



*Royal Australian Artillery Association (NT) Inc Patron – The Honourable Austin Asche AC QC*

Greetings from the RAAANT in Darwin. Yesterday the Darwin Military Museum achieved another milestone in its evolving history with the opening of the new Vietnam Gallery. We invite you to read on below.

UBIQUE John Johnston (Editor) – [iri5076@bigpond.net.au](mailto:iri5076@bigpond.net.au) PH: 0419 836 669

## **NORTHERN TERRITORY INFRASTRUCTURE MINISTER OPENS NEW VIETNAM GALLERY**

NT Minister for Infrastructure the Hon. Peter Styles MLA opened the new Vietnam Gallery at Darwin Military Museum on Wednesday 14 August 2013. The Gallery which took four years of work to establish is in the underground Generator Room of the 9.2-inch gun emplacement in the Museum grounds. In keeping with the Museum's practice of preserving the old while presenting the new the curatorial team has not concealed the original purpose of the Generator Room – to provide motive power for the Gun Emplacement's firepower. Rather they have highlighted it while showing off around 150 artifacts of the Vietnam War including uniforms equipment photographs and medals.

Minister Styles congratulated the Museum on its initiative saying: "It's great to see the Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia and the Darwin Military Museum unite on this venture. We owe a debt to our returned soldiers in more than just acknowledging that fact – it has to be seen to be part of our public history and to have all of its facets on display."

Peter Mansell, the President of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Darwin Branch agreed. He said: "We collected our souvenirs at first for ourselves – but in recent years we wanted them to be out there on inspection. It's part of sharing with the people of Australia the fact we went to war and that the conflict was difficult in more than the usual facts of combat – our homecoming was shrouded in doubt and often dismay." Mr Mansell went on: "This new gallery at the Museum allows an inspection which highlights our history for the general public – not just our members."

Darwin Military Museum Director Dr Tom Lewis said the curatorial team led by Norm Cramp had pursued a number of initiatives to combine the old aspects of the generator room so that the original purpose of the area could be seen for what they were and also the impact of the new displays were minimized. These included platforming over the old engine plinths but showing by means of cutouts where the original power plants were mounted and designing new easier and safe stairs so as to show the original stairs through them. Exhaust vents have been retained but made into display cases and the original purpose of the engine room – to convert its power into hydraulics – has been shown through explanations and diagrams.

Colonel (Retd) Jeff Dunn OAM President of the Royal Australian Artillery Association (NT) Inc, who founded the Museum and continues it today, congratulated Norm Cramp and his curatorial team - Peter Blackadder John O'Connell and Major Trevor Smith. "This is four years of effort" said Colonel Dunn. "Well done to all concerned!"

The Vietnam gallery is open as part of the other attractions of the Darwin Military Museum at East Point - Darwin's leading tourist attraction – which is also home to the unique Defence of Darwin Experience.



Vietnam Gallery Opening - Guests Inspecting the Gallery



Vietnam Gallery Opening

(L-R) Peter Blackadder (DMM Guide) Peter Mansell (President Vietnam Veterans Association Darwin NT) Hon. Austin Asche AC QC (Patron RAAANT) Norm Cramp (Operations Supervisor DMM) Hon. Peter Styles MLA (NT Minister for Infrastructure) Don Moyle (DMM Guide) Dr Tom Lewis OAM (Director DMM) Colonel (Retd) Jeff Dunn OAM CSM (President RAAANT)

#### WEB SITES

Darwin Military Museum: <http://www.darwinmilitarymuseum.com.au>  
Defence of Darwin Experience: <http://www.defenceofdarwin.nt.gov.au>

#### CONTACTS:

Dr Tom Lewis OAM, Director Darwin Military Museum E-mail: [info@darwinmilitarymuseum.com.au](mailto:info@darwinmilitarymuseum.com.au)  
Tel: (08) 8981 9702 or 0400 836 590

John Johnston, National Liaison Officer RAAANT E-mail: [jrj5076@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jrj5076@bigpond.net.au)  
Tel: 0419 836 669

Darwin Military Museum is Located at 5434 Alec Fong Lim Drive, East Point NT 0820

RAAANT/DMM Postal Address – GPO Box 3220 DARWIN NT 0811