



DEBRIEF

Patron: RADM Neil Ralph AO DSC RAN (RTD)

Edited and Published By

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Inc.

P.O Box 97

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SUMMER

2012

ORIGINAL LONG TAN CROSS ON DISPLAY AT THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

For the first time the original Long Tan cross will be on display in Australia.

The battle of Long Tan was Australia's most costly single engagement of the Vietnam War. During the nation's ten-year-long involvement in Vietnam, there were bigger and more sustained battles, involving larger formations. But few were so intense and dramatic.

On 18 August 1966, 108 soldiers of D Company, 6RAR, fought a fierce battle in the Long Tan rubber plantation against a large Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army force. Outnumbered by at least ten to one, but with artillery support from the Australian base five kilometres away, they fought off determined attacks.

Three years later soldiers of the 6th Battalion, 6RAR/NZ (ANZAC), returned to the site of the battle to erect and dedicate a commemorative cross. Soldiers who fought at Long Tan were present at the ceremony.

The Long Tan cross has been generously loaned to the Australian War Memorial by the Dong Nai Museum in Bien Hoa, with the support and approval of the Ministry of Culture, Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

The Long Tan cross will be on display from 17 August 2012 until 11 June 2013

this write-up taken from Australian War Memorial Web site



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NATIONAL PRESIDENTS REPORT



With the festive season approaching I wish everyone a great Xmas and New Year. Be careful on the roads, enjoy the time as we all look forward to a prosperous future ahead.

The VVAA continues to work with DVA and the Minister for Veteran Affairs in relation to

matters of concern to the veteran community. It is important that the ESOs can have these issues discussed.

At this time there is a review of BEST funding. These Grants are to assist organisations to carry out assistance to veterans in both claims for pension and welfare services. Originally the funds were for pension officers and advocates then it was revealed that in fact 82% of the money was going to paid welfare officers. As from this round, round 15, it is believed this will change. Instead of using VVAA funds for out of pocket expenses BEST funds will be available.

This year at the National Council/Congress in May and the Council in October were very productive. Most of the business of our operations were dealt with and an action list distributed to delegate tasks to various people and States. We look forward to the completion and output going ahead.

Most of the workload revolves around welfare for us now as most Vietnam veterans have claimed their pension now. The younger veterans of conflicts since are those seeking assistance now. They are spread all around the country and do not have anywhere need the concentration of people in locations as we did. Privacy stops us being advised of where they are we rely on word of mouth. I hope we can get these young blokes working with us to continue the service to veterans. I have spoken to the APPVA National President to have him advise his members that they could be working with the VVAA more.

Merchandise sales are continuing at a great rate. Most sales are to Sub Branches but many come via the net from individuals from all over Australia and overseas. There has been an increase from New Zealand Vietnam veterans in recent times and we now have items particular to them.

Whilst talking of New Zealand, there is now a permanent display in the National Vietnam Veterans museum for that country. This had a significant opening on November the 18th with an official function.

In May I will not be standing as National President. It is time for new blood. I must say that it has been both a privilege and a pleasure to have represented the VVAA since December 2005. During that time I have made many friends and contacts across the country and while I stand down from that position I will continue with my advocacy work and representation on the Operational Working Party forum dealing with compensation matters. Kath will continue in her role if that is her wish and the wish of the committee.

I take this opportunity to thank all of those I have worked with over the period. Without your support and backup I would not have been able to continue in the position, my utmost gratitude to you all. My appreciation of the efforts of all is hard to express in words.

The VVAA will continue to be a force in the veteran community for sometime yet and I wish all involved continued success.

Keep up the great work and you will reap the benefit.

Ron Coxon.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
& A HAPPY NEW YEAR**



**FROM THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OF
VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION
OF AUSTRALIA INC.**



**KEEP OUR SERVICE PERSONAL
SERVING OVERSEAS
SAFE TILL THEIR RETURN.**

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NATIONAL SECRETARIES REPORT



The National Council of the association met in Adelaide on 26th and 27th of October 2012 to accept reports and consider points of interest and concern to the members. The meeting was cordial and covered a range of subjects that can be further

considered by the members as they see fit, copies of the minutes are available from your State Branch or Sub Branch secretaries.

Primary concerns covered government funding to support pension and welfare support to the veteran community, general health related matters, the written history of the Vietnam War, Education of the children of Vietnam veterans particularly in regard to the Long Tan Bursaries and the future direction of the association as our veteran numbers continue to diminish.

A high point of the Council meeting was the unanimous decision to present a National Life Membership to John Smith for his services over many years as a National Vice President of the association, John as President of the Queensland branch has been a strong supporter of our association and of veterans in general. Within the association I have concerns about state branches continuing to work outside the requirements of the National Constitution and National Handbook, it appears that while delegates accept the rules at meetings the implementation is not always pursued as enthusiastically.

Debrief magazine Summer edition will be in production in the near future, I would remind all states that unless there membership lists are current I cannot guarantee all members will receive copies, deadlines for member ship lists and items for inclusion in this edition have been distributed in the admin instruction on this matter.

As we move into 2013 and prepare for the National Congress in May I would ask you all to consider how you can contribute to the ongoing activities of the association, there are positions on Sub Branch, State and National Executives that are best filled by Vietnam veterans in the support of their comrades. Volunteers are underpaid but the other rewards cannot be measured by simple things like money.

May I wish you all a Happy and Joyful Christmas for 2012 and a healthy and prosperous year in 2013 and into the future.

Ken Foster JP

National Secretary

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2012. MUSWELLBROOK NSW

I had the pleasure of attending the Muswellbrook RSL's Vietnam Veterans Day Celebrations on 18/8/2012. The large crowd comprised serving service personnel, a Guard of Honour and Catafalque Party of local reservists, local dignitaries, school children, Vietnam Vets and their families and a large contingent of about 90 members of the ARVN Veterans Association in Australia - NSW Inc.

As the service was about to get underway there was a fly-over by two small aircraft (Cessnas?) one of which had been deployed as a spotter plane in South Vietnam.

Several school children gave readings about the Vietnam War and one young girl gave a very interesting presentation about her grandfather (Grumpy), an AATTV member who had two tours and sadly passed away in his fifties, before the young girl was born. According to the story at one stage he was replaced on a reconnaissance flight by a US Colonel who was subsequently shot down and held captive for 10 years, the longest by any POW in Vietnam. Some of the South Vietnamese people were seen to wipe away tears during the readings from the school children.

Mr Don Rowe OAM, President of the RSL of Australia (NSW Branch) spoke on behalf of the Australian Vets and Major Tran Dang Vinh, NSW State President of the ARVN Association in Australia responded on behalf of the ARVN Vets. The Major's speech was particularly moving and I have included a copy of it as he has consented to have it published if there is sufficient space.

One of the ladies from the ARVN Association Choir sang a beautiful song that she had written and the full Choir sang the South Vietnamese National Anthem and the Australian National Anthem.

During the laying of the wreaths a local lady sang a lovely service-related song that she had written and then her teenage son gave an excellent rendition of the near-anthem, Khe Sanh.

The weather was kind by Muswellbrook standards until the westerly blew in straight off the snow so immediately the service was over there was a rush to the RSL Club for supper and some liquid refreshments compliments of the Muswellbrook RSL Sub-Branch. We then settled in and had a good natter with the ARVN Vets and their charming ladies until the time came for them to head back to Sydney.

Barry Nisbett

A member of VVAA Hunter/Central SB

NEW SOUTH WALES

18th August was another successful Vietnam Veterans Day Commemoration , the salute was taken by the NSW Governor, Prof Marie Bashier and amongst the dignitaries attending was the Premier, Barry O'Farrell, opposition leader Mr John Robinson, DC Ms Jennifer Collins, Brig Doug Humphries ,senior representatives from the three services and many ex servicemen and women from all over Sydney.

7th September saw the NSW VVAA very well represented at an invitation to Government House for the Premier Barry O'Farrell's Commemorative function to honour the fallen, wounded and those who served their country in Vietnam, after I gave the response to the premier. I was told by the premier that I would never make a politician (speech was too short) but everyone there was grateful for the brief response (all could get back to the refreshments quickly).

NSW executive and representatives from St Marys and MacArthur had a meeting with Minister Warren Snowden re BEST , the consensus was that although he listened to our presentation, he really needed to, as he did not aware of how a grass roots ESO operates and what is involved by that ESO for serving both the local veteran community and being a good community neighbour, and that these are the things that our previous Minister made himself aware of before he even got the ministers office. Immigration Minister Chris Bowen was also in attendance at this meeting.

NSW Branch has acquired the services of a dedicated Events Co-Ordinator, Ms Carol Ward CSM JP, who has recently retired from her long time position in office management for Price Waterhouse in Sydney and is still currently serving in the Army Reserves (33 years), has graciously volunteered her services to help out with any functions we have coming up (Viet Vets Day, National Congress etc , we are most grateful for Carol's help as it takes the load off any one person (VP's).

The Vietnamese Community Association along with the ARVN Association of Australia are holding a fund-raiser dinner on the 11th November after a Memorial Commemoration in Sydney, at this Commemoration, a Memorial Plaque with the 521 names of the Australian fallen in Vietnam will be opened by the Governor , it seems that the Vietnamese Community cannot do enough for us in the area of welfare assistance, for which we are more than grateful.

