



September 2017

SIT-REP

CAIRNS RSL SUB BRANCH

Member Magazine



The price of liberty is eternal vigilance



KOKODA HALL

115 The Esplanade (Upstairs) Cairns

8:30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

FREE ENTRY



The Returned & Services League of Australia **Cairns RSL Sub Branch**

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Cover

Vietnam Veterans Day- From Left: Vice President Phil Warwick, Brigadier George Mansford AO, The Hon. Warren Entsch, RSM Dave Marendy and CMDR Carl Capper





ACTING PRESIDENTS REPORT



The Board continues to be occupied with matters of governance and administration as well as project matters.

On matters concerning the Title Deed to our property (and since the Sub Branch

is now an incorporated body) that document requires amending to give the Board title to the property and that any reference to Trustees be removed. This accords with the current Queensland legislation that governs the RSL in Queensland (the Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch) Act 1956 as amended). Our solicitors have drawn up an agreement (to be signed by the Sub Branch and the sole existing Trustee) agreeing to the amendment. When this matter goes to the Titles Office the Agreement will be necessary to support the contention that no stamp duty be paid by the Sub Branch on the transaction that amends the title deed.

In relation to the continuing proposal to develop our property members will be aware that the Sub Branch has kept the Development Application current. There is also a significant cost attached maintaining the Application every 3 years. To that extent our solicitors have made it very clear that the Development Application cannot continue to be renewed indefinitely. In any case, the Sub Branch is very unlikely to ever be in a position to launch a redevelopment of this site in our own right. Unless compelling economic advice can decide otherwise, the Board will seek approval of the membership to let the Application lapse at the next General Meeting.

At our most recent meeting with Cairns Regional Council to discuss the Cenotaph upgrade it was agreed that Council would undertake specified works to create more space and enhance the Cenotaph precinct. A more involved redevelopment of this area will now form part of a city Master Plan that will incorporate the Cenotaph precinct.

The meeting also discussed how the Cenotaph might represent those who died in all wars and other conflicts post World War 1. The meeting agreed that one option might be an appropriate inscription, to have a place of significance on the Cenotaph, which recognises those servicemen and women who gave their lives in the service of their country in engagements post World War 1.

Our Vietnam Veteran's Day commemorative service was held at the Cenotaph on Friday 18 August. An impressively large gathering heard our Guest Speaker, Brigadier George Mansford, AM talk about the Vietnam conflict and how Australian soldiers went about the tasks given them. An article on Vietnam Veteran's Day appears later in this edition of SITREP as well as an article on Operation Bribie by David Clifton.

The Sub Branch was also represented at the Inter-Service Golf presentations at Paradise Palms, the launch of Legacy Week, the opening of a second Men's Shed at Mooroolbool and at the reunion of 55 AESS & EWPS (55 Advanced Engineer Stores Squadron & 55 Engineer Workshop & Park Squadron) that was based at Vung Tau South Vietnam from 1965-1972).

Buster Todd has been on leave.

Phil Warwick, Acting President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

A lot has happened since the last Sit Rep and I believe it has all been effective in progressing the Sub Branch towards a promising future. During this period, I have met with many stakeholders to develop new partnerships and many members to receive their feedback and advice moving forward. Thank you to our Board for providing such enthusiastic guidance and support during this period. Their progressive thinking, leadership and integrity is a major contributing factor to the sustainable future of the Cairns RSL Sub Branch and is acknowledged by many to be one of our greatest strengths.

Our profile has been raised in the business community through the Chamber of Commerce and the Cairns Business Women's Club and through networking with business groups who are keen to work with us to improve services to Veterans in our region. We have also been actively involved in forums such as the RSL State Congress, Developing Northern Australia conference and Regional Development Australia meetings where we have shared the story of Veterans in the Cairns region. We have continued to build our relationship with specific veteran organisations such as RSL Qld, RSL Far Northern District, our neighbouring sub branches (including visits to Cooktown and Malanda Sub Branches), Defence Reserves Support, VVCS, DCO and DVA. 51st FNQR and HMAS Cairns have welcomed us to events such as a visit to HMAS Success and an invitation to the Closing Ceremony of Exercise Kowari and we look forward to strengthening the relationships. The Sub Branch continues to take the time to listen to our counterparts to see how we may best utilise our resources in the service of Veterans.

The team have successfully raised the profile of the Sub Branch and delivered services to Veterans through many events. Vietnam Veteran's Day was well attended with many

saying it was the best service to date. There have been numerous walking tours through the museum and we have contributed resources to other events such as the Australian Leadership Excellence Awards where Young Veteran Geoff McGraw was awarded the Cairns Region Manager / Leader of the Year award. Marketing and Events Coordinator Rebecca Milliner is now working hard on a Wartime Treasure Hunt (3 October - 7 November) to engage schools and #letsgetphysical for Veterans Health Week (23-29 October) - and of course services for Remembrance Day (11 November). Over the Father's Day weekend we had an information display at AusArmourfest to promote the Sub Branch and services for veterans as well as inviting participation in the Young Veteran Coordination Initiative. As always, events are promoted and reported on thoroughly across social media allowing members near and far to stay up to date.

Within the office there have been new developments also. We have upgraded computers across the organisation to allow cloud storage backup and remote access for all files and a more efficient working environment. A phone has been purchased for the welfare advocate so that they may be reached as needed. We have had a new valuation completed on the building and our premises are now valued at \$6m, a significant improvement on the 2011 valuation. We have explored options for costs such as insurance and cleaning making significant savings in our budget. While we have saved considerable dollars in recent months by seeking additional quotes and thoroughly researching our options, we have also sourced new streams of income in the form of grants.

Staff member Cameron Vonarx not only brought with him \$20,000 through the Back to Work grant when we employed him, but has since commenced a traineeship in Business



Administration resulting in an additional \$4,000 in funding. Grants are currently being sought to undertake many projects including upgrades and finishing touches to the museum. The most significant grant to date has been the Young Veteran Coordination Initiative giving us \$42,739.09 through the Department of Veteran Affairs. Young Veteran and Project Manager Michael Kitzelmann will be leading the project and your input into this project will be critical to its success.

A core part of our journey moving forward will include tightening our governance and processes to protect our organisation and our very much-loved volunteers. Volunteer Lance Armstrong Waters has brought his considerable knowledge in this area to work closely with the team developing induction processes and management systems to safeguard our volunteers and our clients now and into the future. Our intention is that once we have established a system and process we will be able to share that resource with other Sub Branches and organisations protecting and strengthening their capabilities also.

As television shows such as the SBS Insight episode air across the country, and the debacle in South Australia and New South Wales throw the RSL name into disrepute it is more

important than ever that the Cairns RSL Sub Branch provide transparent and accountable governance and strategically plan for the future. The employment of Young Veterans, the appointment of women and Young Veterans to our board and the undertaking of specific projects to better improve our services, all demonstrate that the Cairns RSL Sub Branch is proactive in delivering the 8 Objects of the RSL and protecting our integrity.

Overall the Sub Branch is moving dynamically to lead Veteran services across our region in partnership with our many stakeholders. Recent meetings in Brisbane with key stakeholders such as RSL Qld leave us in no doubt that we are heading in the right direction with many of our initiatives closely aligned with the overarching strategy of State and National organisations. As always, if you have any feedback or ideas as to how we can better serve Veterans in the Cairns region please do not hesitate to contact me.

Lara Wilde

ed@cairnssrlsubbranch.com.au



PROFILE OF A SUCCESSFUL VETERAN - WARREN ENTSCH



1. **What was your role in the Military?** *I was an aircraft engine fitter in the RAAF from 1969 – 1978.*
2. **What was the highlight of your military career?** *Probably working as part of the support team in Papua New Guinea leading up to Independence, and addressing famine in the Highlands where we were dropping out live pigs from a Caribou. I was also doing coastal surveillance from Townsville to Cocos Keeling Islands as part of the 10th Squadron. I also went to Darwin immediately after Cyclone Tracey and spent 8 months there as part of the recovery team.*
3. **What do you do for a job now?** *I am the Federal Member for Leichhardt in the Australian Parliament.*
4. **Best part about your job now?** *The best and the worst is the people. You meet the very best of people and some of the not so quite pleasant.*
5. **What do you think is the greatest challenge facing veterans today?** *Multiple rotations in some conflict areas. I don't think it gives our soldiers enough time to stabilise some serious issues that are being faced, especially for those who have served multiple times in conflict zones.*
We know a lot more about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder now but we need to pay extra attention to those who've had exposure to these conflict areas.
6. **What is your greatest accomplishment thus far? And what strategy did you have in place to achieve it?** *There have been many but one I have great pride in is my campaign to have the Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion awarded Pacific Star Medals, which recognised the contribution of Australia's first and only Indigenous battalion. 870 men served in this battalion.*
I started campaigning for the medals in 1996-97 but it took until around 2000 before I was successful in having these men awarded. At the time there were

close to 100 Infantry veterans alive, sadly today there are just two.

I spent a lot of time in the Torres Strait identifying families or widows that had an entitlement they weren't aware of with Veterans Affairs.

I also engaged a historian and worked with local people.

7. **What was/is your role in the community?** *I am the local Federal Member for Leichhardt.*
8. **What are your proudest achievements in the community?** *There are too many to mention.*
9. **Did you ever or do you still struggle with PTSD or mental health issues? If you did what helped you through the hard times?** *I've never struggled with PTSD but I have been heavily involved with it and maintained contact with those who do through places like The Junction Clubhouse in Cairns which helps anyone impacted by mental health issues to re-engage with others and re-connect with their community.*
I've also been a patron to the local chapter of the Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club and the sense of belonging in that group and support offered by comrades in arms has been crucial to members in need of support.
10. **What advice do you have for people who are leaving the services?** *Stay engaged. You have so much to offer and many skills that are of enormous benefit to our community, but you must stay engaged in order to put them to good use.*
11. **What are the greatest opportunities for ex-serving members in our region?** *To get involved and use the skills they have to positively impact on our community in ways that extend beyond the military.*
12. **Are there currently any ex-serving members in the community that you see as up and coming leaders?** *There are many. The key to being a good leader is always staying focussed and disciplined and this is engrained through military service.*
13. **What was the biggest challenge you faced transitioning from the service back into civilian life?** *I've never struggled with transitioning back into civilian life, but I do miss the comradery. The friendships you build in the military are not the same as those in civilian life.*
14. **What is your philosophy or value that you hold dearest in life?** *Be true to yourself.*



YOUNG VETERANS COORDINATION INITIATIVE

With the current level of operational duties being carried out by Australian Defence Force members, it has become apparent that a substantial number of Young Veterans are potentially not engaging with Ex-Service Organisations for support services. This realisation has resulted in a preliminary review of services and the complexity of gaining access to support services. In addition, the current level of nationally reported high risk behaviours, homelessness, suicide, domestic violence and concern for the wellbeing of our Young Veterans has provided the imprimatur for this project to be conducted.

The changing dynamic of returned servicemen and women has identified that the method of service delivery for support services needs to change with the needs of our honoured veterans. In reviewing the immediate needs and feedback from young veterans seeking support, the Cairns RSL Sub-Branch identified the key service delivery challenges in meeting these needs.

