



# Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Victorian Branch Inc.

SUMMER 2018 EDITION

## HONOURING OUR CORAL/BALMORAL VETERANS



### VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2018

March Form Up at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance headed by 26 cadets from Mentone Grammar School parading Australian Flags commemorating each of the Coral/Balmoral KIAs.



### ELTHAM College vocalists - "I Was Only 19"

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***Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living***

ESB-VIC





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***Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living***



Hey, where did 2018 go? So here I am now racing towards the big 70!

To all you vets out there who have already hit the big 70 and beyond, well done you “old codgers”! And to all of you over 70’s who are DFRDB pension recipients (you know, the pension that keeps on giving – to the Government!), I bring special greetings from the Commonwealth Super Board; may you continue to enjoy

good health and continue to make your involuntary contributions for many years to come.

On a serious note, the DFRDB scandal continues to land on tin ears in Government, and I thank all who took the time to sign the on line petition. The treatment of DFRDB recipients who decided to commute part of their pension to a lump sum is nothing short of a disgrace (the banks have nothing on the Commonwealth Super Board when it comes to ripping clients off), and is just another way that many Vietnam veterans and other ex-service personnel continue to be screwed.

## WE DID IT, WE DID IT, WE DID IT!

We got the Gold Card for the SEATO medical and surgical teams! On Friday 14 December I joined Dot Angell and two other SEATO nurses for a meeting with Darren Chester the Minister for Veterans Affairs and Josh Frydenberg the Federal Treasurer at the Shrine of Remembrance where the Minister advised us that the Government will make the DVA Gold Card available to the surviving members of the SEATO teams. We were prevented from making any comment until the news hit the papers on Sunday.

I reported to you that we had finally destroyed the Government’s argument against providing the Gold Card to the SEATO folk in September this year. I provided the Minister with evidence that civilian members of the Defence Signals Directorate went to Vietnam on Diplomatic passports, were attached to the Australian Embassy in Saigon as liaison officers and had successfully had their claims for a DVA Gold Card accepted, and also that the Government had now made provision for the Gold Card to be provided to civilians who may have been impacted by the British Nuclear Testing in Australia.

***We got the Gold Card for the SEATO medical and surgical teams!***

Before moving on to quick review of other key achievements for 2018, I want to reflect for a moment or two on the loyal and brave Vietnam veteran mates who have passed away this year. I have attended too many funerals for my liking this year, but unfortunately it seems to be a sign of the times, and there is no doubt in my mind that Vietnam War service impacted their health and contributed to their far too early demise. Happily, the funerals were a celebration of life and faithful service and I dip my lid to all of our mates who have passed. Well Done Those Men (with apologies to Barry Heard for using the title of his terrific book), we will remember them.

We hit a number of high points in 2018. In no particular order:

\*Bob Glaubitz managed a big smile when we finally acquitted the \$1M state Government grant for the 2016 commemorations. We were delighted to be able to submit an unqualified audit report to the Department of Premier and Cabinet – well done Bob.

\*Another excellent commemorative event at the Shrine, with the focus on Coral/Balmoral. The feedback indicated that many who attended thought it our best commemorations ever. Well done Maurie Benson and all involved, thanks to the Shrine Governors for allowing us to use audio/visuals and present a “Vietnam Veteran” type of service. Thanks also to all who contributed to help finance the Gunfire Breakfast.

\*Branch membership cracked 2000. A wonderful effort when it is considered that many members passed away, and

some have not renewed membership. This was offset in part by a steady trickle of new members and others returning to the fold. Well done to all, and in particular Sue and Lindsay who keep the best membership register in the VVAA, and to those Sub-Branched who equaled or surpassed their 2017 membership totals.

\*Amended our constitution to give SEATO team members ordinary member status.

\*Success with obtaining grants through the Victorian Veterans Council for VV Day 2018, E Team activities, and Branch Executive functions.

\*Final presentation of Branch awards at the last Story Writing and Arts Competition. We have been proud sponsors of this annual competition for a number of years. Thanks to

Aff Binnoore for being our SWAC representative.

\*Progressing our closure plan from a discussion paper to a guide for closure with the inclusion of detail on the role of the State Executive. The experience of some of our sub-branches closing has increased our confidence in the content of the closure paper. Our closure plan has now been extended to the VVAA National Executive and copies forwarded to the Victorian Veterans Council, Department of Premier and Cabinet Veterans Branch and Legacy Victoria.

\*Maintaining a strong presence at the National Congress and Council meetings. The Branch continues to advocate for a lessening of the administrative burden imposed by national on the branches, and more recently, the branch pushed for a distribution of national funds to the National Vietnam Veterans Museum.

\*Two members recognized in the Queen's Birthday honours list.

\*State Council commitment to VV Day commemorations at the Shrine for 2019, where the Battle of Binh Ba and other actions from 1969 will take centre stage.

\*Recording of reflections of Coral/Balmoral veterans, one of whom has since passed on. It is critical that we record such memoirs while there is still time.

\*The annual Leslie Farren Memorial award was presented to Jeff Freeman in recognition of his work at the Repat.

\*Continuation of the Branch "Dollar Day" donation to the NVVM, taken from your capitations.

The Branch Executive continues to have an excellent working relationship with the RSL folk at ANZAC House and I have written to Dr. Rob Webster on behalf of the Branch to thank him and his staff for their on-going support. Occupying an office in ANZAC House is of tremendous benefit to the Branch.

Similarly, we continue to enjoy good working relationships with the Department of Premier and Cabinet Veterans Branch and Consumer Affairs Victoria. The executive hosted a small morning tea at ANZAC House recently to thank the members of the Veterans Branch for their support, particularly during our 2016 commemorative year.

After the recent state election, John Eren, the former State Minister for Veterans has stood down from ministerial responsibilities. I look forward to working with the new Minister to advance the lot of our members.

Your education team continues to represent the Branch magnificently and it is planned to deploy the E Team to

Echuca/Moama a few days before our 2019 AGM to conduct a community awareness and education program.

Another year of achievement and camaraderie draws to an end. At this time of the year our thoughts and deeds are focused on family and loved ones—rightly so, for they are veterans in their own right. It is worth pausing just for a moment to recognize that this time of the year may not be a happy one for some of our members and partners who may be alone for the first time, have just lost a loved one, may be estranged, or in poor health.

