

WESTERN OUTPOST NEWS



WINTER 2016 ISSUE

St Mary's Outpost the
'Train of Knowledge'

St Marys Veterans Centre

St Marys Outpost - VVAA
& St Marys RSL Sub-Branch



Simpson and his donkey plus poppies.

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Various places throughout the 'News'



Note from the Editor ... It seems to be getting harder and harder to obtain reports and articles for the "Outpost News". The deadlines for the year are shown below. This is the reason why your magazine has come out so late each season. **Please help!**

DEADLINES FOR PUBLICATION

Spring 2016..... 26 August 2016
 Summer 2016..... 18 November 2016
 Autumn 2017.....24 February 2017
 Winter 2017..... 23 May 2017

Articles of a general nature may be submitted at anytime, please send to:
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Google: St Marys RSL Sub Branch

Phone: 9623 6555

St Marys Vietnam Veterans Outpost

President's Report

As I am quite sure you can imagine, our April activities were dominated by ANZAC DAY preparations, such as the polishing of Guns, and, sprucing up the Garden beds with fresh red bark supplied with the compliments of Bunnings Hardware, and, the erection and subsequent dismantle of the entry tents inside the RSL auditorium; our thanks must go out to our dedicated volunteer train washers.

A wet Sunday the 17th April did not discourage the enthusiasm of the public who gathered to watch the Pre Anzac Day march and the following service at Victoria Park, about 1000 people braved the elements and remained for the service, after which, many came to the St Marys RSL for refreshments.

Our ANZC DAY Dawn Service started 30 minutes earlier this year to allow more time for the bus trip to the city. The service was a huge success with around 5000 in attendance, and, after the service, the traditional breakfast was served to about 700.

Many thanks must go out to our organising committee and once again to our dedicated volunteers, because, without their expertise this event would be a NON EVENT.

Anzac Day came and went, but the work went on In the following week, the St Marys Welfare team visited various aged care facilities where they conducted Anzac Day Services for the in-patients, in addition, our Education team and other members of the Train attended 22 schools to give Anzac Day speeches.

As you all know, 2016 is the year of many important Vietnam Veteran anniversaries, however, I take this opportunity to draw your attention to an important piece of the Vietnam War history.

On the 24th May just gone, it was the 50th Anniversary of Pte Errol Noake's death as a result of enemy action. He was the first **National Serviceman** to be killed in the Vietnam War, and, subsequently, he became the focus of the anti-conscription and anti-troops to Vietnam activists. He was also the first member of the newly established 1ATF to be killed in Vietnam.

Pte Noake was brought home by his father Walter very soon after his death on 24th May. On 1st June a military funeral was held for Errol at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Adelaide and he was buried in the Derrick Garden of Remembrance, Centennial Park cemetery.

Pte Noake's father Walter stated that it was only on his insistence that the Army brought Errol back to Adelaide for burial, and, that thankfully, this set a precedent for others. A small box containing Pte Noake's belongings are kept at the Philip Island Museum.

Repatriation of Vietnam Veterans and others, interred at Terendak Military Cemetery, Malaysia.

In May 2015, the Australian Government announced an offer of repatriation to the families of Thirty Five Australian service personnel and dependants interred at Terendak Military Cemetery in Malaysia, and the Australian who died during the Vietnam War and was interred in the Kranji War Cemetery in Singapore. Thirty Three families accepted the Government's offer.

On Thursday 2nd June 2016, I arranged to meet a group of 9RAR Vietnam Veterans at the Clarendon Pub, that being an ideal place to watch the two RAAF C-17 Globemaster aircraft carrying the caskets of the deceased, descend onto the tarmac at 10:20am; after touchdown, we moved to the assembly area outside the RAAF Richmond gates in Percival Street to form up as part of the Guard of Honour.

I had the privilege of being part of the Honour Guard that assembled outside the gates of RAAF Richmond; I must say that standing and watching 33 hearses pass by in procession was a very moving and sombre moment, something I will never witness again. Inside the RAAF base, we were represented by Tony Fryer, Ken Ward and John Cross, who would have seen much more than the Honour Guard who lined up on the street outside.

Because RAAF Richmond is an operating military base, entry into the base was restricted to persons who met the stringent criteria or obtain accredited media passes from the DVA; as such, there was only limited access into the RAAF base where a formal military repatriation ramp ceremony was held. The ramp ceremony was followed by a private memorial service for the families of those reunited with their loved ones. There was no media access to the private service.

I happy to report, that I was very pleased by the number of Vietnam Veterans from the various branches of the Navy, Army and Air Force who were in attendance at both RAAF Richmond and at Parramatta.

