

POSSUM DROPPINGS #16

March 2010

161 Recce Assoc NAB – 8 McGregor Street, Toowoomba. QLD. 4350.
Email - < lavery19@tpg.com.au > or Ph – 07 4633 4888

Welcome to yet another edition of Possum Droppings from the National Administrative Body (NAB) of the 161 Recce Association.

The elected members of the NAB are John Custance (President), Skeeta Ryan (Secretary/Treasurer) and Len Avery (Assistant).

Presidents Report.

Time is moving fast and we are not getting any younger. It does not seem like almost five years ago that we gathered in Adelaide to celebrate Possum 40 and now we are on the rundown for Possum 45 in Townsville in September.

My wife and I visited Townsville last year and caught up with a lot of the Townsville Possum's and had a great dinner at the Townsville RSL. This RSL will be one of the venues for Possum 45 and might I say the food and the service were great.

Just a little on the finances for Possum 45, at this stage, the following have been received or is pending:

\$2500 from 161 NAB to the Townsville Branch to kick start P45,

\$1000 from the Sydney Branch of the Association to the Townsville Branch to assist with P45, and

\$3000 grant approval from DVA in support of the Possum Gathering in Townsville.
(I have had verbal indication that this should not pose a problem).

Lots to do and see around Townsville. Please make the effort, have a holiday but book now while travel is available. I found a very good deal at the Quality Inn on Stanley Street just a short walk to the Cowboy's Leagues Club and a short cab ride to the RSL. There is also a very cheap bus service around the CBD especially for us "Old Farts".

On a sad note, we have lost a lot of our team during the past few years. Our heart and thoughts go to the families and friends left behind. Just remember you and your families are part of the 161 Team and are more than welcome to join us in Townsville. I can assure you that you will receive a warm welcome and have a chance to catch up with some old friends.

To those who put their hands in their pockets to assist 161 when asked, THANK YOU very much. It was greatly appreciated.

Until September we hope to see a lot of you in Townsville, take care and enjoy good health while you can.

John and Una Custance.

Treasurer/Secretary Report.

Throughout the past 12 months the number of financial members at the National Branch level increased significantly and a number of those members who joined the Association were members who we had never had any contact with or we had lost contact with due to circumstances beyond our control. We are always pleased to make contact with any member of 161 Recce Flt or 161 Recce Sqn.

We still have a number of 161 Recce Flt members who we do not have any contact with and those members who are listed as being AWOL are published on the 161 AWOL List on our 161 Web Site. It is possible that one or more of the members on the AWOL List are either deceased or terminally ill or just don't want to have anything to do with the 161 Recce Assoc and we fully respect the wishes of all of our members.

One of the reasons that we continue to make an effort to contact those members who are listed as being AWOL is the majority of those members would be entitled to be issued with the Army Combat Badge (ACB) which we the National Executive are holding for issue to those members or the Next of Kin (NOK) of any deceased member.

Please check the 161 AWOL List on the 161 Web Site and let us know if you know the location of any member on the AWOL List or if you know if any of the members on the List are deceased. If we know that a member is deceased we will endeavour to track down the NOK of those members.

During the past 12 months we were made aware of the availability of a lost/stolen set of medals belonging to one of our 161 members. After confirming to the best of our ability that the medals were genuine and that the member would like his medals returned we set out to purchase the medals and return them to their rightful owner. The cost of the medals was very high and although we were aware of the risk of possibly losing our money and not getting the medals back we decided to proceed with the purchase of the medals.

We approached those members of 161 who are on Email seeking donations to offset the cost of purchasing the medals and assist with the return of the medals to their rightful owner. As anticipated, many of our 161 Members were quite willing to put their hands in their pockets and send through a donation to assist with the purchase of the set of medals.

Fortunately, everything worked out well in the end and the medals have been returned to their rightful owner and the member has expressed his deepest appreciation for the efforts of the members of the 161 Recce Assoc in recovering his medals.

The decision to go ahead with the purchase of the medals was not made lightly and it is not our intention to go looking for lost or stolen medals of our 161 members in the future however, if any medals do become available in the future we will treat each case on its own merit and do whatever we can to assist in returning the medals to their rightful owners. We are aware of at least one other 161 member who has lost his medals and we will be keeping an eye out for those.

2009 was a reasonably successful financial year from the 161 Recce Assoc National Branch with the increase in financial membership as previously mentioned and the ongoing sale of items through our 161 PX. A new item in the 161 PX which you may not be aware of is the 161 Number Plate Frame which has proved popular amongst those members on Email or have access to our 161 Web Site. If you would like a set of number plate frames please contact Len Avery as per the PX Section of this newsletter.

Finally, I hope that you all had a wonderful Christmas and that 2010 brings you good health and happiness.

Sandra and I are planning on attending P45 in Townsville in September and look forward to catching up with everyone who makes the trip to the 'Possum Gathering'. Until then God Bless and stay safe.

Skeeta and Sandra.

Possum 45.

