



DEBRIEF

Patron: RADM Neil Ralph AO DSC RAN

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Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Inc.

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A better life with chronic pain?... it can be done

Many veterans are living with chronic (persistent) pain, managing the best they can on their own at home. The nature of military service and the ageing veteran population means chronic pain is more prevalent in your community. Unfortunately, veterans (like the general community) are probably not getting best practice health care.

My story

If I knew then, what I know now – my health would be different. In 2006 I was running down the stairs, in socks, carrying a basket of washing, fell & fractured vertebrae. Even though I kept my husband awake, complaining about the pain, I only took a single paracetamol. After 2 days I was back at work as an advisory teacher, having physio before work & then driving long distances, lugging resources into different schools & generally overdoing it.

In 2008 I was stopped in my tracks one morning when my leg gave way. Being surprised rather than alarmed ... it came good, so I trundled off to work. However, following a lunchtime meeting, my leg paralyzed & siren screaming pain set in.

That afternoon I landed in the hospital emergency department.

During the consultation with the neurosurgeon I was given a lecture, "I can operate to fix the pain but I can't repair nerve damage. If you'd come to see me when you could walk, you'd be in a much better position, than the one you're in now." Two ops later the nerve damage has left me with continuous neuropathic pain, which I always have to manage. I'm in denial no more. I had rehabilitation & later attended a pain management clinic (PMC) ...a decision that gave me my life back: medication review, paced exercise/activity, routines, and helpful mind techniques, reorganizing home lessons & relaxation. When our group finished the PMC there was no support outside of hospital so, with the help of my husband, mates & the medical profession I founded APMA.

Of course, many veterans, and others I speak to now with chronic persistent pain have far worse injuries and diseases than mine. My story is a small one but the crucial factors I have learned from my experience are for everyone with pain:

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VVAA NATIONAL CONGRESS MAY 2010



Above:

Brigadier Bill Rolfe AO, retiring Service Member of the Repatriation Commission, being presented with a plaque by Ron Coxon for his untiring work on the commission for veterans.

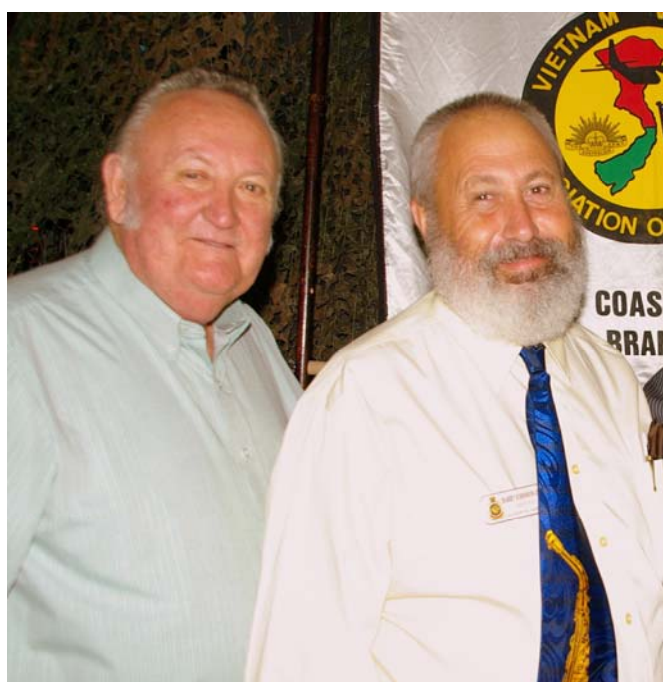
Above right:

Prof. Dr. Brian O'Toole receiving a presentation recognising his work on the Longitudinal Study of Vietnam Veterans and Families Study.

Right:

Congratulations to National Vice President/Qld State President John Smith OAM JP. and Barry Johnson OAM ,JPQ Caloundra RSL Services Club Senior Vice President/ Caloundra RSL Sub branch President for their organisation of the National Congress.

Below:



NATIONAL PRESIDENTS REPORT



I take this opportunity to welcome new members to the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAA) and encourage all members to look around at those who may have dropped off the radar and maybe in need of some assistance. Welfare is becoming more and more of our focus. We have many in our midst

who are on the sick list. We would wish them all well and hope they experience a speedy recovery. As we age health and welfare becomes paramount to a good lifestyle. Both State and Sub Branches must become actively involved in programs of interest to members.

Now that all of the new forums are in place and meeting regularly it is important that the reports being distributed from the representatives are circulated down to Sub Branch level so that you, the members, know just what is happening within the veteran community. This is your association you should know what is occurring if it is not happening please enquire to keep yourself informed.

The VVAA is constantly watching for outcomes of the reviews being conducted still, with outcomes outstanding at this time. These include the review of Pharmaceuticals, DVA funded Advocacy Services and the MRCA among others. It is extremely important that our input in these reviews has been considered. In line with that the VVAA has now been invited to sign up to becoming a partner in the, National Compact with the Third Sector Agreement, where better ways of working with the Government should be formulated. This will be across a broad range of diverse working areas such as health, social welfare, mental health volunteering and advocacy. Ex-service organisations (ESOs) are important contributors to this sector.

At times when writing my reports for this magazine you wonder who is reading it all. Recently I received a letter from the wife of a veteran who was experiencing difficulties in understanding the claims process. This lady quoted a paragraph from my report written in 2007 and as a result wrote to me seeking explanation of the system to give them both better understanding. To realise that the magazine serves this purpose and, in this case, the knowledge had been retained for so long makes it all worthwhile. Feedback like that is heartening. The Debrief is, along with State and Sub Branch Newsletters, a great means of getting the message out there, a great communication tool for those in isolation.

More local items would also give those on the road an insight into what maybe happening in your area in which they may wish to be involved. For this reason information of this type could be forwarded for inclusion.

National Congress was held in May with little change to most positions. I personally thank outgoing Vice President Brian Harper for his untiring work on the Executive and look forward to his continual involvement in future. The updated contact details pages are as usual is at the back along with the Portfolio Managers for the various aspects of business. Anyone experiencing difficulty in any area should contact that respective portfolio manager so that there is awareness of problems in any area of business.

We all look forward to continuing our services to for you and to honour our motto. Remember this is your Association have a say you can make a difference.

Ron Coxon,

'Survey on Debrief.

Have a look inside the address flyer on this edition for a simple survey for your comment on the Debrief. Your comments will be appreciated on any changes you think would be appropriate.

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NATIONAL SECRETARIES REPORT



National Sponsor

I am pleased to report that we have made contact with our national sponsor, Rear Admiral Neil Ralph AO DSC RAN he has been returned to the Debrief mailing list and hopefully will be attending this congress.

As National Secretary I have identified a number of areas of administration that required attention.

Policy hand book:

In my opinion a number of existing items in the policy handbook require updating and the items raised by NSW and Victoria over the past year require a decision, I have recommended a number of amendments and an annual review of the policy handbook in future.

Constitution:

I have put a number of recommendations to the national council, most importantly are the administrative amendments that are related to the change of name approved in 2009, others are administrative amendments to improve the administrative process.

I cannot over emphasise the need for adoption of at least the first six constitutional amendment recommendations I have made in a separate paper. Non adoption could affect such things as our income tax exemption from the Australian taxation Office.

ABN Registrations:

Again as part of the change of name process approved in 2009 a number of amendments to our Australian Business Number (ABN) registrations were required and these have now been completed.

Debrief Magazine:

The subject of the editing and production of the magazine has been under discussion for some time, in anticipation of this continuing I asked all branches to consider the services they consider as alternatives and asked for quotes based on a similar production for comparison.

Future programs for consideration:

A number of projects have been investigated and in some cases initiated, these include:

The Bullet project:

This project authorises a commercial enterprise to use our logo as a marketing tool, the authority is for a one

year period and is renewable, and there is a financial return to the association for every unit sold with no expense to the association

The rose project:

This is a long term project as it takes a number of years to develop a suitable rose, produce stock and market the project, no specific name has been selected to date and again there is a financial return to the association with no outgoing expenses.

The Wollongong University medical school mental health project.

The association, in cooperation with other ex service organisation has agreed to assist and support a mental health project at Wollongong University. The project depends on government funding and an application has been lodged by the university with letter of support from the ex service community.

Again there is no cost to the association however our members may be invited to participate in parts of the project.

The Mines Advisory Group project.

Earlier this year I attended a meeting with executive members of the Mines Advisory Group that were visiting Australia, the group support removal of mines and unexploded ordinance in areas of past conflict to allow the local populations to use areas of land that previously were unusable.

Their main focus of the meeting was a request to support their operations by distributing newsletters and items of information throughout our membership and promoting the group's activities to the Australian ex service community, I indicated I would pass the request to this National Congress for endorsement.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

It should be noted that a number of recommendations have been sent to the national council for consideration, it is then a matter for the states to accept these recommendations and put them as motions for adoption or reject the recommendations.

On a number of occasions comments have been made that the national executive does nothing, If you compare the recommendations to the actions by states to comment, discuss, question and adopt these recommendations I feel the actions by the national executive are appropriate.

The grass roots membership are the final authority on policy within the association, there is a belief that the general membership are not interested in

administration, I do not believe that is so, they may not want to be involved but I do believe they want professional administration of the association at all levels.

Ken Foster
National Secretary

TASMANIA

Since taking over from my predecessor in February of this year I have discovered that there is a pair of rather large shoes to fill. On behalf of all the members of our branch

and I am sure all among you at national who have known and worked with him over the past five years, we sincerely thank both John and Gail for their sacrifices and dedication to the veteran community and the VVAA, and wish them both all the best and good health in the coming years.

February 2010 marked the beginning of a new electoral format for the Tasmania Branch Executive following a successful amendment to the State Constitution being made in November 2009. Each member of the executive is now elected for a two year term with a ballot for half of the executive occurring annually. This change was taken in recognition of the fact that a level of continuity in executive experience must be maintained if we are to support and encourage volunteers to put their hands up. Something that right down to Sub-Branch level is proving difficult to do as our membership ages.

Another feature of this general reluctance to take up any executive positions, and I am certain it is not just a phenomena restricted to Tasmania, is an ongoing pre-occupation with internal debate on what members generally view as obscure and irrelevant organisational politics at the expense of issues that actually matter. The view is 'if we aint got it together by now, it aint ever going to happen and we're not interested'.

A trend emerging in Tasmania is a distinctive shift towards the need for a stronger focus on welfare activities among the aging Vietnam Veteran population. Not surprisingly a good percentage of referrals reaching us are for veterans who have never been members of any ESO. They are suddenly finding that the civilian infrastructure is either overwhelming or they are being categorised into something they are not. Assistance rendered to these veterans may not equate into increased membership, but in all cases is greatly appreciated.

Following several months of negotiations I am pleased to inform National that a Memorandum of Agreement

I believe this may well be a first in Australia and a clear demonstration of the respect and recognition given to the objectives, doggedness and achievements of the VVAA on behalf of the veteran community since its inception. This M.o.A. also serves as a timely reminder that others seek to learn from and build on our experiences as they in turn are compelled to address the prevarications of political expediency at both Federal and State level on behalf of their veterans. In other words the VVAA is as relevant today as it was two decades ago, perhaps more so.

A further item of concern Tasmania is facing at the present that also has national ramifications is a recent decision by the Army Amenities Fund to cease leases on several of its facilities throughout Australia. Of particular concern to us the closure of the Fort Direction facilities near Hobart from 10 October 2010.

The issue was first raised with us in February 2010 by the wife of a Somalia veteran, and daughter of a Vietnam Veteran, who in voicing the sentiments of herself and others wished to know why the AAF was closing the one place veterans were comfortable at and were able to adequately deal with their personal issues.

The AAF has responded stating that maintenance costs were the primary consideration for their withdrawal from Fort Direction. This statement was reaffirmed by Defence Support Estate and Facilities Services. In response it was suggested to DSEFS that the VVAA Tasmania and APPVA Tasmania may be interested in negotiating a takeover of the AAF lease in October. This offer was quickly countered with the terminal response that '...as such, and as a result of Defence's ongoing operational requirements, there is no intention to offer the Fort Direction site for non-Defence use.'

Given the past record of DSEFS activities in Tasmania, particularly its catastrophic disposal of the former Brighton Army Camp, one must be sceptical of what the actual motives behind this decision really are, and why is it prepared to sacrifice the welfare and well being of its serving and veteran personnel and their families. Perhaps it is time for national to take up the cudgels and examine the activities of the AAF and DSEFS with the Minister as a welfare issue affecting serving and non serving veterans alike.

Warwick Luttrell
State President

Cont from front page....

- All pain is real & is the body's warning system ...take notice
- If pain is stopping you doing what you have to do or enjoy doing ...this is the time to act & seek medical treatment
- Untreated or undertreated acute pain can lead to chronic pain disease...& worse pain
- Stoicism can lead to pain related disability &/or other conditions like anxiety & depression
- Chronic pain won't let you ignore it, 'will' it away or push through the pain barrier ...these unhelpful thoughts just ramp it up
- Chronic pain doesn't mean you are injuring yourself because you feel pain so you need to stay as active as possible.

What is chronic pain?

It's pain that persists beyond the usual healing time, usually three months and is diagnosed by pain that is felt for 30 or more days over six months. It is felt as severe to disabling which interferes with daily functions. It impacts physically, psychologically and socially. Studies have reported 50 -75% of amputees having severe chronic pain (phantom limb pain)

Medical science now knows that chronic pain is a disease of the central nervous system. When an individual experiences pain over a protracted period of time, the central nervous system (and often, peripheral nervous system) becomes hyper-sensitized. That is, the network of nerves fire off their pain messages even more. At the same time, the normal mechanisms that clamp down the pain stop working. This results in pain being felt continuously. Another symptom of chronic pain is that there can be hyper-sensitization of skin, limb or organ.

For the large majority of people with chronic pain, the underlying cause(s) have healed e.g. injury. Some diseases are ongoing e.g. arthritis resulting in two diagnoses e.g. arthritis & chronic pain.

What is the impact of chronic pain?

The impact of chronic pain is felt every day, in all daily functions. It severely restricts an individual's ability to participate in family, social and workplace environments and their overall quality of life.

Persistent pain is like having a fire alarm screaming inside your body that you can't turn off. In Australia today, pain relief should be seen as a human right. Unfortunately, for many sufferers they face social disadvantage and discrimination.