In summary, these have been identified into the below elements;

1. The current support network is difficult to navigate,
2. The type and level of services required are dynamic from one young veteran to the next,
3. There is limited coordination between service providers (ESO's),
4. There is limited understanding of the number and specific needs of Young Veterans in the Cairns and Far North QLD regional footprint, and
5. There is the need for a single point of reference for ESO services in the Cairns and Far North QLD area to be established.

What does this mean

We will be conducting a project to understand how many Young Veterans we have in the region;

to date we have been able to identify 1007 (based on ComSuper and DVA data). Once we have established how many Young Veterans there are, we need to gain a better understanding of the services that they may need; and finally, who are the Ex-Service Organisations in the area providing support.

Who will benefit

Whilst the project is focused on Young Veterans (Current and Former Defence Members serving post 1999), the project outcomes are expected to benefit all Veterans regardless of when they served.

How are we going to do this

The project data will be collected through a number of methods:

- Direct feedback and discussion with the Cairns RSL Sub-Branch,
- A short 10 minute survey,
- Through our Facebook page, and
- Through the collection and review of existing data.

Project Ambassadors

Mayor: Cr Bob Manning, OAM

Bob Manning, OAM is a Vietnam Veteran and former CEO of the Cairns Port Authority and Longreach Shire Council. He was awarded Cairns Citizen of the Year in 2002, and was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2004 for his service to the Cairns region and community through the development and promotion of the tourism, marine and aviation industries.

The Hon. Warren Entsch MP

Warren is the Federal Member for Leichhardt. His diverse career history has given him a unique insight when representing his constituency in Canberra. He has worked as a railway porter, insurance clerk, real estate salesman, fitter and

turner with a mining company, grazier, crocodile farmer, and served Australia for nine years in the RAAF as an aircraft engine fitter.



Deputy Commissioner Leanne Cameron, President Buster Todd, Director Katherine Young, Cameron Vonarx.



From Left Warren Entsch, Cameron Vonarx and Buster Todd

How can you get involved

The survey can be completed online at

www.surveymonkey.com/r/YVCI

Website:

www.cairnsrslsubbranch.com.au/YVCI.49.0.html

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/CairnsRSLSubBranch

Project Leader: Michael Kitzelmann

info@cairnsrslsubbranch.com.au

Mobile: 0412 844 453



The Australian Hearing Bus is coming to town

Hop aboard for a **free hearing check** or to speak to an expert about your current hearing device

Find us here:

Sat 16th September

Bunnings Cairns
Kenny Street,
Portsmouth, QLD

9:00am - 2:00pm

Tues 26th September

Cairns RSL Car Park
The Esplanade,
Cairns, QLD

9:00am - 2:00pm

Tuesday 8th October

Tobruk Pool Car Park
Sheridan Street,
Cairns QLD

8:00am - 2:00pm



No appointment necessary, just come along on the day.

NEWS BRIEFS

CARE PACKAGE INITIATIVE

Around Christmas time most of us are lucky enough to spend extra time with our family and friends. It's important that we acknowledge the many Australian Defence Force personnel who won't be able to share this time with their loved ones. Thousands of Australian troops are currently serving our nation on operations far from home. Help us assemble 500 Christmas Care Packages to send to our deployed troops for Christmas. Rick and Jo Wells have kindly donated some lollies, ANZAC biscuits, fruit cake and toothpaste. Dianne, Rosslyn, Nicola and Merilyn have been hard at work all year creating beautiful cards that we've sent over to the troops for Mother's Day and Father's Day. Once again, they are busy making Christmas Cards for us to send over to the troops. Below are some other suggestions of items that can be contributed towards the packages:

Toiletries

- Deodorant (non aerosol)
- Shaving cream (non aerosol)
- Disposable razors
- Shower gel
- Lip balm
- Perfume/Aftershave samples (not glass)

Food

- Biscuits- Tim Tams, ANZAC biscuits
- Lollies
- Small tinned consumables
- Non-perishable foods

Other Ideas

- Magazines
- Puzzle books
- DVD's
- Letters of support
- Posters and letters from school children



Dianne, Rosslyn, Nicola and Merilyn



Rick and Jo Wells

We held an information stall at the most recent ADF transition seminar at HMAS Cairns. These seminars are designed to assist ADF members and their family in a smooth transition into civilian life. They provide information on topics such as; transition support and administration, future employment, finance and superannuation, and the services offered by ex-service organisations like ours.



SIT-REP

The North Queensland Region Inter-Service Golf Championships are conducted annually with teams from all three services of the Australian Defence Force competing. This year the championships were hosted by the Navy and held at Paradise Palms Golf Club. The Cairns RSL Sub Branch were honoured to be the proud sponsors of the shirts worn by the winning team! Congratulations HMAS Cairns on taking out the win in this year's tournament.



The Men's Shed have been hard at it again and generously donated a number of stands for scale model ships that were donated by Geoff George. The polished timber stands were hand crafted by the very talented members of the Cairns Men's Shed. If you would like to be involved with the Men's Shed contact John King on 4053 5045.



Les Bassett

On Thursday 31 August we held a very successful volunteer drinks and canapes evening for all our hard working volunteers. It was great to see some of our newer volunteers taking up the opportunity to meet with the Directors and other volunteers. The next one will be held on Thursday 23 November at 4:30pm.



From Left David Clifton, Peter Blackburn, Peter Hayton



From Left Lyn Nesbit, Norma and Les Bassett



From Left Eunice Neale and Lance Armstrong



From Left Gerry Tooth, Allan Jamieson, Murray O'Neill, Phil Watson



Grant Richards, Peter Hayton, Craig Maher, Matthew Payne, Katherine Young, Michael Kitzelmann



From Left Allan Jamison, Murray O'Neill, Bob Browne



From Left Peter Blackburn, Roy and Dawn Hartman



From Left Bill Maconachie, Allan Jamieson, Stan Carswell, Bob Browne, Ralph Gradidge



From Left Peter Hayton, Craig Maher, Matthew Payne, Michael Kitzelmann



From Left Matthew Payne, Roy Hartman and Gerry Webb



From Left Murray O'Neill, Matthew Payne, Lance Armstrong, Craig Maher



Volunteer Drinks and Canapes



SIT-REP

Jo Dawson has generously donated \$1000 on behalf of her late husband. This donation is being used to put together care packages for veteran's who are homeless.

SBS Insight recently aired a segment across the country called Coming Home. During this episode the RSL's current position and capabilities were scrutinised. We want you to know that the Cairns RSL Sub Branch has been actively taking steps to rebrand and rebuild the relationship with our younger veterans.



Last year we appointed our first young female board member Katherine Young. Katherine is currently serving at HMAS Cairns and is our Director of Pensions, Advocacy and Welfare Services.



We also welcomed another young currently serving member to the board in Mark Rix. Mark has been in the Navy for 14 years and has seen a number of deployments around the world. He understands the challenges young veterans face today. Mark has successfully navigated the DVA system and is now volunteering his spare time at the Sub Branch to coach and support our members.



Earlier this year we employed a young veteran, Cameron Vonarx. After 3 years with the ADF Cameron discharged for family reasons. At the end of February

Cameron joined the team in the Sub Branch as an office administrator through the Youth Boost Back to Work program and is now completing his Certificate IV in Business Management.

We recently received a grant from The Department of Veterans' Affairs for more than \$42,000. This has allowed the Cairns RSL Sub Branch to employ young veterans to carry out new research on understanding the specific needs of younger veterans in the Far North Queensland community and implement programs to better support their needs.



We also run an art initiative called The Art of War. This gives current and ex serving defence members an opportunity to showcase their artwork. This has been a resounding success with a number of young

veterans artwork being displayed over the past 8 months.

We want you to know that at the Cairns RSL Sub Branch our doors are always open and we have a team of amazing people here who understand and can support you!

WHERE ARE THEY NOW- ROB LEE

Rob Lee served for 10 years with the 1st Battalion The Royal Australian Regiment and was deployed on operations to East Timor, Timor Leste, Iraq, and Afghanistan. He also completed several training missions throughout South East Asia and Europe. Rob understands what it's like to have served in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the challenges faced when transitioning. Upon transitioning Rob worked as the Liaison Officer for Mates4Mates and volunteers his spare time at the Cairns RSL Sub Branch. Rob is passionate about supporting the veteran community and connecting veterans with the services available to them.

More recently Rob successfully gained employment as a Sales Executive for new cars at Pacific Toyota. Since working at Pacific Toyota he has noticed that a number of veterans are unaware of the special tax exemptions available to them when purchasing a new vehicle. Basically, an eligible veteran is entitled to purchase a new vehicle up to the amount of \$57 000 with a GST exemption. This means a potential saving of up to \$6000 on a new vehicle.

Who is eligible for the GST exemption?

Eligible persons are those who served in the Australian Defence Force or in any other armed force of Her Majesty (for example, A British or a New Zealand veteran) and as a result of that service:

- have lost a leg or both arms, or
- have had a leg, or both arms, rendered permanently and completely useless, or
- receive a disability pension at the special (Permanently Incapacitated) rate but are not Temporarily Totally Incapacitated in accordance with the VEA,
- receive (or are eligible to receive) a Special Rate Disability Pension under the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004.

In addition to this great offer, eligible veterans can also access a further discount on stamp duty.

Stamp duty exemption on motor cars

Veterans in receipt of special rate pension or disability pension at the 100% rate or above may be exempt from stamp duty on the purchase of a new car.

These great savings are made possible through the partnership of Pacific Toyota and The Department of Veteran Affairs, as a way of acknowledging and thanking the veteran community.

If anyone would like more information on how to take advantage of this great opportunity please do not hesitate to contact Rob Lee, Pacific Toyota's veteran community specialist.



Rob Lee

Sales Executive

New Vehicles



Pacific Toyota

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PO Box 907, Cairns, QLD, 4870

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PAWS NEWS

VISIT BY DVA DEPUTY COMMISSIONER LEANNE CAMERON

On 12 July 17, Cairns Sub Branch welcomed Leanne Cameron, Deputy Commissioner for DVA for a Q&A type forum.

The RSL Sub Branch Advocates had the opportunity to submit questions to clarify some ongoing concerns. A total of 16 questions were submitted. The questions ranged from clarification of DVA Gold Cards, "no help" at the ESO Portal, progression towards a paperless office and clarification of the date of onset, just to name a few.

With the Defence Health system transferring to a paperless system in 2014, the question was asked about how DVA will move toward a paperless office. Deputy Commissioner

Cameron responded that since 28 November 2016 all correspondence received by DVA is now digitised. They are also in the process of scanning physical files into a PDF file, but the complete digitisation of DVA is a huge project and will take time.

DVA's digital transformation activity consists of a number of high priority projects including:

- Expanding online claim functionality
- Developing a strategy to promote DVA's online services to new clients, organisations and current clients
- Developing a department wide co-design framework to ensure that clients and stakeholders, such as ESO's have a greater voice in how DVA Services are designed and delivered.



Cairns RSL Sub Branch Welfare and Compensation Advocates and the Deputy Commissioner Leanne Cameron

For those who aren't aware you can now track your claim status and access a range of online services through DVA's online service portal MyAccount.

