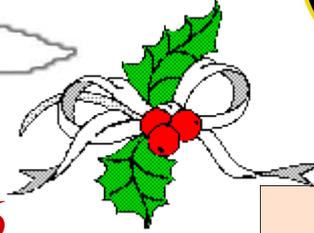


Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Victorian Branch Inc



FSB - VIC



SUMMER EDITION ~ 2006

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VIETNAM VETERANS DAY MELBOURNE



Spirit of Anzac Recipients and 5/6 RVR Pipers re-enact the service held at Long Tan on the 18th August 1969.

This Cross was built by the same man who built the original Cross - Cpl Barry McAvinue, RNZA, and now has a permanent home at the Vietnam Veterans' Museum, San Remo, Victoria.

(More pictures centre pages)



Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

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STATE VICE PRESIDENT	Reg McMASTER JP
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Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the second edition of *FSB-Vic*. A reminder, this is your magazine, and we welcome your input and feedback.

Memories of the 40th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan commemorations at the Shrine on 18 August this year will stay with me forever.

It was a special honour to have our State Premier attend and I particularly thank him and his Government for their financial support.

I also want to particularly thank the State Commemorative Committee and the Association Committee; both worked tirelessly to ensure an unforgettable event, and Bob Solly from DVA, Peter Liefman and Maurie Benson are deserving of special mention, as is MAJGEN David McLachlan who took his task as keynote speaker very seriously indeed. Finally, a big thank-you to sub-branches, who attended the Shrine commemoration.

At the time of writing, I am hopeful that two submissions to the State Commemorative Committee to utilise excess federal funding for the 40th Anniversary commemorations will succeed: funds for a reflective area at the National Museum, incorporating the Long Tan Cross, and funding for a “pop up” list of the Vietnam Veterans who died on active service to be added to our website.

I am, pleased to report that State membership numbers are up, Echuca Sub-Branch is active and there are prospects for a new sub-branch in the Castlemaine area. Additionally, I am hopeful that after the Sub-Branch boundary project is completed, that we will have the opportunity to expand into previously untapped areas.

I have been advised of another excellent badge week effort, with a result of in excess of \$60,000 net expected. Congratulations to all involved in the fund raising. It does raise the issue of what to do with all the welfare funds sloshing around. I urge all sub-branches to consider how they might put welfare funds to work, and to ensure that members are aware that welfare funds exist, and how they might access them if necessary.

I am delighted to also report that your State Council has approved the establishment of a second tertiary bursary, which may be available to sons or daughters of Vietnam Veterans.

During the second half of the year, I met informally with a group of highly experienced state branch members. (For want of a name, I have called this loosely formed group the State Advisory Group-SAG). The purpose of this group is to meet irregularly to consider key policy and planning issues and to provide advice through the State Executive to the State Council. I believe that this process has enormous up-side for the state branch, allowing as it does, access to senior association members, whose collective knowledge stretches back to the original formation of the VVAA.

As a flow on from this consultative process, Sub-Branch Presidents participated in a workshop at Geelong prior to the November State Council meeting. At the workshop, the Presidents considered a number of key planning issues, including future planning for the State Branch. As with the SAG, I acknowledge the very considerable knowledge base that exists at the Sub-Branch level, and I am keen to tap that knowledge and encourage Sub-Branches to take on more “ownership” of important issues-for the betterment of our membership. The results of this workshop will flow to the members for consideration and feedback to the state council.

At the national level, Victoria continues to press for a more pro-active approach by the Association to major issues. Recent initiatives, including a new media awareness and responsiveness plan, will help. Additionally, your delegates pursued motions carried to National on your behalf. I am quietly confident that the last hangovers from another regime have been cast off-there is now unity of purpose and respect.

Representing VVAA National, Victoria pursued the issues of recognition and management of private War Graves and extension of VVCS services to divorcees. I am pleased to advise that we have had some success with both matters. Details have been provided to Sub-Branches.

In cooperation with National VP John Smith, Victoria will work towards the creation of a legal arrangement for the National Vietnam Veterans’ Museum, and commence to flesh out administrative structures. Peter Liefman, the Honorary National Solicitor will play a pivotal role.

Within Victoria, considerable change has occurred at Government level; the crea-

Cont’d next Page



Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

from previous page

tion of the Victorian Veterans Council will have a big impact on veteran matters in the state. Peter Liefman has been appointed deputy chair of the council and Dick Culliford has been ratified as the VVAA representative on the council. Congratulations to both of them. In the lead up to the state elections, the Bracks Government has committed \$10M to build a new Veterans Psychiatry Unit at Heidelberg if re-elected. A long awaited initiative.

