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QUEENSLAND 4021

HONOUR THE DEAD BUT FIGHT LIKE HELL FOR THE LIVING

SITREP

Incorporated 31 Aug 2000

Nov 2016

ABN 34-392-447-046

Mission Statement

To assist all veterans, dependants and their descendants in all matters relating to health, welfare and wellbeing.

PRESIDENTS PONDERINGS

It is that time of the year when we reach for our wallets and pens to pay for our 2017 Renewal of Membership. Remembering the sub branch allows internet banking for the payment of membership renewals. However, the secretary still requires the hard copy of the Renewal of Membership form. You will find all the relevant information at the bottom of the Renewal of Membership form.

It was quite distressing to all when informed that the new Vietnam Veterans' Memorial had been defaced by a dimwit. I of course could use much stronger language, but, I am a gentleman. The following day Neville reported the defacement to a Ranger from the MBRC. Shortly after that the Council cleaned the offensive tag from the memorial. .

Our next major social get-together is our Christmas party on Saturday 26th November. I hope and trust that it is well attended by you and your partner\wife and friends. Of course the 11th November Service is being held at Anzac Place two days after our November meeting. No doubt I will share a cold drink with some of you in the Kokoda Room after the service.

I would like to remind you that we have several small businesses who advertise in our newsletter "SITREP," I strongly recommend that we support these businesses.

Individuals should not attempt to fill out any DVA forms without the assistance of the Redcliffe RSL Sub Branch's Welfare/Pension officers. The wording on these forms is very important and DVA is well known for pouncing on the incorrect use of a single word and misconstruing the entire intention of the writer.

Take care one and all I will see you all at our next General Meeting

Charles Parsons LM
Ich Dien



YADA YADA'S

Well, the end is nigh"er" the end of year that is. Rod is still busy organising the Christmas Party. A few other things are going on. The Vietnam Veterans emblem for our plinth at ANZAC Place has been replaced and appears to be of better quality. We have sent a request to get a BBQ day at Bunnings to beef up our coffers and we are initiating more involvement with the Thursday night raffles. As yet we do not have a response. In relation to the raffles, BILL IS BACK. Bill Stowers and Neville Cullen the Secretary of the RSL and the President continue to run the raffles with Bill oozing charm to, without soliciting, sell many tickets to people as they get off the escalators, not to mention giving them lessons in respect at the recitation of the Ode. Some of us are supporting them but can always have more keeping Captain Charles company. Anyway between raffles and bbqs we should be able to better fund our various activities. We will discuss them again at this months meeting Once again people, remember REMEMBRANCE DAY 11th November at 10.15am ANZAC Place.

Cheers and see you at our meeting on the 9th November
Gomer

SOCIAL REPORT

It is time to again report on social activities. Firstly and importantly, our Xmas party is but 4 weeks away. Acceptances are slowly trickling in with 31 names so far, don't forget, we have to pay for 50 minimum. As previously stated, the sub branch is fully subsidising the meal and entertainment for members and members partners. Non member guests pay \$55.00 each. All you need to pay for is raffle tickets and your drinks (there will be no bottle wine or jugs of beer provided on tables). Entry will be 6.15-6.30 for 7.00 pm start , raffle tickets and lucky door prize tickets will be available on entry . My contact details are listed below, so please contact me as soon as possible, as the final cut off date for acceptances is 18th November. We are looking forward to another fun night. phone 0438111728 email rapnjap@bigpond.com. I am a step closer to applying for bus trip grants for 2017, with tenders from tour operators and bus companies for prices. I want to thank John Martin from Post 55 for his valuable assistance. Further updates as we progress. Finally , no lotto dividend for last month.

Till next time, take care and look forward to seeing you at the Xmas party.

Rod P Mike O Rod B



Doug Morris

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P (07) 3284 5423 F (07) 3284 5244
E dmj@powerup.com.au
Shop 30, Kippa Ring Village, Kippa Ring, Qld. 4021



**Vietnam Veterans Association of
Australia
Redcliffe Sub Branch Inc.
VVAA Redcliffe Committee**

Patron	Doug Morris	32845421	dmj@poweup.com.au
President	Charles Parsons	38804082	blackhat47@optusnet.com.au
Snr. Vice President	Bob Hartman	38894595	bjhartmann@bigpond.com
Jnr. Vice President	Brian Lewis	38800376	riverscitysecure@optusnet.com.au
Secretary	John van Pelt	3880 4788	john@jvpdesign.com
Treasurer	Peter Parrish	0407 374 823	pandn@tpg.com.au
Editor	Mick Cassidy	38802764	mickcass@optusnet.com.au
Quartermaster	Mick Joyce	32041619	michaeljoyce7@bigpond.com
Entertainment Member	Rod Parker	3283 2425	rapnjap@bigpond.com
Welfare. Redcliffe RSL	Graham Woodward	32930239	gnj.woody@bigpond.com
Advocates & Pension Officers. Redcliffe RSL	Neville Cullen	32038247	nevjcullen@optusnet.com.au
Redcliffe RSL	Erich Jeffrey	34916643	dragons@internode.on.net

