

WESTERN OUTPOST NEWS



August 2012 Issue

St Mary's Outpost the
'Train of Knowledge'

St Mary's Vietnam Veterans Outpost & St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch Combined Newsletter



NO PROBLEMS TAMING TIGERS

IN THIS ISSUE

	<u>PAGE</u>
Outpost Presidents Report	3
St Marys RSL Sub -Branch Report	4-5
Outpost Education Report	6-7-8
Boer War Service & Address by Norma Thorburn	9-10-11
Vietnam Veterans Day	12
St Mary's Bowls	13
Rooty Hill RSL Entertainment News	14
Veterans' Affairs Pre-Arranged Transport - Brent Morgan	15-16
St Mary's RSL	17
Sick List & Hospital Patients	18
Nepean Wives of Veterans Support Group	18
Computer Classes	19
Aussie Banners & Flags	19
"My Account" DVA Web Info	20
Hearing Services For Eligible Veterans	21
Important Info Regarding Days of Operation For Claims	22
Funding to Upgrade POW Memorial in Malaysia	23
Australian Operational Service Medal (OSM)	24-25
VVAA & RSL St Marys Web Site Info	26
Lost Generation of Men Still Fighting Their War	27-28
Heavenly Celebration Funerals	28
Rapid Plumbing Solutions	29
Michael Fitzgerald - Solicitor	30
Report on Stay at the Hyde Park Inn - Frank Lawton (Letter)	30
Committee	31

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Presidents Report July 2012



Well here we are at the half way point of the year already. It certainly appears that the older we all get the faster the days stream by, leaving us wondering more and more where the time has gone and what we have to show for it.

All has been flowing fairly well with the “Train” recently, with the noticeable exception of the few sickies we have had. In particular we missed our hard working Secretary Sam Vecchio. Thankfully we have had the ever reliable Gary Fizzell to step up and take on Sam’s work load. Unfortunately we have also been down a couple of Pension Officers who we have not been able to replace at this point in time. Thankfully our work load has not been overly heavy at this point.

Work is progressing toward another Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Day Service. As this will be the first time that we have held our service on a Saturday, it is certainly going to be among our biggest and best (we hope).

You may also be aware that we are in the process of planning to build a museum area within the Double Decker carriage. We have contracted WOW Displays to quote and build this for us. Once it is up and running we will be looking at receiving any donations that you may wish to have displayed. The Display will be over seen by Vin and Nancy Cosgrove in conjunction with myself and Gary Fizzell. All donations will need to be done on the basis of once they are donated they become the property of the Train. The committee will examine each item and decide what is relevant for a display and what is not. We anticipate that this will be a live display i.e. it will be updated and rotated on a regular basis. It will include any items from the Malayan Conflict up to and including Afghanistan depending on available space.

Our choir “The Sunset Station Singers” is in the process of making a CD of 60’s and 70,s favourites under the guidance of the choir master Mark Bowden. They are looking for new members as always. Don’t tell me that you can’t sing as there is not one member who is a professional or trained singer. What I know about singing you could write on the head of the proverbial pin. But if I can do it so can you. So come along and give it a try. Drop in any Monday night at the RSL between 7.00pm to 9.00pm.

Please remember that Management Meetings take place between 9.00am and 10.30am on the third Thursday of each month. However non-management personal are invited to sit in at any time. If you see a need around the Train or something that can be improved than please let us know either by attending meetings or giving us written information. Also stay in touch with your Outpost’s activities by logging on to our website occasionally.

We have the Dianne Lindsay song “Living In The Shadow Of The Horseshoe” loaded on the Presidents page. Why not log in and have a listen.

Regards to all and keep safe

Greg

A Word From the RSL Sub-Branch



Three months since our last publication, and three very successful and respectful Commemorative Services later, I can report that our Sub-Branch is continuing to operate well in support of our members. The RSL office is receiving an increasing volume of email traffic - many of which are being generated directly from our website links.

A very warm welcome to our new members this year including:

Phillip Hincks, David Kiltney, Chris Kaltenbacher, John Sammut, Kevin Cosgrove, David Cuff, Ian De Pars, John Celeban, George Keane, Edward Cooper, Anthony Wickens.

Whilst it is always a pleasure to welcome new members, it is equally as sad to say farewell to our deceased members:

Bob Gertdz, Ron Halling, Richard Laidlaw, Ronley Fordham, Mick Mulhall.

Our ANZAC Services for 2012 were arguably the best yet - particularly in terms of attendance. Thank you to all who took part and who encouraged families and neighbours to also attend. The Dawn Service attracted by far the largest crowd we've seen. More than 2000 participants were given clear view of proceedings by the addition of a real-time video on a large screen attached to the side of the carriage, this facility has already been re-booked for 2013.

Our annual Boer War Commemorative Service, (full report pages 9-11) was again successfully conducted on Sunday 27th May with attendance outnumbering most of the like-services around the Nation. An informative and interesting address was given by Mrs Norma Thorburn (St Marys Historical Society) on the theme "St Marys in the Boer War".

Our Welfare Team, operating through the 'Train' continues to do a magnificent job in providing advice and compassion to our ill veterans and their families. Remember, for any Welfare issue, always make John Foeken (0409 329 688) your first call. If you have an overnight hospital stay planned, again please let John know so we can assist where needed and get a fruit basket (or similar) to you.

