

WESTERN OUTPOST NEWS



DECEMBER 2013

**St Mary's Outpost the
'Train of Knowledge'**

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



Names of Australians KIA are on the wall to the Right

Kandasang Memorial Sabah Nth Borneo

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VVAA St Marys Presidents Report - December 2013

I must confess to doing a bit of navel gazing of late. No! I do not mean looking at old Navy Photo's and romanticising about when we actually had a Navy. No, I mean the introspective type of navel or belly button gazing if you will. Out State President and National Vice President, **Dave McCann** went off to National Conference in October as fit and healthy as ever. While Dave was there he complained of feeling unwell for a couple of days, but was able to see out his duties at the Conference. However, at the end of the Conference he was carted off to hospital where it was discovered that he had suffered a mild heart attack. He was admitted to hospital whereupon he decided that he might as well get full benefits from his Gold Card and proceeded to have Stroke on top of the heart attack. Now, thankfully neither of these debilitating attacks were enough to knock out an 'Old Salt' like Dave and he has started to make a remarkable recovery. It did however, get me to thinking, firstly how fragile we are becoming. We continue to punch on as if we were still in our late 40's or early 50's. Yet we all know that we are all well past that point of no return and are quickly approaching or have reached that 'Three score years and ten' that was allotted to us. Unfortunately, the majority of the work that needs to be done to keep an organisation like the VVAA and the 'Train' alive is always going to be done by a minority of volunteers. Let's face it not everyone has the necessary skills to undertake pension and/or welfare work, nor does everyone have the time available to give to the 'Train' office and the 'Train Washers'

The young Diggers from Iraq, Afghanistan, East Timor and all of those other post Vietnam disputes that we have been involved in are in the main not ready yet to take over our association (if they ever will be). But we still have a duty to remain in place to assist all serving and/or ex-serving personnel for as long as we can. To this end and I recommend to you all. Take time, get away when you can. Try to enjoy as much of your life as possible. We need members who can continue to operate, not ex-members suffering burnout.

When I look back on this year I have to admit it has been a tough one for me, and has also been the fastest to fly by. I cannot imagine where the days have gone this year, I promised myself I would go fishing every month and get away for at least two one - week fishing trips. Needless to say my strike record for joining the Fishermen this year has been only about once every three months and I have not made it away for an extended break at all.

I admit that I am not a good example to follow and that this sometimes plays havoc with my family life, however, I will be the first to stand up and say next Year must be different. Let us all make that resolution to see out 2014 in some form of spiritual harmony with ourselves. Remember boys and girls, this is not a dress rehearsal. We get one shot at life only and there is no chance to back and try again.

To all of my friends and their families a Happy and safe Christmas and I will see you all back in 2014.

Regards,

Greg Cant.

VVAA ST MARY'S OUTPOST
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY 23rd FEBRUARY 2014

VVAA St Mary's will hold the AGM on Sunday 23rd February 2014 at 11.00am in the RSL Northern Room *** followed by a BBQ, all are welcome.

The AGM shall include:

Confirmation of the Minutes of the preceding AGM;
Reports from the Executive concerning the preceding year;
Consideration of any Notices of Motion received;
Election of Office Bearers;
Election of Outpost Auditors and Solicitor;
Election of Public Officer.

Note 1: Copy of proceedings to be lodged with the Department of Fair Trading within 21 days of the AGM

Note 2: A quorum at the AGM shall consist of at least three (3) Executive/Committee Members and (7) Seven Ordinary or Associate members.

Nomination forms are available at the "Train" and will be accepted up to and including Friday 7th February 2014 at 12 noon.

***You will be advised accordingly if venue changes.

Greg Cant
President

St Marys RSL Sub-Branch Presidents Report



A warm welcome to all members (and others) reading this newsletter.

As 2013 draws to a close and our final Commemorative Service for the year completed, I thank all who contributed to, and participated in the year's Sub-branch activities. This includes not only our Sub-Branch members but also those wonderful ladies in our Women's Auxiliary and those who do such a terrific job each week in groups such as the Youth Club and the Governor King Day Club. Our Social Guild has again kept us entertained through the variety of outings - thank you all.

Of course those essential services of the RSL for which we engage the Outpost to provide to our members (i.e. Pension and Welfare) have again been conducted with a high level of professionalism, efficiency and effectiveness. Thank you to John and Greg for coordinating those important services.

Our Colin Shepherd OAM Memorial School Scholarships program was conducted for the 11th year, with some outstanding entries being received - some of these are on display in our *Corridor of Honour*, some on the board near the computer - some actually on the computer. Congratulations and best wishes to those Year 10 winners; we hope that good use is made of the scholarship finds to enhance their future educational opportunities. Thank you also to those dedicated teachers at each of the six schools, who take the time to administer the program in their respective schools.

