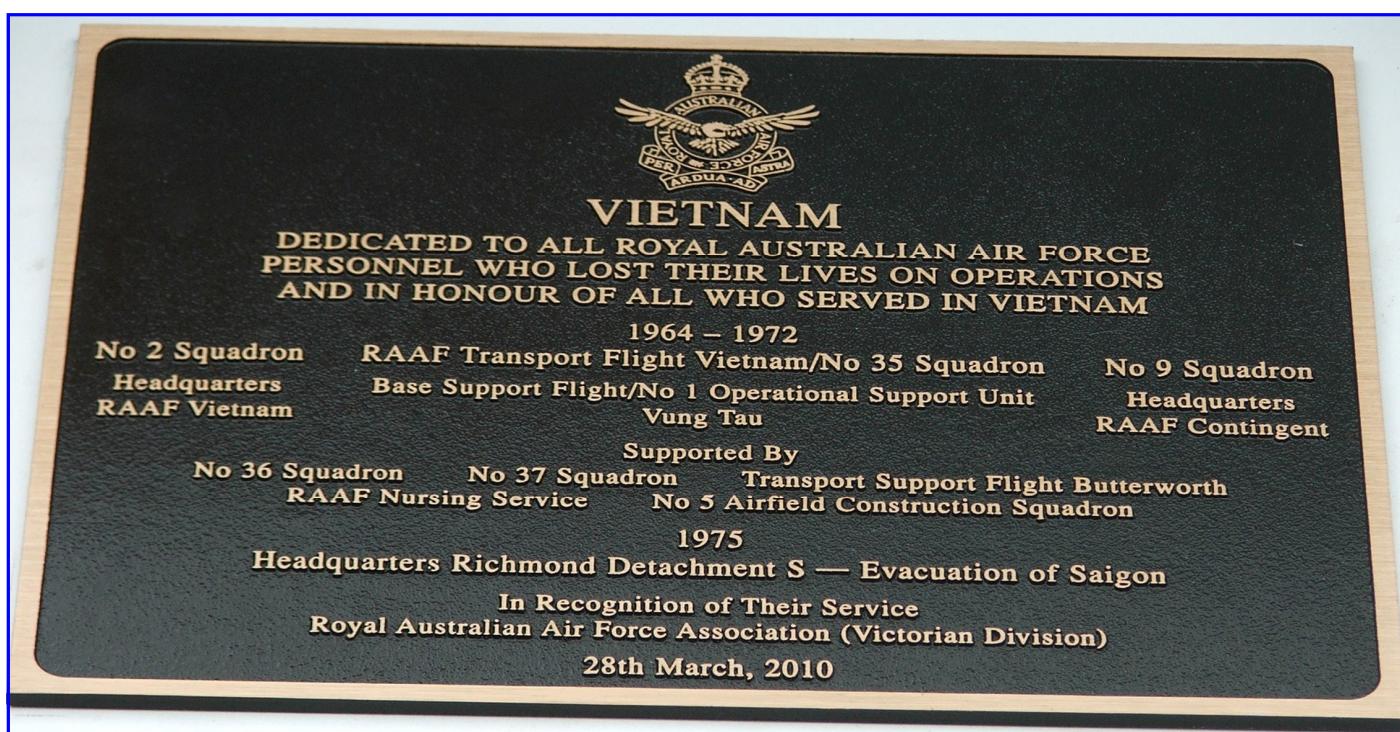


Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Victorian Branch Inc

FSB - VIC

**AUTUMN
EDITION
~ 2010**



AT LAST! RAAF VIETNAM SERVICE REMEMBERED

RAAF plaque unveiled at RAAF Base Pt Cook on Sunday 28th March is dedicated to those RAAF personnel who lost their lives during the Vietnam conflict and also honours all the RAAF personnel and units who served there. See Page 23 for more detail.

ALSO
IN
THIS
ISSUE:



- * State Manifesto
- * Fromelles Project
- * SWAC
- * Snapshots
- * National Servicemen's Memorial
- * MATES
- * DVA matters
- * Museum Info
- * Men's Health
- * Education Assistance
- * RAAF "Home at Last"
- * VVCS programs
- * Military Superannuation
- * Notice Board

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 first edition of FSB Vic. for 2010, I trust you find it interesting and informative. I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the new members of the State Branch; it is my hope that you will find mateship, support and assistance with any issues through your sub-branch. It is encouraging indeed to note that we continue to grow our membership, albeit it only marginally over the past year.

I wish to thank all those Sub-Branch committee members who have stood down this year-your endeavours on behalf of the Victorian Vietnam veteran family are greatly appreciated. To those members taking up committee positions for the first time and to those continuing on, thank you, I look forward to working with you all for the veterans. At state level, we have had a significant change, with two new Vice Presidents and a new Secretary, I welcome Sandy McCann, Jim Coghlan and Mike Coleman aboard.

I would be remiss without acknowledging the wonderful work of Peter Bright as State Secretary over the past three years. Peter was tireless in his endeavours to ensure that the members were kept informed of events and he worked hard to put in place effective and robust administrative systems-thanks Peter.

The next phase of the grass roots welfare presentations program is already underway and the schedule of presentations is provided in this newsletter. I commend the presentations to all members and their

partners, as our personal welfare circumstances and personal affairs can always do with a bit of a tune up.

As we enter 2010 we are faced with another federal election. We have already written to Victorian based Federal politicians in relation to the management of the DFRDB scheme, and no doubt other key issues from the recently approved manifesto will be brought to their attention as the year progresses. The manifesto is included in this newsletter.

It is sobering to think that in a few years we will be commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the deployment of Australian service personnel to South Vietnam-just where have the years gone? The elapsed time does raise some interesting questions, and in an open letter our Honorary Solicitor Peter Liefman posed the question; "what is there left to do"? There is no doubt that much discussion will take place in the near future about what important things we need to put in place, and what sort of legacy we want to leave.

One trend that is becoming increasingly noticeable to me are the continuing attempts to "dumb down" the status of military service and the gradual but determined efforts of policy makers and bureaucrats to equate military service and the hazards and conditions of military service to "community norms". We have heard, for instance, senior military personnel refer to battle field casualties as "injured". Com-

ing changes to military superannuation management will see union representatives and other non-military background appointees involved in managing government superannuation schemes, including DFRDB. Advocates will tell you that the onus of proof has clearly shifted away from the government to the veteran in cases before the VRG and AAT, and the once "veteran friendly" environment is all but gone. I see this assault on our identity and on the fairness of the "system" as one of our major issues going forward: we need to remain vigilant.

The National Vietnam Veterans Museum is a magnificent facility-it is an outstanding example of veterans achieving great things-and is now recognized nationally: if we continue to nurture it, we will ensure that we leave a wonderful legacy that will continue to tell our story long after we have gone. You have done much to help get the museum to where it is today, but there are serious challenges ahead, and I am looking to the membership to find the collective will and courage to renew and refresh our efforts to put the museum on a sound footing. Nationally, it is more of steady as she goes, and State Council will direct your delegates on how to vote in the upcoming national elections. We have a number of issues to take to the table, including the civilian nurse compensation issue. Good health, look after each other.

