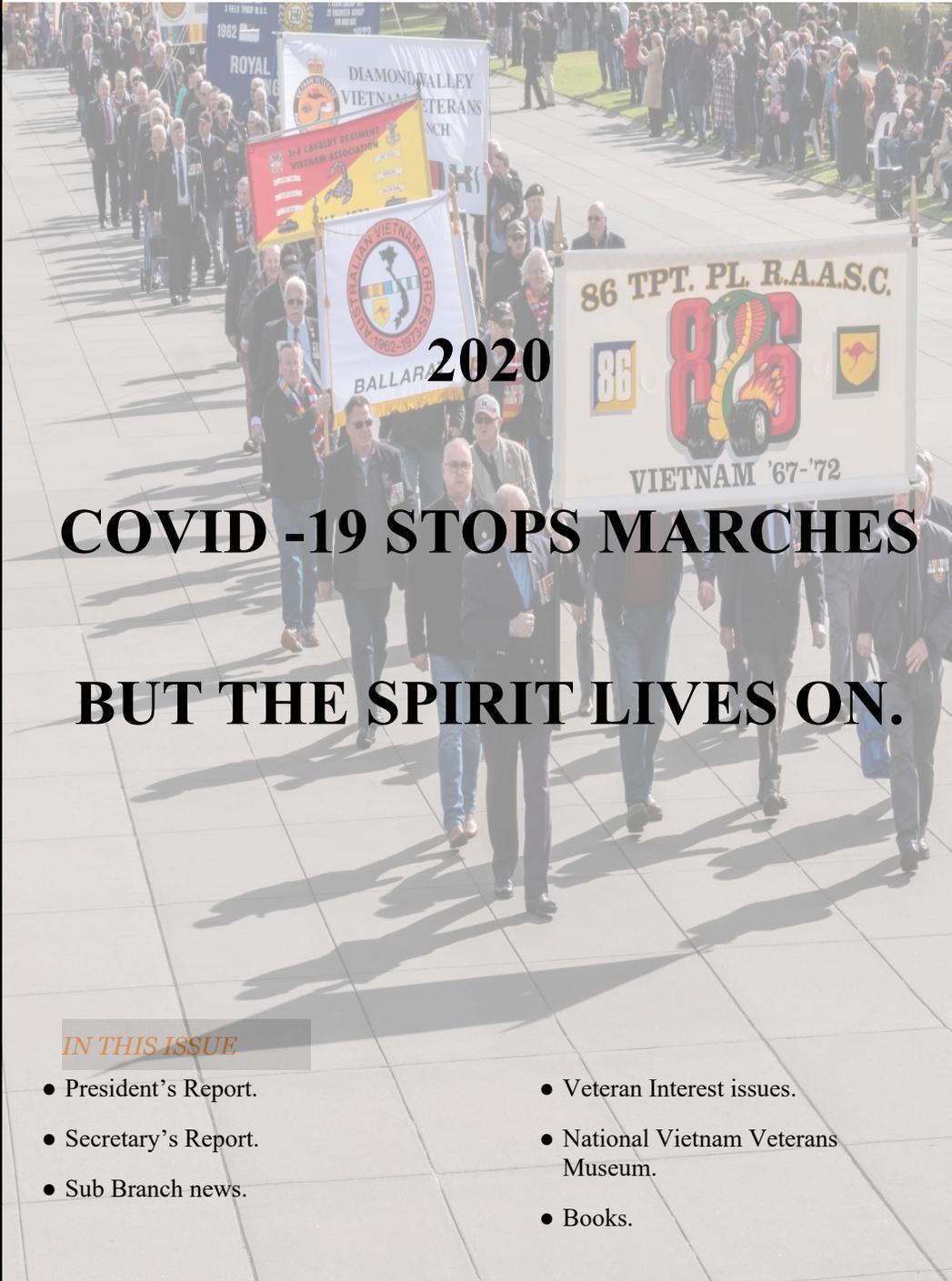




# Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Victorian Branch Inc.

WINTER 2020 EDITION

**FSB-VIC**



**2020**

**COVID -19 STOPS MARCHES  
BUT THE SPIRIT LIVES ON.**

#### *IN THIS ISSUE*

- President's Report.
- Secretary's Report.
- Sub Branch news.
- Veteran Interest issues.
- National Vietnam Veterans Museum.
- Books.

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

# VVAA Victorian State Branch

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



How are you all coping with the Covid-19 restrictions? Finished all the jobs around the house that the better half has lined up for you? I want to send out a well done and thank you to everyone who was involved in our campaign to make a call

to all of our members stuck at home. Never underestimate the power of a simple telephone call; I know that after I received mine I felt elated and the rest of my day was that much better. Grassroots welfare at its simplest and best. Fortunately we have had only two reported cases of COVID-19, and happily both folks have recovered.

So what have we all been doing? I have spent a lot of time tuned into Vietnam Vets radio enjoying the songs from our era interspersed with Chicken Man episodes and other bits and pieces from the US AFVN archive. Just Google Vietnam vets radio or enter <http://vietnamvetradio.org> and kick back from the Delta to the DMZ.

Despite the interruptions to our normal way of life, our business goes on. Your executive has been meeting on ZOOM meetings and Secretary George Skell has arranged for a ZOOM meeting for the next State Council meeting later in June. Thanks George and thanks to all SB's for jumping on board. I must say it is really pleasing to see the faces again - we haven't aged a day!

I was thrilled to be allowed into Ward 17 recently- they are practicing COVID-19 checks - to handover a heap of goodies for the in-patients and also to check out the blanket warmer we donated. Staff told me that it would be a wonderful addition to the ward. I must say the value of a warm blanket for someone feeling unwell was lost on me; an email from a member's wife explained that a warm blanket was so welcome for her after surgery some years ago. So again, well done all, welfare at its best.

It was our intention to donate the money received for bush fire relief during our next State Council meeting "in the bush" to a worthy cause in a town that had been impacted. COVID-19 short circuited that idea, so we still hold the funds and continue to look for a good way to make the most of the donation, perhaps there are other good alternatives out there; if you have an idea let us know.