We were able to assist quite a good number of local schools with their visits to either the AWM Canberra or more localised excursions (Kokoda Track Memorial and City services). Schools are increasingly looking to us for such assistance....and are most appreciative on receipt.

In July, John Barlow, Ron Blakely and Tony Fryer enjoyed a very educational tour of WW1 battlesites and were able to lay a fine wreath on behalf of our Sub-Branch at the nightly Menin Gate 'Last Post' Service in Belgium (see photo). The wreath commemorated the sacrifices of all St Marys Military Service personnel in all wars. The boys were also special guests representing the Sub-Branch at the 97th Commemorative Service of the Allied relief of the small French village of Pozieres on 23rd July (see photo).

Back in St Marys, refurbishment of the Rotunda in Victoria Park has now

well and truly been completed thanks to the good work and support of Penrith City Council. We look forward to use the venue again in April.

The *Corridor of Honour* continues to attract interest from members and visitors alike. It is intended to make occasional changes to visual (photo and electronic) and display material to promote its attractiveness. Have YOU taken a few moments to see what's new lately?

Whilst as usual, there will be no monthly Sub-Branch meeting in January 2014, the AGM will be held on Wednesday 12 February, followed immediately by the February monthly General meeting. All members will be advised by letter towards the end of January, calling for nominations for the committee Executive positions. If you have time to spare and would like to play a part in continuing the good work of the Sub-Branch, please nominate for a position - fresh new ideas are always welcome.

For those I may not see before we break for Christmas, I will now take this opportunity to wish you and your families a 'Merry Christmas and Happy New Year' Please take particular care to stay safe over this period.

Ron Kelly
President

**Ron, John & Tony laying
the wreath at Menin Gate**



**At the Pozieres Commemorative
Service proudly displaying the
National Flags**

DECEMBER 2013 OUTPOST EDUCATION PROGRAM REPORT

Throughout the Year the Outpost Education Program continued to deliver our highly rated program on Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War to government and non-government schools.

A record number of 65 presentation sessions were delivered involving a total of 5810 Year 9/10 students.

Communications from schools indicate 2014 will be another busy year for the Education Program prior to the National History Syllabus implementation in 2015. From then on the Vietnam War topic will be one of several options from which teachers/students can choose to study/investigate. Feedback from schools suggest the Vietnam topic is popular and will continue to be addressed by many schools.

It is noteworthy that school donations in appreciation of Education Program presentations continue to cover all costs associated with the delivery of the programs and also help with financial support for other Outpost initiatives.

Thank you sincerely to the following Outpost members for their support and involvement with the Education Program across 2013 - Greg Cant, Sam Vecchio, Gary Fizzell, Ted Fish, Jeff Perry, Bob Devaise, Burke Rogge, Bob Pears and Nancy Cosgrove. A special thank you to Nancy for her participation in all presentations representing and giving a female perspective on veterans and family issues involving Agent Orange and PTSD and also for maintaining our extensive memorabilia/teaching resources kit and regularly washing six sets of smelly greens.

Twenty guest speakers from the above mentioned members were also provided for school Anzac/Remembrance Services. Members support and participation in these services are greatly appreciated by schools and help to link veterans and students while passing on our military history, heritage, values and demonstrate a sincere commitment to the words 'Lest We Forget'. Additional speakers for our Guest Speaker list for 2014 would be most welcome from our VVA membership.

Accompanying role play student photos are from our 2013 program.

A Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year to the Outpost Community.

Vin Cosgrove
Outpost Education Program

A recent photo taken at St John of God Hospital Richmond of the staff members who also like to 'Dress up' Could the officer in the white jacket be possibly off the Love Boat?





These School photos taken during the Education Presentation By Vin & Nancy gives the students some idea of the uniforms worn by Australian Vietnam Veterans as well as a couple of uniforms worn by the VC/NVA





NS Sigs from 103 Sig Sqn preparing to leave Nui Dat SVN for RTA in 1967

Defence Care *Always There*. A charity supporting the Australian Defence Force (ADF). DefenceCare is a charity and not-for-profit organisation helping current and ex-serving members of the ADF and their families in times of injury, illness or crisis.

Our services are free of charge and include assistance with entitlements such as pensions and benefits, advocacy, counselling, support during a crisis or the death of a loved one and financial assistance.

DefenceCare can help from the time a member first joins the ADF and continue this help throughout their life whenever they need a hand. We can also help family members when they are in need.

Why our diggers and their families need help:

Serving in the ADF can have a significant impact on health, well-being and quality of life - during and after service.