As your personal Christmas gift to them, can I encourage you to take a moment or two to give a mate or two a quick call just to say "hello, I am thinking of you". You may never know how powerful and meaningful those simple words might be. And isn't grass roots welfare what we pride ourselves on?

To each and every one, Lyn and I wish you all a peaceful and Holy Christmas and a restful and happy New Year. We are privileged to be able to call ourselves one of you. BRING ON 2019!

Bob Elworthy AM

VICTORIAN



BRANCH

## MEMBERSHIP

### 2019

Time now to renew your 2019 membership.

YOUR SUB BRANCH  
NEEDS YOU

*'Last Friday [14 Dec] I met with Dot Angell, a couple of other SEATO nurses, the Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, and the Minister for Veterans Affairs Darren Chester at the Shrine of Remembrance where it was announced that the SEATO team members would finally get the Gold Card.*

*Members will recall that about a year ago it was decided to give up on trying to get DVA pensions for the SEATO teams, the government was just not going to budge. So it was Gold Card or bust.*

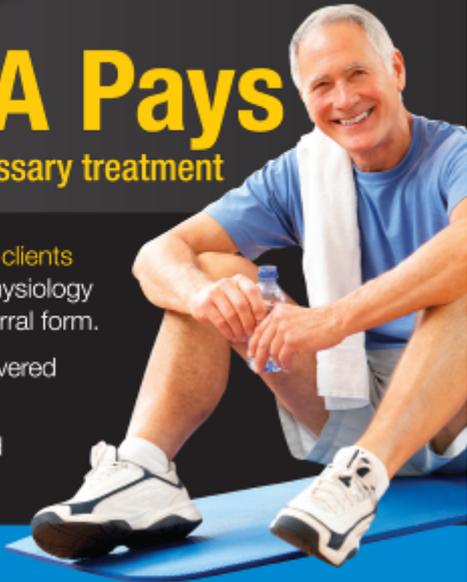
*I mentioned some months ago that I had attended a very promising meeting with the Minister for Veterans Affairs where he was presented with new, and what I believed to be compelling evidence, that other civilians during the Vietnam War had successfully applied to the government for the Gold Card. Coupled with the government announcement that civilians who may have been impacted by the British nuclear testing were also now eligible for the Gold Card, it was put to the Minister that the Government could no longer deny the SEATO members because we had defeated their two main arguments, i.e. The SEATO members were civilian and not attached to the ADF.*

*I congratulate the government for this long overdue recognition of the SEATO team members who now number less than 200. This brings to an end a decades long fight with federal governments of both political persuasions to achieve what I believe to have been one of our last big pieces of unfinished business, and another achievement for the VVAA of which we can be very proud. Thank you to all who persisted along the way, once again we have lived our motto by Honouring the SEATO team members we have passed on and we Fought Like Hell for those still with us.'*

R W (Bob) Elworthy AM

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia

Victorian Branch President



**Veterans Wellness Programs**

**DVA Pays**  
for the clinically necessary treatment

Entitled Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) clients may be referred for clinically necessary Exercise Physiology treatment by their General Practitioner on a valid D904 referral form.

**Gold Card Holders** are entitled to clinically necessary treatment covered by DVA's health care arrangements for all health conditions.

**White Card Holders** are entitled to clinically necessary treatment for an accepted disability ie: an injury or disease accepted by DVA as caused by war.

**Start today and experience the benefits...**

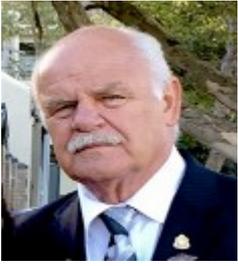
- ✓ Increase mobility and balance
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## A roundup of 2018

We should all be very proud of our achievements this year, I know I am. 2018 has been a very productive and successful year for us all. Membership has remained steady and falls just short of last years total but still over our magic number of 2000, be it by

just one. This year (*to date*) we have lost 31 of our mates and our thoughts go out to their family & friends. They will be sadly missed. 'Lest we Forget'

The events for this year were many and varied with Sub-Branched working hard to deliver services to their members within their own communities and Sub-Branch. The Sausage sizzles, Day outings, Wives activities Coffee mornings, Badge Week and other Welfare fundraisers and let's not forget the Sub-Branch's local Vietnam Veterans Day commemorations all make for a happy veteran community. Vietnam Veterans Day at the Shrine this year surpassed all expectations. The theme was the Battle of Coral/Balmoral with Eltham College Band performing amongst other songs 'He was only Nineteen.' The Mentone Grammar School cadets (26) were the flag bearers and guard of honor on the day.

Commemorations this year were a little different from previous years in that, there was no keynote speaker on the day, this instead was replaced with a *Retrospective* to those who died during the battles of Coral and Balmoral.

The addition this year of a television screen displaying a live broadcast of the commemorations added to the atmosphere. The broadcast switched between recollections by veterans of their experiences in Vietnam and live broadcasts of activities around the Shrine precinct. Truly well done and greatly appreciated by all attending.

Comments after the event came in from all over Australia validating the hard work put in by the organizing committee and the effort by Sub-Branched in getting their members to the Shrine for the occasion. Most comments were around how well we do it here in Victoria. It was a truly spectacular day.

Planning is already underway for next year 2019.

We are truly blessed here in Victoria at being able to work hand in hand with a Government who actively supports Veteran Welfare by showing a genuine interest in keeping the veterans cause alive. A pre-election promise to fund VVAA Victoria to the tune of \$1m in support of our members gives us certainty in hosting the Vietnam Veterans Day Commemorations for 2019 .

The museum from humble beginnings has grown into a Nationally recognized tourist destination winning certifica-

tion from Trip Advisor, ACNC and many more. The Museum is in dialog with a number of local land owners in regard to the procuring of land for their new home and future expansion. The museum is very close to achieving full museum status.

Military equipment continues to come in, the latest a Sabre Jet, a C130 aircraft have been gifted to the Museum with the hunt on now for a F4 Phantom for adding to the list. These new additions will join the Caribou recently fitted out as a classroom where visiting schools and children can experience, through an interactive visual display, a realistic feeling of what it was like on a day way back when all those years ago. The simulated take offs and landings will add to their experience as will the opportunity to sit in the pilot seat, play with the instruments and controls and experience boarding and disembarking by way of the hydraulic movable ramp.