To start the registration process for MyAccount, phone the Veteran's access network on 133254, or 1800 555 254, for regional callers. Quote the claim number on the top of your determination letter. For additional information you can go to www.myaccount.dva.gov.au.

DVA is also part of the Veteran's Employment program. For additional information go to:

<https://www.dva.gov.au/about-dva/news-and-updates/prime-minister-s-veterans-employment-program>

Any business or ex-service organisation that would like to register for the Prime Minister's Veteran Employment Program should email: veteranemployment@dva.gov.au

These meetings provide a valuable resource for the Cairns RSL Sub Branch staff to get up to date information first hand and are a great opportunity for us to give direct feedback to DVA.

**By Katherine Young
Director of PAWS**



Deputy Commissioner Leanne Cameron, President Buster Todd, Director Katherine Young, Cameron Vonarx



Smartline welcomes Australian Military Bank to our panel of lenders!

This means I can now offer my services to all my military family and friends with regards to the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS). Likewise, if you have the DHOAS currently and think you are paying too much, you probably are! My service comes at no cost to you and I am more than happy to have a look at your situation for you.

- My service comes at no cost to you.
- As an Ex Serving Navy Member of 22 years; I have your best interests at heart!
- Leave the negotiations, paperwork and details to me.

Call me today to discuss purchasing or refinancing your DHOAS loan!



Aaron Latter

m 0414 651 101
e alatter@smartline.com.au
w smartline.com.au/alatter

Australian Credit Licence Number 385325

★★★★★ Client Review Rating 4.9 out of 5.



MEMORABILIA AND MUSEUM REPORT

Museum Administration & Management

Sub Branch Director Peter Hayton has been appointed Museum Director Cairns Sub Branch. This is a most welcome appointment. Peter attended our recent Memorabilia Meeting and during the meeting he explained his role and defined how he would like to see us move forward. He also gave the approval for us to be formally known as a Committee. Prior to this I have always used the term "Group" because we did not have a specific Board Member to report to. Our link to the Board was through the Sub Branch Secretary, (now the Executive Director). In fact the link to the Board via the Executive Director is still current.

During the meeting, I explained that each person on the Committee has a title and a primary role. These titles and roles are shown in the table below. Hopefully before the next meeting I will have role descriptions completed for Curator, Deputy Curator, and each of the Museum Coordinators. This structure and the primary roles will be discussed at the next meeting and suggestions on changes, if any, may be directed to me prior to the meeting.

As well as the committee, there are also other volunteers that help with adhoc projects, working bees and the like. We also have other volunteers that have signed up specifically for museum volunteering.

Museum management structure:

Cairns RSL Sub Branch Memorabilia Museum Committee Structure

Position Title	Primary role	Incumbent
Museum Director	Director	Peter Hayton
Museum Curator	Planning & management of resources.	Bob Browne
Museum Deputy Curator	Planning, Facilitation & Scheduling of Exhibitions	Bill Maconachie
Museum Coordinator	Display Design Planning & Fabrication	Murray O'Neill
Museum Coordinator	Military/Local History, Creative Writing & Liaison	David Clifton
Museum Coordinator	Digital, Hard Copy & Video Images + Audio/IT	TBA
Museum Coordinator	Medals, Awards, Historic Artefacts & Library	Roy Hartmann
Museum Coordinator	Refurbishment & Preservation	Craig Maher
Museum Coordinator	Records-Archives & Correspondence	Fred Van Luyk

Proposed Exhibitions: -

- Over the next several months we will be holding and or hosting three exhibitions. The first one is to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Kokoda. (July to September). We got moving on this exhibition this week thanks to a heads up by WO2 Andrew (Dusty) Miller of 51 Battalion. 'Dusty' has recently returned

from walking Kokoda and during the walk he wore the same equipment as the men did in 1942. There is a lot more to this and it will be featured in the next Sit-Rep. To add substance to the exhibition Dusty has donated all the equipment he wore and carried. This is a permanent donation. He donates the equipment as a tribute to Sgt Les Martorana the soldier he represented whilst on the track.



- We will be putting together a suitable exhibition for Vietnam Veterans day. This exhibition will be in the Kokoda Museum and will be displayed all day from opening until 7pm so that people can view it after the ceremony.
- In November in conjunction, with Remembrance Day, the Australian National Maritime Museum will set up an exhibition "the War at Sea" - the Navy in WWI graphic panel display. This is a travelling exhibition and panel display both of which are sponsored by the RSL. There are eight banners of 1x 1.5 meter. ANMM will also provide marketing templates, an education pack and copies of films, which can be screened in the Museum. The panel display is based on the major touring exhibition War at Sea. It highlights the contribution the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) made in the 'war to end all wars'.

North Wall

Until funds are available for the Planned North Wall project the Committee has decided to populate the allocated space with selected framed prints and paintings currently in storage. It is envisaged that it will be at least March/April next year before the planned display panels are completed and ready for installation.

These items will only be installed above 2 meters from the floor and the Glass Medals Cabinets will remain in place.

We will continue to plan the design and content of each panel for the North Wall project. This will entail sourcing and collecting suitable images. Apart from what we already have there are several sources that are worth trying. The Cairns Historical Society, The Australian War Memorial and the like.

Alternative to having the Cairns During WW II War Photo's exhibited as hard copies.

It has been suggested that instead of using a Projector we can buy another "Smart TV" and run a "repeating photo display" via a USB key. This suggestion has a lot of merit as projector consumables (lamps) are expensive and need to be replaced often. The initial costs projector vs Smart TV are similar. I'm hoping this part of the project can be expedited as we can then free up space in the museum by retiring the Blue Display Boards and archiving the hard copy WW 2 photos.

Fabrication of boxes suitable for framed prints/paintings

To best look after framed prints and painting in storage it would be good to have some purposely fabricated 'Art' boxes similar to those used by Art Galleries and Museums. These boxes are inexpensive plywood fabrications that have a removable top and front panel. They have castors for easy moving around. The items stand upright. Such boxes would reduce storage space and in some instances, they can double as exhibit surfaces within the Museum and can thus be used for rotating items.

Electronic Scrapbook Featuring WW II Catalina Pilot Flt Lt Arthur Lunnon.

Some time ago we received a donation of memorabilia from the daughter of WW II Pilot Arthur Lunnon. The memorabilia comprised several items and the actual Pilots Log Book. The significance to Cairns is that Flt Lt Lunnon was the pilot of the Catalina A24-60 that lost a propeller on takeoff and crashed into a navigation marker pylon in Cairns Harbour. The entire crew survived and the aircraft salvaged. A painting depicting the crash hangs in the Museum.

Recently I have been trading email correspondence with Jason Lunnon who is a close relation to the late Arthur Lunnon. Jason is

piecing together an electronic scrapbook which when finished will be a comprehensive history of this pilot including his RSL Welfare work post war. Jason has indicated that he will donate a copy of this electronic scrapbook.

Library and books in storage

In recent weeks many of the books from storage have been transported to the Museum and added to the library. These books were painstakingly and individually selected for their content importance by Roy Hartmann and Ralph Gradidge from the stockpile of books. None of these books have been catalogued as yet nor have those that remain in storage.

There are several other boxes of book that have been sorted, selected and listed. There is still a large quantity of books that need to be sorted and catalogued. This work will be discussed at the next Memorabilia meeting.

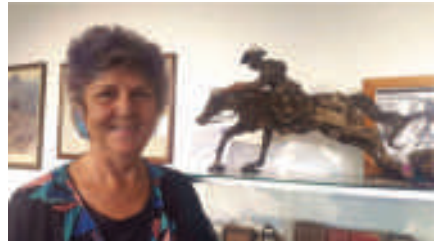
Lt Commander Ronald McKaige DSC VDR MBE

Ron McKaige was the Cairns RSL Sub Branch President for 21 years. A framed photo of Ron McKaige was recently uncovered in a very poor condition. The Photo has since been cleaned up. Ron McKaige was the first Commanding Officer of the Cairns Navy Cadet Unit TS Endeavour. The unit celebrates its 60th Anniversary in August 2017 and we were asked if we could provide a copy of Ron's photo for a magazine they are producing. It appears that this is the only photo of Ron that can be found.

Ron's son Gordon McKaige has donated a Catalina aircraft anchor. Gordon presently lives in Central Queensland. When the anchor arrives, it will be secured and displayed on the wall surface at the southern end of the Club.

Donations

- Jennie Scott has kindly donated one of her statues named The Battle of Beersheba for us to display in the Museum



Jennie Scott and her donated statue

- Marion Hayton, President of the Cairns & District Ex-Service Women's Sub-Branch recently presented a cheque to Memorabilia Curator Bob Browne for a display cabinet in the Museum. The money was raised through the Ex-Servicewomen's annual raffle.



President Marion Hayton Ex-service women's sub branch and Bob Browne

By Bob Browne
Cairns RSL Sub Branch Curator



THE ART OF WAR

JULY ARTIST – KEEGAN LEY

Keegan Ley served 5 years with the Army, enlisting in 2008. During this time he deployed to East Timor with 2RAR and was also attached to a joint training exercise to Papua New Guinea. He was then posted to SASR as part of Support Squadron, which was the highlight of his career in the Army. Keegan served two years with SASR.

After his 5 years of service Keegan began a career in the mines as a shotfirer. He worked at an Iron Ore mine in Western Australia for two years.

He then moved to the UK for two years to work and travel around Europe. It was during this time that he picked up his passion for photography. Only in the last 6 months has he become more serious about photography and aims to capture beautiful images around the world.

Keegan specializes in landscape and wildlife photography and is based in Cairns. He has

recently created a website to showcase his work www.klphotography.com.au. Some of Keegan's photos are displayed at the Salthouse and the Double Tree Hilton hotel. Keegan's photos on display are a number of sunset photos shot locally around Cairns and also rainforest settings.



Keegan Ley Exhibition



Keegan Ley on location

THE ART OF WAR

AUGUST ARTIST – CAMERON VONARX

Cameron Vonarx grew up across the road from the Jungle Training Wing in Tully, Qld. From a very young age Cameron was exposed to various forms of art through his family. As a result of growing up in this environment Cameron developed a great love for all things art and in particular drawing. During his high school years Cameron's talent did not go unnoticed. However on completing high school Cameron decided to follow in his father's footsteps and sign up to the Army.

He completed his basic training and Initial Employment Training prior the end of 2014 and was posted to the 8th/12th Regiment, in Darwin. Serving as a gun number he went to various exercises in the Kangaroo Flats Training Area, Mount Bundy Training Area, Cultana Training Area and Majura Range.