Bob Elworthy

FROM THE SECRETARY

I would like to thank the Council for my election as State Secretary again.

I am looking forward to working with the Executive and more importantly the Sub-Branchees.

I would like to publically thank Maurie Benson and the volunteers at the State Office and Len Barlow for his work on the Website.

The following are the State Council Meeting dates:-

- * 15th May 2010
Maryborough.
- * 31st July 2010
Murray Border.
- * 13th November 2010
Frankston.
- * 26 February 2011
Geelong.

Items for State Council must be lodged to the State Secretary three weeks prior to the meeting date.

All Sub Branch Reports are to be lodged in writing to the Secretary either prior to or on the day of the meeting.

Sub Branch Secretaries are urged to report the death of a veteran to the executive as soon as the occurrence is advised.

I look forward to the camaraderie.

Mike Coleman,
State Secretary.

STATE EXECUTIVE/COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The VVAA Victorian State Branch has been serving the veteran community in Victoria for the past 25 years and has a creditable list of achievements that have directly benefitted Vietnam Veterans and their families in this state.

Those milestones have been reached as a result of strong membership numbers and support and a team of people who have stepped up to the plate and provided exceptional leadership.

To continue that process, as we must, your Victorian State Branch is seeking nominations for Executive/Committee positions to be decided at the next AGM in November this year.

If you believe you have the skills, experience and time to serve on the State Executive, please contact the State Secretary Mike Coleman on email at secretary@vvaavic.org.au.

JUST HOW OLD ARE WE? ~ Post printing, VVAA Vic 25 years

The State Honour board commences at 1985, however there is clear evidence that a state branch was in existence for some years prior to 1985. It was intended to conduct 25th anniversary commemorations this year but based on evidence

coming in, that idea is no longer appropriate, and we are looking to confirm the exact year in which the state branch was formed and then to look at what might be appropriate to mark the occasion later in the year. If any of you old timers out there have information on the 1980-85 period please contact Maurie Benson urgently so that we can get the correct information together. At the very least we will probably need to adjust the honour board to reflect pre 1985 state executives.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VVAA VICTORIAN STATE BRANCH MANIFESTO

Ratified at 14 Nov 09 State Council Meeting (Tocumwal)

Disability Payments Treated the same as Federally Funded Pensions

Ensure that all disability payments are indexed the same as other Federally funded pensions and are included in pension indexation rounds, and in any other lump sum increases that are applied to other Federally funded pension payments.

Disability Payments - Maintenance of Value

Ensure that the value of all levels of disability payments (general rate increments, intermediate rate, special (TPI) rate and EDA rate) are maintained through the continued application of the most beneficial indexation formula.

Veteran Aged Care

Government act immediately to secure and oversee the provision of aged care facilities for Veterans, and provide assistance to Veterans to meet the cost of obtaining retirement village type accommodation.

Mental Health – Condition Acceptance Procedures and Funding

Provide better and simplified mental health assessment, treatment, and compensation regimes, including improving and simplifying psychiatric condition acceptance procedures.

Provide adequate funding to ensure eligible Veterans have timely access to mental health professionals, mental health programs and facilities, including specialist hospital treatment.

Defence Superannuation Fairly Indexed

Immediately abandon the CPI linked indexation of Defence Superannuation payments and apply future increases based on the greater of the increases of the CPI index or MTAWE.

BEST Funding

Ensure that adequate BEST funding is provided to meet, at least, all of the costs of operating the Regional Veterans Centre Project in Victoria.

Pharmaceuticals

Provide free pharmaceutical services for entitled Veterans

Complementary Medicine and Health Services

Provide free access to all complementary medicine and health services for eligible veterans.

Partner Carer Gold Card Entitlements

Extend gold card entitlements to Carer partners of Gold Card holders.

Funeral Benefit

Funeral benefit currently payable under VEA be increased to the same level available to other Veterans under MRCA.

Counselling Access

Remove time limits for access to VVCS Counselling Services for divorcees.

Role of Carers

Give proper recognition to the role of Carers of Vietnam Veterans.

Provide funding and resources to allow access to community health facilities and adequate respite breaks.

Extend Education Support Criteria

Extend eligibility criteria for education support to include eligible Veterans on the General or Intermediate Rate of disability compensation.

Legal Aid

Provide the same legal aid service level through State Legal Aid commissions to Vietnam Veterans in all States irrespective of the case.

Retrospective Awards

Continue reviews into the lack of bravery awards made to Vietnam Conflict service personnel with the aim of retrospectively making appropriate awards, including allowing foreign awards to be recognized.

Broaden the award of active service medals to include personnel who were engaged in certain logistic support and evacuation operations.

War Graves

Maintain as official war graves, the graves of all Vietnam Veterans who died on active service and are buried in Australia, irrespective of whether the funeral was conducted privately or with Military Honours.

Voluntary Work

Acknowledge the value of TPI Veterans undertaking voluntary work, and ensure that voluntary work is not considered in the assessment of a Veteran's eligibility to any compensation or pension payments.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

WELFARE IN ACTION

We would like to pass on our sincere "thank you" to the generous support of the VVAA following the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria.

Our family have now moved into a new home just before Christmas 2009. Photos tell the story.

Many Thanks.

John & Carmel Brock.

Diamond Valley Vietnam Veterans (DVIETS).

A BUSH FIRE SUPPORT THANK YOU



Sub Branch Presidents at State Conference Bendigo February 2010 with their Certificates of Appreciation for a job well done during the 2009 Bush Fire season.

VVAA Victorian Sub Branches and members can be justifiably proud of the manner in which they rallied to help mates in need.



THANKS LADIES

The State Branch President will attend the Waverley RSL Ladies Auxiliary meeting in June or July to present a plaque on behalf of the State Branch membership as thanks for the donations that the ladies auxiliary have made to the Branch.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

S N A P S H O T S

VOLUNTEER GRANTS 2009: STATE BRANCH UNSUCCESSFUL

We have been advised by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, that our application for funding under the 2009 Volunteer Grants scheme has been unsuccessful. State had applied for \$2000 to assist with welfare work in remote areas; over 17,500 grant applications were submitted. We'll have a go again in the 2010 Grant scheme.

You win Some, You Lose Some

Bob Elworthy

VICTORIAN TPI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT RETIRES

John Vincent has retired from the presidency of the Victorian TPI Association for personal reasons.

John has successfully led something of a renaissance within TPI Victoria and has been outspoken on a wide range of veteran issues. He has been keen to cement relationships with VVAA Victoria and has been a good ally for us in attempts to bring the wider veteran community closer together.

John was acknowledged for his work for veterans with the award of the OAM in 2009. John retains his membership of the DViets, and we wish him well in his future endeavours.

TPIs EXEMPT FROM CENTRELINK MEDICAL REVIEWS

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs has announced that from 10 March 2010, veteran pensioners assessed as TPI will be exempt from the need to undergo Centrelink medical reviews to access a Disability Support Pension.

