was formed in 1989.

A special welcome to our Patron, Major General John Pearn and our Padre Ron Mc Donald.

I thank you for your presence.

2019 has been a busy, hard and sad year: busy due to the number of activities in which we are involved; hard because our membership is dwindling and there are fewer members available or able to contribute to our activities; and sad due to the passing of our members. Since the last AGM, to our knowledge, nine members have died. These losses are: James Woo OBE; Graham Mitchell; Alistair Martin; Tony Milan; Nelson Hardiman; William (Bill) McGrath; Denis Samin, Ken Jones and Ron Adams.

Presently we have 142 full members, 27 associate members, 21 association friends and 3 honorary members, a total of 193.

Of the total, location wise, 96 (50%) live in Southeast Qld, 31(16%) in country Qld, 51 (26%) interstate, 3 (2%) overseas and 9 (5%) have unknown address.

Surprisingly only 72 (27%) of the total accept email correspondence while the rest remain hardcopy or snail mail recipients.

As you are aware each item of postage costs \$1. Assuming 10 items are posted to each hardcopy recipient per year, \$10 of each subscription of \$30 pa is used for postage only. This is why we would like computer owning members to accept emails

– it saves the association about \$10 per member and helps keep everyone's annual fee low. If the 117 hardcopy recipients used email, the association would save \$1,170 and potentially reduce everyone's annual subscription by \$6 per annum.

Although our Association is relatively few in number it is very active. Our association was formed in 1989 and incorporated in 1991. The founding President, Harry Green remained as President until his death February 2005. Since then the present office holders have held their positions with nearly 15 years of continuity of service and dedication.

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

1. three major functions, Brisbane Anzac Day march and reunion, the Qld State Mvm memorial service in the Brisbane Cenotaph and the 80th Anniversary commemoration service of the formation of NGVR held on 7 September;
2. publication and distribution of 6 issues of Harim Tok Tok, the association's 16 page newsletter;
3. maintaining an up to date website and face book;
4. maintaining its military museum with attendant 10 public open days and separate group visits;
5. six committee meetings;
6. a rifle shoot at Boonah;
7. an AGM and luncheon;

8. Museum participation in Brisbane's October open weekend;
9. two fund raising Bunnings sausage sizzles;
10. attendance at and support to about 2 dozen kindred organisation's events and commemorations;
11. welfare phone calls and visits to aged and frail members;
12. attendance and arranging poppy parades at former members funerals;
13. attendance and presentation of medals of excellence at the annual 9 RQR Steel Tuff exercise;
14. and projects being undertaken by individuals.

The last events for 2019 include preparing for the November annual 9 RQR Steel Tuff Exercise and presentation of Medallions for Excellence to the best section in the Battalion (9 RQR is an Army Reserve battalion which provides trained soldiers who serve overseas with the regulars – the association has been doing this for over 20 years) and final committee meeting and BYO luncheon for the year on Saturday 30th November at 10am, to which all who are interested are welcome to attend.

The past years activities of the Association has been reported in our newsletter and social media; details of all activities since the Association's incorporation are posted in our Website [www.pngvr.weebly.com](http://www.pngvr.weebly.com) and for the past couple of years in our Facebook page. Everyone should read our website; you may be surprised by its content!

Besides articles written for the HTT and other purposes by members, Michael White who works part-time at the AWM, has several on-going projects in which you may be interested:

1. he has prepared a list of the 1400 military who served in the AN & AMEF during WW1 and so far has written biographies for over 100 from this list;
2. he has confirmed all NGVR soldiers killed during WW2, of whom we are aware, are on AWM's honour board;
3. has instigated an investigation towards AWM changing its criteria to recognise enlisted NGVR who were not called up for full time service, but were killed during the war as civilians, to be placed on AWM's Commemorative Roll;
4. after which he will endeavour to have all Australian civilians living in PNG during that period and who were killed in the War to be similarly recognised and placed in the AWM's Commemorative Roll.

John Winterbotham has for years and continues to research NAA documents relating to PNG, particularly to the military.

Examples are his complete list of all NGVR, PNGVR, PIB and NGIBs men who served.

If you are working on a project which may be of interest or use to the Association, please advise us and do not hesitate if you require information, contacts or assistance.

Through our many and varied activities, NGVR's and PNGVR's regimental histories are becoming better known and respected. Our Association has developed an enhanced network with kindred organisations with which we share activities, mostly commemorative in nature.

Our newsletter Harim Tok Tok remains our main means of communicating with our wide-flung membership and continues to grow in popularity amongst members and others. Editor Bob Collins has produced about 60 issues over the past 10 years which is much appreciated.

Our Facebook which is managed by Kieran Nelson is also increasing in popularity. Trevor Connell, our web master continues to maintain and improve our website [www.pngvr.weebly.com](http://www.pngvr.weebly.com) – I commend our website to you as it holds our historical records, photographs and current information.

Our Military Museum opened February 2006 and is managed by Curator Paul Brown and his assistant Colin Gould. Paul and Colin have restructured the displays to streamline the through flow of guests. It costs about \$7000 per annum to maintain the Museum. Over \$13000 capital expenditure was made last year to upgrade security. The most pressing issues of tenure and succession remain - without tenure succession cannot be resolved. Negotiations between the BCC and NSAAQ have been on the table for a number of years and are ongoing, yet we have little or no influence to progress them. We have little idea for the delay. NSAAQ has confirmed in writing that a sublease will be granted to the Association once NSAAQ obtains its lease, the terms and conditions unknown. Our honorary solicitor Craig Ray has been asked to assist in resolving this issue.

We are indebted to Paul and Colin for their ongoing work and time devoted to the Museum which has become a focus for many of our activities. Our legacy to the community is our military museum which will ensure the histories of our two unique units and their part in contributing to the enduring relationship between Australia and PNG are not forgotten.

Despite large expenditures our funds are growing again. Thanks to Kieran Nelson, we were recently successful in winning a Gaming Grant for \$2,000 for new computer equipment (this will be shown in our 2020 financials). Our income sources are limited and derive from subscriptions, sausage sizzles, donations and grants. Treasurer Doug Ng is doing a fine job of keeping us on an even keel financially.

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 Doug Ng, Museum Curator and Welfare Officer Paul Brown, Webmaster Trevor Connell, Grants Officer and Facebook Administrator Kieran Nelson and committee members Peter Rogers DFC, Mike Griffin, Tony Boulter and Peter Rogers (the younger). We are appreciative for our Honorary Padre Ron McDonald and Honorary Solicitor Craig Ray who are always available when we ask them. Our Patron, Major General John Pearn, graciously continues to provide engaged support and encouragement to us through his high standing in the community, his many connections with kindred organisations and individuals and his presence at our events, for which we are extremely grateful.

As an association, we can proudly state we have met and exceeded the stated objectives of our constitution and the expectations of the community.

Phil Ainsworth, 26 October 2019

President

NGVR & PNGVR Ex-members Association

P: 07 3844 3222

F: 07 3844 9888 M: 0418 730 348

E: [p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au](mailto:p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au)

W: [www.pngvr.com](http://www.pngvr.com)