As part of the Governments pre election promise in November a further \$200.000 has been allocated to allow more students to learn about the Vietnam conflict the 60,000 that went and the 521 who never made it home.

The museum is constantly evolving with continuous rotations of the Displays and Events. Donations from Veterans, families of Veterans and the general public come in frequently, these are put into storage until the opportunity for a specific display comes around. The future of our Museum is looking really bright thanks to the talented Board of Directors and the Museum management team.



I have over the last few months started to accept invitations to Commemorative events around Melbourne. Just recently I attended the Remembrance Day commemorations at Woodlea, deputizing for Bob Elworthy.

The service was well attended by Vietnam Veterans and veterans from other conflicts and the general public. At completion of the service I took some time out and look around their Memorial Walk which was very impressive. On the way home I detoured by way of Wheelahan Park Memorial at Sunshine. The Memorial was erected to honor Australia's commitment in Vietnam and to remember the 521 who died there. Earlier this year it was vandalized with many marble panels damaged and broken. I am pleased to report the damage has all been repaired and the site is once again good as new. A 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Commemoration has been planned for this year and I look forward to attending once again.

As mentioned, 2018 has been a very productive year for VVAA Victoria. Thank you to my fellow Committee members for their support and to the Sub-Branched Executives

for their dedication and effort in keeping membership numbers up and the Sub-Branches running smoothly. Your co-operation certainly makes my job easier.



*To all a very Merry Christmas with best wishes for the New Year. I look forward to seeing you all again next year, 2019*

*Regards  
George*



*Yes your Secretary has indeed been busy.*

CENTRE STATE PRINTING

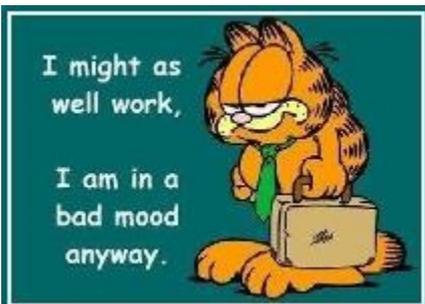
Following a decade of providing printing services to VVAA Victorian Branch it was only fitting that a *Certificate of Appreciation* be presented to the Team at Centre State Printing (CSP), Maryborough.

CSP have provided us with an efficient service in ensuring our state newsletter FSB-Vic reached member mailboxes each 6 months in a timely manner.

Given our move to electronic issue of FSB-Vic sadly we no longer need the services of CSP but thank them for being with us along that journey and being part of the VVAA story.



Pictured L>R: Maurie Benson, Editor FSB-Vic, Ben CSP, Rick CSP, Lee Turton VP Maryborough Sub Branch, Ben Holscher President Maryborough Sub Branch.



**THE FOUR STAGES OF LIFE:**

1. You believe in Santa Clause.
2. You don't believe in Santa Clause
3. You are Santa Clause.
4. You look like Santa Clause.



***Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living***

# HONOURS & AWARDS 2018

VVAA Vic is delighted to see another two hard working members acknowledged for their efforts within the veteran community with an award of the *Medal of the Order of Australia* in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours.



**Brendan Kincade OAM**

**Vice President VVAA Victoria**

*For services to veterans and their families.*



**Cheryl Myers OAM**

**Secretary VVAA Frankston**

*For services to veterans and their families.*

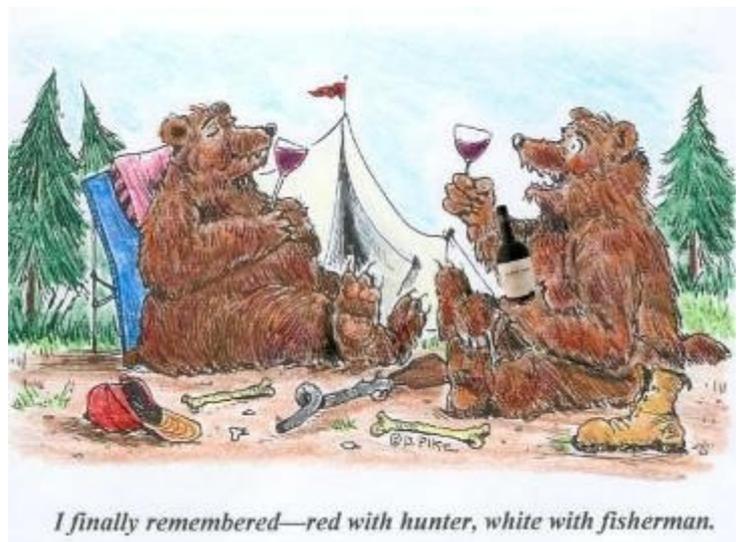
# PHIL WHITE MEMORIAL AWARD.

This annual award is given to the Year 12 Student who excels in attitude towards teachers, staff and fellow students and application to all aspects of his studies.

The late Phil White OAM (VVAA Vic Education Team) had a special relationship with Alkira Secondary College, North Cranbourne and was responsible for several awards from the State Government in partnering the school in educating students about all aspects of the Vietnam War.



Bladdyn Dickinson from Alkira Secondary College, North Cranbourne, was awarded the 2018 "*Phil White Memorial Award for Attitude and Aptitude*" and is pictured here with Education Team Member Brendan Kincade OAM.



## Outstanding Support Award

This Certificate is Presented to

### Veterans Branch, Department of Premier and Cabinet

In recognition of outstanding and sustained support to the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, Victorian Branch, and in particular the close and personal assistance provided by Veterans Branch staff, which contributed significantly to the success of the Victorian Branch 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan Commemorative Program in 2016.

At Anzac House Melbourne on Wednesday 14th November 2018 the VVAA Victorian Branch presented a *Certificate of Outstanding Support* to the Team at the *Veterans Branch, Department of Premier & Cabinet* (DPC).

Over many years VVAA Vic State Executive has developed a sound working relationship with Veteran Branch DPC staff who have also responded in a positive manner to the many “demands” placed upon them both from VVAA Vic, as a progressive veteran welfare group, and the myriad of rules and regulations to be overcome to achieve objectives.

We are particularly grateful for the solid support provided by the Veterans Branch DPC staff when VVAA Vic was undertaking the 2016 commemorations program which raised a huge range of challenges.



