

# Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Victorian Branch Inc

**FSB - VIC**



Heroes all

Tpr Mark Donaldson VC (Afghanistan), Cpl Ben Roberts-Smith VC MG,  
(Afghanistan), WO Keith Payne VC OAM (Vietnam)

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*Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living*

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## FROM THE *PRESIDENT*

Welcome to this edition of FSB Vic, there is plenty in this edition and I hope you find the contents informative and enjoyable.

The front cover shows our three living VC winners-heroes all, and a source of great pride and inspiration for all of us who once were soldiers and for the young servicemen and women of today.

I am delighted to have been re-elected as your State President. I and the other members of your State Executive are very aware of the trust that you have placed in us to administer the branch on your behalf, and we look forward to working closely with all members to further our aims. I thank all those who have offered themselves for election to positions across the state and thank those who are standing down.

I offer my congratulations to our latest State Life Members Maurie Benson, Bill Kane and Len Barlow: due recognition by your peers for loyal service to veterans, well done all. I am also delighted to welcome Peter Meehan as a Honourary State Life Member, again, recognition for his support of and service to the Victorian Vietnam Veteran community.

I can confirm that Victoria will host the 2012 VVAA National Congress in Geelong in May. Some preliminary work has already been done by VP Coghlan and the Geelong Sub-Branch, and your delegates to the

2011 national congress in NSW in May this year will present the proposed schedule for 2012 to the national delegates. Speaking of national, Victoria has already alerted the national council members to a range of issues that we will be pursuing. The issues are explained in more detail in the newsletter.

It seems that at every turn there are important issues potentially impacting veterans that we need to keep an eye on. National War Memorial funding, a new Minister for Veterans Affairs (along with his other portfolios), the Military Superannuation saga, MRCA review, change of State Government, funding pressures etc.

There is considerable discussion, opinion and misinformation flying about the airwaves in relation to revelations of goings-on at ADFA and within the Defence Forces and the proposed 2012 reconciliation activity in Vietnam. As I have noted in a personal opinion piece on the proposed reconciliation, an old saying goes *"the truth is always surrounded by a bodyguard of lies"* and there is much more to be learnt about both matters. Suffice to say that outcomes should be for the betterment of the ADF and veterans, and not for some politically motivated aim.

The matters of younger veterans joining the branch and future directions of the branch have been debated at length and a discussion paper on the latter topic prepared.

Planning for the future is vital, and decisions taken that will impact on the branch in the future need to be carefully considered and debated, and in this I will be seeking input from the membership. There are clear stresses on our organisation which we need to recognise, acknowledge, confront and seek solutions for in order to ensure that we continue to look after each effectively into the future.

Against the background of all the goings-on, one thing stays constant; our need to remain focussed on delivering the best welfare support possible to our members. Welfare can take many forms, from formal intervention to assist veterans in crisis to a simple telephone call from a mate or a random act of kindness – often the most subtle gestures of support have a powerful effect. With that in mind I close with the thoughts of a veteran who said to me recently

*"What I appreciate the most is knowing that should I need help it will come in bucket loads, and should I get into strife that someone has my back..."*

Bob Elworthy



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## FROM THE *SECRETARY*

Firstly, I appreciate your vote of confidence in electing me as the Victorian State Secretary for the 2011 year. It is shaping up as busy year – no different to previous years really.

In the past, I may have often mentioned not having an Assistant Secretary – Sue Arthur was elected to the position for 2011 and will most surely be an asset for the Association in that position.

From the administrative side of things, I ask that Sub-Branches please update any name and/or con-

tact changes to the Sub-Branch Executive. This can be done by simply advising myself by e-mail and will ensure the timely passage of information to the Sub-Branch and your members - *over to you ladies and gentlemen.*

I would like to add that I would be most pleased to respond to any enquiries from Sub-Branches or members. Just call or e-mail me and I will respond as soon as possible.

Maurie Benson has again taken on the mantle of State Branch Office Manager for the 2011 and will be

looking after volunteers to assist in the State Office, if you would like to be one of those members, please contact Maurie via e-mail at office@vvaavic.org.au.

Len Barlow also has taken on the job as our Webmaster and manages the Victorian State Branch website – thanks to Len for taking on the job – very much appreciated.

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

Regards

Peter Bright

## TRAINING & INFORMATION PROGRAM [TIP]

The Training & Information program [TIP] provides training for Ex-Service Organizations, Authorized practitioners, in both welfare and compensation streams and at different levels of standard so as to assist in the provision of welfare and compensation services to the wider Ex Service and serving members of the Australian Defence Force.

The schedule below lists courses available over the May-Jun 2011 period and ESOs are asked to consider nominations.

For information about nominations ring Angela on 03 5143 1633 or John on 0438 441 712.

Date	Course & Location	Max attendance	Current Nominations	Remarks
10 -11 May 11	Welfare Expo-DVA Melbourne	80	37	43 Vacancies
17-18 May 11	Pension Refresher course-Wodonga	20	7	13 Vacancies
1-2 June 11	Pension Refresher course-Swan Hill	20	1	19 Vacancies
1-2 June 11	Welfare Refresher course-Swan Hill	20	0	20 Vacancies
3-30 June 11	MRCA Online [Level 1 & 2] training Online [eLearning] course	Unlimited	0	Unlimited
7-9 June 11	Basic Pension [Level 1] course -DVA	20	16	4 Vacancies
7-9 June 11	Basic Welfare [Level 1] course -DVA	20	13	7 Vacancies
15 -16 June 11	MRCA [Level 2] Claims Officer-DVA	20	2	18 Vacancies
18 -19 & 25 June 11	Basic Pension [Level 1] course [2 Parts] Legacy House	20	2	18 Vacancies
21-23 June 11	GARP user course-DVA	20	2	18 Vacancies
28-29 June 11	SOP User course-DVA	20	6	14 Vacancies

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# S N A P S H O T S

## New State Life Members



New VVAA Vic State Branch Life Members awarded their Badges and Certificates at the Frankston State Council Meeting in November 2010 were:

L>R: Len Barlow, State Web Master; Bill Cane, Outer Eastern Member; Maurie Benson, State Branch Office Manager.

The awards to Len, Bill and Maurie are in recognition of long and outstanding service to the VVAA Victorian State Branch.

VVAA Victoria State Branch President Bob Elworthy was presented with State Life Membership at the Geelong State Council Meeting held in Geelong in February 2011.

