

## The FESR Visitors Log

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**Message started by Webmaster on Jun 8<sup>th</sup>, 2007, 11:08pm**

Title: **FESR W.A. Reunion 2007**

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Evening All - Joe and Erica asked me to post this front page - but with work this week - end of year cut offs and equipment expenditure - I thought at least get Joes' 'Good Words' out and let you see what a great job W.A. FESR and all FESR Members did to make this a reunion of many great achievements and memories.

#### REUNION 2007 IN SANDGROPER COUNTRY

Our pilgrimage by air land & sea across the rabbit-proof fence was an adventure met with great weather, good hosts, and lots of camaraderie with former shipmates and their wives.

Over 200 members and their wives descended on the WA port city of Fremantle for 5 days of fellowship in a region full of rustic charm and memorabilia befitting a bunch of old mariners.

Registration and the Annual General Meeting were conducted in the South Fremantle Football Club home of the Bulldogs & the Dockers just up the boundary fence a bit.

Reunion shirts, caps, key rings, tourist information, and well produced invitations to key events highlighted gift bag contents. NSW cockroaches Norm Sharman, Des Taylor, and Herbie Sunderland registered the only grievance- they wanted pink bags!

During the AGM, President Joe Linaker re-elected for another year, presented his report, which detailed his ongoing struggles with DVA on a number of issues, and the need to gain some support from the strong and powerful to give the FESR a stronger voice.

Les Bailey (Vic) was elected to the National Executive in a Vice- Presidential role, and Gordon Love (Qld) was elected National Secretary. Life Membership was bestowed on Denis Sefton (WA) and Bob Witt (Qld) and both received wide acclamation for their service and dedication to the association during the turbulent years and the fight for recognition.

Closing the meeting President Joe called for the members to assemble for the next AGM in Gosford NSW on Monday 30th June 2008. The AGM would herald a week of activities including FESR Day celebrations and the consecration of the Malay Borneo Memorial Bridge.

The venue for the next reunion is to be determined by the NSW Division and the destination mix for consideration included Newcastle, Ballina, & Caloundra.

**STOP PRESS!**

NSW Division has determined venue in 2010 to be COFFS HARBOUR!

Tuesday's bus venture to HMAS Stirling was interesting with a tasty lunch over red wine in the ships cafeteria. Unfortunately the guide must have thought we were wearing towels on our heads and carrying bags of semtex, because security dictates would not let us off the bus apart from a comfort stop & lunch.

Kings Park was packed with over 30,000 people for a magnificent dawn service attended by

magnitude of public support.

This level of support was revealed in the daylight of ANZAC day for the march. FESR Navy division was second cab off the rank, and crowd support was overwhelming. As the photos indicate the contingent lead by FESR widows were a very proud bunch of old warriors and in step too!

Sign on material followed the march with several hours at sea with a beer issue & a rum issue on the Swan in a terrific cruise boat hosted by a marvelous crew who showed tremendous patience waiting for all the wobbly boots to cross the brow expressing their appreciation by yodeling among other things!

Monument Hill's imposing obelisk to the fallen stood tall over the wonderful ceremony to unveil and dedicate the FESR Navy plaque fixed in a prime position on one of the monument pillars to seaward of the obelisk. Unveiled by Fremantle City Mayor Peter Tagliaferri, no less than 11 wreaths were laid at the ceremony to include the Vice-Consuls for Malaysia, Captain Steve Davies CO HMAS Stirling, Patron RADM Phil Kennedy AO, National President Joe Linaker and all State Presidents.

On completion all members were accorded a civic reception by Lord Mayor Peter during which he presented WA Division President with a city of Fremantle plaque for services to the city.

The trek to Bullcreek was well worth the wonderful presentation of the Association dinner by James De Souza & staff of the RAAF Association. Delicious lamb cutlets, Hardys Shiraz Cabernet, and a damn fine port. President Joe raised a few laughs when he regaled the audience with a five minute hypothetical- "Should Navy Veterans Over 65 Have tea?" Sitting our Kiwi shipmates and their ladies under the NZ flag left an indelible impression on many at the dinner.

Many friendships were re-cemented for years to come at the farewell barbeque at RAAFA Bullcreek, and all members and their wives could be forgiven for being a bit tired and emotional after a wonderful week with the Sandgropers .

THANK YOU WA.