- Service men and women can return from training, war zones or other deployments with physical and mental illnesses and injuries. This can have a significant effect on family members supporting and caring for an injured or ill veteran.
- Some can find it difficult to transition to civilian life. Finding a new job, dealing with mental and physical injuries or worrying about finances can lead to significant stress and trauma.

For further information email: defencecare@rslnsw.org.au Or.....

Phone: 02 8088 0388



Governor King Day Club
Sponsored by St Marys RSL Sub-Branch
" An RSL Service to the Community"
Address all correspondence
Co-ordinator



PO Box 316 St Marys South NSW 2760

Since the previous report we have gained three new members and we welcome them to our family; Also gained a volunteer in training, he is a young lad, who has disability, and is supported by a local organisation called BREAK-THROUGH.

We are still attracting an average of thirty members each week which is supporting the Club financially

On the 27th July we had our Christmas in July at the RSL Club for which we thank the Management for their support.

We have had many guest speakers from many Organisations, including National Stroke Foundation, Deaf Society of NSW,

On the 9th October, we celebrated our ninth birthday and were entertained by the Blacktown Country Music Group. There were approximately seventy people at the celebration including many Ladies from the RSL Ladies Auxiliary, who incidentally won many of the raffle prizes. Congratulations.

Many thanks to the volunteers who provided the BBQ food and to those who spent the time cooking the meat and onions.

Next year will be our tenth birthday and we will be expecting many Officials from Sydney and Locals to attend the day.

At this time, we are gathering items of food (Tinned Food) for our Christmas raffle, so if you have a spare can of baked beans or spaghetti or similar, could you leave them at the Train, where Mick Reilly will pick them up.

We take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year and may 2014 be better than 2013

Michael Reilly
Wal Charlwood

Co-ordinators

Double risk of leukaemia for Vietnam Veterans

From: AAP

NEW Zealand's Vietnam War veterans are almost twice as likely to suffer from a common form of adult leukaemia than the general public, a new study has found.

The Otago University study found veterans, who may have been exposed to toxic chemicals including Agent Orange when deployed in Phuoc Tuy province, have a 91 per cent higher incidence of chronic lymphatic leukaemia (CLL).

CLL is one of the most common forms of leukaemia found in adults, particularly older adults, and is rarely diagnosed in children.

The university research analysed medical records of 2783 of the 3400 New Zealand military personnel who served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1971. It found 0.5 per cent of them contracted the cancer, compared with an average of 0.26 per cent within the general public.

"The incidence of leukaemia is interesting," lead author Dr David McBride told AAP.

"The Australians and the New Zealanders appear to be the only group of veterans that have shown this excess."

Many Australians and New Zealanders fought in the same area during the Vietnam War and Dr McBride said chemicals known as Agent Orange or other pesticides used in certain areas could be the cause.

Scientists made the link between pesticides, including Agent Orange, and CLL during studies on farm workers exposed to the chemicals more than 10 years ago.

Despite this, scientists can't pinpoint exactly what causes the increased incidence of this cancer without information about individual exposure, five decades ago.

"It's a time and place associated with the disease, and therefore there must be something about it," Dr McBride said.

"But we're not sure exactly what it is."

The study also found lung cancers claimed the most lives in both New Zealand and Australian Vietnam veterans.

However, when it came to overall deaths, the mortality rate of the former New Zealand military personnel was 15 per cent lower than the general public.

Dr McBride says this is due to something called the "healthy soldier effect" which arises from the selection process of military members.

"This is related to the fact that this cohort would have been selected for its health and fitness," he said.

Cancer Test ‘can ruin men’s lives’

Source: DT 7/11/13

Men are being over-diagnosed with prostate cancer, leading to an increase in invasive operations for harmless tumours that in some cases are being blamed for suicides.

A 276 per cent increase in prostate cancer diagnoses over the past 20 years has experts worried over-diagnosis could be ruining men’s lives.

Even though the government, the Cancer Council and expert international bodies advise against prostate cancer screening, about 60 per cent of men aged over 50 and many under that age are being screened every year on the advice of their GP.

Associate Professor Freddy Sitas of the NSW Cancer Council said: “The current tests often fail to distinguish between a low-risk prostate cancer from one that is life threatening”

“The increased number of men diagnosed has led to many having highly invasive treatments resulting in unnecessary long-term health complications.”

Some Facts About Prostate Cancer:

The epithelial cells in the prostate gland produce a protein called prostate-specific antigen (PSA). The PSA helps keep the semen in its liquid state. Some of the PSA escapes into the bloodstream. We can measure a man’s PSA levels by checking his blood. If a man’s levels of PSA are high, it might be an indication of either prostate cancer or some kind of prostate condition.