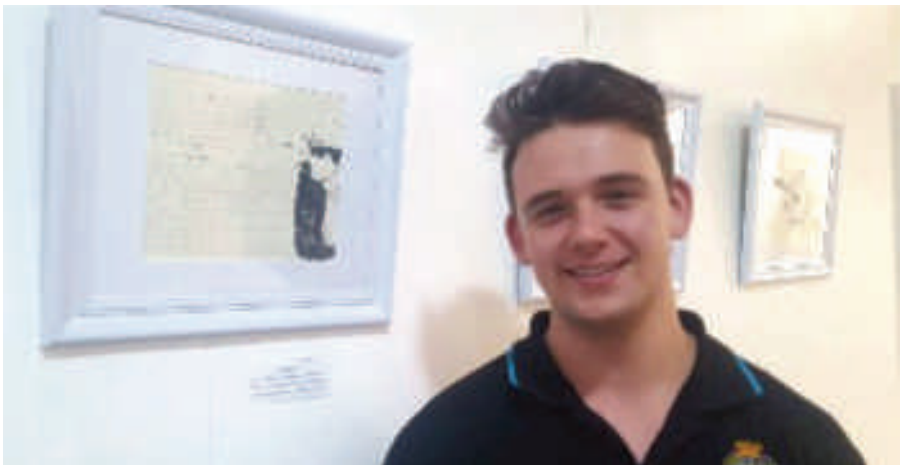
After 3 years in the ADF Cameron decided to discharge on compassionate grounds to join his family in Cairns. At the end of February Cameron joined the team in the Sub Branch as an office administrator and is currently completing his Certificate III in Business Management.



Cameron Vonarx sketch of a man



Cameron Vonarx sketch of a hand



Cameron Vonarx

PAINTING PARTY – NEW TO CAIRNS!

In the spirit of learning new things in a relaxed and fun environment, Painting pARTy Cairns Studio brings a new concept to Far North Queensland. Whether you are a seasoned artist, a regular tinkerer at home or have never painted in your life, Painting pARTy offers a new and unique experience to you.

The studio is a space for your imagination, creating, and letting go of your busy world while connecting with your friends, colleagues and family or meeting new people while enjoying a beverage of your choice at the BYO Studio. Add music and step by step instructions and there's the recipe for a fun and relaxing night out while creating an amazing work of art! Beginners are welcome and encouraged.

Painting Party endeavours to promote and secure funding to the local program called, "Retired and Wise." Adriana's goal is to host affordable painting events for older generations to allow them to connect with their peers through painting while hopefully finding a new hobby and visit with friends, new and old on a regular basis.



Art therapy can be valuable in navigating anxiety. It can become another healthy tool whether your anxiety is occasional or chronic. One big benefit of art therapy is its ability to calm the nervous system: When we're focused on creating, our attention shifts away from worrisome ruminations.

"When our attention has shifted, our nervous system can begin to regulate. And we can have more access to the rest of our brains, thoughts, emotions, empathy and compassion," said



Doreen Meister, MA, MFT, a mindfulness-based, expressive art and depth psychotherapist in Oakland, Calif. This lets us process more difficult experiences, she said.

Art therapy also lets us express ourselves nonverbally, which helps us move away from our thoughts to see a visual expression of a situation, Meister said. This “can provide more distance from the situation; it can be containing and allow for a different perspective.”

Plus, “the simple act of creative expression connects us with an inner sense of vitality,” which can be invigorating, she said.

Painting pARTy is an alternative to the traditional night out and we invite all ages 12 and up to Paint at the Studio. In addition to regular Painting Parties on Friday night and Sunday afternoons we also offer private events like Team building, Corporate Events, Hens parties and Birthday Parties just to name a few.



www.paintingparty.com.au
Studio (07) 4031 2996
Mobile 0448 930 223
info@paintingparty.com.au
1, 203-205 Mulgrave Road and
Aumuller Streets Bungalow, Cairns

REF:
psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2015/10/19/3-art-therapy-techniques-to-deal-with-anxiety/





FND REPORT

Within the District and from the reports, all Sub Branches appear to be travelling quite well and should there be any issues then FND is here to assist.

Just a reminder that the District Secretary will be conducting a training day on Saturday 2 September, all Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers and Delegates are invited to attend at Malanda RSL.

The draft minutes of the State AGM have been forwarded to all members, along with a complete report of the AGM as streamed live on the days.

The draft Constitution process has been impacted by the Deloitte's consultations with the Districts about the future shape of the RSL. This process will generate activity for the C & A committee in Quarter one 2018 with the most likely time to approve the new Constitution being at the 2018 AGM.

The Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission investigation into RSL Qld is still proceeding as they requested further information and a further report of 4000 pages were forwarded on 26 July 2017.

RSL National is holding their AGM in September; there are two nominations for National President:

1. Robert Dick and
2. David McLaughlin.

State has requested a meeting with both so that we can decide who to vote for.

The State Secretary has been requested to advertise publicly through social media "the Battle of Beersheba" anniversary being held at Southbank on 28 October.

Far Northern District's last meeting was hosted by Edge Hill/Cairns West Sub Branch held in the Catalina Room at Cairns Sub Branch. Most of the District's Sub Branch's were represented. Following the meeting we had a two hour presentation from Deloitte's about the RSL Qld Governance Review. This was first discussed at the State AGM in June 2017. Three District Veterans Welfare Grants and one Cadet Development Grant were approved.

The next District meeting will be held at Mossman RSL on Sunday 17 September.

**By Norma Short
Secretary
Far Northern District RSL**

EX SERVICE WOMEN'S SUB BRANCH RSL

Most of our members are well, a few more birthdays, a couple still in hospital, and we currently have nine ladies over 90.

We have submitted a grant application for the 100 years of RSL Celebrations. The money from the grant will be used to treat our members to a lovely morning of High Tea at the Pullman Cairns International. This includes transfers to and from the event and a small gift from the RSL as a keepsake.

We have had a very successful Monster Raffle this year with a total of \$1000 raised. This money will be donated to a local welfare charity which will be decided at the next meeting. Thanks to our

fantastic President Marion Hayton for all her work!

We attended the Mt Molly 50th Anniversary of Vietnam Veterans Day with District Secretary Norma Short. It was wonderful to see the whole town, including school children getting involved. Rona Shute laid a wreath on Vietnam Veterans Day at the Cairns RSL Sub Branch service on the Esplanade.

The Ex-Service Women's Sub-Branch RSL meets at 10:00am on the third Monday of the month upstairs in the Board Room at the Cairns RSL.

By Ellen McCallum

DAY CLUB REPORT

The Day Club has had a great turn out lately with the addition of five new members. Last week we reached capacity as there were many new faces from Auscare Transition Care in attendance.

This month's day trip was to the Gordonvale Historical Society's Museum where we enjoyed a high tea served on fine bone china. We then went on a historical mosaic trail around the township of Gordonvale. This was an experience thoroughly enjoyed by all.

We are waiting for the new Aquarium to open as this will be the next day trip.



Day Club outing



The Day Club was very fortunate this year as the Sub Branch has given us a \$5000 grant towards the running of the Club plus help with a contribution for fuel money for our wonderful volunteers. We have received half now and the remainder next year. This will also go towards our Christmas party and a small gift to all members.

We are a self-funded not for profit Club who run our own raffles and weekly morning tea and games or once a month lunch or an outing monthly. Our members love to play their games so most mornings it's games, laughs and company. All positions are voluntary and we love that we are immersing ourselves with our RSL family. Happy Trails!

By Ellen McCallum



Day Club morning tea

Seniors Morning Tea and Visit

Travel back in time and take a trip out to The Mulgrave Settlers Museum located at 60 Gordon Street Gordonvale. The Museum is inviting all seniors groups to visit their unique little museum depicting the early pioneering history of the area. There are also displays on WW2 and the involvement in Gordonvale of the American 503rd Parachute Regiment, a typical 19th century home, a blacksmith shop and much more. A current special display called "Beetles, Bugs and Other Grubs" celebrates the



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100th year of the Sugar Experiment Station and a special exhibition on the Edmund Jarvis Insect cases dating back to the early 1900's.

Entry into the Museum and morning tea is all included in the low price of \$6 per person.

Please call Julie Amadio (Museum Publicity Officer) on 0457080670 to organise a booking for your group or phone the Mulgrave Settlers Museum during opening hours between 10am – 2pm Monday to Saturday on 40561810.



MILITARY STORY- WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE “BARMY-BA”?

Most of the Australian service personnel who served in the Republic of Vietnam from 1962 to 1972, would have probably sampled and not forgotten the Vietnamese brewed “Bia 33”, “Ba Moui Ba”, which means simply 33 in Vietnamese. Bia 33 was commonly referred to as “Barmy Ba” or just “33” by Australian forces, who have the instant ability to give everything their own stylised, slang name.

There was a persisting rumour that formaldehyde was used in the beer as a preservative, but this did not seem to deter many drinkers. It was proven, however, that this was not the case, although some of the hangovers, following a day out, would seem to support the former theory. Usually obtained in local bars, I don't remember seeing it in messes or clubs, the beer was on the whole cheap, and bought with Vietnamese Piasters (Dong). It usually was not cold, due mainly to the lack of refrigeration and the fact that the Vietnamese usually drank it at room temperature anyway. There was local ice available which was often broken up and placed in

a glass with the beer, at one's own peril. Otherwise, it was drunk warm, unless the bar owner could be convinced to produce an ice bucket of some form.

Following the fall of Saigon and the North Vietnamese takeover of the country, the name of the beer was changed to “333” in an effort to erase everything related to the former regime. These days, there are many different brand named (local and foreign) beers available in Vietnam brewed in-country.



Bill Maconachie



LITTLE DIGGERS ANNUAL FAMILY FUN DAY

Little Diggers Community Centre recently held our annual family fun day at FUN-E-FARM at White Rock.

The families were able to pet and interact with a variety of different animals. Newborn puppies, baby ducks and guinea pigs were some of the favourites. There was even a visit from Terry The Turtle from Paint The Town Read.

The children thoroughly enjoyed the day which also included pony rides, feeding some of the animals, playing in the amazing cubby house and a sausage sizzle.

Although there were a few sprinkles of rain all in all it was a very successful day. The numbers of defence families that attended was record breaking for Little Diggers.

A big thank you to Defence Health and Smart Salary who helped sponsor the event and to Anita who allowed us the opportunity to interact with farm animals we otherwise wouldn't see in a city environment.

Renee Andrews
LDCC Coordinator





LITTLE DIGGERS COMMUNITY CENTRE

Little Diggers Community Centre Inc. (LDCC) is a Cairns based Defence-sponsored community group. Our aim is to help Defence families feel confident, resilient and connected in the local area. We welcome both Defence and Non-Defence families to our activities making it a great place to meet locals, make new friends and catch up with old ones.

Our centre in Brinsmead is welcoming, air-conditioned and very child-friendly. We have indoor and outdoor play areas, fully equipped kitchen, disabled access and baby change facilities. With a large indoor area and fully covered porch we offer year round entertainment for the children.

Playgroup and Bellies & Bubs are a regular weekly activity offered by LDCC.

Bellies & Bubs gives parents of 0 – 18 month olds the chance to relax and chat to other parents. We have a fully carpeted area with rugs and toys to ensure bubs are stimulated while their guardians have the chance to debrief and just take breath from life with others in the same boat. Older children are welcome to accompany their youngersiblings.

Playgroup is open to 0-5 year olds and their

guardians. The little ones have lots of fun with structured and non-structured activities. Parents are asked to get involved with the sessions via preparation of fruit and the set up/pack up of each session. In addition, they have the chance to utilise, with their child, available toys/outdoor area/books etc. We have found that this relaxed yet structured format helps the child be prepared for kindergarten and what is to come in a friendly and comfortable environment. Not to forget guardians who also get the chance to interact with others of like mind.