Here we see him with James Coghlan, Snr Vice President (L) and Peter Liefman, Hon, State Solicitor and former Victorian State President (R).

Bob, a man who has his fingers on all aspects of goings on in VVAA Victoria, did not see this coming and was most surprised at the announcement.

We will continue to benefit from Bob's expertise and drive as he has been re-elected Victorian State President for 2011/12.



Anyone attending the annual Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance will have heard the very professional announcements by the MC. That man is SQNLDR Peter Meehan pictured here with VVAA Victorian State President Bob Elworthy (L) and VVAA Victorian Snr Vice President James Coghlan (R) as he receives an Honorary State Life Membership for his continuing service to Vietnam Veterans in Victoria.

We are privileged that Peter gives his time and effort to VVAA Victoria as he is an extremely busy man running Peter Meehan Corporate Communications and his many other involvements.

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# VICTORIA SEEKS ANSWERS ON OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Victorian issues again raised with VVAA National.

## Government knowledge of the use of chemical agents in Vietnam, the potential risks associated with such use, and Government Denial of any link.

After much debate, the Victorian council has approved the following motions:

*“That the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia write to the Federal Government and demand acknowledgement that the government of the day knew of the impact of the use of chemicals on the health of Vietnam Veterans but refused to publicly acknowledge the link”, and*

*“Demand that the Government acknowledge the struggle of the VVAA to have this link accepted and that the assertions made by the VVAA in relation to the impact on the exposure to chemicals on the health of veterans were correct”.*

It is Victoria’s contention that the VVAA should make the strongest possible representations to government to have this matter addressed as detailed in the motions. To do otherwise is to break faith with those who gave so much to prove the link.

**DVA Access to VVCS Files.** It has been brought to our attention that DVA lawyers may be attempting to gain access to VVCS client files. One argument raised by DVA is that access to the files will facilitate progress on claims/VRB/AAT cases. This issue has significant ramifications for veteran confidence in the impartiality and confidentiality of VVCS.

## **Support for National Vietnam Veterans Museum.**

Victoria has introduced an increase of \$1 to annual capitations. Whilst acknowledging the donations that have been received from interstate sub-branches and ACT Branch, it is fair to say that consistent support from across the National membership has not been forthcoming. Victoria would hope that the National Council can resolve to provide more meaningful financial support in the future.

**BEST Funding.** Victoria would like to engage Council members in discussions on the funding ramifications contained in the report. BEST funding is important to us all, and Victoria is heavily reliant on adequate BEST funding for the Regional Veterans Centre Project. It is our contention that the BEST funding formula is flawed as it does not differentiate between simple client appointments and complex client matters which may take multiple appointments to address and thus use up more funds.

**Civilian Nurses and Grave Plaques.** Victoria wishes to be briefed on where we are at with the nurses in terms of when National made its last submission on the matter and what if anything is contemplated for the future. Similarly, we seek advice on what progress has been made on the matter of grave plaques for veterans KIA and who were buried under private arrangements.

**Administrative Demands.** Victoria is not enthusiastic about the level of detail and the level of presentation required by the National Secretary in relation to capitation returns and additional information sought by the secretary.



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## SUB BRANCH ACTIVITIES



Each year around Australia Day, **Mornington Peninsula Sub-Branch** raise funds from local RSLs and provide a BBQ lunch for the residents of RSL Vasey homes at Frankston. The balance of funds (this year \$1,800) was donated to the residents to purchase life-style equipment.

The RSLs involved were Edithvale/Aspendale, Chelsea, Seaford, Mornington, Rosebud and Rye.

Residents from RSL Homes Frankston enjoying the BBQ. Linton Soderholm on the left and Kevin Mawdsley (Mornington peninsula President) Cooking sausages for the group.



**Swan Hill Sub Branch** Members filled about 2,500 sand bags in 4 hours during recent floods in the area; not bad for 60 year olds. We understand the spade is a prop to stop falling over!

Well done to Swan Hill and other Sub Branch Members who helped in flood stricken areas.

### Vandals trash Maryborough Memorial

VANDALS recently went on a drunken rampage in Maryborough, desecrating a Vietnam War memorial and trashing a park.

A group of people caused widespread damage to park facilities, garden beds and the Vietnam War memorial.

State president of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Bob Elworthy said the vandalism was despicable. "It's a real low act, those monuments are the reason why those little human beings are able to walk around the street in freedom," Mr Elworthy said.

Avoca RSL sub-branch president Tim Bradley described the acts as "mindless desecration".

"Every family with any history will have some relative that has served in the forces, without question," Mr Bradley said. "They're really just destroying something that could be a memorial to one of their own family members at some point in time."



*Editors note:*

*DVA rang the State President the following day after reading the article to advise that repairs to the monument could be funded through the 'Their Service Our Heritage' grants program.*

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# NVA/VC RECONCILIATION RUMOURS

## RECONCILIATION WITH THE NVA/VC (OR HOW THE PRESS DON'T LET THE FACTS GET IN THE WAY OF A GOOD STORY)

*Personal opinion by Bob Elworthy*

There has been much made of a newspaper article that appeared in *The Australian* newspaper that suggested that "more than 2000 Australian Vietnam War veterans are expected to meet their former foes if an ambitious plan for a formal reconciliation.....is agreed to by Hanoi".

The article further says: "If Hanoi agrees, the plan could result in Australian veterans joining a reconciliation parade with their former enemy, the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong to coincide with next year's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of Australia's decade-long involvement in the war".

Ever since the article appeared, the Veterans grapevine has been awash with rumours, comment and diverse opinion. I too was drawn into the discussion and tendered my own personal take on the issue. However, my comment was based in reaction to, and on an acceptance of the veracity of the newspaper article, and sadly on my part, too little time to reflect and too little time checking the facts. As a result, I have given the National RSL President an unwarranted whack. Since I aired my own opinions on the matter, I have been apprised of the background, intent and progress of the matter. So let's try to take most of the emotion-including my own-out of the issue and get to the REAL facts.

As far back as 1999, ESO's (including the VVAA at National level it seems) had written in support of the genesis of an idea to hold some form of (low key?) commemorative/reconciliatory activity in Vietnam in 2012, presumably to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our involvement there or perhaps the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the raising of AATTV. There was never any suggestion of a march (or parade?) involving Australian Vietnam veterans; not back when the original idea was born, nor in any subsequent dealings by the RSL National President or others involved. The discussions with the Hanoi authorities are at a delicate stage, and I understand that at the time of writing there are no guarantees that Hanoi will sanction any form of activity, let alone agreeing to thousands of Australian Vietnam Veterans marching about the place.