- chronic pain can lead to underemployment or unemployment and impoverishment
- Individuals may be blamed for having persistent pain; face disbelief and social stigma
- many older people are under-reporting their pain, or when it is reported to their GP it is regarded as an inevitable part of old age, resulting in pain being under treated
- Long term pain can cause family break up - loss of house – depression - suicide

In addition to the daily pain, common personal effects of chronic pain include:

- Insomnia and fatigue
- Medication side effects e.g. nausea, dizziness, loss of concentration
- Disability & difficulty with home duties, social and leisure activities
- Unemployment & interference with work
- Family & relationship disruption
- Psychological distress e.g. anxiety and depression
- physical de-conditioning e.g. muscle wasting, joint stiffening
- premature death
- suicide

What can be done?

Australia has world leading pain research and medicine and in 2010 The National Pain Summit endorsed the National Pain Strategy. See: www.painsummit.org.au/ However, this knowledge of a complex problem is not widely known and the Strategy recognizes that nationally, the problem of

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inadequate and inappropriate pain management and "these shortcomings mean that Australians are suffering from pain more than necessary and this is having a significant impact on health services and society generally."

The best pain health care is interdisciplinary. Pain management health care becomes a team effort, shared by doctors, specialists and other health professionals. Treatment is multimodal using different medicines and treatments for different types of pain and related health problems (co-morbidities). There is evidence to show that leading pain management services have many of the following features in common:

- View chronic pain as a disease in its own right
- Prioritise medical care according to complexity
- Interdisciplinary care at all levels, with strong coordination between care providers from the GP through to hospital
- Active health management by the person in pain
- Community or hospital pain management programs for patients and intensive cognitive-behavioural programs for more complex cases
- Pain Medicine specialists guiding GPs and other health professionals
- Early intervention at the sub-acute level to stop pain progressing to chronicity or, when chronicity occurs, minimising the suffering by effective care
- GP education and training.

Pain management in the veteran community

Chronic pain & its management are likely to be a major health issue for veterans given the physical nature of military training & service & the high rate of musculoskeletal injuries. The 'maturing' of many veterans heightens the propensity for veterans to suffer chronic disease. However, age should not be used as a factor not to seek pain relief or to provide pain relief. APMA believes that pain relief is a human right and applicable at any age.

In the USA, Veterans' Affairs (VA) has had

a National Pain Management Strategy since 1998 & the Military Pain Care Act 2009 calls for the implementation of a comprehensive policy on pain management for the military by April 2011.

Many Australian veterans are fortunate to have their medical treatment costs covered by DVA through a Gold Card. But this is of limited use if proper pain services do not exist, are in short supply or health providers and GPs do not understand the problem or patients' needs. It will be a great day when Australian governments (including DVA as a major purchaser of health services) adopt the National Pain Strategy and the defence force and seriously address the challenge of the epidemic of undertreated and mismanaged chronic pain.

Further information:

1. Australian Pain Management Association Inc.: consumer health support & resources for professionals
www.painmanagement.org.au
2. National Pain Strategy provides a blueprint for Australia to move forward with to improve pain management in Australia
www.painsummit.org.au
3. US VHA Pain Management is primarily for clinicians etc and has a range of information but medical jargon is used
[http://www1.va.gov/Pain Management/](http://www1.va.gov/Pain%20Management/)
4. Department of veteran Affairs for an overview of self management of Chronic conditions. Arthritis related Conditions are well covered
http://www.dva.gov.au/health_and_wellbeing/physical_health/mhpe/Pages/chronic.aspx

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VVAA PORTFOLIO AND COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION AS AT 22 MAY 2010

Portfolio	Manager	Committee & Organisation	Representative
Health	David McCann	National Health, Aged & Community Care Forum (NHACCF)	Jan Properjohn
		National Mental Health Forum (NMHF)	Brian McKenzie
		Veterans Medicines Advisory and Therapeutic Education Scheme (MATES)	Peter Ryan
Compensation & Rehabilitation	Ron Coxon	Operational Working Party (OWP)	Ron Coxon
DVA Operations	Ron Coxon	Ex-Service Round Table National Presidents	Ron Coxon
Administration	Ken Foster	Constitution & Policy	Ken Foster
		Register of Practitioners	
		Administration	
		Membership Data Base	
		Debrief Editorial Committee	National Executive
		National Grievance Committee	Appointed by National Council
Management, Media & Education	Ken Foster	Liaison with Government, Minister, Shadow Minister, Repatriation Commission & DVA	Ron Coxon
		Media Releases	Ron Coxon
		Public Officer	Ken Foster
		AVCAT	Ken Foster
		Museum National Liaison Officer	Bob Elworthy
		Veterans Indemnity Training Association (VITA)	Ken Foster
		National Solicitor	As Required
Finance	Rob Cox	Website Webmaster	Rob Cox
		Finance Committee	National Executive
		Grant & Budget Preparation	Rob Cox
		Register of Assets	Rob Cox
		Merchandise & Memorabilia	Kath Coxon
Welfare & Income Support	John Smith	Welfare	John Smith
		Service Pension	John Smith
		Income Support War Widow	John Smith
		Rent Assistance	John Smith
		National Kindred Organisation Committee (KOC)	Peter Ryan

NEW VETERAN HEALTH CARDS BEING ROLLED-OUT

The Minister, Alan Griffin, has announced that DVA clients would begin receiving their new and improved Repatriation Health Cards. Around 40,000 new gold, white and orange Repatriation Health Cards will begin arriving in the letter-boxes of clients shortly. The new cards have been designed to include a number of new and improved features. The cards will now have a magnetic strip which will contain data including the veteran's full name, file number, card type and expiry date. Micro-printing and the addition of a DVA registered hologram will ensure enhanced security and reduce the likelihood of reproduction. The mail-out is expected to be completed by the end of August 2010. The new cards will work the same way as Medicare or private health fund cards — just one swipe will enable health providers to immediately access the client's information and streamline the claims process

The Australian General Service Medal for Korea is being struck to recognise former Defence Force personnel who completed 30 days participating in operations in South Korea. This includes any location within 161 kilometres seaward from the coast of South Korea during the post-armistice period from 28 July 1953 to 19 April 1956. Former Defence Force personnel who served in South Korea during the post-armistice period are encouraged to submit their application to the following address:

Contact:

Directorate of Honours and Awards

Department of Defence

PO Box 7952

CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

1800 111 321 (toll free within Australia) or +612 6266 1050

(from outside Australia), or visit [http://](http://www.defence.gov.au/medals/)

www.defence.gov.au/medals/

QUEENSLAND

Committees

Well here we are in 2010 thank goodness. I do not know why I say that because this year started the same as last year but it has improved, slowly. Finally Qld has a full executive with no double ups and only one nomination from the floor. Unfortunately some of the Sub branches aren't as fortunate. A couple of them have had no nominations whatsoever and had to call for nominations from the floor and some of the Sub branches do not have full executives. One Sub branch could not find a Secretary. This is becoming an ever increasing problem.

We have virtually a new committee with me the only one reelected to the same position. It was with a heavy heart that our Treasurer of some eight years, John Skubis, has finally pulled the plug and we wish him all the very best. The other new members are Snr Vice President, Mr. Greg Norris from Bribie Island, a previous State VP, Jnr Vice President, Mr. Keith Fraser from Gympie, Secretary, Mr. Carl Boy'e from Brisbane North. and Treasurer, Mr. David Fiechtner from Sunshine Coast, previously a State Vice President.

Financial Security

After the Angus House fiasco in the middle of the year we were hit with a further problem with Zac's Place in Townsville when it was discovered that our Snr Vice President was caught and charged with 'dishonestly obtaining funds'. He was the manager of Zac's Place and also the Treasurer of the Townsville Sub Branch and caught for similar offences there as well. He has been charged and found guilty. He was given a one year suspended sentence for two years after he repaid \$18,000 between both parties but, we believe, this was not the full amount taken. This has proved that we have to be very diligent, and conduct proper checks and balances, no matter who is involved.

We have finally received advice and a cheque from the Qld RSL for our Assets and money spent on renovations in good faith prior to being evicted. Although we were hoping to receive about \$65 000 we received a paltry \$6500 with no options or chance for a counter offer. We can now shut the books on a very prominent and successful VVAA venture for some 23 years, most probably the most successful in Australia apart from the National Museum. We are also awaiting advice from Dept of Communities re the severance pay of our Manager.

ANZAC Day Dawn Service

The VVAA Qld Branch has been gifted the running of

the main ANZAC Day Dawn Service in Brisbane plus the premises that used to belong to the Diggers Assn. called Remembrance House, situated in Grey Street Sth. Brisbane about 200 metres from the Sth. Brisbane Railway Station. The year started off with the Qld RSL placing almost unworkable demands on us (re the Dawn Service) until the Brisbane City Council (BCC) stepped in and proved that the RSL demands were out of order and not required as the Qld RSL had relinquished their Letter of Agreement of the Square, Shrine etc in 2006. They do have a valid lease of the Subterranean Offices but not the Square. The situation is very quiet at the moment but we are expecting a very strong move from the RSL after ANZAC Day to try and take control. We do not believe that the Qld RSL have given up hope of controlling this Service in the future.

We have set up a Combined Committee consisting of VVAA Qld, VVFAQ, APPVAQ, ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee (ADCC), and RAR Assn Qld, The Qld RSL, (who have since withdrawn), BCC, State Govt, Qld Police Service (QPS), SES and members from the Diggers Assn. We have since forwarded invitations to the Naval Assn, Qld and RAAFA Qld but at this time have had no reply. The Governor, Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AO, has agreed to continue as our Patron- in-Chief as long as she is in office. This committee has become a Sub Committee of the ADCC which is a citizen's committee set up by the people of Qld in 1916 and is chaired by the Premier and the Deputy Chair is the Leader of the Opposition. The ADCC is responsible for the running of all ANZAC Day Activities in Qld. This committee is the only one of its kind in Australia. I am more than happy to report that apart from some very minor amendments the Dawn Service was a resounding success.

Other ESO

Qld is fortunate at the moment as we have the National Presidents of the Naval Assn, Mr. Les Dwyer and the APPVA, Mr. David Penson CSM, living on the Sunshine Coast, and both will be present for the Congress. I also know the State Presidents of both these groups in Pat Ringold, NAA and John Burgess, APPVA. I have made contact with each group and I trust that we should, and will be able to develop a very strong combined working relationship with them. We also have strong ties to the Qld Vietnamese Armed Forces Assn through their President Mr. Huynh Ba Phung who is also in attendance at congress.

National Congress and Council Meetings

Although funding has been non-existent, the National Congress will go ahead. I believe it is time for us to have a real good look at how we operate and especially how to conduct congresses and council meetings in the future. The only funding that we have been able to

raise at this time is \$2000 from the Qld DVA DC and a \$100 donation from my State Politician, Mr. Mark Ryan. I have been involved with the organising and running of four National congresses here in Qld since 1997 and we have gone from making a small profit in 1997 to making an increasing loss on each in 2004, 2006 and now this year. Obviously it is getting harder and harder to raise funds and sponsorship. We believe the time has come where it should not be the responsibility of one State to organise and pay for a National Congress which has developed into a talkfest with little or no Core business discussed.

Some ideas that we have are to centralise all Congresses and Council meetings and adopt a user pay system. We believe that National does need to play a part in all this. If the National Executive wishes to invite VIP then National pays. We need to get lean and mean. Another method of saving money would be to have only one delegate per State. If there is no business to discuss then maybe we could have the meeting electronically. We could still vote for the executive this way. I believe we need less talk from VIP and more input and discussion from the States and the members.

National Executive

Whilst talking National there is a very strong feeling here in Qld that the VVAA is very noticeable by its absence while other ESO such as the RSL and DFWA are very active and visible. Qld members believe that the VVAA Nationally has to be more visible and proactive in their dealings with all matters in relation to Veterans Affairs. It is not good enough to say 'O, we do support the other ESO, our logo appears on their submissions'. Yes, we should and must support other ESO's if we agree with their position but we have to be very visible to all of our own members with that support.

If that means that we have to prepare submissions and put out media releases, then so be it. Let's do it even if they only support and endorse the others that normally are put out before us anyway. That is what our members want. Other ESO do so why can't we? The Members have a right to know and see what is going on and what we are doing. At the moment the members believe National is doing nothing and are asleep at the wheel. If you examine our website we have only put out 4 Media releases since August 2007 and two of them was about the Agreement between us and the APPVA and one on National Bush Fire Appeal, the other one was budget response. Don't we have anything to say about our Core Business, Welfare?

The Future

I received a wake-up call the other day. A 'You Tube' article was forwarded to me entitled 'Before They Go'. Yes, it was American and it had to do with the US Vietnam Veterans. There were approx 2.9 million who served in Vietnam and there are now only about

800 000 left and if their attrition rate continues at the same rate then by 2015 there will be none left. I know that Australian Vietnam Vets are different and more resilient but it still makes you wonder. It is my belief that we have to do whatever we can to see Victoria's Welfare Project become a National Program with the highest priority we can possibly give it. Somehow funding has to be made available. Qld is endeavoring to do something about this but funding is the major obstacle. Queensland is a big State.

We are getting more and more of the Post 75 vets wanting to come on board and help but they are being turned off because they feel as if they are not wanted as they are not treated as equals. I know of two personally and have been advised of two others who have not renewed their membership because of their treatment. One of them I know is the child of a Vietnam Veteran. These four have joined the Federation because they can be ordinary members with full rights. All that they want is to help and be treated as equals and not some 'second rate citizen' as we were 40 odd years ago. We have to give them an alternative at least in the short term and continue to support and honour our memorandum of agreement with the APPVA but some of these members do not and will not join the APPVA. Anyway we may only have five years left in us.

I asked a couple of questions last year at my RSL Sub branch committee meeting and they were "How many of you will be seventy in five years and 80% responded in the affirmative. I then asked another question and that was 'How many of you will still be serving on the committee in five years time and they all responded in the negative. So you can see that we are not the only ones who have to face this question. We have to start preparing for what we want to happen to us in five years. Do we wither and die or do we start to educate the younger guys to take over? Five years is the year 2015.

