

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Victorian Branch Inc



AUTUMN EDITION ~ 2009



BLACK SATURDAY VICTORIA BURNS

**ALSO
IN
THIS
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Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living



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Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

FROM THE *PRESIDENT*

Welcome to the Autumn edition of our newsletter "*FSB-VIC*". I extend congratulations to all re-elected and new members of committees across the state and thank you for your dedication to the well being of Vietnam Veterans and their families.

The recent bushfires have demanded a great deal of our time and I commend and thank all members who put their shoulder to the wheel in very trying times. We grieve for the loss of a Vietnam Veteran and his family in the fires and stand ready to assist those who have lost homes and possessions; the renewal has already begun. Your Secretary and Treasurer are to be complimented on the systems they put in place to cope with the disaster and in the near future we will be in touch with sub-branches who have had members impacted by the fires to see how best we can use the donations that state has received. A report on the bushfires is included in the newsletter.

Despite the major distraction of the bushfires, life goes on and so does the work of the Branch. Following on from a very successful Council meeting in Traralgon—thanks to Jim Saddington and the RSL members for their hospitality - your committee, and John Ockwell as PR manager, have set the scene for the first community welfare presentation in Hamilton, conducted a review of state executive business and re-prioritized our activities, attended to national business including capitations and our motion concerning proportional voting, and engaged with the museum in relation to trustee/state relationships and responsibilities.

Our membership returns are tracking well and I am hopeful that we can exceed last year's excellent result and continue our status as the only state branch with a growing membership. The number of veterans who we knew nothing about who literally came out of the scrub as a result of the bushfires, have

served to reinforce my belief that there is still much that we can do collectively to reach and regain lost and previous members. The experience of the bushfires gives us the perfect opportunity to reinforce to them the importance of "being on the radar". It is sobering to note that a significant number of these veterans have not paid much attention to their personal welfare and were unaware of the services and assistance available to them - there is much that we can do!

As I mentioned at Council, the issue of the National constitution continues to drag on. Victoria has made its position clear on the matter and has largely kept out of the scrum that has developed, preferring instead to focus on issues that provide tangible benefits for members. It is interesting to reflect that our membership is increasing while those State Branches that have become absorbed in the constitution issue have experienced significant membership falls - Is there a message there? The constitution matter is sure to be prominent at the next National council meeting to be held in Canberra during the period 20-23 May 2009. Our motion calling for proportional voting for national executive elections will also be debated.

It has been a bitter sweet time for the ADF. On the one hand we join others in congratulating SAS Trooper Mark Donaldson on the award of the Victoria Cross for acts of gallantry in Afghanistan, and on the other hand we mourn the loss of Private Gregory Sher, Cpl Matthew Hopkins and Sergeant Brett Till, all killed in action in Afghanistan this year; the last two in the same week.

It is pleasing to report that our bids to the Victorian Veterans Council seeking grants from the ANZAC Day Fund and the Victorian Veterans Fund were successful, and we received a total of \$42,000. Without this assistance, we would struggle to maintain the level of administrative support we currently provide and to undertake other activities deemed to be of value to our

membership.

On the matter of the Victorian Veterans Council, I continue to enjoy the involvement very much and look forward to assisting with a state wide review of what ESO's are doing in relation to education and to selling the value of the VVC to the veteran community. Peter Liefman has resigned from his position as Vice Chairman of the VVC after giving valuable and dedicated service. Peter has also stepped back from his role as honorary legal advisor for the VVAA, and is now concentrating on his private business and family. I am sure you will agree that Peter has given a great deal to the Association at all levels, often to the detriment of his own affairs. Peter continues to be involved as a trustee of the national museum and he freely provides advice to me on the many occasions that I need it.

I am aware that there are diverse opinions within the State Branch in relation to the future and how we might approach the day the State Branch finally closes down, and there is also strong opinion in relation to how we relate to, interact with and include younger veterans in our activities. This is as it should be; there should be careful, respectful and detailed debate on issues as fundamental as these to our very existence and identity. Change will take time and we should not hurry it, but neither should we sit on our hands for change is inevitable and we must be prepared to at least debate it. In my opinion it is better to have control over our future by planning sensibly for it rather than having something else less satisfactory imposed on us. I look forward to vigorous debate on these and other important issues.

I look forward to meeting with the membership in my travels around the state. I thank you for your confidence in me and your state executive.

Regards, Bob

FROM THE *SECRETARY*

Firstly, I appreciate your vote of confidence in electing me as the Victorian State Secretary for the 2009 year. It is shaping up as a busy year – no different to previous years really.

You would know that we did not elect an Assistant Secretary at the AGM at Traralgon as there were no nominations for the position received. I would like to see someone put their hand up to fill the position – any interested person can contact me on 0438 597 932. A bit of an early call but I am undecided as to whether I will continue in the position of State Secretary past the 2009 year and would like to mentor a replacement.

From an administrative viewpoint – things seem to be getting along okay except for the “old warhorse” of Sub-Branches not responding to requests for information – over to you ladies and gentlemen. I would like to add that I would be pleased to respond to any enquiries from sub-branches regarding the administrative side of things – just call or e-mail me and I will respond as soon as possible.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the following members for all the work they have done assisting me as the State Secretary:

Len Barlow: for filling in for me on a number of occasions, his sage advice and also for his work as our webmaster. As you would be aware, the website underwent a major review in 2008 and the successful conversion from the old website was in no small way due to Len’s efforts. Involvement and efforts very much appreciated.

Maurie Benson: for working as the State Office Manager, the FSB-VIC Newsletter Editor and being a major player in the organisation of VV Day each year. Job(s) well done and very much appreciated.

Dennis Clarke, Barry Brewer, Murray Lewis and Rob Huggan : for working at the State Office at ANZAC House during the week. Contributions and endeavours very much appreciated.

Finally, I look forward to working with members at all levels for the betterment of the veterans cause.

Regards

Peter Bright

State Secretary

Victorian State Branch

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia

BADGE WEEK

At the recent Traralgon State Conference it was agreed that all Sub Branches were to provide their notions to the Museum on the design/type of any new badges they would like to see for Badge Week (although there will be no change for the 2009 Badge Week) - **responses direct to Museum.**

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

VV Day was discussed at some length by the State Council with Sub Branches being requested to consider their level of participation on, and support for, the Day. The issues surrounding this consideration are the level of Service at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance on the Day, support by Sub Branches for the Day and the diminishing level of ADF support -these matters will be further discussed at the 16th May State Council Meeting (Box Hill).

MUSEUM DAY 31st MAY 2009

In addition to being a day for Veterans at the Museum, the purpose of the 2009 May Day is to invite and thank those people and organisations who have provided work and equipment/supplies at no cost or at heavily discounted cost—***mark the date in your calendar!!***

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

STATE CONFERENCE/AGM TRARALGON

The VVAA State Executive and Sub Branch Delegates met at the Traralgon RSL on 27th February and Saturday 28th February for the 2009 AGM and the quarterly State Conference of the VVAA Victorian Branch.