So there you have it. The newspaper article draws a very long bow indeed, perhaps fuelled by excited (but misguided?) veterans and the need to create a headline. I am reminded of an old saying "*The truth is always*

*surrounded by a bodyguard of lies*" There are always two sides to every story. (Lesson to self – never believe what you read in the papers)

I still hold to my initial position; that is, I strongly believe that reconciliation is a personal matter for each Veteran to consider. To me, being comfortable within myself about my own time in Vietnam and in my own attitude towards former enemies, is sufficient. And I continue to ponder: exactly what is the motive behind pursuing a formal reconciliation, if in fact that is what is being contemplated? Is it politically motivated-if so to what end? Whatever the motivation, whatever the intent, I have not moved from my original stance that the major stakeholders in this-Vietnam Veterans and Vietnamese Veterans-need to be consulted, and should have a major say as to whether such action is warranted or even wanted.

And What of the Vietnamese Veterans?

Has the sensitivity of such a proposal in relation to the Vietnamese been thought through? I suspect that the Vietnamese have not been consulted properly about this proposal, although I understand that they may have been advised that something was afoot some years ago. Clearly, the Vietnamese Veterans have not been kept up to speed on developments, how else can the angst within the ranks of the Vietnamese Veterans Association in Victoria that has been expressed to me personally, be explained?

At a recent meeting to formally raise the Victorian Australian-Vietnamese Veterans Council, the Vietnamese Veterans-all Australian citizens by the way-were angry, upset and completely opposed to any notion of reconciliation. Fair enough too I suppose when you consider that many of them spent time in re-education camps (a pleasant sounding term for what were in reality not much better than slave labour and death camps) many of them still have family in Vietnam (and they will tell you that they live in fear and poverty) and they continue to send funds to Vietnam to assist disabled former ARVN soldiers who are left to fend for themselves in Vietnam.

Anecdotal evidence also suggests that former ARVN soldiers are permitted to undertake only menial work, and former South Vietnamese sympathisers and their families are heavily discriminated against by the communist regime.

Now I don't know about you, but I can't find it in me to engage in any type of formal reconciliation with former soldiers of a regime that deliberately violated a peace accord and today practices exactly the type of repression and abuse of human rights that we went to Vietnam to prevent in the first place.

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## VVAA Vic Education Team (ETeam)

All Organizations need a solid foundation, and for the Education Team it is the Office.

Our Office is the first point of contact for any presentation requests and it needs to be professional, informative and friendly, that's where our Office Manager Chris White comes in. Chris has been with the E Team from its' inception and is well informed on all aspects of the Team.

The Office Manager job description has many facets, taking bookings would be high on the list of priorities, explaining exactly what the E Team has to offer and talking to teachers and others, about their specific needs and what they want to be included in their presentation. Organizing the right team to do the presentation, making sure all details are correct, especially addresses, times and dates, parking and availability of aids needed for a smooth running presentation.

Chris likes to run a tight ship, she makes sure booking forms and booking schedules are up to date and set out regularly to all members to keep them informed as to what all our Teams are doing. A letter of Confirmation is also sent to the teachers.

Most of the donations come into the Office, they need to be receipted, documented and a letter of thanks has to be sent out. Also Petty Cash and some team member claims have to be collated and sent to the Treasurer for his action.

Another task that is the responsibility of the Office Manager is to make sure all Team members have uniforms, photo ID and Police and Working with Children checks.

Chris has to know all the team members' availability, there are a few "Grey Nomads" in the E Team, some take their holidays or are unavailable at any given time, that can take a bit of brain work to make sure all presentations are covered.

Reports have to be done for meetings, meetings have to be booked, requirements from State office need to be delegated and of course a Christmas letter to all recipients of a presentation during the year, with best wishes

and an invitation for a return visit the following year, has to be sent.

For the Education Team our not so silent behind the scenes leader is Chris. The ETeam would be lost if it wasn't for our Office Manager Chris White.

*Editors Note: The E Team presented a cheque for \$5000 to the State President at the 2011 AGM. The cheque represented donations made to the E Team by schools that they had visited. The cheque was deposited into the state education account. Thanks E Team!*

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### ANZAC Day parking



While we all know what a headache it can be to find a car park in Melbourne, especially on ANZAC Day, this year Secure Parking provided FREE parking at its Flindersgate car park at 172 Flinders St (opposite Federation Square), to veterans, their families and those honouring our fallen heroes on ANZAC day. Those taking up this generous offer simply had to enter the car park between 3:00am and 10:00am and exit between 8:00am and 2:00pm. Well done Secure Parking.

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### New Victorian AUS-VIET Council

The new Australian Vietnamese Veterans Council of Victoria was formally raised at a meeting at the Footscray RSL on Saturday 9 April 2011.

The council has a very broad charter: To improve relationships and understanding between the Australian and Vietnamese Veteran communities, and to promote issues of mutual interest.

The inaugural committee comprises three Australian and three Vietnamese representatives along with Paul Adams as the inaugural President. Bob Richardson, of DViets and RAR Association Victoria fame, is the inaugural secretary.

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## CPL BENJAMIN ROBERTS SMITH VC MG

### Australian Army

#### Awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia



#### Corporal Benjamin Roberts-Smith, VC, MG

##### Citation

For the most conspicuous gallantry in action in circumstances of extreme peril as Patrol Second-in-Command, Special Operations Task Group on Operation SLIPPER.

Corporal Benjamin Roberts Smith enlisted in the Australian Regular Army in 1996. After completing the requisite courses, he was posted to the 3rd Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment where he saw active service in East Timor. In January 2003, he successfully completed the Australian Special Air Service Regiment Selection Course.

During his tenure with the Regiment, he deployed on Operation VALIANT, SLATE, SLIPPER, CATALYST and SLIPPER II. Corporal Benjamin Roberts-Smith was awarded the Medal for Gallantry for his actions in Afghanistan in 2006.

On the 11th June 2010, a troop of the Special Operations Task Group conducted a helicopter assault into Tizak, Kandahar Province, in order to capture or kill a senior Taliban commander.