Much has been said by the ill-informed and downright mischievous about Ward 17. Well I can assure you that the system works very well. Without going into detail, your executive intervened in the case of an unwell younger veteran. End result saw the veteran admitted within a week, no fuss, no chest beating, no abuse, just respectfully working the system behind the scenes to achieve a good outcome. And I can also report that the imminent takeover of Ward 17 by VICPOL as trumpeted by the RSL Reform Team last year has not occurred, and will not occur. Of the 16 in-patients in Ward 17 when I visited, 12 were veterans.

There is a big to-do about Vasey RSL Care. As previously advised, we have embarked on a fact finding mission, speaking with President RSL Vic., President War Widows Guild and the Chair of Vasey RSL Care Mike O'Meara. I recently visited the Geelong Independent Living facility with President VVAA Geelong Sub-Branch to hear from some of the veterans living there. Despite being pressed on a number of occasions by the RSL Reform Group and being the subject of social media abuse, I have refused to make a statement on behalf of VVAA Vic. about the proposed sale of Vasey RSL Care until we have the facts and I receive guidance from the State Council. To do so would simply embolden others who would use such a comment for their own ends.

Some of the Facebook commentary has been disgraceful, untrue and disrespectful; reverting to personal attacks when they can't get their own way, including vile attacks on the RSL Vic. President and the War Widows Guild. Its water off a ducks back for me but when the integrity of our association is unfairly attacked by the ignorant that is entirely another matter. The major mouthpiece has recently accused VVAA of abandoning veterans, used our VVAA badge and logo on face book followed by a derogatory "Foxtrot Oscar". He sits in a coward's castle, manipulates comment to suit and never identifies himself as the originator of hate mail. Fortunately, others are now tiring of his tactics and the Vasey RSL Care Chairman has now distanced himself from him. If any member was concerned about George Skell's interaction, George deserved a free kick as he has been vilified and enough is enough; the wind has now been sucked out of the coward's sails. Every dog has its day.

I will report more later on my own meeting with Open Arms Vic. and the National VVAA ZOOM meeting with National Open Arms reps. VVAA has plenty of issues with the current standard of Open Arms service delivery and management, and one of our members, Dr. Frank Donovan, who was involved in the very early formative stages of VVCS has written a great letter to

# A WORD FROM YOUR PRESIDENT ... cont'd

Open Arms on the issue. Frank will stay involved as necessary in further discussions. Thankfully senior Open Arms folk are listening and have taken action to immediately ensure that the “non-negotiable” acknowledgment of the fact that VVCS was created by Vietnam Veterans will again be included on all Open Arms material: the acknowledgement has disappeared over recent times. If you still have your last Veterans Affairs newsletter check out the Open Arms Logo and you will see what I mean.

As you would expect, a lot of the programs underway as part of the State government grant have stalled or slowed due to COVID-19 restrictions but are now cranking up again. Grant funding for the Older Veterans Psychiatric Program outdoor area at Coral/Balmoral has been received and it is planned to open the facility next year to coincide with VV Day 2021. Treasurer Bob Glaubitz is managing the various grants funding and our capitations to National continue; we maintain our position as the largest Branch.

VV Day 2020 at the Shrine will revert to a live streaming of a very small service to be conducted by the executive at the post 1945 memorial. No guests will be invited to attend. This is due to current restrictions

on attendance numbers at the Shrine, so the emphasis will be on Sub-Branch local activities. VV Day 2021 at the Shrine will be something to behold so put it in the diary now.

After many years of looking after our website Len Barlow has called time. I want to thank Len very much for his work behind the scenes keeping the site up and running and relevant. Your executive will work on a way ahead and keep you informed. Sadly, Barry Brewer, one of our longest serving VVAA Vic ANZAC House office workers has passed away. Barry will leave a large hole to fill.

Strange times indeed, but we will all come out the other end bigger and better and still relevant to our cause of helping ALL veterans. Thanks to all Sub-Branches for keeping up our memberships, and to Sue and Lindsay for maintaining our membership stats. Pleased to have VP Brendan up and about again, he has been quite poorly, and best wishes to Harold Heslop who was rushed to hospital recently.

Cheers, and thanks for your support.

Bob E

## AUSTIN HEALTH ~ BLANKET WARMER



*I visited Coral-Balmoral Ward 17 yesterday to drop off a bag of goodies.*

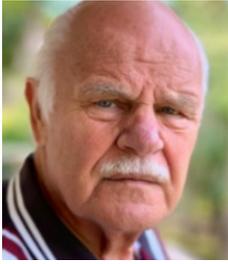
*I met with the Ward Supervisor and had a good chat and then went to have a look at the Branch donation of a blanket warmer for the ward. The Supervisor said that the warmer was a wonderful donation for the ward and it*

*will be in operation shortly after the wiring installation is complete. She said that it gets quite cool in the ward and the warmer will be of great assistance to patients who are feeling unwell-they can curl up under a warm blanket she said.*

**Bob Elworthy AM**



# A WORD FROM YOUR SECRETARY



Our State Congress (AGM) & Council meeting on Saturday 22, February 2020 saw no major changes to your current Executives with the exception of Peter Bright being elected unopposed as State Assistant Treasurer. To Peter, welcome aboard.

Not long afterwards we, as with everyone, we were hit with the COVID 19 restrictions. As a result the administration of VVAA Victoria needed another form of communicating with each other and ZOOM was it's name, ZOOM a relatively easy form of visually getting together and conducting business on line.

In the meantime your VVAA Victoria Executive has been conducting State Executive meetings via ZOOM conferencing with great success and enjoying this different way of getting together. The next State Council meeting was set down for Saturday 27, June 2020 via a ZOOM conference meeting . A trial ZOOM meeting of Sub-Branches was held successfully with several issues being highlighted; these will be sorted well before the actual meeting day.

Your Executive has had a number of Executive and General meetings to ensure the running of VVAA Victoria continues and function normally. Likewise National held it's AGM on Wednesday 13, May 2020 via ZOOM conferencing also with your National Executive all re-elected unopposed, the only change being that for the position of Secretary. We extend our sincerest thanks to Graham Anderson OAM JP, the outgoing National Secretary, for his 7 years of service to VVAA and welcome a new face Terry Roe (*Tasmania*) as Acting Secretary for 2020/21. We look forward working closely with Terry and wish him all the best.