Vietnam Veterans Cup

Some good news! Last October we had an approach from South's Rugby Union Club to see if we would like to sponsor a Vietnam Veterans Cup to be played for annually between themselves and North Brisbane Rugby Club. This has come to be with the cup being competed for in a game played on Saturday 17th April. The winning team was South's who were victorious in the last minute of the game. At this game our State Secretary, Carl Boy'e recited the Ode, and the State President gave a speech and presented the Cup to the winning team. All of this at no expense to us at all. All the Vietnam Veterans present were given the opportunity to address both teams prior to the commencement of the game.

Conclusion

On behalf of the VVAA Qld I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all the VIP, Executive,

Delegates and their Partners, also the Observers, here to sunny Qld and in particular the Sunshine Coast. I know that you will all enjoy yourselves and I trust that we can achieve everything that we set out to do.

In finishing, Qld would like to congratulate the new executive but must warn you that you are on notice to perform. We are very proud of who we are and what we have achieved but we cannot and must not rest on our laurels. Successes of the past are very quickly forgotten and our success in the future will depend on what we do today and in the future. Let's get serious and make a new name for ourselves. Let's get active and really become achievers and start leading the way for other ESO to follow!!!

John Smith
State President

MEDIA RELEASE

ANZAC Day Dawn Service in Brisbane now controlled by a new ANZAC Day Dawn Service Combined Committee, a subcommittee of the ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee of Queensland.

The AIF Legion first started conducting the ANZAC Day Dawn Service in Brisbane in 1931 and then it was placed into the hands of the Diggers' Association in 1937 which has been running it up until last year. However, due to declining membership and increasing age, they passed the torch to younger veterans. They approached the VVAA Qld about four years ago for assistance which was readily provided. After ANZAC Day last year the Diggers' Association decided to formally hand over their premises situated on Grey Street South Brisbane, known as Remembrance House, and the responsibility for organising and conducting the ANZAC Day Dawn Service to the VVAA QLD.

The VVAA Qld Branch decided that the best avenue of approach to achieve this would be to set up a committee of like minded Ex Service Organizations (ESO). This committee is known as the ANZAC Day Dawn Service Combined Committee (ADDSCC) and consists of representatives from the VVAA Qld, Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia Qld Branch (VVFAQ), Australian Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Veterans Association of Australia Qld Branch (APPVAQ), RAR Association Qld, ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee (ADCC) plus some members of the former Diggers' Association. There are representatives of both the Qld State Govt and the Brisbane City Council on the Committee as well. The Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency, Ms Penelope Wensley, AO has agreed to remain as our Patron-in-Chief whilst she is in office.

The ADDSCC is now officially a sub-committee of the ANZAC Day Committee (ADCC) - a committee that is unique in that it is the only state citizens' ANZAC organization in Australia. It was set up by the people of Queensland on 10 January 1916 as a 'gift of the people' to commemorate deceased and honour surviving veterans. This committee is chaired by the Premier with the Deputy Chairman being the Leader of the Opposition.

The ADDSCC has conducted meetings over the last few months and is very pleased to report that everything is proceeding steadily. This year there will be a number of screens set up to televise the service live. The Brisbane Boys' College Choir will be participating and BBC will also provide students in college uniform to form a guard of honour for the veterans and attending VIPs including the Governor of Qld, Her Excellency, Ms Penelope Wensley, AO. They will be assisted by members of the Venturers. These students will also escort the VIPs during the official wreath laying. The Australian Army Band will provide music.

The Committee would like to extend an invitation to all veterans to attend the march and the solemn service. The veterans will march from King George Square to ANZAC Square commencing at 4.00 AM. We would also like to extend the invitation to all veterans' families, children and members of the public to be present and participate in the service. The ADDSCC has secured the use of both ANZAC Square and Post Office Square so there will be plenty of room and, although Post Office Square is some distance away, there will be large media screens available, complete with sound, so you will not miss anything.

Media Contact -

Denis Nicol Ph: 07 3408 1863

John P Smith, OAM, JP (Qual)

Chairman: Ph 54985202 or Mobile 0407 460 358

H.M.A.S. Melbourne Reunion.

The Association Committee met last week and due to the promising response of emails and other promotion of the proposal, it was decided to proceed with the idea and hold the event on Saturday the 18/10/2010 in Nowra N.S.W. The venues, format and program for that weekend will be determined at a later date. The Captain of H.M.A.S. Albatross, Manager of the Fleet Air Arm Museum, Fleet Air Arm Association, Shoalhaven Naval Men's Association and others have generously offered their support.

Dean Gedling.

Vice President

c/o H.M.A.S. Melbourne Association,
P.O. Box 4011 Bradbury. N.S.W. 2560

sicambre@optusnet.com.au

VICTORIA

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Victorian Branch in its current form, and thus an enviable record of 25 years of support to the Victorian veteran community. The milestone is to be recognized during our Vietnam Veterans Day commemorations in August, the unveiling of a plaque at the National Vietnam Veterans Museum to mark the occasion and other activities. All sub-branches have been requested to put together their own histories as part of the research into our past, and already a wealth of information about activities in Victoria in the years leading up to 1985 has been uncovered. One of the themes to surface as we look back on the history of the branch is ‘What is there left to do?’ This question will be the subject of a President’s workshop later in the year.

It is pleasing to note that the membership of the Branch continues to grow, albeit only marginally in the last twelve months. Significantly, we are seeing good numbers of new members and former members returning to the fold, which helps to offset the churn rate of members not renewing their membership, members moving interstate, and sadly, member deaths. Whilst overall member numbers remain strong, there is increasing evidence of strain within some areas as numbers decrease and difficulty in finding volunteers increases. This trend is inevitable given the age of our membership and the fragile health of many, and poses a significant challenge moving forward.

We continue to be encouraged by our grass roots welfare program, and our travelling road show ‘Are You on the Radar?’ is now in its second phase and continuing to draw good attendances and significant radio and newspaper exposure for host sub-branches and the branch in general. It is clear - and this is the real pay-off - that there are still significant numbers of veterans from a number of conflicts in need of assistance, and we are reaching them via the presentations.

It is important to note that these presentations are truly a team effort. While the presentations are a VVAA Victoria initiative, we have received excellent support from RSL Victoria Headquarters and RSL sub-branches, from DVA - through mail outs to clients advertising the presentations and VAN Office support and from VVCS with information kits. Other ESO’s have provided brochures and VAN Office, VVCS, RSL, PVA and Carry On representatives have attended most presentations.

We have been fortunate to obtain a grant from the Victorian Veterans Council (VVC) to meet some of the onas an additional grant to help with the costs of staging on-going costs of delivering welfare to veterans, as well

Vietnam Veterans Day at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance. We are indeed fortunate in Victoria to have had the old Patriotic Funds Council (PFC) in place for many years,

overseeing the legislation detailing how welfare funds raised by ESO’s are administered and used. As a result, ESO’s across Victoria have significant patriotic welfare funds at their disposal. The PFC has been replaced by a newer model, and we now have new State Government legislation-the Veterans Act 2005-that details how patriotic welfare funds are managed and the delivery of veteran services in Victoria. The Premier of Victoria takes keen interest in things veteran through his role as Victorian state Minister for Veterans Affairs, as does the minister assisting the Premier for veterans’ affairs.

As well as the welfare presentations, our education program through the VVAA Victorian Education Team continues apace, with heavy bookings from schools and an expanding book of engagements at community activities. The E Team is heavily involved in the local Vietnamese community festivals and has a significant presence at the annual Victorian History Teachers Association seminar. The team works closely with education agencies in order to ensure that presentations meet set history syllabus criteria.

Another important arm of our education activities is the provision of assistance to the children of Vietnam Veterans undertaking tertiary studies, and we are delighted to report that we currently have two William Hacking Bursaries -William Hacking was the first Australian to die in Vietnam- in place. The bursary provides for financial assistance of \$3000 per year for three years to each bursary recipient: ongoing assistance is dependent on satisfactory results. We have also provided “one-off” grants to assist with education needs that fall outside of the bursary program.

The last of the donations for the Bushfire appeal have been distributed: in all, in excess of \$40,000 has been provided to veterans, their families and to assist with the rebuilding of community facilities-a brilliant effort by everyone involved.

The State Council has adopted a core four badge model for future badge week appeal fund raising efforts. This has been done to provide the Branch with a product that is instantly recognizable, just like the RSL ANZAC Day appeal badges and to overcome the plethora of products currently being offered. The badges, three of which are based on the Long Tan Cross, will form the central badge range sold across the state-as well as other products that sub-branches might wish to continue to offer-and will be purchased

by sub-branches from the National Vietnam Veterans Museum. It is anticipated that the museum will make significant funds from badge sales to sub-branches and that state-wide sales during appeal week will exceed \$65,000.

With Federal and State Elections before us, it is a challenge to look at, and formulate sensible arguments in relation to the big picture as well as keeping an eye firmly on the need to maintain a focus on grass roots welfare. That is why our grass roots welfare program is so important, because the basic welfare needs of veterans do not change just because we have elections coming; our basic welfare work is needed, measurable and achieves results.

It seems to be all too easy to be drawn into a desire to seek headlines and to shake the politicians' cages – just for the sake of 'being seen to do something' – potentially at the expense of providing welfare to the most important people, our members. It looks and sounds good to make statements and issue press releases, but what is actually achieved? Do the politicians really listen? How do we measure the results of press releases? Do the headline grabbers actually reflect the wishes of the membership?

Obviously there needs to be a balance. Clearly there is a time and place to be making public statements and directly addressing politicians on pressing policy issues, particularly in the lead up to elections. That is why we have embarked on our pre-election campaign to contact every Victorian based federal politician with our list of concerns. Also, with a state election looming, we will be writing to the Victorian opposition to seek a guarantee that they will maintain the existing Victorian veteran support infrastructure and funding streams if they win office.

Our long suit in Victoria has always been the delivery of practical, useful and timely welfare to our members and we will never lose sight of that.

Bob Elworthy
State President

Finding assistance:

Phone numbers:

Dept of Veteran Affairs	133 254
Metropolitan area	1800 555 254
Callers from regional Australia	1800 011 046
Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service	131 114
Lifeline	1300 651 251
Suicide Helpline	1800 007 332
Carers counselling Line	

Web sites	www.dva.gov.au
VVCS	www.dva.gov.au/health/vvcs
Beyond Blue	www.beyondblue.org.au

ANZAC DAY 2010 IN WA



North Americans Veterans Unit.

Senior Officer, Capt Michael Donnelly USN [ret], is leading the unit on parade, immediately behind him is the senior member in age – WW11 Technical Sergeant Victor Lane, a Bronze Star Medal holder [the 4th highest US award], who was 100 1/2 years old on Anzac Day. Victor, who is accompanied by Unit President, Michel Munjak, only started marching on Anzac Day when he was 90 years of age. A proud and determined Veteran marches on.



"My first ANZAC DAY"

Lilah Tester, 5 1/2 month old granddaughter of
Rob Cox (Nat Treasurer) (Poppy)
after the ANZAC March
"Don't worry Poppy, Ill grow into it"

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The past twelve months have been difficult for the W.A. State Branch. Following the resignation of David Watson, as State Secretary, it was necessary to reshuffle the State Executive positions. Peter Fox, was appointed Treasurer, with Ian Holthouse, moving to fill the vacant Vice President's position. The State President assumed the dual role of President/Secretary.

A successful Vietnam Veterans Day Service was held, although the numbers attending were down a little to previous years, possibly due to the weather on the day. The W.A. Governor, Dr Ken Michael AO, attended our service for the first time and complimented the State Branch on the conduct of the service and our Memorial Pavilion.

The Memorial Day address was delivered by Dr Kenneth Chern, Consul General of the United States of America.

Due to the minimum numbers on the executive during the year and the resultant work load, for a few, some projects have not got off the ground, while others have been delayed. In particular the Web site upgrade is still work in progress. At this time the executive are rethinking the needs and direction for the website, before proceeding to completion.

At this time the W.A. State branch is financially stable, membership numbers are slightly down on the 2009 figures but this seems to be a normal trend, with members forgetting to renew on time and the numbers creep back up to a peak as the year progresses.

A recent bequest of \$10,000, was made to the V.V.A.A. W.A. by a veteran, Phillip Pascoe, ex 1RAR, unfortunately Phillip passed away a short time after making the bequest. The money from the bequest will be used to establish some form of memorial tribute to Phillip Pascoe, be it a series of scholarships or the naming of a building or similar in his honour. The executive are canvassing the membership for suggestions on how the memorial tribute be implemented.

The 2010 AGM was held on the March the 14th, with all existing executive members re-nominating for their positions, leaving only the State Secretaries position vacant. It was good to have some members nominate for positions for the first time and to be able to welcome some new faces on to the executive and committee. Following the AGM, Gloria Fox, volunteered to take on the State Secretaries position and was duly appointed.

Anzac Day 2010, the usual early start, put the flag up at Anzac Cottage, 4.30am, tradition, the hour they went ashore at Gallipoli [well it was still dark and I got to the Dawn Service by 6.00am]. Following the Dawn Service, a service was held at the Vietnam Memorial, at 7.30am, with approximately 500 people attending.

A Gunfire Breakfast was available at Rigby's, prior to

the march through the city and a Memorial Service on the Esplanade, again well supported by veterans and the public. Following the official part of the day, in excess of 600 Vietnam Veterans, some younger Veterans and family members, adjourned back to Rigby's for an enjoyable afternoon.

The day ended with the now traditional Sunset Service, at Anzac Cottage, with guest of honour Marjorie Williams, daughter of Gallipoli veteran Pte. John Porter, attending, along with other descendents of the Porter family.

What lies ahead for the W.A. State Branch in 2010. Planning is underway for Vietnam Veterans Day. The main focus for the State branch has to be retaining but preferably increasing membership and fostering veteran participation in the association.

Richard Williams.

State President.

The 94th Anniversary of Anzac Cottage.

On the 12th of February 2010 was the 94th Anniversary of the building of Anzac Cottage in Mount Hawthorn, W.A. The cottage was open to the public to mark the occasion, with the Westralian Great War Living History Association, dressed for the occasion, mpunting a display of WW1 equipment, including an original bell tent.

The association was formed to create a memorial detachment, to depict great war soldiers, because of the dwindling number of WW1 veterans at the time. Since then other veteran associations have asked the WAGWLHA, to produce examples of soldiers from other 20th century conflicts Australia has been involved in.