Some of our important projects, for which I continue to hold high hopes, have been frustrated and slowed by the lack of feedback from Sub-Branches. I understand that the information sought may not be available at all Sub-Branches, however the response has been poor: delays in the processing of veteran claims and erosion of veteran entitlements are very important to all veterans-they are issues which deserve our full attention and effort.

The end of the year is fast upon us, and before we know it the 2007 AGM will be with us. This year has just flown by, and I hope to make it to the final few Sub-Branches I have yet to visit before year's end. I thank all Sub-Branches I have visited for their hospitality and support-I have learned much.

Together we have made significant changes to our business practices both at Executive level and at Council level - the issue of the new administrative instructions is one prime example. We have many more challenges ahead of us, which we must win for the benefit of veterans-I look forward to tackling them with you. On behalf of your executive, I extend thanks to you all for your support. I wish each and everyone a safe, holy and relaxing Christmas period.

Bob Elworthy

A WORD FROM THE *TREASURER*

VV Day 2006 was an excellent event for VVAA Vic with both State and Federal funding amounting to approximately \$50,000 received.

These funds assisted with the Gunfire Breakfast and the Construction of the Replica Long Tan Cross.

We also received funding through DVA to have a Bronze Plaque made to present to every Victorian Shire, 79 in total, to celebrate this very special year. The plaques should be made by the time you receive this report.

Plaques have also been provided to ADF Units and others who contributed so much to the success of this year's VV Day celebrations.

The committee of the Veterans Day 2006 Peter, Maurie, John, Reg, and Myself, trust you all enjoyed the great day, and we are gearing up to 2008 the anniversary of The Battle of Coral/Balmoral.

We look forward to you're continuing support of your Association.

Merry Christmas to you and your families. Take care and have a safe and happy time.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VETERANS CONCESSION CARD

Veterans are reminded that from ANZAC Day 2005, Victorian veterans who hold a Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold or White card are eligible for the same public transport concessions available to pension card holders.

This Veterans Concession Card entitles these veterans to concession fares that are approximately half the price of the full daily fare, any time and any day, when travelling on regular public transport services provided by Metlink, V/Line and bus networks (including regional cities such as Bendigo, Ballarat and Geelong).

Download the application form

from [Metlink](#).

Contact the Central Pass Office

Transport House

Ground floor

589 Collins Street

MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Telephone: 03 9619 1159

(The Central Pass Office will mail out the application forms).

300 Latrobe Street Melbourne

Telephone: 133 254 or 1800 55 254

VETERANS ~ NEW GOLD CARD

My gold card

The holders of a Repatriation Health Card - For All Conditions (Gold card) will be the only Australians given a choice of a gold-coloured access card, in recognition of the respect Australia has for its veteran's and war widow/ers. The new gold access card will replace your current gold card. Gold card holders will be able to get a new gold access card.

The new card and my entitlements

The new card is simply a way of combining all the cards you currently use to access veterans' services, and other Australian Government health and social services. The introduction of the card will have no impact on any pension, health service, compensation, income support or other service or payment from the Department of Veterans' Affairs or other agencies.

War widow/ers and the new card

Everyone who has a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) issued card will need to get an access card, including war widow/ers. However, once you have an access card, there will be no need to get separate cards from Medicare or Centrelink as any additional entitlement will simply be added to your new card.

I only get services from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, do I still have to get a new card?

Everyone who has a DVA-issued card will need to get an access card.

Acknowledging Total and Permanent Incapacity (TPI)

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that those who currently have increased recognition in the community, such as TPI veterans, will continue to receive this acknowledgement.

Allowing people to act on your behalf

You will be able to authorise dependants, carers and other people such as family members or pension advocates to act on your behalf.

In order for somebody to act on your behalf you must be listed on that person's card. This will enable them to act on your behalf, for example when picking up medications.

Discounts and concessions

The Australian Government is working on ways to make sure everyone who currently receives concessions or discounted services due to their DVA-issued card, will be able to continue receiving those discounts and concessions.