The opening address was given by local sporting identity and local Member Russell North MP.

Guest speakers for the day were George Logan RFD, Vice President of RSL Victoria and Mick Quinn, Victorian State President of APPVA (Peacekeepers Association).

George Logan provided an outline of "The Future" for the RSL in Victoria while Mick Quinn gave an up date report on APPVA activities. He also confirmed the importance of the recent Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) recently signed between VVAA and APPVA.

Both VVAA Vic and APPVA Vic acknowledged the close working relationship each had with one another and with RSL Victoria.

The recent bushfires received considerable attention in terms of welfare assistance required from VVAA for those veterans affected by the fires. Relief funds have been col-

lected and are available for distribution once needs are identified.



Yes, it was all hard work
at the Conference!!



VVAA Vic State Executive 2009/10
L>R James Coghlan, Vice President, Peter Bright, Secretary, Bob Elworthy, President, Jim Saddington, Vice President, David Weeks, Treasurer, Ron McMullen, Asst Treasurer/ Membership



George Logan RFD, Vice President, RSL Victoria (Guest Speaker), Bob Elworthy, State President, VVAA Vic, Mick Quinn, Vic State President, Peacekeepers Assoc. (Guest Speaker)



Bob Elworthy, VVAA Vic State President, Russell North MP, Local Member who opened the State Conference and Jim Saddington, President Traralgon RSL.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES ~ counting the cost

The bushfires in February brought devastation to many parts of Victoria. In the Kinglake, Flowerdale and Strathewen areas to the north east of Melbourne, many Vietnam Veterans and their families were severely impacted.

The tragic death of DVIET Greg McIvor, his wife Judy and his mother May who perished when their Strathewen home was consumed in the firestorm was reported early on in the bushfire report daily updates. (McIvor photo here with caption "tragically lost")

A total of five Vietnam Veterans, eight sons/daughters of Vietnam Veterans and a Cambodian Veteran that we know of have lost their homes. There has also been significant property damage reported in all areas where the bushfires occurred. The cumulative effect of these losses will be felt for some time.

The Vietnam Veteran Community has come to the fore with financial assistance with the following donations totalling \$16,850 being received by State Branch as at the writing of this report:

We gratefully acknowledge these donations (refer to page 7 of this newsletter) which will be used specifically for veteran bushfire relief. Further donations are expected from the VVAA National Fundraising.

The Diamond Valley Sub-Branch – its members



The **February 2009 Victorian bushfires** were known as the **Black Saturday bushfires**. Some 400 fires blazed throughout Victoria fanned by winds in excess of 100 km/h.

The fires destroyed over 2,000 homes, 3,500 structures in total and damaged thousands more. A total of 173 people were confirmed to have died in the fires with around 500 injured.

Many towns north-east of the state capital Melbourne were badly damaged or almost completely

bore the brunt of the fire damage - has been very active with financial and other support for all veterans in their area who have been affected. In conjunction with a local Vietnamese Restaurant, the DVIETS and friends raised over \$14000 for the bushfire relief appeal, and DVIETS members Rosa and Tony Arena held a dinner and auction at a DVIETS member's home raised \$1500 which has been donated to the CPL Gibson trust fund - CPL Gibson was severely burned in the bushfires while trying to save his family, his wife and three young children perished. Noble Park Sub-Branch raised over \$4000 for bushfire relief, some of which was donated to Diamond Valley Sub-Branch.

To all Sub-Branches who worked hard to ensure that their membership was safe, made donations, helped in practical ways and provided information to assist in building a state wide picture of the impact on Vietnam Veterans thank you.

To individual Vietnam Veterans who called to offer assistance, a heart-felt thank you - practical welfare at its best!

The task ahead is to assist the affected veterans and their families as best we can. Any assistance given to these veterans will certainly not lessen the impact of the bushfires on them but it is hoped that the assistance will help the veterans through the difficult times ahead.



destroyed, including Kinglake, Marysville, Narbethong, Strathewen and Flowerdale. Many houses in the towns of Steels Creek, Humevale, Wandong, St Andrews, Callignee, and Koornalla were also destroyed or damaged, with several fatalities recorded at each location.

The fires affected 78 individual townships in total and left an estimated 7,500 people homeless, many of whom sought temporary accommodation, much of it donated in the form of spare rooms, caravans, tents and beds in community relief centres.

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VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES ~ Thanks for your generosity.

The VVAA Victorian Branch would like to formally acknowledge the following generous donations made to the VVAA Victorian Branch Bushfire Appeal.

All donations are specifically earmarked for veterans who have been impacted by the bushfires and are deposited to a specific Bushfire Appeal Account maintained by VVAA Vic.

Donations are recorded and a receipt provided. Do-

nors will be kept up to date on the expenditure of the funds.

Acknowledgement is also given to the enormous effort provided by VVAA Vic Sub Branches in responding to the needs of fellow veterans and their families through fund raising and gathering/distributing a wide range of basic needs i.e. food, clothing, bedding and all the everyday items that were so desperately needed.

From	Amount
Redcliffe Sub-Branch (Queensland)	\$1,000
Echuca Sub-Branch (Victoria)	\$1,000
Macarthur Sub-Branch (New South Wales)	\$500
RAEME Vic Association (Victoria)	\$500
Murray Border Sub-Branch (Victoria)	\$500
Maryborough Sub-Branch (Victoria)	\$1,000
Brisbane North Sub-Branch (Queensland)	\$1,000
Swan Hill Sub-Branch (Victoria)	\$1,000
Bendigo Sub-Branch (Victoria)	\$1,000
Geelong Sub-Branch (Victoria)	\$500
Gippsland Sub-Branch (Victoria)	\$500
Goulburn Valley Sub-Branch (Victoria)	\$500
Outer Eastern Sub-Branch (Victoria)	\$500
North West Sub-Branch (Victoria)	\$2,000
Mr K Pryor (Personal Donation)	\$200
Queensland State Branch (Queensland)	\$500
Gympie Sub-Branch (Queensland)	\$500
Coolangatta/Tweed Heads Sub-Branch (Queensland)	\$1,500
Northern Suburbs Sub-Branch – Adelaide (South Australia)	\$850
Murwillumbah Vietnam Veterans Social Group (NSW)	\$1,800



VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (HUNTER/CENTRAL COAST SUB BRANCH)

AN AFTERNOON OF AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY MUSIC IN AID OF THE VICTORIAN BUSH FIRE APPEAL

was held at the DOYALSON-WYEE RSL CLUB NSW in April, with all proceeds going to the appeal. Feature artist included; *Trevor Day, Slim Newton, Bob Easter, Dianne Lindsay, Tracey Coster and Peter Simpson.*

Well done to our NSW mates who rallied in a splendid manner and raised money in support of those Victorians affected by the bushfires.

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Drop In Centre aids Veteran and Families

The Aussie Veterans Opportunity Shop & Drop In Centre is located at 5 Erica Ave, Boronia and operates between the hours of 10 am to 4 pm Mon to Fri & 10 am to 2 pm Sat.