The photo on the front lawn of Anzac Cottage, depicts typical soldiers from the Great War. The 28th Battalion officer [Mike Bell] is wearing the KD[khaki drill] uniform, worn in tropical climates. The 28th wore the KD's during their garrison duty at the Citadel in Cairo. The others are wearing the enlisted mans serge wool uniform, used at both Gallipoli and on the Western Front. The battalions depicted are ones fully or mostly raised in W.A. The bell tent is an original from the period and was one of the most common types of temporary field accommodation from this time.

Anzac Cottage will be open on Vietnam Veterans Day, and hopefully the WAGWLHA group will be there depicting Vietnam era soldiers.



Photo and script courtesy of Mike Bell.

‘VICTORIAN GRASS ROOTS WELFARE PROGRAM’

The presentations program which focuses on encouraging veterans and their families to attend to their basic welfare needs is the third part of a state wide program commenced three years ago with a letter to every branch member and then intensive follow up of lost members by sub-branches. The program has also been presented in Wagga Wagga in NSW and at Mt Gambier in SA.

It is clear from the attendance at the programs and the number of veterans seeking assistance afterwards that the message is resonating amongst the veteran community and that there are still many veterans who have little or no contact with ESO's or their unit associations. A significant number of these veterans have been found to be in need of urgent welfare and pensions support.

PERSONAL WELFARE? AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR ALL VETERANS AND THEIR PARTNERS

The Victorian Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia invites all Veterans and their partners to a grass roots welfare presentation hosted the Outer Eastern Melbourne and Box Hill VVAA Sub-Branches at,
Mitcham RSL, 26 McDowell St, Mitcham.
Tuesday 6th July 2010 at 3.30pm.

Key Themes:

PERSONAL WELFARE:

Take control of, and improve your personal welfare circumstances

ARE YOU ON THE RADAR?

The importance of being known and having your wishes known.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Peace of mind for you and your family. The benefits of being involved.

WHAT'S OUT THERE?

Find out about the services and facilities provided by the ex-service community that are available to you and your family.

Reps from other ESO's in attendance, also Pension and Welfare Officers-all available to answer your questions. Brochures and information sheets available.

For further information contact
Outer Eastern Melbourne VVAA Sub-Branch
President John Ockwell on Ph 5964 3746,
Box Hill VVAA Sub Branch President
John Haward on 9803 3301 Or
Email Outer Eastern Melbourne VVAA Sub Branch
Secretary Judy Mc Quillan
at
secretary@outereasternmelbourne.vvaavic.org.au
Box Hill VVAA Sub Branch Secretary Rod Burgess
at secretary@boxhill.vvaavic.org.au

The Sessions that we have conducted this year are

18/02/10	Glenroy	- North West Sub Branch
13/04/10	Seymour	- Mitchell Sub Branch
13/04/10	Bendigo	- Bendigo & Castlemaine Sub Branches
14/04/10	Shepparton	- Goulburn Valley Sub Branch
14/04/10	Echuca	- Echuca Sub Branch
15/04/10	Swan Hill	- Swan Hill Sub Branch
04/05/10	Melton	- Melton Sub Branch
04/05/10	Ballarat	-Ballarat and Central Highlands Sub Branch
05/05/10	Geelong	- Geelong Sub Branch
07/05/10	Greensborough	- Diamond Valley Sub Branch
01/06/10	Traralgon	- Latrobe Valley Sub Branch
01/06/10	Sale	- Gippsland Sub Branch
02/06/10	Warragul	- West Gippsland Sub Branch
02/06/10	Phillip Island	- Museum Sub Branch
04/06/10	Werribee	- Melbourne West Sub Branch

The remaining sessions are

06/07/10	Frankston	- Frankston and Mornington Sub Branches
06/07/10	Mitcham and Box Hill	- Outer Eastern Melbourne Sub Branches
14/07/10	Glenroy	-North West Sub Branch (return visit at the RSL's request)
15/07/10	Noble Park	- Noble Park Sub Branch

These are in addition to the 12 sessions we did last year

26/05/09	Hamilton	- Warrnambool Sub Branch
27/05/09	Warrnambool	- " " "
04/06/09	Horsham	- Horsham Sub Branch
22/07/09	Ararat	- Maryborough Sub Branch
23/07/09	Colac	- Geelong Sub Branch
25/08/09	Lakes Entrance	- Gippsland Sub Branch
01/09/10	Wangaratta	- Murray Border Sub Branch
02/09/09	Albury/Wodonga	- " " " "
04/09/09	Wagga Wagga	- " " " "
15/09/09	Mildura	- Swan Hill Sub Branch
17/09/09	Mt Gambier	- Warrnambool Sub Branch
12/11/09	Tocumwal	- Goulburn Valley

Please note: The above data has been taken from the original flyer supplied by John Ockwell.

**Victoria Branch writes to all
Victorian Federal Polities on Super**

January 2010
(Federal member of Parliament)

**MILITARY SUPERANNUANTS CONTINUE TO
BE UNFAIRLY TREATED**

The ALP Government has recently accepted the recommendation of the Mathews Review that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) should remain the basis for indexation for Military superannuation pensions and Commonwealth Public Servant's pensions. By taking this action, the Government has ensured that Military superannuants will continue to be disadvantaged in comparison to virtually all other forms of pensions, and continues the long history of successive Australian Governments who have refused to introduce fair indexation of Military superannuation pensions.

In 1997 the Government acted to maintain the purchasing power of Aged and other Welfare pensions by changing indexation to CPI or Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE), whichever was the greater. More recently, it included another indexation factor, the New Pensioner and Beneficiary Living cost Index (PBLCI); **But nothing has been done for Military Superannuants** despite the Australian Bureau of Statistics concluding that:

“the tight nexus between movements in the CPI and wage and salary adjustments no longer exists”, and stating in 2001 that: “...CPI is not a measure of the cost of living”.

The Chair of the recent Senate Inquiry on the Effect of Cost of Living Increases on Older Australians had this to say:

“It is hard to explain to Commonwealth superannuants why their pensions, to which they contributed during their working life, should fall behind the pension increases of those who have generally not made provision for their retirement”.

In 2008, the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs concluded:

“Commonwealth and Defence superannuation pensions should immediately be brought in line with other Government pensions by indexing these to both CPI and Male Total Average Weekly Earnings”.

Despite numerous enquiries and reviews, nothing has been done for Military superannuants, consider the following fact:

In the period 1989 to 2008, Military superannuation pensions rose by 68%, Age Pensions rose by 110%, and the pensions of retired MP's rose by 131%.

The Hon. Lindsay Tanner MP, Minister for Finance and Deregulation has said to the effect that it would cost the taxpayers too much to implement a higher indexation. According to the National Centre for Economic and Social Modelling, the Government would “claw back” in the order of 37-58% of any budget cost for fairer indexation (through increased tax revenues and reductions in other support payments).

It seems incongruous to me that this Government is reportedly spending in excess of \$680 million annually on welfare payments to refugees, (more than double the projected gross cost in 2019-2020 of introducing a fairer indexation method for Military superannuation pensions before any “claw back” is considered) yet remains immutable on the subject of improving the quality of life of veterans and ex-ADF members by applying the same indexation method to Military superannuation pensions as is applied to almost all other Commonwealth payments, including MP's pensions.

I am at a loss to explain to Military superannuants why it is that their superannuation pension is indexed more harshly than almost every other Commonwealth payment. Can you, or any of your colleagues explain why this is so, and why it is that those who served this nation so well-some for 20 years or more- who sacrificed personal freedoms and stood directly in harm's way to carry out Government orders should be treated so abysmally?

I commend to you the Adjournment Speech by Senator Steve Fielding, Leader of Family First on 18 November 2009, where he addresses in considerable detail the inequity of the current indexation system and notes that:

“We are talking here about an issue of basic equity. It is about giving a fair go to those Australians who have put their lives on the line. Why should politicians have their superannuation payments indexed more generously than our veterans?”

I ask that you raise this important issue with your colleagues and urge your party to fix this injustice as a matter of priority. Military superannuants across the nation will be watching with great interest to see if either political party announces a policy to fix indexation of Military superannuation pensions in the lead up to the next Federal election, and thus redress a long history of neglect.

Yours sincerely,

R W (Bob) Elworthy



THE FINAL INSPECTION

The Soldier stood and faced his God,
Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining,
Just as brightly as his brass.

"Step forward now, you Soldier,
How shall I deal with you?
Have you always turned the other cheek?
To My Church have you been true?"

The Soldier squared his shoulders and said,
"No, my Lord, I ain't.
Because those of us who carry guns,

Can't always be a saint.

I've had to work most Sundays,
And at times my talk was tough.
And sometimes I've been violent,
Because the world is awfully rough.

But, I never took a dollar,
That wasn't mine to keep...
Though I worked a lot of overtime,
When the bills got just too steep.

And I never passed a cry for help,
Though at times I shook with fear.
And sometimes, God, forgive me,
I've wept unmanly tears.

I know I don't deserve a place,
Among the people here.
They never wanted me around,
Except to calm their fears.

If you've a place for me here, Lord,
It needn't be so grand.
I never expected or had too much,
But if you don't, I'll understand.

There was a silence all around the throne,
Where the saints had often trod.
As the Soldier waited quietly,
For the judgment of his God.

Step forward now, you Soldier,
You've borne your burdens well.
Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets,
You've done your time in Hell."

~Author Unknown~

New Generation Veterans

We honour our old veterans, we honour them with
pride,
And read of all the horrors they have carried deep
inside,

We know they served in Asia or New Guinea's
highland rains,
Vietnam or in Africa where many men were slain.

We know that fateful landing on Gallipoli's dark
shore,

Wherever Aussies fought, we know there are so
many more,
But now a new young generation needs our help as
well,

They too have been to war and suffer with their
private hell.

Though losses are not classed as great, their fears
are just the same,
Those electronic hidden bombs, still injure, kill or
maim,

They fight against an enemy they find so hard to
see,
Who mingle in the market place, then cause much
tragedy.

Insurgents in Afghanistan hide in the rough ter-
rain,
Or roaming in Iraq, where, wearing robes they look
the same,
The suicide stealth bombers, don't care who they
hurt or kill,
Then, with their own beliefs, they try to break our
forces will.

Our fighting Aussie spirit shows on any foreign
land,
They're in the skies, they're on the sea, or on the
desert sand,
Now many are returning with the horrors they still
see,
And living with their nightmares, suffering bu-
reaucracy.

I know on ANZAC Day, we all remember with a
tear,
But ALL vets, young or old, they need our help
throughout the year,
Support and listen to their stories, when they do get
told,
Let's honour our NEW veterans, just like we do
our old.

David J Delaney

The Vietnam Swans' Inaugural ANZAC Friendship Match, 2010

45 years ago, a lot of TV footage from Vietnam was being being beamed into Australian homes.

Last Sunday, we were at Tommy's 3 in Vung Tau, Vietnam, watching footage of the Collingwood-Essendon ANZAC match from the home of Australian Rules Football, the MCG. Vung Tau had been the home of the Australian Logistics base during the War.

The previous day, the Vietnam Swans played our Inaugural ANZAC Friendship Match as the Hanoi Hawks and Saigon Saints at the Greyhound Racing Track. We had a crowd of 400 supporters including Ambassadors, Vietnamese orphans, Consul Generals, Veterans, Defense Attaches, western children, University Presidents and adults. Just like at the MCG, we also observed a minute's silence. But unlike those at the MCG, we couldn't hear any trains rattling through the safety of the Jolimont railway yards. All we could hear were our own thoughts and reflections.

Highlights from Friday 23 April - Sunday 25 April 2010:

Friday

Afternoon: Swannies visit two orphanages. From babies to adolescents, we held them, played with them, laughed with them and distributed small gifts.

Saturday

Morning: tour to Nui Dat, Australian Army Base. Our group of 120 was led by two veterans, Kevin and John, and Warrant Officer Dan Kindness we were given an excellent detailed history.

Afternoon: Inaugural Vietnam Swans ANZAC Friendship Match. Hanoi Hawks beat Saigon Saints by one point. Tommy's Bar raised over \$1,000 for two local orphanages. Acknowledged the service of "5 Yr Swans" - Trav, MJ, Micky Francis, Scotty Stacey, Dave Kainey, Patsy and Willy.

Evening: Tommy's Bar and greyhounds.

Sunday

Morning: Dawn Service at Long Tan and tour

Afternoon: Watch telecast of Collingwood Vs Essendon ANZAC Day Match. Vietnam Swans raise \$1,030 for swimming program in Hoi An, Central Vietnam. Merchandise included a footy signed by Nathan Buckley and Gary O'Donnell (from their recent trip to Vietnam), an Essendon jumper signed by current Captain Jobe Watson and A Swannies footy kit.

It was an amazing weekend and judging from the feedback of those who were involved, it was a very well received. We seem to have successfully negotiated the political sensitivities. Next year, in Year 2, we expect

The people we need to thank for organising this weekend come from Hanoi, Hoi An, Saigon, Vung Tau and Singapore. But special thanks to Dan Kindness and Glenn Nolan.

It was an incredible and moving weekend. It was made more special when two weeks ago, Sam Middleton contacted the Vietnam Swans. Sam served in Vung Tau in 1967-68 and reported that back then, there was a full scale Aussie Rules Competition played between 7 Australian Units twice per year. And where did they play? The Lord Mayor's Oval which has since become the Vung Tau Dog Racing Track. That's where we played our Friendship Match. Sam also has lots of photos of the footy during that period on his website at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/aodcurator/sets/72157615047181580/>

Apart from football, the weekend provided us all with a unique opportunity to meet some Veterans and learn about what had happened.

The Vietnam Swans visited two local orphanages to share some time holding, laughing and kicking the football (which had to be sugar coated with time spent kicking the soccer ball).

We supported Tommy's Bar (major organiser and venue for telecast of the Collingwood-Essendon ANZAC Match) to raise money for the orphanages. The Vietnam Swans auctioned off some memorabilia and all proceeds were donated to the Hoi An Children's Swimming Program. In Vietnam, more children die from drowning than road accidents. Going forward, this is an area that the Vietnam Swans are keen to offer additional support.

Strengthened by the very positive feedback that we have received about the ANZAC Friendship Match, the Vietnam Swans would like to continue this new tradition. Next year, rather than playing a "Heritage Round" match between the Hanoi Hawks and Saigon Saints, the Vietnam Swans will play an international team in Vung Tau.