This will mean that TPI's will no longer need to undergo repeated Job Capacity Assessments to access and retain their disability Support Pension.

This change immediately assists around 1100 TPI's with the potential to assist more in the future. DVA and Centrelink are also now sharing data to help reduce the risk of overpayments for the more than 17500 pensioners on both DVA and Centrelink payments.

DEFENCE ASBESTOS EXPOSURE EVALUATION

The DAESS is open to current and former ADF members who suspect that they may have been exposed to asbestos as a result of their service. To participate in the scheme, call the Defence Asbestos Hotline on 1800 000655 to register your details. When you register you will be given an asbestos registration number to be used when making assessment appointments.

After you register you will receive a letter advising how to arrange an assessment with Health Services Australia. Vehicle allowance is payable if you travel more than 50K to attend an assessment. More information can be found on the DVA Website.

DVA CONTACTS

DVA is moving to a new standard mailing **address** across the nation. All **mail** sent to DVA can now be addressed to:

GPO Box 9998,

IN YOUR CAPITAL CITY.

This change will ensure a more efficient and effective mailing system for all.

Mail sent to old post office addresses will still arrive safely.

General enquiries:

Telephone: 133 254

Regional callers 1800 555 254

Nearest VAN Office:

1300 55 1918

Email:

GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au

Warning: This email facility to DVA may not be secure. Do not use this link to send DVA personal information.

Provider enquiry numbers:

Metropolitan areas:

1300 550 457

Non-metropolitan areas:

1800 550 457

Transport bookings:

Metropolitan areas:

1300 550 455

Non-metropolitan areas:

1800 550 455

For other information go to the DVA web site www.dva.gov.au.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

EDUCATION ASSISTANCE (AVCAT)

Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust (AVCAT) is the organisation that administers the **Veterans Children Education Scheme (VCES)** and more recently, they have changed their contact details.

New *contact details* are:

Mark Newell – Executive Officer AVCAT

Telephone: (02) 9213 7988

Email: avcat@dva.gov.au.

Please note that anyone with any enquiries regarding VCES should first contact AVCAT who administer the VCES Scheme.

You may from time to time receive information through your Sub-Branes regarding educational scholarships for children/grandchildren of veterans.

In applying for education assistance you need to be aware that:

- ★ Those students who are undertaking part-time tertiary study and have at least 15 hours of teacher contact (incl field work) can apply.
- ★ Indentured apprentices are not eligible as they are being paid for work when they are not at “school”.

NEW VETERANS' REVIEW BOARD HEAD

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Alan Griffin has announced that Doug Humphreys has been appointed as the Principal Member of the Veterans' Review Board for five years, beginning on 22 March.

The Veterans' Review Board is an independent tribunal that reviews decisions or determinations of the Repatriation and Military Rehabilitation & Compensation Commissions. The Veterans' Review Board also reviews determinations of the Service Chiefs of the Navy, Army and Air Force in relation to rehabilitation for serving members of the Defence Force.

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (NAC)

The NAC provides independent advice to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs on the needs of the veteran community and ways that these can be addressed through the VVCS.

The NAC also supports the VVCS to develop programs and service delivery arrangements.

The Chair of the NAC has direct access to the Minister.

Membership:

Dr Tony Austin AM	Chairman
Martin Carr	Peacekeeper
Bronwyn Fullick	Partners and families
Prof. Malcolm Battersby	Psychiatrist
Tim McCombe OAM	Veteran
John Ryan OAM	Veteran
Bob Elworthy	Veteran
Tracey Negus	Daughter of Veteran
Dr David Monash	GP

Ex Officio Members:

National Manager	VVCS
Prof. Mark Creamer	Head ACPMH
Repatriation Commissioner	
Defence Community Organisation Representative.	

APPOINTMENT OF NEW REPATRIATION COMMISSIONER

Major General Mark Kelly AO, former Commander of Australian Forces in the Middle East, has been appointed as the new Repatriation Commissioner.

Major General Kelly graduated from the Royal Military College Duntroon in 1978 with the Sword of Honour and has since commanded at every level in the Australian Army. His operational experience includes service with the Commonwealth Monitoring Force in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia, Chief of Staff of INTERFET during Operation Stabilise in East Timor, and Commander Joint Task Force 633 in the Middle East Area of Operations and Afghanistan, concluding on 15 January this year.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE ORGANISATION AND VETERANS

Introduction

Defence is recognised as one of the largest employers in Australia. In recognition of Defence's contribution to the Nation numerous suppliers of products and services provide tailored products to Defence personnel as a goodwill gesture. This advice contains eligibility criteria and links to products and services that are available to Defence members including, ADF members, Defence civilians, and Defence contractors.

Some products are available to Retired ADF members and Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Gold and White Card recipients. Spouses of eligible persons may also take advantage of some products and services.

The information is a guide only. Not all products and services are available to all members; certain eligibility criteria may apply (check the eligibility guide - below). There may also be special conditions applicable to the product or service that you are interested in, check with the provider. It is your responsibility to check with the product or service provider to ascertain if the product or service you are considering to purchase meets your requirements. Shop around before making a commitment to purchase. Suitable proof of identity may be requested at the time of purchase.

Eligibility Guide

This eligibility guide is provided as an indication only, it does not imply any priority for acceptance by the service provider. Look for these numbers in each section to see if you're eligible.

1. ADF full-time service (including Reservists on full-time service)
2. Retired ADF and/or ADF superannuants
3. ADF Reservists not on full-time service
4. Defence civilians
5. Defence contractors and their staff
6. As specified by the provider in their product description

Proof of Eligibility

The following forms of identification for eligibility are acceptable to the providers, provided the identification is current:

- * Defence ID Card for ADF full-time and Reserve members.
- * Defence ID Card for Defence civilians and Defence contractors.
- * ADF Superannuants – Yearly Statement from COM-SUPER.
- * Letter of introduction from Unit/Ship administration on official departmental letterhead (only to be used for personnel that have an out of date identity card).
- * DVA Gold or White Card.

WebPages and Links

Information about these products and services is available on the DPSA web site on both the DEFWEB and Internet:

- * DEFWEB
– visit (<http://defweb.cbr.defence.gov.au/dpsa/>)
- * INTERNET
– visit (<http://www.defence.gov.au/dpe/dpsa/>)

Download Information

This document may be downloaded from either of these sites and reproduced for your personal use or for distribution to other members of Defence and Veterans.

Call Centres

Some providers use call centres to manage customer service requirements. When contacting providers using call centres, explain fully what product you wish information about. Remember that call centre operators do not necessarily have in-depth knowledge about the products or services that the call centre handles on behalf of their clients.

HOAX MESSAGE ~ IGNORE

MOBILE PHONE NUMBERS GO PUBLIC

This is for Australian phone numbers.

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

So, you want to put an end to telemarketing calls.

