

**VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION of AUSTRALIA
VICTORIAN BRANCH (INC)**



MELBOURNE WEST SUB-BRANCH



NEWSLETTER



December 2009

(www.melbournwest.vvaavic.org.au)

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Committee

President	Vic Pilch	Ph: 0410 350 889 Email: president@melbournwest.vvaavic.org.au
Vice President	Ian Patrick	Ph: 9741-8536
Secretary/Treasurer	Tony Hind	Ph: 9748 8101 Mob: 0419 348 558 Fax: 9748 4010 Email: secretary@melbournwest.vvaavic.org.au PO Box 1430 Werribee Plaza Vic 3030
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer	Ray Matthew	Ph: 9749-2835
Committee Welfare	Brendan Lynch	Ph: 9741 4157
Committee Merchandise Officer	Pierre Goss	
Committee Activities	Alan Scott	Ph: 9369 5504 Mob: 0418 382 116 Email: alan274@bigpond.net.au
Committee Trainee Pensions Officer & Activities	Duane Henley	9974 1187

Western Suburbs Veterans' and Services Centres

12 Smith Street (PO Box 981)
Melton 3337
Phone: 9746 9582 Fax: 9746 9583
Mondays to Thursdays

Kelly Park Community Centre
4 Synnot Street (next to RSL Club)
Werribee 3030
Ph: 9731 1608 (Wed only)
Wednesdays 10:00 till 14:00
Email: werribeevetcentre@westnet.com.au

Pensions: Duane Henley (Training)
Welfare: Vic Pilch 9749 5281
Jeannette Wyer
Brendan Lynch

Inner Metro Veterans' and Services Centre

Ph: 9282 3518 Fax: 9282 7854

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Editor: Sub-Branch Committee -- Publisher: Tony Hind

From President Vic:



Summary

A great deal has been achieved over the past year. I would firstly like to thank the wives and partners of your committee members for their support and patience. I would also like to thank the whole Committee for all the work and time that they have put in over the past twelve months including our Vice President Ian Patrick who put in a lot of time even though his health wasn't the best. Recently Ian resigned his position and we were sorry to lose him.

I'd also like to recognise the work done by our Secretary/Treasurer, Tony Hind who has been in constant contact during the six months that he has been travelling around Australia and with the generous assistance of his daughter Cindy has managed to produce three quarterly 'Newsletters'. I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank Benlor Real Estate Pty Ltd for sponsoring our 'Newsletter'.

A special thanks also to our Assistant Secretary Ray Matthew for 'holding the fort' while Tony has been away and while I was away in the USA. In recognition of Ray's efforts in keeping the Sub Branch functioning I have nominated him for the Hoppers Club's Sub Club President's Award for 2009.

Unfortunately two other Committee Members, Barrie Rice and Pierre Goss (our merchandise man) were also forced to resign due to ill health while Duane Henley was also limited in the time he could commit due to health problems. This threw a lot of work back on the remaining Committee Members Alan Scott, Brendan Lynch and Bogie Knight who have done a fantastic job.

Membership

The final membership for 2009 was 126 comprising 71 ordinary members; 2 second members; and 53 associate members which is something of a record.

Badge Week

Badge Week 2009 was a huge success with gross receipts of nearly \$12,000 which is the second highest ever and a net profit to our Welfare Fund of nearly \$9,000. An estimated 250 hours was put in by volunteers during Badge Week 2009. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all members, family and friends who assisted with this great effort as well as the railway stations and shopping centres that made their facilities available.

Social Activities

Due to our limited resources on Committee, the social activities during 2009 have been more quality than quantity. Bus trips to the National Vietnam Veterans' Museum at Philip Island and another to Fort Queenscliff were well patronized and enjoyed by those who participated. The Vietnam Veterans' Dinner at Altona RSL was an outstanding success (special thanks to Alan Scott for organizing the function). Similarly, the numbers attending the first Friday of the month luncheons at Werribee RSL is increasing each month and great fellowship is enjoyed by all.

RSL'S

This year we have continued our policy of holding our monthly Committee Meetings at the various RSL's in the Western Suburbs in order to increase our Association's profile and let veterans know that we are around and ready to assist them. I would like to thank Footscray, Sunshine, Newport, Williamstown, Altona and Werribee RSL's for making their facilities available and for being such generous hosts.

Western Suburbs Veterans' & Services Centre

Once again, the Veterans' Centre has been our major focus. I would sincerely like to thank the volunteers who have assisted clients with their pension claims and also assisted with a raft of welfare problems over the past twelve months. In order to represent clients effectively and professionally

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Pensions Officers require a high level of skill and training. As in past years we have been fairly light on the ground with skilled Pensions Officers and for most part of the year we relied heavily on assistance from Linden Webb from the Melton Veterans' Centre and Barry Yukoff an Advocate from Geelong. I would like to thank Linden and Barry for their assistance. Alan Shanahan came back to us as Pensions Officer at the start of September and is doing a great job. We also have two Pension Officers in training (Heather Taylor and Bogie Knight) which augers well for the future.