The Swannies are keen to play footy and we're also keen to give something back to the communities in which we live. We think and hope that our ANZAC Friendship Match can play a positive role with multiple benefits, even if modest, for many parties.

Hong Kong Match a week ago

Last week, the Vietnam Swans made our first tour to Hong Kong to play the Hong Kong Dragons. Congratulations to the Dragons who were a powerhouse on the field and sensational hosts off it. The trip also served as the farewell tour to three champions of the Swannies: Captain Monkey, JD and Jerry. As expected, we gave them a fitting send off. We also wel-

new guys who enjoyed their first tour for the Swannies. All good!

Finally...

The ANZAC Weekend in Vung Tau last month really was incredible. And so were so many people who put in so much time and effort to make it such a success. I know I'm a bit biased, but when I look around the Club and see the quality of people and the quality of the things that they're doing, I do think that it's not a bad sort of a Club.

Congratulations and thank you to all.

Fabbo

Phil Johns
National President
Vietnam Swans
Hanoi, Hoi An, Saigon, Vung Tau
Ph (+84) (0) 933 032 296
www.vietnamswans.com

Above right.

The previous month, Miike Warren, Community Relations Manager for the Hawthorn Football Club, had presented the match ball to Swannnie, Phil Murphy, back in Australia.

Right.

The match ball, supplied by Hawthorn, was taken to the middle of the ground by Veterans Kevin McMillan (centre left) and John Brown (centre right). They are escorted by Hawks coach, Willy (L) and Saints coach, Josh (R).



The Vietnamese children got scared and didn't sing the Vietnamese National Anthem. The NZ Anthem didn't happen. MC Matty Townsend had to break the news to the Hawks and Saints that they had to sing the Australian Anthem without the benefit of music.

Below left.

The Consul General, Graeme Swift, presents the ANZAC Friendship Trophy to the Hanoi Hawk's, Stanno.

Below Right.

Stanno holds the trophy aloft with President Willy—before the team



Junior Recruit Training Scheme

Our History-Our Heritage

The establishment of a memorial to the Junior Recruit Training Scheme is now an integral part of our naval heritage. This heritage extends from that established with boy training in the RAN onboard HMAS Tingira. To this end several centres are established within the RAN that serve to preserve and protect relics from that historical phase in training.

The RAN Heritage centre is situated at Garden Island, Sydney, and houses many relics from HMAS Leeuwin and its role in the training of boys in preparation for a career in the R.A.N. Similarly at HMAS Cerberus there is a long established museum that protects the history of training there, some of which was for boys in 1963 and 1964. All are valued parts of the Junior Recruit heritage.

The JR Memorial Commemorative Medallions are now part of that heritage and the committee has taken steps to ensure that these are displayed at both the RAN Heritage centre and at the Cerberus Museum to add to the collection of heritage items held that relate to the training of boys in the RAN.



Committee members Warwick Luttrell and Peter (Pedro) Franklin recently travelled to HMAS Cerberus to make a formal presentation of medallions to the Curator of the museum WO Marty Grogan. Marty is a long serving sailor, and whilst not an ex JR, has demonstrated significant interest and support in the memorial pro-



Commemorative Medallion presentation by Warwick Luttrell to WO Marty Grogan, Curator of the *HMAS Cerberus Museum*

Ex JR's Ron Givven and Mick Gallagher, representing the Memorial Committee, also journeyed to the RAN Heritage Centre to present a medallion to their collections. The Curator, Commander Shane Moore, has some connection with Leeuwin in that he was one of the last Divisional Officers to serve there with Junior Recruits in

1984 and also Ian Steele, a staff member at RANHC, himself an ex JR from 1975

Australian Naval Cadets represent an important and significant part of the RAN's commitment to the training of young men and women to prepare them for future careers that hopefully will find them serving proudly in the RAN at some time. Whilst the Junior Recruit Training Scheme and the Tingira boy training arrangements represent two of a number of junior entry models for the RAN, the Naval Cadets also represent an important part of the training of young people and for the most part mirror some of that provided for JR's and Tingira Boys.

Two of the Naval Cadet Units, TS Perth and TS Tingira by virtue of their location are established as important links to the training of young men and women in the RAN. To maintain that link the JR Memorial Committee also recently undertook to visit these two units. TS Tingira (CO Val Bookless) has shown strong interest in the memorial project and members of this unit are fully aware of the old Tingira scheme and its relationship with their unit name and also the JR training scheme. In addition to the medallion a copy of RADM Brian Adams book on the history of the JR scheme was also presented.



Peter (Pedro) Franklin an ex Cerberus JR presents a Commemorative Medallion and book to TS Tingira

TS Perth-Guardians of the Junior Recruit Memorial

TS Perth is located immediately opposite the previous HMAS Leeuwin and maintains a strong relationship with training and the RAN through their CO Brad Barrett who started his RAN career as a Junior Recruit. Ken Dobbie and Paul Harris representing the JR Memorial Committee recently attended a parade of the TS Perth Cadets, firstly to present them with a Commemorative Medallion but also to seek their support in looking after the JR memorial at the Leeuwin site. To this end the committee presented TS Perth with a Certificate acknowledging their commitment to act in the future as the *Guardians of the Junior Recruit Memorial*.

The Junior Recruit Memorial at LEEUWIN Barracks East Fremantle will officially be opened and dedicated by C.N.S. Vice Admiral Russ Crane at 11.30 Tuesday 13 July 2010.

Vietnam Veteran's Day at Standown Park

At last year's Vietnam Veteran's Day service at Standown Park, 29 Veterans marched and were led by Retired WO Noel Huish OAM.. This was the first march held at Standown Park and will continue, as the Veterans themselves organised it.

The service was given ceremoniously by NZ Veteran, Clarence Ormsby, where the very first 'Korowai' reconciliation project was launched between Australian, New Zealand and American Vietnam Veterans.

Noel led the march in the "Korowai" ceremonial robe.



The Korowai is a traditional New Zealand Maori garment worn by Maori Chiefs, Kuia (dignified women) and invited guests.

In this instance it was worn as a mark of respect for the many mates, men, women and children who lost their lives from the misuse of Agent Orange toxic chemicals during the Vietnam War.

Clarence is the World Patron for Agent Orange "Korowai – Cloak of Tears" who are raising money for the support program for all Vietnam Veteran's Grandchildren.

After the service everyone congregated around the open fire place for refreshments then later enjoyed a delicious camp oven dinner.

Clarence is a retired professional entertainer and delighted the crowd of 84 with his variety of songs and skits.

On Wednesday 18th August all Vietnam Veterans are invited to attend this years Vietnam Veteran's Day service at Standown Park.

There are 40 powered caravan sites plus acres of camping area as well as hot showers, toilets and a large camp kitchen complete with BBQ, fridge, huge woodstove and an atmosphere to burn.

.Standown Park organises the 'Push to the Bush' where all Veterans are invited to go to a small country town and march on Anzac Day. Five years ago it started with seven Veterans going to Wyandra for the nine school children, this year there were 58 Veterans and their partners. Due to the numbers they split and half went to Augathella and half went to Wyandra where they

Took the Anzac message to the whole community. Everyone had a wonderful experience and was amazed at the gratitude shown to them by the children and parents.

If you would like to book in for the 18th August and/or be put on the list to be contacted for '2011 Anzac Day Push to the Bush' trip, please contact Pam or Rod Elkington (Ex 9RAR) on 07 5486 5144 or 0417 718 127



Barcaldine
Homestead CARAVAN PARK
Your home away from home
and Cabins
phone: 07 4651 1308 Email: info@homesteadcvpark.com.au

Just to let you know that we have a special evening on again this year for the veterans on the 18th August at the Barcaldine Homestead caravan park. All Veterans are welcome to enjoy an evening of free entertainment, free billy tea and damper and a free meal.

The program is as follows starting at about 4:30pm

Tapping Ted and Alan Luscombe (country and western singers).

The children from the Barcaldine state school performing (sing and Music)

Free Billy Tea and Damper

Tom Lockie (bushman) with bush poetry and more.

Followed by a free dinner for anyone in the park.

I hope you can inform your members that if they are anywhere near Barcaldine (QLD) to drop in for a great evening.

Regards

Thanh and Ben

Phone: 07 4651 1308

Email: info@homesteadcvpark.com.au

My Bullet flyer

NEW SOUTH WALES.

Sub-Branches and the Future of the VVAA

It is becoming increasingly apparent that ten members, the minimum that the VVAA requires for the formation of a Sub-Branch is substantially inadequate.

The number of members required to manage and maintain a Sub-Branch is much, much higher, particularly when it comes to filling Executive positions, conducting the business of the Association, organising social functions and providing the associated pensions, advocacy and welfare effort.

The future of the Association appears to divide membership between two extremes. Those who want to amalgamate with younger veterans to keep the VVAA alive and those who are happy for the last surviving individual turn out the lights. Other alternatives include moving a Sub-Branch under the aegis of a continuing organisation like the RSL.

Opinions are strong and vary not only from State to State but within each State and Sub-Branch. I do not believe that there will ever be a consensus of opinion for any specific option.

I'm predicting that there will come a time when it's difficult if not impossible to fill National and State Executive positions and that the only solution will be to give Sub-Branches the autonomy to decide their own future.

Promoting the VVAA

As an Association we continue to struggle with the concept of self promotion. The VVAA does not seem to have come to grips with the fact that it exists in a world where self-promotion is necessary. It is not sufficient for us to do what we do; we have to tell our own membership and the broader veteran community what we have done, what we are doing and what we are going to do.

Our measured approach fulfils the need and sits midway between those Ex-Service Organisations which are slow to act and those individuals prominent on the internet – the email mafia - who react to changes in room temperature and whose intelligence can be measured by the same standard.

While self-promotion is seen as a negative trait by our generation, we have to understand that it is a necessary attribute for success in the present era.

We need to focus on rebuilding our public profile, being heard across the country, showing veterans, service people past and present and the public at large what we do.

Where we do engage we must be seen to engage.

Our Primary focus must be on the digger, but in doing this we must preserve and enhance our public image, our reputation and our status as the organisation of first resort when our people need help.

In enhancing the reputation of our separate State Branches we have to make sure that the reflection of this also enhances the reputation and standing of our National organisation. Successful programs such as the recent welfare program initiated by Victoria should be publicised as widely as possible.

The VVAA must continue to support Vietnam and other veterans, ex-Service men and women, war widows and widowers. In advertising what we do and telling others what we stand for we will be recognised as the ESO of choice for Vietnam Veterans.

Australia and the Vietnamese MIA

The theme for my address at the Martin Place Cenotaph in 2009 was the work of Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) and UNSW historians Dr Bob Hall and Derrill de Heer (both ex-8 RAR) in identifying and cataloguing the burial sites of some 3,760 members of the PAVN and VC who fell in action against Australian troops.

At that time Bob was attempting to engage the Australian government and obtain funding of about \$35,000 in order to take the database to Vietnam and provide to their government a proof-of-concept which would give them an equivalent of the support that they had provided for the very welcome discovery, recovery and repatriation of our six Australians who were missing in action.

The relationship which now exists between Australian and Vietnamese veterans of that war is clearly analogous to the mutual respect which exists to this day between Australia and Turkey. The tough, no-nonsense approach of the Australians, coupled with a respect for the rules of war contributes in no small measure to these relationships.

I can report that the funding was provided and the proof-of-concept enthusiastically accepted by the Vietnamese government and Vietnamese veterans. This project has now had an additional phase added, with two separate goals.

The first target is to help them to identify the fallen by name, assisted by a Vietnamese database of the fallen – some 3,300 individuals - from the PAVN 33rd Division. It won't always be possible, but there will be a degree of success. Neither do we expect that the bodies will be recovered, but it is important for the families to know where their relatives are buried.

The second goal is to see if we can perhaps reunite some of the souvenirs taken from the fallen Vietnamese with their families.

Cont from previous page

This latter aim was initiated by the daughter of a Tasmanian Vietnam veteran. The veteran processed a negative of a portrait removed from the body of a Vietnamese combatant killed in action, later having the photograph printed. He had long held the desire to get a copy of that photograph to the Vietnamese family, and through this project his long-held wish has a chance of being fulfilled.

We'll be looking for personal items souvenired after contacts – photographs, certificates, diaries and the like. You can expect to see more information about this appearing on a veteran community web-site near you very soon.

30 April 2010

I was invited to attend a vigil night in Hyde Park, Sydney on 30 April 2010 to mark the 35th anniversary of the Fall of Saigon. Was it really that long ago? As Vietnam veterans we know all too well the military cost of the war, but in a number of ways the evening forced me to face the cost to the civilian population of Vietnam.

The vigil was attended by a number of civic and religious leaders, all of whom were fulsome in their praise of the Vietnamese Australian community.

In researching the fall of Saigon I was struck by the number of Vietnamese from both North and South, civilian and military who lost their lives in the Second Indo-China War – the American War as some have it.

Most significant and heart wrenching was the figure of 640,000 South Vietnamese who lost their lives in the “consolidation of power” carried out by the North after the military takeover.

I touched on the fact that the civilian population of the South was caught up in a Hobson's Choice of having to support a corrupt and nominally democratic regime and then subject to reprisals when the forces of the North, regular or guerrilla were in the area. The communist sympathisers had it the other way of course.

It is a direct analogy with the situation for the Afghani civilians caught up in the current war in that country. I often wonder if the result will be any different.

As a part of the service, and after two technical problems were resolved, a big screen displayed film clips from the era. The screen was behind me on my left, and turning around I saw that the Vietnamese man behind me had his eyes partly closed, facing forward and not looking at the screen at all. When the clips were finished I could see that he was troubled and said to him “You didn't need to see the film, did you?” He replied “I was there. I can see it when I close my eyes.”

There's not much that you can say in response to that.

Clive Mitchell-Taylor OAM JP
NSW President

Vale **Doug Bernard Brennan**

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of our sub-Branch Patron Mr Douglas Bernard Brennan who was a well known identity within the Bay and Basin area.

Doug was past President of the Huskisson RSL Sub Branch 1984 to 1988 and Huskisson RSL Club 1990 to 1996 and a Life Member of both; founder and current Librarian of the Club's Library; Patron of the Snooker Club and Patron of the Vietnam Veterans Association Jervis Bay sub-Branch to name but a few of his achievements.