And last but by no means least, one of our Sub-Branched (Hunter/Central Coast) has open a Veterans

Drop in Centre at the Warnervale Airport on the Central Coast of NSW , we have the support of Federal and State MP's along with Dept of Veterans Affairs, we feel, and from general responses from Veterans, that opening the Drop in Centre giving them (the Vets), an alternative place to go, rather than a club (RSL etc) has been well received and has also created a lot of interest in other ESO's (War Widows, PVA, Legacy), what it does do, is open up an area out of the precincts of Sydney, and gives our Vets somewhere extra to go to.

Dave McCann
State President

2nd Intake JRTE HMAS Leeuwin 1961

First ever reunion

Approximate date is yet to be confirmed, assume Feb/ March 2014.

To be held in the Shellharbour area NSW about 110km south of Sydney.

To register your interest and for further details:

Contact Dave Turner or 02 9520 2810

Email: davkat@bigpond.net.au

The 10th INTAKE **NATIONAL SERVICE REUNION** **AT SAWTELL BEACH HOLIDAY PARK** **8TH TO 14TH OCTOBER 2013**

NEWCOMERS WELCOME to come and enjoy our tried and tested events:

Camp kitchen at 5pm for Happy Hour, trivia night, Memorial service at local RSL (so bring your medals), RSL Breakfast, we provide a complementary evening meal, perhaps a "Black & Bling" dress up night, the Caravan Park provide a great breakfast for free, return of the Ladies "Sawtell Follies", State of Origin cricket match followed by a seafood smorgasbord at the RSL or a delicious Chinese dinner at the Bowling Club. There will be a White Board in the camp kitchen detailing daily activities so you can find a partner to tennis, bowl, golf or swim in the pool.

Accommodation.

Email to info@sawtellbeachcaravanpark.com.au

Ph 1800200555/0266484485

Website www.sawtellbeachcaravanpark.com.au

Past reunion participants will need to ring the park (after 25th October 2012 to retain your same 2011 cabins/sites and pay a security bond of \$100) Remember to ask for Michelle and quote "10th Intake Reunion" for your 10% discount.

Contact:

Richard and Yvonne Barry- 0267 923 114 richyvonn47@hotmail.com

Email: richyvonn47@hotmail.com

Owen and Lynn Email: Puie-owenpuie@bigpond.com

Carol and Max Dahler- 0429 497 553

Email: mdahler@bigpond.com

QUEENSLAND

The Qld Branch has had a very busy period since the National Congress in May. The first major activity was the finalization of our purchase of a 7 acre property plus six bedroom house at Burpengary which we intend setting up as a State HQ plus Service/Ex Service Family Support Centre. Work is progressing very well with the support of some of the local Sub branches. Like any major acquisition there has been some opposition but we are proceeding with our plans. We have had two social activities at the House which has been very successful with plenty of support from the local members.



50TH Anniversary Activities

We have had a very busy time this year celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the commencement of our involvement in Vietnam. The first activity was their Armed Forces Day which was held on Saturday 16th June at Roma Street parklands followed by a Lunch in the Park.



Then a 50th dinner hosted by the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Association at Lions Richland with approx. 300 in attendance 23rd June. Tim Fischer and myself along with Phung Huynh the national president of the republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Association were the guest speakers.



The next activity that we were invited to attend was by the AATTV to their 50th which was held at their Can NHA which is situated in the Canungra Army Base where we were asked to lay a wreath on behalf of all Vietnam veterans. This activity was hosted by Mr John Gibson, AATTV Qld State President.

On Thursday 16th August the VVAA Qld branch hosted a 50th Anniversary Luncheon at North's League's and Services club where we had approx. 200 in attendance. The entertainment was provided by a group which most of you know Radio Saigon. The Qld president of the AATTV was in attendance as well as Phung Huynh, National President Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Assn



The big day Vietnam Veterans Day 18th August 2012. We had a beautiful sunny day. We congregated at the Treasury Casino in the morning. We then marched off from here at Midday lead by myself, Mal wheat VVFAQ President, Terry Meehan Qld RSL president and John Gibson AATTV. The AATTV had pride of place and led the march. John Gibson was our guest speaker



The next Majority activity is being conducted by the Vietnamese Community in Qld which is to be a 50th Anniversary Service and plaque dedication at the National Memorial Walk at Enoggera on Sunday 11th November commencing at 1.00PM. Dr Bui, Qld President of the Vietnamese community, myself and John Gibson AATTV will be the three speakers. As you can see and I am sure you will agree that our 50th Anniversary has really been celebrated in style and I am sure that these activities have done a lot to assist in supporting each other within the Vietnam Veteran arena.

Qld Veterans Advisory Council

The Premier has announced the appointment of a State Veteran Affairs Minister and he intends setting up this group. We believe the members of this group will be the State Presidents of VVAA, VVFA, RSL, DFWA and one other plus the Minister and other government representatives as and when required.

National Congress 2013

We have had a few hiccups in relation to this activity but it now appears to be in place awaiting the national council approval. We intend holding it from 22nd to 25th May and it will be conducted at Twin Towns Services Club with accommodation at the Outrigger which is owned by Twin Towns.

Other information

As you are aware we have a Trust up here called the ANZAC Day Trust. The task of this group is to assess applications for reimbursement of funds from individual ESO. The VVAA Qld Branch has been invited to nominate a rep to join this trust.

At our State Management Committee meeting last weekend it was basically agreed to hold an official opening of our HQ along with our AGM and concert at Remembrance House over the last weekend of February. This is still to be ratified by the members.

News from Townsville

James Cook University had three young girls attend Zac's place for 10 weeks as part of their course. Apparently the girls were very enthusiastic and willing during the period. They were given a farewell at a function where the Townsville Sub Branch presented them with Certificate of Appreciation. The girls are preparing a report on their visit which will be forwarded to the Townsville Sub Branch. Also DVA are sending some of the troops from Afghanistan to check the Place out and the units from Townsville have requested contact details.

Sub Branch Closures

One very worrying aspect of the VVAA in Qld is the demise of Sub Branches. This year alone we have seen the Central Qld Branch close due to not being able to get an executive. We have been advised that the Southport Sub Branch will fold early next year. We have also had indications that Cool Tweed and Albert and Logan appear close to closing. This is indeed a problem. It does appear as if Southport and Cool Tweed are working on amalgamation and calling the new entity Gold Coast District Sub Branch as it was once before. We have been successful informing the Central Sub Branch which hopefully will be come home to the members from the Sub Branches that close.

John Smith

State President



John Smith
being pre-
sented with
National Life

membership by Ron Coxon at the National Council in Adelaide.

1Field SQUADRON WORKSHOP 2013 Re-Union:

From 21st -26th April, 2013
Box Hill, Victoria.

Invitation to Veterans and their Wives/Partners. Incorporating Dawn Service at The Shrine in Melbourne, traditional March down St. Kilda Road followed by get together and luncheon.

Contact Dennis Clarke on [03] 9848 6757
Email: eastern.auto@optusnet.com.au

S O M E T I M E S

Sometimes....

when you cry...

no one sees your tears.

Sometimes...

when you are in pain....

no one sees your hurt.

Sometimes...

when you are worried...

no one sees your stress.

Sometimes....

when you are happy...

no one sees your smile.

But FART !! just ONE friggin' time....

And everybody knows!!

Finding assistance:

Dept of Veteran Affairs

Metropolitan area

Callers from regional Australia

Veterans & Veterans Families

Counselling Service

Lifeline

Suicide Helpline

Carers counselling Line

Phone numbers:

133 254

1800 555 254

1800 011 046

131 114

1300 651 251

1800 007 332

Web sites

VVCS

Beyond Blue

www.dva.gov.au

www.dva.gov.au/health/vvcs

www.beyondblue.org.au

TASMANIA

Again another year is drawing to a close and for some of us not quickly enough. After two visits to the operating theatre to have my throat tinkered with, and what is now two months of recovery that has tested all my notions of what real pain is, I am looking forward to the warmer months and the psychological boost to well being they bring with them.

Unfortunately this year has seen many of us in Sick Bay and to those of our members still there I wish you all a comfortable and speedy recovery. The year has also seen several of our members crossing the bar and difficult times for those they leave behind. As we steadily age and this scenario is only ever to be repeated the demand for veteran based welfare services will only continue to increase. We certainly have time at our disposal to provide these essential services, but where is the support from DVA and the federal government that will ensure the provision of those services does not impact financially upon the pensioner veterans and their supporters who provide those services. Our polities and bureaucrats give a whole new meaning to the acronyms MIA and AWOL.

BEST Funding in Tasmania

July 1 saw the anticipated closure of three veterans' centres throughout the State. This has not meant a reduction in services, they have simply moved back into RSL premises.

Tasmania has for almost twelve years now benefited under a joint venture with the RSL as the key stakeholder, and other ESO's. Certainly until round 13 the State has been able to keep its head above water in the provision of pension and welfare services. But this has changed following Round 14 that has brought with it a significant and inexplicable decrease in funding across the board.

As we are all aware expenditure on the provision of welfare services will no longer be funded as they are not considered by this government to be a legitimate expenditure. Any costs incurred by members engaged in welfare work are the responsibility of the particular ESO involved. While all our members are justifiably perplexed by this attitude, it does however raise the spectre of how much longer it will be before the bean counters discover that in actual fact the provision of pensions' assistance to veterans is welfare work under a different name, and assess it accordingly. Did I hear someone mention that there are several islands in close proximity to Australia that seem to have no difficulty in attracting federal funding for pension and welfare activities.