Immediately upon the helicopter insertion, the troop was engaged by machine gun and rocket propelled grenade fire from multiple, dominating positions. Two soldiers were wounded in action and the troop was pinned down by fires from three machine guns in an elevated fortified position to the south of the village. Under the cover of close air support, suppressive small arms and machine gun fire, Corporal Roberts Smith and his patrol manoeuvred to within 70 metres of the enemy position in order to neutralise the enemy machine gun positions and regain the initiative.

Upon commencement of the assault, the patrol drew

very heavy, intense, effective and sustained fire from the enemy position. Corporal Roberts Smith and his patrol members fought towards the enemy position until, at a range of 40 metres, the weight of fire prevented further movement forward. At this point, he identified the opportunity to exploit some cover provided by a small structure.

As he approached the structure, Corporal Roberts Smith identified an insurgent grenadier in the throes of engaging his patrol. Corporal Roberts Smith instinctively engaged the insurgent at point-blank range resulting in the death of the insurgent. With the members of his patrol still pinned down by the three enemy machine gun positions, he exposed his own position in order to draw fire away from his patrol, which enabled them to bring fire to bear against the enemy. His actions enabled his Patrol Commander to throw a grenade and silence one of the machine guns. Seizing the advantage, and demonstrating extreme devotion to duty and the most conspicuous gallantry, Corporal Roberts Smith, with a total disregard for his own safety, stormed the enemy position killing the two remaining machine gunners.

His act of valour enabled his patrol to break-in to the enemy position and to lift the weight of fire from the remainder of the troop who had been pinned down by the machine gun fire. On seizing the fortified gun position, Corporal Roberts Smith then took the initiative again and continued to assault enemy positions in depth during which he and another patrol member engaged and killed further enemy. His acts of selfless valour directly enabled his troop to go on and clear the village of Tizak of Taliban. This decisive engagement subsequently caused the remainder of the Taliban in Shah Wali Kot District to retreat from the area.

Corporal Roberts Smith's most conspicuous gallantry in a circumstance of extreme peril was instrumental to the seizure of the initiative and the success of the troop against a numerically superior enemy force. His valour was an inspiration to the soldiers with whom he fought alongside and is in keeping with the finest traditions of the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force.

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## Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk Seymour Stage 1 Opened

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Hugh Delahunty officially opened Stage One of the new Vietnam Veterans' Commemorative Walk in Seymour on Wednesday 30 March. The completed first stage of the development includes a memorial cairn and a new interpretive centre called Luscombe Bowl.

Joining local Member for Seymour, Cindy McLeish, Mitchell Shire Mayor Graeme Coppell, President of the Victorian Branch of the RSL Maj Gen David McLachlan and Chairman of the Vietnam Veterans' Commemorative Walk Committee Ross Stewart at the facility, Mr Delahunty congratulated all involved for their work in developing the innovative commemoration project.

"The Coalition committed \$1.2 million during the 2010 election campaign towards the cost of completing Stage 2 of this wonderful development that will include a memorial wall and walk surrounded by rubber trees, rice paddies and military artefacts from the period. I look forward to celebrating the beginning of that next exciting stage."



L>R: RSL Victoria State President MajGen David McLachlan AO, VVAA Vic. State President Bob Elworthy, Chair Commemorative Walk Committee Ross Stewart, VVAA National President Ron Coxon OAM, Chair Victorian Veterans Council MajGen Peter Haddad AO.



*Luscombe Bowl Interpretive Centre*

**NOTE:** Individual Brick/Pavers can be purchased by donation for \$50 or \$100. Your name and details will be engraved into a paver as a lasting record of your valued support of the Commemorative Walk Project and will provide an historical record of your military service well into the future.

For further details contact:

Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk  
PO Box 764 SEYMOUR VIC 3661  
Ross Gregson 03 5792 3227  
[www.vvaavic.org.au/mitchell.asp](http://www.vvaavic.org.au/mitchell.asp)



*Minister for Veterans Affairs Hugh Delahunty and Commemorative Walk Patron MajGen David McLachlan officially open Stage 1 of the Walk.*

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## **TOUCHBASE ~ DVA and Defence launch Pilot support program.**

### **TOUCHBASE SUPPORT FOR FORMER ADF MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and Defence have launched a pilot program, known as *touchbase*, to support separating and former ADF members in accessing health and other information and resources. This program has been developed as part of recommendations made in the reviews by Professor Dunt into *Mental Health Care in the ADF and Transition* and the *Study into Suicide in the Ex-Service Community*.

*Touchbase* features a wide range of topics, from counselling services, family support and mental health information to sporting clubs and entertainment. *Touchbase* will assist former members and their families in linking and accessing to these services.

Former members and their families can register to receive the *touchbase* newsletter which contains stories of interest regarding former members in civilian life and their community.

To access *touchbase* go to:

**[www.touchbase.gov.au](http://www.touchbase.gov.au)**

### **Further Information**

The pilot commences in December 2010 and your support and feedback would be appreciated. If you require further information, please call Anna Picker at DVA on 02 6289 6627.

We would welcome your assistance in promoting this initiative through your communication channels to former members and their families.

Yours sincerely,

**MICHAEL CALLAN**

Department of Defence  
Director General  
Defence Community Organisation  
13 December 2010

**JOHN FELY**

Department of Veterans' Affairs  
National Manager  
Defence Support Services  
13 December 2010

## **VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2011**

### **Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance Thursday 18th August 2011**

<b>1030—1130 hrs</b>	<b>Marchers gather at Northern Forecourt.</b> <b>NOTE:</b> <b>No Gunfire Breakfast 2011.</b>
<b>1130 hrs</b>	<b>Marchers Form up at Northern Forecourt.</b> <b>This is an opportunity to catch up for a chat with mates</b>
<b>1200 hrs</b>	<b>March Step Off</b> <b>Official Commemoration Service.</b> <b>VIPs include Senior Government, Defence and ESO representatives.</b>
<b>1300 Hrs</b>	<b>Formalities conclude.</b>

- ★ Large Medals to be worn.
- ★ Banners and Flags welcome.
- ★ Dress Code: Neat - Jacket preferred.
- ★ Wreaths/Floral Tributes to be placed on the Wreath Trestle near the Eternal Flame before the March start.

Marchers will be directed by RSM Ceremonial, Victoria Barracks who will act as Chief March Marshal.

### **The Theme for 2011 VV Day will be RAAF Helicopter Ops.**

After more than 25 years the VV Day Commemoration Service annually is the premier gathering of Vietnam Veterans each year in Victoria.