Doug was a Legatee with Nowra Legacy Group for over thirty years. He would have turned 90 years of age on 6th March this year

Doug joined the Navy on 25th August, 1939 and was discharged on 23rd July, 1952, as a Petty Officer Tactical Yeoman with just on 13 years service.

His Service Number was 24638 and he saw service in the Royal Australian Navy onboard HMA Ships: Penguin 2, Kanimbla, Kuttbull, Rushcutter, Morton, Ladava, Madang, Lonsdale, Leeuwin, Platypus and Australia.

Doug was awarded the following Medals: 1939-45 Star, Africa Star, Pacific Star, British War Medal 1939-45, Australian Service Medal 1939-45, Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasps: "South West Pacific and Papua New Guinea", Navy General Service Medal with clasp minesweepers, Australian Defence Medal, Malta George Cross Fiftieth Anniversary Medal and The Anniversary of the Liberation of the Philippines Medal.

We say farewell to an old salt and friend who will be sadly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

VVAA Jervis Bay Sub Branch

And remember:

*life is like a roll of toilet paper.
The closer it gets to the end,
the faster it goes.*

A Thank You to all Vietnam Vets from a Marine in Iraq

A guy gets time to think over here and I was thinking about all the support we get from home. Sometimes it's overwhelming. We get care packages at times faster than we can use them. There are boxes and boxes of toiletries and snacks lining the center of every tent; the generosity has been amazing. So, I was pondering the question: "Why do we have so much support?"

In my opinion, it all came down to one thing: Vietnam Veterans. I think we learned a lesson, as a nation, that no matter what, you have to support the troops who are on the line, who are risking everything. We treated them so poorly back then. When they returned was even worse. The stories are nightmarish of what our returning warriors were subjected to. It is a national scar, a blemish on our country, an embarrassment to all of us.

After Vietnam, it had time to sink in. The guilt in our collective consciousness grew. It shamed us. However, we learned from our mistake. Somewhere during the late 1970's and on into the 80's, we realized that we can't treat our warriors that way. So ... starting during the Gulf War, when the first real opportunity arose to stand up and support the troops, we did. We did it to support our friends and family going off to war. But we also did it to right the wrongs from the Vietnam era. We treat our troops of today like the heroes they were, and are, acknowledge and celebrate their sacrifice, and rejoice at their homecoming ... instead of spitting on them.

And that support continues today for those of us in Iraq. Our country knows that it must support us and it does. The lesson was learned in Vietnam and we are all better because of it.

Everyone who has gone before is a hero. They are celebrated in my heart. I think admirably of all those who have gone before me. From those who fought to establish this country in the late 1770's to those I serve with here in Iraq. They have all sacrificed to ensure our freedom. But when I get back home, I'm going to make it a personal mission to specifically thank every Vietnam Vet I encounter for THEIR sacrifice. Because if nothing else good came from that terrible war, one thing did. It was the lesson learned on how we treat our warriors. We as a country learned from our mistake and now we treat our warriors as heroes, as we should have all along. I am the beneficiary of their sacrifice. Not only for the freedom they, like veterans from other wars, ensured, but for how well our country now treats my fellow Marines and I. We are the beneficiaries of their sacrifice.

Semper Fidelis,
Major Brian P. Bresnahan
United States Marine Corps



MARCHED ON

We deeply and sincerely regret to report the death of one of our own.

3789076 Pte/Sapper Douglas John Brain 17 Const. Sqn
Passed away 20th January 2010. He will be sadly missed. Our Condolences go to his family.

They bade no-one a last farewell, or even said good-bye,
Their souls had left before we knew, and God alone knows why.
They would not ask for sorrow, they would not ask for tears,
But just to be remembered throughout the passing years.
LEST WE FORGET.

President
Terry Murray.
VVAA Hunter/Central Coast Sub Branch

Vale - Graham Mervyn Weekes
Service No: 215060
Service: Australian Regular Army

Born 14th January 1946
He enlisted into the Australian Regular Army on February 7, 1963, and served in Vietnam with 5RAR from 8 May 1966 until 3 March 1967. Graham also served in Singapore between 22 October 1969 and 23 March 1972.
During his time in the Army, Graham was employed in 12 different units over 20 years, and was discharged on June 24, 1983 with the rank of Sergeant.
Graham passed away on 21st January 2010, after a long illness, and will be sadly missed by all members of Macarthur Sub-Branch

Rod Beer
Hon. Chaplain
VVAA Macarthur Sub-Branch

Bathurst Sub branch wishes to advise the passing of one of their members. Daryl Garvey of Bathurst.

Closing on 31 October 2010 for

**AUSTRALIAN VETERANS'
CHILDREN ASSISTANCE TRUST**

Scholarships for Children of Veterans intending Tertiary Studies in 2011

In 2011 the Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust (AVCAT) are expecting to give financial assistance for up to 65 students under many different scholarship schemes. All schemes help the selected children in need of the Australian veteran community with the costs of tertiary education. Applicants are considered for all schemes for which they are eligible.

Applications open on 18 August 2010. To apply you must be:

- a. Within the means test. That is eligible on assets and income grounds for Youth Allowance benefits for full-time education.
- b. Enrolled, or planning to enrol in a full-time course of tertiary education in Australia by attendance at a university, TAFE or college. The course must be of one or more academic years length and at undergraduate level.
- c. The child or grandchild of a person who has operational service with the Australian Navy, Army or Air Force, or if not has three or more year's continuous full-time service as a member of the Australian Defence Force.
- d. Under the age of 25 when applying, unless exceptional circumstances related to veteran's service exist.

The largest scheme is the Long Tan Bursary funded by the Australian Government. There are 50 new bursaries each year. They are valued at \$9,000 each which paid at \$3,000 per year for three years. There are selection number targets for each State and Territory. To apply you must be the child of an Australian Vietnam Veteran, be resident in Australia, be entering any year of tertiary study, having not previously received a Long Tan Bursary.

The other national schemes are the AVCAT Bursary, the two RSL Scholarships, three Vietnam Veterans' Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Scholarship and the Defence Force Welfare Association Scholarship. George Quinsey Scholarships directly pay tuition fees for economics, commerce and accountancy studies. There are also regional scholarships. In NSW, there are three from Brisbane Water Legacy covering Gosford/Wyong NSW and one from the NSW TPI Association. Some private donors offer two scholarships to resident NSW applicants. In SA, the VVAA also offers a scholarship.

Schemes vary between \$3,000 and \$5,000 per year each. Some are restricted to location of residence or studies. Most require veteran service in Vietnam but others are broader. Most schemes continue payments for later years of study. All scholarship schemes but one pay monthly instalments. That scheme helps with tuition costs for courses in commerce, economics and accountancy. One scheme is for indigenous students doing substance abuse or related studies. For this scheme there is no upper age limit nor a need to be related to a veteran. In addition to the above there is one grant per year to assist a handicapped eligible veteran's child or grandchild with special extra costs of transition to tertiary studies or employment.

To receive an application form register interest on 1800 620 361. Children and grandchildren of Vietnam veterans should do so now, as should any others who believe that they are eligible. If not sure, ask:
Applications close on 31 October each year.

AVCAT
PO Box K978,
Haymarket, NSW 1240
FAX: 02 9213 7307,
Email: avcat@dva.gov.au

The BALLINA ALL SHIPS REUNION - 2010
will be held from 19th to 22nd of November
For information contact:
Merv Stevens on 02.6681.5620
Max Lewis - 02.6628.0086
or send an email to: snake1@exemail.com.au

Apply for lost medals

Click on the website below and apply for any medals which you may be entitled to and have not yet received.
<http://www.lostmedalsaustralia.com/>

EATING FRUIT...

An email has been received recently which makes a number of claims and, while these claims seem to be scientifically unsubstantiated, there are elements that make a lot of sense. What is of importance is that we all need to include more fruit and vegetables in our diet, for the sake of our general well-being.

We all think eating fruits means just buying fruits, cutting it and just popping it into our mouths. It's not as easy as you think. It's important to know how and when to eat. What is the correct way of eating fruits?

Fruits should be eaten on an empty stomach. Think about starting your meals with an entree of fresh fruit and substitute mid- morning and afternoon snacks with a piece of fruit instead.

If you eat fruit like that, it will play a major role to detoxify your system, supplying you with a great deal of energy for weight loss and other life activities. When you need to drink fruit juice - drink only fresh fruit juice, NOT from the cans. But eating a whole fruit is better than drinking the juice. If you should drink the juice, drink it mouthful by mouthful slowly, because you should let it mix with your saliva before swallowing it. It is preferable to eat uncooked fruits because cooking destroys all the vitamins.

KIWI: tiny but mighty. This is a good source of potassium, magnesium, vitamin E & fibre. Its vitamin C content is twice that of an orange, as much potassium as bananas and a good amount of beta-carotene. It is important to note that kiwi fruits contain a remarkable amount of Vitamin C, E and A. Vitamin C is a water-soluble antioxidant that has been proven to protect our body from free radicals, dramatically improving the health of individuals who consumed it regularly against all kinds of disease, from cardiovascular problems to cancer and obesity. Vitamin E has been proven to have similar effects, but is fat-soluble and thus is complimentary to Vitamin C in its functions. Kiwi fruits contain both these vitamins in high amount, which help protect our body against free radicals from all fronts.

APPLE: an apple a day keeps the doctor away? Although an apple has a low vitamin C content, it has antioxidants & flavonoids which enhances the activity of vitamin C thereby helping to lower the risks of colon cancer, heart attack & stroke.

TOMATO: A large consumption of tomato can help improve skin texture and colour. Tomato is a good blood purifier and helps in cases of congestion of the liver (protects the liver from cirrhosis)

as well as for dissolving gallstones. Tomato is a natural antiseptic therefore it can help protect against infection. Nicotinic acid in tomatoes can help to reduce blood cholesterol, thus helps prevent heart diseases. Vitamin K in tomatoes helps to prevent haemorrhages. Tomato contain lycopene (the red pigment in tomato), which is a powerful antioxidant that can also fight cancer cells.

STRAWBERRY: protective fruit. Strawberries have the highest total antioxidant power among major fruits & protect the body from cancer-causing, blood vessel-clogging free radicals.

ORANGE : sweetest medicine. Taking 2-4 oranges a day may help keep colds away. Oranges contain Betacarotene, a powerful antioxidant that protects our cells from being damage, Calcium that helps protect and maintain the health of our bone and teeth, Folic Acid for proper brain development, Magnesium that helps maintain blood pressure, Potassium that helps maintain electrolyte balance in the cells, and is important in maintaining a healthy cardiovascular system, Thiamin that helps to convert food into energy and Vitamin B6 that helps support the production of haemoglobin that carries oxygen to all parts of the body. Persons addicted to alcohol have found that the desire for liquor is greatly reduced by drinking of orange juice.

WATERMELON: coolest thirst quencher. Composed of 92% water, it is also packed with a giant dose of glutathione, which helps boost our immune system. Other nutrients found in watermelon are vitamin C & Potassium.

GUAVA & PAPAYA: top awards for vitamin C. They are the clear winners for their high vitamin C content. Guava is also rich in fibre, which helps prevent constipation. Papaya is rich in carotene; this is good for your eyes. Papaya contains the digestive enzyme papain, which is why it is valuable for aiding digestion.

BLUEBERRIES: not only a low calorie snack; they are also a great source of nutrients. New research suggests blueberries are a great way to naturally lower risk factors for cancers, enhance your memory (which may be a factor in lessening the risk of Alzheimer and other types of dementia), and achieve the optimal health we should all be striving for.

BANANA: is an energy booster. It contains tryptophan, a type of protein that the body converts into serotonin. Serotonin is a hormone that is known to make you feel happy and improve your mood. Banana is a rich source of iron, thus it is

helpful in cases of anaemia and good source of potassium.

PINEAPPLE: contains a proteolytic enzyme bromelain, which helps in the digestion of protein.

AVOCADO: often on the hate-list of those people who want to lose weight, but avocado should be every woman's best friend. They are rich in vitamin E which is said to be a beauty vitamin because it is valuable for healthy skin and the prevention of wrinkles. Avocadoes also supply a considerable amount of potassium and large quantities of the extremely healthy monounsaturated fats. These, especially the oleic acid and the other nutrients avocado contain, make them one of the most powerful antioxidant foods. Pureed avocado is good for invalids, sick children and those people who are recovering from operation as it is easily digestible and contains some antibacterial and antifungal chemicals.

All fruit is good for people with who have high blood pressure because they are low in salt. A series of studies published by the Archives of Ophthalmology have proven that consuming 3 or more servings of fruit per day can reduce by 36% the risk of developing an eye-related disease called ARMD (the primary cause of vision impairment in adults), if compared to people who only consume 1.5 servings of fruit per day.

If you would like to access a comprehensive list of the health benefits of fruits and vegetables, go to <http://hubpages.com/hub/List-of-Vegetables-Fruits-and-Its-Nutritional-Values> Site where there is much more information.

Jan Properjohn
VVAA ACT

Help wanted.

Yank looking for Aussie Diggers Royal Thai Airfield 1967-68-69

Dick Martin U.S. Airforce station at Utapao near Bangkok is looking to make contact with Australian Military Personnel who served around Royal Thai Airfield Dec 1967 to dec 68 and June and July 1969. Dick was a Bomb Load Chief on B-52D Aircraft, bombs dropped on Vietnam.

Australians (about 100) used as Recon/Cunter insurgency Missions against Communist Sappers? Dick likes the aussies there very much and has fond memories of talking and drinking with these blokes and would like to renew contact with them again. If you would like to contact Dick please email: fixallmartin@verizon.net

Four Worms and a Lesson to be learned



A minister decided that a visual demonstration would add emphasis to his Sunday sermon.

Four worms were placed into four separate jars..

The first worm was put into a container of alcohol.
The second worm was put into a container of cigarette smoke.
The third worm was put into a container of chocolate syrup.
The fourth worm was put into a container of good clean soil.

At the conclusion of the sermon, the Minister reported the following results:

The first worm in alcohol - Dead.
The second worm in cigarette smoke - Dead
The Third worm in chocolate syrup -Dead
Fourth worm in good clean soil -Alive.

