

## 2011 Secretary's Report

2nd/6th Cavalry Commando Regiment and 2nd Cavalry Regiment Association (Vic) Inc. SECRETARY'S REPORT TO AGM APRIL 2011

Another year has flown by and we are once again gathered to reminisce and remember fallen comrades, mates, loved ones and courageous sacrifices. It is also a time to reflect on the years' disappointments and how we can do things better in the future and to celebrate and appreciate our achievements and success.

**Our Disappointments:**

- The Committee submitted a detailed and thorough grant application for \$38,000 to the State Government's Department of Planning and Community Development for material; equipment; research; recording veteran's stories; education and training; marketing and promotion, which was unfortunately unsuccessful due to the project being exclusive to our Regiment Association and not the wider veteran population.
- Despite a great turn out at the Annual Pilgrimage on Nov 3rd our gathering at the Shrine was forced to face the elements of a cold and windy day due to another group using the inside facility. The Committee will endeavour to ensure that this doesn't occur again.

**Our Achievements:**

- An increased mailing list from under 100 members to 155 members. Members receive Cav News twice a year plus major events mail outs. This is a great outcome when many associations are decreasing in number and consequently disbanding.
- A closer bond and relationship has been formed with the Northern Territory branch and 2 Cav soldiers in Darwin and Puckapunyal.
- Two trips to Sydney were made to assist and encourage the NSW branch to embrace the amalgamated association and to witness the next generation assume office on their committee.
- Formation of the new banner which illustrates the association's journey from World War 2 to our joining forces with 2 Cav. The 2/6 Cav motto of "through mud and blood to the green fields beyond" creates the solid foundation and backdrop for the superimposed Double Diamond. On top of this again is 2 Cav's colours and their motto and mascot "Courage".

**Successes:**

- The continued growth of the website which is hugely responsible for the increased membership and growth of the association family. More and more veteran descendants are hungry for information of their loved ones and the number of emails with requests continues to rise.
- The content of the website has increased dramatically with new profiles, stories, photos and even books – the first one being my father Osie Stafford's book "To the Green Fields of Kastina". Many thanks to Shorty and my brother Robert (also a Committee member) for their hard work in making this a reality. If Dad only knew his book was available free of charge for the whole world to read!! The website is an amazing tool and resource and ensures our association will live forever and our veterans will not be forgotten.
- The Secretary's desk on the website has been a great success but in no way can be credited to me. Another brainwave from Shorty who keeps it updated as well.
- A successful trip to Darwin to present the "Best Cavalryman" award of \$1000.00 (donated by Victoria) to Trooper Koen.
- Becoming incorporated takes the association to a new level with the associated benefits of added public liability protection.

**Our Goals for 2011 / 2012:**

- Work towards the association forming a National Body.
- 2/6 monument to be erected in Darwin.
- Continued development of the website.
- Recruit new committee members.
- Continue to keep in touch with all our members and keep them well informed of news and events within the association.

This now brings me to the crux of all that has happened this past year. None of the above would have been possible without the management team, especially the vision and guidance of our leader and president John (Shorty) Corbett.

Firstly, thank-you to all committee members for putting your hands up to help and for your valued contributions. Secondly, a big thank-you to all the 2 Cav soldiers for their support and commitment to the amalgamation and for embracing 2/6 Cav's with open arms. Thank-you to those here today for making the effort to attend and be involved. Also to others in Darwin, Puckapunyal and around Australia who have been involved in any way and to those ex 2 Cav soldiers who have become members. Thirdly, I would like to thank our assistant secretary Heather Stone for her support and encouragement throughout the year and for the amazing amount of work and time, she and her sister Josie Andrews, has spent on researching and uploading mega amounts of information onto the website. Fourthly, our deep gratitude and thanks goes to our patron Betty Land for her support and encouragement to the association and for her assistance, especially on important occasions such as this. Lastly, but most importantly, I would like to conclude with a quick word about Courage. The dictionary definition states courage is "mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty". It is one of the qualities our brave veterans showed when they fought for our freedom. It is also 2 Cav's motto and mascot. Warrant Officer Courage is a wedge tail eagle trained for duty on parade and wherever required. He was chosen for his qualities of strength, speed and ability to see small objects from a great distance just as a Cavalry scout is trained to do. Courage is also one of the many qualities that I often see in our leader and President Shorty. Not to mention his war days of being a forward scout, but today his courage to follow his vision has led us to a healthy association where many other associations have folded and died. He has showed great courage in his personal life and not only is he an inspiration to me and my family, but he is an inspiration to the regiment. On behalf of our newly joined association, Shorty, I offer our profound thanks to you for your massive contribution to keeping us alive and healthy and for the smooth running of the website and the association as a whole. Without you there would be no association! You are an amazing role model to us all and what can be achieved in later life (Shorty will be 88 in three days time). We admire and treasure your courage, commitment, passion and energy which you have poured willingly and generously into our association. In recognition of all of this I present you with a small token of our appreciation for your many hours of hard work and dedication. Inscription reads: BUT THOSE WHO HOPE IN THE LORD WILL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH. THEY WILL SOAR ON WINGS LIKE EAGLES. THEY WILL RUN AND NOT GROW WEARY. THEY WILL WALK AND NOT BE FAINT. ISIAH 40.31 This concludes the Secretary's report for 2011. Susan Stafford-McLaughlin