Each year we run activities and programs to give children and adults the opportunity to make new friends and receive support from other local Defence and non-Defence families.

LDCC also runs workshops/activities for adults.

Our regular activity times are as follows:

- * Playgroup – Tuesday and Friday 9.00am to 11.00am
- * Bellies & Bubs – Thursday 9.00am to 11.00am

We would love to see you at any of our activities. The more the merrier!

For more information feel free to contact us via email info@littlediggers Cairns.com.au, phone 0498 505 494 or why not look us up on Facebook under Little Diggers Community Centre Inc.

MATES4MATES

At Mates4Mates we understand that transitioning into civilian life can be tough and at some stages you or your family might need the support of a Mate.

Mates4Mates provides a safe environment where you can come together with other like-minded Mates and find support and access our programs and Family Recovery Centres. Our services are open to current and ex-serving personnel and their families.

Mates4Mates offers a holistic approach to rehabilitation through our five core service streams. These 5 service streams include: Physical Rehabilitation and Wellbeing, Psychological Services, Employment and Education support,

Rehabilitation Adventure Challenges & Social Connection.

We run a Cairns Coffee catch every fortnight on Tuesday, which provides a great opportunity for our Mates and family members to meet and connect with like-minded people over a relaxed morning of coffee and cake. Call our Volunteer Liaison Officer Rikki Bradley on 0437 203 464 for more details on other events in your region.

If you or someone you know have been wounded, injured or ill as a result of service, get in touch with us on 1300 4 MATES (1300 4 62837).

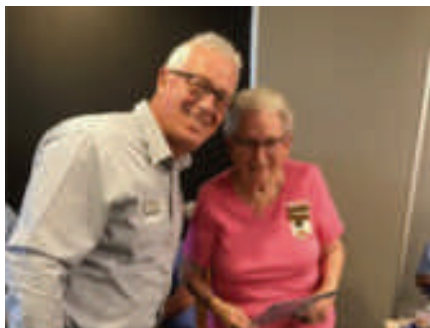
LEGACY REPORT

The Laurel Club of Cairns Legacy recently combined with the RSL Day Club to hire a coach and have a day trip out. The coach picked us up from Farnorha and we travelled via the Kuranda range to Yungaburra where we visited the Avenue of Honour. This is a very wonderful memorial to the young men who lost their lives in Afghanistan. Some members had previously visited the memorial, but for some it was the first time, and it was enjoyed immensely. While we were there we held a small service and Rona Shute, President of War Widows, laid a wreath in honour of the young men who had paid the supreme sacrifice. Estelle Dan laid a wreath at the dog's memorial, as we felt it fitting that the dogs be remembered for their sacrifice also. We then travelled to the Malanda RSL for lunch. It was very nice and a big thank you goes out to the Malanda RSL team for their great service.

After lunch, it was time to again head down the Kuranda range and return to Cairns. After having a very enjoyable day out, the attendees would like to thank everyone involved in organizing the trip, and for the help and assistance given to all participants.

Lorraine Watts.
Hon.Sec/Treas.
Cairns Laurel Club of Cairns Legacy.

Legacy Week kicked off with CMDR Carl Capper and LT Danielle Britton presenting Cairns Legacy with a generous donation of \$1,800. It is wonderful to see HMAS Cairns fund raise and donate money to an organisation who do so much for our ex-service community families.



CMDR Carl Capper and LT Danielle Britton



CMDR Carl Capper and LT Danielle Britton



Legacy week launch



CMDR Carl Capper presenting Legacy with a cheque

MALANDA SUB BRANCH

Vietnam Veterans Day 2017 – Malanda RSL Far North QLD

On the 51st Anniversary of the battle of Long Tan and now recognised as Vietnam Veterans Day, the Malanda RSL Sub-Branch officially unveiled a full-size replica of the Long Tan Cross in commemoration to those ADF and NZ service personnel who were engaged in this battle and in particular those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The Cross was commissioned by the members and subsequently constructed by a fellow colleague Mr. Bob Auer a Vietnam Veteran who raised the notion at a previous Sub-Branch meeting. The service was officially opened by the President of the Sub-Branch, Mr. Phillip English, OAM, a WW11 RAAF pilot. The Cross was consecrated by Padre Buddy Smith, whose

father also served with the US Forces in WW2. Invited guests and speakers included representatives from our fellow Tableland RSL Sub-Branches, Army Cadets of 114 ACU, students from the Malanda State High School, local Council, fellow Veterans, wives, partners, Laurel Ladies and the local community. The Cross now joins our parallel Sub-Branch at Mt Molloy and will go on permanent display at the Malanda RSL Citizens Memorial Club.

Kenneth Willoughby
Secretary/ FND Delegate
Malanda RSL Sub-Branch
Email: malanda@rslqld.org
M: 0437410575



VV Day Malanda 2017 Blessing



VV Day Malanda 2017

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Vietnam Veteran's Day

Cairns Cenotaph

Friday 18 August, 2017

A commemorative service to observe Vietnam Veteran's Day was held at the Cairns Cenotaph on Friday 18 August, 2017. A larger than expected gathering came to observe and to remember the Vietnam years, to remember the lives lost and to remember those who suffered then and the many who still suffer now.

Friday 18 August, 2017 was also the 51st anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, an extraordinary engagement that occurred late in the afternoon of 18 August, 1967. They were 108 men – 105 Australians and three New Zealanders of D Company, 6 RAR about 40 of whom were national servicemen on a three-day patrol called Operation Vendetta.

The Battle of Long Tan began to unfold about 1540 hours when the forward section of 11 Platoon contacted 6-8 VC who were part of an estimated 3,259 enemy troops in the area. D Company, supported by punishing and deadly artillery fire from 161 Battery, RNZA based in Nui Dat, engaged the much larger force just as a heavy monsoon storm broke over the battlefield. About 30 minutes later, realising one battery in support was going to be insufficient, 6 RAR's NZ Forward Observer requested a regimental fire mission using all 24 guns of 1 Field Regiment, RAA also based at Nui Dat. It may not have been obvious then, but history tells us from that point the tide began to turn against the enemy, despite their overwhelming superiority in troop numbers.

The result of that remarkable engagement, in which 6 RAR lost 18 soldiers killed in action, is now an indelible part of the Australian Army's rich history.

Vietnam Veteran's Day 2017 was also the 50th anniversary of Operation Bribie – primarily fought by A and B Companies, 6 RAR (who lost





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8 soldiers KIA) over 17-18 February, 1967 and was also the 50th anniversary of Operation Ballarat – fought by A Company, 7 RAR (who lost 5 soldiers KIA) on 6 August, 1967.

The Guest Speaker for the Cairns service was Brigadier George Mansford, AM. Brigadier Mansford's 40 years of service in the Australian Army included Korea, the Malayan Emergency, Thai Border, Vietnam, New Guinea and Singapore. His address is published here with his kind permission:

Today throughout our nation there will be gatherings such as ours to reflect on our involvement in the Vietnam War and above all, to honour our fallen. In doing so, we also pay our deepest respect to yet another generation of our military currently on operations. It seems nothing changes on our troubled planet.

Was it so long ago that our men and women went to war in a place called Vietnam?

It was a time when frequent government lotteries in rolling barrels full of birthday numbers determined which 20 year old males would be conscripted for two years' military service.

It was a time of anti-war demonstrations and vilification of those in uniform and their families which caused our military to become closer and united more than ever.

It was a time when protesting mobs burnt our national flag and the consequences were that our troops cherished the sacred cloth even more.

In Vietnam our units stood fast in battle. They endured the physical and mental demands placed on them. They refused to relent against what seemed impossible odds on more than one occasion. Always evident was their battle discipline, confidence and trust in each other and even when battle weary, no matter when or where, were the grins.

As well as major battles, it was also a time of countless patrols, ambushes, cordon and search operations, much of which is now long forgotten and gathering dust in history records.

Always are the veterans' memories of such times. How could they ever forget the wok wok of the beloved Huey and the familiar drone of the Caribou or perhaps they were on one of the warships patrolling a very dangerous coast line. The nurses waiting at the landing zone called Vampire ready to receive yet another group of wounded. Do you remember counting the days until it was one day and a wakey before going home and so many dreams to pursue?

It was a time of varying farewells such as watching mates struggling with heavy packs and weapons boarding a chopper or armoured personnel carrier to commence another operation. Departing on Rest and Recuperation to escape the madness for just a few days or going home. No matter the circumstances, always was the firm hand shake, sharp wit, a hug, a wave, a thumbs up as a fond farewell or perhaps a shout of "Take care". Unknowingly for some, it would be for the last time.

There were forgotten lessons of war from previous campaigns and re-learned the hard way in Vietnam. There were also new lessons learnt in Vietnam which have since been neglected or distorted thanks to social engineering and the continual onslaught of political correctness.

Common was the immense camaraderie, determination, wry humour and battle discipline which demonstrated that the magnificent qualities of the original ANZACs had not been diluted.

There was pride, duty, honour and acceptance of responsibilities which had been developed from early age in our society then strengthened in the military during training and mastered on operations.

It was a time of loved ones waiting for news and dreading any unexpected knock on the door. We should never forget the wives, mothers and families who bore the brunt of isolation, not knowing and always searching for mail and the media for any fragment of news. They met the challenges with dignity and stood the test. Wives were both mother and father and always

praying that the next knock on the door would not be by a grim faced official.



Vietnam Veterans Day



Rob Payne MP





Bill Maconachie and Gerry Webb



From Left Vice President Phil Warwick, Mayor Bob Manning, Director Peter Blackburn, RSM Dave Marendy and CMDR Carl Capper



OPERATION BRIBIE

David Clifton was a National Servicemen during 1965-67 and spent a year in South Vietnam with 1 APC Squadron, later A Squadron, 3 Cavalry Regiment whose principal role was armoured support of the two Royal Australian Regiments, 5RAR and 6RAR. David is also a past president of the Cairns RSL Sub Branch and has kindly offered to tell us his recollection of Operation Bribie.

February was always a special month in the Clifton family – Mum's birthday was 2 February, my brother Stephen's was 7 February and my birthday was 17 February

On the morning of 17 February 1967 2 & 3 Troops of A Sqn, 3 Cavalry Regiment loaded up A Coy of 6 RAR - it was my 22nd birthday - and headed NE towards the coastal savannah strip north of the Long Hai mountains.

D445 Battalion of the Viet Cong had attacked a small outpost that night and wiped out the US Advisers and the South Vietnam garrison. The plan was to land on their escape route and hit them hard. B Coy would be choppered in to the LZ at the same time we had secured it and cleared it of enemy. We would then wait to confront the retreating enemy force.

So the picture was that about 25 Armoured Personnel Carriers, 250 grunts and 20 choppers would all arrive at the same place at the same time on this escape route and get into a real fight with D445. This Viet Cong battalion had fought against D Coy 6RAR at Long Tan in August 1966

I was crew commanding 33B at this time with Paul McNamara as driver and we were in a hell of a hurry.