The dates for Possum 45 in Townsville have been amended and the dates and details are as follows;

Dates – Wednesday 08 September 2010 until Friday 10 September 2010.

Venue – Townsville.

Organising Team for Possum 45 – Alan Meiklejohn and Russell 'Shifty' Gordon supported by the other 161 members of North Queensland.

Contact details;

Alan Meiklejohn – 9 Grasmere Court, Kirwan. QLD. 4817.

Phone – 07 4773 1519

Email < alanmeik@bigpond.net.au >

Russell Gordon – PO Box 7731, Garbutt. BC. QLD. 4814.

Phone – 07 4724 0648

Email < possum45@bigpond.com >. (Special Email address for Possum 45 correspondence).

Further details regarding Possum 45 will be distributed in the near future as well as being posted on the Notice Board of the 161 Recce Assoc Web Site at < www.161recceflt.org.au >.

Attached, please find copies of the following documents relating to P45:

Possum 45 Flyer,
P45 Registration Form,
P45 Merchandise covering letter, and
P45 Merchandise Ordering Form.

P45 contact details and copies of the documents listed above can also be found on the 161 Notice Board of our 161 Web Site at < www.161recceflt.org.au >.

If you are planning on attending the Possum Gathering in Townsville in September and you **have not** registered as attending could you please do so as soon as possible to assist those members who are organising the gathering.

We Will Remember Them - Lest We Forget.

Regrettably as time marches on so do a number of our members and since our last newsletter we have lost another nine Possum's from our ranks. On behalf of the Association we would like to extend the condolences of all the members of 161 to the families and friends of the following members:

4719223 Corporal Richard Peter Boothroyd – AACC

Richard served with the Flight from 02 September 1969 until 11 Jun2 1970 as one of our cooks. He was born on 06 January 1947 and passed away on 01 February 2009.

243041 Donald Cockerell – RAEME.

Don was an original member of 161 Recce Flt serving with the Flight from 14 September 1965 until 20 September 1966 as a Fixed Wing Pilot. He was born on 17 March 1940 and he passed away on 08 January 2010.

1200955 Lieutenant John Francis Howard – AAAvn.

John served with the Flight from 21 April 1971 until 23 December 1971 as a Fixed Wing Pilot. He was born on 18 May 1947 and passed away on 04 November 2009.

36127 Sergeant Bruce Arthur Johnson – RAEME.

Bruce served with the Flight from 19 August 1968 until 27 August 1969 as the Sergeant Electrical Fitter.

This was not Bruce's first trip to Vietnam. From 27 May 1965 until 09 July 1965 he was posted to the Army Logistics Support Company and attached to Number 1 Troop, A Squadron, 4th/19th The Prince of Wales Light Horse Regiment as part of the 1 RAR Group at Bien Hoa.

He was born on 22 March 1938 and passed away on 28 October 2009.

42364 Warrant Officer Class One Michael James Morero – RAEME.

Jim served with the Flight from 01 June 1971 until 23 December 1971 as the ASM in the 161 Workshop. He was born on 25 Feb 1932 and passed away on 16 August 2009.

*** Late last year we were able to confirm the death of the following member. Unfortunately we had no contact with the member and at the time we were not aware of his passing:*

52901 Sergeant Carl William Langridge – RAASC

Carl served with the Flight from 10 May 1967 until 12 February 1968 as the Chief Clerk within the 161 Headquarters. He was born on 11 February 1938 and passed away on 11 October 2007.

As previously advised, one of our primary tasks as the National Executive of your Association is to preserve a lasting memory of all members of 161 Recce Flight and 161 Recce Sqn who are now deceased. We try and achieve this objective in a number of ways including posting details on a Memorial Page on our 161 Recce Assoc Web Site under the title of 'In Memoriam'.

To further enhance the 161 'In Memoriam Page' we try and include a photo of each member who is now deceased. Unfortunately there are a few members on the 'In Memoriam Page' who we do not have a photo for so if you can provide a photo for anyone on the page we would be very grateful.

We are also well aware that there are a number of our members who are not travelling very well health wise due to ongoing aches and pains or serious health problems.

If you are not in good health and without invading your privacy could you please let us know that you are not well and if there is anything we can do to assist you please do not hesitate to contact us.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those members who may not be enjoying good health at this point in time.

161 Communication Network and Web Site.

We continue to take great pride in the fact that we have established a strong communication network via our 161 web site and Email. This network allows us to communicate with a large number of our members on a regular basis. We currently have more than 400 members on email, including a number of 161 family members. The network which we have established allows us to distribute information of interest and provide assistance to our members where required.

If you are on email and you are **not** in contact with Len Avery please send him an email at:

< lavery19@tpg.com.au >.

Russ Graham continues to manage our 161 Recce Assoc Web Site and we are very grateful for Russ's ongoing efforts in expanding and updating the web site.

If you haven't visited our web site in recent times we invite you to do so by logging onto:

< www.161recceflt.org.au >.