It is a myth to think that a high blood-PSA level is harmful to you - it is not. High blood PSA levels are however an indication that something may be wrong in the prostate. In some older men the prostate may continue to grow, especially the part that is around the urethra. This can make it more difficult for the man to pass urine as the growing prostate gland may be causing the urethra to collapse. When the prostate gland becomes too big in this way, the condition is called Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH). BPH is not cancer, but must be treated.

Prostate cancer is mostly a very slow progressing disease. In fact, many men die of old age without ever knowing they had prostate cancer-it is only when an autopsy is done that doctors know it was there.

St Marys RSL Bowling Club

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.

New Minister for Veterans' Affairs - Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson.

Senator Ronaldson said he was honoured to be appointed the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. "It is a true honour to serve Australia's veterans and their families. I want to learn from them, hear their concerns and do everything within my power to give them the support they deserve," He said.

Before being appointed, Senator Ronaldson attended the Vietnam Veterans Day Commemoration Service at St Marys VVAA, after the ceremony he was given the 'cooks tour' of the 'Train' by our President, Greg Cant. Greg gave the Senator an extensive overview of our Pension and Welfare activities which the Senator displayed a great deal of interest - and he was suitably impressed.

Senator Ronaldson said his deep appreciation for the veterans' affairs portfolio stems from an active role with the veteran community while in opposition. "I took a great deal of time and interest in meeting with current and former serving members of the ADF, as well as many war widows and family members. I travelled extensively, meeting with Ex-Service organisations and conducting more than 100 veterans' forums with thousands of participants right across the country."

Senator Ronaldson said the Government would work to ensure that veterans and their families are supported to live full and healthy lives.

Senator Ronaldson said the veterans' affairs portfolio was a priority for the new Government, saying the Government had set several major goals, including:

1. Recognition of the unique nature of military service;
2. Retention of a stand alone DVA;
3. Tackling Mental Health challenges for veterans and their families
4. Supporting veterans through **advocacy and welfare services.**

"Our commitment to these four important pillars, combined with a genuine desire to serve the veteran community, will ensure we have the very best chance of delivering significant improvements to the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families," the Minister said.

Well done Minister, now lets see it happen! Good luck with your portfolio.

REDUCED DEEMING RATES PUT MONEY BACK IN VETERANS' POCKETS

Nearly 60,000 members of the veteran and defence communities will benefit from a decrease to deeming rates, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson, announced today (Monday 4th November 2013).

“The Government will decrease deeming rates from today Monday 4 November, to better reflect returns available to pensioners from financial investments,” Senator Ronaldson said.

The new deeming rate will lower from 2.5 per cent to 2 per cent for total financial investments to \$46,000 for single pensioners or \$77,400 for a couple. The upper deeming rate will also decrease from 4.0 per cent to 3.5 per cent for balances over these amounts.

“The reduced deeming rates will benefit service pensioners and income support supplement recipients who receive less than the maximum rate of pension due to their income. The average increase is around \$8.00 per fortnight,” Senator Ronaldson said.

“In addition to this new measure, the Coalition Government has committed to scrap the Carbon Tax and reduce wasteful spending, whilst retaining existing Carbon Tax compensation measures,” Senator Ronaldson said.

Deeming rates are used by the Government to assess pensioners' financial assets determining their level of service pension or income support supplement. They are applied to the total value of a person's financial assets, including bank accounts and shares.

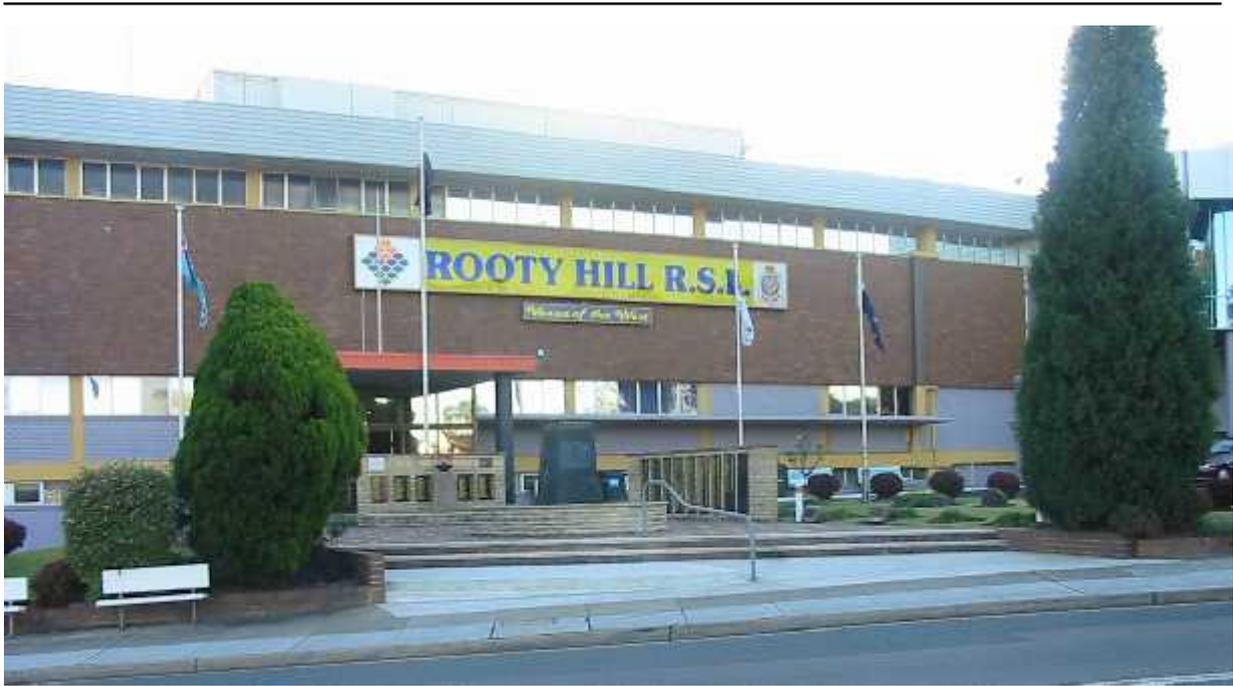
For more information on deeming, see the factsheet on the DVA Media Centre or call 133 254 or 1800 555 254 from regional Australia.