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## Visiting Terendak Military Cemetery, Malaysia

The Terendak Military Cemetery is situated within the perimeter of Terendak Camp, Malacca, an operating military base.

Visitors should first check with the Australian High Commission, Malaysia, before booking travel, and are reminded of the strict procedures to be followed before visiting the cemetery.

The following information is required to be submitted by anyone wishing to visit the Terendak Military Cemetery. This information is to enable the Defence Section of the Australian High Commission Kuala Lumpur to commence a "Request to Visit" process with the Ministry of Defence, Malaysia to obtain the appropriate approvals.

You will need the following information:

Photocopy of the front page of your passport (one for each person if in a group) showing passport number, expiry date, date of birth etc. **Note:** Ensure all copies can be clearly read.

- \* Date and time of visit.
- \* Purpose of visit.

- \* Mode of transport to the cemetery.
- \* Passport size photo.

The information is required **45 days** in advance of the visit. **Note:** Notification of approval to visit the cemetery may take a few weeks.

Contact can be made by writing to either of the following addresses:

Defence Administrative Assistant  
Australian High Commission – Kuala Lumpur  
Locked Bag 40  
Kuala Lumpur Bag  
KINGSTON ACT 2604  
or  
Defence Administrative Assistant  
Australian High Commission  
6 Jalan Yap Kwan Seng  
50450 KUALA LUMPUR  
MALAYSIA

You can also email the [Defence Administrative Assistant](#). If you have any further questions or information about the visit request, please do not hesitate to contact the Defence Section.



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## NASHOs 60th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS



### Registrations are now open!

Registrations are open for the NASHOs 60th Anniversary Celebration to be held in Townsville from 8 September - 11 September 2011. See below the details of the registration.

#### NASHOs – who are we?

Between 1951 and 1972, a total of 287, 000 young Australian men were called up in two separate schemes for compulsory training in the Navy, Army and Air Force. Of them, 212 died on active service in Borneo and Vietnam.

#### National Service 60th Anniversary Celebrations

From September 8 to 11, 2011 Townsville, North Queensland, will come alive to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the National Service schemes of the 1950s to the 1970s.

#### National Service 60th Anniversary Registration

The registration cost for the National Service 60th Anniversary is \$50. This includes:

- ★ Entry to the Meet and Greet on Thursday 8 September. Canapés and entertainment provided, drinks available for purchase from the bar
- ★ National Servicemen's gift bag including program, discount vouchers, identification lanyard, general information on Townsville and special memento gift
- ★ Entry to the Public Concert on Saturday 10 September and reserved VIP seating. Food and refreshments will be available for purchase from vendors onsite
- ★ Entry to the National Servicemen's official commemorative service on Sunday 11 September
- ★ Participation in the National Servicemen's March from the City to Anzac Park. Barbeque and refreshments will be provided.

#### Dinner Dance Registration

The registration cost for the Dinner Dance is \$62. This is in addition to the National Service 60th Anniversary Registration fee. The \$62 includes:

- ★ Dinner Dance on Friday 9 September at Jupiters Hotel & Casino
- ★ Buffet Dinner with Dessert and one complimentary drink on arrival
- ★ Entertainment provided by Townsville's 1RAR Army Band.

#### BOOKINGS can be made online at:

[https://www.patronbase.com/\\_TicketShop/Productions](https://www.patronbase.com/_TicketShop/Productions)

For **booking assistance** email:

[ticketshop@townsville.qld.gov.au](mailto:ticketshop@townsville.qld.gov.au)

or phone :

1800 44 99 or (07) 4727 9797

### A little bit of nostalgia from the Dat 1966/67.



*Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living*



## VETERANS HOME MAINTENANCE LINE

The Veterans' Home Maintenance Line (VHML) is a toll free telephone service for members of the Veteran Community which:

Provides advice on general home maintenance matters;

Provides local referral to reliable and efficient trades people with appropriate qualifications, and both professional indemnity and public liability insurance cover;

Provides 24 hour access for emergency repairs;

Offers a home inspection service to identify current or possible future maintenance problems and is available during weekdays in business hours; and

Provides links to Government subsidised services where possible.

### Who is eligible?

VHML is available to all members of the Veteran Community.

### Who pays for the service?

The advice or referral for home maintenance is free, but you are required to pay for any work undertaken by the tradesperson, including any call out fee. You are also required to pay for the home inspection service.

### Follow up

The VHML staff may contact you after the work has been completed to ask whether you are completely satisfied with the service that was arranged.

### How to apply?

It's easy! Just ring **1800 80 1945** and ask for home maintenance advice or a referral to a tradesperson.

### Preventing Falls

Falls are not an inevitable part of ageing. Most falls can be prevented. One in three people aged 65 and over report falling at least once each year.

- ★ One quarter of these people sustain significant injuries and 5% sustain a fracture (usually humerus, wrist, hip or pelvis).
- ★ Strength and balance exercise has shown to reduce falls by older people.
- ★ Falls and accidents are a key factor in causing otherwise avoidable admissions to hospital.

**HomeFront** is a falls and accident prevention program available for all Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) gold and white card holders. A free **HomeFront** assessment is available each year and the department makes a financial contribution towards the cost of recommended items and modifications. HomeFront aims to maintain the health and independence of the veteran community and reduce potential medical and hospital costs by reducing the incidence of falls and accidents in and around the home.

Following the home assessment, DVA will make a financial contribution, currently \$203, towards the

cost of recommended aids and minor home modifications that will reduce the risk of falls and accidents. The recommended minor home modifications and/or aids and appliances are generally low cost items such as the provision of non slip treatment on steps or floors or extra lighting. The HomeFront assessor also provides information about local community and Government services that are available to assist veterans and war widows to remain living in their own home for as long as possible. **A HomeFront assessment can be arranged by telephoning 1800 80 1945.**

There are currently around 272 000 Australian veterans that are eligible for the HomeFront program.