We encourage you to maintain a close watch on our Web Site and we welcome any assistance in expanding the content and accuracy of our 161 Web Site.

Medal or Badge Entitlements.

A reminder to all members of their entitlements to medals for their service in Vietnam or post Vietnam service.

All members of 161 who served in Vietnam, irrespective as to how many days they were in country, are entitled to a minimum of three medals and those medals are:

The Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 with Vietnam clasp,

The Australian Defence Medal, and

The Vietnam Medal.

For those members who served in Vietnam for a minimum of six months you are also entitled to the South Vietnam Campaign Medal.

If you were posted to 161 Recce Flt, as part of the 1 RAR Group based at Bien Hoa in 1965-66, you are entitled to the United States Meritorious Unit Commendation (MUC). For those members who have not received their MUC please contact Len Avery.

The 161 Recce Assoc has made a commitment to ensure that all members of 161 Recce Flt receive both their MUC and a copy of the MUC Certificate, which the 161 Recce Assoc has organised through the 1 RAR Association.

** Please Note – For those members who **have not** applied for or who may have lost their medals we can provide details and assistance with application forms and medal entitlements.

Computer Crash and loss of 161 Data and History.

For those who are not aware, towards the end of last year my external hard drive experienced a melt-down and I had ongoing problems with my computer. We purchased the external hard drive over five years ago to be used as an external storage facility for our 161 pictorial collection and history. At the time of purchase I was told that I would no longer have to back up images and data as it would be safely stored on the external hard drive. BIG MISTAKE!!!!

Following the melt down of the external hard drive we sent it to a data retrieving agency in Sydney and paid \$450 to initiate the recovery of the data with an agreement to pay another \$1950 upon the success of the data recovery. Unfortunately the agency was unable to recover any of the images or data from the external hard drive.

I have subsequently purchased a new computer system and external hard drive and I am now in the process of re-establishing our 161 pictorial collection and compiling our lost 161 history and data.

I would not have been able to purchase the new computer system without the very generous donations from individual members of the 161 Recce Assoc and the 161 Branches within the Association. I would

like to thank everyone who was able to help me purchase the new system and help me work through the drama of losing so much of our pictorial collection and history.

The loss of the pictorial collection and data has been a very costly and stressful experience which could have easily been avoided by backing up the pictorial collection and data on CD's and/or DVD's.

With the new system we have two internal hard drives and the external hard drive plus I am backing up everything onto both CD's and DVD's. We will also be looking at some form of external data storage service however, the priority at the moment is to recover whatever we can from readily available sources and start compiling the history which has been lost.

The experience which I have been through should be a warning for all members in regards to storing images and data (family history etc....).

If you are using your computer and/or an external hard drive to store images and data make sure that you back up all of your images and data onto at least two CD's and/or DVD's on a regular basis.

161 Recce Flt Pictorial Collection.

Prior to melt-down of the external hard drive and computer failure we had in excess of 5000 images in our 161 Pictorial Collection, covering all aspects of 161 Recce Flt's deployment and service in Vietnam and a small collection of 161 Recce Sqn images.

We still have access to the majority of the slides and photos which we used to create our 161 pictorial collection and we are in the process of re-scanning and creating that pictorial collection again.

A number of our members have offered assistance and access to their slides and photos from Vietnam.

Allen Williams who served with the Flight from 27 July 1968 until 2 July 1968 has sent through two CD's with 700+ images on the CD's.

We also have a number of pictorial CD's from other members which we will use to establish a base line for our 'new' 161 Pictorial Collection. Many thanks to those who have offered to help restore our 161 Pictorial Collection.

Eventually our aim is to once again offer our members CD's of the 161 Pictorial Collection covering the actual years that they were in the Flight in Vietnam.

If you have any slides or photos of your time in Vietnam please contact Len Avery and discuss the best way in which we can obtain access to your images so that we can add them to the 161 Collection.

We still have the resources to scan and burn images to CD's and although we are in the process of re-establishing our 161 Pictorial Collection please let us know if you would like a CD of images covering the period that you were in country.

For those who haven't visited our 161 Web Site < www.161recceflt.org.au > we would encourage you to do so. One of the pages on our Web Site is the 161 Photo Gallery and the images on the Photo Gallery will give you a brief insight into our extensive 161 Pictorial Collection.

Books.

You should all be aware of the book **Possums and Bird Dogs** by Peter Nolan which was published back in 2006.

For those who maybe interested, we still have copies of Peter's book '**Possums and Bird Dogs**' available through our 161 Recce Assoc PX for \$30 plus postage. Anyone wishing to purchase a copy of the book please contact Len Avery.

The book provides a great insight into the history of 161 Recce Flt in Vietnam along with a nominal roll of those members posted to the Flight.

In addition to Peter Nolan's book there are a few more books that have been written by members of 161 and you may be interested in purchasing a copy. Those books are:

One Day at a Time, by D.J. Dennis.