VAN Offices may also answer queries on Deeming Rates, queries may also be directed to the VVAA St Marys (The Train) 9833 4700

Father to daughter upon her announcing her engagement: “What does he do? Does he have any money?”

Daughter: “You men are all alike. That's the first thing he asked me about you!”





Fabulous New Addition to Rooty Hill RSL Club **SGAC - Sydney Gymnastic and Aquatic Centre**

The SGAC building will house a 4,000sqm Olympic-grade gymnastic facility, two 25 metre swimming pools, a sports medicine and rehabilitation centre and will also be the new home of Gymnastics NSW.

Sport Skills is a gymnastic program unlike any other. Aimed at children from 5-14 years of age, Sport Skills gives them the coordination and strength required to excel at any sport; this is all done through a range of engaging gymnastic routines. We aim to offer classes specific to popular sports such as AFL, Soccer and Rugby League; the specifics of the program are still being developed, so keep an eye out for updates!. With a number of renowned sportspeople, such as former Australian fast bowler Craig McDermott, recognising the cross-over value of gymnastics in sport, there is sure to be a lot of interest in this program.

The ONE55 Swim School will provide a progressive learn to swim program for children starting at 4 months of age. As they progress through the classes, they will have an opportunity to join the junior squad, learning endurance and race skills. For people of any age looking for more one-on-one approach to learning, private tuition will also be offered.

Check out the SGAC website for more details: www.sgac.com.au

ST MARYS RSL CLUB CORNER MAMRE ROAD & HALL STREET

If you are planning one of life's magical moments, looking for somewhere to host your next business function, or just planning a party for your family and friends, then leave it to us to organise everything you need for that special day.

St Marys RSL & Ex-Servicemen's Club has a range of fantastic function facilities to suit most needs. Let our experienced and dedicated staff ensure that your most special of days is truly memorable. At St Marys RSL Club we will ensure that every aspect of your Wedding is planned to perfection with a variety of flexible menus and packages to suit any budget and spectacularly refurbished rooms.



Perfect for Meetings, Conferences, Seminars, product launches and exhibitions, St Marys RSL Club is the ideal venue for your next business event with:

- **120 person capacity conference room**
- **Full range of audio visual equipment**
- **A variety of flexible menus and packages to suit**
- **Excellent car parking facilities**



We offer you only the best in professionalism and attention to detail. St Marys RSL & Ex-Servicemen's Club has the room perfect for all occasions, including:

- **Birthdays & Family Reunions**
- **Retirements & Social Events**
- **Themed Parties & Special Celebrations**

For further particulars call us on 9623 6555

More PTSD among combat soldiers.

After more than a decade of operations, there's yet to be a tsunami of traumatised combat veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. But new studies show higher rates of PTSD symptoms among those on the frontline, particularly soldiers involved in bomb disposal. The studies released found the highest rates of PTSD symptoms were among those two to three years out of the defence force. There was no clear correlation between PTSD symptoms and time spent deployed or repeated deployments.

Overall, those who deployed on operations were physically and mentally healthy with their PTSD rates not significantly different with those who never left Australia.

Former Middle east Commander, retired Major General John Cantwell, had predicted a tidal wave or tsunami of PTSD among those who have served in recent operations. But defence force chief General David Hurley said that was emotive language which did not take into account that defence personnel have been performing difficult border protection tasks and rotating through operations in the Middle East for 12 years.