We are fortunate to have a great Welfare team in Jeanette Wyer, Fran Ruddle, Eddie Taylor and Brendan Lynch. I should point out that the Veterans' Centre attends to the welfare needs of all veterans and their widows not just Vietnam Veterans.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the support of Wyndham City Council for the free use of the facilities at Kelly Park Centre and Werribee RSL their administrative support without which we would be unable function.

Hoppers Crossing Club

I would also like to thank the Hoppers Crossing Club for their financial support during 2009 where a total of \$2,400 has been raised from the Members' Raffle towards our Welfare Fund.

Community Commemoration

During the year some of our Members have participated in various commemorative services on ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day at local schools and we will be sponsoring two needy children to attend the Portsea Camp in January 2010. Some Members also assisted the Darwin Defenders Association with their commemorative service at the Shrine.

Vietnam Veterans Day services for 2009 were a great success and well patronized. We were fortunate to have the Mayor of Wyndham, Councillors and representatives of State Government attend our dawn wreath laying service at Werribee Cenotaph and a number of our Members marched under our Sub Branch banner at the ceremony at the Shrine.

Future

During the year the Committee raised the question of the relevance and future direction of our Association and particularly our Sub Branch. It is evident from recent events (e.g. indexation of military superannuation pensions) that although the VVAA has achieved a great deal the battle has not yet been won.

If we are to achieve our goal to "Honour the Dead ... but fight like hell for the living" Members must be prepared to step up to the plate and nominate for Committee in 2010 as there will be a number committee positions vacant.

Vic Pilch

From Secretary/Treasurer Tony:



G'Day everyone! I guess the main item I wish to advise you is that because the travel bug has bitten and because health wise I am better off 'out and about' and as well as having a great feeling of guilt for not being able to dedicate my whole time to the office of Secretary/Treasurer, I will not seek re-nomination for the position next year.

Someone told me once that you can't leave till you find your own replacement. Well I have discussed the situation with Ray and he has agreed to put his hand up for the job and will nominate. Subject to the Members agreeing at the AGM I wish him all the best. I know your Sub-Branch will be in very capable hands should he be elected.

Our Membership is at an all time record high and will go from strength to strength, but will only be as good as you let it. In saying that, and as Vic said in his report, the only way it will get better is if more

Honour the Dead but fight like hell for the living

Members get involved by putting their hands up and help in the running of the Sub-Branch be it a small or large part. Vic's report also has the breakup of Membership.

I really hope that you all have a very merry Christmas (I know I will, I will be in Miami USA with my Grandkids). I also hope everyone has a happy and healthy New Year.

Our AGM will be held at the Hoppers Club on the 7th February and there is a separate notice included together with a nomination form for any of the Committee positions and the more of you that put your hand up the better and more productive your Sub-Branch will be. More hands the lighter the work. After all, it is *your* Sub-Branch

The end of the year is here and as such Membership fees are due at the end of December. An invoice and a stamped return envelop is included with this newsletter and I would encourage you all to pay the fees as soon as possible to keep continuity with State and National enrolments.

Stay well and have a great Crissey

Tony

From Ray (Actg. Secretary/Treasurer):



**VVAA MELBOURNE WEST SUB BRANCH
ACTING SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT – DECEMBER
NEWSLETTER**

Hi Everyone,

With the Festive Season almost upon us I'd like to add my good wishes to you all for a happy and safe Christmas and a wonderful 2010. I'd also like to thank everyone who has assisted me during the year in ensuring that all our administrative work gets done.

A lot has happened since the September 'Newsletter'. A State Council Meeting was held at Tocumwal where a number of important issues affecting our Association were addressed.

The Veterans' Centre at Kelly Park is running smoothly and we now have our own Pension & Welfare Officers ready, willing and able to attend to veterans' needs. The Centre also has two new cupboards built by Bogie Knight to house our computer, printer and telephone that helps with the efficiency of the work area.

A number of our Members together with some WW2 veterans observed Remembrance Day with children and staff at Thomas Chirnside Primary School. We have built up a great relationship with school where we are described as 'living history books' for the next generation. In conjunction with Werribee RSL we will be sponsoring children from needy families to attend Somers Camp at Portsea next month.

We are looking for some volunteers to assist the Darwin Defenders Association conduct their memorial service at the Shrine of Remembrance on Friday 19 February 2010.

Finally, in last 'Newsletter' I pleaded with all Members to consider becoming more involved in our Association if we are going to survive. With the AGM and election of office bearers for 2010 in February I would once again ask you to consider becoming involved as the battle is not yet won.