For those who do not know D.J. Dennis is Don Trick who served with the Flight from 13 August 1967 until 13 August 1968 as an Air Traffic Controller. The book was published back in 1992 and obtaining a copy can be very difficult however, we do have a spare copy of the book in our 161 Library and it is available for loan at a small cost.

Ho Chi Minh, Johnsy and I, by Tony 'Shorty' Lourensen.

The book is the ramblings of a baggy arse Army Clerk during those hazy, crazy days of the Vietnam War.

Shorty Lourensen served with the Flight from 30 June 1967 until 8 May 1968 as a Corporal in the Orderly Room.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of this book please contact Shorty Lourensen by Email at,

< shortys.book@optusnet.com.au > or < clourensen@optusnet.com.au >.

The cost of the book is \$20 plus \$5 postage.

You can check out details on the book by logging onto the following Web Site:

< <http://www.tonylourensen.com/> >.

If you purchase a copy of Shorty's book and let him know that you are a 161 member he will make a small donation to the 161 Recce Assoc National Branch Account for each book purchased.

A Look through My Window, by Peter Ginman.

The memoirs of Peter Ginman. Peter was one of our RAAF members and he was in country from 13 May 1967 until 17 October 1967. He was a Sergeant and he was the SNCO in charge of the Electrical Section during his time in country.

The book includes a chapter of Peter's time with 161 (Indep) Recce Flt in Vietnam.

Cost of the book is \$25.45 which includes postage.

If you would like to order a copy of the book please Email to Peter at < petergin2@westnet.com.au > or you can send a Money Order or Cheque for \$25.45 to Peter at:

108 Nicklin Road, Palmwoods. QLD. 4555.

161 Recce Sqn News.

Current key appointments in and supporting 161 Recce Sqn are;

Officer Commanding – Major Daniel Bartle,
SSM – WO2 Darren McCormick,
Engineering Officer – Captain Kim Veness (Forward Repair Group), and
ASM – WO2 Terry Norman (Forward Repair Group).

As previously advised, 161 Recce Sqn has moved into purpose built facilities at Robertson Barracks in Darwin as part of the 1st Aviation Regiment which moved from Oakey and 162 Recce Sqn, which has moved from Townsville to Darwin.

There have been some major changes within the 1st Aviation Regiment in regards to how maintenance support is provided to the Squadrons which means that the Squadron's no longer have their own maintenance support. The maintenance support element for each Squadron is now centralised within the 1st Aviation Regiment Technical Support Squadron. Direct maintenance support is provided to the Squadron by a Forward Repair Team (FRT) or Forward Repair Group (FRG) as required.

The 1st Aviation Regiment now has its own hat badge and all members of 161 Recce Sqn wear the 1st Avn Regt badge whilst they are posted to the Regiment. All members of 161 Recce Sqn are also entitled to wear the United States Meritorious Unit Citation which was awarded to the members of 161 Recce Flt who served as part of the 1 RAR Group in Vietnam under command of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) at Bien Hoa, September 1965 until May 1966.

The current CO of the 1st Aviation Regiment, Lt Col John Fenwick, former Possum Master and the RSM, WO1 Wayne Fletcher, former SSM 161 Recce Sqn, have advised that they are planning on attending the Possum 45 gathering in Townsville in September.

Hopefully the current Possum Master and other members of 161 Recce Sqn will also be able to attend Possum 45.

We have included a 161 Sqn Page on our 161 Web Site specifically for the Squadron and we invite former and current members of the Squadron to visit the web site and assist with the expansion of the Squadron History and Photo Gallery.

Please note, all current and former members of 161 Recce Sqn are most welcome to join the 161 Recce Association.

A message from the current Possum Master

November/December 2009 saw 161 Recce Sqn deploy to Townsville for four weeks to undertake Exercise Possum OPEVAL. This involved self deploying four ARH Tigers from Robertson Barracks to operate in High Range Training Area for the first time. The first two weeks of the exercise qualified five crews in troop gunnery during which 3000 rounds of 30mm ammunition were expended along with three AGM-114M Hellfire Missiles. As well as conducting Squadron qualifications, 161 provided live fire support to ADF Joint Fires Observers (JFO's) and Joint Terminal Air Controller (JTAC's) for the first time. During the live fire operations ARH Tiger conducted hot rearming and refuelling operations in dual point Forward Arming and Refuelling Point (FARP's) very successfully. This is the first time this capability has been exercised with ARH, well done the 1st Avn Regt FARP.

The third week saw 161 Sqn work intimately with 2OCU FA-18 Fighter Combat Instructors (FCI's). This opportunity further enhanced the knowledge of both parties through capability briefings whilst continuing to develop joint SOP's. This culminated in the conduct of laser target hand off procedures and simulated joint weapons engagements.

The final week of the exercise saw the Squadron participate in the Mentoring Task Force 1 (MTF1) and Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE).