Don't just delete those calls otherwise you will find that you have been signed up for all sorts of extra services that you didn't want or know about. Simply register at <https://www.donotcall.gov.au/>. You can add more than one number on the DONOTCALL Register, but remember to renew your registration yearly. There is no charge for this service.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

MILITARY SUPERANNUATION PENSION

Speech: Senator Steve Fielding, Parliament House, Canberra, November 18 2009

Last week on Remembrance Day we stood for a minute's silence to remember those Australians who died fighting to protect the values and freedoms which we so dearly cherish. The soldiers we remembered were brave individuals who each made the biggest sacrifice one can ever make: the sacrifice of their own lives for the sake of their country. Each day, thousands of Australian men and women put themselves in harm's way and put their lives at risk to keep us safe and secure. It is just another reason why service in the Australian Defence forces is not just some kind of ordinary job but a unique service which deserves special recognition as well as our full support and respect.

I was speaking recently with David Jamison, the National President of the Defence Force Welfare Association, and he had something to say that struck a real chord with me. He said that service in the ADF was unique because when you sign up to the ADF you effectively sign away your human rights. For example, when you sign up to the ADF, you give the state or the nation the authority to send you overseas into lethal situations where the outcome in extreme cases can be certain death. A soldier does not have the right to refuse a dangerous order that will put them in harm's way. They must follow through with their orders, even when they know that this may mean they will never see their family or friends again. It is an incredible situation to put yourself in and it takes incredible people to do this. And, therefore, given these circumstances and the uniqueness of this, we as a society have an obligation to provide the members of the ADF with special benefits above and beyond what would ordinarily be provided to others.

However, now it seems that we are doing the exact opposite of this; and nowhere is this more evident than in the case of the military superannuation pension schemes. The Rudd government likes to say the right things and acknowledge that service in the ADF is unique, but, quite frankly, for a long time both sides of parliament have paid lip-service to many veterans' issues.

Only recently we had the Matthews review, which looked at the pension indexation arrangements in the Australian government civilian and military superannuation schemes. There was much hope that this report would correct the failings of previous governments and recommend a more appropriate indexation arrangement for the following military superannuation pensions:

- * the Defence Force Retirement Benefit Scheme (DFRB);
- * the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefit Scheme (DFRDB); and
- * the Military Superannuation Benefits Scheme (MSBS).

After all, this report was delivered to the Rudd government back in December 2008, and it was only tabled in parliament in September 2009. So there was much expectation that the government was working its way through the issues during this time.

At the moment the current indexation arrangements are hopelessly inadequate and condemn our military pensioners to fall further behind rising community income standards. The Defence force and superannuation pensions are only indexed to

CPI, which, as anyone can tell you, is not an accurate measure of the increases in cost-of-living expenses. This was even accepted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which said:

The CPI is not a purchasing power or cost-of-living measure.

CPI is just a measure of changes in the price of a basket of goods and services and should not be used as the only measure to index the military pensions of our former servicemen and servicewomen. This is an outdated way to index pension payments and must be fixed immediately because at the moment the true value of those military pensions is falling compared to rising incomes of the general population.

Even the government has admitted that CPI is not an appropriate measure for indexing the pension and has reformed other government pensions which were previously indexed to the CPI. This includes:

- * the age pension
- * the wife pension
- * the disability support pension
- * the widow's pension parenting payment
- * the carer payment
- * the services pension
- * the partner service pension
- * the income support pension
- * the war widow's pension

In the 2008 budget the government recognised that many seniors were concerned that their cost of living may rise faster than the consumer price index and to address this concern the government announced:

... the Government will guarantee that the Age Pension will increase in line with the higher of the consumer price index, increases in male total average weekly earnings or the living cost index for age pensioner households. These arrangements will ensure that the Age Pension keeps pace with increases in prices and improvements in community living standards.

Why them and not our veterans? Again, other parts of the community received greater attention than those who have willingly put themselves in harm's way at the direction of successive Australian governments.

These pension payments are now all linked to the average wage so that they do not slip below a certain percentage of any increase in the average wage. This method of indexation makes a lot more sense and it is ridiculous that the government is refusing to budge and do the same thing when it comes to military pensions.

The current indexation arrangements have meant that military superannuation pensions are 35 per cent lower than they would have been if they were linked to a wage based indexation, such as the male total average weekly earnings, 20 years ago. Thirty-five per cent works out to be an enormous amount of money and it would make a real difference to veterans. By not changing it, not only does it seriously erode the standard of living for people relying on these payments but it also sends a terrible message that this is the way the government treats those people who have given their all for Australia.

We are talking here about an issue of basic equity. It is about giving a fair go to those Australians who *Cont'd next page*

MILITARY SUPERANNUATION PENSION (cont'd)

From previous page

have put their lives on the line. Why should politicians have their superannuation payments indexed more generously than our veterans? Why should federal court judges have their pension payments indexed to the increases in judicial salaries but military personnel have their payments linked only to CPI? Why does the government believe veterans should be worse off compared to others! How does this possibly make any sense? Clearly the sensible thing is for military superannuation pensions to keep pace with community income standards, so why is the government being so stubborn on this issue?

This issue of proper indexation for military superannuation pensions has already been dealt with by numerous Senate inquiries and yet we still see no change whatsoever on this front. Even as recently as last year the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs concluded:

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

What we do not want to see is another report or inquiry on this issue. Instead we want to see concrete action taken by the government to fix this disparity once and for all. Back in 2007, the Labor Party promised to fix this issue if it were elected to government. The Labor Party, in a letter to the Defence Force Welfare Association, said the following:

Labor believes that Defence superannuation is a vital factor in the nation's ability to recruit and retain talented and capable people for the Australian Defence Force. It is also a key entitlement for ex-service personnel. ...there is clearly much more to be done to address a range of longstanding issues in Defence superannuation. Issues of great concern to the Defence and ex-service community include indexation.

It is now two years on and the thousands of people who depend upon their military superannuation pensions are still waiting. I know well that organisations such as the RSL, the De-

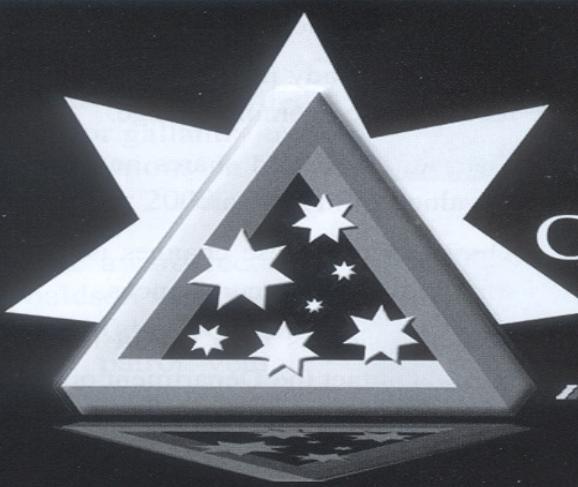
fence Force Welfare Association and the Australian Peace-keeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association have been battling hard on this issue and struggling to get their voices heard.

That is hardly the end of it. Veterans still have the same issue with the DFRDB scheme and those who want to commute their super to get a lump sum are having it calculated based on life tables from 1962 which results in a lower residual fortnightly payment than would be the case if up-to-date life tables were used. In fact, it gets even worse than that. DFRDB pension recipients who choose not to commute their lump sum have only that part of their pension that would have been paid if they had commuted indexed—that is, partial indexation.