Emergency information on your new card

It is currently planned that emergency contact information and other basic health information such as allergies can, at the card holder's request, be stored on the card's chip to be accessed by emergency personnel if required.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VIETNAM VETERANS NATIONAL MUSEUM

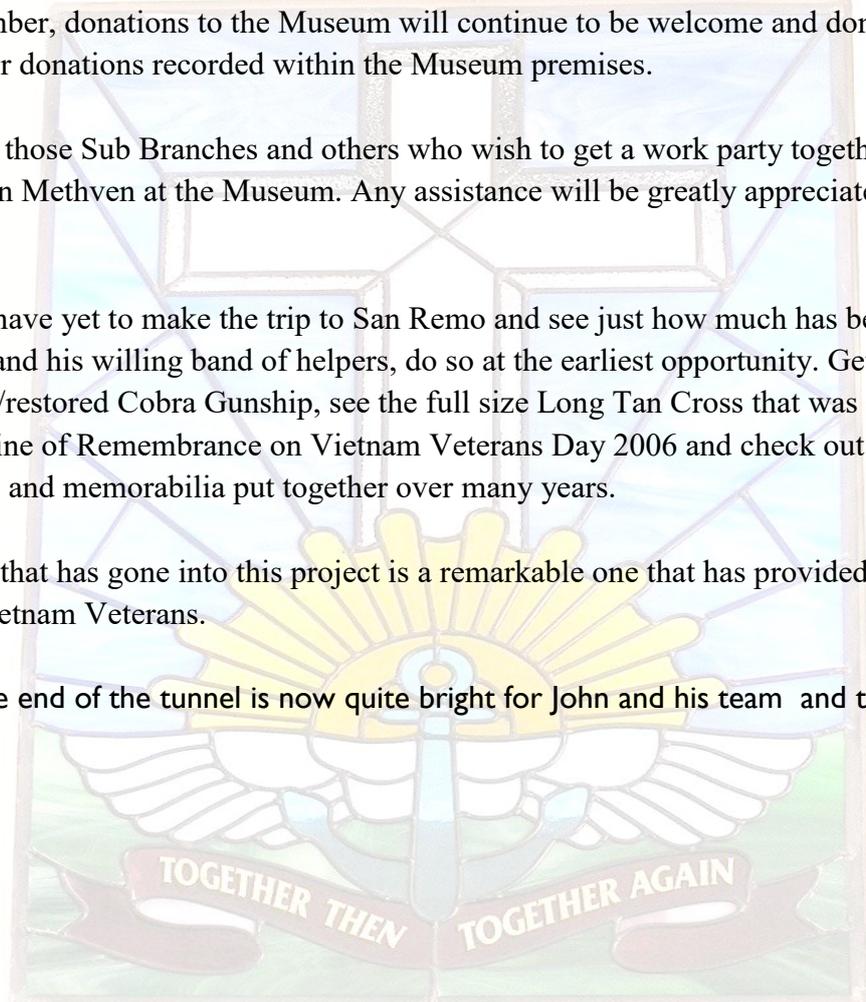
*The Vietnam Veterans National Museum at San Remo
will move to it's new location by 15th December 2006.*

- ★ At the close of business on the 15th November the existing/old Museum at San Remo will close.
- ★ The Museum will open in the new premises at 1000hrs 15th December 2006.
- ★ The new number for the Museum will be (03) 5956 6400
- ★ Email remains unchanged at “secretary@museum.vvaavic.org.au”.
- ★ While donations to Buy a Brick campaign will cease at close of business on the 15th November, donations to the Museum will continue to be welcome and donors will have their donations recorded within the Museum premises.
- ★ For those Sub Branches and others who wish to get a work party together, please contact John Methven at the Museum. Any assistance will be greatly appreciated.

For those who have yet to make the trip to San Remo and see just how much has been achieved by John Methven and his willing band of helpers, do so at the earliest opportunity. Get up and close to the fully armed/restored Cobra Gunship, see the full size Long Tan Cross that was centrepiece at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance on Vietnam Veterans Day 2006 and check out the amazing collection of items and memorabilia put together over many years.

The dedication that has gone into this project is a remarkable one that has provided a “spiritual” home for all Vietnam Veterans.

The light at the end of the tunnel is now quite bright for John and his team and the dream becomes reality.



Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VIETNAM VETS CALENDAR



**From L > R: Peter Cornish, Vic Smythe and Rory Davenport
What more can you say !!**

The Calendar will be on sale at the end of October and orders can be obtained from:

MEN AT WAR AND PEACE

C/- GREG CARTER

PO BOX 1775

BAIRNSDALE VIC 3875

Preferably by email: pawprints@wideband.net.au

Profits are shared equally with:

- * VVAA (their share to be donated to National Museum, San Remo)
- * VVF
- * National Museum, San Remo

The calendar will have pics of Vietnam Veterans in a nude position (very tasteful and discreet) with an insert photo of them on tour in Vietnam - dressed appropriately we hope!.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

LESLEY FARREN ~ 1st VICTORIAN NATIONAL SERVICEMAN KIA

Bank teller Les Farren did not live to hear Prime Minister John Howard's apology for the reception his mates received from a disillusioned public when they returned home from Vietnam.

This little-known soldier from the Melbourne suburb of Reservoir was the first Victorian National Serviceman to die in that controversial war.