The team from Veterans Branch, Department of Premier & Cabinet.



Sunday, 11 November 2018

## SUPPORTING THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO PROTECT US

Every single day, there are men and women who put their lives on the line for us. A re-elected Andrews Labor Government will make sure that service is given the respect and recognition it deserves.

Because leaving the frontline behind them can be difficult for so many, Labor will fund an expansion of the Centenary of Anzac Centre, which provides mental healthcare for current and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel and their families.

The \$1.5 million investment will fund capital works at the centre, which is run by Phoenix Australia, a not-for-profit organisation that is internationally renowned in the field of post-traumatic mental health.

With around 8.3 per cent of our armed forces having experienced post-traumatic stress in the last year alone, this is a real and insidious problem that impacts families across our state.

With this investment, Labor will deliver a huge expansion of mental health services – making Victoria our nation’s leader in the research and treatment of post-traumatic mental health, and making sure our servicemen and women get the support they deserve.

Today’s announcement builds on Labor’s commitment to introduce provisional acceptance payments for mental health injuries for emergency workers, making sure that these dedicated Victorians can access mental health support the moment they need it.

Ensuring veterans have the support they need as they transition back into civilian life, Labor will provide \$1 million to Veterans in Construction to secure work for 100 veterans across our major projects and other private sector jobs.

This new investment is in addition to the Victorian veterans who are already contributing to the Andrews Labor Govern-

ment’s massive infrastructure program, removing level crossings and building road and rail across our state.

Today’s announcement recognises that the skills and experience veterans gain in the ADF are second-to-none, and ensures these Victorians can continue their service to our state.

*We will also provide \$1 million for the Vietnam Veterans Association to support their members across the state. A further \$200,000 will go to the National Vietnam Veterans Museum in Phillip Island, allowing more school students to learn about the conflict, with some 60,000 Australians serving our nation and 521 who never made it home.*

Labor will also recognise the sacrifice our diggers made, and continue to make, by introducing a weekly Last Post Ceremony at the Shrine of Remembrance, commemorating every Victorian who has served our nation.

It will be an opportunity for family members, veterans and school students to attend and pay their respects to the men and women who answered their country’s call and fought for the freedom Australia enjoys today.

Today and every day, we remember those whose service has afforded us the freedoms we enjoy today.

*We will also provide \$1 million for the Vietnam Veterans Association to support their members across the state. A further \$200,000 will go to the National Vietnam Veterans Museum in Phillip Island, allowing more school students to learn about the conflict, with some 60,000 Australians serving our nation and 521 who never made it home.*

### Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*“With this investment, we’ll make Victoria our nation’s leader in the treatment of post-traumatic stress. Most importantly, we’ll make sure those men and women never have to face that battle on their own.”*

*“Our veterans have always been there for us and we’ll always be there for them.”*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Veterans John Eren

*“It’s only right that we give the men and women who’ve served our nation the support they need as they transition back into civilian life.”*

Premier Andrews announces new

Minister for Veterans

The Hon Robin Scott MP



BOX HILL

**INDUCTED LIFE MEMBERS**

The Vietnam Veterans “Black Tie Dinner” as many of you know is the Premier event on the Vietnam Veterans Calendar, and the Box Hill RSL as well. This year again saw a great speaker in The Honourable Tim Fischer AC.



During the night, a special event also took place, and what better place to do this was the Induction of Five members of the Vietnam Veterans and they were presented their certificates by the President of RSL Victoria Dr Robert Webster OAM and the President of the Vietnam Veterans State Branch Victoria Mr Bob Elworthy AM awarded them their Medallions. The inductees were from left to

right be Rod Burgess Secretary, Brian Tateson Vice President, Gerry Wallbridge Committee person, Vic Allen Past Vice President and John Haward President and all of the Box Hill Vietnam Veterans and Box Hill RSL.

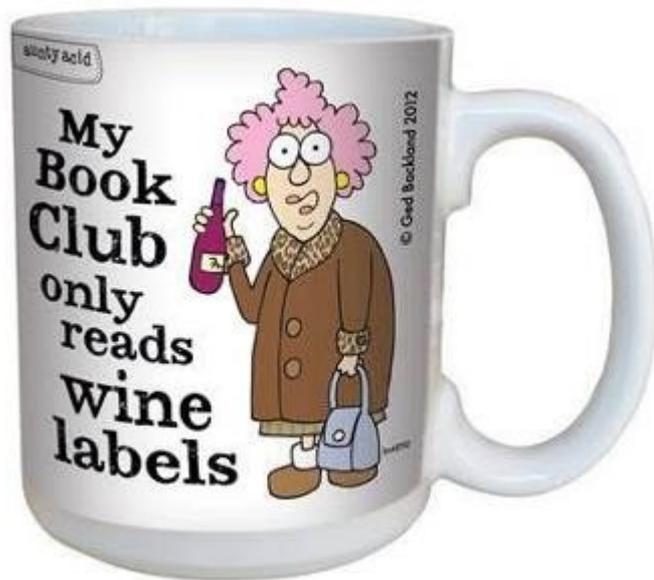


The induction also witnessed by our Politicians who attended the “Black Tie Dinner” were Julia Banks MP our Federal Member and Mr Robert Clark MP our state member. Those named and to receive “Life Membership” was for all the hard work they have carried out, each serving (14) years. “Well Done Those Men”

**BOYS AND THEIR TOYS**

This year 2018 as most of us know marks the 50th anniversary of the battle of Coral and Balmoral, and also it marks the 50th year that some of us were in Vietnam. To celebrate this

milestone, members of “C Squadron 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Regiment” ventured of to Buninyong to view (3) working Centurion Tanks, two Battle Tanks and one Dozer Tank. They have all been restored by two brothers Chris and Frank Nicholls. Not only did they restore these tanks but they have all the information on “C” Squadron and “B” Squadron. Their mother Bev, made scones, jam and cream along with chocolate cake for about twelve of C Squadron. Those who served at Coral and Balmoral in the photo were Herman Harberts, Leigh Jukes, and other members present were Rod Burgess, Gary Willets and Brian Tateson, all from our Sub-Branch. As the motors screamed up, everyone had goose bumps, it was great to hear this noise after so long, and it was such a great day thanks to the Nicholls family, one we will remember for a long time.



