

**Royal New South Wales Lancers Association Report
To the RAAC Corporation Virtual AGM 10 October 2020**

Great to have the opportunity to report on what the Royal New South Wales Lancers' Association has done in the past year.

It has been a year where we have been beset by disasters. The Regiment has been on almost constant deployment since October 2019; and it is a Reserve Regiment. The reports the CO Colonel Andrew White has given to us to publish in Lancers' Despatch tell the story. From using the PMVs, labouring and providing entertainment.

In October and November the unit helped out with the bushfires in New South Wales.

The Regiment provided assistance in staging the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo at Sydney Olympic Park.

In 2020 it was back to the fire front, then COVID struck. The Regiment was involved with port quarantine during New South Wales' Ruby Princess crisis. Latterly the Regiment has been deployed to the Victorian border.

And the Regiment has continued to train participating in Exercise Talisman Sabre and running home training and live firing exercises.

For the Association 2020 has been a year for navigating restrictions as it has been for everything else. Started well, we managed to get the February Lancers' Despatch out on time. By March things were not as good, the Regimental birthday, 135 years since the formation in 1885 could only be commemorated by a short parade in the Drill Hall, much of the unit being committed to the bush fires.

Later in the month, a physical AGM was not possible, we assembled via Skype Meeting and did the necessary business.

ANZAC Day was not like any other, we along with all of the nation gathered with family members in the cold at the end of our driveways and watched presentations.

Let us hope that COVID will abate sufficient for the Association to participate in the Freedom of Entry parade in November, and not just watch a compilation of past parades on YouTube.

The pandemic has adversely affected quite a few Association members, as former Reservists few of whom saw active service, they are not covered by veteran programmes. Younger members have lost jobs, retirees have had incomes depleted with dividends and interest on investments drying up. The Association has been able to assist by fostering the comradeship of the Museum working environment and contact between our members, publishing videos of Museum work, continuing to publish Lancers' Despatch online and in paper format; and in extreme cases providing direct financial assistance. We are fortunate to have our trained welfare officer Brian Walters to assist with such matters. The contribution of DVA funds to the Association in lieu of travel expenses to the Corporation AGM Has proven very useful.

When COVID struck our Lancers' Museum had to close and all booked tours cancelled.

The AGM and committee meetings were conducted by Skype Meeting.

The Museum was able to re-open again on 5 July under strict COVID protocols. A COVID plan in accord with NSW Government requirements was prepared and is strictly adhered to. Later given the difficulty in physical distancing in the Museum building, visitors wear masks. Attendance has been good on

those Sundays when it has not been freezing cold and teaming with rain. So far only one of the cancelled booked tours has been able to be re-scheduled.

The Museum is managing to dodge bullets fired by JLL that would close us down, and still having problems getting approval from NIG for the construction of overhead protection for our vehicle collection.

Addendum

The Regiment has announced that the Freedom of Entry parade proposed for November will now not happen. The commemoration will be subdued and held in Lancer Barracks under the terms of the COVID restrictions applicable at the time.

John Howells
Secretary