“Assuming a tidal wave, we should expect to be experiencing that now. Our data does not support this view,” he said.

One study surveyed the health of 3074 defence members who served in the Middle East in the period 2010-12. It found 1.9 per cent reported PTSD symptoms after their deployment. There was also higher rates of obesity and alcohol disorder. The second study surveyed 14,032 defence personnel who served in the Middle East between 2001 and 2009.

“Symptoms of PTSD and other mental health problems were more prevalent among members who reported high levels of traumatic and combat exposures,” he said.

Those involved in bomb disposal reported the highest level of traumatic and combat exposure. DVA deputy-president Shane Carmody said around 800 a year were granted compensation for PTSD with a similar number seeking treatment but not compensation.

Director - General of defence health Rear Admiral Robyn Walker said it was estimated 10 per cent of the current defence force would seek help for a mental health condition. “The study shows while you remain in the ADF, you remain pretty healthy. There is about seven times the rate of PTSD symptoms among those no longer in the reserve and those who no longer have a relationship with defence” she said.



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.

**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

NEPEAN WIVES of VIETNAM VETERANS
WOMENS SUPPORT GROUP

Nepean Wives of Vietnam Veterans Women's Support Group have had another successful year so far.

Our membership continues to grow, we welcome Brenda Lamore to our group, Brenda is also a member of the Sunset Singers. One of our members, Judy Cant has recently had a knee replacement and thankfully, she is recovering nicely, Jude is also a valued member of the Sunset Singers.

This year we have been able to continue with our fitness group with thanks to Ehsan and David - they very generously volunteer their time on a weekly basis, so thanks boys.

We enjoyed a great bus trip to Vaucluse House with a guided tour of this magnificent historical house and gardens. We then proceeded to Watsons Bay for lunch and then Birkenhead Point for retail therapy. The weather was great thankfully, because this part of Sydney is delightful on a bright sunny day and some of our members have never been to Watsons Bay or the notorious "Gap"

The ladies have got together and managed to send 30 Care Packages to our Troops overseas for Christmas which included goodies for their dogs as well.

In November we will be celebrating 14 years of support.

Sunset Stations Singers

The singers have performed at Concord Hospital for Men's Health week and we have also received a request to perform at St John Of God Hospital Richmond for their Christmas function and also Concord Hospital.

We will be performing at the Cross Roads Hotel again this year, this looks to be an ongoing gig which is organised by **Harry Hunt** for disadvantaged people in the community to enjoy a wonderful Christmas lunch.

Our practice night is Monday at 7.00pm in the Northern Room of the St Marys RSL Club. We are always looking for new members so if anyone is interested in joining us give me a call - you will be made most welcome.

Thanks to Michael Wiesel and the RSL Club for making the Room available.

Maureen Clements 0418 253 199

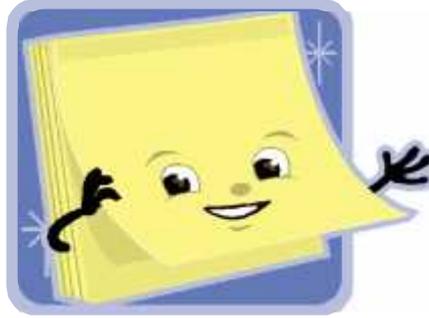


**“HOPE
THIS
WORKS”**



**“I AINT
LETTIN’
IM GO”
Says
Maude**

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



**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

PLEASE NOTE: The Train office will be closed for the Xmas break from 20/12/13 to 13/01/14 some admin work will occur but no Pension Claims.



BACK ON TRACK PROGRAM

Overweight?

Unfit?

Type II Diabetes?

Generally unsure how to make the changes needed to become a healthier person?

Western Sydney Sports Medicine Centre runs a Back on Track Program to help you find the healthy person living inside you. We all want to be healthier and sometimes we just don't know where to start.

What is involved?

- An assessment with an Exercise Physiologists
 - 6 group exercise classes
 - 1 group healthy eating education session
 - 1 group supermarket tour
- 1 footwear assessment with a Podiatrist at a footwear store
 - Back on Track Health Passport

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To find out more information phone (02) 4732 4497 or visit our website www.wssmc.com.au

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Planning Ahead - Hints:

Why Would I Need an Enduring Power of Attorney? If you lose your decision-making ability through illness, accident or trauma and you have not made provision for another person or agency to manage your financial affairs on your behalf, it may be necessary for an administrator to be legally appointed to make those decision for you. The guardianship and administration board of your state or territory chooses the administrator. The person or agency appointed for the board may not be the same as you would have chosen for yourself.

An enduring power of attorney enables you to take action now to ensure that your best interests are safeguarded if you lose your ability to make decisions for yourself at some time in the future.