But he was remembered when his 86-year-old mother, Lillian Farren, unveiled a plaque at the Reservoir Cenotaph.

Forty years after his death, Mrs Farren still grieves for her son. **"It was awful to see Les go and never see him again", said Mrs Farren. This way he will be remembered."**

Les was always in the shadow of another Melbourne suburbs boy when he went to Vietnam. The 1960s Australian pop legend, Normie Rowe, was one of his schoolmates at the Northcote High School before they were called up for Vietnam.

Les, two years older than Normie, was quietly spoken and looking forward to being an accountant in the suburbs. Normie, in the era of Beatlemania, was being mobbed by screaming hysterical teenage girls and had the music world at his feet.

But Vietnam changed their lives. Pte Leslie Thomas Farren was conscripted in 1965 and

posted to 10 Platoon, Delta Company, 5th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, Infantry Corps.

He was also a keen amateur photographer and the only son of Thomas and Lillian Farren.

On June 10, 1966, while on patrol in South Vietnam, Pte Farren was severely wounded by Viet Cong mortar fire. He was 19 days short of his 21st birthday.

Cpl Frank Donovan was the army medic who tried to help Les: "Les Farren actually died in my arms from massive lower body wounds," said Cpl Donovan. The extent of his wounds and loss of blood made survival impossible.

Normie Rowe took an interest in Les Farren after reading about him in a newspaper more than 15 years ago and was surprised no one had acknowledged his service. With the assistance of the Victorian Branch of the VVAA, Darebin Council responded quickly to approve the laying of a commemorative plaque by Les's mother, Mrs Lillian Farren.

Les Farren has not been forgotten but it has taken too long to acknowledge his service. Following the Prime Minister's words on Vietnam Veterans Day, the sacrifice of these veterans might now be better remembered.



Mr Bob Elworthy, State President of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, chats to some 5RAR veterans at the Leslie Farren memorial plaque ceremony



Mr Frank Donovan, then Army Medic with 5RAR, who held Leslie Farren as he died of his wounds, giving a speech. Next to him is Councillor Stanley Chiang, the Mayor of Darebin City Council, which lent his support behind the memorial.



Les Farren's mother, Mrs Lillian Farren, aged 86, unveils the plaque to her son.



The plaque inscription reads:

"In Memory of 3786921 Leslie Thomas Farren - First Victorian National Serviceman Killed in the Vietnam War 10 June 1966".

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VVAA STATE MANIFESTO

Key Issues

1. **TPI Payments:** Arrest continued erosion of the value of TPI payments by providing an immediate \$75 payment increase in compensation for, and acknowledgement of the loss of real earning power over time, caused by CPI indexation. Abandon split indexation of the TPI payment.
2. **Children's Health:** Immediately commence a far - reaching and adequately funded study into the health of the children of Vietnam Veterans.
3. **Mental Health:** Provide better, simplified mental health compensation, assessment, treatment, and psychiatric condition acceptance procedures. Provide adequate funding to ensure eligible veterans have access to mental health professionals, mental health programs and facilities, including hospital beds.
4. **Medical and Dental Services:** Ensure unrestricted access to medical, dental and allied services for entitled veterans, adequately remunerate specialists thereby encouraging them to treat veterans. Extend gold card entitlements to spouses of gold card holders.
5. **Alternative Medicine and Health Services:** Provide free access to alternative medicine and health services for gold card holders.
6. **Pharmaceuticals:** Provide free pharmaceuticals for entitled veterans.
7. **Funeral Benefit:** Increase the funeral benefit for all eligible veterans to \$4000.
8. **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.
9. **Legal Aid:** Provide legal aid to Vietnam Veterans in all states through state legal aid commissions irrespective of the case.
10. **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.
11. **Counselling Access:** Remove age and time limits for access to VVCS counselling services for children of Vietnam Veterans and divorcees.
12. **Retrospective Awards:** Conduct 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.
13. **Medal Issue:** Immediately improve and adequately resource the medal issuing authority in order to overcome long delays in delivering service medals to eligible personnel.
14. **Voluntary Work:** Acknowledge the value of TPI veterans undertaking voluntary work.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

Memory of Long Tan - Dedicated to all Vietnam Veterans

I went to the Shrine today,
And with a tear in my eye looked their way.
As the vets stood silent with their shoulders erect
There heads bent low with respect.

Their thoughts were with the
18 men who did not come back
And memories of others they served with.
But, we civilians and politicians do not know much about that!
They faced the enemy with bravery and might
While we at home were tucked in our beds warm and tight!