More information, including interesting statistics, are available on DVA's website -

[http://www.dva.gov.au/health\\_and\\_wellbeing/health\\_programs/homefront/Pages/intro.aspx](http://www.dva.gov.au/health_and_wellbeing/health_programs/homefront/Pages/intro.aspx)

---

**Earl and Bubba are quietly sitting in a boat fishing, chewing tobacco and drinking beer when suddenly Bubba says, "Think I'm gonna divorce the wife - she ain't spoke to me in over 2 months."**

**Earl spits overboard, takes a long, slow sip of beer and says, "Better think it over.....women like that are hard to find."**

---

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# HEADING



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

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

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

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

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

Melway 632 F8



[secretary@vietnamvetmuseum.org](mailto:secretary@vietnamvetmuseum.org)  
[www.vietnamvetmuseum.org](http://www.vietnamvetmuseum.org)

## Entry Fees

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

## Bus Groups

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

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



## The Light and Sound Show

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

## Authentic Equipment and Weaponry

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



## Displays

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

## Nui Dat Café and Merchandise Shop

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



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

“  
LEGACY IS KEEPING  
THEIR PROMISE  
TO MY DAD”

CHARLOTTE

A promise was made to a dying soldier in the trenches of WWI. A promise that his family would be looked after. With recent conflicts, our work is as important today as it was when we began. Help us keep the promise, make a donation today.



TO DONATE, CALL 1800 534 229 OR VISIT [LEGACY.COM.AU](http://LEGACY.COM.AU)

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## The Veteran Community

### Story Writing & Art Competition (SWAC)



Patron:

Maj Gen David J McLachlan AO

( 1300 132 515 )

#### VVAA PRIZE WINNER 2010

The Presentation and Award Ceremony of the VVAA (Vic) section of the Story Writing and Arts Completion took place at the RGH Heidelberg on the 25<sup>th</sup> Nov 2010, the Ceremony was attended by the Deputy Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Victoria Mr Mike O, Mera, the Guest Presenter was Maj Gen David Mc Lachlan (Ret), President of the Victorian Branch of the RSL.

Approx 170 recipients and guests attended the Ceremony, the winner of our sponsored section was Mr David Anderson from Reservoir Victoria, David is an Ex Navy member who joined the RAN in 1968 and saw service on the following ships;

HMAS Cerberus, Vampire, Stuart, Stalwart, Leeuwin,

### GP's able to refer direct to Mental Health Practitioners

General practitioners can now refer holders of repatriation health cards who require mental health services to psychologists, clinical psychologists, mental health social workers and mental health occupational therapists. Under statutory registration introduced in November 2010, mental

health professionals registered with Medicare Australia are automatically able to provide allied mental health services to Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) clients.

The DVA referral process for referring to these providers has not changed and a mental health treatment plan by the referring GP is not required.

Source: Royal Australian College of General Practitioner's newsletter 21 January 2011.



(Pictured L to R Mr David Anderson, Amat (Aff) Binnoore VVAA Rep SWAC Vic)

Penguin, Platypus & the Odin Bases & ships. After seeing active service in Vietnam & touring many Asian countries, David took his discharge in 1976, David was initially in the gunnery area of the Navy but later in his service he became a Medic. David's interest in Photography started when he was in the RAN.

After taking his discharge in 1976 he joined the SEC in the Latrobe Valley.

**PERTH -** An SAS trooper collecting toys for children was stabbed when he helped stop a suspected shop-lifter in east Perth.

The 'Toys-R-Us' Store Manager told 'The West Australian' that a man was seen on surveillance cameras last Friday putting a laptop under his jacket at the store. When confronted, the man became irate, knocked down an employee, pulled a knife and ran toward the door.

Outside were four SAS Troopers collecting toys for the "Toys For Tots" program.

Smith said the Troopers stopped the man, but he stabbed one of them, in the back. The cut did not appear to be severe.

The suspect was transported by ambulance to the Royal Perth Hospital with two broken arms, a broken leg, possible broken ribs, multiple contusions and assorted lacerations including a broken nose and jaw... Injuries he apparently sustained when he tripped whilst trying to run away after the stabbing.

**THE CLUMSY BASTARD !!!**

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# THE BEER PRAYER

*Our lager  
Which art in barrels  
Hallowed be thy drink  
Thy will be drunk (I will be drunk)  
At home as if in the tavern  
Give us this day our foamy head  
And forgive us our spillages  
As we forgive those who spill against us  
And lead us not to incarceration  
But deliver us from hangovers  
For thine is the beer, the bitter, the lager  
For ever and ever....*

*Barmen*

---

## Vietnam 40 years ago

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 10 March 1971    | Sir William McMahon replaces Gorton as Liberal leader and Prime Minister.  |
| 30 March 1971    | Prime Minister McMahon announces further cuts in Australian forces in South Vietnam, including withdrawal of the tank squadron, RAAF Canberra bomber squadron and some Caribou transport aircraft.             |
| 30 June 1971     | Third and last of the big anti-war rallies. About 110,000 demonstrate in State capitals.   |
| 18 August 1971   | The Prime Minister announces the bulk of Australian forces in South Vietnam are to be withdrawn, leaving only a modified training team. The period of national service is reduced from two years to 18 months. |
| 06 October 1971  | 3 RAR is airlifted onto HMS Sydney, leaving only one battalion at Nui Dat.   |
| 07 November 1971 | 4 RAR moves out of Nui Dat to Vung Tau, ending Australian combat operations in Phuoc Tuy province.   |
- 



## 104 SIGNAL SQUADRON NATIONAL REUNION

**4 to 6 November 2011**

**WEEKEND ON THE GOLD COAST**  
**At Twin Towns Services Club**  
**(Coolangatta/Tweed Heads)**

The 104 Reunion is being hosted by Twin Towns Services Club and Resort on the Gold Coast, celebrating 40 years since the Unit returned from war service in Vietnam. This Reunion is for 104 Signal Squadron *past* and *present* members, their families plus Veterans who supported the Squadron, drank with a Squadron member or would have liked to have been a Squadron member. It would be great to have the guys who worked with us and supported us in Vietnam attend, especially from 110 Signal Squadron, 547 Signal Troop and other Vietnam Signals including the 103 Signal Squadron guys that dug our original Nui Dat holes. Also the *new* 104 and 1CSR Veterans that have and are still serving our country.