If you have any illness/injury/condition which you feel related back to your military service, please make the right move now and visit our Pension Officers at the 'Train' (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday) if unsure where to go, look for the steam train (Veterans Centre) in the grounds of the St Marys RSL Club, corner Mamre Road and Hall Street, St Marys. (Continued next page)

Head up to the platform and into the Station Office there.

Can I also put in a plug for the RSL Social Club? Russ Boserio has organised a great calendar of social events. If you've met the criteria (attending 3 meetings in the previous 12 months) make sure you get your name in for upcoming events; e.g. fantastic lunch/cruise up the Hunter River on Saturday 8th September; the usual ultimate Kid's Christmas party on 25th November, contact Russ on 0413 503 542 to see if/when tickets are available.

Our annual Colin Shepherd OAM Memorial School Scholarship program is well underway and we look forward to reviewing the best works that submitting schools will generate.

On our financial side, while the investment situation remains unattractive, we are not in any dire straits and in fact, our advisors have been guiding us well to minimise the negative impact on our assets.

All-in-all, the Sub-Branch is progressing well and I encourage all members to take an active part in Sub-Branch life whether that be in assisting others (less fortunate) through learning to provide pension and welfare services, or just coming along to participate in our monthly meetings and social outings.

Contact details for all Sub-Branch Committee appear on the inside back cover of this newsletter.

Finally, please continue to monitor your Sub-Branch website:

http://www.vvaastmarys.com.au/StMarysRSL_Sub-Branch
To stay up on matters of interest and to contact your Executive.

Wishing all Good Health.

Ron Kelly
President

ST MARYS VVAA OUTPOST EDUCATION TEAM REPORT JULY 2012

The development of the proposed National History Syllabus has had very little impact on the Outpost E-Team activities to date this year. The total number of student programs delivered in 'semester one' is similar to previous years. Its worth noting that we will commence our ninth year of operation in August 2012.

At the conclusion of 'semester one' the E-Team had:

- Delivered 44 student programs involving 3740 students i.e. 38 two hour Year 10 group presentations and 6 individual student research and reporting projects.
- The above program summary includes the E-Team's annual Outreach visit to Monaro High School in Cooma which also included the Team accompanying 50 students on an educational visit to the Australian War Memorial Vietnam Gallery in Canberra.
- Total school/student donations received by the Outpost in appreciation of the Team's programs to date this year are \$8803.00. This figure elevates the eight year total donations to the Outpost to over \$37,000 which covers the Team's expenses and goes a long way to assist the Outpost as well.
- Sincere thanks to Outpost members for their valued contributions to the Team Program.

Over the past years the Team has set up highly acclaimed Vietnam - era memorabilia displays at various functions and events. A project is about to be put in place to establish permanent displays at the Outpost. It is anticipated that this project will be a "work in progress" for some time. The Outpost will be applying for a DVA Grant to help with the initial costs of setting up display areas and glass cabinets to house the artefacts.

Examples of the type of display are shown on the following pages.

Vin Cosgrove
Outpost E-Team Co-ordinator





NOTE:
**ALL THESE DISPLAYS WOULD BE SECURED IN A
 LOCKABLE GLASS CABINET.**

Boer War Commemorative Service – 27th May 2012
Address by Norma Thorburn
St Marys Historical Society
‘St Marys in the Boer War’

Following several defeats of the British in Africa, the Secretary of State for the colonies asked the Governments of New Zealand, Canada and the Australian Colonies to send soldiers to fight with the British Forces.

By October 1899 some Australians had been recruited. Since the states hadn't been federated at that stage, each state formed their own contingent.

With a recruiting centre in Penrith, several young men from the area enlisted. Some familiar names from the area appear on the list such as Stanton, Colless, Gates, Betts, Holmes, Thorndike, Barrett, Flemming, Burling, Webb, Ransley and Sheens among others.

One interesting character was Captain James Francis Thomas, who was born on his parents' farm at St.Marys. He had no interest in farming and so after gaining a degree in Law at Sydney University, he set up a practice in Tenterfield. He joined the Tenterfield Company Mounted Infantry Regiment and by February 1900 had risen to the rank of Major and was the Commanding Officer of the A Squadron of the NSW Bushman's Contingent. He served in several actions including the Relief of Mafeking where he was decorated.

Following an unfortunate incident where a number of Bushveldt Carbineers were accused of murdering some unarmed Boer soldiers Captain Thomas, because of his background in the Law was called on to defend the Carbineers in a Court Marshall. Two of those were Peter Hancock and Harry (Breaker) Morant.

Another soldier from this area is of particular interest. Edwin Horace Ransley was the son of William and Eliza Ransley of Llandillo. He enlisted in the A Squadron NSW Mounted Rifles. During his training he wrote to Mr. M. Bennett of St.Marys as follows:

"I have been accepted for service in Africa; I passed all tests very satisfactorily - my shooting was good and also my riding. There are seven Penrith chaps in the same tent as myself; I know them all well. We camp together, drill together and will fight together.

I do feel lonely to think that I am the only St. Marys boy that has faced the music, but I will try to uphold the credit of that little town --- home of my birth."

Trooper Ransley left for the front 17th. January, 1900. He was particularly friendly with Private Thomdike, who became very ill with enteric fever soon after arriving in South Africa. Edwin Ransley nursed his best friend back to perfect health.

He wanted the British Flag, that had been raised over the Court House in Bloomfontein, to hang it in the Mechanics Institute at St.Marys. He tried to coerce the caretaker of the Court House to give it to him, without success.
He somehow came into the possession of the flag.