There were many obstacles these vets were to face,
To help a country in a time of need!
And to come back home to a nations rebellion about this war!
To take it out on our vets is a bloody disgrace!
Each and every one of us owe our veterans our deepest respect
And the apology of a nation is not over yet!

Yes, I was at the shrine today -
And proudly watched as the march got under way.
For my man was one of those vets,
Along with many others I have met
There will always be a tear in my eye,
For I have had the privilege to meet,
A few of those men who obeyed an order to go and fight –
Now let us bow our heads with respect when their in our sight!!

“Lest We Forget”



Gabrielle Shepperd (wife of R. (Shep) Shepperd. AB-QMG RAN)

18th August, 2006

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VV DAY 2006 ~ Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance



2006 marks the 40th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan; a time when Vietnam Veterans across Australia gathered to remember that epic battle and those who lost their lives continuing the ANZAC spirit.

At the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne this year the VVAA State Branch again hosted the VV Day Ceremony for some 3/4,000 vets, family and friends. The day began with a “gunfire” breakfast and reunion with mates. The formal ceremony followed and included a recreation of the Long Tan Cross ceremony of 18th August 1969. Spirit of Anzac Recipient school children replaced the 6RAR Diggers of 1969 and 5/6 RVR provided the 2 pipers.

The centerpiece of the Melbourne ceremony was a full size replica of the Long Tan Cross

built by the same man who built the original Cross - Corporal Barry McAvinue, Assault Pioneer 6 RAR-NZ (ANZAC) Battalion.

Other features included 2 APCs, one of which was a Vietnam Vet that was at the Battle of Long Tan and two 105 MM Howitzers. Well done to the professional and enthusiastic assistance provided by our ADF mates.

The crowd was addressed by the Victorian Premier Steve Bracks who expressed regret for the shameful way Vietnam Vets were treated on their return home from Vietnam. The keynote speech was then given by RSL Victorian President MajGen David McLaughlin Retd and well received by all present.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY ~ MELB



Gunfire Breakfast



RSM gives the troops last minute "instructions".



Marching up the Shrine Forecourt.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY ~ MELB

US and Vietnamese Vets followed by Sons & Daughters Banner.



“Black Hats” making the most of the Day.

Service Chiefs with Spirit of Anzac Recipient laying a wreath for the Armed Services at the Cross.



Marcie Jones and Denise Drysdale singing “Lonely Heroes”. Not a dry eye in the house. Thanks girls.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

TRAUMA and MILITARY SERVICE: A PTSD Program



We all know what it means to “go through” a traumatic event. On military deployments it is often not the time or the place to spend time reflecting or “working through” traumatic events. It is often only after the events that the emotional impact is fully experienced.

This may involve a passing period of difficulty after which things return to normal or it may be more enduring. Sometimes the connection to a traumatic event is apparent, sometimes not.

With traumatic events it is natural to want to keep the recall of the events and their emotional impact out of mind and out of awareness. Unfortunately in this circumstance the emotional impact of events often persist in the absence of an association to the original events and the results are puzzling. Why am I drinking more? Why am I on edge? Why don't I want to socialize any more? Why do crowds bother me when they never did before?

Over months and years these questions may fade; the altered state becomes the norm. The statement becomes, “This is what I'm like.” rather than, “This is the impact of trauma.” Often veterans are not aware of the ways they have incorporated the effects of trauma into their daily lives. For example many veterans on the program become aware for the first time how much they are on the alert for danger; why they always sit with a back to the wall and an eye to the door; how much alcohol use is an attempt to control distressing thoughts, feelings or dreams; why they are on edge and easily agitated.

The Austin Health (Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital) Program

The PTSD program at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital has been providing treatment programs since 1995 and over 100 cohorts of veterans have passed through the program. The program aims to provide education about the impact of trauma, peer and professional support to address difficulties and skills development to manage problems and to make positive change.

The program includes topics such as: anxiety management, anger management, substance use, education about health and PTSD, group discussion, communication skills, relationships and family issues, trauma and memory, individual counselling, relaxation training, making change and sleep management. The program also includes a group for partners of veterans, which covers some of the same topics.

Programs are run in groups of up to eight veterans. Apart from the specific topics probably the most beneficial part of the program is to be part of a group of veterans working together on the same issues.

Two of the most frequent comments we hear are “*I wish I had done it earlier,*” and, “*It was being*

Continued next page

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

TRAUMA and MILITARY SERVICE: A PTSD Program

From previous page

with other veterans which made the program work for me.”

The program is funded by DVA. Information is not shared with DVA apart from the fact that the veteran has applied for, and ultimately, has completed the program. No referral is necessary.