COVID 19 created some unique problems. Sub-Branches have been hard at it contacting members by phone making sure everyone was OK. Welfare Centres changed the way they processed claims from the usual face-to-face interviews to processing over the phone and email. Documentation requiring signatures was mailed and lodgment of claims was emailed to DVA.

As was expected ANZAC Day proper was cancelled and replaced instead by roadside vigils. On my daily walks I noticed with interest the engagement by the children of the neighbourhood with their displays of Poppy wearing Teddy Bears, Australian flags and messages drawn into the footpaths with coloured chalk. On the day, at dawn, the 'Last Post' could be heard all around our area, followed with hot beverages and sandwiches. It was certainly an ANZAC Day to remember, a far cry from the usual march by veterans down Swanson Street to the Shrine.

Vietnam Veterans Day 2020 looks like another causality of COVID 19 and will not to go ahead in it's usual form. Instead it will take the form of a small wreath laying ceremony to be held at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne with VVAA Sub-Branches following the lead set by the Shrine in their own local areas. Due to the scaled down commemorations for this year, all eyes are on next year's commemorations for what will possibly be the last final gathering at the Shrine marking the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of hostilities in Vietnam.

Rumblings from the RSL Reform team continue with the main focus now, by a breakaway individual, being the sale of Vasey RSL Care by the War Widows Guild and RSL Victoria. As usual the thrust of this individual's campaign focuses on misinformation that creates fear amongst the Vasey RSL Care veteran & widows community and posted on social media. (*Facebook*) A Channel 9 'Current Affair' program to get the message across was also aired, although this was a little one sided. The Facebook posts are generally very demeaning and aimed at any individual or group who dare to speak out. Many interested groups and individuals are working through this issue logically and calmly with steps being taken to ease the anxiety of Vasey Care RSL residents many of who are Vietnam Veterans.

To assist with understanding of this complex situation I have included the links for the *Vasey RSL Care website* and *Save Vasey – the facts*. Please familiarise yourselves with Vasey's comprehensive take on this:

<https://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/>

<https://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/home/save-vasey-rsl-care-support-our-advocacy-campaign/save-vasey-the-facts/>

It is pleasing to see our VVAA Victoria memberships are on track and once again compare favourably with previous years at the same time. Many members who traditionally renew their memberships at the ANZAC Day and Vietnam Veterans Day commemorations will have for this year missed out due to the Corona Virus pandemic. We ask them to contact their Sub-Branches and renew their membership and visa versa with Sub-Branches reaching out to them ensuring they remain financial.

We are confident the next State Council meeting at Swan Hill 23-25 October 2020 will go ahead and if so will allow all delegates to get together once again.

Regards  
George



# SUB BRANCHES ~ WHAT'S ON

## OUTER EASTERN MELBOURNE

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic, OEM has initiated a 'telephone contact to our members by the Executive Committee and our Support Group. To date some 260 members have been called. Interestingly this initiative seems to have had a 'two fold' outcome, as not only are members pleased (some are surprised) by the call, but those making the calls have advised of receiving a deal of worth and pleasure in being able to provide some welfare wellbeing themselves.

Many members took the opportunity on ANZAC Day



by conducting or participating in a driveway/porch Dawn Service. One such Dawn Service being conducted was outside Aldo (Rocky) Gerzina's residence, above. It was

pleasing and a delight to see, and to be advised of the many community endeavors at a 'different Dawn Service', by many in the community. The many varied and personalised Dawn Service activities and displays throughout our areas was amazing. Somehow these 'singular' services seemed to be 'more personal' and meaningful. The community did not forget veterans!

Being unable to meet in person, we have conducted two SKYPE executive meeting, a successful and interesting way to conduct our regular meetings. This new initiative was one that may prove to be a worthy activity if future meetings are interrupted by 'time & space'.

OEM has set (provisional) dates for our usual, annual functions. Subject to the easing of restrictions, we are



anticipating the many social functions, caserole luncheon, external BBQ, Grand Final Breakfast and Christmas Dinner will proceed

We have arranged to host an electronic version of the VVAA

(Vic) publication *Victoria Remembers Vietnam* on our website. You can access the PDF of the book from [www.oemvvaa.org.au](http://www.oemvvaa.org.au) or directly from a link on the VVAA website [www.vvaavic.org.au](http://www.vvaavic.org.au)

The year had a busy start with our AGM in February, at which Allan Small became our new President after Aff Binnoore decided not to nominate for the position of President this year. The AGM was held at Bayswater RSL with 75 members attending.



In February we held a Dinner Dance to celebrate our Sub branch 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Over 170 members joined us for a fantastic night that will be remembered for a long time to come. Many members travelled long distances to catch up with friends. Our speakers were The Hon Alan Tudge, Federal minister and Member for Aston and our VVAA (Vic) Vice President Brendan Kincaid. During the night Sub branch Life Memberships were awarded to Allan Small, Judy McQuillan and Bob Farquhar

Our Gypsy travellers group was lucky enough to fit in a week at Marengo Park (beside Apollo Bay) prior to the onset of the virus.



At our AGM we launched our newly rebranded folder to assist members in getting their affairs in order. The package addresses wills, powers of attorney, funeral and burial arrangements, organ donation and a range of related topics. This package is being distributed to members, albeit being affected by current restrictions. An electronic version is available to all on our website [www.oemvvaa.org.au](http://www.oemvvaa.org.au)