Tony Mullavey

President VVAA St Marys Outpost



Departing Malaysia



Terendak War Cemetery



Ramp Ceremony RAAF Richmond



The Governor-General, Sir Peter Cosgrove and other VIPs



Vietnam War casualties buried at Terendak Garrison Cemetery.

A total of 24 casualties of the Vietnam War were buried in the cemetery of Terendak Garrison, located 14 miles north of Malacca, in Malaysia. This garrison was manned at the time by the 28th Commonwealth Infantry Brigade, which included a number of Australian units.

They are:-

<i>Number</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Date of Death</i>	<i>Unit</i>
2786017	Private	Dal E Abbot	21	30 May 1968	1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
2784699	Private	Norman G Allen	21	10 Nov 1967	7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
2788583	Private	Gary A Archer	22	4 Feb 1969	9th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
41400	Major	Peter J Badcoe VC	33	7 April 1967	Australian Army Training Team Vietnam
215349	Lieutenant	Robert Birse	23	10 Dec 1967	4th Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery
213151	Corporal	Robert W Bowtell	33	11 Jan 1966	3rd Field Troop, Royal Australian Engineers
14208	Sergeant	Ronald T Carroll	31	4 Aug 1968	3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
311534	Gunner	Thomas W Checkley	28	5 Aug 1966	131st Divisional Locating Battery
215215	Private	Christopher Clark	20	8 Jan 1966	1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
214479	Private	Ronald E Field	22	9 Oct 1965	1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
310089	Warrant Officer Two	John Garrigan	40	27 Dec 1968	Australian Army Training Team Vietnam
43593	Warrant Officer Two	Maxwell P Hanley MM	31	20 Feb 1967	Australian Army Training Team Vietnam
40774	Corporal	Reginald H Hillier	26	29 Nov 1965	1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
3786634	Trooper	Tony Holland	21	7 Jul 1966	1st Armoured Personnel Carrier Squadron
215217	Private	Neville W Horne	19	8 Jan 1966	1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
39510	2nd Lieutenant	Allan D Jellie	22	3 Dec 1969	161st Independent Reconnaissance Flight
26182	Warrant Officer Two	Ronald V Lees	37	13 Jan 1966	Australian Army Training Team Vietnam
2784043	Corporal	John G S Pearce	22	14 May 1966	1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
42352	Warrant Officer Two	Thomas D Phillips	38	20 Mar 1966	Australian Army Training Team Vietnam
212612	Lance Corporal	Thomas Ross	25	12 Oct 1965	1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
3410295	Lance Corporal	Arthur Ruduss	29	12 Jun 1966	Headquarters, 1st Australian Task Force
36205	Gunner	Thomas Simpson	27	9 Dec 1965	105 Field Battery, Royal Australian Artillery
37003	Corporal	Francis J Smith	25	21 Sep 1965	A Company, 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
213780	Private	Mervyn A F Wilson	29	8 Jan 1966	1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment

One further burial of significance in this area is worthy of note:-

13097 Warrant Officer Class Two Kevin G Conway, AATTV serving with US Special Forces and killed 6th July 1964 at Nam Dong in Thua Thien Province, he was the first Australian casualty in Vietnam and was buried in the Kranji War Cemetery Singapore. WO Conway was recommended for the VC, but this was denied at the time, because, **Australia was not at war.**

Welfare Officers Needed

The Welfare Department of the VVAA St Marys Outpost and the St Marys RSL Sub-Branch are seeking the support of members and their partners in being trained to become Welfare Officers.

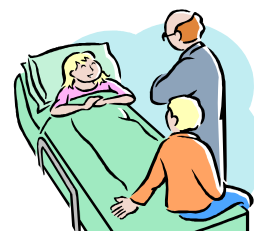
We need to rebuild the Welfare Department due to several members resigning because of ill-health and personal reasons

Anyone interested will be assigned to a qualified Welfare Officer and will be taken to visit DVA patients in different Hospitals and Nursing Homes on Tuesdays.

After you have been on several visits with different Welfare Officers and you are deemed to be suitable to carry out the duties of a Welfare Officer you will be asked to attend a TIP Welfare Course to become a fully qualified Welfare Officer.

If you think you would like to try and can spare a few hours on a Tuesday please contact John to arrange a meeting and more information.

H John Foeken JP - Welfare & Funerals Co-ordinator
0409 329 688



Blacktown and Districts TPI Social and Welfare Club

Blacktown and Districts TPI Social & Welfare Club meets on the First Thursday of each month (except January) at the Blacktown RSL Club. Meetings start at 1:00 pm

The Club is open to all TPI Veterans (including Veterans under the MRC receiving the Special Rate of Disability Pension), and welcomes their Carers and Friends.