The shop is a non profit organisation run by the RAASC Vietnam Association Inc. with all profits going towards helping Veterans, their families and War Widows(ers) who need financial assistance or household goods due to hard times. To this end we are always looking for financial donations or donations of goods that can be sold to assist in the welfare of Veterans and War Widows(ers).

No discrimination is shown to any Veteran from any conflict and to date assistance has been provided to WW2 Veterans, including a WW2 Greek Veteran, and recently Veterans from Timor, Somalia and Iraq.

A "Drop In Centre" is also run at the shop for Veterans to come in, have a talk over a cup of tea or coffee with fellow Veterans and if necessary obtain assistance/guidance with any problems they may have, including pensions.

Our goal is to assist, wherever possible, any Veteran in their time of need. If you can assist us in any way, please contact the shop during business hours on 9761 0468.

Your support for this worthy operation would be greatly appreciated.

Assistance to Bushfire Victims

Assistance was offered and accepted by a Timor Veteran whose father is a Vietnam Veteran.

The Veteran and his 14 year old son escaped the bushfires on Saturday 7th February by jumping onto the back of a truck with fires chasing them out of town. He and his father had no time to taken even their vehicles. On return to the area it was found that the cars and his fathers house were intact, unfortunately his partners father lost everything.

The Veteran has now found unfurnished accommodation, but required the basics to live. The Aussie Vets Op Shop has supplied cooking utensils, cloth-

ing & furniture etc but there were no beds or a fridge available. It was agreed by the Executive of the Assoc. that we purchase these items for the family, total cost \$900.00.

The Assoc. has been informed that other Veterans may also need our assistance in the coming weeks, even months - this is why we do what we do!

Please keep the Aussie Veterans Opportunity Shop & Drop In Centre in mind, if in the future you come across a Veteran/s in need, we are here to help. We are always looking for volunteers to help in the shop if you can spare any time.

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E TEAM REPORT

The **VVAA Victorian Branch Education Team (E Team)** is part of the VVAA Victorian State Branch and has been giving presentations to schools and other groups for approx. 20 years. It is made up of five teams:

Eastern: Rob Lowe, Rob Edgell, Keith Whitford, Jim Dewar
 Metro: Phil White, Bruce Kidney
 Bayside: Bob Paice
 Peninsula: Brendan Kincade
 Western: Rod Quarrell, Peter Burquest, Clive Jones

Following a reorganisation during 2009 the E Team now has a Patriotic Fund account through which donations can be processed. The Fund Number is W559 and the official title is "Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Victorian Branch Inc Education Team Welfare Patriotic Fund".

BOOKINGS

PRESENTATIONS

2009 (To Date)	School	Suburb	Presentations		
			2008	2007	
18-Jan	Richmond Lunar Fest	Richmond			
20-Jan	Narre Warren Probus	Narre Warren	Schools	90	112
7-Feb	Sandown Tet	Sandown	Clubs/ Groups	11	3
8-Feb	Sandown Tet	Sandown	Students	7,000	4,822
2-Mar	Parade College	Bundoora	Audience	230	178
5 Mar	Parade College	Bundoora	Displays	4	
20-Apr	Vic College Arts	Southbank			
24-Apr	Walmsley Village	Kilsyth			
11-May	Mt Lilydale College	Lilydale			
21-Jul	Frankston H Probus				
5-Aug	Caulfield Grammar	St Kilda East			



At the recent VVAA Vic State Conference held at the Traralgon RSL, Rob Lowe (on the right) from the VVAA Education Team (E-Team) presented VVAA Victorian State President Bob Elworthy with a cheque for \$5,000.00, being donations received by the ETeam in the course of their presentation activities.

The funds received not only support the E-Team in their activities but contribute towards Welfare activities of the VVAA Victorian State Branch, in particular the provision of education bursaries and education related assistance for dependants of Vietnam Veterans.

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DIGGERS DIE IN AFGHANISTAN



Pte Sher was serving with the Special Operations Task Group when he was killed by a rocket attack in Oruzgan Province, on Sunday 4 January.

30 year old PTE Sher was from the Sydney-based 1st Commando Regiment.



Corporal Hopkins - the ninth Australian to die in the war - was from the 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, based in Darwin. Cpl Hopkins was 21-years-old, and had a young wife and baby boy,

Part of an Australian team mentoring the Afghan army, he was killed while on patrol in the southern Oruzgan province, where most of Australia's 1100 troops are based.

Near Kakarak - one of the province's most fiercely held insurgent strongholds - his patrol came under heavy fire from about 20 insurgents armed with guns and rocket-propelled grenades.



Sergeant Brett Till, 31-year-old father of two, was killed when the improvised explosive device (IED) he was trying to defuse exploded.

He is the tenth Australian soldier to be killed in Afghanistan since 2001.

Sergeant Till was an explosive ordnance disposal technician and was

on a route clearance task in southern Afghanistan when the explosion occurred.

Lest We Forget

Keith Payne VC congratulates Tpr Mark Donaldson VC

Keith Payne VC was on hand to congratulate SASR Trooper Mark Donaldson VC on his award of the VC; the first VC to be awarded in almost 40 years.

Trooper Donaldson becomes the 97th Australian recipient of this prestigious award and the first recipient of the Victoria Cross for Australia instituted in 1991.

Trooper Donaldson was awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry under fire during operations in Afghanistan in September 2008.

The citation for the award records that Trooper Donaldson was travelling in a combined Afghan, US and Australian fighting patrol vehicle convoy that was engaged by a numerically superior, entrenched and coordinated enemy ambush.

With sustained accurate fire from the enemy, Trooper Donaldson took the initiative and created diversionary fire while moving between alternate positions of cover, himself deliberately exposed to enemy fire to protect wounded soldiers.



The patrol was forced to conduct numerous vehicle manoeuvres under intense fire and move some four kilometres when it was realised that a

wounded coalition force interpreter was inadvertently left behind. Again, of his own volition and with complete disregard for his own safety, Trooper Donaldson moved alone over approximately 80 metres of exposed ground to recover the wounded interpreter. Despite intense enemy fire Trooper Donaldson picked up the interpreter and carried him to the relative safety of the vehicles.

Trooper Mark Donaldson VC remains humble at the award saying that his actions were undertaken as part of a team.

Congratulations on a job well done and an award well deserved.

The Victoria Cross, according to the Instituting Royal Warrant establishing rules and ordinances governing its bestowal, shall only be awarded for the most conspicuous bravery or some daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice or extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy.

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DFRB/DFRDB PENSIONS RESTORED

From the inception of the contributory DFRB/DFRDB Superannuation Schemes until mid 1977 widows or widowers of Australian Defence Force Personnel who were killed in Australia or overseas were granted a pension from the contributory Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefit Fund. Until 1977 the Commonwealth Government Legislation required that if a spouse remarried the pension be cancelled.

In 1977 a Federal Government policy change meant that widows/widowers pensions were no longer cancelled on remarriage. However, those spouses who had lost their partners before this date did not have their pensions reinstated, unless there was a compelling case of financial hardship.