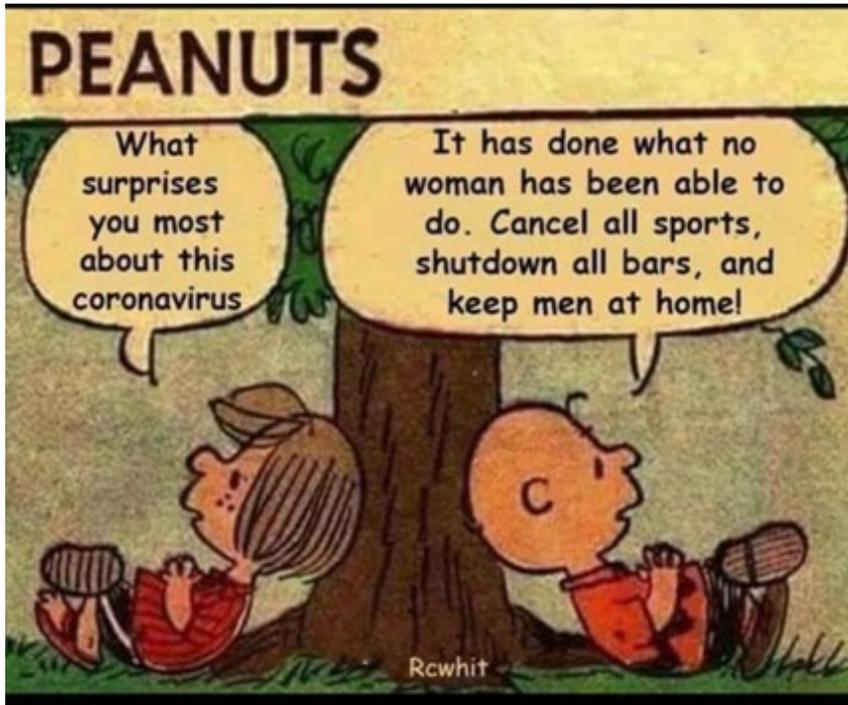
## GEELONG

The start of 2020 has been a most unusual experience with the veteran community here in Geelong being in lockdown and veterans and their families existing in 'iso'. As we make up the vulnerable group we have had to be extra careful. The SB initiated their "Are You OK?" policy by contacting all members by phone to see how they were coping and if there was anything we could do to assist. In the majority of cases Vietnam veterans were well supported by family and friends, some needed additional assistance which we provided. ANZAC Day services were cancelled across the country but we still found ways to remember; one of the most popular was the driveway service called 'Light the Dark'- people standing in silence in their driveways with a lighted candle. The Geelong SB featured on the front page of the Geelong Advertiser. On ANZAC morning a few members laid a wreath at the Geelong Vietnam memorial, observing social distancing restrictions.

We had to close the VV Centre on orders of the City Council, but kept in touch via our email network and phone calls. We re-opened on 10<sup>th</sup> June, observing the appropriate limitations. Our Vietnam memorial received a professional clean and new flags were hung. The memorial looks great again!

We have submitted our permit application for the Vietnam Veterans commemoration on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August. We are hoping restrictions are lifted to enable the march and service to go ahead.

Rieny Nieuwenhof  
President



**Prediction: There will be a minor baby boom in 9 months, and then one day in 2033, we shall witness the rise of THE QUARANTEENS.**

## FRANKSTON

We folks, hasn't the last few months been interesting. This virus has changed us all with the way we think and the way we behave. I think it will be a long time before we have any sort of normalcy again.

At Frankston Sub Branch we are trying to keep in touch with our members by emails on a regular basis, with helpful hints or jokes to get them through the day. Our members who are snail mail have been receiving regular phone calls to make sure that they are coping ok.

ANZAC Day this year was strange for everyone. I asked all our members to send in to me a photo of them standing outside their driveway and I was very happy to get over 40 photos back, which I am hoping Maurie will include some with this article. Les and I laid a wreath at the Frankston

cenotaph on behalf of the Sub Branch and we met another one of our members doing the same thing.

At this stage we have not made any plans for 18<sup>th</sup> August, we are waiting for the rules to hopefully be relaxed a little bit more and also hopefully for our RSL to open again as it has used the shutdown to do major renovations.

Our coffee group has started up again now that they can meet in small numbers, and as they can't go to the cafes yet, they are meeting in members sheds taking their own chairs and I think they are enjoying catching up with each other and having a chat

Please take care and stay safe during this time

Cheryl Myers OAM



### **Vale 3411779 Barry Brewer, 3 RAR SVN Dec '67 to Dec '68.**

Barry was a long standing State Office Volunteer who carried out his duties with great efficiency - he is sadly missed.

### **VVAA Victorian Branch Retirement.**

Retiring from full time VVAA Vic volunteer duties is former State Secretary Len Barlow OAM.

Apart from his former duties as State Secretary, Len has been the VVAA Vic Webmaster for the past MANY years. Thanks Len for all your work and guidance. Yes, we know you are only a phone call away.

## RAAF

Our last Newsletter (March 2020) summarised our major activities during for the preceding 12 months and highlighted coverage of our AGM held on 16 February. Who would have thought that within just a few short weeks, our lives would be so affected by the COVID 19 pandemic? To use the military metaphor, we were to be confined to barracks for an extended period and to exercise life-changing practices in how we related to others in the very few activities we were permitted outside our homes.

I, like many of us, either had to dust-off or purchase web-cameras that we had never used and become familiar with the various video-conferencing programmes to keep connected with friends and family. To some extent, participation in video committee meetings quickly became much more disciplined and efficient and although larger gatherings such as our Anzac Day March and lunch were not possible, we were able through the technology of “Zoom” able to remember the RAAF personnel who lost their lives on operations and to honour all who served in Vietnam. We were also privileged to hear AVM Alan Reed recite the poem he had written specifically for “Anzac Day 2020”.

Many of us had earlier in the day responded to the invitation of the Victorian RSL to stand in our driveways with a candle at dawn for a one minute reflection as the Last Post was broadcast and perhaps take a “selfie” of the occasion. Our Branch was also

keen to participate in the “telephone tree” initiated by AFA (Vic) President Max McGregor and several members of our committee made calls to Branch members just to touch base and keep the lines of communication open.

The Coronavirus lockdown restrictions are gradually being lifted and we are hoping that our next commemorative event on Vietnam Veterans Day will proceed as normal. The Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia will be planning for this shortly and we’ll keep everyone posted on arrangements.

In the meantime, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with me or a committee member if you are having any concerns or issues during these challenging times.

Stay well and don’t forget to keep up the social



## VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2020

As a result of COVID-19 gathering restrictions the usual Commemoration Service held at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance has been reluctantly cancelled.

However, the day will be observed as follows:

- VVAA Victorian Branch State President Bob Elworthy AM will lay a wreath at the Melbourne Shrine at 1100 hrs Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August. That small Service will be Live Streamed via the Shrine Facebook Page.
- VVAA Victorian Branch Sub Branches are encouraged to conduct appropriate Services in their own local area.
- **Mark Vietnam Veterans Day Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021 in your diaries - BIG Plans.**

# SUB BRANCHES ~ WHAT'S ON

## DIAMOND VALLEY ~ (DVIETS)

2020 started well for the DViets before it all started to fall apart; but we managed to get our AGM sorted in February and the Committee for 2020 has familiar faces:

Peter Blackman – President  
Alan Comben – Secretary  
Mick Pignatelli – Treasurer  
Margaret Van Poeteren – Committee  
Bill Little – Committee  
John Boniface – Committee

We managed a trip to Watergardens for lunch in February, a trip to Bacchus Marsh for morning tea and then onto Ballarat for the day on 10<sup>th</sup> March, and we conducted a successful Trivia night at Greensborough RSL on 15<sup>th</sup> March...all prior to us all going into lockdown mode.