To join the Club a Veteran must be a subscribing member of the TPI Association of NSW Ltd.

Apart from the Monthly Meetings the Club arranges at subsidised cost, a function, generally each month, which could be a Bus Trip, Luncheon, BBQ.

The Club's Welfare Officers also keep in contact through Hospital and Home visits to those who cannot make the Meetings.

A Newsletter is also distributed to all members, either by email or by 'snail mail'

For further Information, please contact the Hon Secretary: John Davison at

mobile: 0411737446 or email: john.davison@optusnet.com.au.



ST MARYS RSL SUB-BRANCH REPORT

Firstly I would like to talk about our two Anzac Services. On the Sunday Service the weather was not the best the rain came down, but it did not dampen the spirit of the day. It was very good to see the number of children who marched and attended the service, even though it was school holidays. Anzac Day itself was also well attended, with about 5,000 attending. We had a couple of hiccups but overall it was very good. It appears that the day is on the increase. I would like to congratulate all those who had an input into the presentation of the day, especially Tony Fryer who never stops working on how to improve the day. Well done all.

Whilst on Anzac Day, it was a very good tribute to the St Marys RSL Sub Branch made by Prue Car MP in her speech to Parliament. These sort of reports are very good for the Sub Branch and I would like to thank Prue for her comments.

It is very good to see the amount of school Anzac talks that were made by the RSL Sub Branch members, 19 schools were addressed by the members. It appears that as we get older, we get more schools to attend, so if you have any free time next year, please come along and assist.

It has been a very sad time for some of our members, with the passing of Christine (Turtle) Schoenherr, wife of Uwe. Chris you will be sadly missed by many people. When these things happen, you can understand how short life is.

In relation to those small wooden crosses decorated by the school children and burned on Anzac Sunday, the treated ashes will be returned to Pozieres by Tony, Ron and John on the anniversary of the battle this year. They will be over on the Western Front at the time of the 100th Year Anniversary.

The upgrade of our Memorial area is still in progress and hope all will be completed in the near future.

The Boer War Service will again be held at our Memorial site this year, on the 29th May.

We have a new representative to the FWMDC, that being Bob McCallum.

Well that is about all I wish all well and keep warm.

Ron Kelly
President
St Marys RSL Sub Branch

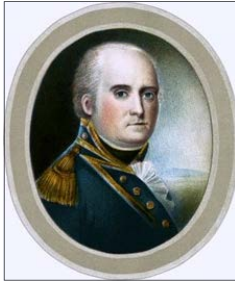
Shortly after British Airways 293 flight had reached its cruising altitude, the captain announced: "Ladies and Gentlemen, this is your Captain. Welcome to Flight 293, non-stop from London Heathrow to Toronto. The weather ahead is good, so we should have a smooth uneventful flight. So sit back, relax and..... OH, MY GOD!"

Silence followed!

Some moments later the captain came back on the intercom. "Ladies and gentlemen, I'm sorry if I scared you. While I was talking to you, a flight attendant accidentally spilled a cup of hot coffee in my lap. You should see the front of my pants!"

One Irish passenger yelled, "For God's sake, you should see the back of mine!"





ST MARY'S GOVERNOR KING DAY CLUB

Sponsored by St Marys RSL
Sub-Branch
“An RSL Service to the Community”



Well, here we are now in our twelfth year and still going strong. Our membership is growing and we now are averaging forty two attending each week. We have had a couple of our elderly members pass on, the latest being last week, she was 96 years young and will be missed at our meetings. A couple in hospital and we wish them a speedy recovery and back to us.

We can still make room for more members, so send Mum and Dad along.

Frank Woodford, one of our original volunteers has gone to Queensland to live and be closer to his family. Frank will be missed at our meeting as he was always there to assist where ever possible.

Alan Greenwood is back after his stint in Hospital with heart problems (No Jokes Please). He is moving around slowly but moving.

Our volunteers are down at the moment, with one in the UK and another sailing the Pacific and they are missed. However the remainder are keeping the meetings up to the mark.

As usual the Management and members of the St Marys RSL Club, RSL Sub Branch and Vietnam Veterans Association as well as the Ladies Auxiliary have been a great support and we thank you for that support.

Bob McCallum
Co-ordinator

Address all correspondence

Co-ordinator
PO Box 3168
St Marys South NSW 2760

It's payback time

A truck driver stopped at a roadside diner for lunch and ordered a cheeseburger, coffee and a slice of apple pie. As he was about to eat, three bikers walked in. One grabbed the driver's cheeseburger and took a huge bite from it. The second one drank his coffee, and the third wolfed down his apple pie.

The truck driver didn't say a word as he paid the waitress and left.