We provided daily support with a troop of Tigers conducting Ground Convoy Escort, Attached Airmobile Escort with C Squadron 5th Aviation Regiment, Close Combat Attack, Close Air Support and Armed Reconnaissance allowing us to thoroughly test our developing TTP's / SOP's while adding a significant training benefit to the MTF1 soldiers. None of this could have been achieved without the outstanding level of aircraft serviceability maintained by the Forward Repair Group (FRG1) throughout the activity. Finally, thanks to all from 5 Avn Regt, none of the great work mentioned above would have been possible without the support given for the duration of the exercise.

The Squadron now has four ARH Tigers and we should have our full complement by mid year. The Squadron has two of three flying troops manned with the third just starting training at Oakey.

There is still some way to go within the Squadron in regards to training and the certification of the aircraft but the Squadron is able to support other Units around Australia. The Squadron worked with 1 Brigade in the field in the Northern Territory and deployed four aircraft to Townsville for a month in November/December last year to work with the RAAF, 6 RAR and 3 Brigade Units.

I believe the CO is keen for members of 161 to attend P45 so I expect to see you in September. With luck we'll be involved in an activity in Townsville in September and will bring aircraft and a few more bodies. We won't know until we get a bit closer.

Possum 9

161 Recce Assoc - Possum PX

Our 161 Possum PX remains open for business however, we only hold a limited number of items in stock. If you would like to purchase anything from our PX, please contact Len Avery.

DO NOT send any money with your order, an invoice will be posted to you with the items and it will include postage and packaging.

Item No.	Description of Items available from PX.	Cost
1	161 Recce Assoc Tie.	25:00
2	161 Recce Assoc Collar Badge.	6:00
3	Army Aviation Blue Beret (Sizes M - L or XL).	15:00
4	Army Aviation Corps Hat Badge.	8:00
5	RAEME Corps Hat Badge.	8:00
6	Book - 'Possums and Bird Dogs' by Peter Nolan.	30:00
7	161 (Indep) Recce Flt Plaque.	35:00
8	161 Recce Assoc "Pilot Statuette". (very limited supply).	35:00
9	161 (Indep) Recce Flt Wine Glass featuring the 161 Possum.	15:00
10	161 (Indep) Recce Flt Port Glass featuring the 161 Possum.	15:00
11	161 (Indep) Recce Flt Coffee Mug featuring the 161 Possum.	15:00
12	16 ALA Sqn, Plaque.	35:00
13	16 ALA Sqn, Fridge Magnet, 50mm Diameter.	5:00
14	161 Possum – Fridge Magnet, 50mm Diameter.	5:00
15	Luscombe Field – Fridge Magnet, 50mm Diameter.	5:00
16	Perspex Medal Holder.	8:00
17	161 (Indep) Recce Flt Car Stickers. 90mm diameter.	5:00
18	161 TAC Sign Sticker. 120mm x 120mm.	5:00
19	Large Vietnam Ribbon Car Sticker. 310mm x 50mm.	5:00
20	161 Recce Flight Baseball Caps.	20:00
21	161 Number Plate Frame.	10:00
21	CD – Vietnam Songs	X:X

** Len Avery – Ph (07) 4633 4888, Email < lavery19@tpg.com.au > or

8 McGregor Street, Toowoomba. QLD. 4350.

Supporting The Troops Overseas – “ADOPT-A-DIGGER”.

We would once again like to take this opportunity to thank those 161 members who have been actively involved in the “ADOPT A DIGGER” Program during the past 12 months, especially Garry Channells.

As previously advised Garry has been actively involved in the “ADOPT-A-DIGGER” Program through the Ourimbah/Lisarow RSL in NSW sending packages to troops on deployment in Afghanistan, Timor and the Middle East which includes troops from both the 1st and 5th Aviation Regiments.

Some of the personnel currently deployed overseas include both past and present members of 161 Recce Sqn and the efforts of Garry Channells and everyone involved in the “ADOPT-A-DIGGER” program are greatly appreciated by all members of 161.

Museum of Australian Army Flying (MAAF).

In October of 2009, the Museum of Australian Army Flying (MAAF) at Oakey held its annual Fly-In and we the 161 Recce Assoc organised a special display in the Museum hangar during the Fly-In.

The weekend was a great success and the 161 display drew a lot of attention from the visiting public. A number of our 161 members manned the display during the weekend and they were kept busy answering questions and talking to people about 161.

Special display cases were provided for the display and due to the success of the weekend we were asked to leave the displays on show in the Museum for an extended period of time.

We would like to make special mention of the assistance provided to the 161 Recce Assoc by our resident Possums at the Museum, Brian Reardon and Barry Skinner, plus all the members of the MAAF Committee and Museum Management Team.

We would strongly recommend a visit to the Museum if you are passing through the Darling Downs area. We can assure you that you will not be disappointed.

161 Recce Flt is well represented in the Museum with examples of all of the aircraft we flew in Vietnam plus a special 161 display in the memorabilia room ‘The Terry Egan Room’.

Membership to the MAAF is open to all members of 161 Recce Flt and 161 Recce Sqn and we would strongly encourage you to become a member and support the MAAF. A membership form for the museum is available on the MAAF Page on our 161 Web Site.