**Cost is \$125 per person for the three functions which includes administration costs.**

**Reunion Shirts available via registration form only.**

**Other merchandise at Reunion by SVVA (Qld).**

**See Reunion Web Site at <http://2011.au104.org>**

**All Correspondence:**

104 Sig Sqn Reunion  
PO Box 115  
Glass House Mountains Qld 4518

**Email: [reunion2011@au104.org](mailto:reunion2011@au104.org)**

### **104 Reunion 22011 Committee**

<b>Denis Hare</b>	<b>Ph: 07 5438 7512 Mob: 0419 334 535</b>
<b>Don Sutherland</b>	<b>Ph: 07 3269 8298</b>
<b>Peter Thorne</b>	<b>Ph: 07 3285 4823 Mob: 0409 633 353</b>
<b>John Bertini</b>	<b>Ph: 07 3397 1058 Mob: 0429 491 460</b>

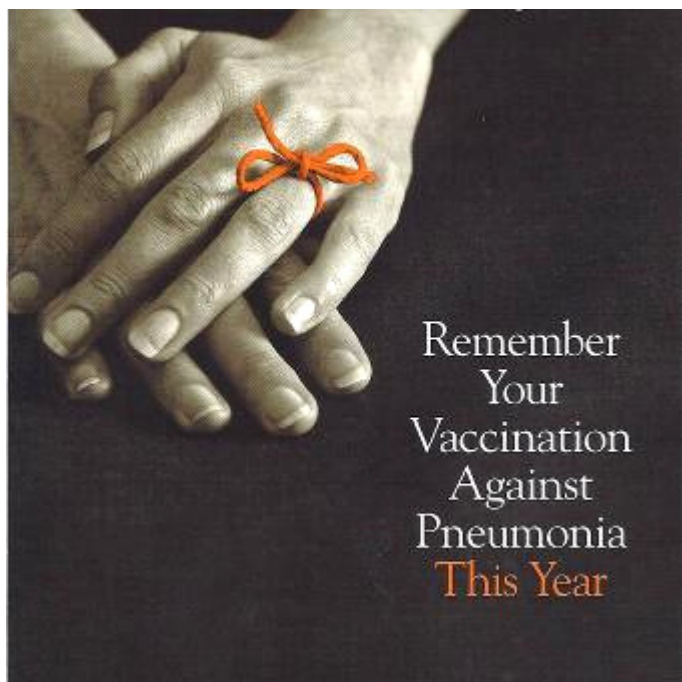
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**SIGNALS VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION  
QUEENSLAND**

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## YOUR HEALTH



### Pneumonia can be a serious disease

Pneumonia is commonly caused by the pneumococcal bacteria.

The Australian Immunisation Guidelines recommend vaccination to the following groups, who are considered at high risk of infection from pneumococcal bacteria:

- Anyone over 65 years old
- People with heart, kidney and lung disease (eg. COPD)
- People with diabetes
- Anyone with a weakened immune system
- People of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- Tobacco smokers
- People without a spleen

The vaccine is **FREE** for anyone 65 years or older, on the National Pneumococcal Program for Older Australians.<sup>1</sup>

The pneumococcal vaccine is also available for people under 65 years at high risk of infection. (See above)

**ASK YOUR GP about vaccination against pneumonia.**

Reference: 1 The Australian Immunisation Handbook, NHMRC, 9th Edition, 2008, Chapter 3.15.  
Available at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Handbook-pneumococcal>.  
CSL Biotherapies Pty Ltd, ABN 66 120 398 067, 45 Poplar Road, Parkville, VIC 3052, Australia. DC 3377.

## THE 521 FALLEN AUSTRALIANS A RESEARCH PROJECT BY BARRY HAMPSON

Barry Hampson, a former ADF Member and Veteran of the Middle East and East Timor, son of a Vietnam Veteran and keen Historian is researching material for a new book dedicated to the Vietnam fallen and their families.

“Each of these 521 Australians has a story that needs to be recorded, *before it is too late*, their lives before they entered the military, their military service and how they lost (*their sacrifice*) their lives. Coupled with their story, is the story of how their death effected and continues to affect their families, friends and the mates they served with, which also needs to be recorded.”

I have started researching each of “*The 521*” to produce a book honouring and documenting their lives, how each touched those around them, how they lost their life and the affect that their loss on their family, friends and the mates they served with.

*My reason for writing this book is because I want to ensure that current and future generations remember them, remember the sacrifice they made and how their loss effected and continue to affect their families, friends and the mates they served with.*

To assist me in this endeavour I would like to talk to and interview anyone who served with any of the 521 Australians; this includes members of their families and friends.

Please contact me directly via:

Email: bazz662@bigpond.com

Webpage: [www.barryhampson.com](http://www.barryhampson.com)

Mobile: 0424 750 943.

*Anyone interviewed will be asked to elect whether they are happy to be quoted as a source of information in the book or remain totally anonymous.”*



Erin Date with her proud father Robin Date (L) and VVAA Victorian State Branch Snr Vice President James Coghlan (R) receiving her Certificate for satisfactorily completing her tertiary studies.

Well done Erin.

William Hacking Bursaries are provided for those students not eligible for the Long Tan Bursary or VCES funding. Conditions apply.

Applications should be directed to the VVAA Vic State Secretary.

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# VVCS GROUP PROGRAMS

## Anger Management

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

- ★ understanding anger and aggression
- ★ understanding, monitoring and learning strategies to reduce physiological arousal
- ★ identifying triggers and learning when to use appropriate strategies

## Relationships

Loving relationships can at times be taken for granted leaving a feeling of something missing. This program is designed for emotionally committed couples who want that something back. The program aims to improve the quality of relationships through development of skills to strengthen emotional

## Outreach Heart Health

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

## Lifestyle Management

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

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

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

## Depression and Anxiety

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

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

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

## Programs for Partners and Sons & Daughters

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

Partners' programs include:

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

Sons & daughters of Vietnam veterans programs include:

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

## Changing the Mix

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

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

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

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

## Other Programmes include:

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

Register your interest by calling VVCS on 1800 011 046 or visit [www.dva.gov.au/health/vvcs](http://www.dva.gov.au/health/vvcs)

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## HEART HEALTH PROGRAM



Heart Health Group at Waves, Cheltenham

The Heart Health Program aims to help you increase your physical health and wellbeing through practical exercise, nutrition and lifestyle management support. It is a 52 week program that includes two physical activity sessions per week and 15 health educational seminars.

The program covers a range of top-

ics including setting healthy goals, eating well, lowering alcohol consumption, communication and stress management, quitting smoking, taking care of your body, solving problems and maintaining a healthy heart.

### Eligibility

The Heart Health Program is open to all veterans and peacekeepers

who have not previously participated in a Heart Health program. All participants are required to get a medical clearance from their General Practitioner before beginning.

### Costs

This is a free program for all participants. Transport entitlements are not payable.