As the waitress walked up, one of the motorcyclists growled, "He ain't much of a man, is he?" "He's not much of a driver, either," the waitress replied. "He just backed his 18-wheeler over three motorcycles."



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or email us at admin@irehab.com.au | www.irehab.com.au**

Two blondes were walking down the road and the first blonde said,
"Look at that dog with one eye!"
The other blonde covers one of her eyes and says, "Where?"





Cessnock RSL Sub-Branch

Is proud to invite you to the unveiling of the
50th Anniversary of the
Battle of Long Tan Memorial
For Vietnam Veterans Day

On the 18th August 2016 at 4pm
At Veterans Memorial Park, Aberdare
110 Aberdare Rd, Aberdare NSW 2325



Cessnock RSL Sub-Branch

Invited VIP Guests - 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan Memorial

Captain Neil Rankin (Ret'd) D company 6RAR

His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) Governor of New South Wales

Ms Billie Moore Consul General New Zealand

Rear Admiral Kenneth Allan "Ken" Doolan AO, RAN (Ret'd) National RSL President Australia

Commodore Stephanie Moles RAN - Director General Maritime Support

Commanding Officer Lone Pine Barracks Singleton

Commanding Officer Williamtown RAAF Base

Peter Rosemond CSC, OAM - Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army 1996 to 2001

Mr R.D (Rod) White AM RFD - NSW State RSL President

Joel Fitzgibbon Member for Hunter

Clayton Barr NSW MP

Bob Pynsent Mayor



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**

VVAA ST MARYS OUTPOST

EDUCATION PROGRAM REPORT

Anzac Day 2016 has come and gone and afforded Vietnam Veterans and their families the annual occasion to join veterans from all wars past and present to commemorate brothers and sisters-in-arms.

Anzac Day commemorations have gathered significant focus over the past decade or so. Many would argue that Anzac Day now attracts greater attention and participation than Australia Day.

Thank you to all Outpost members who have devoted their time to participate in School Anzac Services. The involvement of veterans in school programs has a positive influence on future generations.

This years Anzac period highlighted several areas of conflict across our military history for specific commemoration:

- * The 101st year anniversary of the Gallipoli landing (WW1)
- * The centenary year commemorations for major battles on the Western Front - The Somme, Fromelles and Poziers (WW1)
- * 75th anniversary year of the Siege of Tobruk (WW2)
- * 65th anniversary year of the Battle of Kapyong (Korea)
- * 50th anniversary year of the Battle of Long Tan (Vietnam)

No doubt there are other chapters from our military history of equal significance to members of the veteran community.

While Anzac Day highlights the opportunity to remember and thank all veterans past and present; central to the days service programs are the 102000 (plus) names of our fallen on the Australian War Memorial (AWM) Roll of Honour.

Accompanying this report are several photos taken in and around our AWM on Anzac Day highlighting the use of poppies as an act of commemoration and reflection (Please see back and Front Covers). Since the 1920's the poppy has become widely accepted throughout allied nations as the flower of remembrance. Our younger generation should know that during the First World War, red poppies were among the first living plants that sprouted from the devastation of the battlefields of northern France and Belgium. Soldiers told the story that the poppies were vivid red because they had been nurtured in ground drenched with the blood of the soldiers' comrades.

(The red poppy of Flanders is a symbol of modern times, but legend has it that the poppy goes back to the 12th century in the time of the famous Mongol leader, Genghis Khan as a flower associated with human sacrifice.)

Across the WW1 centenary years to date magnificent displays of poppy art, as acts of commemoration, have been mounted in allied nations and across Australia, including our own sub branch.

As shown with the photos included with this report countless poppies adorn the panels of the AWM's Roll of Honour, placed beside names as a small personal tribute to the memory of a

particular person, or to any of the thousands of individuals commemorated there. This practice at the AWM, began at the interment of the Unknown Australian Soldier on the 11th November 1993.

As people waited to lay a single flower by his tomb in the Hall of Memory, they had to queue along the cloisters, beside the Roll of Honour. By the end of the day hundreds of RSL poppies had been pushed into the cracks between the panels bearing the names of our fallen.

Fast forward to 2016 and note that poppies are now being placed around the memorial on all manner of the memorabilia. It's as if the poppy seeds have blown around the memorial, perhaps distributed by the Anzac spirit, to highlight other aspects of our military heritage. These acts of commemoration are beautiful statements of individual sentiments of 'Lest We Forget'.

Dr Brendan Nelson, Director of the AWM, said that he has been encouraging the public to place poppies where they see fit and has instructed staff not to remove them unless they are faded and are undignified in appearance and/or position. Dr Nelson also indicated that something special is being planned for 2018.