Following strong representation to and subsequent support from senior Government Ministers of the last Coalition Government [The Hon Mal Brough, The Hon Nic Minchin and The Hon Bruce Billson], the Pre 1977 DFRDB Spouse Pensions have been reinstated prospectively, on application, with effect 1 January 2008.

The term used by the present Government through Comsuper is 'Reversionary Pensions'. Regrettably, it is a term that not many understand.

The reinstatement of the DFRDB Widows [Spouse] pensions needs wide dissemination to all Military Associations of the three Services and the wider community.

This initiative covers the widows of all Australian Defence Force personnel who contributed to the DFRB/DFRDB Scheme and who died as a result of natural causes, accidents, disease or in other circumstances in peace in Australia or overseas as well as all those who lost their lives on Active Service.

It is stressed that the reinstatement of DFRB/DFRDB pensions will only be made prospectively from the date of application.

Contact:

Comsuper
DFRDB Scheme
PO Box 22
Belconnen 2616
Tele: 1300 001 887
Email:
dfer6755@bigpond.net.au

Released by:

Mrs Sara Ferguson
and
MajGen David Ferguson
AM, CSC [R]
Tele: 07 5497 5519

Deeming Rate Lowered for DVA Pensioners

Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Alan Griffin, MP Media release Friday, 6 March 2009

The deeming rate will drop from 3 per cent to 2 per cent for the first \$41,000 of a single pensioner's financial investments (\$68,200 for a couple). It will also reduce from 4 per cent to 3 per cent for the balance of financial investments over these amounts.

The changes were effective from 20 March and included in payments made from 26 March 2009.

Department of Veterans' Affairs payments affected by the deeming rate include service pensions and the income support supplement.

The lowering of the deeming rates means that part rate pensioners paid under the income test, with financial investments mainly in term deposits, shares, managed investments and other accounts, may receive an increase in their pension payments, to re-

flect the reduction in their assessable income.

Veterans already paid at the maximum rate are not affected by the deeming change.

The value of listed shares and securities will also be re-valued from 20 March.

The impact of these changes is dependent on the person's individual circumstances.

DVA pensioners who would like further information should contact the Department on 133 254.

How to start a fight

My wife and I are watching "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" while we were in bed. I turned to her and said, "Do you want to have sex?"
"No," she answered.
I then said, "Is that your final answer?"
She didn't even look at me this time, simply saying, "Yes."
So I said, "Then I'd like to phone a friend."
And then the fight started....

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Veterans & WAR Widows' Pensions Increased

VETERANS' AND WAR WIDOWS' PENSIONS INCREASED from 20 March, paid from pension day 26 March 2009.

Indexation delivered Veteran and War Widow pensioners up to an extra \$14.10 a fortnight. For the first time, the Special Rate (TPI) Pension is more than \$1,000 a fortnight at \$1,011.90.

The increases are based on a movement of 0.9 per

cent in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and a top-up of \$2.60 per fortnight to bring the single Service Pension rate to 25 per cent of Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE). All disability pensions are indexed by reference to both CPI and MTAWE. This resulted in a 1.4 per cent increase.

For more information on the new pension rates visit www.dva.gov.au or call 133 254.

	OLD RATE	NEW RATE
Special Rate (TPI) Pension	\$997.80	\$1,011.90
Extreme Disablement Adjustment	\$550.70	\$558.50
100 per cent General Rate of Disability Pension	\$354.50	\$359.50
Intermediate Rate Disability Pension	\$677.00	\$686.60
Service Pension - single	\$562.10	\$569.80
Service Pension - couples	\$469.50 each \$939.00 couple	\$475.90 each \$951.80 couple
War Widows/ers Pension	\$598.70	\$607.00
Income Support Supplement	\$167.80	\$170.20



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SCHOOL CHILDREN ANZAC DAY SERVICE

At this time of the year it is not unusual to see veterans interfacing with their local schools around ANZAC Day and to involve students in ANZAC Day Services.

Outer Eastern Sub Branch members provide school services to a number of schools in their area where the school and students actually conduct the Service, including making the major presentations.

Following these services, everyone gathers for morning tea and discussion groups with the veterans where the students can ask questions and the veteran can tell his story.

Similarly the Melbourne West Sub Branch has an excellent relationship with several Schools in the

Western suburbs where they conduct services on Remembrance Day and Anzac Day.

The Service is generally two parts: one part is where there is a face to face question/answer session in the School auditorium with Students and Teachers and the second part is an official ceremony with speeches by students and Vets, hymns, the Ode, flag lowering etc. That is usually followed by morning tea supplied by the School in the staff dining room.

Additionally, at Thomas Chirnside Primary School, volunteers from Melbourne West built and maintain a Vietnam Veterans' Memorial which has a lone pine tree with brass plaque. Some of their Members have grandchildren there then and now.

Thomas Chirnside Primary School, Werribee

Melbourne West Sub Branch members attended an ANZAC Day Service with students from the Thomas Chirnside Primary School, Werribee.



SUPERVISOR WHAT? THE TIMES THEY ARE CHANGING

Did you know that the old Infantry Subject Two for Corporal course is now known as the Supervisor Infantry Operations—Section (SIO-S) course?

I feel like my body has become totally out of shape, so I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotards on, the class was over.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

40th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF BINH BA



The village of Binh Ba village, situated some four miles North of the Australian Task Force HQs at Nui Dat, was well known to the Australians during the

first tour. As a deterrent to the Viet Cong tax collectors and assassination squads taking control of the village 5RAR stationed a rifle company and a mortar section within the village. While this strategy proved to be successful it was not to continue. By 1969 the drain on the meagre resources of the Battalion proved to be too much and the village was left to the protection of Regional forces.

On separate operations, 6RAR was engaged in a heavy contact with the enemy several miles north of the Task Force base. At 08:00 on 6 June 1969, a Centurion



Tank and an armoured recovery vehicle moving through to assist 6RAR were fired upon from Binh Ba village.

The initial intelligence report indicated that two enemy platoons had infiltrated the village and the commander 1 ATF decided to react D Company to the village.

The Ready Reaction Force consisted of D Company 5RAR, a troop of tanks (two tanks from 1 Troop and two tanks from 2 Troop 1st Armoured Regiment) and an APC Troop were alerted to the incident and prepared to move to the area. The OC, D Company issued orders and the force moved off to the village of Binh Ba. The company consisted of three platoons plus company HQ.

With preparation from helicopter gunships, 9 Squadron RAAF, D Company assaulted the village. The



Centurion tanks were effective for close action; however against concealed enemy firing RPG 7's, 2 tanks sustained some external

damage whilst one tank was penetrated. Within an hour, three of the four tanks from the initial assault were disabled with damage and crew casualties. The officer commanding D Company decided to move his force out of the village and move to western side of Binh Ba. With a fresh troop of tanks together with APC support, D Company conducted a second assault on the village. Infantry platoons led the assault. Each platoon had one tank and two APCs in close support.