All correspondence to be addressed to the:
Secretary
VVAA Redcliffe Sub Branch
PO Box 38
KIPPA-RING QLD 4021

Unless otherwise notified in the 'Sitrep' newsletter, all meetings of the VVAA Redcliffe Sub Branch are held at 11:00am on the second Wednesday of each month at the Redcliffe RSL, Irene Street, Redcliffe, in the Redcliffe RSL Meeting Room. All VVAA members, members' partners, Members' guests and prospective members are welcome to attend.



Birthdays 

Nev Cullen, Brian Lewis, Gaye Lewis, John Van Pelt, Jim Williamson, Graham Woodward

LAUGHTER PARADE

New Suit

Paddy and Mick were walking along a street in London . Paddy looked in one of the shop windows and saw a sign that caught his eye. The sign read, "Suits £5.00 each, Shirts £2.00 each, trousers £2.50 per pair".

Paddy said to his pal, "Mick look at the prices! We could buy a whole lot of doze and when we get back to Ireland we could make a fortune. Now when we go in you stay quiet, okay? Let me do all da talking 'cause if they hear our accents, they might think we're thicke's from Ireland and try to screw us. I'll put on my best English accent."

"Roight y'are Paddy, I'll keep me mouth shut, so I will. You do all da business" said Mick..

They go in and Paddy said in a posh voice, "Hello my good man. I'll take 50 suits at £5.00 each, 100 shirts at £2.00 each, and 50 pairs of trousers at £2.50 each. I'll back up me truck ready to load 'em on, so I will."

The owner of the shop said quietly, "You're from Ireland , aren't you?"

"Well yes," said a surprised Paddy. "What gave it away?"

The owner replied, "This is a dry-cleaners."

The Innocent Smuggler

A Mexican teen came up to the Mexican border riding his bicycle carrying two large bags on his shoulders. The officer stops him and says, "What's in the bags?"

"Sand," he answers.

The officer says, "We'll just see about that." He takes the bags and rips them apart; he empties them out and finds nothing in them but sand. He detains the teen overnight and has the sand analyzed, only to discover that there is nothing but pure sand in the bags. The guard releases him, puts the sand into new bags, hefts them onto the lad's shoulders, and lets him cross the border.

A day later, the same thing happens. The officer asks, "What have you got?"

"Sand," says the youngster.

The officer does a thorough examination and discovers that the bags contain nothing but sand. He gives the sand back to him, and the young man crosses the border on his bicycle.

This sequence of events is repeated every day for three years. One day, the teen doesn't show. Days pass and the officer never sees him. A month later, a messenger comes and hands the officer an invitation for a house warming.

When he gets to the address, he sees it's a large villa with a pool, and many guests celebrating. Inside he finds the teen, holding a glass of wine and enjoying his guests.

"Hey, Buddy," says the officer , "It's driving me crazy. How are you so rich when all you were carrying across the border was sand? Just between you and me, what were you smuggling?"

The youngster flashes a smile and says: "Bicycles."

My budgie broke his leg today so I made him a little splint out of a couple of Redhead matches - his little face lit up when he tried to walk . . . unfortunately, I'd forgotten to remove the sandpaper from the bottom of his cage.

POETS CORNER

The Women Who loved and Lost

**Such ladies are always seen with brave face
Young and old, they've never faltered in life's great race
Duty, honour and love of country was a familiar cry
A final hug, the last kiss as he whispered goodbye**

**These women knew well the loneliness of the waiting game
The smothering silence while pretending he was home again
Each day and night dreading to hear that cruel knock on the door
Hoping tomorrow would go faster than the one before**

**To see once more that familiar wave from the front gate
Have him safe and no longer the agony of wait
Longing to hear his laughter reaching out above
The comforting warmth and sweetness of his love**

**They have such proud and loved memories of yesterday
When married to the best who for Nation led the way
God bless and salute them for the brave women they are
Their beloved heroes watching from above mid the brightest stars**

George Mansford © October 2014



The Hidden Price of Freedom

Each year on the 11th of the 11th we pause to reflect on the sacrifice made in war, particularly by those who did not come home. They were mostly very young and so full of energy and zest for life. They had many similarities including love of country, mateship and acceptance of responsibility. These men and women were dedicated to each other, sharing and caring, defiant when the odds were against them, daring, a wry sense of humour and longing to be back in their beloved Oz.