**So the Minister asked the congregation
What did you learn from this demonstration?**

**Maxine was sitting in the back,
quickly raised her hand and said,**

'As long as you drink, smoke and eat chocolate, you won't have worms!'

Australian Army Aviation and The Museum of Australian Army Flying



The Museum of Australian Army Flying is situated 3 kilometres north of Oakey on the Darling Downs in Queensland. The location is adjacent to the civil airport terminal on the eastern side of the Australian Army Aviation Centre.

**MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN ARMY FLYING
ARMY AIRFIELD
OAKEY QUEENSLAND 4401**

Phone: 07 46917666

Fax: 07 4691 7675

E-mail: AustArmy.FlyingMuseum@defence.gov.au

Web Page:

<http://www.army.gov.au/history/museums.htm>

NORTHERN TERRITORY

The Northern Territory State Branch Executive team was re-elected this year. Danny Meredith remains the President with Darryel Binns the Vice Presidents and of course Peter Mansell and Sue McCallum remain as Secretary and Treasurer.

Last year our association achieved many goals. One of which was membership reached the magic 80 and I am hoping that those members remain in the association and more members join.

This year the Northern Territory membership remained on par with approximately 70 members including 3 life members.

The NT Consultative Forum had its inaugural meeting in November last year when the Terms of Reference were drafted. The secretary and I are members and attended the inaugural meeting and the first meeting for the year in February.

The State Branch Executive has been active in raising matters to Federal and Territory Politicians that affect our members such as Military Superannuation, disparity in funeral expenses and the payment for flu vaccinations.

The bulk of Pension and Welfare Officers work in the NT still remains with Vietnam Veterans but it has been noticed that there is an increase in the areas of ex service men and women who are non veterans.

It is pleasing to note that the VVAANT still remains determined to carry out our core business of helping our members and other veterans.

This years' ANZAC Day in the Top End was as good, if not better than last year. There was approximately 80 Vietnam Veterans who attended Dawn Services and marches across the Territory. Of notice is the number of young veterans and their families that were at the Dawn Service in Darwin. It is important to note that there were around 2000 people attend the Dawn Ser-

60th Anniversary CD of Regimental

The RAR Foundation has, with the support of the Australian Band Corps, a new RAR 60th Anniversary CD of Regimental Marches to replace the previous Regimental Marches (50th Anniversary) CD which has been sold out.

This CD can be obtained by sending \$18.00 for postal delivery, or for \$15 for collection at the RARF office in RMC-A, Duntroon, on Wednesdays and/or Thursday mornings.

Telephone (02) 6265 9842.

RARF,

GPO Box 3112,

Canberra ACT 2601

Please make cheques payable to RAR Foundation

Nomads and are travelling in the Top End feel free to give us a call and join us for a good afternoon.

Coral House is running along fine under guidance of the State Branch executive committee and continuing to supply good quality accommodation to Vets and others in need, last year a total of 78 clients used the facility.. SAAP funding is still being used to improve the living conditions of the residents. Many improvements were made during the year such as new fridges, lounge suits and the installation of a computer to assist clients to go on line and register for work and permanent housing.

The VVAANT also received additional funding of \$10,000.00 to assist us in obtaining professional help to draft an Operating Procedure Manual. Murdock Advantage, Consultants are doing the work for us. (I am hoping that it will be completed soon).

NT's application for 2010/2011 BEST funding has been lodged.

The Rural Association has been actively involved in fund raising activities from running raffles to cooking the BBQ at the Noonamah B & S Ball. It is also planned to continue handing out information on the association and about Welfare, Health and the Well Being of Veterans in conjunction with VVCS at many events held in Darwin during the Dry Season.

In the first three months of this year our Pension and Welfare Officers, have completed the work.

Pensions:

Interviews	45	Pensions lodged	0
Pensions finalised	2	Hospital visits	2
VRB Logged	1		
Welfare related contacts:	9		

DANNY.T.MEREDITH

President

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Over the past few months we have been lobbying both Major Parties for a truer deal for General Rates for Pension Recipients. Louise Markus MP (Shadow Minister for Veteran Affairs) has shown considerable interest in making in the General Rates of Pension more equitable with the TPI Rate.

Laurie Lewis AM, Chairman of the Consultative Council of Ex-Service Organisations is behind the motion and will draft a letter on behalf of the Consultative Council Membership, to both Major Parties, supporting the argument.

The Mental Health System in South Australia is currently fragmented.

At the Future Directions Consultative Group meeting held on 28th March 2000 at Daw Park Repatriation Hospital the matter of Mental Health especially in relation to finding a bed or accommodation after hours was the major topic of discussion. It was agreed that a special meeting between the State Health Minister John Hill, Laurie Lewis from the Consultative Council of Ex-Service Organisations, Ian Kelly DVA, Jock Statton RSL, Geoff Tattersall, General Manager RGH, Michael Burwell, Director VVCS and myself get together to try and fix the current anomalies.

To date, no time frame has been set.

Membership has slightly increased from this time last year, and to date we have managed to retain the Membership fee at \$27.00. However, with all Admissible costs rising, it has been approved by the State Council to increase Membership fees to \$30.00 effective as from the start of the 2011 year.

This year Veterans Day is going ahead with a major sponsor, namely Eblen Subaru coming to the party with \$5,000.00. This year special guest will be Lucky Starr. The event will be held on Sunday 15th August 2010 on the Torrens Parade Ground.

Due to the conflict resurrecting its head between the Copper Coast Sub Branch and the Veterans Community Centre at Kadina, it was decided to place a Public Notice in the York Peninsular Times, stating that the Veterans Community Centre is not a sub-branch and they did not represent this Association in anyway.

The State Branch is in a secure financial position for the coming years. This will insure that all commitments to our Membership and the Veterans Community will be made.

Mike Benyk JP
State President

ACT

As the nation's capital feels the first icy grip of winter and we rug up accordingly, arrangements for Vietnam Veterans' Day Remembrance Service are taking shape. This year we expect 2 Sqn RAAF Association to attend. They will be there to witness the final chapter in the long saga of our MIAs.

Family members of F/Off Michael Herbert and P/Off Robert Carver, escorted by 2 Sqn RAAF Association members will unveil the final two "Home at Last" plaques on the MIA seats at our Memorial, the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial.

2 Sqn RAAF Association members have planned a unit reunion to coincide with the unveiling.

This day will also officially end the saga of our MIAs that began an age ago with the search for L/Cpl "Tiny" Parker and Pte Peter Gillson of 1 RAR first tour. The rest of the search, recovery, RTA and funerals of all six MIAs may now be written into history but the tenacity and determination of all those involved in the process should be remembered as a quintessential quality of Australian mateship.

To date this year, the ACT Branch has achieved all goals in almost every area. Pension claims are being submitted in numbers planned for in January. We have met all demands in the welfare area and are looking to recruit another welfare officer. While we expected our Victorian colleagues to have made the "On the Radar" presentation in this area, circumstances have dictated that it be scheduled later in the year.

Membership numbers are up slightly on those of this time last year. While a few have not renewed and we know of some who have moved interstate and sadly some passed away, we welcome those returning to the fold or who are joining for the first time.

Our contribution to local ESO committees and our relationships with other ESOs continue to bear fruit in the co-operative area.

Relations with both sides of ACT politics could not be better as our dealings on matters with our Senators and MPs show. Fruitful meetings with member for Canberra Annette Ellis, member for Eden Monaro Mike Kelly and Senators Kate Lundy and Gary Humphries are a part of the Canberra landscape. We constructively work for the benefit of not just Vietnam Veterans but all members of the Veteran community. We continue to pursue the issue of amenities in the form of toilets, drinking fountains and shaded seating for Veterans and the general public paying their respects at the National Memorials on ANZAC Parade. Naturally we constantly raise other issues including

Military superannuation indexation, health, pensions and a myriad of other concerns to all members of the Veteran community.

While our financial situation remains adequate, to remain so will require a greater involvement of volunteers to replace those who will, for a variety of reasons, take a well deserved break.

Our current volunteers ensure our activities programmes run smoothly. We are looking to swell our volunteer ranks to staff new programmes and activities coming on stream or in the planning stages. We see a definite need for these programmes and activities to help fill the lifestyle void brought on by members leaving the paid workforce. Far from turning the VVAA ACT into a "social club" these programmes and activities fulfil a vital role in meeting the needs of our members and their partners in leading satisfying lives in retirement.

As we rug up for winter, one of our highest goals in this relatively small Branch will be to encourage all in the VVAA to devote their time and energies to constructive ways of advancing the health, welfare and well being of all Vietnam Veterans and their families. All too often corrosive elements enter our lives and distract us from achieving that all vitally important goal of looking after the needs of our people.

Pete Ryan, BA LLB,
ACT President

All you ever want to know about Vietnam

This site is very good for research

<http://www-static.cc.gatech.edu/fac/Thomas.Pilsch/Vietnam.html>

**Wanted: Information re:
Vietnam Monuments & Memorials
Accommodation, Caravan Parks & Camp-
sites for the Debrief.**

Contact Kath Coxon

Ph: 03 6266 6467

Email: rkcoxon@netspace.net.au

EXHIBITION PARK IN CANBERRA

Flemington Road, Mitchell ACT 2911

PO Box 456 Dickson ACT 2602

Phone: 02 6241 3022 Fax: 02 6241 5394

Email: info@epic.act.gov.au

Website: www.epic.act.gov.au

It's the Soldier.

**It's the Soldier, not the reporter,
who has given us the freedom of the press.**

**It's the Soldier, not the poet,
who has given us the freedom of speech.**

**It's the Soldier, not the politicians,
that ensures our right to Life, Freedom
and the Pursuit of Happiness.**

**It's the Soldier who salutes the flag,
who serves beneath the flag,
and whose coffin is draped by the flag.**

One of Maxine's best!!!!!!!

Minorities

We need to show more sympathy for these people.

*** They travel miles in the heat.**

*** They risk their lives crossing the ocean.**

*** They don't get paid enough wages.**

*** They do jobs that others won't do or are
afraid to do.**

*** They live in crowded conditions among a people
who speak a different language.**

*** They rarely see their families, and they face
adversity all day ~ every day.**

**I'm not talking about illegal boat people ~ I'm
talking about our troops!**

**Doesn't it seem strange that many Labor and
Liberals and Independents are willing to lavish all
kinds of social benefits on illegals, but don't sup-
port our troops, and are even threatening to de-
fund them?**

Help needed

RE: LATE PETER JAMES GOLLAGHER

Aka Publishing has been assigned to write the memoirs for the late Peter James Gollagher who died in a Vietnam tunnel during 1968 and was involved with the Infantry 3rd Battalion. We wondered if you could assist with any editorial inclusion or advertising to hopefully spark interest amongst those who perhaps knew Peter or could assist with any background information surrounding the period 1967-1968. Any information at all will assist with the above project and would be greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

Jasmine Davidson

Project Manager

a.k.a. publishing Pty Limited

(Incorporating This Is My Story)

T: 02 9326 1499 F: 02 9699 9784

www.akapublishing.com.au

Vietnam Veterans' Family Study (VVFS) Update ***5/5/10***

The VVFS is investigating the long term effects of war service on Vietnam veterans' families. This study will help provide a better understanding of what those impacts are and how best to assist those who need help. It was initially expected that the VVFS would conclude in December 2016, however, it is now anticipated that the final research reports will be completed by the end of 2011. Following receipt of all the research reports, a report incorporating all the research elements will be completed and this is expected to be handed to Government in the latter half of 2012. This is over four years earlier than originally programmed and will be achieved without compromising the scientific validity of the study.

Registration numbers have continued to increase, however we are still encouraging registrations as the more people involved in the study, the greater the validity of the results. In particular we are still seeking participation from the nieces and nephews of Vietnam veterans'. The reason we are asking nieces and nephews to participate is that the VVFS is aiming to compare the following groups:

- the sons and daughters of Vietnam veterans,
- the nieces and nephews of Vietnam veterans, and the children of Vietnam era ex-Army personnel (the control group for this study).

These group comparisons should allow the researchers to identify any significant differences in health and well-being between these groups or between these groups and the general Australian population. More information on how to register for the study can be found at www.dva.gov.au/vvfs or by calling the FSP Team on freecall 1800 502 302.

Timor-Leste Family Study Progress

Military service, particularly deployment, has a profound effect not only on those who serve but also on their families. The Timor-Leste Family Study aims to determine what, if any, physical, mental or social health impacts there are on military families as a result of deployment, particularly to Timor-Leste. The study also aims to identify any potential risk or protective factors that influence the ability of Defence families to cope with deployments. The Centre for Military and Veterans Health (CMVH) is running the Timor-Leste Family Study as part of the larger Department of Veterans' Affairs Family Study.

The research includes information provided by the families of people who:

- deployed to Timor-Leste, or
 - were eligible to deploy to Timor-Leste but did not.
- These families may or may not have deployed on other operations.

The study will help DVA and Defence better understand the impact of deployment on Defence families and identify the kinds of support services that would best help these families prior to, during and after deployments.

You can contribute to the success of this research by telling your friends and family about this study and by participating in the study. Potential participants will soon be sent information packages explaining the research and asking them to participate.

Contact us:

call **1800 708 335**

email families@cmvh.org.au

website www.cmvh.org.au

Vietnam Veterans' Family Health Study Update. ***16/5/10***

Research is now underway into the health of Australia's veteran community, helping identify health problems that may have occurred as a result of service in Vietnam.

Family members of Vietnam Veterans, particularly their nieces, nephews and step children, are being urged to sign up for the Vietnam Veterans Family Health Study, as scientific validity relies on adequate registration numbers. To date the response from other veteran relations has been excellent. There just remains this one select group where numbers continue to be small. It is important for the study that these relatives become involved if at all possible.

Veteran participants are split into two key groups, those who served in Vietnam, and those who didn't go to that conflict. Invitations have been sent to around 20,000 servicemen of the Vietnam era and with the program's budget at \$11.5million, the study promises to be one of the most significant ever carried out in this demographic. The study is now expected to be completed by 2012, some years earlier than originally planned plus results will be made available throughout the course of the study.

You can find out more or register by :

emailing healthstudy@dva.gov.au

Or calling **1800 502 302**

or web site www.dva.gov.au

This is an initiative we must all support to gain a benefit from the information the study produces. Please consider asking these particular Vietnam Veteran relations to volunteer their time to help us all.