We are coping well with the lockdown and the Committee has contacted all members and there are no major issues. We have established an environment where members are encouraged (and are doing it) to ring another member and have a chat, either phone, zoom, skype or whatever. This is working exceptionally well.

We have lost two members over this period, Barry Brewer and Peter Moore, but not to the Corona Virus and we express our condolences and regret that we cannot give them the farewell they deserve.

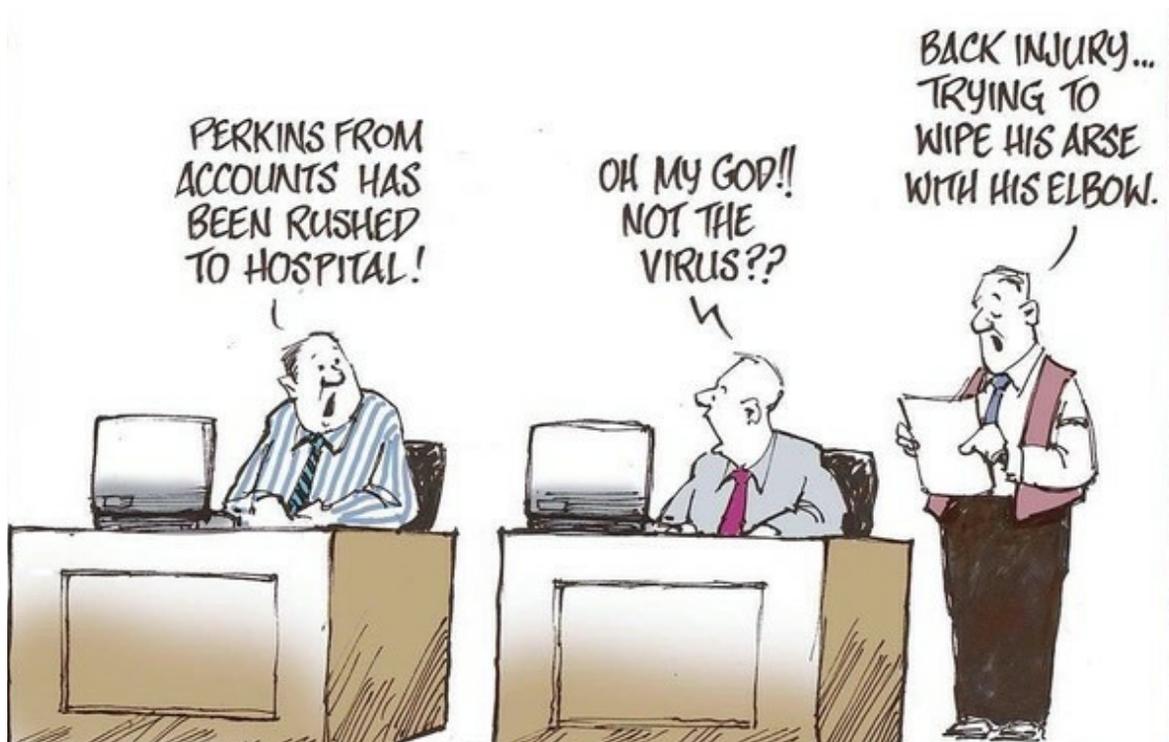
We are also still putting out a weekly newsletter to all members with relevant information re the Corona Virus and how all members are coping; we get jokes, photos and it helps keep us all together, so when we can kick off again we will be ready.

Our members were very active on Anzac Day and participated in Driveway services in their street and on their exercise walks when passing a veteran's home saying hello, all at appropriate distancing of course.

We have attached photos of driveway services and other photos of DViets being DViets.

Let's all hope we all successfully get through this period of concern and we and the world will get back to some normality.

Peter Blackman  
President, DViets.



# *SUB BRANCHES ~ WHAT'S ON*

## **DIAMOND VALLEY ~ (DVIETS) ROGUES GALLERY**



*DVIET' AGM*



*ANZAC Day 2020.*



*Watergardens.*



*ANZAC Day 2020.*



*Ballarat.*



*Isolation.*



*Trivia.*



*Mick Van Poeteren - Isolation.*

## BENDIGO

Bendigo Sub Branch has had a quite uneventful period since the virus pandemic hit our shores at the start of the year, it seems like an age has passed since then.

The first item on our agenda was to contact all our members to ask whether we could help them in any way possible. This was done by calling for volunteers at our last general meeting in March; originally members who had no underlying medical issues were invited to volunteer as we imagined that we would be actually assisting with physical help, but this was not possible because all of us were in the 'vulnerable' category. A list was drawn up and divided into equal parts, with each volunteer responsible for approx. 10-11 members, who were then to be contacted and asked **R.U.O.K.** Reports from our phone canvassers were positive, and those contacted were happy that their Association was concerned, and some were pleased just to have a chat.

One member and his wife had just returned from a tour of New Zealand and had contracted the virus from another traveler, resulting in him being hospitalized for over 10 days. His wife was not as fortunate in that she was in I.C.U. for over 3 weeks - we are glad that they are both back home and slowly recovering.

Anzac Day this year was a pared back affair, the RSL only sold badges on-line, with a few honesty boxes in various locations. We, as a branch, retired from conducting badge sales on behalf of the RSL, Maurice Betts had been responsible for organizing Anzac Day and Remembrance Day Appeals for quite a few years, and it had become an arduous task which took up approx. 3-4 months of his and his team of willing helper's time, as well as a steady

reduction of those able to help. On top of that we found the administrative support from the RSL was left wanting. As in past years, we laid wreaths at Bendigo, Eaglehawk, Kangaroo Flat and Huntly.