Tasmania's bid under the SDI program was moderately successful and its implementation is proceeding

according to a schedule. I have repeatedly expressed my concerns however that within our State anyway, I see future problems with veteran centre funding for several reasons, the least of which being the lag period between our generation and the 'contemporary veterans' taking up their roles as pension and welfare representatives, coupled with the federal governments propensity to cut into veteran funding in general as it endeavours to offset never ending budgetary blowouts in another particular department.

The oft touted answer of engaging 'paid staff' to pick up the roles of pension and welfare representation, in Tasmania, is simply not practical or achievable. This is a dictum reliant on a long held bureaucratic misconception that the ESO's involved are financially so well off that they can pick up the substantial on costs that are involved maintaining paid staff, not to mention offsetting incidental costs to practitioners and the provision of daily running costs to ensure that the veterans' centres can function as intended. In short it would not be an overstatement to speculate that once the respective SDI programs are implemented, **all** future funding will be the sole responsibility of the ESO's involved. Unmistakeably in Tasmania that is the direction we are headed.

While similar to our mainland counterparts we do have a State minister and veterans' advisory council which could and should contribute in a positive sense as is done elsewhere, however it will be some time yet before the Tasmanian body can free itself from the 'family' shackles that ensure it carefully opts for the less arduous path of only pursuing individual self interest.

We have the work before us addressing these issues in our State, but it is also a major concern at national level and a unified engagement by our association and membership as the federal elections finally begin to draw near must occur, otherwise it has nearly all been for nothing. "quaesita marte tuenda arte"

Vietnam Veterans Day 2012

In stark contrast to the two previous years the State was blessed with a fine and generally warm day with some extremely gusty intervals. Remembrance ceremonies around the State were well attended and supported and as with ANZAC Day it is particularly encouraging to see the ever increasing support from among the younger members of our communities. The interest and awareness among school children of all ages on why we commemorate Vietnam Veterans Day is reassuring and bodes well for the long term future of the commemoration.

Over the past couple of years we at various times have raised the twilight issue of our association. For the most part our membership acknowledges that we are now coming to the end of an era while others choose to

bury their head in the sand and perpetuate the delusion of eternal existence. Human nature I guess, but the one thing that galvanises them is the prospect that some or all of the notable achievements made by this association as a unified entity could be dismantled or threatened in some way by a political establishment focused only on its personal survival.

What we see both at a federal level and to a similar extent in Tasmania offers little comfort to those who have a genuine concern for the future of veterans. The gradual and inevitable dismantling of BEST should be of immediate concern to us all as an association. It requires a concerted and unified effort from us all to ensure that those who would make decisions affecting us are kept well aware that the VVAA is far from being a spent force.

The photos below were taken at the Burnie & Districts Vietnam Veterans Memorial on 18 August 2012, with some of the Sub-Branch stalwarts. Front and centre is the Sub-Branches' Roll of Honour Book. The book usually resides in its own special display case and comes out only on Vietnam Veterans Day. It contains 521 pages, each page individually dedicated to a fallen Australian of the Vietnam War.



Earlier this year I had the good fortune of being able to visit Mr. Michael Hodgman A.M. QC., Patron of the Tasmania Branch. Michael is still holding his own in his battle with emphysema. At the time of my visit all I had with me to record the event was my wife's mobile phone, and being the electronic troglodyte I am it has taken until now to retrieve the photo from her phone courtesy of Bluetooth.\

It was a memorable occasion for the both of us and I know that Michael is immensely proud of his long association with the VVAA as we are of him and the generous support he has always given us.

The plaque occupies pride of place in Michael's room together with other significant moments of his life.



I would like to take this opportunity of wishing all our members, both Tasmanian and those relegated to the larger island, a very happy Christmas and a prosperous, healthy and safe 2013.

Warwick Luttrell
State President

HMAS Cerberus JR's Memorial / Reunion
Memorial - Dedication - Reunion
for all HMAS Cerberus JR's.
April 5 - 6 - 7, 2013.

HMAS Cerberus, Frankston RSL.

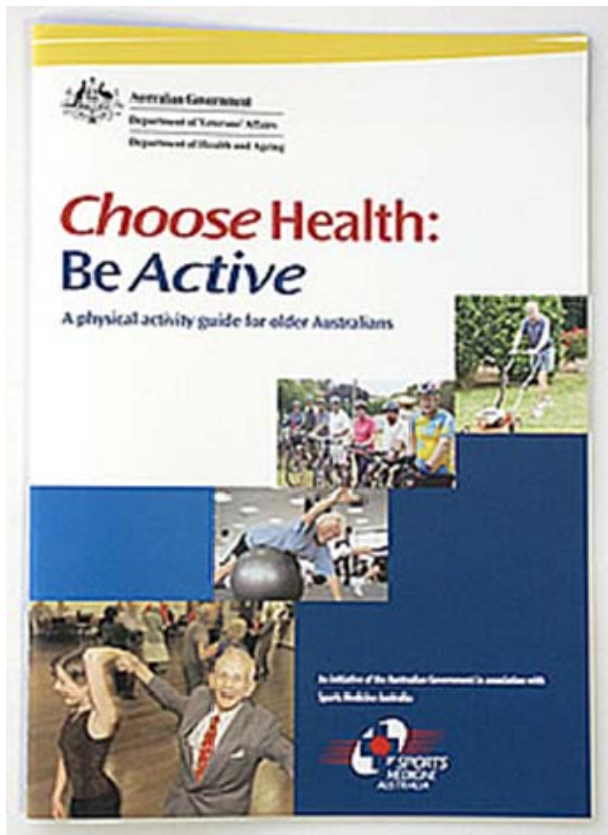
Contact: Tim Mackey 03 6432 2893
Email: tjm63272@gmail.com

VVCS—VETERANS & VETERANS FAMILIES COUNSELLING SERVICE

Choose Health: Be Active

A physical activity guide for older Australians

Designed as a guide to help older Australians lead physically active and healthy lives, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Department of Health and



Ageing jointly produced this popular publication *Choose Health: Be Active*.

The publication demonstrates how the Australian Aged Care Community can benefit from participating in some form of physical activity on a regular basis. The publication demonstrates how exercising:

- can be the key to maintaining good health;
- can help prevent certain illnesses;
- helps to reduce stress levels and insomnia;
- help to enhance mental wellbeing; and
- provides a great opportunity to enjoy physical activity with family and friends.

The publication includes descriptions and diagrams for different exercises and demonstrates simple ways to build exercise and physical activity into your daily routine. It offers ideas for keeping active at no cost, including balance and strength exercises that can be done in your own home. It includes an activity planner, advice on how to cope with health problems and how to overcome setbacks. A copy of the publication *Choose Health: Be Active* can be downloaded for free from the DVA website at ['Choose Health Be Active'](#) (Adobe PDF 2Mb).

Copies can be ordered free of charge by calling the Department of Health and Ageing on 1800 500 853 or (02) 6269 1080 or by emailing your request to health@nationalmailing.com.au

DVA GOES ONLINE

Clients of the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) in Tasmania are the first to use a new service which gives veterans online access to DVA services.

MyAccount offers Tasmanian veterans a more immediate way of conducting business with DVA, giving access to services anytime and anywhere. All you need is a registration number, a computer and an internet connection.

If you are an eligible DVA client, you can use MyAccount to:

- update your contact details
- view payments and card information
- view the status of your claims
- apply for additional entitlements
- book transport to medical appointments
- lodge claims for travelling expenses
- request replacement cards, and
- view and request forms.

More services will available in the future.

With the introduction of MyAccount, DVA is responding to the changing needs of the veteran community, and Tasmanian veterans responded enthusiastically to the MyAccount pilot program run in February this year.

MyAccount will not replace traditional means of communicating with DVA. You can still contact DVA by phone, fax, email, mail and face-to-face. Tasmanians are among the first to use MyAccount which will be progressively rolled out across Australia in coming months.

Visit myaccount.dva.gov.au

<https://myaccount.dva.gov.au> for more information and phone 1800 173 858 during business hours Monday to Friday to register.

Wilfred (Wilfie) Sydney Eyles

Here is a short verse from Wilfie before he died.

Please do stand by my grave with a tear
I am still here
I am in the beat of those chopper blades
The throb of the dozer in the field
On the lining of the passing cloud
Please do not mourn I am with you
Wilfy "Dad" Eyles The Sar Major

Wilf served with the BCOF in Japan, in the Far East (Malaysia and Borneo) and in Vietnam from 65/66, he was a thorough gentleman, and no one could ever remember Wilfy saying a bad word about anyone.
RIP Sar Major

VICTORIA

Vietnam Veterans Day 2012

What is it about the 18th of August and the weather in Melbourne? Again we had filthy weather for Vietnam Veterans Day, but despite that we had a very good roll up of veterans, particularly our country sub-branches who made the trek in big numbers. Our commemorations this year focussed on the 50th anniversary of the deployment of AATTV members to Vietnam in 1962, and accordingly, AATTV led the march, the guest speaker was an AATTV member and our chaplain recited the AATTV prayer to close proceedings. The “gunfire breakfast” on the lawns of the Melbourne Shrine was well patronised by vets and guests alike, and despite shortening some of the ceremony due to the weather, the solemnity and importance of the day was not compromised.



We were honoured to have the Governor of Victoria, State Premier, state and federal politicians, US and NZ Consuls and senior ADF representatives attend along with many senior ex service representatives and a large Vietnamese veteran presence. The Governor was genuinely interested in our activities and impressed by the size of the turnout. The Premier spoke very well and complimented the branch on its continued work for veterans, and telephoned the state president the following evening to express his thanks for being invited to attend.



