



Chair Report 22nd October 2011

The focus of the RAAHC Board over the last 12 months has been to align the activities and structure of the RAAHC in accordance with the new RAAHC constitution approved at the RAAHC AGM in October 2011. The principal activities have been:

- . Developing appropriate administration and governance for the RAAHC.
- . Establishing a national identity of the RAAHC.
- . Developing a RAAHC corporate plan for 2011-2016.
- . Responding to the move of the AAHU from North Fort
- . Clarifying the ownership of the North Fort collection.

I can report that the governance of the RAAHC as a not for profit organization is now clearly established with its company records and address in Parramatta, its constitution lodged in accordance with the Corporations Act , a RAAHC Governance Charter agreed and the Board functioning well with Governance, Financial, Membership and Historical sub committees. Sound financial, administrative and membership procedures are also now in place and the RAAHC is well placed to develop its relevance and influence with respect to the history and heritage of Australian artillery in accordance with its Corporate Plan.

A new logo and Internet website has been developed and links to the RAA Regimental Committee and other Artillery and associated organizations established. I would like to extend the gratitude and thanks of the RAAHC to the website work done by Graham Hampton of the Australian Artillery Association. Without his assistance and the support of the Association's President, Kim McGrath, the website would not have been launched.

Soon after the Board was expanded at the 2010 AGM, the Army advised it was going to close the Museum at North Fort, handover the site to the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (SHFT), and move the collection to temporary storage at Bandiana until a new combined museum for the Australian Armour and Artillery could be built at Puckapunyal. This move was completed on 16th June 2011 and North Fort is now administered by the SHFT. During this period I have written several letters to members and kept the RAA Regimental Committee informed about RAAHC activities and the moves at North Fort.

As part of this move the RAAHC is in the process of clarifying the ownership and the future location of the artillery collection that was at North Head. Most of the collection has moved to Bandiana including much claimed by the RAAHC. Through

discussions with the Australian Army History Unit (AAHU) the ownership of many items in the Collection is now agreed. The Board has also agreed that those items that should most appropriately be held in the AAAM will be loaned by the RAAHC to the AAHU. Other items will be retained by the RAAHC for loan to the SHFT for its museum planned for North Head and for distribution to other appropriate artillery sites and organisations around Australia. This action will continue and by 2012 your Board should be able to clearly define where all its assets are located and who is responsible for their maintenance.

The RAAHC has also established a good working relationship with the SHFT and will sign an MOU with them soon. This will cover the retention of the RAAHC library, the storage of some other RAAHC assets at North Fort in the “registry” building, and the maintenance and future dedication of the Australian Memorial Walk (AMW) at North Fort. SHFT has also maintained a volunteer program, tours of the tunnels and a workshop capacity at North Head, and I am pleased that a number of the North Fort volunteers continue to participate in projects on that site.

The RAAHC also continued to cooperate with other organizations in a number of projects such as the “ Sir Roden Cutler Memorial Intersection”, the possible acquisition of a 9.2in Gun from South Africa, and several restoration and display activities around Australia.

In all it has been a demanding year for the Board but I consider the RAAHC is now well placed to better support Australian Artillery history and heritage, develop our national membership base, and establish appropriate links around Australia. Finally I wish to thank all those who have contributed to the progress that we have made this year. I wish to especially mention our librarian Danny Toplis, and the editor of “Cannonball” Alan Smith, as well as Ian Taylor and Graeme Hall, plus all the RAAHC Directors for their hard work. Lastly but certainly not least, a thank you to our Honorary Auditor Bill Neill and our Honorary Solicitor Colin Dunston who steered us through the transitions over the last 12 months. Colin has now retired from this position and been replaced by our new Honorary Solicitor Margaret Pavey. Thank you all.

Major General Tim Ford, AO (Retd)
22nd September 2011