If you have not visited the AWM recently, put a visit on your list of things to do. You won't be disappointed. The AWM is one of the leading tourist attractions in Australia. That distinction in itself is a wonderful statement of recognition of all Australian veterans.

Vin Cosgrove OAM JP

VVAA Outpost Education Program



Roll of Honour in WW2 Cloisters plus poppies.

From the RSL Sub-Branch side of things, our **Far West Metropolitan District Council** representatives Bob McCallum and myself (Tony Fryer) attended the RSL NSW 2016 Congress on the 23-25 May at Sydney Town Hall. Some members/recipients of the Newsletter may be interested in a brief report of some miscellaneous aspects of the Congress.

On the Secretary's day (Mon 23rd) after the intro and admin were out of the way, I attended one of the small break-out sessions that were on offer. The one I attended focussed on enhancing the use of Social Media so as to 'Engage with the Veteran community' and meet their ever-changing preferences for communication. In fact the session focussed almost entirely on Facebook 7 offered some interesting suggestions for design and management to make it attractive to readership.

- ◇ Add Facebook link to Sub-Branch email address
- ◇ Access 'Privacy' setting to disallow posts from the general public
- ◇ Complete 'About' if not already done
- ◇ 'Milestones/Events' section – complete history & events
- ◇ When adding photos from others, clearly indicate the origin as "Sourced"
- ◇ Engage interest by asking a question within a post
- ◇ Can 'hide' or 'delete' comments.

AGENDA Items:

- ◇ Results are available –Secretary has a summary of the outcomes
- ◇ The major concern before Congress was Item 19 calling for 5% of Gross Income to be gifted to State from S/Bs earning more than \$2Kpa. This was lost unanimously.

Miscellaneous items:

- ◇ RMA - 4 new SOPs were introduced in the last 12 months with a further 9 potentials under investigation as well as around 100 additional re-writes.
- ◇ Veterans' Review Board – talk was delivered by the Principal Member of the Board – O/S matters have reduced considerably to 'only' 2,400 and is still reducing – largely as a result of the success of the 'Alternate Dispute Resolution' process. 57% of matters are being resolved within 2 months of going to dispute.
- ◇ DVA – Head, Simon Lewis – DVA is undergoing a major IT upgrade; the 17 VAN offices are all individually being reviewed, but few 'walk-ins' are being received, where as 400 Government offices can be in a position to deliver DVA services; there is an uptake of the online 'My Account' facility, also contributing to lessening face & phone contact with VAN and DVA switchboard; DVA now have access to records for every ADF entrant.
- ◇ After an interesting voting process, the next 3 years' RSL NSW Congress will be held in Albury Entertainment Centre; next Congress will be 21-24 May 2017
- ◇ To celebrate the centenary of the RSL in NSW, RSL NSW has provided a

'gift to the Nation' by way of digitising all issues of Reville since it commenced in 1927. This is seen as an important research source for students.

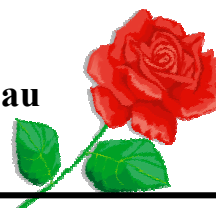
- ◇ National President Report – in his absence, the Tasmanian President Robert Dick delivered – RSL has 170K members Australia-wide; a new National Constitution and revised By-Laws is now complete; Ken Doolan will retire in early June – Robert Dick and Rod White have entered their names to succeed.
- ◇ The Greek Consul General, on the 75th Anniversary of the Greece/Crete WW2 Campaign presented 2 marble plaques to RSL NSW & has promised a small marble plaque to each of 260 Sub-Branches next year.
- ◇ A letter of 'disgust'/support will go from State to the NSW Police in relation to the recent desecration of the Police Memorial.
- ◇ The Woolworths badge sales arrangement is with National & is a National activity; the funds raised in NSW and given to RSL NSW all goes to Defence Care; amount is unknown however the Chairman of Appeals will be requested to advise the amount to Sub-Branches in due course.
- ◇ TIP Training – A competency-based program titled 'Advocacy T & D Program' replaces the TIP program for pension training. 'Long-standing' Pension Officers will be 'grandfathered' or rubber-stamped (i.e. no requirement to 'retrain').
- ◇ The Minutes of the RSL Congress will be delivered to Sub-Branches by end-July.

Tony

Heavenly Celebration Funerals believe that families want honest and comprehensive answers regarding their funeral arrangements. Our funeral home Web Site provides you with vital information to help relieve some of the burdens of this difficult time.

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Email: michelle@heavenlycelebrations.com.au
Web: www.heavenlycelebrations.com.au





Nepean Wives of Vietnam Veterans, Women's Support Group.

The Wives of Vietnam Veterans, Women's Support Group, are in their 16th year.

We currently have 34 members.