There are others who also became casualties of war; the women who waved loved ones goodbye and kept the home fires burning. For them, no matter the generation and regardless of the conflict, of when and where or its degree of intensity, they too endured and still do.

The long wait for mail, the loneliness of sleeping between cold sheets in an half empty bed, the smothering uncertainty from day to day and always waiting for that reassuring message that all was OK. For many it was also being both Mum and Dad and so many extra chores that used to be his.

Those women who have experienced such separation would agree it was a very long and anxious time waiting and too often a skipping heart beat when the media with breaking news announced there had been casualties. Each announcement followed by the long, long dreaded wait for a possible knock on the door by a grim face in uniform. It's the game played by next of kin in any war and there are the winners and losers./Cont. over

Let us never forget such women, particularly those who lost and the pain and anguish many of them experience for the rest of their life. The average profile of a woman on becoming a war widow is a stark reminder of the tragedy of war. Most are very young and more often than not they have infants. Many never remarry. Their dreams are gone and life is changed for ever with photographs of a smiling soldier on the mantelpiece as a reminder of sweet memories from yesterday.

So when you recall war, never forget the hidden sacrifices of those who were caught in the terrible game of waiting, hoping and then had lost. Sadly there has been no change to the rules and the game goes on this very day. I will conclude with some lines dedicated to those women who in all seasons of war have always kept the homes burning brightly.



Understanding homelessness in the veteran community

The Government will get a better understanding of homelessness in the veteran community through a research project announced today.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Dan Tehan said the University of New South Wales and the University of Adelaide had been engaged to conduct research into homelessness in the veteran community.

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) was commissioned by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) to run a competitive tender process for the research. The process included consultation with representatives from key Australian and state government agencies, ex-service organisations and homelessness service providers. The research will be completed by the end of 2017.

“This important research will focus on developing estimates of the number of veterans accessing homeless services, the factors that cause homelessness and the experiences of homeless veterans,” Mr Tehan said.

“The aim is to collect data about homelessness in the veteran community so the Government can better integrate support services available to homeless veterans with those offered by mainstream specialist homelessness service providers.

“The study complements work undertaken since 2015 by DVA and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to include veteran identifiers in the data collected about homelessness in the Australian community.

“Veteran homelessness is a challenge that requires a coordinated national approach to ensure the provision of appropriate assistance to all former members of the Australian Defence Force./Cont over

“Where DVA becomes aware of a veteran who has become homeless or is at risk of homelessness, it takes steps to ensure they have access to available services and support.”

Homelessness services provided by state, territory and local governments, as well as many community sector organisations, are [listed on DVA's website](#)./Cont.over

FROM the VAULT

PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS September 2005

Redcliffe's new Vietnam Veterans' Place:



VVAA Redcliffe President Nev Cullen, Commissioner Alistair Cairns OAM (Rtd) & Major Allan Fleming dedicated the new Vietnam Veterans' Place on 18 Aug 2005.

The relocation of our Vietnam Veterans' Place from the Redcliffe Parade and ANZAC Avenue roundabout, to the John Oxley Park area on Redcliffe Parade, (on the outskirts to the entrance from Brisbane of the Redcliffe CBD and overlooking Moreton Bay) is now complete, thanks mainly to the Redcliffe City Council. We held our official dedication service on Vietnam Veterans' Day, 18th August 2005.

The Salvation Army padres, Commissioner Alistair Cairns, OAM (Rtd) and dedication service

Representatives from Post 1955 Veterans Group and Redcliffe TPI Social Centre, along with a number of our own members were present at the dedication. In my dedication speech I said, “We are here to dedicate our new Vietnam Veterans' Place on this the 30th Anniversary of the ending of the war in Vietnam. This Vietnam Veterans' Place is not intended for the glorification of the Vietnam War (1963 ~ 1975) but to honour all men and women who served in Vietnam and especially those who paid the supreme sacrifice. To day is also the 39th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan and we remember those brave men who died during this battle and all other actions during the Vietnam War.

Lest We Forget.”



Many attended the dedication service of the new Vietnam Veterans' Place.

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WHAT IS A VETERAN

On 18th August we younger veterans will always remember our conflict. We remember those who didn't make it back. If you asked any member of the public what is a veteran, the answer you would generally get: somebody who served overseas. WRONG. May I take this opportunity to let you know what I think a veteran is.