A platoon made contact with the enemy immediately. The opposing force occupied the houses and was firing from the windows, doors and from any available cover. An Australian soldier was killed. Pte Wayne Teeling was shot through the neck as his team approached the first line of houses.

A tank fired one round of HE into the building occupied by the VC. The house exploded, and the clearing team assaulted immediately. Six enemy dead were found in the ruins. This type of action was typical all along D Company's assault line. It was made clear some time ago that the strength of the enemy force was far greater than two platoons. It was confirmed from captured documents that D Company was facing elements of the 1st Battalion, 33 NVA Regiment. Enemy weapons littered the battle ground. Some Australian soldiers used discarded AK-47's to conserve their own ammunition.

Elements of the 1st Battalion 33 NVA took up defensive positions within the village and fought to the death. Other groups discarded their uniforms and weapons and mingled with the pockets of civilians unable to escape



the fighting. This added another dimension to the conduct of the battle, and the soldiers of D Company 5RAR exposed themselves to extreme danger trying to usher these groups to the rear of the battle zone. Other enemy groups tried to flee the village, or hide in the small air raid bunkers attached to every house. In one case, an enemy force as large as an infantry company attempted to enter the village to take part in the battle. In the latter case these forces were met by B Company, blocking the exit and entry routes outside Binh Ba. To fully clear the village, every bunker, house and any likely areas of concealment had to be searched.

On the second day, the clearing of the village continued. D Company, with a platoon from B Company did much the same as on day one although, contact with the enemy focused on small groups of NVA still holed up in the village.

The battle concluded on 8 June 1969. A large enemy force had been defeated by the Australian troops. One Australian soldier was killed and 8 were wounded; 91 VC and NVA soldiers were also killed. The battle for Binh Ba ranks as one of the major military victories by the Australian Task Force.



Former members of 1 Armd Regt, 3 Cav Regt, 105 Fd Bty, 1 Fd Sqn RAE and 5RAR members wanting further information about Commemoration Services should contact their respective Associations or the Binh Ba Commemoration secretariat Jan Properjohn (02) 6288 7292 or jproperjohn@internode.on.net

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

Replacement medals policy relaxed

Current Defence Department policy does not allow ADF medals to be replaced and released to family members.

However, as a result of the recent bushfires in Victoria and floods in Queensland, the Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon. Dr Mike Kelly AM MP announced in March that the Replacement medals policy will be relaxed.

Those family members who have lost the medals of loved ones in the *Victorian bushfire* and the *Queensland floods* can now apply to have them replaced.

Application forms can be obtained from the Department of Defence website ww.defence.gov.au/medals/ or by calling toll-free Customer Response Team on 1800 111 321.

Completed application forms should be submitted to:

Directorate of Honours and Awards

T-4

Department of Defence

PO Box 7952

CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

Lost Medals

LtCol Glyn Llanwarne is a man on a mission.

Beginning as a collector of medals, his quest since 2000 has been acquiring, researching and then returning lost medals to veterans or their families.

As military medals are an important part of personal military history Glyn now uses all his resources for research and locating families whose medals come into his possession.

The LOST MEDALS web site at <http://www.lostmedalsaustralia.com/> is dedicated to returning medals that Glyn has in his possession to the veteran's nearest kin. This he does free of any charge or fee.

Changes to “MATES”

The **Veterans’ Medicines Advisory and Therapeutic Education Services, better known as Veterans’ MATES**, is a program that is advisory in nature and provides condition-specific medical information to veterans and health professionals. This material is also made available generally through publication on the Internet.

Following on the success of Veterans’ MATES, the Department of Veterans’ Affairs has set up a dedicated web address for this program.

The new web address is:

www.veteransmates.net.au

The new site provides great improvements in navigation, layout and ease of reading. It would be appreciated if you would please update your web link or consider creating one from your site if you do not have one already.

Access to this material is still available through the DVA website:

www.dva.gov.au/health/veteransmates.

*---My memory's not as sharp as it used to be. Also, my
memory's not as sharp as it used to be.*

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

NEW FORUMS FOR VETERANS

A new structure for the veteran and ex-service community to consult on Government operations and decisions affecting them was announced by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs on Thursday 9 April 2009.

A high-level strategic forum will be established to address issues of strategic importance to the ex-service and defence communities including providing advice on policy development and service delivery issues affecting the veteran community.

This forum, the *Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) Round Table*, will comprise senior leaders of the ESO community and will act as the main forum for dialogue with the Repatriation and Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commissions and the Department of Veterans' Affairs. In conjunction with the Prime Ministerial Advisory Council (PMAC), this will ensure veterans will continue to have input directly to the Minister and through the Minister, the Prime Minister.

The new ESO Round Table will be supported by four smaller forums that focus on specific policy areas:

- ★ The Operational Working Party - to focus on service delivery performance and issues.
- ★ The National Health, Aged and Community Care Forum - to advise on current and future health and aged care needs of veterans and war widow/ers.
- ★ The Current and Former Members of the ADF Emerging Issues Forum - to provide a mechanism for consultation about issues affecting younger and recently discharged members and their families.
- ★ The National Mental Health Forum - to enable broad consultation on mental health policy and issues, including raising awareness of mental health and the provision of early intervention and treatment programs.

The new structure follows a review of the formal consultative arrangements between the veteran community, the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission, the Re-

patriation Commission and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).

Each forum will operate with a defined work agenda, formal terms of reference and operational protocols aimed at providing robust outcomes. A representative from the PMAC will be invited to join each forum, ensuring continuity and consistency of advice provided to the Government and DVA.

These forums will be supplemented by State Consultative Forums of ESOs, chaired by the local Deputy Commissioner of DVA.

The Secretary of DVA will soon be writing to ESOs seeking nominations for the forums. Members will be selected from these nominations by the Secretary, or the Deputy Commissioner in the case of the State forums, in consultation with the Minister.

The National Advisory Committee on operations and services of the VVCS will continue to operate as a separate committee. The new Chairperson will be Dr Tony Austin AM. He will be joined by two new members: Professor Malcolm Battersby and Mr Bob Elworthy.

New arrangements should be operational from mid year. Including the new Victorian structures which will involve members of your State Executive.

NEW NAC APPOINTMENTS

The Minister for Veterans Affairs, The Hon Alan Griffin MP has announced the appointment of Mr Bob Elworthy as a member of the National Advisory Committee (NAC) of the VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service. Other appointments to the NAC are Dr Tony Austin AM to the role of Chairman and Professor Malcolm Battersby to the role of member psychiatrist on the Committee.

AAT FINE TUNES PROCEDURES

The *Administrative Appeals Tribunal Regulations 1976* set out a range of matters that facilitate the operation of the *Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1975* (the Act). The Regulations include provisions relating to:

- ★ the ways in which different types of applications and requests under the Act may be made to the Tribunal, including forms that may or must be used;
- ★ how documents may be lodged with the Tribunal and served on parties and other persons;
- ★ fees and allowances for expenses payable to persons summoned to appear as witnesses;

- ★ fees that are payable for lodging applications with the Tribunal, the circumstances in which fees are not payable and when application fees may be refunded.