What is a limited power of attorney?

A limited power of attorney allows a person to act on your behalf in specific circumstances only, for example in dealing with a specific financial matter such as the sale of a house. You specify what the person can do on your behalf and for how long. It applies **only while you are capable of making your own decisions**. If this capacity is lost, a limited power of attorney is no longer valid.

More information can be obtained in the 'Planning Ahead' Guide Booklet available at the 'Train'.



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Planning Ahead - Legal And Financial Issues: Your Will:

Why You Need A Will: A Will is a legal document that enables you to exercise your right to select the relatives, friends and others who will inherit your assets when you die. If you die without a Will it may cause unnecessary hardship and distress to your family and friends.

What if you don't make a Will? If you don't make a Will, your assets will be divided among qualifying relatives and dependants, according to a formula set out in government legislation. If you have no relatives, or they cannot be traced, your estate will be paid to the state government. If the result of that statutory distribution leaves members of your family or other dependants in needy circumstance, they can apply to the court for an order under family provision legislation for part of the estate to pass to them. This depends on their needs at the time of the application.

How to make a Will: You may choose to make your own Will. If you choose to do this you must ensure that it is a clear and valid Will which is a legal document. You may also choose to consult a solicitor, public trustee or private trustee to assist in drawing up your **Will which must be signed by yourself and two independent witnesses who are not beneficiaries.** Your executor should be made aware of his or her appointment as your executor.

More information on Wills which was prepared by Mr Michael Fitzgerald is available at the 'Train' on request.

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Tinnitus: That annoying ringing in the ears!

Source: Aust. Tinnitus Assoc. (NSW) Ltd

Tinnitus is the medical term, for the constant ringing, hissing or other distressing noises that people hear in their ears or head.



These constant noises are usually only heard by those who have the disorder. An unpleasant noise that may never stop can be hard to take. People who have Tinnitus may have trouble sleeping, concentrating on their work and enjoying recreational activities. Some people with severe Tinnitus are in great distress from the unending noise which in some cases may lead to anxiety and depression.

Who has Tinnitus: Tinnitus is often associated with older people, however, people from all age groups have reported Tinnitus: seniors, adolescents, pilots, army and navy personnel, children, musicians, teachers, hairdressers, tradesmen and even new mothers. About 25-30% of the Australian population experience Tinnitus.

What are the causes? Exposure to very loud noise is NOT the only cause of Tinnitus but it is the most common and one we can control. As the noise in our world becomes louder, more people complain of Tinnitus. There are other causes: head injury, under active thyroid, stress, ear disorders, neck or jaw disorders, some drugs, cardiovascular disease and aging process, in-the-ear music devices and in rare cases a tumour.

What are the treatments? There are dozens of treatments that may help relieve Tinnitus: Tinnitus Retraining Therapy, Auditory therapies with hearing aid-style and tabletop devices, biofeedback, hearing aids, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Counselling, conventional and naturopathic medicines, relaxation techniques, hypnosis and others.

If you have Tinnitus:

- First see an Ear, Nose, and Throat specialist to assess if there is a medical cause for your Tinnitus.
- Learn about your options and get involved in choosing appropriate treatments and/or management options.
- Use hearing protection (ear plugs or earmuffs) in very noisy environments to avoid a worsening of Tinnitus.

St Marys RSL Youth Club: One of the activities undertaken at the Youth Club is boxing, and we now have a up and coming young dedicated boy in training. **Ryan Fletcher Smith** is making a career out of boxing and he is only 15 years old.

The head coach at the Youth Club said: “two years ago Ryan came here to learn boxing and loves it, he attends the gym every day after school, training and sparring. The training is paying off and he’s turned pugilistic potential into considerable performance.

Young Ryan represented NSW in State of Origin bouts in Queensland earlier this year but the real victory came at the NSW titles at Richmond Greyhound Club recently; his opponent couldn’t match Ryan’s speed, agility, skill and ferocity.

Ryan is determined to achieve and has the skill and discipline to back his ferocious style, especially his powerful body punches. He is a very talented boy and is looking at a professional career; he was judged the best in the tournament.

The coach is plugging another fighter from the **St Mary’s** stable to keep an eye on, Faleupolu Fuimaono who won the NSW 81kg novice elite division title by a technical knockout at the Richmond Club after having only his second fight.

Well done boys and also the boxing head coach: **John Shamsabad.**

On the 3rd November 2013, 20 members from St Marys RSL Sub-Branch attended the official opening of the Uralla RSL Sub-Branch’s Memorial Garden. The members were very impressed and the function was attended by Keith Payne VC and the NSW RSL President, Mr Don Rowe OAM.