Enteric fever was rife and Trooper Ransley became a victim of it, dying at Sterkstroom on 27th April 1900.

On Saturday, 21st December 1901, the new St.Marys Mechanic Institute was opened on the highway, by Mr. Samuel Lees, MLA. Following the formalities a social and musical program including refreshments' was held. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the flag to the Institute by Sergeant H. C. Gates of K Company, Penrith on behalf of the Late Trooper Ransley. This flag was one of the first raised over Bloomfontein after its capture by the British forces. The flag hung in the Institute for the seventy years that the building stood.

Above the front door was a marble plaque which reads:

“To the memory of Trooper E. H. Ransley, Native of this town & at one time Secretary of this Institute, who died in the Imperial cause at Sterkstroom, South Africa on 27th April 1900 aged 30 years. A member of the 2nd. Contingent NSW Mounted Rifles - I fought the good fight.”

Both the plaque and the flag are now in the possession of the St.Marys & District Historical Society. The flag has been gently restored and framed, with the help of a grant from Veterans Affairs and a generous donation by the Rotary Club of St.Marys. The Plaque has been installed in 'The Chambers' by Penrith City Council and both items form part of our permanent Memorial Display to all our St.Marys men and women who have served in all theatres of war.

May they Rest in Peace.



Mrs Norma Thorburn

Boer War Service – St Marys – 27th May 2012



The threatened poor weather conditions gave way early to a sunny day to shine on our successful annual service at St Marys RSL to commemorate those Australian veterans and fallen from the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902.

A small but enthusiastic crowd of 65 were introduced to Banjo Patterson's poem 'Our Own Flag', along with the traditional Prayers of Remembrance. Federal Member for Lindsay, Mr David Bradbury and State Member for Mulgoa Mrs Tanya Davies honoured the assembled group and, along with St Marys RSL Patrons, Penrith Mayor Greg Davies and Deputy Mayor Jackie Greenow, we were provided with a truly local (St Marys) focus through an address by Mrs Norma Thorburn of the St Marys Historical Society around the theme "St Marys in the Boer War".



Cheers, Tony

**Official
Guests
(listed above)**

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY SATURDAY 18th AUGUST 2012



The annual Vietnam Veterans Day will be held in the commemorative area at the 'Train' (St Marys RSL) on 18th August commencing at 5.00pm followed by a informal function in the Northern Room from 6.00pm to 9.00pm.

Some changes have been made to the program to make it more in line with Vietnam Veterans rather than a RSL type Service; these changes will be apparent mainly in the middle of the Service. The Lancers Band from Parramatta will be in attendance as normal and they will entertain you with music from approximately 4.30pm.

SEE YOU THERE



St Marys RSL Bowls

The bowling club invites all members and visitors to utilize the excellent facilities available with our two greens, spacious bowls lounge and function room. We have a great social bowls programme and free coaching for those interested in starting out. Bowls are available from the club, so there is no cost outlay to start your new pastime.

We also have a strong representation in both male and female pennant teams (representative) which is available to any member to enter. You don't have to be a champion bowler to play pennants. So come along and join in the fun.