You can access the MAAF Web Page by logging onto the 161 Recce Assoc Web Site at:

< www.161recceflt.org.au > or by logging onto the Army Web Site at:

< www.army.gov.au > and going to the History Section and then to the museums page.

The MAAF continues to make an annual donation to the 161 Recce Assoc to offset the cost of maintaining the 161 Web Site.

Helen Bawden does an excellent job in publishing a monthly newsletter for the MAAF and the newsletter’s are published on the MAAF Web Page.

The next Fly-In for the MAAF is planned for the weekend of 2-3 October 2010 so please keep a close watch on the MAAF Page of the 161 Web Site for dates and details of the Fly-In.

Please Note – Both Brian Reardon and Barry Skinner are no longer the curator or the manager of the Museum. Brian has retired, although he will continue to assist the Museum on a voluntary basis, whilst Barry Skinner is back in the Army and been posted to 5 Avn Regt in Townsville as the maintenance manager for B Squadron and the Black Hawk helicopter.

Vietnam Veteran's National Museum – Phillip Island, Victoria.

A reminder to everyone that a visit to the National Vietnam Veteran's Museum (NVVM) on Phillip Island in Victoria is strongly recommended.

Prior to visiting the Museum you may wish to visit the Vietnam Veteran's Museum Web Site at the following address:

< <http://www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org/> >.

We now have a large 161 Recce Flt display in the Museum along with a Bell 47 Sioux (A1-406) on loan from the Museum of Australian Army Flying at Oakey.

Rex Willis is responsible for creating the 161 display at the Museum and a special thank you must go to Rex for all the work that he has done and continues to do to develop the 161 display within the Museum.

We now have a resident 161 Possum at the Museum. Ian Diss has been assisting at the Museum by conducting tours within the Museum so if you get a chance to visit the Museum please try and catch up with Ian and say hello.

Australian Army Aviation Association & FOURAYS.

A reminder that "FOURAYS" is the journal of the Australian Army Aviation Association (AAAA.), published twice yearly. Ordinary Membership or Life Subscription to AAAA is open to all personnel who served with 161 Recce Flt or 161 Recce Sqn.

****PLEASE NOTE:** Membership of 161 Recce Association **does not** include membership of AAAA.

The AAAA website is operational and can be accessed by logging onto: < <http://www.fourays.org> >.

December 2010 will mark the 50th Anniversary of the formation of 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron at RAAF Base Amberley. The Australian Army Aviation Corps was formed on 01 July 1968.

The committee of the Australian Army Aviation Association is examining options to celebrate this important milestone and the suggestion has been put forward that a gathering be held on the Gold Coast over the weekend 10/11 December 2010.

For those who may be interested in attending the gathering in December please keep a close watch on the FOURAYS Web Site.

Finally, Best wishes to you all, and look after yourself and those you care about.

Len and Kay Avery.

Contact details are:

Phone – 07 4633 4888 or Email at < lavery19@tpg.com.au >.

Address – 8 McGregor Street, Toowoomba. QLD. 4350.

161 Web Site - < www.161recceflt.org.au >.

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161 RECCE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Membership to the 161 Recce Association is open to all members of 161 Recce Flt and or 161 (Indep) Recce Flt who served in Vietnam and all past and present members of 161 Recce Sqn.

Membership to the 161 Recce Association is also extend to all Next of Kin and family members all members of 161 Vietnam and 161 Recce Sqn.

The 161 Recce Assoc has Branches or 'Points of Contact' in all States and Territories so if you need assistance or information regarding membership of the 161 Recce Assoc please contact your nearest Branch or the National Administrative Body (NAB).

Membership fees are due as of 01 January of each year. Membership Fees through the NAB are \$10:00 per year or if you prefer you can pay in advance, eg. \$100 for 10 years.

Membership Fees at Branch level may vary to that of the NAB so please contact your local 161 Recce Assoc Branch regarding membership or alternatively contact Len Avery at:

(07) 4633 4888 or Email < lavery19@tpg.com.au >.

Attached please find a 161 Recce Association Membership Form which you can use to initiate or renew your membership with the 161 Recce Assoc. Please send your completed Membership Form to your closest Association Branch, or to the NAB at the addresses provided.

Membership Status.

Ordinary Membership is open to:

- All members who served with or were attached to the 161 Recce Flight in Vietnam, and
- All current and former members of 161 Recce Squadron.

Associate Membership is open to:

- The immediate family of a member, dependents and descendants, and
- Any person who is serving in, or who has served in, the Australian Defence Forces, or a friendly Allied country, in any unit whose role is or may have been similar to that of 161 Recce Flt.

Life Members.

The 161 Recce Association currently has three Life Members and they are:

Max Sward, Len Avery and Frank Benfield.