DVIETS

As we draw to the tail end of 2018, we wish all Vietnam Veterans and their families all the best for Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

The DViets have enjoyed a good 2018 and have maintained their strong membership base and recruited some new members; it is sad that over the year we have lost several members and our thoughts are with their families and friends.

We are still enjoying good numbers every Friday night at our weekly meetings across the RSLs of our area with regular visits to them all and we thank the RSLs for their support and assistance with our activities.

We are meeting our aim of having at least one outing for members each

month, be it a mystery trip or to a designated venue. These outings are very well patronised.

August continues to be the prime month with a Community Service, Simpson Barracks for Chapel Service and the Sergeants Mess afterwards, the Vietnam Veterans themed footy match at Lower Plenty FC grows in stature each year, and of course, a terrific day put together by VVAA Vic Executive for the 18<sup>th</sup> at the Shrine and I trust many members will support the event in 2019.

Badge week, as most branches are finding, is becoming increasingly difficult but our Badge Week coordinator Bill Little did a terrific job and the outcome was a very pleasing result. A

tribute to our members who got out there and helped with the sales.

An interesting night in November with Darebin RSL for the third year hosting a night with a free meal for members and partners; very much appreciated.

We have our Annual Xmas Party in December and look forward to a great turn-up at the Greensborough Bowling Club.

Next year will be the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the DViets and we will be celebrating in style with a Luncheon at Watsonia RSL and some very honoured guests and members.

Peter Blackman  
President.

OUTER EASTERN MELBOURNE

It's been busy over the past few months with many activities on the calendar. One of the most important was the awarding of *Sub Branch Life Membership* to Tony Zammit. Tony's role as Fundraiser Coordinator, and the key role of Events Coordinator, is crucial to OEM. The award took place at the OEM Christmas Function in early December when around 90 members attended.

Two of our Members Lindsay Rotherham and Dennis Curran took out 3 of the key prizes in the final SWAC Competition. The SWAC Competition has finally closed after an incredible 56 years. **Right: Dennis Curran is presented with first prize in the Open Photography Section by Dr Robert Webster OAM, President of RSL Victoria.**

Other activities over the last few months included participating in Remembrance Day Services. This again

taxed the Sub Branch with Members attending some 8 services and laying wreaths at 5 services. We presented the annual *Integrity Award* at the *Recruit Passing Out Parade* at *HMAS Cerberus* in early December. This is an annual event for the Sub Branch. Our OEM Gypsy Caravan Group again had successful trips to Port Albert and spent a few days at Glen Cromie in November. We were joined at Glen Cromie by members of other VVAA Sub-branches.

In partnership with the Welfare Support Unit of the Ringwood RSL we conducted a *Nutrition and Health Expo* as a contribution towards DVA's Veterans Health Week. We also attended 2<sup>nd</sup> Briefing with the New Secretary of DVA, Liz Cosson. It was again a very interesting discussion on the guidelines of *Patient Servicing* from July 2019

More recently our Support Group has

prepared Christmas hampers for some 15 OEM Members who it is felt need just a "Heads Up" for Christmas. We believe that's a way to say "we know you had a tough year in 2018". We also took part in a community fundraising event in Belgrave to help raise funds for the family of a nurse who was killed assisting an injured motor cyclist. We had two teams working our OEM BBQ trailer for the day.

***We wish all Sub Branch Members of VVAA VIC our Best Wishes***

***For Christmas & the New Year***

***Please Drive Safely***



# SUB BRANCHES ~ WHAT'S ON

## DVIETS ON PARADE

[On the road to Canberra and Lakes Entrance](#)



THEN – bus to Shepparton; out for dinner; and The Whistlestop...



Head into our Dinner Dance and VV Week activities: Community Service, NFL footy match, Simpson Barracks...



Bus trips to Bendigo, Mystery Trip, and another great meal at Darebin RSL...



***Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living***

GEELONG & DISTRICT

As in the past few years the Geelong Vietnam Veterans Weekend consisted of special Long Tan Football and Netball games. The games were preceded with a short memorial service, with both teams, umpires and Vietnam veterans lining up in front of the Australian flag. The Ode was recited followed with the Last Post and Rouse. At the end of the games the Geelong President, Rieny Nieuwenhof, had the honour of presenting the Long Tan Medals to the "Best on Ground" and "Best on Court".

Another feature of Vietnam Week was the flying of VVAA Geelong flags around the city; these provided a spectacular entrance to Geelong along the Princes Highway and in other prominent locations around Geelong. We thank the City of Greater Geelong for its recognition of the Vietnam Veteran Community.

Towards the end of August Vietnam Veterans, who had served at Coral and Balmoral were invited to a special Morning Tea at Parliament House with the Minister for Veterans, The Hon John Eren.



L-R Hon. Richard Marles, Federal Member for Corio; Mayor of the Borough of Queenscliff Cr. Sue Salter; Graham Christie JP; Minister for Veterans John Eren; Geelong SB President Rieny Nieuwenhof.

FRANKSTON

As we look back over the last 12 months the Frankston District Sub Branch of the VVAA has had an increase in membership, we believe that this is due not only to our active social activities, but to our partners being full members of our group.

This year, as usual, many of our members disappeared for the winter months. Unfortunately we have several of our members suffering badly with ill health and I hope that next year is better for them.

Our Service on Vietnam Veterans Day was well attended and among our guests were students from the Pearcedale primary school deaf choir, they sang the national anthem as well as other songs; this was very moving and warmly welcomed by our members and guests.

We have continued our affiliation with Pearcedale primary school with a perpetual shield called "*The Carving Cobber*" award which will go to a Grade 5 student; this will be presented in December this year.

Some of our members have just come back from a week at Castlemaine which they all enjoyed and we have also enjoyed several lunches at various restaurants in the region. We all watched the Invitus games

to see how Rye Shawcroft went. Rye is a disabled younger veteran and the Frankston members spent quite a while helping him train for his event seated volleyball.

Like most of the Sub-Branches we are planning our activities for 2019 and to fund these we have recently had a sausage sizzle at Bunnings.

As mentioned in previous copies of FSB-Vic we hold a coffee morning every Tuesday for veterans at a local café. This has now grown into a very social gathering with about 20-25 going every week and also they are having the odd bus trip as well.