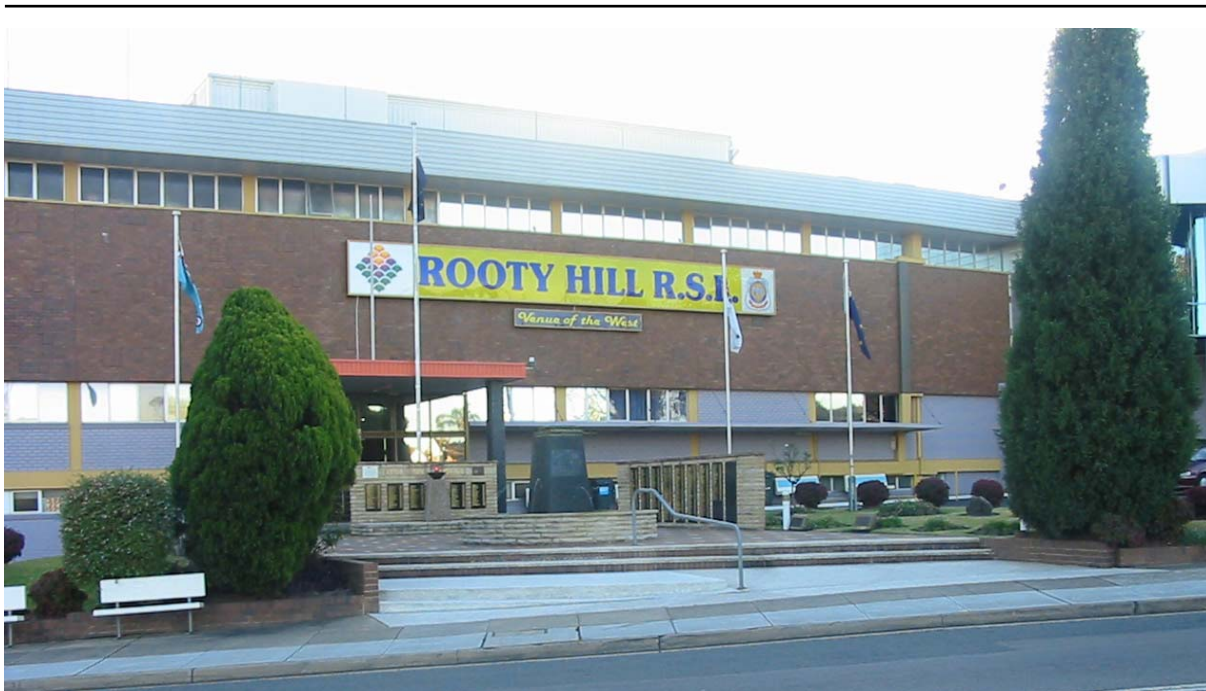
Social Bowls Programme

Tuesday	Any Pairs	9.30am Start
Wednesday	Any Pairs	10.30am Start
Thursday	Ladies Bowls	9.30am Start
Friday	Mens Pairs	1.00pm Start
Saturday	<u>Free Coaching</u>	10.00am – 12 noon
Saturday	Any Pairs	1.00pm Start
Sunday	Turkey Trots(mixed Bowls)	9.30am Start

Contact the Bowls Office via Club Reception on 9623 6555



Bowling Club Greens and Function area.



Shows Coming To Rooty Hill Soon:

So What! The P!nk Show: Friday 24th August 8.00pm. Members FREE, Visitors \$10.00. A concert production show that incorporates numerous costume changes, choreographed dance routines, a live band, backing vocalists and a Robbie Williams support. Featuring P!NK's old and new hits this show always impresses. If you are looking for a bite to eat why not reserve a table at menu33 on the night of the show and take advantage of the special show goes menu by selecting the menu33 option when purchasing tickets.

COMEDY CORNER 24th August, 21 September, 14 December:

Time 8.00pm, Tickets Free available at the Club Shop.

After making it's mark at two sell-out Sydney City venues, Comedy Corner Rooty Hill is the latest place to go if you want side-splitting humour that guarantees to make you laugh at least once!! Held in the Waratah Room at Rooty Hill RSL. The night is hosted by Steve Hoskins, one of the most popular Sydney MC's on the circuit right now. With an ever-changing line-up delivered by some the most exciting new Sydney comedians, a night at Comedy Corner is sure to appeal to those that like their humour a little bit fresh and a little bit different.

Veterans' Affairs Pre-Arranged Transport

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) provides eligible veterans and war widows a range of transport options to travel to and from their medical treatment. Each year more than 1 million trips are funded by DVA at a cost of about \$52 million.

With this volume of work, the taxi industry is integral to making this a successful service. Veterans and war widows are a very special group of people who should be given the respect, courtesy and acknowledgement of the contribution and sacrifices they or their spouse made in defence of the nation. Many DVA clients who rely on this service are old, frail and are generally needing assistance with travelling. They expect and deserve a higher level of service from drivers when travelling in taxis.

Most veterans and war widows are able to book their own transport directly with taxi companies for travel to and from their medical appointments and will pay the driver and then seek reimbursement of their fares later from DVA. However, the bulk of travel is pre-arranged by DVA and this service is known as Booked Car With Driver (BCWD). DVA pay the fares for BCWD jobs as part of a corporate contract arrangement with networks and operators.

It can be confusing at times for drivers as to how they will be paid for their service. In most cases, this can be as simple as confirming with the veteran or war widow prior to commencing the journey whether the trip is covered under BCWD or if they intend to seek reimbursement. In most cases BCWD jobs are broadcast as "DVA Contract" jobs which means that DVA will pay the fare.

If at anytime there is doubt about who pays, please seek clarification from your base. For contract work, DVA pays the networks and operators directly for BCWD journeys and veterans and war widows should not be asked for payment by drivers. If a passenger says that this is a Veterans' Affairs job you should contact your base who will have instructions on how to proceed – in most cases the response will be fill in a "docket" and we will seek approval from DVA at a later date.

DVA receives about 3,000 calls daily to book travel for treatment. These bookings are recorded and are passed to the appropriate contracted network or operator, the majority are issued the day prior to travel. The network or operator has the responsibility to dispatch the jobs at the appropriate time to ensure the veteran or war widow arrives at their medical appointment on time. The consequence of arriving late is that critical medical treatment may be missed and another appointment may not be available for months.

If you are transporting veterans or war widows to their medical appointment:

- BCWD jobs are normally identified as part of the dispatch process as a "DVA contract booking"
- BCWD is a door to door service for special needs people. Don't honk your horn in the driveway. Many using the service will have hearing difficulties and may not be able to hear the horn. Please exit the vehicle and knock on the front door. More often the person probably requires assistance to the vehicle, entering the vehicle and with the seat belt.

(Continued next page)

-
- If they have a collapsible wheelchair or walking frame they will rely on you to put it in the boot.
 - Confirm who they are and the destination and appointment time.
 - For BCWD jobs, DVA will pay. **Under no circumstances should the veteran or war widow be asked to pay.**
 - If you require a docket to be signed then please ensure it is filled in. Veterans and war widows become quite anxious when asked to sign blank dockets. Dockets are no longer required by DVA for those vehicles/operators using MT Data.
 - Arrive as close as possible to where the drop off is without breaching the road laws but be mindful of the safety of the veteran or war widow. Please offer assistance such as opening the door, as many suffer from poor mobility and may require help to enter and exit the taxi.
 - For the return journey, the veteran or war widow may not know which taxi is specifically theirs, especially if they are at a large medical facility. You may need to leave your vehicle to seek and identify the client and to assist them to the vehicle.

DVA appreciates the commitment by the NSW taxi industry for its efforts in transporting Australia's war veterans and war widows.