Hanoi, Vietnam (AP) Vo Nguyen Giap (pictured) the brilliant and ruthless self-taught General who drove the French out of Vietnam to free it from colonial rule and later forced the Americans to abandon their gruelling effort to save the country from communism, has died at age 102, he was the last of Vietnam's old-guard revolutionaries. Giap was a national hero whose legacy was second only to that of his mentor, founding President Ho Chi Minh, who led the country to independence.



The so-called 'Red Napoleon' stood out as the leader of a ragtag army of guerrillas who wore sandals made of car tyres and lugged their artillery piece by piece over mountains to encircle and crush the French army at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. The unlikely victory, which is still studied at military schools, led not only to Vietnam's independence but hastened the collapse of colonialism across Indochina and beyond.

Giap remained sharp and well-versed in politics and current events until he was hospitalised. Well into his 90's, he entertained world leaders, who posed for photos and received autographed copies of his books while visiting the general's shady colonial-style home in Hanoi.

In 1944, Ho Chi Minh called on Giap to organise and lead guerrilla forces against Japanese invaders during World War II. After Japan surrendered to Allied forces the following year, the Viet Minh continued their fight for independence from France. Giap was known for his fiery temper and as a merciless strategist, but also for being a bit of a dandy. Old photos show him reviewing his troops in a white suit and snappy tie, in sharp contrast to Ho Chi Minh, clad in shorts and sandals.

The General drew on his Dien Bien Phu experience to create the Ho Chi Minh Trail, a clandestine jungle network that snaked through neighbouring and ostensibly neutral - Laos and Cambodia, to supply his troops fighting on southern battlefields. Giap had been largely credited with devising the 1968 TET Offensive, a series of surprise attacks on American strongholds in the south by Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces that came during lunar new year celebrations. Newer research, however, suggests that Giap had been against the attacks, and his family has confirmed that he was out of the country when they began.

In 1995 U.S Defence Secretary Robert McNamara, came to visit; he asked about a disputed chapter of the Vietnam War, the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident in which two U.S. Navy destroyers were purportedly fired upon by North Vietnamese boats. It's the event that gave the U.S. Congress justification for escalating the war. Later many questioned whether the attack actually occurred. During his visit, McNamara asked Giap what happened that night. **"Absolutely nothing" Giap said.**

Later in Life, Giap encouraged warmer relations between Vietnam and the United States, which re-established ties in 1995 and have become close trading partners. Vietnam has also recently looked to the U.S. Military as a way to balance China's growing power in the disputed South China Sea.

"We can put the past behind," Giap said in 2000. "But we cannot completely forget it"

RAN 100 Year Centenary Celebrations - Sydney Harbour:

Warships from 17 countries steamed into Sydney harbour on October 4th for a nautical extravaganza marking the centenary of Australia's emergence as an independent sea power.

Naval vessels from nations including China, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, the United States and Britain passed through the entrance of the famous harbour where they joined 16 tall ships from around the world.



Navy ships entering Sydney harbour 'Line Astern'

The armada was part of celebrations to commemorate 100 years since the RAN fleet first entered the city's waters. It was on October 4, 1913 that seven Australian warships, led by HMAS Australia, first steamed into Sydney to be met by huge crowd, heralding the country's independent sea power and emergence as a modern nation. Until then, the Australian colony had been watched over by British vessels.

"It was the birth of the RAN in terms of the ownership of all of our ships but it meant something to the nation as well. It meant were a true nation, we had our own Navy; it was treated almost at the time as a demonstration of our nationship. It was important not just for the Navy but the nation itself." Australian Navy chief, Rear Admiral Tim Barrett, told ABC radio.

The Flotilla was welcomed by a 21 gun salute from HMAS Sydney, at the head of seven Australian warships, before a ceremonial fleet review on Saturday led by Britain's Prince Harry, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Governor General Quentin Bryce, the Queens's representative.

Approximately 8000 sailors were in town for the week, festivities included - Open days, fireworks, the fleet review, parades through the city, aircraft fly-pasts, helicopter displays & marching bands.

According to reports, two Russian ships pulled out at the last minute because of tensions over Syria, while two Canadian ships also cancelled after colliding during a towing exercise.

Rear Admiral Barrett said the international involvement was a sign of the times: "We're all mariners at heart" He said.

"We like to work together when the opportunity arises. It shows each other our professionalism but it also helps us when we meet each other on the ocean"

"Maritime security is something that we really must protect and no nation can do that alone." said Commodore Peter Leavy, co-director of the exercise. "There is some really valuable training with navies that we don't get to work with all that often."

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 open most mornings between 10.00am-12noon and can be contacted on **9623 6555**.

St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch Committee

President:	Ron Kelly	0408 684 276
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Gary Fizzell - Editor

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