Advice received at VVAA State Office considers that the changes proposed by the Tribunal are without substantive impact upon veterans.

Those changes can be viewed at:

<http://www.aat.gov.au/LegislationAndJurisdiction/AATLegislation.htm>

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

The Veteran Community

2009 Story Writing & Art Competition (SWAC)



Patron: Maj Gen David J McLachlan AO
(1300 132 515)

SWAC is a popular annual event run specifically for members of Victoria's ex-service community. It attracts hundreds of entries each year in the categories of painting, craft, photography, story writing and poetry.

The Competition is a joint initiative of Victorian ex-service organisations, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital. It receives generous sponsorship from the corporate and community sectors. The competition began in 1962 at the Repatriation General Hospital as therapy for returned soldiers and has grown in popularity ever since.

VVAA Vic sponsors SWAC to the value of \$650 per annum. \$500 being towards the SWAC administration costs with \$150 being prize money for first place (\$100) and second place (\$50) in Category 4A (Photography - war/armed services).

We believe there is probably no end to a vet's talents, so print off the application forms from the following DVA website and get started!! If the website is not your thing, ring 1300 132 515 and ask for the SWAC person.

www.dva.gov.au/vic/services/swac/about.htm

ELIGIBILITY

The following members of the ex-service community residing in VICTORIA are eligible to enter the competition:

Ex-service personnel of the Australian Defence Forces.

Ex-service personnel of countries that were allied to Australia during past war or war-like conflicts.

1. *WRITING*

**Category 1A True Wartime Experience
(3,000 words or less)**

Category 1B True Life Experience (3,000 words or less)

Category 1C Fiction (3,000 words or less)

Category 1D Poetry/ Prose (3,000 words or less)

Category 1E Special; "Women and War" (1,500 words or less)

2. *ART*

Category 2A Oils – Novice

Category 2B Oils – Experienced

Category 2C Other Media – Novice

Category 2D Other Media – Experienced

Category 2E Advanced – All Media

3. *CRAFT*

Category 3A Textile & Fibre (eg. knitting, decoupage, etc)

Category 3B Needlework (Works produced with a needle)

Category 3C Ceramics/Glass

Category 3D Wood

Veterans of Australian Peacekeeping or Peacemaking Missions.

All spouses, widows and widowers, and children of the above aged 18 years & over.

Children who are Department of Veterans' Affairs beneficiaries; this includes Veterans' Children Education Scheme recipients.

The work of a deceased member of the ex-service community may be entered by family or a friend (acknowledging the name of the original artist/author).

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

SPORT ~ BREAKING NEWS

The **BIG** question being asked after the OE-M vs GEELONG cricket match is who did what to who and by how much

For the uninformed there was a “cricket” match recently between Outer Eastern Melbourne and Geelong Sub Branches held on the beach at Ocean Grove.

Both Teams turned up suitably attired. OE-M, captained by Rob Huggan, turned up in lime-candy shirts emblazoned boldly in gold with “Huggan’s Heroes”. Geelong resplendent in singlets and boardies.



The match began prior to lunch when Geelong President Sully lost the toss, contrary to prior instruc-

tions, and his Team was sent in to bat. Something about the special “commemorative” coin his skipper had given him!

The day progressed and moved on to the afternoon when OE-M went in to bat on a “sticky” wicket, due to the incoming tide. It was a credit to OE-M batters that they pushed on regardless of the fact the



wicket was actually under water.

Overall, to the great mirth of all present, and anyone else on the

beach that day, the contest was hard fought in true Digger fashion with much encouragement provided by the ladies who also featured strongly in supporting their battle weary boys.

As to the final score; your *Editor* must tread with some caution. Claims, allegations and “legal” threats have been made and some “outrageous” statements made about some of the members involved in this clash.



Such is life ... when you’re a bunch of Vietnam vets out for a day with your families to have a bit of fun and a laugh.

One wonders if this is the small beginning to a bigger Saigon Tea Cup across Victoria?

MOBILE PHONE TELEMARKETING

Don’t we all “love” those nuisance calls made to our phones.

Well, read on, as we are now to be harassed on our mobile phones as well as our land lines.

NOTE: Mobile Phone Numbers Go Public from April 2009.

NOTE: all mobile phone numbers are being released to telemarketing companies and you will start to receive sale calls.

YOU WILL BE CHARGED FOR THESE CALLS

Log on to <https://www.donotcall.gov.au/> where you can enter your phone numbers to put an end to telemarketing calls.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

Notice Board

The *Notice Board* is intended to be similar to those you see in other Veteran publications and can include personal notices such as *Wanted to find, Reunions, get togethers, hobby related matters etc.*

The VVAA Victoria Branch President retains the right to refuse acceptance of any notice that does not accord with the aims and objectives of the VVAA.

Please forward your notices to the State Office or Email to 'Editor VVAVIC@vvaavic.org.au'.

Looking for information: Nathan Butt is looking for information about his father **Peter Thomas BUTT** C Coy. 8RAR SVN 69/70. Nathan's dad Peter died approx. 15 years ago and Nathan is anxious to learn more about his Dad's role in SVN. Anyone who knew Peter BUTT or can assist, please contact Nathan on Mob: 0402 443 699 or email: southozzy83@hotmail.com.

Basic Pensions Course ~ Bendigo
12, 13 & 14 May (Note this is a 3 day course)

Basic Welfare Course ~ Bendigo
12, 13 & 14 May (Note this is also a 3 day course)

The courses are being run concurrently over the 3 days and there is room on both courses for anyone who wishes to participate.

To register interest in these courses please contact VVCS Mary Varga at Sale on 5143 1633.

CHEAPER TRAVEL FOR SENIORS

If you have a state seniors card you can now travel around Australia for less. Previously, state government issued seniors cards only provided concessions in the state of issue. The Australian government has provided funding for a *National Transport Concession Scheme*. Concessions will vary from state to state but generally provide for discounted travel on public transport in metropolitan areas.

The new arrangements have started in NSW, Victoria, SA, Tasmania, Queensland, Act and NT. Discussions with the Western Australian Government are continuing. There are no changes to concessions provided to holders of the Pensioner concession Card, Commonwealth Seniors Health Card or Repatriation White or gold cards.

The eligibility criteria for the state seniors card varies from state to state but generally age and employment status are considered. Eligibility for the Seniors Card is not means tested.

For more information on how the card works visit www.seniorcard.com.au. You can apply to the state government for the seniors card which will automatically entitle you to concessions under the *National Transport concession Scheme*.

Gunners & Grocers Tour of Vietnam

Hi Peter

I'm ex ARA 1967 - 1987 (Army no: 423737) and ARes 1987 - 2001 (1 Training Group) and served in HQ AFV in 1968 -69 and am a member of the RAASC Vietnam Veterans Association.

In **August 2009**, I'm leading the ***Gunners and Grocers tour to Vietnam***, which some of your members might be interested in joining.