The government is robbing its ex-service people by deducting more than they need to and then claiming that they cannot afford to do anything because they do not have the money. The government needs to stop its penny pinching and give proper reward to the thousands of Australians who have served this country so loyally.

Some people might think I am biased on this issue because I have a son who is currently serving in the Army, so I want to declare and make it perfectly clear that I certainly do have a personal interest in this debate. But my special interest is not as a father of a soldier; it is as an Australian citizen who actually gives a stuff about their fellow Australians giving tirelessly of themselves above and beyond the call of duty to protect me and my family.

I hate seeing something in our system which I think is so blatantly wrong, and this issue relating to the indexation of the military superannuation pension is one of those issues, especially when Labor has basically said they will do something about it. Let's put aside party politics and penny pinching and give our Defence personnel the outcome they truly deserve.



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MILITARY SUPERANNUATION PENSION

~ LETTER TO GOVERNMENT

10 February 2010

Letter to Victorian Federal Politicians

MILITARY SUPERANNUANTS CONTINUE TO BE UNFAIRLY TREATED

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

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

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

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

"It is hard to explain to Commonwealth superannuants why their pensions, to which they contributed dur-

ing their working life, should fall behind the pension increases of those who have generally not made provision for their retirement".

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

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

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

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

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

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

nuation pensions as is applied to almost all other Commonwealth payments, including MP's pensions.

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely

R W (Bob) Elworthy

President

Victorian State Branch

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia

ADF Service Records & Medical Records

Copies of your Service and Medical records are available. Some fees may be involved; check with the contacts below.

For copies of your or your **ancestor's service records**: <http://www.defence.gov.au/footer/contacts.htm#04>

For copies of your or your **ancestor's medical records**:

http://www.defence.gov.au/Army/CARO/HealthMedical_Records.asp

SERVICE RECORDS

Proof of identity or Next-of-Kin relationship is required and all requests require a signature. Due to privacy restrictions, specific regulations apply to the distribution of confidential personnel records.

Contact	Contact Details	Postal
Navy - Personnel Records RAN	Phone: +61 2 6266 5962 Fax: +61 2 6266 5851	Queanbeyan Annex 2, Department of Defence Canberra ACT 2600
Army - Central Army Records Office	Phone: +61 3 9282 5393 or +61 3 9282 6235 Fax: +61 3 9282 5434 E-mail: caro.hq@defence.gov.au	GPO Box 393 Melbourne VIC 3001
Air Force - Personnel Records RAAF	Phone: +61 2 6266 5965 Fax: +61 2 6266 5851	Queanbeyan Annex 2, Department of Defence Canberra ACT 2600
Historical service records – WWI and WW2 National Archives of Australia	Phone: 1300 886 881 E-mail: ww1prs@naa.gov.au http://www.naa.gov.au	

HEALTH/MEDICAL RECORDS

World War II:

Contact the Department of Veterans' Affairs
– 1800 555 254.

For details Post 1947:

Australian Defence Force Health Records - Army (ADFHR-A)
GPO Box 1932
MELBOURNE VIC 3001
Telephone Number: (03) 9282 4911
Facsimile Number: (03) 9282 5978

DVA TO CONTINUE AS SEPARATE AGENCY

VA101 Thursday, 17 December 2009

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, today reassured the veteran and ex-service community that the Government has no plans to merge the Department of Veterans' Affairs with other agencies.

"Consistent with our election platform, the Government remains committed to maintaining a separate and properly funded Department of Veterans' Affairs," Mr Griffin said.

"The Government understands that the needs of veterans and the ex-service community are unique. We rec-

ognise that delivering an appropriate level of service for this group requires a Department with a discrete budget and awareness of the special circumstances that exist within this community.

"Veterans should not be concerned by a recent announcement relating to the merger of agencies within the Human Services portfolio – my Department is not affected.

"The Department of Veterans Affairs will continue to work closely with both Centrelink and Medicare."

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VETERAN INDUCTED ONTO HONOUR ROLL OF WOMEN

Media release

From the Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs March 2010



Decorated veteran and leader in military nursing, Colonel Janice McCarthy, has been inducted onto the 10th Victorian Honour Roll of Women.

Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs, Tony Robinson said: "Since commencing her career in 1958 Colonel McCarthy has served her country and community

with tenacity, outstanding leadership, commitment and humility.

Colonel McCarthy's impressive career includes being the sole theatre nurse in the 110 bed 1st Australian Field Hospital at Vung Tau, Vietnam. During this time she not only managed the hospital's clinical team under horrific circumstances, but counselled and mentored staff new to war as well as being a great comfort to wounded soldiers.

"I admire the Prisoner of War (POW) army nurses like Vivian Bullwinkle and Betty Jeffrey," said Colonel McCarthy. "They coped with such difficulties and then came back and got on with their lives but never forgot how important it was to care for other veterans."

In 1999, Colonel McCarthy became

president of the Returned Soldiers League's (RSL) Nurses' Branch. She also became one of the first female presidents of the Seymour Legacy group.

Other roles Colonel McCarthy has held include president of the Seymour District Memorial Hospital Board; National President of the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps Association; Director of RSL Care; and veteran member of the 30th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan Commemorations Group.

For more information about Colonel McCarthy on the Victorian Honour Roll of Women visit www.women.org.au or for information on the Spirit of ANZAC Study Tour visit www.veterans.vic.gov.au

NEW REHABILITATION PROGRAM FOR STRESSED VETS

Chief of the Defence Force Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston recently announced that the ADF wants to ensure soldiers who are unwell are treated quickly.

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) is setting up a new rehabilitation program which it hopes will stop soldiers suffering from mental health problems from leaving the service.

The program will be headed up by David Morton, who has been managing a veterans' counselling service within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"We recognise that post-traumatic

stress disorder, depression and other mental health issues must be taken seriously," Air Chief Marshal Houston said.

"We also recognise that we have a duty of care to ensure early identification and the provision of treatment to allow these individuals to continue as valued members of Defence and the wider community."

Mental health program coordinators will also be recruited to establish regional teams in Darwin, Townsville, Melbourne and Brisbane.

A review of mental health care in the ADF last year by Professor David Dunt found resources and

staff were inadequate.

It also found that mental health problems were stigmatised in the ADF, and there were barriers to seeking health care.

Experts estimate that up to 10 per cent of combat veterans returning from the Middle East and Afghanistan may be suffering long-term mental health disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Around 1,550 soldiers are now deployed in Afghanistan, with another 850 also stationed in the Middle East.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

THE FREEDOM BELL OF FROMELLES PROJECT



“Don’t forget me Cobber” was the heartrending cry of a wounded Digger heard on the battlefields of Fromelles, France on 19 – 20 July 1916. The farm fields near Fromelles were the scenes of the AIF’s 5th Division’s first great battle on the Western Front and in 27 hours, 5553 of Australia’s finest lay dead or wounded on the battlefield due to the catastrophic blundering of an English General.