As to branch activities, our headquarters is in the grounds of the Bendigo RSL and we therefore had to abide by their rules, (gates were locked), as well as the community social distancing directives, so our 'Shed' was out-of-bounds until about a week ago, when we were able to have an Exec. Comm. Meeting.

We have been able to help while away the hours, via email, with members contributing humorous articles sourced mainly from the internet and forwarded to the Hon. Sec., to be re-forwarded to the membership, after some editing to weed out the 'Not for general exhibition' category items, of which there were more than a couple. All/most have been well received and appreciated. I suppose that you could call it a newsletter without any news ??, it has been published? on a daily basis.

Our social calendar has also been severely curtailed, with one trip that had been booked and deposit paid, postponed until.....who knows when, hopefully THIS YEAR !!!

Our membership stands at 128 (financial) for this year. We don't expect it to change much, if at all, although there have been some stragglers in previous years, Question in August:- 'Have I paid my membership for this year ??'

We now have to wait, like all other branches, to see whether we will be allowed to sell badges and commemorate V.V. Day on the 18<sup>th</sup> August.

Graham Flanders, Secretary.



1. Graham Flanders, Maurice Betts and Andrew Turner laying the wreath at Bendigo Soldiers Memorial Institute Museum, 2. The wreath at the obelisk. 3. President Paul Penno with Graham Flanders, at the Eaglehawk Memorial.

# HMAS SYDNEY

On the, 27<sup>th</sup> May 1965, B Coy 1RAR along with other elements of the 1RAR Group boarded HMAS Sydney bound for service in South Vietnam.

The converted aircraft carrier HMAS Sydney, departed Sydney on her first of over 20 voyages to South Vietnam, carrying 347 officers and men of the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR) together with vehicles, equipment and stores. The remainder of the battalion flew by chartered Qantas 707 jets on secret overnight flights from Richmond airbase to Saigon over the following two weeks.

The dispatch of this unit, totalling some 1,100 Australian

Regular Army troops, marked the first deployment of Australian combat troops to the struggling Republic of Vietnam. 1RAR was generally considered one of the most professional and best-trained battalions ever to have left Australia, although deficiencies in its equipment and preparation would soon become apparent during extended operations in the bitter war in Vietnam.

Australian support for South Vietnam since the early 1960s was in keeping with the 'forward defence' policy of Australia and the 'containment' strategy of the United States, aimed at stemming the spread of communism in Southeast Asia.



## ONE FOR THE MEAT LOVERS

*In the UK, some supermarkets have admitted that there is horse meat in their home cooked burgers.*

*Within hours, the following quips hit the Internet:*

- *I'm so hungry, I could eat a horse. I guess Tesco just listened!*
- *Anyone want a burger from Tesco? Yay or neigh?*
- *Not entirely sure how Tesco is going to get over this hurdle.*
- *Had some burgers from Tesco for supper last night. I still have a bit between my teeth.*
- *A woman has been taken into hospital after eating horse meat burgers from Tesco. Her condition is listed as stable.*

- *Tesco are now testing all their vegetarian burgers for traces of unicorn.*
- *"I've just checked the Tesco burgers in my freezer ... "AND THEY'RE OFF!"*
- *Tesco is now forced to deny the presence of zebra in burgers, as shoppers confuse barcodes for serving suggestions.*
- *I said to my spouse, "These Tesco burgers give me the trots..."*
- *"To beef or not to beef, that is equestrian".....*
- *A cow walks into a bar. Barman says, "Why the long face? Cow says "Illegal ingredients are coming over here stealing our jobs!"*

- *I hear the smaller version of those Tesco burgers make great horse d'oeuvres.*
- *These Tesco burger jokes are going on a bit. Talk about flogging a dead horse.*
- *Since they're selling the meat wrapped in plastic, is that technically a "Trojan Horse?"*
- *Instead of choosing "rare, medium or well done, it's now Win, Place or Show"*





**The National Vietnam Veterans Museum (NVVM) is delighted to formally advise that Australia’s most recognised Vietnam Veteran, General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove, AK AC (Mil) CVO MC (Retired) has agreed to be the Patron of the National Vietnam Veterans Museum.**

## **THE NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM GAINS MUSEUM ACCREDITATION**

### **MEDIA RELEASE Monday 4 May 2020**

*The National Vietnam Veterans Museum has gained Accreditation by the Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria. A professional panel of museum experts has made a final assessment and compiled a positive report on the museum’s operations. The National Vietnam Veterans Museum has met set criteria from the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries and joins the 79 Victorian museums, galleries and collecting organisations Accredited in Victoria.*

The National Vietnam Veterans Museum has unique beginnings, having initially been conceived by John and Krishna Methvan as a travelling ‘mobile museum’ trailer which toured Australia in an effort to reach out to soldiers and to promote a broader understanding of the Vietnam War. The museum moved to its permanent home in Newhaven on Phillip Island in 2007 and remaining true to its vision, has continued to support service men and women and their families by interpreting

the enduring impact of the war on society. The museum’s collection ranges from helicopters and tanks to oral histories and the ballot marbles used in selecting birth dates for National Service. Staff and volunteers remain dedicated to creating informative and engaging visitor experiences based on the extensive collection now under their care.

The Accreditation panel were impressed with the range of activities the museum carries out as part of the broader community and its continued commitment to service men and women and their families, in particular the creation of a commemorative garden space for remembrance and contemplation.

The Victorian-based Museum Accreditation Program (MAP) is now in its 27th year and is run by Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria, the professional association for the museum and gallery sector. There are currently 79 Accredited cultural organisations and a further 5 working towards this goal. To become Accredited the museum spent 4-5 years developing procedures and policies, and practice to meet recognised museum standards.

Simone Ewenson Co-Manager, Museum

## AINTREE WALK OF HONOUR

The *Aintree Walk Of Honour* is a permanent *Memorial Walk* which has a boundary of approx 30 kms and Honours Australian Defence Force personnel who came from the following areas:

*Melton*  
*Bacchus Marsh,*  
*Sunbury,*  
*Kilmore*  
*St. Albans*  
*Deer Park*  
*Rockbank.*  
*Caroline Springs*

Stage one was dedicated by RSL's Mike Annett on 11/11/2018 - it is located in the new suburb of Woodlea located off the Western Hwy.



1st stage to finish with Vietnam conflict - 24 Vietnam Veterans on the Walk.