The tour is fully inclusive, escorted and four/five star all the way; a highlight being a visit to Nui Dat and the Long Tan Cross on 18 August. I know there are numerous Veterans tours to Vietnam, however, all are different and tailored to different needs and organisations. This tour, although designed for Vietnam Veterans, has been tailored to anyone who has an interest in the history and culture of this fascinating country. It is particularly suitable for couples. The accommodation in Vietnam is first class as you can see from the itinerary.

I'm planning on a group of around 25 and at this stage have 18 definite. It would be great if you could provide a bit of publicity either on your website or in relevant newsletters.

Best wishes

Phil

PR & MP Brookes

Telephone: 61 7 3341 2732

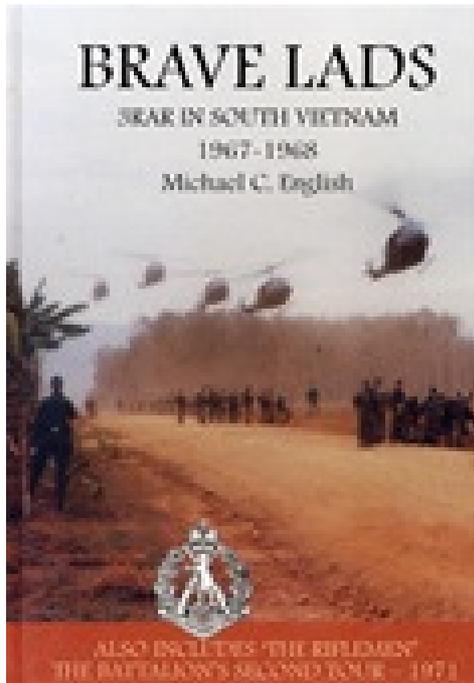
Mobile: 0418 719 166

Email: brookes1@bigpond.net.au

Fax: 61 7 3341 2735

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

BOOKS



BRAVE LADS

The 3RAR TOUR OF DUTY IN SOUTH VIETNAM 1967-1968

'*Brave Lads*' is a long-awaited unit history that fills a gap in the Australian military experience in South Vietnam.

The Third Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR) first served in Vietnam in 1968 and later had a second tour of duty in 1971.

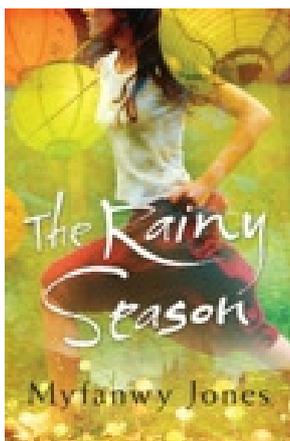
In 1968 3RAR was based at Phuoc Tuy Province but also operated outside their area of operation as the need dictated. The unit fought in the Tet Offensive in early 1968 and later operated in the Long Hai Hills where it sustained many casualties as a result of mines.

In May-June of that year, the battalion successfully held off several determined enemy attacks at Fire Support Base 'Balmoral', and with the Australian military commitment at its height, the battalion continued its active patrolling and ambushing at a high level of activity.

Men lost due to illness or wounds, or for any other reason, were not usually replaced, which placed a strain on those soldiers still serving on operation. In the second tour (1971) the battalion again encountered problems, but despite that, the unit showed a high degree of professionalism in its actions against an ever-aggressive and sometimes elusive enemy.

This history pays tribute to the Brave Lads of 3RAR in their tumultuous year in Vietnam where hard work and ever-present danger, were constant companions.

This is actually a compilation of two books in one.. The first title "Brave Lads" is a new publication, the second "The Riflemen: A History of the 3RAR Second Tour of Duty in Vietnam" was first published in 1999.



"I have just had my first novel, *The Rainy Season*, published by Penguin Books. It is about a young woman who goes to Vietnam in the mid-1990s in search of answers about her veteran father who abandoned the family after the war. It is about the long reach of war, about love, loss and healing." – the author Myfanwy Jones.

Seemingly abandoned by her Vietnam vet father when she was five, Ella has been brought up by her alcoholic mother. When, following a confusing relationship break-up, she travels to Vietnam to confront her father's past, she's drawn into the chaotic social life of Saigon's ex-pat community. It's 1994:

the Clinton administration has just lifted the 19-year economic embargo on Vietnam, ostensibly in return for the fullest possible account for Americans held as prisoners of war (POW) or missing in action (MIA). For Ella, the talk of MIAs heightens her conflicting feelings about her father.

The Rainy Season is successful on many levels. Primarily, it's the story of a young woman coming to terms with her feelings of rejection and gaining a sense of herself; but it's also a vivid picture of expatriate life, the exuberance and recklessness of youth, a tortured country coming to terms with change, and the agony of the once-young fighters who were largely reviled or unacknowledged when they got home. Finally, it is a vibrant description of a lively, chaotic and contradictory city and culture. A wonderful achievement.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health

Bigger, Better and Moving to a New Home

Following several years of growth in staff numbers and research projects, the Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health (ACPMH) in Melbourne is preparing to move to new and larger premises.

While the move takes the ACPMH from the Austin Repatriation Hospital in Heidelberg, the Centre's home since its inception, the ACPMH will continue to work closely with the Departments of Veterans' Affairs and Defence in all aspects of veterans' mental health – from recruitment through to transitioning from combat to life as a civilian and a veteran, according to the Centre's Director, Professor Mark Creamer.

"ACPMH remains deeply committed to improving mental health outcomes for veterans and their families. The new premises, located closer to the city

centre and the University of Melbourne, will consolidate the position of ACPMH as the leading centre in Australia for policy advice, research and training in the field of posttraumatic mental health," he said.

"There has never been a time when so much attention has been focused on mental health effects of trauma, both in civilians and in the defence forces. The move will allow us to grow and to increase our work on the prevention, recognition and treatment of these disabling problems and diagnosis of PTSD. We expect this growth will provide benefits to all our stakeholders, including the veteran community, to whom we owe so much."

New details: Level 1, 340 Albert Street, East Melbourne, VIC 3002

Tel: (03) 9936 5100; Fax: (03) 9936 5199; Email and website unchanged

Grass Roots Welfare Presentations Program Kicks Off

After approval from the State Council to conduct welfare presentations across the state was given at State Council in Traralgon, planning for the first two presentations in Hamilton and Warrnambool on 26 and 27 May respectively are well advanced.

Warrnambool Sub-Branch is hosting the first two presentations, and it is intended to involve the nearest Sub-Branch to each presentation in the planning and public relations activities.

John Ockwell is managing the Public Relations effort in the lead up to the presentations, including a press release that also focuses on the Warrnambool Sub-Branch, approaches to local radio and television stations, engagement of local councils and community groups.

The presentations will be open to all veterans and their partners, and the response from other ESO's that have been approached to see if they have an interest in having their profile included at the venues has been encouraging.

After the first two presentations, it is planned to roll out the welfare message to other locations including Bairnsdale/Lakes Entrance, Wangaratta, Albury-Wodonga, Mildura, Horsham, Stawell or Ararat and perhaps Colac.