Thousands of Australia’s sons gave their lives to free the little town of the Nord-Pas-de-Calais and hundreds of men have no known graves. However recently in a field at Pheasant Wood near the Fromelles village, a mass grave was discovered and the bodies of almost 250 men are to be re-interred in a new cemetery at Fromelles during 2010.

When the grave site was discovered, the farmer immediately donated his land to the Australian War Grave Commission.

Madame Nathalie Braule, the current Fromelles Primary School Principal, brought all the children from the school to flower the area profusely where Australia’s lost sons were resting. She has led the way in honouring Australia’s fallen and not to be outdone the rest of the inhabitants of the little village flower the site grave regularly.

Alain Gaudet, a Canadian ex-1st Airborne Commando Group trooper now living in France is helping Vern Be-

chaz, an ex-Navy Vietnam Veteran living in Victoria Australia, to find out more about this little school called “Les Cobbers”. Alain in speaking to the principal elicited that the school is twinned with Camberwell Primary School in Victoria, Australia. However because of a lack of computer systems at their small school, the principal pointed out that they cannot communicate with their sister school in Camberwell. Alain also gleaned from Madame Braule that her greatest wish for “Les Cobbers” was to have an Australian bell to proudly ring in the start and close of the school day.

This is the reason why Vern and Alain have called this project “THE FREEDOM BELL OF FROMELLES” The Bell will be engraved with the symbols of Australia’s Armed Forces and the Commonwealth Coat of Arms and several plaques will acknowledge the support of Australians and those units who fought at the Battle of Fromelles.

We therefore appeal to the Ex-Service Organisation’s of Australia to help fund the casting of a 12” Bell and Plaques and for the engraving of the symbols onto the Bell. Briggs Marine of Carrum Downs, Victoria has been approached and is ready to start casting when funds are available. Surplus monies will be sent to France to help with the purchase of the schools computers system.

Vern together with his wife Catherine will be visiting “Les Cobbers” Primary School in May 2010 to take the Bell and Plaques along with gifts from Australia to present to the school and the children on behalf of the ESO’s, in appreciation of their efforts in honouring Australia’s fallen so they may be ready for the Dedication on 19 July 2010

Donations can be made by Bank Transfer – Cheque – Postal Order

All Donations should be made payable to:
“The Freedom Bell of Fromelles”

Please forwarded to either:

The Treasurer Southern Sounds Chorus 3 Nyora Cl. Frankston, Vic. 3199
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<u>Bank Transfer:</u> Bank: Westpac Branch: Karingal, Shopping Centre BSB: 033138 Acc. No.427622

Vern Bechaz 345 Stumpy Gully Road Balnarring Victoria 3926

Vern and Alain, in anticipation of your generosity thank you most sincerely.

“GOOD ON YA COBBER FOR YOUR DONATION”

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

NATIONAL SERVICE MEMORIAL



The **National Service Memorial** at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra will be dedicated on Wednesday 8th September 2010.

Approval has been given for a fountain set in its own precinct off the main entrance to the Australian War Memorial.

The Memorial honours the 212 National Servicemen



who died on active service – 2 in Borneo and 210 in Vietnam – and commemorates the 287,000 men called up between 1951 and 1972 for service in the Australian Navy, Army and Air Force.

For further detail:

Website: www.nashaustralia.org.au
 Email: nashosecretary@optusnet.com.au
 Mail: PO Box 6203
 LONG JETTY NSW 2261

RESEARCH WARNING ON HERBAL MEDICINE

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/herbal-remedies-could-be-deadly-says-forensic-pathologist-professor-roger-byard/story-e6fre6u-1225827809823>

MANY herbal medicines contain potentially lethal amounts of arsenic, mercury and lead and pose a serious danger if taken in large quantities, injected or combined with prescription drugs, an Adelaide researcher has found.

Adelaide University Professor Roger Byard, one of the state's most experienced forensic pathologists, has issued a warning to consumers about the potential dangers of herbal medicine after analysing a series of studies and research from around the world.

"There's a false perception that herbal remedies are safer than manufactured medicines, when in fact many contain potentially lethal concentrations of arsenic, mercury and lead," he said.

"These substances may cause serious illnesses, exacerbate pre-existing health problems or result in death, particularly if taken in excess or injected rather than ingested."

Professor Byard said one US study that found 251 Asian

herbal products found in American stores and identified arsenic in 36 of them, mercury in 35 and lead in 24 of the products and had the paper he produced published in the US-based *Journal of Forensic Sciences*.

There can also be fatal consequences when some herbal medicines interact with prescription drugs, Professor Byard said.

"As access to such products is largely unrestricted and many people do not tell their doctor they are taking herbal medicines for fear of ridicule, their contribution to death may not be fully appreciated during a standard autopsy," he said.

A herbal medicine known as Chan su, used to treat sore throats, boils and heart palpitations, is one of the worst offenders and can cause cardiac arrests or even comas, according to Professor Byard.

"Other side effects of herbal medicines can include liver, renal and cardiac failure, strokes, movement disorders, muscle weakness and seizures," Professor Byard said.

Please, tell your doctor what, if any, herbal or other medicines you take in addition to what he/she prescribes! It could save your life!

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM



The National Vietnam Veterans Museum brings to life exhibits depicting the period of Australia's longest war.

A vast display of weaponry, vehicles and equipment from all Services and participating nations.

Open Daily 10:00 am to 5:00pm
Closed Good Friday and Christmas Day

25 Veterans Drive
(Next to the airfield)
Newhaven Victoria
Australia 3925

Ph +61 3 5956 6400
Fax +61 3 5956 6406

Melway 632 F8



secretary@vietnamvetsmuseum.org
www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org

Entry Fees

Adults	\$9.00
Children U/15	\$5.00
Senior Citizens/Veterans	\$6.00
Families (2Ad + 2Ch)	\$20.00

Bus Groups

Organised Groups	\$5.00 per person
All School Groups	\$4.00 per person

Tour groups are welcome. Prior arrangement is desirable for groups over 10 to ensure sufficient qualified guides are available.

The Light and Sound Show

This attraction presents the story of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war. It will educate and entertain children of all ages, from 18 months to 85 years. An emotional ride through time.



Authentic Equipment and Weaponry

Includes helicopters, a Bell Sioux and a fully-armed Cobra Gunship. Platoon weapons, a Centurion Tank, 105mm Howitzer and a range of vehicles.



Displays

The museum has over 25,000 items of memorabilia, photographs and artefacts to complement major exhibits. An armoury of weapons used and a Research Library of books, newspaper articles and clippings are displayed.



Nui Dat Café and Merchandise Shop

A place to relax with a coffee or tea and a snack. While here take some time to browse through the merchandise for something to take home or for a friend.



Visit our Garden of Reflection - an area of hallowed ground dedicated to those fallen and afflicted from the Vietnam Campaign. A serene area which reinforces the Museum as being the spiritual home of Vietnam Veterans.