Some extra care and understanding of the special needs of this group and some common courtesy and respect for the elderly goes along way in raising the profile and image of taxi drivers and this can be rewarded with more work from DVA.

If you would like additional information about how you can provide a better service to Australia's war veterans and war widows, or are interested in doing DVA jobs, please contact your taxi network.

More information about DVA Transport, including guidelines for transport operators, is available at http://www.dva.gov.au/service_providers/Pages/booked_car_scheme.aspx

Brent Morgan
Director Veterans Transport Services Program
Department of Veterans Affairs
Phone: 9213 7918

Note: The above article was sent to the Taxi council for insertion in their June Newsletter addressed to all qualified drivers. Premier Cabs have now introduced a system of training for those taxi operators who wish to join their corporate customers which includes DVA Booked Car System, in order to join, the driver must first attend the training course to be accredited to do the work. **Greg Cant & Gary Fizzell** attended and observed the first training course which was held at St Mary's RSL and we were quite impressed. Since the training/accreditation system began we have found, at least at St Marys, the number of complaints for BCWD have dramatically dropped.

On page 20 of this issue there is an article "My DVA" - if you sign up and register with DVA you will see that booking DVA transport and claiming for D800 travel can now be all done online.

TAB FACILITIES

Sports Bet
FOX Sport
SKY Channel

TERRACE CAFE

Check Board for Specials
Open Daily for Lunch & Dinner
Serving Light Meals, Snacks, Sweets & Coffee

Monday

Bingo 11.30am
Rock & Roll Dancing 7-10pm

Tuesday

Bingo 7.30pm

Thursday

Bingo 11.30am
Texas Hold'em Poker 6.30pm
DJ Stuart plays 60's, 70's & 80's in the Lounge
and **MEMBER'S BADGE DRAW**
\$3000-\$5000 From 7pm

FRIDAY

Bingo 11.30am
DJ Stuart In Lounge 8pm -12.30

Saturday

Meat Run 4-6pm
Duo in Lounge Area 7.30pm-Midnight
Live Band in Audi 1st Sat/Month

Sunday

Raffle, Trivia & Music 4-8pm

ST MARYS RSL CLUB

"The Place To Be"

FORTUNA Chinese Restaurant

Open for Lunch at Noon & Dinner at 5pm (Except Mondays)

www.stmarysrsl.com.au

Is gambling a problem for you? G-Line (NSW) is a confidential, anonymous & free counseling service.
FREECALL 1800 633 635

THANK YOU.

Terry and Debbie Burn would like to express their thanks and appreciation to everyone for their kind thoughts, flowers and cards received upon the recent passing of Terry's mother.



Terry was also overwhelmed with the thoughts and cards received after his own very serious illness and long stay in hospital.

Sick list:

**Paul Devine, John Mulheron
And Owen Hanson are all on
the long term sick list and
recuperating at home; We
also have Paul Kinney**



Paul Devine



John Mulheron

recently discharged from St John Of God Hospital. At the time of writing this Report, Col Doust was admitted to Nepean Private with a suspected heart problem, can't be too bad - he has ordered a basket of fruit from the RSL Sub-Branch welfare. We hope all "youse blokes" are recovering well and back in the fold real soon.

Nepean Wives

of Vietnam Veterans Women's Support Group

This is a non-profit community based support group for wives of veterans and are part of the VVAA St Marys. The group meet on the second Thursday of each month at 10.00 am at the

St Mary's RSL Youth Club Hall.

Phone: Cheryl Mullavey 9625 9363



Computer Training Classes

Computer Classes are conducted at the Vietnam Veterans Train situated at the St Marys RSL Club in Mamre Road St Marys as follows:

Tuesday: 9.00 am - 12.00pm

Wednesday: 9.00AM - 12.00 pm (Ladies Class)

Thursday: 9.00 am - 11.00 am

Thursday classes teach Digital Photo manipulation using Photoshop Elements 5, only 5 students at a time. **Bookings essential.**

The Tuesday and Wednesday classes are informal and we teach mixed classes from the 'beginner' to the more experienced and retired seniors wanting to familiarise with current software and learn to use the Internet to send E-Mails and carry out research & other technology related issues.

WE URGENTLY NEED A TRAINER FOR OUR WEDNESDAY CLASSES TO ASSIST BETWEEN 9am - 12 Noon.

For more info call Keith 9833 4700 or email vietvet@tpg.com.au

Aussie Banner & Flag Co. Pty Ltd (ABF Signs)

Boats, Banners, Awnings, Vehicles Factories, Shop Fronts, Magnetic Signs, Illuminated Signs, Computer Vinyl Signs.

**Banners & Bunting
Flags (National, Corporate, School)
Exhibitions & Street Banners.**

1/20 Hall Street St Mary's 2760

Contact: Tom Bell 0418 447 389

Phone: 9623 2937

Fax: 9623 2934

ausban@pnc.com.au

My Account - your DVA services online.

My Account is a new initiative of the Department Of Veterans Affairs which enables you to access a range of DVA services online.

My Details: Manage your information:

- **Update your contact information**
- **View your accepted medical conditions**
- **View card information and request a replacement card**
- **View your payments**
- **View your claims and request benefits**

Transport:

- **Make a transport booking and view current bookings**
- **Claim for travel expenses and view recent travel claims.**

Forms and Publications:

- **Download popular forms, factsheets and publications.**

To learn more on how to register, log on to the DVA website “print and follow” registration guide on either Word or PDF.