Apart from the weather, the major disappointment of the day and indeed for all of the activities associated with 50th anniversary commemorations was the lack of interest and coverage by the mainstream media in Melbourne. Despite vigorous publicity on our part, including several press releases, VV Day and the associated anniversary activities passed with barely a mention in newspaper, radio or television media.



Vietnamese Community and Vietnamese Veterans Activities

The Victorian Vietnamese community and Vietnamese veterans conducted a number of high profile events to mark the 50th anniversary. A black tie dinner, attended by the Governor, a three day exhibition at the Melbourne Town Hall, a ceremony at the Melbourne Shrine and a Vietnam era concert were conducted with great success. Significantly, the Vietnamese contributed a large donation to the Victorian Branch, which was dispersed to the National Vietnam Veterans Museum and the Seymour Vietnam Veterans Walk. The VVAA Victoria education team, various RSL's,

National Vietnam Veterans Museum

There have been significant developments at the NVVM. Transfer of ownership of the museum land from the state branch to the NVVM trustees should be completed by year's end, and negotiations for the installation of a communications tower on museum land continue; the museum will benefit from the regular rental income.

In the second hangar, concreting of the floor space is largely complete, a large roller door has been fitted, a mezzanine floor is under construction and a large range of equipment used for aircraft restoration has been installed.

The Canberra bomber has been extensively dismantled for restoration, a new Navy Wessex helicopter, Navy gun from one of the destroyer escorts and the “Huey” helicopter have been received.

Museum Day in November this year will be big. Already confirmed is the official opening of a KIWI Vietnam section by members of the NZ Government, a

symbolic ride in by the VetRide peloton and the presentation of a large cheque to the museum, being the proceeds of VetRide 2012, unveiling of the "Huey" helicopter and other new exhibits. If you have never visited your museum, there is no time like the present, you will be mightily impressed.

Veterans Walk Project Seymour

Phase two of the project is underway and installation of the first of the name panels is imminent. The panels carrying the names of all who served in the Vietnam War will also carry scenes from Vietnam, etched into the panels. The South Vietnamese Armed Forces Badge will be included in pavers on the pathway in recognition of the support of the Vietnamese veteran community. The committee of management is planning for a ceremony in March 2013 to commission the next phase.

BEST Funding

Re-jigging of the Victorian Regional Veteran Centre Project continues in the context of severe cuts to funding and the capacity of centres to continue to function. Of particular concern to Victoria is that veteran centres close to the NSW and SA borders are increasingly seeing more clients from across the borders, for which the centres receive no additional compensation from DVA. Allied to the BEST funding issue, is the difficulty in recruiting enough younger pension officers to undertake training in the increasingly difficult area of younger veteran compensation matters, and to cross train sufficient numbers of older pension officers until new volunteers are found.

Project CAIRO-Accommodation for Younger Veterans

The Victorian Veterans Council continues its involvement in the acquisition of units in an apartment building which is scheduled to be completed in 2015. The housing complex, to be constructed in South Melbourne, will provide some apartments that will be available for purchase by organisations with special housing needs. With a grant from the state government, the VVC is seeking to purchase some one and two bedrooms apartments that will be made available on a lease basis to younger veterans and families in need of accommodation. There is an expectation that the ex-service community will contribute to the project.

William Hacking Bursary

The branch sponsors a bursary for children of Victorian based Vietnam veterans, to assist with the costs of tertiary education. The bursary provides funding of \$3000 per year for three years, and this year the branch is delighted to recognize the outstanding academic achievements of Ms Sophie Meehan, who recently successfully completed her bursary.

Membership

Membership numbers are holding up well. Of interest has been the increase in membership numbers from the outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne, which will help to offset the loss of RAAF VVA members who are moving across to the RAAF Association.

Closure Planning

The branch continues to develop a closure plan which when completed will contain guidance and information on key trigger points to be considered when sub-branches contemplate closure, and a template for the orderly closure of sub-branches, management of assets and the controlled contraction of the state branch. It should be noted that no timeframes for closure are being considered at this stage.

Veteran Histories

It is a regular theme at funerals here that many veterans have not recorded their military history or spoken at any length with family members about their experiences in uniform. It is also a common theme that family members, in particular the young, are very interested to learn of the veteran's service and are eager for knowledge and where to go to get it. It is likely that the same is occurring in other states, and it is sad that such rich history is not being recorded and that family members are deprived of that knowledge.

Bob Elworthy
State President

VVAA (Vic) EDUCATION TEAM

Exhibition at Melbourne Town Hall 17th-18th-
19th August 2012

This year being the 50th Anniversary of Australia's involvement in Viet Nam, the Vietnamese Community in Australia (Vic Chapter) wanted to show their appreciation to the Australian Vietnam veterans for their time spent in South Viet Nam.

The E-Team have a very good working relationship with the Vietnamese community, we set up displays at their three different Tet Festivals, Richmond, Footscray and Sandown Park (two days) and we were invited to take a major part in the exhibition which was free and open to the general public.

The exhibition ran for three days and involved, in chronological order, AATTV set up by the Box Hill RSL Sub-Branch; Australian Experience set up by the VVAA Education Team; Vietnamese Veterans Perspective, and the Vietnamese Boat People Archive, finishing with a small reflection area. It was pretty complex trying to get all parties involved and to stick

to the format, several meetings and many emails; a logistical nightmare really. We also had to be aware of sensitive subject matter in the display as the Vietnamese people have many bad memories from that time in their lives.



It took nearly a day to get set up in the right order, (about an hour to pack up), with quite a few changes as we went along. The E-Team had the largest area to set up, but nearly all the team members were on hand which made the job a lot easier and gave some of the newer members a chance to see what a static display was all about. We had a roster for members to be on hand to answer any questions and explain different aspects of the display. Many of the team members put in extra hours to their rostered times. Well done E-Team.

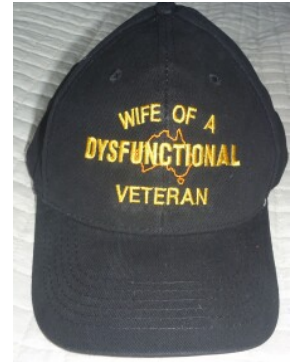


This event was important and we included some new display panels, on the Entertainers, Civilian Nurses, Civil Affairs, National Service, Navy, RAAF, Agent Orange and a tribute to the Vietnamese Forces. Several thousand members of the public visited the exhibition over the three days and we received a lot of very positive feedback.

Phil White OAM
Research and Development Officer
VVAA Vic) Education Team

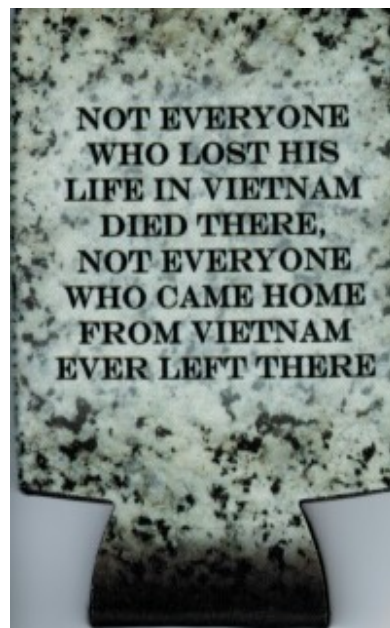
NATIONAL MERCHANDISE

NEW ITEMS



Above CAP 36.

Wife of a Dysfunctional Veteran Black Cap. \$17.50ea



Above. M034 4 Ribbon Stubbie Holder with "Not everyone who lost his life in Vietnam died there, Not everyone who came home from Vietnam ever left there". \$8.50ea

NEW ZEALAND VIETNAM VETERAN



Above Left. NZ Veteran Cap CAP 38 \$17.50e
 Above Right. NZ Vietnam Veteran Polo Shirt
 Black with Orange Trim. Sizes S—5XL \$40ea

**NZ Vietnam Veteran Belt Buckle. Lapel Pin
 & Cloth Patch** will be available early Dec.

NEW. NZ VIETNAM VETERAN ITEMS

CODE	ITEM	PRICE
BB032	Belt Buckle NZ Viet Vet with Ribbons	\$29.00
CAP38	Cap NZ Viet Vet with Ribbons	\$17.50
CP057	Cloth Patch NZ Viet Vet	\$12.00
LP093	Lapel Pin NZ Vietnam Veteran	\$5.50
SH132	NZ Polo Shirt with Ribbons S	\$40.00
SH133	NZ Polo Shirt with Ribbons M	\$40.00
SH134	NZ Polo Shirt with Ribbons L	\$40.00
SH135	NZ Polo Shirt with Ribbons XL	\$40.00
SH136	NZ Polo Shirt with Ribbons 2XL	\$40.00
SH137	NZ Polo Shirt with Ribbons 3XL	\$40.00
SH138	NZ Polo Shirt with Ribbons 4XL	\$40.00
SH139	NZ Polo Shirt with Ribbons 5XL	\$40.00



NEW NASHO VIETNAM VETERAN ITEMS

Left. CAP 37 Nasho Cap with Ribbons.
 Below Right. Polo Shirt Vietnam Veteran with Ribbons
 Black with Gold Trim \$17.50ea Sizes S-5XL \$40ea Sizes S-5XL

CODE	ITEM	PRICE
CAP37	Cap NZ Viet Vet with Ribbons	\$17.50
CP058	Cloth Patch NZ Viet Vet	\$12.00
SH132	NASHO Polo Shirt with Ribbons S	\$40.00
SH133	NASHO Polo Shirt with Ribbons M	\$40.00
SH134	NASHO Polo Shirt with Ribbons L	\$40.00
SH135	NASHO Polo Shirt with Ribbons XL	\$40.00
SH136	NASHO Polo Shirt with Ribbons 2XL	\$40.00
SH137	NASHO Polo Shirt with Ribbons 3XL	\$40.00
SH138	NASHO Polo Shirt with Ribbons 4XL	\$40.00
SH139	NASHO Polo Shirt with Ribbons 5XL	\$40.00



50 Years Limited Edition Products



Above CAP33 V/Nam 50 Years Campaign

CAP34 Vietnam 50 Years Logistic Support

CAP35 Vietnam 50th Nasho

All \$17.50



Above. LT29

50 Year Navy Medallion

LT30

50 Year Airforce Medallion

LT31

50 Year Armour Medallion

LT32

50 Year Artillery Medallion

Limited Edition All \$40 each



Left. LT33

50 Year Infantry Medallion

Limited Edition Both \$40 each

Right. LT34 50 Year Signals Medallion.