Programs are run approximately eight times a year and there is a range of programs to suit different needs. Some involve a residential phase, where veterans live in flats near to The Repat for the first month of the program and then attend daily for eight weeks from home. .

Other programs are not residential; the veterans attend two or three days a week from home. Where there are enough veterans in a metropolitan or rural area to make up a group we can bring the program out to them.

All programs run for twelve weeks for a total of approximately twenty-four days. A typical day is 10.00 am to 3.30. At first glance this seems like a lot but our experience is that veterans find the time is necessary and well spent.

A first step

If you are interested in discussing the PTSD program, please call the Coordinator (anonymously if you wish), Michael Mooney on 9496-4293 or e-mail michael.mooney@austin.org.au .

Another useful source of information may be your own veteran network, such as VVAA Sub-Branch Pension & Welfare Officers and Regional Veteran Centres.

If you decide you are interested in the program Michael will make an appointment with himself or one of the team at The Repat.

Thirty of forty years later is not too late.



Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living



LIBRARY

The Great Dividing Range	2:46
Here I Am <small>Duet with Noel Watson</small>	3:15
The Vow	2:49
Love Me Too	1:07
Dancing With Angels	3:38
Nothin' That A Fool Won't Do	3:01
Love Is A Fire <small>Duet with Gene Bradley Fisk</small>	2:57
The Easter Monday Mine	2:26
Lonely Heroes	3:45
Call On Me	2:38
Butterfly Of Love	4:30
Good For The Goose	3:54
Cowboy, Get Off My Feet	3:01

BONUS TRACKS

Tennessee Waltz	3:06
You're My World	3:08

www.marciejones.com

Email: info@marciejones.com

Marcie Jones

Here I Am



Marcie Jones and Denise Drysdale entertained us on Vietnam Veterans Day 2006 at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance with Marcie's new song *Lonely Heroes* that features on her latest CD, *Marcie Jones - Here I Am*.

Well done Marcie and Denise, we are still drying the tears away.

If you would like a copy of Marcie's CD, check out her Website www.marciejones.com or Email her at info@marciejones.com

FROM THE EDITOR

With 2006 rapidly drawing to a close, we look back with some pride at the achievements of VVAA Vic Branch, in particular our increased level of communication with Members and other ESOs.

Your Newsletter, *FSB-Vic* has played an important roll in that process and I, as Editor, wish to thank all who passed on comment on our editions this year. I proudly and humbly say that all responses have been most welcome and positive. That doesn't mean we always get it right, but we must be on the right track.

I look forward to hearing from as many of you as wish to contribute - after all, it's your Newsletter.

Next year you will see what we describe as a "living" Newsletter on the VVAA Vic web site that will be progressively updated with current news of interest to our Members.

And not that you need reminding, but the Big Man in the Red Suit is just around the corner and will be visiting you and your families very soon. He would like to see you all in good health and enjoying this special time of the year.

Take care, deep breaths and share a kind word with a mate.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

NEW VETERANS MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY

MEDIA RELEASE Friday 10 NOVEMBER 2006

Victorian Premier Steve Bracks announced today that a re-elected Bracks Labor Government will provide up to \$10 million for a new, state of the art Veterans Psychiatric Facility at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital site.

The new facility will replace the existing pre-WWII veterans' psychiatry unit buildings and provide both inpatient and outpatient services. The Veterans' Unit currently treats over 600 veterans a year.

"This announcement is welcomed by the veteran community" said Bob Elworthy, Victorian Branch President of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia. "The old buildings are well past their use by date and no amount of maintenance can bring them to a satisfactory standard. The buildings fall well short of contemporary hospital standards, and patients and hospital staff deserve much better facilities". he said.

Mr Elworthy said "Veteran groups have been lobbying for better mental health facilities for years, and the new facility will ensure that Veterans receive the best of care and that the tradition of caring for Veterans at the Repatriation Campus will continue".

The Veterans Psychiatry Unit at the Repatriation Campus of Austin Health is unique in Australia, and has a reputation for excellence in research and treatment of post traumatic stress disorder.

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

BEST/TIP

What is the Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) Program

BEST is part of the Government's commitment to support the role of Ex-Service Organisations (ESO) pensions and welfare practitioners and advocates. The BEST program assists by providing monetary support and IT equipment to ESO practitioners.

The aim of BEST is to provide support and resources to ESO practitioners for pensions and welfare work to assist veterans, past and present members of the Australian Defence Forces and their dependants. A major objective of BEST is to ensure high quality claims and appeals assistance by ESO practitioners, which in turn will assist the Department in timely and appropriate processing.

Who can apply for funding?