New D800 Claim Form for Travel.

DVA has developed a simplified version of the D800 ‘Claim for Travelling Expenses’ form. The D800 form is used by entitled persons to claim travel expenses relating to their treatment, disability claims and income support claims under the Veterans Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA 1986) or travel relating to treatment under the Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests (Treatment) Act 2006. The most significant change is that the health provider is no longer required to sign the form for travel under 100 km (return). In addition, the new form is simpler to complete and easy to understand.

The D800 form cannot be used for claims made for travel under the MRCA 2004 or the SRCA 1988. There is no specific forms for claims under these Acts, they need to be made in writing and include supporting documentation such as invoices etc. **it is recommended that you discuss these claims with DVA before travelling for treatment.**

Hearing Services for Eligible Veterans -FREEdom of Choice

If you are an entitled person, you are able to receive, free of charge, a range of hearing rehabilitation services appropriate to your needs via the Australian Government Hearing Services Program which is administered by the Office of Hearing Services (OHS).

Hearing loss is sometimes referred to as the invisible disability. Rarely can it be cured and no type of hearing aid can restore your hearing. the good news is that your hearing loss can be managed by an individual hearing rehabilitation program to achieve realistic communication improvement.

The rehabilitation team, that is you and your hearing services provider, devise an individual program based upon your needs.

The program consists of assessment, information sharing and strategies to make the most of your communication abilities and better manage your hearing loss.

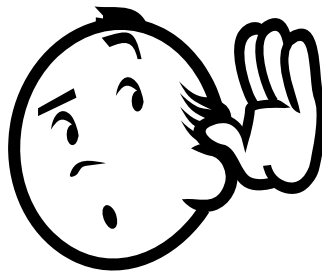
If your provider thinks that, as part of your hearing rehabilitation program, you will require hearing aids they will in the first instance talk about the free range of quality high technology devices appropriate for your rehabilitation needs. They will also explain about the range of **top-up hearing aids** that are available. These hearing aids offer additional features which are not clinically necessary for your rehabilitation program. **As well they are also generally not free.**

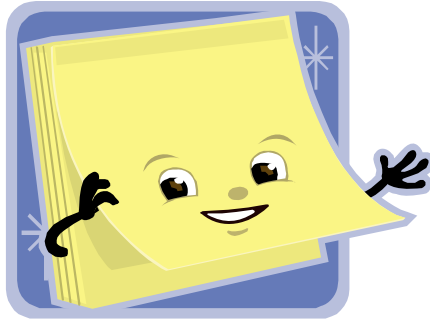
DVA does not cover the cost of top-up hearing aids, as veterans and war widows have access to the large range of well featured, quality, free-to-client hearing aids that will meet their rehabilitation needs. DVA and the OHS expect that if you require hearing aids as part of your rehabilitation program there will almost always be an appropriate free option for you.

If there are exceptional circumstances, your practitioner should consult the entire panel of free-to-client hearing devices. Should they still believe there are no appropriate free-to-client hearing devices available to you on the free-to-client list; your provider can submit evidence to the Office of Hearing Services for consideration of a non-standard device.

For more information go to the DVA website and refer to factsheet HSV22 Hearing Services for Veterans. You can also discuss your case with the Veterans' Affairs Audiologist by calling **1800 637 816**.

Hearing Services - it's your FREEdom of choice.





IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING DAYS OF OPERATION FOR PENSIONS AT THE VVAA ST MARYS OUTPOST

Pension claims at the 'Train' are now carried out on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday between the hours of 9.30am to 1.00pm, however, these timings are flexible depending on availability of Pension Officers.

Anyone wishing to see a particular Officer should phone the office first to ensure they will be in attendance.

Veterans attending the 'Train' for the first time to start a claim should allow for at least two hours for the interview as initial interviews can be time consuming.

Interviews are carried out on a 'first in first served' basis

No Pension claims are carried out on Thursdays, this being kept clear for administration and maintenance.

FUNDING TO UPGRADE POW MEMORIAL IN MALAYSIA

A Malaysian memorial marking the site where more than 3,000 Allied prisoners of war (POWs) and civilians suffered in Japanese captivity, will be enhanced with the help of Australian Government funding, announced today by Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Warren Snowdon.

Mr Snowdon said the Batu Lintang POW Campsite Memorial at Sarawak, East Malaysia, serves as a lasting reminder of the brutal treatment endured by thousands of Australians during the Second World War.

"The Australian Government will provide \$40,000 under the *Overseas Privately-Constructed Memorial Restoration Program* to ensure the memorial continues to provide a solemn place of reflection for all who visit," he said.

The funding will help to install a seating area for visitors to use on days of commemoration and enhance the Memorial's surrounds with landscaping work.

In February 1942, following the Fall of Singapore, more than 15,000 Australian soldiers stationed in Singapore and surrounds were taken prisoner of war by the Japanese.

Batu Lintang (also known as Kuching POW camp) operated as a labour camp, where Allies and civilians were held captive for more than three years.

Prisoners suffered harsh conditions throughout their captivity, including forced hard labour, food shortages and disease, until the Japanese surrender and their liberation by the Australian 9th Division in September 1945.

Following closure of the camp, the graves of about 500 Allies who had died during their incarceration were moved to the Labuan War Cemetery in Malaysia. To honour their memory, the Batu Lintang POW Campsite Memorial was established within the grounds of a nearby teachers training college in 1947.