2nd Stage will now involve the Post 1975 Veterans and is expected to be dedicated this year.

### (ALL ARMS OF SERVICE)

Somalia, Sudan, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste,  
Gulf War 1 & 2, Iraq and ongoing Afghanistan.

Caroline Springs RSL will now be conducting their Remembrance Day Services from the Walk from 2020 and into the future.

Further details are available at the following website:

<https://aintreewalkofhonour.com.au/>



## WHY ARE MEMORIALS IMPORTANT?

*Memorials are an important part of every culture. They allow people to remember a deceased loved one or an important public figure. ... Thus, by providing a permanent resting place for the deceased the survivors also get a place where they can go and show their respect to the deceased*

# OCS PORTSEA REVISITED

On 21 February, Parks Victoria hosted a very brief visit by a group of international and national military dignitaries on a tour through the **Point Nepean Quarantine Station - former OCS at Portsea**.

The visit was one of nostalgia primarily, and notably included the **Malaysian Chief of Army, General Hasbullah** and **MAJGEN Gerald Fogarty (Rtd)** who both graduated from the **Portsea Officer Cadet School** in 1981, and **Brigadier General Meor** who graduated a year later.

Since graduating, General Hasbullah and MAJGEN Fogarty (Rtd) have remained close friends, and shared many memories and amusing stories as they wandered through the site. Their friendship is a testament to the enduring significance this site holds for those who trained here during the school's 34 year occupation.

The group was informed that the Portsea OCS Alumni's proposal to reinstate the OCS memorial with the statue and honour next to the Parade Ground and Badcoe Hall. They were all very pleased to hear this, and mentioned they have seen the original memorial at Duntroon in the preceding days as part of their international relations tour of Australia.



*L-R Julia Street,, Brigadier General Meor, MAJGEN Gerald Fogarty (Rtd), General Hasbullah, COL Nahar, Sally Hutchinson*



**Sorry LIFE IS CLOSED TILL 2021**



🤔  
**My fiancé just told me he has feelings for someone he met at work this week.**  
**He's been working from home.**  
@steelydanalbum  
🤔

# LONG DAZE AT Long Binh

24TH EVAC HOSPITAL  
SOUTH VIETNAM, 1966-68



The humorous adventures of two Wisconsin draftees trained as combat medics and sent off to set up a field hospital in South Vietnam



STEVE DONOVAN



FRED BORCHARDT

## Long Daze at Long Binh:

The humorous adventures of two Wisconsin draftees trained as combat medics and sent off to set up a field hospital in South Vietnam

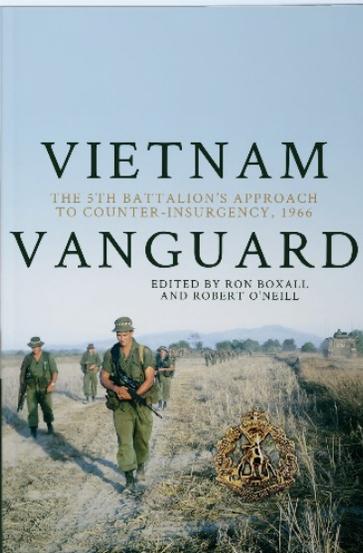
by Steve Donovan, Fred Borchardt

This is a humorous memoir about the Vietnam War as seen through the eyes of two draftees who, like roughly 2.5 million other Americans, were sent to the war zone not as combat troops but as support personnel.

The authors met on the day they were inducted in 1965 and then proceeded to follow identical paths for the next two years. This included bunking side by side for a year in South Vietnam as Army medics with the 24th Evacuation Hospital.

Their stories were at times hilarious, at times horrific and at other times heart-rending. But every day was an adventure for these two young men who never knew what might be lurking around the next bend in the circuitous road of life.

*Long Daze at Long Binh* is a lighthearted but highly informative look at what life was like in a combat zone where there were no front lines and no clear



PRESS

For many reasons, the Australian public know relatively little about what our Army did in Vietnam during the war, particularly during the years of our peak commitment, 1965-72. This book attempts to make the true nature of the war clearer to readers, emphasising how hard fought it was during major operations.

Twenty-seven of the contributing authors of this book were involved in the 1966 deployment of the 1st Australian Task Force into Phuoc Tuy Province. This formation was the first Australian Army force larger than an infantry battalion group to be deployed into a major war since World War II. Sixth Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (6 RAR), was in the vanguard as the task force's first element committed to operations to seize and occupy Nui Dat base and embark on establishing dominance over the enemy.

The narratives presented in this book give rare insights into thoughts of the soldiers at the time and how they have come to view the Australian Government's hurried expansion of its initial commitment to that war, the Army's state of preparedness for that wider involvement, and how those in its forefront adapted to get the job done, both in and out of operations, despite numerous shortcomings in higher level planning.

Buy now or download for free: [press.anu.edu.au/publications/vietnam-vanguard](http://press.anu.edu.au/publications/vietnam-vanguard)

VIETNAM RELATED BOOKS NO LONGER AVAILABLE IN AUSTRALIA

<https://www.abebooks.com/collections/sc/vietnam/5tjA0dd86rB5RcJzy4M>



# THE VVAA BADGE

As has been democratic tradition, discussion and disagreement has been a hallmark of the VVAA, and including changes to the badge.

It first arose concerning the appropriateness or otherwise of the use of the Rising Sun, with the Navy arguing it only represented the Army.

In fact the matter is unlikely ever to be resolved, as the origins of its use are not easily defined, dating from its first application in civilian and then military life.

VVAA National Council's then decision to use the Rising Sun, is perhaps and in hindsight, supported by General Hutton's apparent view at the turn of the century, that the badge included both the (shorter) cut and thrust swords used by the Navy and the bayonets used by the Military.



*The First Pattern - February 1902*

*During this time, a badge was urgently sought for the Australian contingents raised after Federation for service in South Africa during the South African (Second Boer) War. The most widely accepted version of the origin of this badge is the one that attributes the selection of its design to a British Officer, Major General Sir Edward Hutton, the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Forces.*

*Hutton had earlier received as a gift from Brigadier General Joseph Gordon, a military acquaintance of long standing, a 'Trophy-of-Arms' composed of mounted cut and thrust swords and triangular Martini-Henry bayonets that were arranged in a semi-circle around the Crown. To General Hutton, the shield was symbolic of the cooperation between the naval and military forces of the Empire.*

The aeroplane was to symbolise the method of dispersion of agent orange, that being a key issue for the VVAA, and the Australian Flag was included, as it was the flag under which Vietnam veterans had fought and died. .