One great, but lifesaving frustration, was our new OC, Major Gordon 'Guns' Murphy. Bribie was his first operation because he had received the handover from Major Bob Hagerty the previous evening. He insisted that we take an alternative route over the dry padis to get to the



Trooper David Clifton in 1965



David Clifton

Bribie LZ and secure it. We hated it at the time because it meant we had to drive hard over very dry padi fields; foot down flat, across the padi to the bund, hit the bund and bounce over and then to the next bund ..and the next bund.....and the next bund!!!!

We learned after Operation Bribie that the whole thing was an enormous ruse to ambush our armoured column. Along the usual route we took were mines, recoilless rifle emplacements and firing positions in an area that would have



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severely restricted our movement off the road and given no cover to the infantry. We would have been sitting ducks and almost certainly decimated..... 'Thanks, Guns'.

In my letter to Colene (my girl friend, later to become my wife after I returned from Vietnam) of the same date I note that we passed a body:

'.....Today is my special day of the year, today I am 22, another year older and perhaps wiser and probably a little more tolerant. A bad taste to this note; today we found a body of a man and we left him there. On the way back..... I thought 'just a body we say! Once a life, a Man.'

We were crashing down the track with the single-minded urgency that is only part of war, there was no time for any niceties. We knew that something was up and had to go headlong into it.

We arrived at the Bribie LZ arrived together at about 1400hrs as planned but everything went wrong from the start.

We had landed right in the midst of the D445 position which by now had been reinforced by 274 Regiment prepared position and they were dug into bunkers. A hail of fire came from the bush just after the choppers had unloaded; the infantry went to the ground in the security of the dry padi bunds and we responded by putting in 400 odd rounds each of .50 cal to get the situation under control.

It really is quite impossible now all these years later to imagine the noise, smoke and tension in that dry padi.

I remember firing too high at one stage and making a mess of a large melaleuca; I was keeping my head well down because the word had come through the radio that they seemed to be sniping at the crew commanders. Anyway I got on target and did the business. In those days we only had light gun shields; some the boys of 2 Troop didn't even have gun shields.

The Infantry entered the scrub with 2 Troop in support and after several hours of heavy bush



The Bribie LZ with the choppers arriving at the same time as the APC at the commencement of the Battle



LTCPLT



Nine Members - 5 Platoon-B Company - 6RAR1



Callsign 21B after OP Bribie

fighting had to retreat after losing 8 men. The infantry were faced with a very determined enemy and at one stage a platoon commander called to his men to 'fix bayonets'.

Geoff Strachan and Vic Pomroy were supporting that firefight in thick scrub when a rocket hit the track wounding Geoff. Vic went to his aid but was hit by a second rocket as he got out of his seat, killing him instantly. A later rocket completed the damage to the track that is shown in the photographs.

The coincidences of life - Geoff Strachan and I had been in the Bank of New South Wales together and I have a group photo of us both at a Ledger Examiner training course in 1962. Vic and I were the only 2 men from 19 Platoon 2RTB to go to the Armoured Corps. We had shared a bedroom during training and remained good coppers.

We withdrew to an open padi as evening fell and called in Napalm and cluster bomb strikes for most of the night to protect us and to try to knock them about. By the next day they had withdrawn and a search of the area did not reveal much. The wrecked APC of Geoff and Vic was left in the scrub all night and in the morning there was an inscription written on the side translated as **'Go home you Australian Bastards'** or a meaning to that effect. We were all pretty upset by that act because it appeared to have been written in Vic's blood.

The record shows that 8 Australians lost their lives and 27 were wounded. In addition we lost the APC of Geoff & Vic which was totally destroyed. The enemy casualties were 8 KIA and 50-70 believed killed but there was very little evidence to confirm that number.

I believe that we were defeated at Operation Bribie. The official opinion was that the vicious fighting of Operation Bribie was probably the closest that the Australian Army came to defeat in a major battle during the Vietnam War.

A positive outcome was that the Army became convinced that the liaison between the Infantry and Armour needed to be improved and that tanks were needed to do the heavier bunker and positional fighting. The posting of the 1st Armoured Regiment and their Centurions to South Vietnam came as a direct result of Operation Bribie.



Vic



Vic Pomroy

I know that all these years later the memories of 17 February 1967, coupled with two other incidents on 5 February with friendly fire hitting D Coy, 6RAR and 21 February with a huge mine blast with extensive casualties in excess of 30 personnel, remain at the forefront of my mind and will never be forgotten.

February is no longer the family month as it was before my time in Vietnam and I can't wait until the calendar turns over to 22 February each year.

Lest we Forget
By David Clifton

SALLY BROWNE RECIPIENT OF LONG TAN BURSARY

Cairns student Sally Browne is one of the 2017 Long Tan Bursary recipients. Sally's father Bob Browne is a Cairns RSL Sub Branch Member and head curator of the Kokoda Hall Museum.

The Long Tan Bursary honours the service and sacrifice of Australia's Vietnam War veterans by

providing financial support for children to undertake post-secondary education.

The Long Tan Bursary is managed by the Australian Veterans Children Assistance Trust (AVCAT) who administer scholarships on behalf of sponsors and donors including DVA, ex-service organizations, corporate sponsors and private donors.

AVCAT is a national independent charity. Commencing in 2003 its origin stems from the former Australian Vietnam War Veterans Trust, which was established in 1985. The purpose of AVMT was to distribute the Australian share of the funds received from the 'Agent Orange' legal settlement in the USA to Vietnam Veterans and their Dependents.

At the time that the 2017 recipients were announced the Minister for Veterans Affairs, Dan Tehan, said "Providing the children of our Vietnam veterans with educational support is just one way we continue to honour the service and sacrifice of the men and women who served our country in Vietnam."

Recipients of the Long Tan Bursary receive financial assistance of up to \$12,000 over three years.

This year 37 students from across Australia were recipients of the Long Tan Bursary. According to AVCAT there were more than 260 applicants.

The basic (but not all) eligibility criteria is:

- that applicants for this bursary must be a child of an Australian veteran who served in the Vietnam war during the period 31st July 1962 to 30th April 1975;
- have Australian residency status;
- be planning to enrol or be enrolled in post-secondary education in Australia at an Australian University or TAFE equivalent;



Long Tan Ceremony photo-Sally Browne



Sally at her year 12 formal

- be studying or planning to study full-time on-line or face to face.

Within the eligibility criteria, those selected are to be the most deserving applicants on merit as assessed.

Sally and her father Bob attended a Presentation Ceremony for the 2017 Long Tan Bursary and sponsored scholarships which was held in the DVA Brisbane complex on Friday 23 June 2017.

As part of the ceremony each recipient received their award certificate from the Repatriation Commissioner, Major General Mark Kelly AO and their academic achievements and educational aspirations were read out.

Bob mentioned that "Listening to these achievements being read out reinforced the views that each one of the recipients was an exceptional, deserving and talented person".

Sally Browne commenced her schooling at the Tabubil International School in PNG. After the family moved back to Cairns, Sally was enrolled at Redlynch State College (RSC). Sally completed her schooling at Redlynch State and graduated year 12 in 2016. According to all her school reports Sally was a conscientious and popular student throughout. In her final year Sally considered that it was in her interest to study Law/Business at University primarily because of the concept of flexibility - specifically in terms of career paths.

Sally is currently a student at QUT studying Business and Law and believes that by gaining a university degree she will achieve a job where she can gain financial security and give back to her family and local community. She knows that university itself is an expensive venture is very grateful to have been a recipient of the Long Tan Bursary.

Moreover, Sally has great interests in travel, culture and language, so she aspires to work overseas.

Sally's senior year's achievements included:

- Achieving an Overall Position score of 4 (95% ATAR)
- 1st Place Award in French Language Competition 2015
- RSC Top of Subject Award-Music 2015
- RSC Instrumental Excellent Award 2016 (Violin)
- Trinity College London Certificate-Violin level 3 grade 7
- Caltex All Rounder Award (perpetual sponsored award)
- Strings Orchestra Captain in 2016
- RSC Musician of the Year 2016
- RSC Performing Artist of the Year Award 2016
- Cultural Award 2016
- Top of subject award Music Extension 2016
- Top of subject award Music 2016

Sally would like to convey that applying for a Long Tan Bursary requires diligent effort but for those that are successful it is well worth the effort. Her advice is to investigate all the available scholarship possibilities.

Applications for the Long Tan Bursary for each academic year open on Vietnam Veterans' Day, 18 August, and close on 31 October. The Long Tan Bursary scheme is administered by the Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust on behalf of the Department of Veterans' Affairs. For more information visit www.rslqld.org/ADF-Community/RSL-Scholarships

Sally's father Bob Browne served at the USAF Phan Rang Airbase in South Vietnam from February 1967 to February 1968. Bob spent four Months with RAAF No. 5 Airfield Construction Squadron-Detachment 'B' and the remaining eight months with RAAF No. 2 Squadron.



SERGEANT GRAEME MARSHALL

Originally from Mareeba in North Queensland #AussieInvictus team member Sergeant Graeme Marshall joined the Australian Army in 1998 as an Aircraft Technician. He said he wanted to be part of a team which was all-inclusive and supportive whether you win, lose or draw. "Sport has allowed me to focus on things other than the negativity that is currently in my life," he said. "It has allowed me to achieve goals both in sport and weight loss." SGT Marshall is competing at Invictus Games Toronto 2017 in athletics, indoor rowing and powerlifting.

ADF Service: Joined the Army in 1998 as an Aircraft Technician. I served in Timor Leste in 2007.

Age: 37

Hometown: Mareeba, Queensland

Current Town: Cairns, Queensland

Competing in: Athletics, indoor rowing and powerlifting

What is the Nature of your injury or illness?

Depression, panic and anxiety disorder.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation?

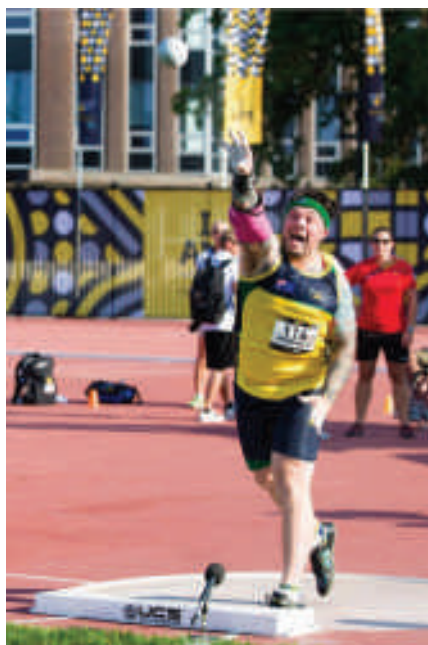
It has allowed me to focus on things other than the negativity that is currently in my life. It has allowed me to achieve goals both in sport and weight loss.

What is your greatest achievement to date?

Eighteen years' service in the Army and my three children.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games?

I wanted to be part of a team which is all-inclusive and supportive whether you win, lose or draw.



CARE PACKS FROM HOME.

We all know the feeling of excitement and joy receiving a gift from a loved one. Imagine the feeling of receiving a gift from a complete stranger thousands of miles from home whilst being deployed in a war torn country. Having witnessed this on several deployments the emotion and pride that comes from the simple things from Home (Australia) and knowing someone cares.