Fond regards,

Ray

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Cobb & Co.



Road Rules for Passengers

Adherence to these rules will ensure a memorable journey.

Coarse language will not be tolerated from gentlemen in the presence of ladies and children. The driver will be exempt from this rule as his horses may not understand the "Queen's English".

Ladies must not show an unseemly ankle when climbing into or alighting from the coach.

If a passenger wishes to sleep during the trip, they must ensure it is done quietly as snoring etc. inconveniences other passengers. A word of congratulations will be forthcoming at the end of the journey to any passenger who does manage to sleep.

In the event of you sighting a Yowie, Bunyip or other such beastie, remain calm - the alcohol will wear off soon.

Keep conversation to a general nature. Bushrangers, accidents, politics and religion should be avoided completely.

In the unlikely event of a hold-up, obey the bushranger's orders immediately. Failure to do so could lead to your relatives entering into a period of mourning.

When swatting flies or mosquitos a clean kill is more humane.

Should the coach become bogged, gentlemen are required to push. Those who do not, may find they contribute to the speed of the ensuing journey by lightening the load.

Do not speak to driver while coach is in motion as he likes to hear his own voice better than anyone else's.

If riding on the top of the coach please remember to "duck your head" when approaching overhanging branches. Failure to do so could mean you may end up in the tree and the coach proceeding without you.

When luncheon stops are made at hotels, it is advisable to "shout the driver", else he may not notice your absence when departing.

Please keep your shoes on when travelling. Strange smells may offend other passengers or the horses.

The driver will allow any passenger who complains of cramped conditions to "stretch their legs", providing they can keep up with the speed of the coach.

The pros and cons of driving techniques should not be discussed with the driver. There are only two ways to drive a coach - his way and the wrong way.

Gentlemen guilty of unruly behaviour will be dislodged from the coach and left stranded in the middle of the never never. It is a **l-o-n-g** walk back to **TOOWOOMBA**.



Cobb & Co. wish you a very pleasant journey.

Produced by the COBB & CO. MUSEUM, 27 Lindsay Street, Toowoomba Qld 4350 Phone 076 39 1971



Fascinate

The teacher asked the class to use the word 'fascinate' in a sentence.

Molly put up her hand and said, 'My family went to my granddad's farm, and we all saw his pet sheep. It was fascinating.'

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The teacher said, 'that was good, but I wanted you to use the word fascinate, not fascinating'.

Sally raised her hand. She said, 'My family went to see Rock City and I was fascinated.'

The teacher said, 'Well, that was good Sally, but I wanted you to use the word 'fascinate.'

Little Johnny raised his hand. The teacher hesitated because she had been burned by Little Johnny before. She finally decided there was no way he could damage the word 'fascinate', so she called on him for his offering.

Johnny said, 'My aunt Gina has a sweater with ten buttons, but her tits are so big she can only fasten eight.'

The following table shows the profit and loss for badge week 2009. It can't be stressed enough that the tremendous effort of the few volunteers made the bottom line possible. A big thank you to those that took part.

It should be pointed out that the profit will stay local for the benefit of local Veterans and their families. It does not go into a State Pool.

Well done those people.

**VVAA MELBOURNE WEST SUB-BRANCH
2009 BADGE WEEK
APPEAL RESULT**

GROSS RECEIPTS			\$ 11,974.10
LESS: COST OF SALES			
OPENING STOCK			
(a) Badges			
Orange	150 x 0.55c	\$	
	650 x	83.00	
Long Tan Cross	\$2.75	\$1,788.00	
	450 x		
Crossed Flags	\$2.50	\$1,125.00	
		\$	\$
Stickers	10 x \$1.10	11.00	3,007.00
(b) Merchandise			
Lanyards	42 x \$4.50	\$	
		189.00	
Necklaces	29 x \$4.50	\$	
	131 x	131.00	
Stubby Holders	\$3.75	\$	
		491.00	\$
			811.00
			\$
			3,818.00
PURCHASES			
(a) Badges			
Orange	200 x 0.40	\$	
	100 x	80.00	
Long Tan Cross	\$2.60	\$	
VVAA Stickers	10 x 60c	260.00	
Welfare Ribbons	100 x \$1	\$	6.00
		\$	