Above. LT26 Vietnam

50 Years Campaign

Lapel Pin



LT27 Vietnam

50 Years Nasho

Lapel Pin



LT28 Vietnam

50 Years Logistic

Support Lapel Pin

Limited Edition All \$5 each



Above.. LT35

Vietnam 50th Medallion Set.

Limited Edition only 1000 sets made. \$200 Set of 6.

Right M035 Vietnam 50 Year Campaign Stubbie Holder.

Right Centre. M036 Vietnam 50 Year Nasho Stubbie Holder

Far Right. M037 Vietnam 50 Year Logistic Support S/H



MERCHANDISE

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TOTAL \$ _____

DELIVERY DETAILS: (Please PRINT all sections clearly)

NAME: Make cheques payable to VVAA National Merchandise

ADDRESS:

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.....POSTCODE.....

DAYTIME TELEPHONE:

Card No....../...../...../..... **Expiry date**...../.....

Type

They Came To Say Goodbye

On 10 June 1966, 5 RAR were on patrol with National Policemen and South Vietnamese soldiers. A pair of enemy mortars were engaged and destroyed. When 10 Platoon neared the area they were engaged by another enemy mortar. The location of the mortar was observed and the patrol radioed for an airstrike, which struck the mortar's location with cluster munitions and napalm, but not before Corporal Brendan "Danny" Coupe and Private Les Farren were killed and four soldiers were wounded. For his leadership in this and the action on 3 June, Second Lieutenant (2LT) Dennis Rainer was Mentioned in Despatches.

After the noise had stopped and the dust had cleared, Cpl Brendan "Danny" Coupe (NSW) and Pte Les Farren (VIC) of 10 Pl, D Coy, 5 RAR had been Killed in Action, 10 June 1966. Four other members of the Pl had been wounded and the young soldiers, mostly National Servicemen had tasted to worst part of war. 10 Pl continued the remaining 10 mths of the 12 mth tour with many successful actions against the enemy. Unfortunately the Pl lost another member, Pte Graham Warburton (Vic), Killed in Action on 1 October 1966. Since returning to Australia the remaining members of 10 Pl have taken the opportunity to formally farewell Pte Les Farren and Graham Warburton, but have never been able to assemble for Cpl Danny Coupe's farewell. Last year, it was decided that an all out effort should be made to formally farewell Danny and during this year's Queen's Birthday Weekend, those of the original 10 Pl and partners, where possible, came from all over Australia to do so.

An exceptional weekend was had by all including Danny's Family and friends. Lots of laughter, tremendous yarns from the past and at times deep emotions.

Special thankyou to Chaplain (Colonel) Peter Hayes, Vic Bks Sydney and Lcpl Tim Dain (Bugler) 23 Fld Regt, RAA, who gave up their long weekend to support the occasion.



Above. Danny's gravesite with the regimental wreath on the right and the family wreath on the left



From the left: Geoff Sobey (VIC) Colin Illman (TAS) Dennis Rainer, MC,(MID) PLCOMD 1966-67 (WA) Graeme Ashton (WA) Frank Clarke (SA) Stretch McLean (Vic) John Stevens (QLD) Colin Lee, OAM (WA) Robbie Arnold (VIC) Geoff Arthur (SA) Blue Babbage (NSW) Ross Hore (VIC) Peter Raine (WA) Bob Bullen (VIC) Eric Leask,

NORTHERN TERRITORY



We are traveling pretty well here in NT and our membership seem to be quite happy with what we are doing within our Association.

Reg Hillier House is now officially VVAA NT Rural Sub Branch property as the Rural Old Timers Association are no longer and any agreements we had with them are now defunct ,finished, goodbye. I am afraid to say but we received no help or encouragement from that crowd other than complaints and broken furniture. The interior of our hall and offices are about to be spruced up with a coat of paint and we have added another container as storage for the ever increasing volumes of paraphernalia and paper work that we seem to collect along the way.



The Memorial Wall now has the small plaques attached and we have had some very positive comments about it.

Vietnam Veterans Day was well attended and we delivered 30 plus books to primary and secondary schools throughout the Territory. Veterans were invited back to the North Darwin RSL for a drink and nibbles afterwards.

We also attended a dinner put on by the Vietnamese Community at their new hall to acknowledge the 50 years since the involvement of Australian troops in Vietnam and it was a very good night. Mr Nick Thomas made himself known to us a few days

later as he had served with Reg Hillier in the same Platoon in Vietnam and he said that Reg was a fine example of an Aussie Digger. Nick is the brother of the Northern Territory Administrator Her Honour, The Honorable Sally Thomas, AM.

Our Pension/Welfare officers are still trying to keep their heads above water but how do they (and you know who) expect us to do their job for them on a pittance of \$758.28 say again \$758.28 in a precinct the size of the Territory.

Example Katherine has the RAAF Base Tindall and also a large number of Indigenous ex servicemen including Vietnam Vet sand I travel 640 kms to see them and our fuel up here is \$1.65 per litre and remember this is only 1 example. But we persevere and continue to serve those who need our help.

We have now also got a Exercise Physiology program happening at a gym in Darwin and also at a rural location. It has taken a while but I believe it has been running in the other States for several years and I cannot understand why we were not included in the original information when it was released.

Fundraising is going well as we still run our meat tray raffles at 3 rural pubs and we are now collecting the refundable bottles and cans from a shopping centre in Palmerston.

Also a lawn sale was held at Reg Hillier Hall to help promote our Association and what we are doing to help people in the community not just the Veterans. I must thank the members involved in fundraising as it is a lot of work and time.

We will also be selling badges etc prior to Remembrance Day along with the help of a couple of serving Navy dudes from the Patrol Boat Base, one being the son of Jim Fitzgerald, Secretary of Melton Sub Branch, Victoria.

Peter Mansell
NT President

Reunion. HQ Company, 1st Australian Logistic Support Group, (1.ALSG)

From Thursday 24th April 2014

Meet and greet at the Mildura RSL

This reunion is planned for the Anzac week end in 2014. Already we have veterans indicating they would like to attend however there are a lot of vets that have never been to a reunion and with your help we may be able to let others know that it is on.

We have managed to secure very reasonable accommodation for twin and double rooms (some meals included) we have arranged various activities for the reunion, such as river cruises to the wineries and loads more for more details contact..

Contact:

Tony Brown 03 5021 2066 V 0428 852 736 M

Email Tonyraye11@bigpond.com

ACT

As 2012 draws to a close, ACT members and the executive are looking forward to a safe and happy festive season as well as the National Capital's Centenary in 2013.

A medical procedure precluded me from representing the ACT at the recent Council and VP Pete Ryan attend in my stead. From the report I received the Council meeting was generally amiable and many issues of concern to our constituents were raised and discussed.

As usual the ACT raised a number of matters at Council and these were received with a varying degree of acceptance.

We will continue to lobby our Government to honour interstate Veterans' public transport travel concessions. We trust our colleagues will follow suit. A favourable national outcome will mean all DVA entitled persons when interstate will be able to use public transport at the same rate as at home. This gives our people an advantage over driving in a strange city as well as saving a few dollars.

One commendable health issue was the adoption of a policy designed to prevent unnecessary early deaths through the early detection of lung cancer. Until recently, regular detection procedures had unacceptably high radiation exposure and were relatively expensive. As these impediments are now things of the past, we looked for the VVAA to urge our people to seek a screening referral from their LMO.

ACT also took to the table two matters aimed at improving the lot of the increasing number of our people resident in aged care facilities. We trust good sense will prevail and the VVAA will adopt all these initiatives as policies.

Vietnam Veterans' Day 2012, whilst bitterly cold, saw about 450 Vietnam Veterans, families and friends make up the congregation at our National Australian Vietnam Forces Memorial on Anzac Parade.

Invited guests included Her Excellency the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Mr Michael Bryce, Minister for Veterans' Affairs representing the Prime Minister, Excellencies, the New Zealand High Commissioner Maj Gen Martyn Dunn (Ret'd) and the United States Ambassador Mr Jeffery Bleich and Mrs Beccy Bleich. I was privileged and pleased to escort ACT Chief Minister Katy Gallagher. CDF General David Hurley and Mrs Hurley attended as did the three Service Chiefs or their representatives as well as local Commonwealth and ACT politicians.

This year, being the 50th anniversary of the AATTV arriving in country, focus was firmly on this august unit. More than 50 AATTV Association members attended including the sole survivor of the four AATTV

Victoria Cross recipients. Keith Payne was accompanied by his spouse, Flo, OAM. Adrian Clunies Ross delivered the address in reply to the Prime Minister's address given by Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Warren Snowdon.