Bona fide ESOs that provide welfare and pension assistance to veterans, past and present members of the Australian Defence Forces and their dependants can apply for funding under BEST. In regional areas, where it is economically viable, the Department encourages ESOs to explore the option of a cooperative project/centre taking advantage of two or more ESOs to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

When is funding available under BEST?

Applications for BEST grants are to be lodged from 15 January - 28 February at the relevant State office of the Department. Funding will be for the period of the next financial year, 1 July to 30 June.

What is the Training and Information Program (TIP)?

TIP is a result of a government initiative announced in the 1994-1995 Budget to train and resource Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) pen-

sion officers, welfare officers and advocates so that they can provide the best possible advice to veterans seeking their assistance.

What sort of training does TIP provide?

There are three broad courses covered by TIP – pension officer, welfare officer, and advocate courses. Pension officer courses provide participants with information relating to repatriation benefits, as well as details of how claims and applications are determined. Welfare officer courses on the other hand provide information in relation to issues of veterans' health, housing and other community services available outside of compensation and Military Compensation. There has been a focus over recent years on refresher courses to update experienced practitioners on developments in legislation, policy and procedures relevant to claims and appeals.

TIP also runs courses on advocacy. These are designed to assist the more experienced ESO practitioner in preparing cases for review before the Veterans' Review Board (VRB) and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). Participants for these more advanced level courses are required to demonstrate that they have had suitable experience in this area and have completed prerequisite TIP courses. Additionally TIP provides courses for a number of supplementary skills such as Networking and Relationships and the use of the electronic tools made available to practitioners by the Department.

How is TIP administered?

TIP is a partnership between ESOs and DVA. ESO representatives and DVA staff jointly plan and deliver training. State Consultative Committees, comprising ESO representatives and DVA staff, have been established in every State to manage State training needs.

Who runs the courses and where are they held?

Members of the State TIP Committees run TIP courses with additional assistance from Departmental specialists when re-

Cont'd next Page 

BEST/TIP

From previous page

quired. Courses vary from one, two or three days depending on the content and the experience of the participants. TIP courses are held throughout Australia in capital cities and many regional centres. TIP is endeavouring to provide training access to all ESO volunteers, with courses being conducted in many rural and remote areas.

With the addition of the administration of the Military Compensation and Rehabilitation Service (MCRS) to the Department, TIP has included content in its training courses.

THE SOLDIER'S LAMENT

*Dedicated to all who served in all wars,
especially my comrades who served in Vietnam.*

Copyright by D G St. Leon

On the Bible I placed my hand
And swore to protect our lovely land.
Dressed in a smart new uniform
The government sent me to fight
In a far off foreign place.
Where battles were lost and won
And deeds we did. I wish were never done.
Back home we came and in a closet,
The governments just heaped our names.
The population, there were few to understand.
A quarter just stared askance.
A third said God would punish us
For doing what we were told to do.
The rest accused, assaulted, criticized and vilified.
To explain they gave us not a chance.
Some even spat upon our lousy uniform.
Drunk one night I staggered home and
Upon each sleeping offsprings head.
I placed my hand and swore an oath that
No child of mine would feel the shame or pain
Of fighting, to save an ungrateful land!

2007 NATIONAL CONGRESS

Victoria is to Host the 2007 VVAA National Congress in Melbourne when Delegates and other invited guests will congregate in AN-ZAC House for a Meet & Greet function and Conference.

Guests will also be treated to a trip to the VVAA National Museum at San Remo as well as enjoying what Melbourne has to offer.



"Frankly, Mr Clause, we don't understand - two days ago you had assets worth billions - today, nothing..."

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 together, 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'.

Re: **Sapper James Henry Coulter**, Late of Baulkham Hills, NSW was a National Serviceman who served with 17 Construction Squadron between 2nd October, 1968 and 1st October 1970. His Service Number was 27911775 and he went to SVN on 24th June, 1969 and returned 25th July, 1970.

Whilst in SVN it appears that he was involved with the Mine Clearance at the Dat Do Mine Field and did Civic Action in Binh Ba.

Anyone who served with him or knew him at any stage of his National Service, please contact Beth Campbell, Westlakes Veterans & Support Group at:
westlakesvets@optusnet.com.au

My name is **James Edward Smith**, service No 55388. I served with 1RAR in Vietnam in 1968. I am trying to contact some of my old platoon. I reside in W.A and would appreciate any help you could give me.

You can contact me on email:
jimsmith1rar@bigpond.com.

Vale 54343 Peter Gerard Rigby

Born in Northcliffe, Western Australia Pete served in a number of Battalions and was a foundation member of 4 RAR and 9 RAR. There is an old saying that would suit the guy very well, "to know him was to love him".