The group has a couple of wives/widows of the Malaya conflict. Our members are not as old as War Widows and too old for wives of current members. Although this is changing as the war widows are now being joined by younger widows moved into supporting our deployed servicemen. As the dynamics of the group changes, with new members joining all the time, we have gone back to the original group support and sharing.

We held our annual Morning tea for Cancer, on Thursday 16th June 2016. We raised \$2800.00 through the generous support of our members and their guests. Each year we support the Penrith Cancer Centre and the Look Good, Feel Better, organisation. With the funds raised we purchase and make hats, donate to palative care and try to assist local cancer patients. The seat for Mt Druitt palative care unit is still in future activities list. All the money to fund these items is from our Cancer Morning Tea and we thank the members of the train and the train washes for their support and assistance on the day. It's very much appreciated.

We have enjoyed a bus trip to Berrimer/Bowral. We have to charge the members a small fee, as the idea is to be able to support our own bus hire. Friends are invited to join us, normally it's approximately \$20. A new bus trip is to be organised, maybe a shopping trip? Members are to vote on this at the next meeting.

We have had a speaker about Diabetes, and send our thanks to Robyn Jenkins for an excellent presentation and informative session. I've never heard the group so quiet and interested in a subject that can effect any of us.

The committee have started plans for our Christmas in July celebration. It will be held at the RSL club, with a great menu. We won't be having gifts, these will be shared at our break up party at Christmas time. As its winter we ask that those attending dress in Christmas fare!

Our members are preparing to attend a retreat to Leura. We have rented a new house in the same street, which sleeps more people. Retreats are paid for by the members. Deposits have been paid, and as far as I know there are no vacancies. As the weather is colder this time of the year, we will be lunching out, and enjoying soups etc for dinner.

The group laid a wreath at the Anzac Day Dawn Service and the Anzac Sunday Service. Thanks to the members for their respectful actions at the Memorial.

Thanks for your support, hopefully we can continue working together for our members.

Maree Johnson JP
President.

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Credit Cards Welcome.

An answer I can understand.

An American tourist asks an Irishman:

"Why do Scuba divers always fall backwards off their boats?"

To which the Irishman replies:

"They have to go backwards. If they fell forwards, they'd still be in the boat."



HMAS SYDNEY

The Safety Valve of Vietnam

This article written by Lieutenant Commander E James RAN and is published in the book “The Vung Tau Ferry” by Rodney Nott and Noel Payne printed by Kingswood Press 1998.

Lieutenant Commander E T James RAN, Jes, as he prefers to be called, was a Physical Training Senior Sailor before being commissioned as an Executive Officer in 1970.

Lieutenant Commander James had a long and distinguished career in the Navy. His view of the service by HMAS SYDNEY in Vietnam is interesting and thought provoking. He writes:



It is felt that the role played by HMAS SYDNEY has not been given full credit in the recorded history of the War in South Vietnam.

Battles such as Long Tan, Binh Ba and Bien Hoa provide graphic accounts of a small number of Australian troops pitted against the might of the North Vietnamese regulars, classic examples of war battles that can be portrayed and dramatized to provide excellent motivation for those within that arm of the service.

How then did HMAS Sydney fit into such a war? There were no classic sea battles. It became known by the mundane name of the ‘Vung Tau Ferry’ and possibly could have assumed to play a role similar to the troopships of World War II such as the WESTRALIA, MANUDA, MANOORA and the like, except that it was never under fire from the enemy.

As a ferry and carrier of military equipment, in one year alone (1971) HMAS SYDNEY steamed approximately 80,000 nautical miles which is reputed to be a distance further than any Australian warship steamed during the whole of World War II. In that time, as a member of the crew, I believed it completed two very important functions:

- a of being a springboard into the war zone; and
- b being a safety valve for troops returning to Australia.

On the way to the war zone, be it a departure from Townsville, Brisbane, Sydney, Adelaide or Perth it provided the battalion commander with a warlike facility to begin to focus the soldier's attention on his operational role that was about to commence. Some may say this had been achieved well prior to departure, that may be so, but until sailing, a false sense of direction existed, leave was available in the evenings, and the married officers and NCO's were able to go home each night, leaving the younger soldiers to their own devices.

HMAS SYDNEY changed all that, exercises were undertaken in isolation, comfortable barracks were replaced with hammocks in the hanger, lectures and briefings were given and realisation of future activities began to crystallise in the mind of the young soldier. Although officers and senior NCO's were accommodated and messed separately from the troops, in the evenings, platoons and sections began to muster together either on the forecastle or in available spaces such as the flight deck and sponsons. The trappings of civilized living began to disappear, no TV, limited alcohol, what you carried was what you owned, and the ever presence of the war machine be it Army or Navy created an awareness of future activities.