The Frankston Sub-Branch meets on the First Monday of the month at 7.30pm at the Frankston RSL in the Simpson Room 2. Any Veteran or partner who is in the area on the day is more than welcome to come along to a meeting. For any information please contact the President Kelvin Park 0432473039 or the Secretary Cheryl Myers on 0409962545

As this will be the last edition of FSB before Christmas, I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Safe and prosperous New Year.

**Our Young Vet Friend Rye.**

Watching Telly one night early in the year an ad came over conveying the message that the INVICTUS GAMES were coming to Sydney. I didn't think much of it at the time but seeing the ad a few more times spiked my interest. I had always thought these games to be a Pommy thing that Prince H instigated.

Hence, I looked into it further to find that it was like a mini Olympics Prince H helped set up to support troubled vets from all around the world and yes this circus was coming to Sydney.



Being a Vet myself and part of our local VVAA group, we were always looking for ideas to engage with the younger vets in the area. I thought this could be such an opportunity. My first thought was maybe to take a motion to the club that we could donate some money to the games organisation to help it along. However, one look at the extent of the games coverage, I thought our offering would be lost in such a big pot, so lost interest in that approach.

Time went by. Then in about June the Australian team of the Games was announced. Ha! I thought maybe we could help a team member to get to the games. Checking out the web site of the Australian

FRANKSTON (cont'd)

Team I happened upon a lad, Rye Shawcroft, in our area only a few k's from our RSL.

Hence, at our next club meeting I spoke to the members seeking their support that if I was to approach Rye, we as a club would be willing to support him any way we could to get him to the games. The club was 100% unanimous.

With that backing I contacted Rye and invited him to the RSL for a meeting with club president Kelvin and myself. At this meeting we found Rye to be a determined 22 year old who had joined the Army in

2014 to be discharged 2 years later after experiencing neural pathway, circulation and musculoskeletal problems with his knees and hips. Rye after being unsuccessful in his bid to compete in the 2017 games was ecstatic to be invited to attend the 2018 training camp and to make the team.

Asking Rye how we could help him get to the games, (thinking he would probably be ok with a few bob and some training gear) he requested assistance with his training. Yes we said!

Rye's team sport is Sitting Volleyball; a team game played as per volleyball rules but skating about a polished floor on your backside without wheelchair assistance. So Rye's request was for a polished floor approximately 5m x 10m and some "athletic types" to help retrieve the volleyball and set up 3 hours of training a week.

What have I done?

We invited Rye to our July VVAA meeting for dinner and introduction to the club, where he spoke of his background and his ambitions; this endeared him to the members. We adopted Rye and presented him with a pocket money cheque for \$500

Luckily the polished floor was the easy bit. The rear pavilion of the Frankston RSL was just right. The VVAA club purchased a couple of extra volleyballs and the training sessions of 1 hour 3 days a week were set up.

The Frankston VVAA boys meet every Tuesday morning for coffee. Anything up to twenty vets come along. I made a request for "athletic types" to assist with ball re-

trieval duties to the group and was pleased by their enthusiasm to help, so a roster was drawn up..

A typical training session was to clear the pavilion of chairs and tables, rig up a make-shift net, mark out the court. Set Rye at one end and have two "retrievers" at the opposite end and another at Rye's end. Training started 17th July and ran through to 11th October; 27 sessions in all involving some 17 vets (now marginally fitter) and 3 partners.

Training would proceed with Rye practicing various parts of the game such as serving, spiking, slamming and setting up; all of which meant a whole lot of balls being wacked around the room, bouncing off walls, ceiling, windows and

air conditioners. It was then up to the "retrievers" to chase and gather the balls and return them to Rye to have the bombardment commence again. After an hour of this carry on, the ball chasers were glad to end and Rye had hardly cracked a sweat. We incurred only one broken window.

Apart from the training Rye is also selected in the wheelchair basketball team. I think we are all thankful that we were not required for that training cycle.

Rye is back to studying for a civil engineering degree and was the first person in Australia to complete the arduous Tough Mudder obstacle course in a wheelchair and has confirmed to many that with determination and commitment anyone can overcome

their obstacles.

13th October Rye left for Sydney and the Games and with ABC coverage we should see him in action on the 22nd.

On his return from the Games he has agreed to return to the club for a debrief of this his latest adventure. We all wish Rye the very best.

Campbell JOHNS

VVAA Frankston Sub-Branch

Best Wishes can be sent to Rye Via;

Mobile: 0401 193 465

Email: rye\_shawcroft@hotmail.com



MARYBOROUGH

The Sub-Branch had big ideas of doing more during 2018, but as time flew by we only managed to complete some of the projects we had spoken about.

During the last part of this year we visited Buninyong once again as this is an interesting outing for our members to see all of the privately collected Military memorabilia, tanks and vehicles.

Our members also had a great day when members of the Military Brotherhood (Ballarat Chapter) came to Maryborough recently and put on a great BBQ for our members and their families.

Several Sub-Branch members once again did our annual trek to visit the Seymour Commemorative Walk with the school leaders of Maryborough's Highview College and Maryborough Education Centre.



They were very impressed with the Commemorative walk and loved the BBQ provided by the Mitchell Sub-Branch members who made the kids very welcome.

We will complete this year with our Family Xmas lunch which is to be held at Paddy's Patch near Bendigo. Both the Marybough Executive and Members would like to wish State and all our Sub-Branches a Merry Xmas and Happy New-Year.



NORTH WEST



Several years ago, at one of our monthly meetings a member floated the idea of a memorial dedicated specifically to our Vietnam Veterans in the area, a lasting memorial to all Vietnam veterans's past and present and on into the future.

The idea of having a Long Tan Cross was agreed upon and forwarded on to the manufacturer with suggestions for a

design.

A specific design was agreed upon with the company "Dished and Flanged ends" who are based in Tullamarine. A huge thank you must go to them for supplying all the material and the manufacturing of the Cross, at no cost to the Sub-Branch, which was a very generous gesture indeed and much appreciated.

The next stage was the Weather Proofing and Painting so it would maintain it's beauty for many years to come. This task was completed by Super Finish of Gaffney Street, Coburg. The Cross was Dedicated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018 by Padre Mark Dunn.