161 RECCE ASSOCIATION

NAB and Branch Contact Details

The following members are our points of contact within the 161 Recce Association;

NAB Chairman

John Custance.
87/33-67 Edmund Rice Drive
Southport Qld 4215
Ph: 07 5527 9376 or 0438 940 574
Email: < janducust@bigpond.com >

NAB Secretary/Treasurer

Skeeta Ryan.
12 Samuel Court
Toowoomba. QLD. 4350
Ph: 07 4634 2767
Email: < sanjryan@tpg.com.au >

Darling Downs Branch

Len Avery.
8 McGregor Street
Toowoomba. QLD 4350.
Ph: 07 4633 4888
Email: < lavery19@tpg.com.au >

Sydney Branch

Garry Channells.
12 Chittaway Road
Ourimbah. NSW. 2258
Ph: 02 4362 1111
Email: N/A

Melbourne Branch

Adrian Bell.
127 Brookfield Village,
111 – 139 Coburns Road,
Brookfield. VIC 3338.
Ph: 03 9746 8486
Email: < possumvic@aapt.net.au >

South Australian Branch

Kevern Rowe.
6 Beatrice Avenue
Seaton. SA 5023
Ph: 08 8356 3588
Email: < kevrow@gmail.com >

Brisbane Branch

Bill Hudnott.
14 Chowchilla Street
Albany Creek QLD 4035
Ph: 07 3264 1921
Email: < bill_judy@optusnet.com.au >

Townsville Branch

Alan Meiklejohn.
9 Grasmere Court
Kirwan QLD. 4817
Ph: 07 4773 1519
Email: < alanmeik@bigpond.net.au >

Canberra Branch

Laz Csibi.
9 Stuart Street
Queanbeyan. NSW 2620
Ph: 02 6297 9109
Email: < lcsibi@bigpond.net.au >

Tasmania Branch

Nigel Hamilton-Smith.
PO Box 14
Oatlands. TAS 7120
Ph: 03 6254 0004
Email: N/A

Western Australia

Derek Downing.
234 Sultana Road East
Forrestfield WA 6058.
Ph: 08 9359 1848
Email: < ddo92797@bigpond.net.au >.

161 RECCE ASSOCIATION

Membership Application/Renewal Form

Surname..... Given Name.....

Address..... Date of Birth

Town/City.....State.....Post Code.....Country.....

Ph (h).....Ph (w).....Mobile No.....

FAX No.....Email Address.....

Record of Service

Regimental No.....Rank (at Discharge).....Corps.....

Date of Discharge.....Unit (at discharge).....

Did you serve in any of the following units, if so when:

161 Recce Flt.....

161 (Indep) Recce Flt.....

161 Recce Sqn.....or

Other Units (Name and Date).....

Membership Status

Membership:.....Ordinary.....or.....Associate or Family

Duration of Membership: Yearly: Yes/No.....orLong Term.....years

Date of Membership payment.....Amount Paid.....

Branch Membership paid to.....

Receipt No.....Received by.....Date.....

Possum 45

Celebrating the 45th Anniversary of the 1965 deployment to South Vietnam of 161 Recce Flight

Information and Registration Details

Greetings from Townsville Nth Qld

Many of you will already be aware that the Possum 45 national reunion is to be held in Townsville over the period of 8th – 10th September 2010. A small group has been working away over many months here and we think that we will put together a great week of activities for you. A cordial invitation to attend **Possum 45** is now extended to;

- All members of 161 Recce Association and their families;
- All **current and past** members of 161 Recce Squadron/Flight and their families;
- Any past or present member of Australian Army Aviation Units and their families;
- A special invitation is extended to the Next of Kin of any 161 Recce Association members.

The registration form is available on the 161 website from September.

An information package of maps, brochures and other general information will be provided to you in the registration package to be sent when we receive your registration. This package has been put together on the assumption that many of you may not be familiar with the new Townsville and its surrounding areas.

The contents will orientate you to the various locations where official Possum 45 activities will take place and provide information on convenient nearby accommodation options, transport options to and from the venues, etc. The package is quite large so, rather than distribute it generally, we will post one to you after we receive your intention to attend.

Although our priority to date has been to finalise the reunion activities and get the registration process started we also want members who travel to Townsville in 2010 to make the most of their stay with us. We therefore hope you will spend a few extra days in the area before and/or after the reunion and take the opportunity to visit some of our local tourist attractions and magnificent weather.

Venues and Locations

In choosing venues and locations we were mindful that many 161'ers and their families from interstate will elect to travel to Townsville by air using the discount airfares which are now readily available. We are hoping to see many attendees who may not have had the opportunity to make it to previous Possum gatherings. Virgin Blue, Jetstar and Qantas have daily services to Townsville and all offer discounted fares. (Book early for the bigger discounts) All Possum 45 venues have been chosen because they are well served by public transport so you may elect not to drive but, if you do, the venues all have plentiful car parking.

Register Early

All is set for a most enjoyable week. It will of course assist us greatly with our planning if you could get your registration form off to us as soon as possible. Early registration will ensure early receipt of your comprehensive information pack so that you can finalise your travel arrangements. Why not send off your registration form to us now while you are thinking about it? In the meantime, we have an email address where you can make enquiries on any matter relating to Possum 45 or Townsville in general and we will try to advise and assist as best we can. Just send an email to: < possum45@bigpond.com >.