Vale 52074 Don Dalton

Don Dalton passed away in August and is described by the RAR Association as the ulti-

mate soldier, great leader of men as an RSM, a dedicated family man, and a thorough gentleman who always thought of others ahead of himself.

MUSEUM RELOCATION

You will have read earlier in this edition of *FSB-Vic* that the Museum relocates to its new location between November and December 15th.

For those who want to share in this important piece of Vietnam Vet history, why not put in a few hours lending a hand to John Methven and his hard working team. Who knows, you might even enjoy it !!!

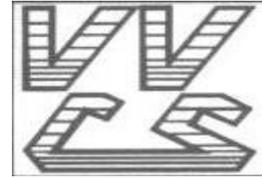
Whether you come along as an individual or get a few mates to make a "party" of it, just give the Museum a call on (03) 5678 5999.

Any assistance will be greatly appreciated.

VVAA State Office, ANZAC House
Please note that the State Office will not be manned after close of business on 22nd December and will re-open on 8th January 2007 .

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VVCS



Group Programmes

Most group programmes are now offered in two formats. You can access one-day introductory workshops on topics such as retirement and managing anger and aggression or enrol in an in-depth weekly programmes that will enable you to develop and practice new skills over a longer period of time.

Residential Lifestyle

This programme is a 6-day residential and will cover strategies to improve your lifestyle and to assist you cope better with stress. It will include relaxation and stress management; practical advice on health and diet; strategies to identify and manage anger; problem-solving and communication skills.

Early Retirement

This programme is available for veterans who have retired or are facing early retirement. It explores attitudes to work and retirement, the feelings of stress and loss often associated with retiring and teaches skills to help you cope with the transition from the routine and structure of work to retirement. The programme is conducted weekly, and extends over ten (10) two-hourly sessions.

Doing it Differently

This programme is designed for veterans who experience their anger and/or violent behaviour as a problem. Topics will include triggers to anger and/or violent behaviour and strategies to prevent this behaviour and its consequences. The programme is conducted weekly over ten (10) two-hourly sessions and fortnightly over five (5) fortnightly two hourly sessions.

Heart Health

This 12-month education and exercise Programme for Vietnam Veterans aims to promote health and well-being as well as social interaction. Information Session will be offered in the following locations:

Controlled Drinking

This programme is designed for veterans who are experiencing problems with alcohol and want to cut down their drinking to improve their health and quality of life. You will learn the principles of controlled drinking and how to reduce levels of alcohol consumption. The programme is conducted weekly over ten (10) two-hourly sessions.

Partners' Self-Care Programme

This programme is offered to partners of veterans of all conflicts and peacekeeping missions. It encourages sharing of experiences and mutual support, and teaches partners ways to take care of their own psychological and physical health. The programme is conducted weekly and extends over ten (10) two hourly sessions.

Sons & Daughters Lifeskills

these three-hour information and discussion forums are offered throughout the state and cover topics such as:

- Understanding your family context
- Stress Management

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VVCS cont'd

Assertiveness
Skills for managing life more positively
Sons and daughters will be surveyed before finalising topics for a particular region.

Sons & Daughters Anger Management

This programme is designed for sons and daughters of veterans who experience their anger and/or aggressive behaviour as a problem. The programme is offered as a one-day workshop and an in depth 8-week programme.

ASIST

This two-day workshop is designed for veterans, their partner and children to help them identify and deal with people who are at risk of suicide. It presents information on how to talk to someone who is thinking of suicide, how to access help for them and how to look after yourself while providing them with support.

Register for community sessions throughout Victoria by calling the VVCS group coordinator

The groups listed above do not cover all the regions in Victoria. If you or your family identify a particular programme needed in your region, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will do our utmost to provide additional groups. Please note that groups require minimum numbers for them to be effective. If numbers are too low, the programme may be postponed or not offered.

Register your interest by calling VVCS on 9221 0515 or 1800 011 046 or by filling in the group registration form below and returning it to:

*Group Programme Administrative Officer,
VVCS, 290 Burwood Road, Hawthorn VIC 3122*

Programme Name:.....
Area:.....
Starting on:.....
Name:
Date of Birth:.....
Address:
.....
Post Code:.....
Phone
 If Veteran - please provide Service Number:.....
 For Partner / children please provide Veteran's name:.....

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

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Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living



4 Combat Services Support Battalion transported and set up the Long Tan Cross at the Melbourne Shrine after transporting it from Seymour.

2nd/10th Field Regiment arrive for the service at the Melbourne Shrine.



4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse setting up at the Melbourne Shrine. We are told that this "track", Bravo21, was involved in the Battle of Long Tan - or the bottom of it at least!

Inside the Old Girl.



Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living