Another distinguished group was the Veterans of the Battle of Long Tan, headed by D6RAR 1966 OC Harry Smith. Harry was joined by a number of his former soldiers who had travelled to the National Capital to witness the opening at the Australian War Memorial of the display of the original Long Tan Cross. Her Excellency the Governor General opened the display on the afternoon of Friday 17 August in front of Long Tan Veterans, invited dignitaries and representatives of ESOs. This Vietnam War icon is on loan from the Dong Nai Museum for six months. We encourage all Vietnam Veterans to make the journey to Canberra to view this icon now a key attraction in the extensive Vietnam Gallery.

A good number of the congregation went on to enjoy the traditional camaraderie afternoon at a local club.

On Saturday 17 November the refurbished Veterans' Park in Civic will be opened. Key elements of the Park are the SAS Memorial and commemorative rose garden. These will be re-dedicated on the Saturday and ASASR Association members are expected to travel in numbers to witness this rededication.

Our executive will continue to represent ACT members on local ESO committees. Such representation breeds the excellent relations our Branch has with our fellow ESOs. One committee is the ACT Chief Minister's Veterans' Affairs Council. ACT VP Pete Ryan represents the VVAA here and planning is well in hand for Veteran oriented commemorative activities for Canberra's Centenary in 2013 as well as Canberra based events to mark the Centenary of ANZAC in 2015.

Locally, the ACT executive has planned a number of events for 2013 including an excursion to the National Vietnam Museum at Phillip Island. Recently a VVAA ACT group did a four day recce of the Murruguldrie Veterans' retreat. As a result ACT will organise larger group visits and recommends the retreat to all members seeking a relaxing, peaceful environment.

The ACT executive on behalf of our members wishes all Vietnam Veterans and their families a happy and safe festive season and all the good they wish for themselves and their loved ones throughout 2013.

Kevin Gill,
State 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>

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Over the past 4 or 5 years, the introduction of a Welfare format has given a new direction to where the VVAA in SA is headed and also has placed a whole new direction for where Veterans and their families can expect support initially I became concerned that this branch and a number of others, did not offer an “after sales service” for those who have received their pensions and when I began to ask around from a few Veterans whether they had any further concerns and problems the answer was that they had the money, but what is next?

Things have evolved since then and programs which have been in the main, introduced by DVA play a part in the lives of many Veterans and their families but of more recent times, we have come to be aware that more and more of those who served are experiencing similar but not quite the same needs for support, so much so, that over time it has become evident that a lifestyle cycle has developed, with those of all age groups heading to their local GP and then, say to a specialist or two and then this is dotted with several visits to a Counselling provider and then on to a Psychiatrist for a course of treatment.

Then to top it off in some cases, a stint in hospital is at the end of this “cycle”.

Along with the “journey” the Veteran takes, there is usually a family member or two as well along for the ride either emotionally or physically or both. All of this over time has had a debilitating effect on those family members both close and not so close. It is with this in mind that this Organisation has been developing the plans for a “Men’s Shed” which is hoped will help some in breaking the “cycle” which I described earlier.

The full title of this program is “the William Kibby VC Veterans Shed”, which is named after a local South Australian soldier who was awarded his Victoria Cross for his deeds during WW2.

Obviously, the main task of the program will be to have those attending to be involved either on a team basis or if they prefer singularly, the overall impetus will be for members to enjoy themselves.

Welfare will play a major part of our program with an emphasis on the younger members and their families with life after the ADF and it’s importance will be paramount.

All in all we feel that the William Kibby VC Veterans Shed could very well play a large part in the lives of those who attend.

Another area that the VVAA (SA) has become involved with is that of many who have suffered abuse during their time in the ADF

This in some cases goes back many years and I am pleased to report that we have put together a team of “specialists” who are already showing some good results for their efforts.

Those who have been following the media will be aware of the DLA Piper Review into abuse in the ADF. This Report was called for by the Defence Minister amid reports of abuse in the ADF but is still to be fully handed down by the Government.

I am pleased to report we have now had legislation passed in the Senate, which will allow a more structured and compassionate focus to be afforded those who come forward and report these sinister incidents. All cases are important and it is sad to report that “abuse victims” are still coming forward and in many cases they have held their stories within for many years.

Should the reader have experienced, or know someone who has been subjected to abuse during his or her time in the ADF, please know that you will be treated with the upmost confidentiality and respect if you come forward.

I would like thank the President (Moose Benyk) for his support with the direction he has allowed me to take in this Welfare role.

It is a challenge and sometime pretty sad but at the end of the day seeing some of the people and the problems that endure just makes me realise that there are a hell of a lot of us who aren’t travelling as badly as we think we are.

One pleasing factor has been interest shown in this venture, by quite a few younger serving and former serving soldiers, both male and female

In particular has been interest shown by a group of Diggers currently serving in Afghanistan who picked up an article I wrote in a local Sunday Paper

Their interest is really encouraging and strengthens our view that this project is on the right track

However, another direction we are keen to take is that of a place where the younger “Veteran” can come and just talk to another Veteran and just have him listen to his story or listen to any request for support he or she may have

Important in this role for the Vets Shed

Barry Heffernan
Welfare Coordinator VVAA SA

VIETNAM VETERANS FRIENDLY RETREATS

Queensland

Standown Park: 91 Radke Road, Kia Ora (halfway between Gympie and Tin Can Bay). Power, water, pets, open fire, showers, toilets, disable facilities, coin laundry, secure off the highway, restful surrounds. No cabins/onsite vans. Discount for veterans.

Contact owners Rod (ex 9RAR) and Pam Elkington (07) 5486 5144 or 0417 718 127

Cockscomb Veterans Camp: Located only 23km from Rockhampton, camp kitchen, showers, toilets, no power, \$ 5 donation.

Contact Allan Evans (07) 4934 4941 for directions

Pandanus Park: Follow the three red stripes from Mareeba, no facilities, take all and remove your rubbish. This is an isolated retreat in Cape York

Sapphire Gemfields: Located behind the post office at the RSL, power, toilets, showers, water, and barbecue. The Club bar is open Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. \$5.00 per night Contact Peter Johnson (ex 6RAR) 0439 797 175

Alaric Homestead Veterans Retreat at Quilpie: The Homestead is fully furnished and managed by a Veteran Duty Officer. Very low nominal fee charged per day. Caravans and camper trailers can be parked at a low daily fee. Booking essential for the Homestead (not necessary for caravans/campers) Contact the Duty Officer (07) 4656 4740. Email: alaricretreat@activ8.net.au C/O PO Quilpie Qld 4480

Rocky Creek War Memorial Park: This camp spot is located at Tolga. The Atherton Shire Council maintains it. There is a 72-hour limit and a gold coin donation. There are toilets, barbecue, and non-potable water. It is a memorial site to all soldiers, who trained on the tablelands before being sent overseas. There is a caretaker on site.

Zac's Place: Located on 715 Ross River Road, Kirwan, Townsville, run by VVAA Qld Branch. There is accommodation for up to 11 people with all facilities. Tariff is \$35.00 per night singles or \$55.00 per night double or \$175.00 per week singles or \$225.00 per week Doubles accommodation.. Contact manager Mr Jason Spurr Ph. (07) 4773 6980.

Homestead Caravan Park: , located along the Landsborough Highway at Barcaldine Queensland Every day in the late afternoon during winter your hosts Ben and Thanh prepare the campfire with damper and billy tea proved prepared the old bush way. Entertainment nightly. They always have something special on for Vietnam Veterans Day 18th August. Cabins available.

For Reservations ph. Ben or Thanh on (07) 4651 1308

Camp Gregory

Camp Gregory is a rural acre property inside a national park with the Gregory River running along one side.

A long drop toilet is available. It is ideal for camping and caravans free of charge to Veterans and their families. People can have a maximum stay of 2 weeks.

Contact Roger Dwyer first Ph: (07) 4129 4030

Address: 168 Darville Rd, Woodgate Qld 4660

South Australia

Bublacowie Military Museum:

Located between Stansbury and Giles Point Yorktown. Three Veteran Museums - \$5.00 admission, \$2.00 children Accommodation enquiries: Contact owner Chris Soar (ex vet of Malaya) (08) 8853 4379 or 0419 853 294

Camp Andrew Russell: in South Australia is located 35km Sth East of Loxton along the Murray Bridge Road, turn left (or right if coming from Adelaide) onto the Lameroo Road, taking the right fork along the road. The entrance is marked with a cream tractor tyre, just past a road sign.

You will need a key for access and thus need to contact John Hough mobile 0409 098 093

New South Wales

Ramon Deed Veterans Retreat: This retreat was named after Ramon John Deed, of 1Fld Sqn, Vietnam. The retreat is located at Dareton, 17Km from Mildura & 16Km from Wentworth and is open to all Veterans, serving & ex-service personnel & their families. There is power & water. Unpowered (\$10.00 per night) powered (\$20 per night) Phone: Barry & Di Langan (03) 5027 4447

Email rdveteransretreat@bigpond.com

Murraguldrie Veterans Retreat: It is situated on the edge of the Murraguldrie State Forest about forty minute drive from Wagga Wagga, and approximately seven kilometres from the Hume Highway turn off point to Tumbarumba on the Tumbarumba Road.