For those who do not have access to email, just drop a note by post to;

Possum 45
C/- R Gordon
PO Box 7731
Garbutt BC
Townsville. 4814.

Possum 45 Registration Form

*Celebrating the 45th Anniversary of the 1965 deployment to
South Vietnam of 161 Recce Flight*

Possum 45 will be held in Townsville, Nth Qld over the period 8th – 10th September 2010.

Please complete and return this form and full payment as soon as possible but no later than 15 July 2010.

You may photocopy the form as necessary to share or keep for your records.

First Person

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code _____

Phone No: _____

Email: _____

Second Person

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code _____

Phone No: _____

Email: _____

(attach separate sheet with additional person names and details if necessary)

ITEM	NAMES OF PERSONS ATTENDING	TOTAL
Wednesday Evening Registration & Renew Friendships at the Townsville RSL. \$25/ person. Nibbles/Canapes provided. Drinks are at own cost. Dinner is available in the restaurant.		\$
BBQ, AGM, lunch @ \$15 per person. Venue. TBA		\$
45 th Anniversary dinner at the Townsville RSL. \$45/ person.		\$

TOTAL COST \$ _____

Please attach a cheque for the total cost made out To "**161 Recce Flight Association.**" and post to;

Possum 45
PO Box 7731
Garbutt BC
Qld 4814

OR

Pay by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to the following bank account. Please enter your full name in the reference box.

BSB No: 803 205
Account No: 124965
Account Name: 161 Recce Assoc NQ

You will still need to complete a registration form. Post it to the address at left or scan and email as an attachment to;

< possum45@bigpond.com >

I have paid by CHEQUE/ EFT

Possum 45 Merchandise for Sale

Celebrating the 45th Anniversary of the 1965 deployment to South Vietnam of 161 Recce Flight

Greetings once again from Townsville Tropical North Queensland,

Following the now established practice from Possum 30, Possum 35 and Possum 40 the organisers of Possum 45 have arranged for “badged” merchandise to be made available for purchase by attendees. The relevant order form is attached.

We have selected manufacturers who have agreed to produce for us the following items;

Polo shirts – A polo type shirt, tropical colours, with the Possum logo on the breast pocket and the words “P45 Townsville” on the collar. A range of sizes will be available. Please use the boxes on the order form to indicate how many items of each size that you require by circling a size and noting the quantity.

Caps - A “baseball” type peak cap with the Possum logo on the front and the words “P45 Townsville” across the back. They are “one size fits all” so you only need to indicate the quantity.

Bucket Hats - A hat in either small/medium or large/extra large with the possum logo on the front. Circle the size and note quantity required.

Stubbie Holders – A stubby holder with the words “161 Recce Flight Association Reunion” printed on the front and P45 Townsville on the back. Once again, you only need to indicate the quantity.

Because of the varying size needs of individuals, specifically for the polo shirts, the items will need to be pre-ordered and paid for.

You can order your merchandise requirements in a similar way that you registered for attendance at Possum 45.

- Post a completed order form and full payment to the address shown.

OR

- Email a completed order form and EFT the payment as indicated.

After you have placed your order with us we will send you an immediate acknowledgement either by post or email.

Please have your order in with us **BEFORE 30th June 2010** at the latest because shortly after that date we will submit a single bulk order to the manufacturer to ensure that we get the best unit prices.

We cannot guarantee that late orders will be able to be processed. We strongly recommend that you send off your order now while you are thinking about it.

Ordered items will be available for pickup at the Wednesday evening “Registration and Meet & Greet” function at the Townsville RSL Venue.

Possum 45 Merchandise Order Form

*Celebrating the 45th Anniversary of the 1965 deployment to
South Vietnam of 161 Recce Flight*

To order Possum 45 merchandise, please complete and return this form and full payment no later than **30 June 2010**.

The items will be custom bulk ordered after that date and will be available for pickup at the Wednesday evening Registration and Meet & Greet function at the Townsville RSL Venue.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code _____

Contact Phone No: _____ Email: _____

Polo Shirt: Men: S M L XL XXL XXXL Other Qty: Total Cost:
\$45

Circle Size Ladies: S M L XL XXL Other

Caps: One size fits all Qty: Total Cost:
\$15

Bucket Hat: S/M Qty: Total Cost:
\$15 L/XL Qty: Total Cost:

Stubbie Holder: Qty: Total Cost:
\$6

Payment by cheque for the total cost made out to **“161 Recce Flight Association NQ.”**

Post to: Possum 45
C/- R W Gordon
PO Box 7731
Garbutt BC
Townsville QLD 4814 or

Payment by EFT: Please enter your name in the reference box

BSB: 803 205
Account No: 124965
Account Name: 161 Recce Flt Assn NQ
Bank: Defence Force Credit Union