For further information contact your local VVCS on 1800 011 046\*

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

Further information can also be seen at:

[http://www.dva.gov.au/health\\_and\\_wellbeing/health\\_programs/vvcs/services/Pages/heart\\_health.aspx#heart](http://www.dva.gov.au/health_and_wellbeing/health_programs/vvcs/services/Pages/heart_health.aspx#heart)

## VETERANS RECONDITIONING PROGRAM

### *Improving the health and well being of the veteran community*

### What is the Veterans Reconditioning Program?

A program that incorporates

§ Twice weekly exercise sessions supervised by an Exercise Physiologist following an individual assessment

§ Regular dietary seminars and individualised meal plans/advice by a Dietician

The program is held at a leisure centre in your local area

### The program can assist you with:

§ Rehabilitation

§ Weight loss

§ Fitness

*and much more...*

### Program Eligibility

#### To be eligible you must have:

- ◇ Either a gold card or a white card with an accepted physical condition

- ◇ A referral from your General Practitioner for both Nicole French & Damian Green

### Contacts

#### Ms.Nicole French Exercise Physiologist and program director

[nicolefrench@optusnet.com.au](mailto:nicolefrench@optusnet.com.au)

[www.rehabexercise.com.au](http://www.rehabexercise.com.au)

#### Damian Green Clinical and Sports Dietician

[damian@nutritionmelbourne.com.au](mailto:damian@nutritionmelbourne.com.au)

[www.nutritionmelbourne.com.au](http://www.nutritionmelbourne.com.au)

Suite 15a, 82 Keilor Road Essendon North Vic 3041  
Tel/Fax 9351 0677

Exercise Physiology and Dietetics is a recognised and accredited allied health service by the Department of Veteran Affairs and as such with a referral are able to offer this service.

*Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living*

## Notice Board

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

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

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

Kevin Forster is **looking for ex Instructors who served at Balcombe Army Apprentices School**, especially in the early to mid 1970's. Kevin is a Graduate of that school (28th Intake 1973) and would like to catch up with former instructors, especially with the hope that some may be able to attend a Reunion of Apprentices this year. Anyone able to help should email Kevin at [kevinff0@bigpond.com](mailto:kevinff0@bigpond.com).

\*\*\*\*\*

### "PIGS IN VIC"

The 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (the Pig Battalion) was formed at Puckapunyal on 1 September 1965. The Bn undertook two tours of duty in South Vietnam; 1967-68 and 1970-71. The next Bn reunion is to be held in Melbourne during the period 3-6 August 2011, centred in and around the SEBEL Albert Park Hotel. Activities will include sub unit get-togethers, Bn dinner, Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance Memorial Service and a range of other social activities to keep the fairer sex agreeable. All Vietnam Veterans who served with or were attached to the 7<sup>th</sup> Bn are encouraged to find out more about the reunion by visiting the Porky Seven website [www.7rar.asn.au](http://www.7rar.asn.au) or emailing the 7RAR Association Victorian Branch Secretary, Peter Kerley at: [PIGSinVic@gmail.com](mailto:PIGSinVic@gmail.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Scams** have always been around but technology and social changes are causing new and varied scams to increase around the world. Scammers have pretended to be from Centrelink, Medicare Australia, Department of Veteran's Affairs to try and get personal information from people, this information is then used to steal money or commit identity theft and other crimes. Scammers may claim your computer is infected by a virus and try to sell you anti-virus software that when installed may well allow external control of your computer. You can keep up to date with the latest scams or report a scam to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission by telephone on 1300 302 502 or you can visit [www.scamwatch.gov.au](http://www.scamwatch.gov.au).

### No one believes seniors ... everyone thinks they are senile.

*An elderly couple was celebrating their sixtieth anniversary. The couple had married as childhood sweethearts and had moved back to their old neighborhood after they retired.. Holding hands, they walked back to their old school. It was not locked, so they entered, and found the old desk they'd shared, where Andy had carved "I love you, Sally."*

*On their way back home, a bag of money fell out of an armored car, practically landing at their feet. Sally quickly picked it up and, not sure what to do with it, they took it home. There, she counted the money - fifty thousand dollars!*

*Andy said, "We've got to give it back."*

*Sally said, "Finders keepers." She put the money back in the bag and hid it in their attic.*

*The next day, two police officers were canvassing the neighborhood looking for the money, and knocked on their door. "Pardon me, did either of you find a bag that fell out of an armored car yesterday?"*

*Sally said, "No".*

*Andy said, "She's lying. She hid it up in the attic.*

*Sally said, "Don't believe him, he's getting senile"*

*The agents turned to Andy and began to question him.*

*One said: "Tell us the story from the beginning."*

*Andy said, "Well, when Sally and I were walking home from school yesterday ...."*

*The first police officer turned to his partner and said, "We're outta here!"*

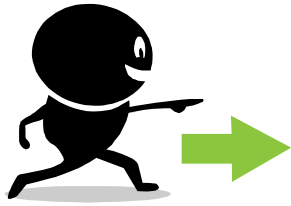


***Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living***

# NEW VETERANS PSYCHIATRY UNIT OPENED.

Upgrade says farewell to the 1940s.

The Old



The New



A new era for veteran mental health management has arrived with the opening of the Coral-Balmoral Building at the Repatriation hospital Heidelberg: part of the Psychological Trauma Recovery Service at the Repat. The new facility replaces the post WWII wards 17 and 18 facility that had well and truly gone past its use by date.

The new \$15.5M building boasts modern in-patient facility, contemporary accommodation standards, including private rooms with ensuite, break out areas, modern kitchen, laundry and outdoor areas. The out-patient area is also state of the art, with excellent group therapy rooms and private consulting rooms. The long suffering staff have also been looked after with modern working spaces, and comfortable offices.

The old ward 17/18 facility will long be remembered kindly by those who were treated there and those who worked there. The new facility however is light years ahead of the old decrepit building it replaces. Significantly, it was the veteran community that brought the new facility to a reality through lobbying of the State Government for a new facility. The VPU is complimented by the adjacent Hydrotherapy and Rehabilitation Centre.

The VPU has become the major provider of specialist assessment and management of trauma related mental health conditions and takes a leadership role in the development and provision of community based mental health treatment services for veterans and their families.

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# VVAA VIC BRANCH INC

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**Secretary** Maurie Betts 5448 4470 0400 979 042  
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 secretary@bendigo.vvaavic.org.au

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**Secretary** Rod Burgess 0439 378 989  
 PO Box 280 DINGLEY VILLAGE VIC 3172  
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*Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living*