To arrange access or booking enquiries contact:

Gordon Irvine" (02) 6971 2488—0428 381 292 M

Les White: (02) 6922 6097—0428 226 097 M

Bob May: (02) 6931 2634—0417 490 127 M

Email vvsouthwestnsw@gmail.com

Tasmania

Tasmania Veterans Retreat: Offers fully equipped-House accommodation in the remote Central Highlands area, 20 minutes from Bothwell. \$30.00 per double + \$5.00 per extra person. Bookings made through the State RSLA Headquarters, Hobart.(03) 6224 0881. Open to all APPVA members.

Western Australia

Camp Hart: Camp Hart is a combination of private and crown land vested with the Shire of Kulin. It is situated 3.5 hours south east of Perth, 14kms east of Kulin, Camp Hart is a memorial park located next to Lake Jilakin and in the shadow of Jilakin Rock. It offers shade, ablution block, sheltered barbecue and bush kitchen. Donations are welcome. Open to all ADF Veterans. All inquiries are to be made to Roger Lingard (08) 9527 8000 or 0419 944 627.

Bruce Rock: situated 254 Km from Perth in the wheat belt. Vets always welcome but each year in November they conduct a Vietnam Veterans activity. Most stay at the Bruce Rock Caravan Park Ph. (08) 9061 1070

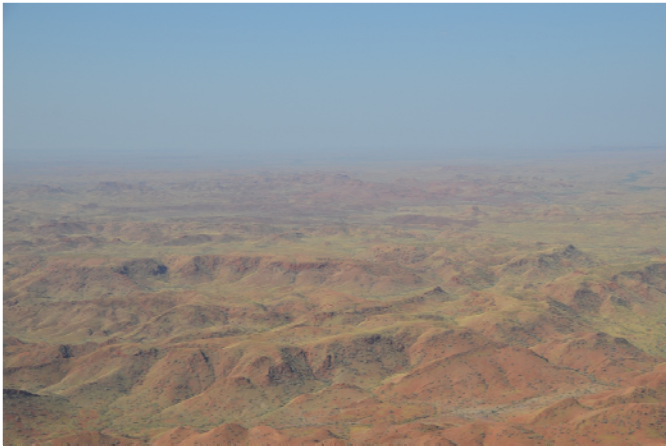
Northern Territory

Roper Retreat: Same as for Pandanus Park, take only Photos. Leave no footprints, Located 31 Klm along the Northern Territory Highway turn north at Elsey Station sign. 3 Klm along you pass the Manager's House and just 5km you reach the Roper. PH Tony 0401 100 514 or Jimbob 0419 414 209

Coral House: Located 107 Bagot Rd, Ludmilla run by VVAA NT, shared kitchen facilities, laundry and bathroom, linen, TV in common room three shared bedrooms providing seven beds.

Contact manager Jack Hamilton on Ph. 8948 0050.

MEENTHEENA VETERANS RETREAT



The weekend of 7/8 June saw the official opening of the Veteran's Retreat and the dedication of the airstrip here at Meentheena .

We were blessed with good weather and a great roll up of guests, veteran's, from around Australia. A total of about ninety people.



Above. Snapped on the day. Norm Whitburn, Lyell & Robin Mills , Brian Kane and Billy Thompson at Richard's plaque.

The formalities were taken care of by Norm with the assistance of Mr Brendan Grylls. MLA, who was along with his wife and children, they all had a enjoyable time. The Bar B Que lunch was followed by a few drinks and a few tall tales, to round off an enjoyable day.

A big thank you to the crew's from Newcrest, RFDS, the Shire of East Pilbara ,the ABC crew from Karratha and the local's for making the trip out to enjoy the day with us.

The rest of June and July was full on with veteran's coming and going , no matter how short or long their stay everyone has enjoyed the retreat.

We are developing a number of new campsites within a couple of km of the outstation for conventional cars/ caravans, as we will need them for next season. Looking forward, to meeting you all.

This month - November - makes it one year that I have

been here at Meentheena, overall I have enjoyed myself and know we are supplying a Retreat of great benefit to our Members and other visitors.

Have now mobile phone and internet coverage from the house about 80% of the time, which is as good as it gets without large injection of money. My friend Peter Blyth, who some of the visitors would have met has moved on ,he is heading for Melbourne, Thanks for the time and effort that you put in Pete.

Over the last 12 months we have had app.210 groups of people, stays have varied between a few hours and a few weeks. As well as Veterans we have had Ornithologist's, Painter's, Geologist's, Photographer's, Prospectors as well as some locals coming out to camp.



The Dept of Agriculture and Food sent a group of four out to reduce our feral animal numbers, they were quite successful. They also did an aerial estimate of the number of cattle on the place, their estimate about 6000+

The power system is working well, with a few teething problems that Regent Power will have repaired by Christmas.

Work continues on a number of projects, the tower for lighting striker, radio, T.V., and phone, solar bathroom, the walls on the house, the trees and the new camp sites

The numbers of visitors has dropped off as the weather has warmed up. It's not too early to start planning next years trip and include a week or so at Meentheena Retreat.

As part of living in the Marble Bar community, I have got involved in the Marble Bar Race Club and the Marble Bar Tourist Ass.

Was a guest on ABC NORTH WEST radio the other morning talking up the sealing of the Roy Hill to Marble Bar Rd.

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N.B. Please note this information has been taken from the June & November Newsletter put out by Brian Kane

Cockatoo Rise War Veterans Retreat

BAIRNSDALE , VICTORIA

Your host's Greg & Anne Carter . t 0409418332

web www.cockatooriseretreat.com.au



We need some help now and again to look after the retreat . If you would to stay with us and lend a hand with small jobs around the place we would be delighted to hear from you .

The retreat is a FREE facility , to stay at ,golf , croquet ,veggie garden , walks and a peaceful enviorement . Enjoy our camp fires and watch the local wild life at sunset.

We are also looking for any memorabilia that vets may not want to on display in our collection.



18 hole golf course for visitors and guests



" Diggers "



Museum colelction



Camp fire at " Diggers "



Caravan area for guests

Debrief articles.

Any articles, poems, stories, correspondence etc re Debrief to: Debrief Chairman. Ken Foster
Email: VVAA.sec@bigpond.com

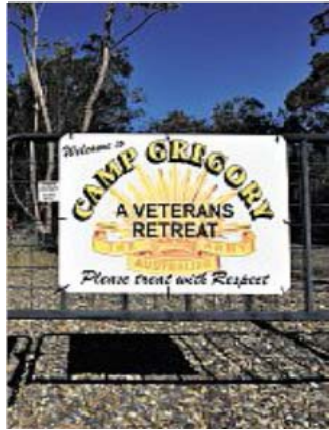
Or Editor Kath Coxon: Email: rkcoxon@netspace.net.au

If you are receiving more than one copy of Debrief per household but only require one, please notify Debrief Ken Foster.

CAMP GREGORY

Camp Gregory is a rural acre property inside a national park with the Gregory River running along one side.

A long drop toilet is available. It is ideal for camping and caravans free of charge to Veterans and their families. People can have a maximum stay of 2 weeks.



It is with enormous sadness we hear of the recent conflict and tragedy in Afghanistan. The time has certainly arrived and well overdue to assist the current troops and their family on return and completion of their duty as most personal have served multiple tours in each of the recent conflicts.

I am speaking from personal experience as a Vietnam Veteran and all federal parliamentarians do not need being reminded how we were isolated on our return and it became most difficult to receive recognition, accolades and financial support from the government. Both parties are equal at fault during the past 40 years. "It is time to change" to quote a previous Prime Minister. Enclosed is a current article which virtually says it all. We the public now challenge the federal parties on both sides of politics because they are equally at fault to forward ongoing commitment to the troops and their families as a lifetime obligation and commence building 100 of these types of retreats around Australia so personal can "chill out" with their family and friends. As a nation, we must all support these personal and families to overcome this dreadful conflict in isolation and enduring most difficult circumstances whilst serving multiple tours abroad. These personal deserve the highest accolades and recognition for their unselfish commitment in serving their country in good faith and not subjected to the same neglect we previous Veterans experienced.



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GREY NOMADS

I saw your sign in "DEBRIEF" CALLING ON THE GREY NOMADS.

We have just arrived home in Armidale, WA from a trip to Queensland and back. Whilst in Qld I heard about a creature called a tree kangaroo. There were reports that Malanda was the place where you could be lucky enough to see one. So on many of the day trips we stopped at Malanda and searched the bush walk, on at least three separate occasions. Our perseverance paid off as you can see from the enclosed photo.

Nearby at Yundaburra we were able to see a platypus in the wild, another first in my lifetime. Atherton will definitely be on the agenda again in the future. Passing through Townsville had to have a look down the hill overlooking Lavarack Barracks, which I hadn't seen since I was a 20 year old Nasho.

M W (Theo) Linden



Sent in your stories, photos hints etc to the editor of Debrief

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VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL GARDEN

Kirra Sports Club, Kirra (22 Appel St)

Due to the unforeseen closure of the Aero Club in September 2007 it became necessary to find a new site for the Veterans Memorial Garden. After consideration of several sites it was agreed by vote with members of the Vietnam Veterans Sports and Social Club and members of the surrounding Vietnam Veterans community including VVAA Coolangatta Tweed Heads sub branch that Kirra Sports Club would be the best site for the new Memorial Garden and that a meet and greet each pay fortnight would be held at the club, as support and discussion on how the garden was to be erected



Approx 35 Mitres long.

As Glen Wright and David Donlan had been previously fund raising for the Vietnam Veterans Day functions and maintenance of the gardens, they would be responsible for the design and construction of the gardens. After consulting with Grant McKenzie, landscape designer and also Club Manager of Kirra Sports Club the new garden design was agreed upon.