These preparations did not escape the SYDNEY's ship's company; they too considered

themselves part of the war effort. Prior to the arrival of troops, onboard activities undertaken by the ship's company prepared for the coming passage, cargo was loaded in the hangers and the flight deck (at times this loading continued throughout the night), and additional stores were embarked to cater for the return trip.

Twenty-four hours before arrival in Vung Tau the ship went into a higher state of readiness and on arrival the crew were always at action stations as the escorting destroyer preceded the ship to the anchorage area. The time of arrival and the ensuing twenty-four hour period provided no respite for ship's company and although no incidents occurred in 1971, divers were continually searching the ship's hull and ship's sentries on deck were always posted. How embarrassing tactically and politically it would have been, had an unnoticed string of floating mines snagged the ship's anchor cable, warped alongside the forward section of the ship and then detonated.

It is believed that the reduction of time spent in Vung Tau harbour (from two days to one day) was due to the efficiency, competence and dedication of the ship's company working in continuous watches. This also reduced the time the ship was 'at risk' and ironically reduced the amount of accrued service the ship's company gained towards receiving recognition for war service, campaign medals and repatriation benefits.

The offloading of troops, their store and equipment provided battalion commanders with an effective and fully equipped force immediately on arrival, thereby reducing the possibility of the enemy gaining an advantage.

"I'm not short, I'm bloody now", and "Hello world, welcome back", are probably two of the most used phrases uttered by army personnel on embarking for the return trip after their tour of duty had been completed. Their sheer relief was evident on arrival onboard, however this arrival could not immediately erase the previous twelve months or so, and the first day and night onboard could be described as quite traumatic, both for the soldiers and sailors.



Unfamiliarity with ship's routines, combined with 'uncivilised' habits caused strain between the two services and once again the ship's company, who had worked continually since arrival, were subjected to a high level of stress as they began the task of 'repatriating' these war-hardened veterans. Anti-social behaviour was usually the order of the day in the beginning as actions such as climbing on bunks while still in greens and boots, littering without regard to who would clean it up, damaging paintwork and fittings and an apparent general disregard for discipline occurred.

It must be stressed that these actions when undertaken in the environment of twenty-four hours previously, would not have raised any objections and for some, the realisation that they had unconsciously transgressed normal social behaviour was an embarrassment, which, had it occurred within the confines of their own home (as no doubt, it may have, for some who returned by air) may have caused irreparable damage to the relationships.

Few veterans slept fully the first night onboard, the realisation of leaving Vietnam and the unfamiliar motion and environment of the ship being the major cause.

Some however, had the time to reflect on happenings during their tour of duty, others, the remembering of fallen comrades who would never return, provided added burdens to their attempts to sleep.

Although this period of time was quite hectic for SYDNEY's ships' company, all went out of their way to make our visitors welcome. In the wardroom and in all the messes, a special evening meal was prepared as a welcome gesture, even though the ship's cooks and stewards had been involved in the unloading, loading and security patrols during the previous twenty-four hours or so while at Vung Tau.

As the ship steamed at 20kts southward, time and the sea environment began to act as a tonic to our visitors. The horrors and inconveniences of the past year began to disappear (although some inconveniences such as water rationing and limited supplies of alcohol remained). The flashing watchful eyes, the distrust of strangers and anti-social behavior disappeared; sleep came more easily and, after cleaning and stowing weapons the remaining week became a pleasant interlude.

To some, time began to drag as they indicated they would rather be back in Australia with their loved ones; however in retrospect it would be interesting to survey these members to gain their present day reactions to the trip.

This time onboard provided a breathing space between battle and home; the safety valve analogy stands out as time passes and on their arrival at their points of disembarkation most were refreshed, energies revitalised and they prepared to face the world once again.

To some this meant marching proudly through cities with heads held high; unfortunately, however for others, arrival in some cities saw strikes and demonstrations which were aimed not only at the soldiers but also at HMAS SYDNEY.

How often was it necessary for the expertise and patience of the ship's company to be tested? In turning and berthing the ship in Fremantle, Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney without the assistance of tugs, using our own gangways to allow these men ashore and unloading their stores with our own cranes while being subject to demonstrations (which even included Federal Politicians), long after the troops had disappeared.

As time goes by the value of HMAS SYDNEY's contribution to the war in Vietnam and returning servicemen, increases as veterans' battle with their memories, their apparent rejection by the Australian public and the reported ever-increasing incidence of mental stability.

'In country' forces have had their recognition for services in Vietnam for a long time, but it is only recently that the ship's companies that served onboard HMAS SYDNEY and her Escorts were rewarded. Those who toiled rightly took their place with pride to pay tribute to the fallen at the dedication of the Vietnam Memorial in Canberra, on Saturday 3rd October 1992.