The project will be completed in early in 2019 with the last stage being the attachment of 4 Bronze plaques, Vietnam 1962-75, a Vietnam dedication, Lest we Forget and Vietnamese campaign Medals on the front, a plaque inscribed with the original wording on the Long Tan Cross will be mounted on the back.

# Story Writing & Art Competition

## SWAC



On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November a part of History ended for the Victorian Veterans Art & Craft Community. The *Story Writing and Craft Competition* (SWAC) finally closed after 56 years of existence. In its 56 years there have been only 4 Patrons; The Hon LTGEN Sir Edward Herring KCMG, KBE, DSO, MC, Bruce Ruxton OBE, MAJGEN David McLachlan (Rtd) AO & finally Dr Robert Webster OAM.

The Competition has brought like minded veterans & their families together from many regional towns and from many areas in Victoria. Although I am unable to tell you how many entries were received over the 56 years it would be well in the thousands.

The Competition has had its home at RGH (Now Austin Health) since its inception in 1962, some 56 years ago,

With the Support of the Victorian Department of Veterans Affairs & Austin Health the Competition has done much for Veterans health & wellbeing. It has provided an outlet for veterans and their families to show their skills.

The Competition was administered from RGH by The Veterans Liaison Officer Robert WINTHER AM (this year made an Honorary Life Member of VVAA Vic) and supported by Ms Siobhan Hodgins. The Chair of the SWAC Committee has always been a Senior Member of DVA Victoria and for its final year it was Ms Sue-Anne Harrison in that role.

SWAC was supported by some 15 ESOs (who were Gold Sponsors) on the Steering Committee with at times some 25 Sponsors, VVAA Vic being one of that group on the SWAC Committee, also a major sponsor.

At the final Award Ceremony on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of Nov it was pleasing to see there was a very large turnout of past & present people who either assisted in the running of SWAC or were former entrants in the Competition.

Several notable guests included the CEO Austin Health, Sandro Cardinali (representing the Deputy Commissioner of DVA Victoria), Mike O'Meara (former Deputy Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Victoria), John Poland (TPI Assn Vic), Simon Bloomer from (Carry On) all were among the special guests.

It is estimated that just in excess of 200 Prize Winners, family & guests attended the final Award Ceremony.

VVAA Vic State President Robert "Bob" Elworthy AM attended the final ceremony & presented the awards in the categories which the Victorian Branch sponsors.

- ◆ VVAA Encouragement Award (photography-war armed services) to Alfred Hook
- ◆ Runner up in the award went to Marg McCronan.

The closing speech was given by the patron of SWAC Dr Robert Webster OAM where he thanked DVA, Austin Health, the SWAC Steering Committee and everybody past & present for their entries, also the Support they have provided to SWAC over its 56 year history.

I was doubly pleased in this final SWAC as three (3) of the key prizes were taken out by members of my own Sub Branch (OEM), they were;

- ◆ Craft –Wood, First Prize was awarded to Lindsay Rotherham
- ◆ Photography Open Class, First Prize awarded to Dennis Curran
- ◆ Defence Force Welfare Assn voted Most Popular by Visitors awarded to Dennis Curran.

It is interesting to note that the Daughter of Lindsay Rotherham also took out 2 prizes; a first in one category & second in another.

One fantastic legacy of SWAC is the refurbishment of part of the "Old Kitchen Area". It is now a state of the art conference centre & nurse training facility made possible by a former SWAC entrant's bequest by "the Late George Duncan".

Finally I would like to thank the VVAA Vic State Executive for their support and my predecessor James Coghlan for all his work and to the Victorian Sub Branches for giving your support to this fine competition over many years.

Thank you all.

Regards

Amat "Aff" Binnoore BEM

VVAA Rep

SWAC Steering Committee Vic

24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2018



The National Vietnam Veterans Museum is entering a very exciting time and, arguably, a new era. We have once again outgrown our existing facilities and to do justice to our constantly growing collection need to investigate expansion. The recent announcement by our Federal Member for Flinders, the Honourable Greg Hunt, to commit \$5 million to springboard fundraising efforts demonstrates a clear acknowledgement of the works we are doing are what we are endeavoring to achieve.

Museum Chairman of the Board, Kingsley Munday, Bob Elworthy and the General Manager met with Victorian State Minister for Tourism and Veterans Affairs, the Honourable John Eren, in May to outline expansion plans. Minister Eren verbalized his support for what we are endeavoring to accomplish and asked for further plans.

Bass Coast Shire is assisting us to identify alternate Phillip Island sites for our new Museum.

Liberal Member for Bass, Brian Paynter, arranged a forum of eight (8) State Parliament Shadow Ministers on Phillip Island last August. Shadow Ministers were given an update of what we were trying to achieve. They were asked to support us and we wished them the best of luck in the upcoming State elections.

Visitor numbers to our Museum for the year to date have continued to increase.



The Victorian Tourism Industry Council (VTIC) recently advised that our Museum has received Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP) recognition. This enables use of the ATAP “tick” A good team effort.

TripAdvisor also advised that our Museum is a “**2018 Traveler’s Choice Award**” winner in the following categories: - Top 25 Museums – South Pacific; Top 10 Museums – Australia.

Traveler’s Choice Awards are the highest honour TripAdvisor can give – meaning our business is truly exceptional. Based on reviews and opinions from millions of travelers, we’re in the top 1% of attractions.

TripAdvisor also saw fit to include our Museum in their “Hall of Fame” status as a result of obtaining the highest

visitor response rating for five consecutive years.

Volunteers Gail Wade, (Librarian) Marian Brennan (Collections) and the General Manager met with Museums Australia (Victoria) Museum Accreditation Program (MAP) Co-Managers last May. The purpose of the meeting was to review the MAP Coordinator’s Report following our application for accreditation. Unfortunately, our application was unsuccessful however, a substantive amount of work has been devoted to the process and we’re of the view that accreditation is not far away.

Victorian Police Compliance Enforcement, Licensing and Regulation Division representatives (3) visited our Museum in August, 2018 to inspect and log our weapon inventory. At the completion of their visitation positive comment was made and that a recommendation would be made to the Department of Justice recommending that the Minister provide our Museum with an Exemption under the Firearms Act in the name of the National Vietnam Veterans Museum Ltd.