"I encourage Australians travelling to Malaysia to visit the Memorial, to pay respect the memory of those who served and died in the region during the Second World War," Mr Snowdon said.

Australians are also commemorated at other sites in Malaysia, including the Sandakan Memorial Park, the 2nd/30th Battalion Memorial at Gemas and the Kundasang War Memorial.

The Australian Government's *Overseas Privately-Constructed Memorial Restoration Program* provides funding to restore existing memorials outside Australia, commemorating Australia's military involvement in war, conflict and peacekeeping operations.

Australian Operational Service Medal (OSM) The ‘New Medal’

A large number of people have made enquiries at the Outpost Re: ‘The New Medal’; until now we have had no news to pass on except to say that we were of the opinion that everyone was not going to receive a New Medal. The following information was received from the Acting Director Honours and Awards, which should clear up any queries you might have.

On 22 May 2012 Her Majesty, The Queen, established the Australian Operational Service Medal (OSM) to accord recognition to members of the ADF and certain civilians who render service in certain new military operations.

On Thursday 19 July 2012, Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, the Hon Warren Snowdon, with Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Ray Griggs AO CSC, will formally announce Her Majesty The Queen’s decision to introduce the OSM and that this medal will phase out/replace the Australian Active Service Medal (AASM), Australian Service Medal (ASM) and campaign medals.

- The AASM recognises Service of Australian Defence Force and certain other persons in prescribed warlike operations.
- The ASM recognises military and other service in prescribed peacekeeping and non-warlike operations.
- Campaign medals have been awarded for service in a designated military operation or duty in a geographical theatre.

In 1999 a precedent was set that Defence Civilians would not be eligible to receive the AASM and ASM. The then Chief of the Defence Force, Admiral Chris Barrie AC determined that it was not appropriate for civilians to be considered for military awards given the different role they play on operations.

The Chief of the defence force did not want to deny them recognition, however, so Defence sought to establish a separate award for Defence Civilians. All attempts to deliver this were, up until the establishment of the OSM, rejected by Government.

The OSM will have different variants, one for ADF personnel (including those involved in border protection operations) and a Defence Civilian variant.

(Continued next page)

Key Issues:

The OSM recognises Defence people, ADF and Civilians who willingly and ably perform their work in unique and hazardous environments and circumstances as part of a declared operation. In future ADF members will receive an OSM in place of the ASM, AASM and campaign medal. The level of recognition that has been achieved in the past through these medals is maintained through the introduction of one based on:

- A unique ribbon received with the OSM representing the operation our people have deployed on, in place of the campaign medal, and
- Effectively linking recognition of the type of service our people have undertaken to the operations they have deployed on.
- The OSM, partnered with varying ribbon designs, will enable recognition of the type of service the recipient has undertaken.
- The detailed parameters for eligibility are not yet available. The Chief of the Defence Force, Parliamentary Secretary for Defence and the Governor-General must consider and approve the eligibility criteria for OSM prior to its public release. Defence hopes to finalise this process in August 2012.
- The OSM has no bearing on ADF members currently deployed and they will continue to receive the same benefits they currently do. The OSM will only come into place for all new declared military operations from hereon in, apart from the retrospective element for border protection and Defence Civilians.
- In future ADF members will receive an OSM in place of the AASM, ASM and campaign medal. A unique ribbon received with OSM will represent the operation they've deployed on, in place of the campaign medal. This approach also effectively links recognition of the type of service our people have undertaken to the operations they have deployed on.

Anyone wishing to know more, particularly regarding the civilian side of the OSM, can obtain a copy of the fact sheet at the Outpost.

Two New and Important Websites for Members

Two new websites has been established for the VVAA St Marys Outpost and the St Marys RSL Sub-Branch; they will be constantly updated with information to keep you in touch, they are interactive so that you can send emails direct to us with comments or suggestions.

You will find similar information on both sites, mainly to do with Pension and Welfare. Present and Past Newsletters can also be found on both sites in colour.

Listed below under each of the logos is what you would find on each of the web pages:



Presidents Message
Advocate/Pension Officer
Welfare
Health
Drop In Lounge
Train Washers
Education Team
Computer Classes
Fishing Club
Sunset Singers
Up Coming Events
Past Events
Present/Past Newsletters
VVAA NSW Newsletters
RSL Sub-Branch Website
How It All Began
The Outpost Train
VVAA National Contacts
Links
Contact Us
www.vvaastmarys.com.au



Home
Welfare
Advocate/Pensions
Commemorative Services
Present/Past Newsletters
Health
RSL Social Guild
RSL Women's Auxiliary
RSL Youth Club
St Marys VVAA Outpost
Governor King Day Club
History of the RSL Sub-Branch
Past Exec. RSL Sub-Branch
Links
Contact us

**[www.vvaastmarys.com.au/
StMarysRsl Sub_Branch](http://www.vvaastmarys.com.au/StMarysRslSub_Branch)**

Easy Log In
Google St Marys RSL Sub Branch

Lost Generation of Men Still Fighting Their War
Article: The Sunday Mail (SA) written by Peter Goers
August 28, 2011

Some of the best men and mates, were the boys sent to the Vietnam War, writes **Peter Goers**. They're the best men I've ever known, Vietnam Veterans.

A lost generation we must never stop trying to find, it's been one of the best things that ever happened to me that I fell in with these blokes and I can't remember how or why it happened, it just did. I've never known a more forgiving, friendly, big-hearted group of people. I was too young to have opposed their war but I admire most of those who did. Had I been old enough I would have marched proudly in the streets to oppose that most stupid, wretched and useless war. I would have inevitably made the mistake of that generation of blaming the soldiers for the war.