It is also intended to conduct presentations across the border in Merimbula, Mount Gambier and Tocumwal, the latter in the lead up to the November State Council. The dates for these presentations will be advised when known.

--- A 97-year-old man goes into his doctor's office and says, "Doc, I want my sex drive lowered." "Sir," replied the doctor, "you're 97 Don't you think your sex drive is all in your head?" "You're damned right it is!" replied the old man. "That's why I want it lowered!"

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VVCS GROUP PROGRAMS

Anger Management

The aim of this program is to improve the quality of life of participants by assisting them to take control of their anger and to learn positive stress management and coping strategies. Topics covered in the program include:

- ★ understanding anger and aggression
- ★ understanding, monitoring and learning strategies to reduce physiological arousal
- ★ identifying triggers and learning when to use appropriate strategies
- ★ the impact of aggressive behaviours on quality of life, including relationships

Relationships

Loving relationships can at times be taken for granted leaving a feeling of something missing. This program is designed for emotionally committed couples who want that something back. The program aims to improve the quality of relationships through development of skills to strengthen emotional ties; develop greater mutual appreciation; communicate more effectively and share goals for the future.

Recommended for: Veterans, peacekeepers, eligible current serving ADF members and their partners.

Outreach Heart Health

Veterans and peacekeepers living in rural, remote and outer metropolitan areas can access the Heart health Program via a correspondence version. It has similar support to the group program. Participants are supported by their general practitioner and a coach who guide participants through the program. The support team conduct fortnightly sessions via the phone with you and will tailor a program specifically for you.

Time Indication: 52 Weeks

Recommended For: Veterans and peacekeepers, once only.

Lifestyle Management

This residential course is designed for veterans and their partners. The program covers strategies to improve your lifestyle and to assist you to manage stress. It may include relaxation and stress management, practical advice on health, strategies to identify and manage anger, problem solving and communication skills.

Take time out and spend some quality time together. A great opportunity to expand support and friendship networks.

Recommended for: Veterans, peacekeepers, eligible current serving ADF members and their partners

Depression and Anxiety

DEPRESSION: This program is available for veterans and their partners who have been diagnosed with depression and experience some anxiety symptoms. Topics include managing negative thinking, developing self-awareness, lowering physiological arousal and stress and maintaining motivation.

ANXIETY: Stress is a normal part of life but some people experience excessive worry, irritability, apprehension, restlessness, feel on edge or find that it impacts on their ability to get to sleep. This program will explore various relaxation methods and helps to develop more effective coping strategies.

NOTE: These programs may be combined into one at some locations.

Changing the Mix

The *Changing the Mix - Alcohol Correspondence Program* is a self-paced program that will give you the skills to change your drinking patterns from the comfort and privacy of your own home, anywhere in Australia.

The program is delivered via correspondence with the modules sent to participants. Participants complete the modules, monitor their drinking and assess their progress with the support of the CTM team.

To find out more information or to register for this health program call the CIM team on 1800 1808 68.

Recommended For: All Australian veterans, peacekeepers, their partners, adult sons & daughters of Vietnam veterans, eligible members of the AUF and DVA gold card holders.

Programs for Partners and Sons & Daughters

WCS offers programs designed specifically for veterans' partners and sons and daughters.

Partners' programs include:

- ★ Partners' Self-Care Workshops including sessions on understanding PTSD, anger management, self care strategies, self esteem
- ★ Caring for the carer
- ★ Partners of veterans residential program (only at selected centres)

Sons & daughters of Vietnam veterans programs include:

- ★ Workshops on topics including stress and anger management, self esteem, communication & conflict resolution
- ★ Anger Management
- ★ Discovering Resilience

Other Programmes include:

- ★ **HEART HEALTH**
Increase your physical health & wellbeing
- ★ **SLEEP & RELAXATION**
Tips on how to better your sleep patterns & improve relaxation
- ★ **STEPPING OUT**
Two day programme to help improve your transition from ADF to civilian life.

Register your interest by calling VVCS on 1800 011 046 or visit www.dva.gov.au/health/vvcs

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

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Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

RETIREMENT OF THE DHC-4 CARIBOU



The Minister for Defence, the Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP, announced the Government has accepted the reality that it will be necessary to bring forward the retirement of Australia's remaining thirteen DHC-4 Caribou aircraft to December 2009.

Caribou Retirement ... both words will strike at the hearts of hundreds of Reserve and Permanent personnel who have a deep affection for the aircraft.

The Caribou has a proud 45-year history of supporting Australian Defence Force operations, throughout the South West Pacific and in South East Asia, including active service in Vietnam, humanitarian relief in Kashmir, Cambodia and Papua New Guinea and also in support of peacekeeping operations in the Solomon Islands and East Timor.

The Royal Australian Air Force took delivery of its first Caribou in April 1964. In July of that year, three Caribous on ferry from Canada were diverted from Butterworth, Malaysia to deploy with the ever increasing Australian involvement in South Vietnam. As a consequence, they became the basis of the RAAF Transport Flight Vietnam (RTFV).

The light footprint Caribou quickly established its credentials as a highly capable Short Take-Off and Landing (STOL) tactical transport ideally suited to hot, humid tropical conditions of the region.

35 SQNs operational fleet, part of the 1st Australian Task Force at Vung Tau, used the callsign "Wallaby" and naturally enough acquired the nick name "Wallaby Airlines".



Flying daily operations, Caribous conducted mostly stores and personnel replenishment flights to isolated make shift strips, including the centres of Phan Rang, Nui Dat, Cam Ranh Bay, Da Nang and Tan Son Nhut in Saigon.

Project Air 8000 Phase 2 plans to deliver a Tactical Battlefield Airlift capability for the Royal Australian Air Force to replace the Caribou in 2013.

As an interim measure, a leased fleet of five additional Hawker Pacific B300 King Air aircraft will undertake light air transport tasks. These aircraft will be phased into the Townsville-based 38 Squadron as the Caribou is progressively retired toward the end of 2009.

"The interim King Air lease will help Air Force minimise the adverse workforce issues that result from allowing gaps to develop in transitioning aircraft fleets," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

"It is important that we honour the debt of gratitude we owe to the men and women who have supported the Caribou for so long by providing a means for them to maintain their skills and streamline their transition to a more modern and capable replacement aircraft."

The King Air is a modern aircraft with digital avionics, advanced displays and navigation systems and turbine engines, that will assist in transitioning 38 Squadron aircrew and technicians to the more modern aircraft types being considered under Project Air 8000 Phase 2.

"Our nation is extremely proud of the magnificent service that the Caribou has provided to the Royal Australian Air Force over the past five decades.

While there may be some who are saddened to hear of the Caribou's impending retirement, even the most vocal supporters of the Caribou will agree this decision is long overdue."

"The men and women of 38 Squadron have been waiting for many years to know what the future holds. Today's decision gives reassurance to them that the Government is very aware of both the challenges they face in trying to sustain such an ageing aircraft and the career management uncertainty that has been unnecessarily forced upon them after so many years of empty promises and inaction," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

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