We are dead or alive, whole or maimed, sane or haunted. We grew from our experiences. We lived through hell or we had a pleasant, if scary, adventure. We were Army, Navy, Air Force, Red Cross, Salvo's and civilians of all sorts. Some of us enlisted to fight for God, Queen and Country, and some were drafted. Some were gung-ho, and some went kicking and screaming. If Vets differ from others perhaps it is primarily in the fact that many of us never saw the enemy or recognized him or her. We heard gunfire and mortar fire but rarely looked into enemy eyes. Those who did, like folks who encounter close combat anywhere and anytime, are often haunted for life by those eyes, those sounds, those electric fears that ran between ourselves, our enemy, and the likelihood of death for one of us. Or we get hard, calloused, and tough. It's all in the days work. But most of us remember and get twitchy, worried and sad. We are crazies dressed in baggy greens, wide eyed, wary, homeless and drunk. We are sleepless.

We pushed paper; we pushed shovels. We drove land rovers, operated bulldozers, built bridges; we carried machine guns through dense scrub, deep paddy, and thorn bush. We lived on ration packs on patrol. Back in camp we had more normal meals like fish, chicken, steaks, XXXX and Tooheys. We did our time in high mountains drenched by endless monsoon We wore berets, bandanas, floppy hats or steel pots. Flack jackets, canvas, rash and rot. We ate palludrine and got malaria anyway. We got shots constantly but have diseases nobody can diagnose. We spent our nights on cold wet ground, our eyes imagining Charlie behind every bamboo blade. We slept in hotel beds in Saigon or tents in Vung Tau and Nui Dat, or in the cramped ships berths at sea. We feared we would die or we feared we would kill. We simply feared, and often we still do. We hate the war or believe it was the best thing ever happened to us.

We blame the Government or Uncle Ho, and their minions and secretaries and apologize for every wart cough or tic of an eye. We wonder if Agent Orange got us.

Mostly, and this I believe with all my heart, mostly, we wish we had not been so alone. Some of us went with units; but many, probably most of us, were civilians one day, jerked up out of "the world", shaved, barked at, insulted, humiliated, and taught to kill, to fix radio's, to drive trucks. We went, put in our time, and were equally ungraciously plucked out of the morass and placed back in the real world. But now we smoke dope, shoot shit, or drink heavily.

Our wives or husbands seem distant and strange. Our friends want to know if we shot anybody. Veterans are people just like you. We served our country, proudly or reluctantly or ambivalently.

What makes us different - what makes us Veterans - is something we understand, but we are afraid nobody else will. But we appreciate your asking: Veterans are white, black, beige and shades of grey. We had names like Hurren, Nelson, Middleton, Smith, Johnston, Jones, Stein, Heinze, Beasley and Kowalski. We were Australians, Kiwis, Americans, Canadians, Koreans, and Vietnamese.

We were farmers, students, mechanics, steelworkers, nurses, and priests when the call came that changed us forever. We had dreams and plans, and they all had to change...or wait. were daughters and sons, lovers and poets, hippies and philosophers, convicts and lawyers. We were rich and poor but mostly poor. We were educated or not, mostly not. We grew up in the back blocks, in city shacks, in duplexes, and bungalows and houseboats and hooches and sheep and cattle stations. We were cowards and heroes. Sometimes we were cowards one moment and heroes the next./cont. over

When we came home and marched though people protesting the Vietnam War, some told our anger and horror for all to hear. Or we sat alone in small rooms, in repat hospital wards, in places where only the crazy ever go.

We are Labor, Liberal, National Party, Socialists, and Confucians and Buddhists and Atheists though as usually is the case, even the atheists among us sometimes prayed to get out of there alive. We are hungry, and we are sated, full of life or clinging to death. We are injured, and are curers, despairing and hopeful, loved or lost. We got too old too quickly, but some of us have never grown up. We want, desperately; to go back, to heal wounds, revisit the sites of our horror. Or we want never to see that bloody place again, to bury it, it's memories, its meaning. We want to forget, and we wish we could remember. Despite our differences, we have so much in common. And long last my family know why I cry at times and cranky for no reason. There are few of us who don't know how to cry, though we often do it alone when nobody will ask "whats wrong?" We're afraid we might have to answer. So Australians, if you want to know what a War Veteran is, get in your car or get a friend with a car to drive you. Go to an ANZAC DAY on the 25th April. There will be hundreds thereno, thousands. Watch them. Listen to them. Talk to them. Rejoice a bit. Cry a bit. No, cry a lot. I'm a proud Veteran and, after 48 years, I think I am beginning to understand what that means



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15A HIGH ST. KIPPA RING Qld. 4021
Ph (07) 3883 3403 Fax (07) 3883 3405 Mob. 0419 022 952
email: mark@trophyworld.net.au
www.trophyworld.net.au

**NEXT MEETING TO BE HELD
IN THE R.S.L. MEETING ROOM
AT 1100 Hrs on the 9th November 2016**

DISCLAIMER:

None of the contents of this newsletter necessarily state the views of the Redcliffe VVAA Sub Branch or that of the Editor, or the VVAA unless otherwise stated.