BADGE WEEK

Official VVAA Badges authorised for sale during Badge Week as approved at the State Conference, Toocumwal 14 November 2009. Badges are available from the Museum:

subbranch@vietnamvetsmuseum.org or

National Vietnam Veterans Museum, PO Box 318, San Remo Vic 3925



A



B



C

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

AT LAST! RAAF VIETNAM SERVICE REMEMBERED

A crowd of some 250 veterans, family and friends along with more than 30 members of the Vietnamese Community (many of them also veterans) witnessed the unveiling of a plaque at RAAF Base Pt Cook on Sunday 28th March.



Start of the Service

(Pic courtesy Rick Holmes)

The plaque is dedicated to those RAAF personnel who lost their lives during the Vietnam conflict and also honours all the RAAF personnel and units who served there. For many of the veterans, having the plaque at Pt Cook (the spiritual home of the Air Force) may be seen as acknowledgment (finally) by the RAAF of that service; albeit that the plaque was commissioned by the RAAAF Association

(Victorian Division). This was achieved following a request from the RAAF Vietnam Veterans Association (Vic). For others, it completes the journey since we are all now home, thanks to the return of our two MIAs late last year.



Vietnamese Veterans Representatives

(Pic courtesy Chick Merceica)

A more detailed coverage of this ceremony can be found on the :

RAAFA website –

www.raafavic.org.au

and the

RAAFVVA website
www.raafvva.org.au.



The RAAFVVA Plaque

(Pic courtesy Chick Merceica)

Included in the dignitaries attending the service was the State President, Bob Elworthy, pictured below who placed a wreath on behalf of the VVAA State membership.



VVAA Vic State President Bob Elworthy
(Pic courtesy of Ellen Scully)



Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

The Veteran Community Story Writing & Art Competition (SWAC)



Patron:

Maj Gen David J McLachlan AO
(1300 132 515)

Story Writing and Arts Competition 2009 Winners

The VVAA Victoria Prizes for photography were awarded to:

First Prize: Barry Pearce "Fire Mission-Vietnam 1971"

and

Runner -Up: David Anderson "Flags Flying"

VVAA Vic. provides and annual sponsorship of \$650 to the competition. Jim Coghlan has been our representative on the SWAC committee for some time now and we are looking for a replacement, so let's hear from anyone interested in being involved in this very worthy activity.

Copies of the competition book 'BRAVO' which contains all of the winning entries and contestants names is available from DVA.

What Is Butt Dust ???

This particular Sunday sermon... 'Dear Lord,' the minister began, with arms extended toward heaven and a rapturous look on his upturned face. 'Without you, we are but dust...' He would have continued but at that moment my very obedient daughter who was listening leaned over to me and asked quite audibly in her shrill little four year old girl voice, 'Mum, what is butt dust?'

HOAX MESSAGE

IGNORE

After abandoning his highly criticised call for US service personnel to pay their own insurance, President Obama had this to say:

Believe it or Not

"Look, it's an all volunteer force," Obama complained. "Nobody made these guys go to war. They had to have known and accepted the risks. Now they whine about bearing the costs of their choice? It doesn't compute." "I thought these were people who were proud to sacrifice for their country," Obama continued. "I wasn't asking for blood, just money. With the country facing the worst financial crisis in its history, I'd have thought that the patriotic thing to do would be to try to help reduce the nation's deficit. I guess I underestimated the selfishness of some of my fellow Americans."

From the USA

KIWI COPS!

GOOD, BETTER, BEST

GOOD

A cop from the NZ Police was watching for speeders, but wasn't getting many.

Then he discovered the problem - a 12-year-old boy was standing up the road with a hand painted sign, which read 'RADAR TRAP AHEAD.'

The officer then found a young accomplice down the road with a sign reading 'TIPS' and a bucket full of money. (And we used to just sell lemonade!)

BETTER

A motorist was mailed a picture of his car speeding through an automated radar post in the Manawatu with a Fine of \$160 included.

Being cute, he sent the police department a picture of \$160. The police responded with another mailed photo of handcuffs.

BEST

A young woman was pulled over for speeding. As a NZ Policeman walked to her car window, flipping open his ticket book, she said, 'I bet you are going to sell me a ticket to the Policemen's Ball.'

He replied, 'New Zealand Policemen don't have balls.' There was a moment of silence while she smiled, and he realized what he'd just said.

He then closed his book, got back in his patrol car and left.

She was laughing too hard to start her car.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

Veteran's MATES Medical Advice & Therapeutic Education Services

MATES Report Jan 2010

The MATES committee has now issued module 21. This module, *About Gout*, will be mailed early in 2010 to identified Veteran patients who have been dispensed, under the RPBS, allopurinol or colchicicine between 01 May and 31 Aug 2009.

We also looked at those Veterans who had been dispensed an oral corticosteroid or a non steroidal anti-inflammatory medication during the same period receiving the same mail out.

Modules 22, 23 and 24 are in the development or testing stage for release this year.

We can now report some outcomes based data flowing from the programme.

A tangible result of the Home Medicines Review (HMR) scheme instituted by the MATES programme shows Veterans identified as at risk of heart failure can look forward to a greater time between hospital admissions of some seven months.

A similarly satisfactory result was obtained for patients with diabetes and at high risk of heart failure being prescribed non steroidal anti-inflammatory medications.

Those at risk of heart failure and being prescribed beta blockers saw a 20% reduction in mean time between hospital admissions.

Results are now coming in for those other than cardiac patients prescribed non steroidal anti-inflammatories and for those prescribed anti-depressants. We expect these to be available for the next report.

Patients suffering respiratory infections are similarly benefiting from reduced mean times between hospital admissions especially for pneumonia.

With dementia patients, the results showed a reduction

in strokes suffered, a number of premature deaths avoided fewer large bone (especially hip) fractures and fewer hospitalisations for pneumonia.

Warfrim users accessing and using MATES information have significantly fewer hospital admissions for bleeds. This resulted in a programme for every LMO prescribing and every pharmacist dispensing warfrim under the RPBS being sent the appropriate therapeutic brief module.

While every Veteran being prescribed warfrim under RPBS has been mailed a warfrim module, less than 5% of those ordered or received a HMR. A module specifically to address this problem is "on the radar".

MATES data shows however that ideally HMR's need to be done 6 monthly. MATES is also working with DVA to streamline the ordering process for a HMR.

All of the measured results in this report are flowing from improved knowledge of medicine management through LMO, pharmacist and Veteran patient and carer education and HMR's generated by the MATES programme.

A side issue but an important one nonetheless, is the potential flow on effect of MATES. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing is now looking at adopting a HMR programme using MATES as a model. This means our older family members, neighbours and friends outside the Veteran community can benefit from the MATES programme.

Peter Ryan: State President VVAA ACT - MATES committee representative

VVAA Representative MATES programme

HAVING TROUBLE MANAGING YOUR MEDICATIONS?

Veterans who are having difficulty managing their medications can obtain assistance through DVA's Dose Administration Aid (DAA) service. It is easy to become confused or forgetful with medications, especially when multiple prescriptions are involved.

The free DAA service can help eligible veterans ensure that they take the right medicine at the right time each day. Gold, White, and Orange Card holders who live in the community and do not live in a Residential Care Facility; hostel or hospital are eligible to be considered for the DAA service.