Whilst Aussie troops were deployed to Afghanistan, a Ladies organisation in country NSW decided to send hand knitted Beanies to the Boys and Girls deployed overseas. The Afghan winter is brutal and temperature below Zero is common,

The troops cherished the woollen hats from home although a lot of the colours created a headache for the Officers yellow and pink beanies did not go so good with the uniform. The troops would wear them all the time if they could, That none issued article made with love from back in Aus held a special place particularly when off duty. The Aussie soldiers being who we are would often share this love and was quiet common for some troops to take two or three and plunk one on a little Afghan child's head as they moved through villages out on patrol.

Some items that we take for granted a deployed soldier would see as a luxury or a reminder of home. Toiletries like shave cream and toothpaste are always well received, and often very hard to come by. Your local RSL will have a list of appropriate items and please rest assured the Love and care behind your donated package is not lost on the young Aussie who receives it.



WARRANT OFFICER CLASS TWO, ANDREW MILLER, MG KOKODA HISTORICAL TREK

I have always planned to walk Kokoda as a tribute to our fore fathers and upon hearing about the No Roads Expedition and Kokoda Historical trek I saw the perfect opportunity. As part of the 75th Anniversary the trek would entail a replication of the efforts of B Coy, the 39th Australian Infantry Battalion, the first Australian unit to cross the Kokoda trail, on the same day and carrying the same equipment.

Throughout my career, whilst on operations and exercise from steaming jungles in Malaysia and North Queensland, to frozen desert mountains of Afghanistan, I have often reflected on how the Aussie diggers before me had coped with and fought through some inhospitable terrain with the equipment and weights that they carried. This trek was my chance to find out.

The uniform and equipment was far from ideally suited for jungle operations. I put the effort into “breaking in” my boots and trying out the Pattern 08 Pack and Pattern 37 webbing on the hills around the Cairns region. The equipment was surprisingly comfortable once adjusted and worn correctly.

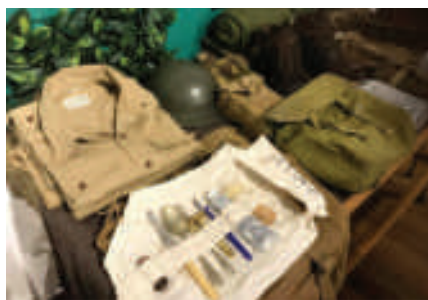
On the 7 July 2017 I found myself marching from McDonalds Corner to Owers Corner in period uniform and slouch hat with a No.1 MK3 Short Magazine Lee Enfield slung over my shoulder, with 13 like-minded and dressed Aussies aged from 17 to 60. Probably not too different to the men of B Coy in 1942. The honour and pride I felt is almost impossible to describe. As I was to find out this was nothing on the emotions that were evoked over the next ten days as we made our way along the wartime track 75 years on. The terrain was brutal, the vegetation in some parts seemed impassable but our troops not

only walked it they fought up and back on either side of that ridge line that we followed.

Our trek was to commemorate not only the men of B Coy but all Aussies that served on or above that track. The kit that I had on this trek has been donated to the Kokoda Hall Museum and is currently on display alongside my story.



Exhibit in Kokoda Hall Museum



Kokoda Pack



Dusty Miller

WARRANT OFFICER CLASS TWO, ANDREW MILLER, MG BIOGRAPHY

Warrant Officer Class Two, Andrew Miller, MG enlisted into the Army, 3 May 1988 from Perth. On completion of his Initial Employment Training, he was posted to the 2nd/4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment. During the next twelve years, he served as a Rifleman, Mortar man and Section Second-in-Command (2IC) and completed several special courses. Below is a timeline of his service:

- 1995- the Battalion delinked to form 2 RAR and Warrant Officer (WO) Miller deployed to Rwanda (Operation Tamar) as a section 2IC with B Company. On this deployment WO Miller was awarded the Medal of Gallantry for his actions at the Kibeho Displaced person's camp. On returning to Australia WO Miller served as a Reconnaissance patrol 2IC and Section Commander.
- 1997- WO Miller was posted to the Australian Defence Force Recruiting – Perth, as an Army Careers Advisor. 1999 saw WO Miller posted to the 51st Battalion, The Far North Queensland Regiment as part of the Operational Support Company for two years where he enjoyed the diversity and the autonomy that the posting provided for a Corporal.
- WO Miller was promoted to Sergeant in January 2000 and posted to 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment as a Mobile Fire Controller within Support Company and a Rifle Platoon Sergeant in B Company in 2002, where he deployed to East Timor (Operation Tanager/ Citadel).
- January 2003- WO Miller was posted to the newly raised Combat Training Centre Combined Arms Battle Wing as an Observer Trainer, and then opted for a position at the Jungle Training Wing Tully as a Training Advisor in 2004.
- 2005- WO Miller was promoted to Warrant Officer Class Two, and posted into Support Company the 16th Battalion, The Royal

Western Australian Regiment as the Company Sergeant Major and Training Warrant Officer.

- 2007- WO Miller Posted back to the Combat Training Centre, as an exercise planner and in 2008 became the Sergeant Major for the Opposing Force Platoon (OPFOR). In 2009 WO Miller was posted as a Small Group Instructor within the Army Instructor Support Team (AIST) with the United States Marine Corps, Exercise and Tactical Control Group, Twenty-Nine Palms. Training Marines for deployment to Afghanistan and Iraq, WO Miller was awarded a Chief of Army Bronze Citation for his exemplary efforts on Infantry small teams instruction.
- 2010- WO Miller was posted to the WO/NGO Academy Darwin as the SME for the operations package, during this posting he deployed to Afghanistan as part of the Operational Mentoring Liaison Team (OMLT) with the Mentoring Task Force Two (MTF2). 2011 WO Miller was appointed Company Sergeant Major for D Company 5th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment as part of MTF 2.



WO Miller at Mt Baldy training



- 2013- WO Miller took the position as Squadron Sergeant Major with Darwin Squadron, The North West Mobile Force, (NORFORCE).
- 2014- WO Miller, again posted to the Combat Training Centre – Jungle Training Wing as a Team Leader and SME for Visual Tracking.
- 2017- WO Miller, is currently employed as an Instructor in Training Company 51st Battalion, Far North Queensland Regiment.

WO Miller's honours and awards include the Medal for Gallantry, the Infantry Combat Badge, the Australian Active Service Medal (Rwanda, East Timor, and ICAT Clasp), the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Australian Defence Long Service Medal and two clasp's, the Australian Defence Medal, the United Nations Medal UNAMIR, the United Nation Medal UNTAET, the NATO Non- Article 5 Medal (ISAF Clasp) the COA Bronze Citation and the Return from Active Service Badge.



Corporal Andrew Miller Medal for Gallantry

LT PAUL WHITTAKER- FIRST WO NAVY

Lieutenant Commander Paul Whittaker, AM RAN RTD-Warrant Officer of the Navy (1993 - 1997)

Born on 18 January 1949, Paul John Whittaker, like his father before him, held an interest in the navy from an early age.

On the 5 January 1965 a 15 year old Paul Whittaker joined the Navy (for an initial twelve years), through the junior recruit training establishment, HMAS Leeuwin, Fremantle in Western Australia. During the first twelve months, he undertook further academic studies along with extensive naval training and, for his efforts, was awarded the Governor's Prize.

In 1966 he was posted to the fast troop carrier, HMAS Sydney (ex-majestic class aircraft carrier) as an ordinary seaman, in which he deployed on several occasions to Vietnam, or as it was commonly termed then 'the Port Jackson - Vung Tau ferry route'.

On completion of his category specialist training as a seaman and radar plotter, a variety of postings followed including HMAS Platypus, Nirimba, the aircraft carrier Melbourne, Watson and Derwent. These were punctuated by promotions to leading seaman and petty officer after which he spent some time as an instructor at the now called CSO faculty at HMAS Watson.

From that point, there were several consecutive postings as a Chief Petty Officer RP between HMAS Watson and HMAS Hobart. He was promoted to Warrant Officer during his last sea posting on 11 December 1986, at which time he was posted as training support officer for the tactical trainer, at the RAN surface warfare school. It was during this period, along with a number of bi-lateral duties, he was awarded a flag officer's commendation in 1989.

In late 1992 he completed a very successful tour of duty as the senior navy recruiting officer for North



Queensland, after which he joined the directorate of sailors career management as the OIC career management cell 7 (reserve sailors).

He was appointed the Royal Australian Navy's first Warrant Officer of the Navy (WO-N) on 13 December 1993. During the next three years Paul did an exceptional job as the Warrant Officer of the Navy after which he was promoted to commissioned rank as a Lieutenant. He was further recognised for his exceptional work with his appointment on 26 January 1997 as a member in the military division of the Order of Australia "for exceptional service to the Royal Australian Navy, particularly as Warrant Officer of the Navy."

Following his time as Warrant Officer of the Navy and subsequent promotion to commissioned rank, Paul was posted to recruiting and port services roles in North Queensland until his separation from the permanent Naval forces in January 2004. He was promoted to Lieutenant Commander on 1 January 2001.

He then transferred to the Naval Reserve and continued working for the RAN as port services manager and HMAS Cairns base redevelopment project officer, amongst other roles at HMAS Cairns, until reaching his compulsory retirement age on 18 January 2014. He fully retired from the RAN and RAN reserve after nearly 50 years of service to the RAN and to Australia.



During his service, he was honored and awarded the following:

- Member of the Order of Australia (AM)
- Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp Vietnam
- Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp FESR
- Australian Service Medal with clasp Middle East
- Vietnam logistic and support medal
- National Medal
- Defence Force Service Medal with four clasps

- Australian Defence Medal
- Returned from Active Service badge
- Flag Officer's Commendation for Outstanding Performance of Duties

Paul Whittaker passed away earlier this year after a battle with cancer.

By J.W. MASCHKE

CAPT, RANR

MA (Maritime Policy), FSSSI, AIMM

Certified Professional Hydrographic Surveyor Level 1

INVICTUS GAMES

My Invictus Games Journey

Last year I was facing a possible medical discharge, I was waiting on the MECRB to come to a decision. I admit that I was lost and in limbo, it wasn't a great time. One day my rehab manager approached me about the Invictus Games (IG), I thought that I wasn't "broken" enough for it, but she enlightened me on the facts and I applied.

I was told that there were over 100 applications sent in and I was one of the lucky 70 odd that got

to go to the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra for selection trials. We had to select several sports to try out for. I chose Wheelchair basketball and rugby, archery, shot put, discus and swimming. I never knew that an abled body person can play the wheelchair sports until that day. I was selected for Wheelchair basketball, indoor rowing and was a reserve for shotput and discus.

After 5 days of trials the training squad was selected, so that was 70 odd down to 53 people. There were a lot of emotions as everyone that was there did their best and encouraged all the other athletes. No matter what the outcome we all got something out of the camp. People talk about inspiration and what drives them to get back into exercise and training, for me it was seeing all these wonderful people getting out there and pushing through their comfort zones, finding out that they can still accomplish things even though they have been wounded, injured or ill during their service.