The Museum is in the process of obtaining Centurion and Scorpion Tank Turret Simulators. Procurement procedures have been initiated. A chance meeting with Dr Clint Heinze, Department of Defence, may realize procurement of an F111 cockpit.

We are indeed fortunate to have a truly passionate group of eighty (80) Volunteers and less than three (3) Equivalent Full Time (EFT) Staff who devote a significant amount of their time and effort to our Museum. They go above and beyond. Without them we simply would not exist. Comprehensive volunteer training and induction programs have been developed and implemented. Most of them now online.

Our Museum was represented at the recent Victorian History Teacher’s Association (VHTA) 2018 State Conference.

The “Caribou Classroom” was formally opened by Wing Commander Mike Ward in July, 2018. Commander Ward was the last pilot to fly Caribou 231.

Restoration Coordinator Colin Grey attended the RAN Historic Flight Disposal Centre last August in regard to procurement of a flying UH-1B Bell Iroquois helicopter. There are three accredited/recognized Australian Heritage Organizations seeking two “Hueys”. The decision as to who the successful tenderer/tenderers will be is to be determined by a review board with the final decision taken by Chief of Navy. We are optimistic.

Our Museum hosted a small Vietnam Veterans Day service on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> August. Commodore Greg Yorke, Chief of Navy, Senior Naval Officer, Victoria, spoke briefly before participating in a march and service at the Phillip Island RSL. Around 150 people attended.

The number of “Friends of The Museum” continues to grow.

We have recently procured a Kiowa helicopter and restoration has commenced. Restoration also continues on the Canberra bomber.

Phil Dressing,  
General Manager,

# VIETNAMESE MEMORIAL SUNSHINE

One year ago the Vietnamese Community funded and constructed a Memorial at the Kevin Wheelahan Park, Sunshine (Sunshine RSL) honouring all 521 Australians who died in Vietnam. This was a project of immense importance to the Vietnamese people who now call Australia home and a symbol of their gratitude to not only the Australians who gave their lives for the people of South Vietnam but to their new home Australia.

On Saturday 15th December this year, the 1st anniversary of the Memorial's construction, veterans both Australian and Vietnamese, gathered in silence and in song to remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Dignitaries included the Vietnamese Community, Vietnamese Veterans, RSL Victoria, local Council representatives, VVAA Victorian Branch and many others.

The Service followed the usual honouring of those departed in war but was quickly elevated by wonderful vocalists who provided a selection of meaningful songs both in English and Vietnamese.

It is worth noting that recent vandalism and damage to many of the panels has been repaired.



# VIETNAMESE MEMORIAL SUNSHINE



Steve Lowe, VVAA Vic Education Team, addresses those attending and presents the recently Memorial Book.

Memorial Books detailing (pictures and info) all 521 Australians who died in Vietnam are beautifully presented and are available from Steve Lowe on

Email: [saigon69@tpg.com.au](mailto:saigon69@tpg.com.au)

for \$50.00 each (limited stock available).

For information Steve was quite involved with the Vietnamese Community during the Memorial project.



Brendan Kincade OAM, Vice President VVAA Victorian Branch, addressing the Service.



Wreath Laying by Maurie Benson, VVAA Victorian Branch State Office, Brendan Kincade OAM Vice President VVAA Victorian Branch and Garry Collins, President Sunshine RSL.



George SKELL, Secretary VVAA Victorian Branch and Steve Lowe, VVAA Victorian Branch Education Team meeting up with some of the very proud locals.

***Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living***



national  
vietnam  
veterans  
museum

# Back to 'Nam'



Music  
from the  
60's &  
70's

Don't miss  
this energetic  
night full of  
laughter, fun,  
reminiscing  
and **ROCK!**

## CONCERT

FEATURING

THE TIMES



THE RETRO GIRLS



FORGOTTEN HEROES



Beer, wine  
and soft drink  
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prices

**PLUS**  
a raffle  
for exciting  
prizes!

A LIVELY AND ENTERTAINING MUSICAL RIDE DOWN MEMORY LANE

THE ENERGY WILL BE ELECTRIFYING AND MAKE YOU TO GET UP AND BOOGIE

**WHEN?**

**Saturday 23rd  
February 2019  
★ 7:00pm ★**

**WHERE?**

**National Vietnam  
Veterans Museum**  
25 Veterans Drive,  
Newhaven, Phillip Island  
**PHONE: 03 5956 6400**

**TICKETS PURCHASE ONLINE AT: [www.trybooking.com/ZTWQ](http://www.trybooking.com/ZTWQ)**

## PLANNING AHEAD

**Have you ticked all the boxes?**

**DO YOU HAVE A  
CURRENT WILL?**



**HAS SOMEONE A POWER  
OF ATTORNEY**

**(ENDURING/MEDICAL/FINANCIAL)?**

Preparing for that unexpected event that impacts family life sadly is far too often left until it is too late and those left to manage a loved one's affairs are faced with difficulties that could have been avoided by a little timely preparation.

To assist people "get their ducks lined up" DVA has produced a document titled "*Planning ahead Kit*" which is designed to help veterans and their families prepare for bereavement and other incapacities.

This helpful Kit can be accessed through the [DVA website > Planning ahead](#).

Also produced by VVAA Vic is a document titled "*When Death Comes Visiting*" which not only covers bereavement but the need to detail individual circumstances and changes e.g. financial, medical etc.

This document can be viewed/accessed through the [VVAA Vic website vyavvic.org.au](#).

It is essential to have specific and up to date Wills and Powers of Attorney so that when we are unable to manage our own affairs that task is made easier for whoever needs to step in and help. It is preferable to consult with a legal adviser on these matters.

**DO NOT LEAVE IT TOO LATE**

**THE GRAVEYARD OF PAST DEADLINES**



## SAFETY IN THE HOME



# Return Unwanted Medicines

Storage of expired and unwanted medicines in the home can be dangerous and unsafe disposal of unwanted medicines can lead to environmental damage.

There is a free and convenient way to dispose of your unwanted medicines responsibly via your local pharmacy, and it's called **Return Unwanted Medicines (or The RUM Project)**.

Check out [www.returnmed.com.au](http://www.returnmed.com.au) to find out more about the dangers of keeping old medications and the *Return and Disposal of Unwanted Medications* program.

***Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living***

Veterans and Veterans Families  
Counselling Service



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*Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living*