With the generous support of club members, the local VV Community, Connect-A-Vet and weekend raffles held at the Kirra Sports Club by Glen and David, funds were now available to commence construction. With the generous support of local businesses such as Kingscliff Nursery who donated the plants for the garden, Tweed Timber and fencing, Tweed Landscape Supplies and club volunteers donating time, resources and materials.



The new garden finished completion in July 2008, just in time for VV Day. Since the VV Day at the new gardens in August 2008 fund raising has continued by Glenn and David which had allowed the garden to be improved upon adding new features (above), such as a 2.5 ton DDG anchor which is situated in the middle of the garden, standing 2.5 metres tall, an aircraft propeller signifying the presence of the R.A.A.F.

There are large sandstone centrepieces with plaques, commemorating significant events, such as, the Battle of Long Tan and the Battle of Coral and Balmoral.

Glen Wright— President of the Kirra Sports Club, although not a veteran, but with 15 years Army service has been a keen supporter of the local VVAA community.



Right.

Dave Donlan—President of the VVAA Coolangatta Tweed Heads Sub branch at the memorial.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

After a mediocre first six months of 2012, a number of successful events have been held in the recent months, the Honouring Vietnam Veterans Service, a Veterans Appreciation Luncheon, Vietnam Veterans Day Memorial Service and the V.V.A.A. W.A. AGM, i will give more detail of these events, in the body of this report.

A Special General Meeting of the V.V.A.A. W.A. was held in June, to adopt a number of amendments to the V.V.A.A. W.A. constitution, one being the change of our financial year, to the 1st of July to the 30th of June. As result of that change i was necessary to hold another AGM in October. The AGM held on the 21st of October, saw a marked improvement in the number of members attending the meeting. All members of the State Executive were re-elected for a further term, while the position of state secretary was not filled at the AGM, i am confident of the vacancy being filled in the near future.

On Saturday the 16th of June, the Vietnamese Veterans and Vietnamese Community in Western Australia, conducted the Honouring Vietnam Veterans Service, at the Vietnam Memorial in Kings Park. The service was well supported by the veteran community and it was pleasing to see a number of West Australian KIA family members attending.



Above. Colour Party Vietnam Veterans.

Following the wreath laying, all invited guests were presented with plaques to mark the occasion. The day concluded with the Vietnamese Community, hosting a dinner, for their invited guests, at a Northbridge resteruant . Congatulations go to the Vietnamese Veterans and Community, for their hospitality and organisation of the days events.



Above. Wreaths on the Memorial Plinth.

In early June, I was approached by the son of a deceased Vietnam Veteran, with the view to arranging a Veterans Appreciation Luncheon. While I had some initial concerns about this project, as the proposed date was only seven weeks away, I supported the principle of holding such a function. I was given assurances by Travis Warner, that he and his band of helpers would be able to achieve this goal, that included obtaining sponsorship and funding to allow the function to proceed. Our usual venue, Rigby's was booked for the function and for most of the following weeks, I was the back seat driver, as planning for the function went ahead. By the cut off date for RSVP's on the 27th of July, 180 veterans and family members, had indicated their attendance for the luncheon.

On Sunday the 5th of August, the Veterans Appreciation Luncheon was held, with a number of guest speakers, entertainment by Lionel Moore, an RAR Vietnam Veteran and a number of W.A. entertainers that toured South Vietnam, with the concert parties

The motivation, for Travis Warner to arrange this function, was seeing his father suffer and struggle to cope and ultimately loose that struggle, with life , post Vietnam and knowing that other Vietnam Veterans, have gone through and are still going through those same traumas. At the luncheon Travis, delivered a very

moving speech, relating to his father's post Vietnam life. Another speaker, was the son of a Vietnamese Veteran, telling his story of growing up in South Vietnam, following the war, his fathers internment in a re-education camp, the families eventual escape from Vietnam and re-settlement in Australia.

Following the successful 2012 Appreciation Luncheon, it is hoped that this will become an annual function. Congatulations go to Travis and Katherine Warner, their families and other helpers that made the luncheon so successful.



Above. Travis Warner, with Errol Pentony, author of Doorway in the Storm.



Above. The flags and enjoying the luncheon.



Right. Out of the trunk.

Vietnam Veterans Day 2012.

As in other states the 2012 Vietnam Memorial Day Service, in Western Australia, was dedicated to the 50th Anniversary of the AATTV's deployment to South Vietnam. The weather was kind to us on the day, with approximately 400 people attending the Memorial Service. Again, our Chaplain, Dr. David Cockram, conducted an excellent service



The Guilford Grammar School Cadet unit, provided the cataflque party and honour guard, while cadets from the 7 Wing Drum Corps, led the parade of Veterans. Major General John Hartley AO, National President of the AATTV Association, delivered a very enlightening Memorial Day Address.

Prior to the Memorial Day Service, a small group of veterans gathered at the Perth War Cemetery, to walk through this precinct and the adjoining Karrakatta Cemetery, to visit the grave sites of 39 of the 62 West Ausralians killed in action in South Vietnam. This opportunity to pay respect to our fallen, began in 2006 and has continued annually since then, on the 18th of August.



Speak to Me of War". Zoe Street.

Every year the V.V.A.A. W.A. are approached by schools and students, for assistance with projects relating to the Vietnam War. This year a year 12 student from the Perth Waldorf School, Zoe Street, researched, wrote and performed three powerful monologues about war. In researching her subjects, Zoe, interviewed a number of veterans, attended the Dawn Service, at 27

13 Field Squadron Engineers, Karrakatta and the Vietnam Veterans Day Service at Kings Park.

I was unable to attend Zoe's monologue performance, Dr. Neil MacNeill, attended in my absence, these are his comments. "While all three intertwined monologues are interesting, the Vietnam monologue was the most powerful for me, "Another Sleepless Night" is something that would be familiar territory for many Vietnam vets and it was disturbingly close to reality. Zoe performed, without missing a line, to two packed houses at the Subiaco Arts Centre in early September. For one so young, Zoe is brimming with talent and she told a story that needs to be told".

From meeting and being interviewed by Zoe, a very professional, dedicated and talented young lady, I say congratulations Zoe, top marks, a job well done.

In September, the V.V.A.A. W.A. conducted the IGA, Brumby's Bakery, sponsored "sausage sizzle" in Canning Vale, a 3 hour opportunity to "show the flag" and raise some funds for the W.A. branch. All the sausages and rolls etc, are donated by the sponsors, so it is all profit on the day, with sales, donations and some merchandise sales, over \$300.00 was collected for our efforts. Thanks to those who helped on the day.

As this edition of Debrief goes to print, the last major Vietnam Veteran event for 2012, the "BACK to the BUSH Reunion" at Bruce Rock will have been held. I will report on that in a 2013 edition.

Compliments of the season, to all V.V.A.A. members, from the W.A. Branch.

Richard Williams.

State President. V.V.A.A. W.A.

Looking for next-of-kin

The men listed below have been posthumously approved for the award of the Commendation for Gallantry for their service during World War II and to date their award has not been claimed. If you are related to any of these men, or know of someone who may be related.

PTE Alexander John BELL
PTE Victor Lawrence GALE
SGT Joseph Kenneth BELL
SIG Howard Frederick HARVEY
PTE Joseph BELL
MAJ Alan MULL
GNR Thomas Stephen CUMMING
GNR Arthur REEVE
SGT Clifford Edmund DANAHER

Contact the Directorate of Honours & Awards' telephone enquiry line on 1800 111 321.

MORAL FOR TODAY

One day a farmer's donkey fell down into a well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer tried to figure out what to do.

Finally, he decided the animal was old, and the well needed to be covered up anyway; it just wasn't worth it to retrieve the donkey.

He invited all his neighbors to come over and help him. They all grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well. At first, the donkey realized what was happening and cried horribly. Then, to everyone's amazement he quieted down.

A few shovel loads later, the farmer finally looked down the well. He was astonished at what he saw. With each shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing.

He would shake it off and take a step up.

As the farmer's neighbors continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he would shake it off and take a step up.

Pretty soon, everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and happily trotted off!

Life is going to shovel dirt on you, all kinds of dirt. The trick to getting out of the well is to shake it off and take a step up. Each of our troubles is a steppingstone. We can get out of the deepest wells just by not stopping, never giving up! Shake it off and take a step up. Remember the five simple rules to be happy:

Free your heart from hatred - Forgive.

Free your mind from worries - Most never happen.

Live simply and appreciate what you have.

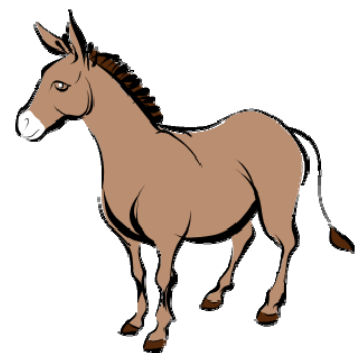
Give more.

Expect less.

NOW

Enough of that crap. The donkey later came back, and bit the farmer who had tried to bury him.

The gash from the bite got infected and the farmer eventually died in agony from septic shock.



MORAL FROM TODAY'S LESSON:

When you do something wrong, and try to cover your ass, it always comes back to bite you.

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RAAF

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 Email: brivets@bigpond.net.au
 Drop In Centre: (07) 3408 0405 V
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 The Recreational Hall 156 First Ave, Bongaree Qld 4507

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 : 3 Ogg Rd, Murrumba Downs, QLD 450
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 General Meeting: Third Sunday each month @1000

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