That was wrong and very hurtful and those wounds are still being healed. We can never, as a society, redress that error sufficiently but we must continue to try. Also, as a nation of volunteers, we've been quick to support liberty and capitalism all over the world and more than 105,000 of the very finest Australians lay buried in foreign fields because of wars not of our own making.

The worst of the Vietnam War was that for the only time in our history men were sent against their will as conscripts in a lottery of death. Politicians love winning wars they very rarely fight in. The Viet Vets are the legacy of the lesson we all learnt: never blame the soldier for the war, it ain't his fault and ain't heavy, he's my brother. War and life is about your mates.

Believing in them. Fighting for them because they may not make it. You're fighting for those around you, those you love - not flags or countries and especially not causes, because they come and go.

The irony of the anti-war movement is that unlike the Diggers they opposed, important as the anti-war movement was, it was never noble and they no longer have each other. No commune lasts for very long and hip becomes hip replacement. It's hard to remain radical all your life and, believe me, I'm trying.

The Viet Vet remains together because only they know what they went through and they did it tough before, during and after, with no support from the home front in an unpopular war - even worse, a dirty war.

(Continued)

(Unfortunately I don't have the room to relate all of Peter's article here but he then went on to write about the Veterans Day last year in SA, here are some more of his recollections of that day.....Ed)

“Then lots of big, broken blokes shed a tear and some got pissed and ate sausages and Vietnamese food and took part in the annual concert at the Torrens Parade Ground and we all came together to share their story”.

“The diggers sang and danced - some of them to their own music in their own heads”.

“This year it was the splendid Navy Band, the Red Hot Mama and trooper's trouper, Linda McCarthy, the genial Evan Jones, the hilariously droll “Old Fella” comedian Rod Gregory, the wonderful Graham Cornes Allstar Band, and, wow, John Schumann singing to those who were only 19”.

“They gather around him and they mouth that song as a catechism of their conflict, the ‘War within yourself’ and they cry with and without tears. It's a great day”.

“As Australians we have a sacred duty to honour, service and sacrifice until we can say ‘we've got to get out of this place if it's the last thing we ever do’, and mean it”.

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The following letter was received via email from **Frank Lawton** regarding a visit to the City and his stay at the Hyde Park Inn in Elizabeth Street which is owned by the RSL.

“Gary, recently my wife and I attended a function in the CBD and thought it wise to stay overnight in the city.

Having many times read the advertisement in the Reveille for the Hyde Park Inn, I thought we would give it a try. Hence the purpose of this letter is to inform, via your newsletter, other Sub-Branch members of it's existence and our experience.

The hotel is located in Elizabeth Street opposite the ANZAC Memorial and is within easy walking distance to many attractions in the CBD. It is currently undergoing some renovations although we never saw or heard anything that would indicate that. The staff were extremely well presented, courteous and extremely helpful. The room was brilliant, with loads of space, clean, modern fittings and furniture and overlooking the ANZAC Memorial through a tree lined Elizabeth Street. Limited on-site parking is available and when that is exhausted complimentary secure parking is provided about 150 metres away. A continental breakfast is supplied free of charge as was a daily newspaper. Sub-Branch members, on production of a current membership card, are given a huge discounted daily rate and no minimum number of night stays are applied to them.

Overall Gary, a very pleasing and satisfying stay and one I would highly recommend to fellow members”.

**Yours Aye,
Frank Lawton.**

MICHAEL JOHN FITZGERALD SOLICITOR

**Level 8
65 York Street Sydney 2000**

Phone: 9283 2500 or 0419 440 990

**FAX: 9283 2600
ABN 18095746334**



St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch
Corner Mamre Road and Hall St.

The RSL Sub-Branch monthly meeting is held the second Wednesday of each month at 6.30 pm in the auditorium, refreshments provided. The Office is manned regularly and can be contacted on **9623 6555**.

St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch Committee

President:	Ron Kelly	0408 684 276
V/President:	Terry Burn	0407 834 499
V/Pres:	John Foeken	0409 329 688
Treasurer:	Ted Fish	02 9833 4700
Secretary:	Tony Fryer	0414 557 692
A/Secretary:	Ron Blakely	0411 131 849
Committee:	Greg Cant	0425 208 622
	Michael Wiesel	02 9623 6555

VVAA ST MARY'S OUTPOST COMMITTEE

PHONE: 02 9833 4700 FAX 9833 4022

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A/Sec.	Gary Fizzell	0418 114 976

Management Committee

The VVAA St Marys Outpost Management Committee meets regularly at the 'Train' to discuss important points relevant to the proper management of the Outpost, which will then be raised at the Bi-Monthly General Meeting. The Office is open Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 2.00pm although closing time is flexible depending on circumstances.

This newsletter is produced and printed at the VVAA St Mary's Outpost in association with the St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch. it is provided free of charge to members of both associations. Views and statements made within the magazine are not necessarily the views of the St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch or the VVAA St Mary's; the Editor and the organizations are not giving legal, accounting or other professional advice and therefore do not accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the opinions or information contained in the magazine. We believe that the sources are accurate at the time of publication. Care should be exercised by readers who attempt to use this publication as a source of reference material for any purpose other than its intended use, which is light informative reading on topics of interest for the veterans of both associations.

Gary Fizzell - Editor

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