I was lucky enough to be selected in the 53-person training squad, but I had to have ankle surgery and was incapacitated for several weeks, this however didn't stop me training, I



still went to basketball on Sundays at Early Settler stadium with the Cairns Hoop Snakes.

In March we all flew back down to the AIS and carried out the next training camp at ADFA. By this stage my cast had been removed and I was in a moon boot, but not weight bearing, bugger. It did make the whole process significantly more challenging. However, looking around I saw that in one way or another everyone had their own hurdles to get over so I sucked it up and got on with it. I even rowed 20 minutes with the moon boot sliding on the floor next to me. The squad had some special guests arrive for a VIP match of basketball, which was a blast, and it gave them an appreciation of the skill it takes to play in a wheelchair.

The June camp was busy, we changed locations, this time we stayed at Narrabeen sport and recreation centre in NSW. The squad had all been training hard for the lead up to this camp as we had a few events on. Firstly, we attended the Hard Launch for the Invictus Games 2018 in Sydney. This was to be held at

Kirribilli house with HRH Prince Harry, the Governor General, General Sir Peter Cosgrove and Lady Cosgrove and Prime Mister Malcom Turnbull, just to name a few. We then travelled by police escort to the Overseas Passenger Terminal for the public launch held by AMIG where some adaptive sports where demonstrated. Wow what a day!!!

This day will always be remembered with great joy and sadness, as I received the news of my Grandmothers passing. But there was still work to be done so I picked up my gear and went back to the trails. On the Friday we were informed





SIT-REP

whether or not we made the final team for Toronto, I was not selected.

I have had a great experience and highly recommend anyone interested to give it a try. I have met some inspirational people. When my children want a hero, I can say that I have had the pleasure of meeting some and when they need some inspiration I will be able to show the kids the real heroes, not some movie star. I will now be training for the IG 2018 that will be held in Sydney. Expressions of Interest are out, so please apply.



Generations have drawn on the words of William Ernest Henley's poem for strength during times of adversity. Henley was himself an amputee and the poem reflects his long battle with illness. The title means "unconquered" and the 16 short lines of the poem encapsulate the indefatigable human spirit, which is at the heart of the Invictus Games.

**Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.
In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.
Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.
It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.**

Invictus, by William Ernest Henley
invictusgamesfoundation.org/
www.facebook.com/Team.Invictus.Australia/

By Matthew Payne





VVCS North Queensland Group Programs July— December 2017

123 Magic & Emotion Coaching Parent Course

Veterans, Eligible ADF and Partners

3 day workshop (2 hours / day)

TOWNSVILLE

Thursdays 24, 31 Aug & 7 Sept, 2:30pm-4:30pm

Thursdays 16, 23, 30 Nov, 11:00am- 1:00pm

Beating the Blues

Veterans, Eligible ADF, Partners, Family

2 day workshop

CAIRNS

Tues 22 - Wed 23 Aug, 9:00am - 4:00pm

Building Better Relationships

Veterans, Eligible ADF, Partners

3 day program

TOWNSVILLE

Wed 8 - Fri 10 Nov, 9:00am-4:30pm

Mastering Anxiety

Veterans, Eligible ADF, Partners, Family

2 day workshop

TOWNSVILLE

Tues 25 - Wed 26 July, 9:00am- 4:00pm

Operation Life

Veterans, Partners, Family, Friends, Volunteers

ASIST - 2 day workshop

TOWNSVILLE

Thurs 14- Fri 15 Sept, 9:00am-5:00pm

Mon 27—Tues 28 Nov 9:00am- 5:00pm

CAIRNS

Mon 11— Tues 12 Sept, 9:00am- 5:00pm

Relaxation Workshop

Veterans, Eligible ADF, Partners, Family

1 day workshop

TOWNSVILLE

Thurs 26 Oct, 9:00am- 4:00pm

CAIRNS

Wed 1 Nov, 9:00am- 4:00pm

Residential Lifestyle Management Program

Veterans and Partners

5 day residential program

TOWNSVILLE

Mon 9 - Fri 13 Oct

Sleeping Better

Veterans, Eligible ADF, Partners, Family

2 day workshop

TOWNSVILLE

Tues 5- Wed 6 Sept, 9:00am- 4:00pm

Stepping Out - ADF Transition

All ADF members & partners who are in the process of or who have separated from the ADF in the last 12 months

2 day workshop

TOWNSVILLE

Tues 1- Wed 2 Aug, 9:00am- 4:00pm

Tues 21- Wed 22 Nov, 9:00am- 4:00pm

CAIRNS

Wed 4- Thurs 5 Oct 9:00am- 4:00pm

What are VVCS group programs?

VVCS group programs aim to improve the quality of life of veterans, eligible ADF members and their families and caregivers counselling and other services that promote recovery through prevention, early intervention and treatment. All group programs are provided at no cost to eligible participants.

To register for group programs, or to make further enquiries please contact VVCS North Queensland on

1800 011 046 or email vvcsnorthqld@dva.gov.au



VVCS North Queensland Group Programs

VVCS Group Programs

123 Magic & Emotion Coaching Parent Course

This is a 5-session program to assist parents and carers to develop strategies to manage difficult behaviour in children aged up to 12 years old.

Beating the Blues

Depression is one of the most common mental health problems, with around one in five Australians experiencing it at least once in their lifetime. Beating the Blues assists participants to understand the situation and thinking patterns that can contribute to depression, and to develop strategies to manage depression symptoms more effectively.

Building Better Relationships

This program is designed to help emotionally committed couples enhance their relationship. The program explores what makes a good relationship and aims to increase partners' understanding of each other, improve communication, enhance intimacy and help couples plan ahead.

Mastering Anxiety

Anxiety is a normal reaction to stress, however when anxiety becomes severe and interferes with our capacity to cope effectively, it is no longer considered normal. This program helps participants to understand anxiety and the factors that maintain it. It aims to promote a sense of wellbeing through developing strategies to reduce anxiety and associated stress.

Operation Life ("ASIST" 2 day workshop)

Operation Life workshops provide a framework for action to prevent suicide and promote mental health and resilience across the veteran community. These workshops aim to help members of the veteran community to recognise someone who might be having thoughts of suicide and to link them in with appropriate assistance.

Relaxation Workshop

This workshop is an educational unit skills based program assisting participants to understand the importance of relaxation, signs and symptoms of stress and overcome barriers to relaxation.

Residential Lifestyle Management Program

This program is designed for veterans and their partners who would like to improve their wellbeing and enhance their relationships. It provides an opportunity to take time out from the daily routine and focus on a range of lifestyle subjects, such as stress management, communication and relationship building.

Sleeping Better

The quality of your sleep directly affects the quality of your waking life, including your mental alertness, efficiency, emotion regulation, creativity, energy levels, and even your weight. Sleeping Better introduces long term solutions for insomnia that involve changing sleep habits to promote good sleep.

Stepping Out

The Stepping Out program is about helping you improve your transition from the ADF to civilian life. Making the move to civilian life can be challenging and the changes you experience may have an impact on your personal life, work life and family life. Stepping Out will give you information and skills to manage your transition to civilian life.

To register for group programs, or to make further enquiries, please contact VVCS North Queensland on **1800 011 046** or email vvcsnorthqld@dva.gov.au. Visit www.vvcs.gov.au for more detailed information on group programs, eligibility, or to register your interest.



HEARING BUS

The Hearing Bus is coming to the Cairns Region

The Australian Hearing bus is stopping by Cairns RSL Car Park to offer free hearing checks and raise hearing health awareness, to locals in the community.

Now with a 12-strong fleet of blue and white buses, the mobile hearing service has provided over 94,000 free hearing checks in communities across Australia since the first bus was launched in 2009. No destination is too far-flung or offbeat!

Trudie Causer, Manager at Australian Hearing Cairns said that because age-related hearing loss develops gradually over time, it is common for people be unaware their hearing is diminishing.

Hearing loss is a prevalent issue in the community, with around 60 per cent of Australians over 60 suffering from some form of hearing loss.

“A hearing check is a quick and easy way to measure the sounds you can and can’t hear. Our team will also be on hand to guide you through what next steps you may have to take in regards to your hearing,” said Trudie Causer

As well as having a hearing check, visitors to the bus can find information on a range of common hearing issues and view a display of easy-to-use hearing devices for around the home. This includes headsets for watching the TV and alert systems for doorbells.

Trudie Causer said, “Not everyone who is experiencing problems hearing needs a hearing aid. Sometimes it’s just hearing the TV at normal volumes, hearing your doorbell, or hearing your



friends on the phone that’s the problem.”

No appointment is necessary. Australian Hearing will provide hearing checks to any interested adults over 18 who visit the bus on the day.



AUSTRALIAN HEARING BUS ITINERARY

**Cairns RSL Car Park
Cairns RSL, The Esplanade, Cairns
Tuesday 26th September. From 9.00am**

Australian Hearing provides subsidised hearing care for eligible people, including pensioners and most veterans. For more information call 131 797 or visit www.hearing.com.au

Hearing Buses

- Over 94,000 free hearing checks have been provided to communities across Australia since the first hearing bus was launched in 2009.
- As at January 2017, we have twelve buses travelling across the country, with more planned in the future.
- Our buses travel across the country to not only visit busy city centres, but also smaller regional towns where it would otherwise be difficult for people to get their hearing checked.
- We also take our buses to retirement villages and aged care facilities to make it easier for people to have their hearing checked.
- We provide hearing checks to any person 18 years old and over. No booking appointment is necessary.



#letsgetphysical

THUR

26TH

OCT



LETS
GET
PHYSICAL

EVENT LOCATION: Meet at Fun Ship (Northern end of Esplanade). Main event on the Western Event lawn next to the Lagoon.

EVENT PURPOSE: To promote enjoyable and social ways for Veterans, family members and friends to participate in physical activity. This is also an opportunity for you to connect with the resources available in our community.

PARKING: Free parking along the Esplanade (until 8:30am) and at the RSL Club

MORNINGS PROCEEDINGS:

6:20 Registrations open

6:50 Briefing on the mornings proceedings

7:00 Step off- To be led by the Mayor, Navy & Army COs & Invictus Games Competitors

7:25 Group arrives at Western Event Lawn

7:35 Commence workshops

8:05 Workshops conclude

8:10 Breakfast and networking

8:40 Opportunity to network with other ex-service organisation providers

FOR MORE INFORMATION:



<https://www.facebook.com/pg/CairnsRSLSubBranch/events/>

CAIRNS RSL SUB BRANCH | 115 The Esplanade Cairns

admin@cairnsrslsubbranch.com.au | (07) 4051 5254

Follow Us on



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Care Package Initiative

Friday 1st September – Tuesday 31st October
Collection point is the Cairns RSL Sub Branch

#letsgetphysical

Thursday 26th October, 6:30am
Cairns Esplanade

Wartime Treasure Hunt

Tuesday 3rd October- Sunday 5th November
Around the Cairns region

Remembrance Day

Saturday 11th November, 10:30am
Cairns Cenotaph

Volunteer Drinks and Canapes

Thursday 23rd November, 4:30pm
Kokoda Hall

General Meeting

Thursday 23rd November, 5:45pm
Catalina Room

Volunteer Christmas Party

Friday 8th December, Time TBA
Venue TBA