To be assessed for this service, DVA card holders must first visit their GP. If the GP determines that the veteran will benefit from the DAA service, he or she can pro-

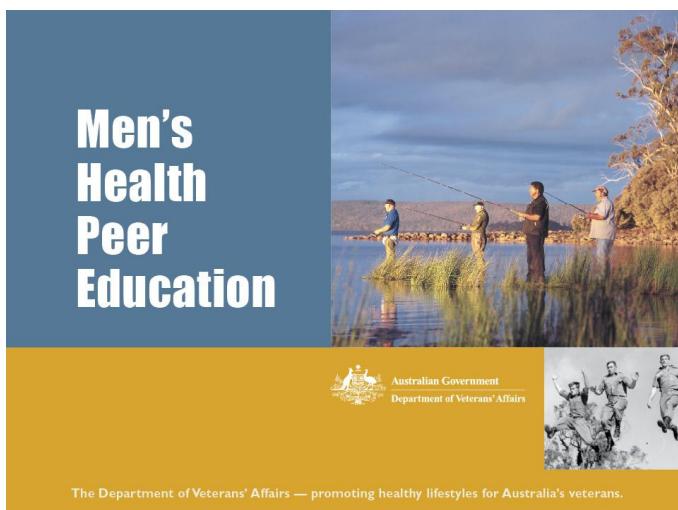
vide a prescription to supply the DAA service for six months. Veterans who utilise the DAA service will have their medications packed each week by their pharmacist in a dose administration aid (much like a pill box).

If you think the DAA service will help you manage your medications, consult your GP. The service is funded by DVA; however normal prescription and co-payment arrangements still apply for all medications packed within the dosage aids. More information about the DAA service is available on the DVA website http://www.dva.gov.au/health_and_wellbeing/self-management/DAA/Pages/index.aspx or by calling DVA on 1300 556 906.

Ack: "Vetaffairs" March 2010 issue.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

MEN'S HEALTH PEER EDUCATION (MHPE)



The Men's Health Peer Education (MHPE) program was established in response to findings in the Vietnam Veterans Health (morbidity) Study (1997) that Vietnam veterans experience a higher incidence of certain health conditions.

The MHPE program aims to raise the veteran community's awareness of men's health issues by encouraging members of the veteran and ex-service community to

share the responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing.

The MHPE program trains volunteers to provide health information to their veteran peers to assist them in making informed lifestyle choices around their health.

How can I become involved ?

Become a volunteer yourself **OR** Host a Men's Health Peer Education session.

If you are interested in finding out more about the MHPE program, or becoming a MHPE volunteer, please **contact Rebecca Chumbley on 03) 9284 6727** for further information and details of upcoming MHPE volunteer training courses.

You can also visit Department of Veterans' Affairs web site menshealth@dva.gov.au which includes:

- * helpful information on health and lifestyle issues
- * online Men's Health Peer Education manual
- * contact details for obtaining more information

NATIONAL CARER SUPPORT SERVICES

DVA has contracted Carers Victoria to provide National Carers Support Services for the veteran and ex-service community across Australia. The services are aimed at helping carers to enhance their own health and wellbeing while caring for others.

Services include educational and community development initiatives, workshops, information sessions, educational programs, conference presentations and social events. The services are for

Carers and partners within the veteran and ex-service community, Veterans and ex-service members who are caring for others, ex-service organisations, community organisations supporting serving and ex-service members and their families and currently serving members and their partners who are caring for others.

For **more information** contact Zena Sharples, DVA Carer Support Advisor, National Carer Support Services at Carers Victoria Ph. 9396 9500

Veterans & Veterans Counselling Service

During business hours—connects you to the nearest VVCS Centre.

There are 15 VVCS centres located across Australia.

After business hours—connects you with Veterans Line, the after-hours telephone crisis counselling service.

Veterans, peacekeepers and their families can refer themselves to VVCS.

Other current serving members can request a referral from the ADF.

www.dva.gov.au/health/vvcs or Contact VVCS on 1800 011 046

* Free local call.
Calls from mobile phones and pay phones may incur charges.



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

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

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.

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

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.

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

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 4718113 **Peter David CRADDOCK** 104
Sig Sqn SVN 9/67 > 3/68.

Anyone with information about Peter's whereabouts please let him know his sister Cecilia on 0419 774 662 would like contact.

Looking for **Elizabeth Anne HEALEY ne HALL**—
Bill Doyle seeks information about her sister Margaret.
Anyone knowing Elizabeth can provide her with Bill's contact details:

email: sabasas@tpg.com.au phone: 02 95333105

Looking for PO **Barry James MUGGLETON**, R58507
HMAS SYDNEY, 1969-1970.

If any one knows Barry, ask him to contact:

Neville Cunningham:

20 Phillipine Dve, St Albans Park, Vic 3219
Phone: 03.5248.4835 or Mobile 0438.162.280

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of 55277 **Colin William DANS** 4 Fld Regt SVN 6/67 > 5/68 please let him know that his daughter Melissa would like contact. She can be contacted via her mother Michele Kingsbury on 07 54939690.

Looking for 3793013 **Joseph Wladyslaw KRAUSE** 2 Transport Platoon SVN 12/68 > 2/69, HQ RAASC 2/69 > 10/69.

Joe's family in Poland are anxious for news of him as they lost contact in 1965 after Joe emigrated with his parents to Melbourne in 1950. Last possible address was Mt Martha, Victoria. There is no record of him attending any 2 Tpt Pl Reunions and his mates would like him to attend their Reunion on the Gold Coast in 2011.

Anyone with information about Joe Krause should contact Les Lunarzewski - Managing Director
Lunagras Pty Limited, Australia 0412 685 930.

Looking for Mick Kernaghan ex RAN - His mate Tony Robinson would like to make contact. Tony's contact details are email: tr1945@bigpond.com

Looking for 15352 **Graham WALL** ex 2 RAR at Terendak Camp Malacca, Malaya around 1965 - 1969. Last known address 3 RAR at Enoggera Queensland. Anyone who know Graham please ask him to contact penn at penn32@yahoo.com.

Looking for **Nigel Leo EVANS** SVN 1968 & 1970/71 with 110 Sig Sqn. If anyone knows Nigel Evans please let him know his son David Lee Evans wants to make contact. David's contact details are home (02) 8065 2176 or mobile 0420 773 580.

Medals belonging to **Leigh (Laddie) HINDLEY** have been **stolen** from his home in the ACT. There are 12 medals in total, including the Distinguished Flying Cross awarded for service in Vietnam – L. Hindley. Miniatures were also stolen. Anyone with information about these medals please contact Susan on 0404 255 156 or email Susan.Pitt@TREASURY.GOV.AU.

This year, 2010, will commemorate 25 years of VVAA service to the veteran community in Victoria and it is fitting that the contributions of individuals be recognised.

VVAA Victorian State Branch is therefore compiling verifiable information on the forming of the VVAA in Victoria for the next FSB-Vic to issue at the end of November this year.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Maurie Benson at editor@vvaavic.org.au or 0417 588 886.

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