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			100.00	
	100 x		\$	
Welfare Pens	\$2.25		225.00	
Crossed Flags	0 x \$1.10		\$ -	
Sales Trays	0 x \$15		\$ -	
			\$	
			671.00	
(b) Merchandise				
Lanyards	50 x \$6.00	\$	300.00	
Stickers (If you don't love it leave)	20 x \$5.00	\$	100.00	
	11 x		\$	
BulletVV Pens	\$18.00	\$	198.00	598.00
				\$
				1,269.00
				\$
				5,087.00
LESS: CLOSING STOCK				
(a) Badges				
Orange	325 x 0.55	\$	178.75	
Long Tan Cross	84 x \$2.75	\$	231.00	
	101 x			
Crossed Flags	\$2.50	\$	252.50	
				\$
Stickers (Sheets)	10 x \$1.10	\$	11.00	673.25
(b) Merchandise				
Lanyards	19 x \$4.50	\$	85.50	
Necklaces	Nil			
VV Stickers - Large	16 x \$5.00	\$	80.00	
VV Stickers - Small	7 x \$4.00	\$	28.00	
Stickers - Together Forever	6 x \$6.00	\$	36.00	
Stickers - Other	3 x \$6.00	\$	18.00	
Bullet Pens	6 x \$25.00	\$	150.00	
	268 x			\$
Stubby Holders	\$3.75	\$	1,005.00	\$1,402.50 2,075.75
COST OF SALES				\$ 3,011.25
NET PROFIT				<u>\$ 8,962.85</u>

I understand there's an issue doing the rounds of the TPI community about interstate ambulance travel. Hopefully the advice below is helpful for you to send out to your members and help quell their concerns.

The Department will transport veterans to the nearest available treatment location that can meet their clinical needs by the most appropriate mode of transport applicable in each case. If a veteran lives in one state and requires ambulance transport for their clinical needs and the closest suitable facility is in another state then the Department would fund that transport i.e. coverage is not limited to the state of residency.

However, if a veteran travels to another state for non medical reasons such as recreation and then requires ambulance transport to a hospital or other facility this would only be covered from their

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place of temporary residence to the nearest suitable treatment facility. The veteran will not be able to elect to be transported back to their home state for treatment or back to their permanent residence after treatment. Such transport is not dictated by clinical need, only personal preference. The Department would transport them back to their temporary residence after discharge from hospital via the most appropriate transport mode.

Transport of veterans between facilities whether within states or between states is based on clinical need and at the discretion of the medical professionals treating the veteran. This is not something the veteran can elect to do and be funded by the Department.

Veterans are encouraged to take out travel insurance when making long trips interstate. This statement is found in the DVA ambulance Fact Sheet HSV120 and in "Before You Travel" HSV 129.

Happy to provide more information should you wish.

Cheers

Ken Douglas
General Manager | Services Division
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Remembrance Day 11-11-2009 at Thomas Chirnside



Our relationship with Thomas Chirnside Public School continues to grow.

From: Peter Trease [mailto:pantre@live.com.au]
Sent: Sunday, 18 October 2009 6:14 PM
To: ntsec@vvaant.org.au; aanswsec1@aapt.net.au; doc1968@bigpond.net.au
Subject:

To Fellow Vietnam Veterans,,
Having been back to Vietnam several times now, We would like to pass onto any future travellers the address of a wonderful young couple who run a small travel agency in HCMC.

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This is NOT an advertisement.

However, we would like to pass on the pleasant & helpful experiences we have received from these people over 3-4 years..[Many friends and their friends also.]

They have proved a focal point for all bookings. Such as, flights [The RIGHT price}, boat trips, travel and hotels etc., Visa problems and all sorts of problems you may encounter.

We have just had news that 4 people from our area connected with Miss AN and her husband Bao last month..After booking their trips all through Vietnam and Cambodia, She [Miss An] telephoned them every second day to check on their proceedings.

So many friends and then friends of friends have been looked after and helped by them and many have become loyal friends of theirs now.

Their honesty and integrity is unquestionable..[E.G. a bus/boat trip with lunch down the Mekong for about \$9-10!!!]..Other travellers with us last time paid about \$80-00 at their hotel!!

For anyone contemplating a visit there please feel free to contact An and BAO at "Welcome Travel"219/2 Pham Ngu Lao St. HCMC[Saigon]
welcomtravelvn@yahoo.com or.

baoantravel@yahoo.com Tel. 84.8.9177055
and feel free to contact us at pantre@live.com.au or kassess@bigpond.com

to check the authenticity.

Fully recommended.

Nancy and Jack Trease and Bob Bruce.
ex 2RAR.

Penguins

Did you ever wonder why there are no dead penguins on the ice in Antarctica - where do they go?

Wonder no more!!!

It is a known fact that the penguin is a very ritualistic bird which lives an extremely ordered and complex life.

The penguin is very committed to its family and will mate for life, as well as maintain a form of compassionate contact with its offspring throughout its life.

If a penguin is found dead on the ice surface, other members of the family and social circle have been known to dig holes in the ice, using their vestigial wings and beaks, until the hole is deep enough for the dead bird to be rolled into and buried.

The male penguins then gather in a circle around the fresh grave and sing:

"Freeze a jolly good fellow."

Then they kick him in the ice hole.

You really didn't believe that I know anything about penguins, did you!

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