In the end however pragmatism won out, and Council agreed to change the Australian flag to a Naval White Ensign and nominate the aeroplane as symbolic of the RAAF.

Council Members from that time, (and who are still with us) would likely still argue that this was a decision reached, after much careful consideration and although the compromise was necessary, it came at the sacrifice of the original concept.

*Commentary provided by Peter Liefman OAM, former Victorian State President*

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

*The changes to the VVAA Badge away from its original concept would no doubt have not sat easily with some, especially those who were involved with the original concept. However, all credit goes to those early decision makers who accepted the change as more "all embracing" for the Navy, Army and Air Force involvement in Vietnam.*



# AATTV (Training Team) VIETNAM ~ THE FINAL HOURS

Headquarters Australian Force Vietnam (HQAFV) Saigon was withdrawn along with the remainder of the Australian Forces and replaced by Australian Army Assistance Group Vietnam (AAAGV) in Saigon which provided support to AATTV elements located at Van Kiep Training Base in Phuoc Tuy, and the embassy guard.

## *So what was going on in 1972?*

In April AAAGV received a message from Army Headquarters in Australia which advised that a question had been asked in Parliament whether there were any children fathered by Australian servicemen in Vietnam. HQAFV reported in 1969 that in An Phong orphanage there appeared to be two who were regarded as being of Australian fathers. Are there any part Australian children in Vietnam? Numbers if available.

The task of finding out was allocated to AATTV by AAAGV. AATTV despatched a Warrant Officer to undertake the investigation. Following is the gist of his report:

*Mother superior at Baria Orphanage stated that she holds two children who could have been Australian fathered. She recalled having 2 others but these were sent to Saigon, after being adopted. She told me mothers do not require to register their children any other way than Vietnamese.*

*A Social worker in Baria had no record of any mothers having Australian fathered children, and doubted the possibility of there being any in Baria due to the fact that there were no entertainment facilities there. (my comment: read bars and brothels?)*

*Father superior at An Phong orphanage reported out of 200 he had 5-7 foreign children but could not tell exactly what nationality.*

*Mother superior at St Joseph orphanage Vung Tau, approx. 3 Australian fathered children. When I asked to see one I was shown a child that was more likely to be Korean than Australian.*

*Sister in charge maternity Le Loi Hospital Vung Tau stated that approx. 200 children a year are born of other than Vietnamese origin. These children are registered as either Vietnamese or foreign. No details as to their exact nationality.*

*Summary: It is obvious that mothers having Australian fathered children do not have to register them as such. Social service is not available. The question of Australian fathered children was regarded as a strange one and it was impossible to supply me with any details as there are no records to demonstrate that certain children are Australian fathered.*

## CHEAP CHARLIE

*Uc-da-loi, Cheap Charlie  
He no buy me Saigon tea,  
Saigon tea costs many many P,  
Uc-da-loi he Cheap Charlie.*

*Uc-da-loi, Cheap Charlie,  
He no give me MPC,  
MPC costs many many P,  
Uc-da-loi he Cheap Charlie.*

*Uc-da-loi, Cheap Charlie  
He no go to bed with me,  
Bed with me costs many many P  
Uc-da-loi he Cheap Charlie.*

*Uc-da-loi, Cheap Charlie,  
Make me give him one for free,  
Mamma-san go crook at me,  
Uc-da-loi, he Cheap Charlie.*

*Uc-da-loi, Cheap Charlie,  
He give baby-san to me,  
Baby-san costs many many P,  
Uc-da-loi, he Cheap Charlie.*

*Uc-da-loi, Cheap Charlie,  
He go home across the sea,  
He leave baby-san with me,  
Uc-da-loi he Cheap Charlie*



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

# VETERAN INTEREST

The Department of Veterans' Affairs Secretary has just advised us of the following outcome –

As you know we have been working closely with a number of supermarket chains to ensure vulnerable veterans can access a range of priority assistance services from supermarkets when purchasing online or shopping in-store.

While the Gold Card is not a concession card it does identify our most vulnerable veterans, and war widows, of which there are over 120,000 across Australia.

From today, Gold Card holders are eligible to access the priority services offered by Coles, IGA, Foodworks and Woolworths. .

The services being offered include priority online ordering, home

delivery, in-store collection and access to a range of boxed basic grocery items which is delivered by Australia Post.

More detail on the offerings from each supermarket can be found at the following links:

## COLES

<https://www.coles.com.au/customer-notice/onlinepriorityservice>.

## FOODWORKS

<https://foodworks.com.au/homedelivery>

## IGA

<https://igashop.com.au/>

## WOOLWORTHS

<https://www.woolworths.com.au/shop/discover/priorityassistance>

While Gold Cards may not be identified on landing pages (as we are waiting for updates to the websites), the DVA Gold card is listed or can be included when completing the online registration process.

We will be providing more information to veterans about these initiatives through our usual communication and social network channels. But I would appreciate your assistance in highlighting these services to your members.

I am pleased with this outcome and thank you all for your patience.

*Liz Cosson AM CSC*

Secretary

Department of Veterans' Affairs

# 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
- ✓ Reduce and manage age related illness
- ✓ Assist with the management of chronic health conditions, back pain, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, diabetes and more
- ✓ Exercise Physiology, Occupational Therapy, Dietetic & Physiotherapy services available.
- ✓ Operating out of Gym & Aquatic facilities, also with the option of home visits.

**NJF**  
Exercise Physiologists



### VICTORIA

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E [admin@njfwellness.com.au](mailto:admin@njfwellness.com.au)

[njfwellness.com.au](http://njfwellness.com.au)

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



## *A service founded by Vietnam Veterans*

Beating the blues

Building better relationships

Doing anger differently

Managing pain

Mental Health First Aid

Operation Life: Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

Operation Life: Suicide alertness for everyone (safe TALK)

Recovery from trauma

Residential lifestyle management program

Sleeping better

Stepping Out

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**or**

**If you need NEED ASSISTANCE**

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**Ph: 1800 011 046**