VVF Health Study.....we need more Vietnam Veterans' nephews and nieces to sign up to complete the required numbers. A new request from this study group. Thank you for any assistance you are able to provide at this time.

BOOK REVIEW

AUSTRALIANS AWARDED: A Concise Guide to Military and Civilian Decorations, Medals and other Awards to Australians from 1815 to 2007 with their Valuations. 1st Edition Clive Johnson, Rennicks Publications Pty Ltd 2008, ISBN 978-0-975245-7-1, \$64.95

Reviewer – Clive Mitchell-Taylor

This publication spans almost 200 years of awards to Australians, including both the Imperial and Australian honours systems. It includes foreign awards made by the United Nations and Papua New Guinea and Malaysia, but not those made by the United States, South Vietnam or more recently, Timor Leste. The latter must have been somewhat galling for my namesake, as the Australian government formally accepted the East Timorese Solidarity Medal in November 2008, just as this publication would have been going to print.

Like many other Vietnam era veterans I am a little out of my depth with the post-'75 awards, especially the bewildering array of United Nations medals, and this book has filled in some of the knowledge gaps for me.



Following the World War II section there is some coverage of official (government issued) badges, WWII commemorative and unofficial awards, then a three-page review of a sample of Association badges, RSA, RSL, ARP and Civil Defence. I couldn't find the post-war CMF badge in the list of official badges and this is the only omission I have been able to identify.

Citations, Commendations, and other tri-Service awards as well as State awards to Police, Fire Brigade, Ambulance, Prison, Corrective and Emergency Services personnel make this a comprehensive coverage of awards that you could expect to see Australians wearing. I was intrigued to note that only Western Australia incorporates state awards into the national awards, while the others states wear them on the right. Queensland, Victoria and the ACT mount them in 'reverse' order with gallantry medals on the left, closest to the heart.

Johnson provides explanations of terms and abbreviations, naming styles and references for recommended reading. Each medal includes a valuation guide and while the unique composition of medal sets makes valuation problematic in any place other than the auction room; his guidance includes a base price for each medal, a single medal with variants and the value that a single medal would be likely to add to a medal group.

I would have liked to have seen more effort put into both the description and illustration of the medal ribbons, but clearly it is the medals, not the ribbons which are the primary focus of the publication.

Colour illustrations throughout, including close-ups of various naming styles make the book a pleasure to read, and while it's probably not one to curl up with on a cold winter's night, it is an excellent reference to a complex subject.

MEDIA RELEASE March 1, 2010

Free road-trip for Vietnam Vets

Wicked Campers is currently offering all Vietnam Vets a FREE road trip.

The special entitles each Vietnam Vet to complimentary campervan rental for five days.

Wicked owner John Webb said the aim of the deal was to say thank you for the huge contribution the Vets have made to our country.

"It's my way of showing our appreciation," he said. "For any Vets who have a bit of spare time, it's a great way to see more of Australia for free."

The approximate value of the giveaway is \$300.

WICKED OFFER FOR VIETNAM VETS

- 5-day complimentary road trip for Vietnam Vets (subject to availability).

- Vans available from Wicked Depots in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Airlie Beach, Alice Springs, Broome, Byron Bay, Cairns, Darwin, Exmouth, Hervey Bay and Hobart.

Wicked vans sleep 2-3 people and are fully equipped with a kitchenette, camping stove, internal table and lounge, and a camping table and chairs. The deal is available for 2 or 3 seater models. Re-location deals are also often available for only \$1 a day.

Wicked Campers are in 14 locations across Australia, with around 900 vans nationwide. They provide an affordable way for travellers to see the country, combining transport and accommodation into one cheap price. Wicked has also expanded overseas, with depots in Canada, USA, Thailand, Chile, Africa, New Zealand and the UK.

To make a booking, phone Wicked Campers on 1800 246 869.

For media inquiries contact:

Michelle Cannon, Big Splash Communications

Ph: 07 3395 0772 **M:** 0488 209 071

E: michelle@bigsplash.net.au

MY LIFE AS A CAR

IF MY BODY WERE A CAR...

If my body were a car, this is the time I would be thinking about trading it in for a newer model.

I've got bumps and dents and scratches in my finish and my paint job is getting a little dull ..
But that's not the worst of it.

My headlights are out of focus and it's especially hard to see things up close

My traction is not as graceful as it once was. I slip and slide and skid and bump into things even in the best of weather.

My whitewalls are stained with varicose veins.

It takes me hours to reach my maximum speed. My fuel rate burns inefficiently.

But here's the worst of it –

Almost every time I sneeze, cough or sputter - either my radiator leaks or my exhaust backfires!

Why I Love the Navy

I LIKE standing on the bridge wing at sunrise with salt spray in my face and clean ocean winds whipping in from the four quarters of the globe, the ship beneath me feeling like a living thing as her engines drive her through the sea.

I LIKE the sounds of the navy, the piercing trill of the boatswains call the syncopated clanger of the ships bell the harsh squawk of the main broadcast and the strong language and laughter of sailors at work

I LIKE navy vessels, nervous darting destroyers, plodding fleet auxiliaries, sleek submarines and steady solid carriers

I LIKE the proud names of navy ships Australia, Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Hobart, Brisbane

I LIKE the lean angular names of navy destroyers Anzac, Vampire, Vendetta, Voyager, Queenborough, Tobruk, Quickmatch

I LIKE the tempo of a navy band blaring through the upper deck speakers as we pull away from the tanker after refuelling at sea

I LIKE the pipe "libertymen fall in" and the spicy scent of a foreign port

I LIKE sailors, men from all parts of the land, from city and country alike and all walks of life, I trust and depend on them as they trust and depend on me for professional competence, comradeship and courage, in a word they are shipmates

I LIKE the surge of adventure in my heart when the word is passed "special sea duty-men close up"

I LIKE the infectious thrill of sighting home again, the waving hands of welcome from family and friends. The work is hard and dangerous, the going rough at times, the parting from loved ones painful but the companionship of robust navy laughter the all for one and one for all philosophy of the sea is ever present

I LIKE the serenity of the sea after a day of hard ships work, the beer issue, watching flying fish flit across the wave tops as

sunset gives way to night

I LIKE the feel of the navy in darkness the masthead lights the red and green navigation lights and the stern light the pulsating phosphorescence of radar screens

I LIKE drifting off to sleep lulled by the myriad of noises large and small that tell me that my ship is alive and well and that my shipmates on watch will keep me safe

I LIKE quiet middle watches with the aroma of kai on a winters night

I LIKE hectic watches when the exacting minuet of haze grey shapes racing at full speed keeps all hands on a razor edge of alertness

I LIKE the sudden electricity of "action stations" followed by the hurried clamour of running feet on ladders and the resounding thump of watertight doors and hatches as the ship transforms herself from the peaceful workplace to a weapon of war ready for anything

I LIKE the sight of space age equipment manned by youngsters clad in No8's and sound powered phones that their grandfathers would still recognise

I LIKE the traditions of the navy and the men who made them and the heroism of the men who sailed in the ships of yesteryear. An adolescent can find adulthood. In years to come when sailors are home from the sea they will still remember with fondness and respect the ocean in all its moods, the impossible shimmering mirror calm and the storm tossed green water surging over the bow, and then there will come again a faint whiff of stack gas, a faint echo of engine and rudder orders a vision of the bright bunting of signal flags snapping at the yardarm a refrain of hearty laughter.

Gone ashore for good they will grow wistful about their navy days, when the seas belonged to them and a new port of call was ever over the horizon, remembering this they will stand taller and say

I WAS A SAILOR ONCE, I WAS PART OF THE NAVY AND THE NAVY WILL ALWAYS BE A PART OF ME THAT'S WHY I LOVE THE NAVY

BRUCE ROCK VIETNAM VETERANS GROUP

WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO ATTEND

THE TENTH

BACK TO THE BUSH VETERAN'S REUNION

1st to the 8th NOVEMBER 2010 BRUCE ROCK WA



All Veterans,
Families and Friends
are welcome to
come along to
BRUCE ROCK

For the 10th
Back to The Bush
Veteran's Reunion
For a great week of
relaxation,
comradeship,
fun and Laughter.

Camping around the
Oval will be
available from
Sunday 31st Oct.
Moving to the grassed
oval on Tuesday 2nd
November 2010

Chris Pickering
PH: 08 90611604

Email:

crpick@highwayone.org

Merv Gould

PH: 08 90611143

Email:

mjgould@westnet.com.au

www.bruce-rock.wa.gov.au

For further information
or to leave your contact
details for a more
informative flyer please
contact the above.

It's Our
10th
Anniversary

Melbourne Cup
Day
Tuesday
2nd
November

There will be
activities
at different
venues in town
so come early
and
enjoy the
Melbourne Cup
in
BRUCE ROCK

The activities will be **Golf, Bowls, Bingo, Beetles, Rifle Shoot, Town Tours, Card Making.** This year Lucy Stone is having a Flower Power Morning tea in Bruce Rock, a fabulous local fundraiser. The Medical evening will be held on Wednesday 3rd Nov, subject to be decided.

RAEME 102 Field Workshops

Are having a Reunion and get together here in Bruce Rock so Veterans, Family & Friends of the above corp are welcome to join in.

A School Concert at the **Amphitheatre Thursday Saturday 6th November** is our **Special** day, with **Street Markets**, in the main street. The **Shire Hall** full of info booths covering a **wide range of health issues.** **Flag Association, PVA, TPI** etc. **10th Light Horse Museum, Historical Military** vehicles and more.

At 2.45pm all Veterans and interested persons are asked to form up outside the Shire Hall, for a **March** through the town to **St Peter's Church** for a **Relighting** of the memorial candle at the **VIETNAM VETERANS PEACE WINDOW.**

Followed by a **Free b/cue and entertainment** at the Recreation Centre. A **Free Sunday Morning breakfast** will follow next day, for those people who have to leave us. We hope you will stay and attend the **Unveiling & Memorial Service** dedicated to the **Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels.**

Also enjoy the **Brass Bands** playing to entertain you at the **Shire Hall.**

Take a leisurely drive to the Ardath Hotel for Lunch, Phone 90651046 for bookings (Accommodation also available). Then rest a while for an evening around Merv's Bards Pit, where you entertain us!

So, come prepared to enjoy real Country Hospitality, have a great time, catch up with old mates and make New ones!!

Vietnam Veterans' South West NSW and Wagga Inc

Murraguldrrie Vietnam Veterans Retreat

www.southwestnsw.tripod.com

The retreat is in the Murraguldrrie State Forest.

(55km South East of Wagga Wagga

45 km North West of Tumbarumba

7 km off the Hume Highway.)

It is set in a past forestry nursery area so it is surrounded by beautiful trees that provide good shade during visits.

A shed provides shelter and contains a kitchen area with tables and chairs. An outlet on the container allows visitors to connect their own generator to power the facilities.

Tank water is available and we ask visitors to be mindful in its usage.

An amenities facility is available with toilets and showers. Hot water will shortly be available via a 'Donkey' system operating on the pinecones readily available on site.

Fire rings are available for use during the cooler months.



The retreat is available to veterans and their families. It offers good bush camping with basic facilities. Both caravans and tents can be accommodated.

Please sign the visitor's book, read the standing orders and make a donation to help keep the running costs down.

After staying we ask you to take your rubbish home, replace firewood used, clean up the kitchen and the toilet/shower facilities you may have used before you leave.

Enjoy the peace and tranquillity offered by our retreat.

If you decide to visit please contact:

Les White 042822 6097

Manager 02 6922 6097

Stuart Innes 041865 1564

Hon. Sec. 02 6926 5881

Gordon Irvin 042838 1292

Committee 02 6971 2488

The Traditional Owners and Management of Elsey Station welcome Australia's veterans to

ROPER RETREAT

Open 1-31 August annually

Vets are invited to rest by 60 km of the magnificent Roper River.

Camping is free, there is fresh water in the river, with lots of peace for regeneration.

Protocol: The same as for Pandanus Park ie take only photos, leave only footprints, you are totally responsible for yourself and there is absolutely no liability for Elsey Station or its residents. Ensure that you have medical clearance, and that you bring everything you might need.

Phone 07 5445 0280 with your names, dates and numbers.

Where is it? 31km east along the Roper Highway, Northern Territory. Turn north at the Elsey Station sign. 3km later you will pass the Manager's house, and just 5km later you reach the Roper.

How much dirt getting in? Only eight km. Yep, you read it right. You don't even need a fourby.

How's the fishing? There are plenty of barra, seratoga and black bream - all great eating - and even catfish, if that's your fancy.

Nearest facilities:

3km to the community clinic

35km to Mataranka for groceries, fuel, doctor and hospital

140km to Katherine for the dentist

<http://www.southaustralianhistory.com.au/elseystation.htm>



Gold Coast War Museum
42 John Rogers Rd (off the Springbrook Rd.)
Mudgeeraba 4213

Open 7 days a Week

9am to 4 pm

Phone (07) 55305222

Adults \$10
Children/Pensioners \$5

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE**P.O. BOX 97 MINTO NSW 2566****National President:**Ron Coxon OAM,
(03) 6266 6467 VPO Box 89 HUONVILLE TAS 7109
(03) 6266 6478 F 0412 264 346 M
Email: vvaanatpres@netspace.net.au**National Vice President:**David McCann J.P
(02) 4390 861337 Whiteswan Ave, Bluehaven NSW 2262
0413 968 985 M
Email: Dmac45@bigpond.com**National Vice President:**John Smith, OAM, JP
07) 5498 520248 Alexander Crescent, Morayfield Qld 4506
0407 460 358 M
Email: vvaanvp2@gmail.com**National Secretary**

Ken Foster JP

PO Box 97 MINTO NSW 2566
0413 046 077 M
Email: VVAA.sec@bigpond.com**National Treasurer:**Rob Cox OAM,
(08) 9455 5290 VPO Box 528 WILLETTON WA 6955
Mob 0418 928 621
Email: nat.treas@inet.net.au**NORTHERN TERRITORY****PO Box 1861 HUMPTY DOO NT 0836**

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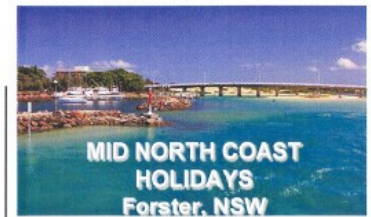
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