DVA facts made easy

RECEIVE THE BENEFITS YOU DESERVE

THAT TRAIN Have you ever thought, what is the real function of "That Train", just sitting there on the Corner of Hall Street and Mamre Road, St Marys?

The brainchild of a small but dedicated group of Vietnam Veterans in association with St Marys RSL, saw a need to establish an All Services Welfare and Drop In Centre staffed by qualified non government consultants who could assist and advise all veterans and dependents with the very confusing formal applications that are required by DVA.

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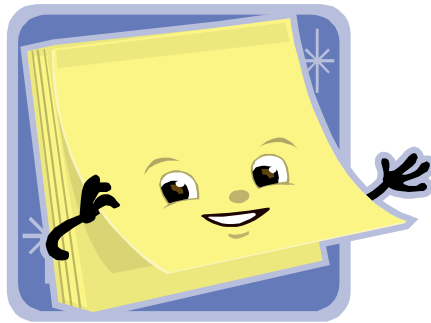
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IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING DAYS OF OPERATION FOR PENSIONS AT THE ST MARYS VETERANS CENTRE

Pension claims at the 'Train' are now carried out on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday between the hours of 9.00am 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

The Ode

The Ode comes from “**For the Fallen**”, a poem by the English poet and writer Laurence Binyon and was published in London in the *Winnowing Fan*; Poems of the Great War in 1914. The verse, which became the League Ode, was already used in association with commemoration services in Australia in 1921.

*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."*

Each year after ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day debate rises on the word 'condemn' or 'contemn'. The Ode used is the fourth stanza of the poem “**For the Fallen**” by Laurence Binyon and was written in the early days of World War One. By mid September 1914, less than seven weeks after the outbreak of war, the British Expeditionary Force in France had already suffered severe casualties. Long lists of the dead and wounded appeared in British newspapers. It was against this background that Binyon wrote “**For the Fallen**”. The poem was first published in *The Times* on 21 September 1914 using the word 'condemn'. Some people have suggested that the use of 'condemn' in *The Times* was a typographical error. However, *The Winnowing Fan*, published a month or two later and for which Binyon would have had galley proofs on which to mark amendments, 'condemn' was again used.

The British Society of Authors, executors of the Binyon estate, says the word is definitely 'condemn', while the British Museum, where Binyon worked, says its memorial stone also shows 'condemn'. Both expressed surprise when told there had been some debate about the matter in Australia. The condemn/contemn issue seems to be a distinctly Australian phenomenon. Inquiries with the British, Canadian and American Legions revealed that none had heard of the debate.

'Contemn' is not used in Binyon's published anthologies and the two volumes set, *Collected Poems*, regarded as the definitive version of Binyon's poems, uses 'condemn'. The Returned and Services League handbook shows 'condemn' and a representative of the Australian War Memorial said it always used 'condemn' in its ceremonies.



VETERANS' HEALTH WEEK



Get Connected during Veterans' Health Week 2016

Social Connection, the relationship people have with others, is the theme of Veterans' Health Week (VHW) 2016, which runs from Saturday, 22 October to Sunday, 30 October.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs will be looking to partner with ex-service organisations and community groups to organise and participate in fun, health awareness raising activities for VHW 2016.

Social connection includes relationships with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours, as well as connections people make through paid or unpaid work, sport and other leisure activities.

These relationships are beneficial to both health and wellbeing. At a population level, an absence of social relationships has been linked to mortality risk. Community groups can enable individuals to form and maintain positive social connections, because they bring people together for a meaningful purpose.

Is there an old friend you've been thinking about re-connecting with? Don't wait until VHW comes around in October, pick up the phone and re-connect.

If you haven't an activity planned, now is the time to consider how you or your organisation can be involved in getting your local veteran community connected.

For assistance or to find out more about VHW, contact DVA on 133 254 or 1800 555 254 for regional callers. Email vhw@dva.gov.au or visit our website at www.dva.gov.au/veterans-health-week for the latest information and event listings.

We look forward to working with you or seeing you at a VHW event in October!



Shit Creek

Somehow I just always knew I would end up here.

Now, if I could only find my paddle.....

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.

Statistics just released from the UK Top Medical Team, reveal that men in their sixties have sex once or twice a fortnight whereas Japanese men, in exactly the same age group, will have sex only once or twice per year if they are lucky.

This has come as very upsetting news to me and most of my mates, as none of us had any idea we were Japanese.



Subject: General Sir Peter Cosgrove.

For overseas friends: Sir Peter is the Governor-General of Australia, the direct representative of the Queen, and thus the equivalent of President. Being ex-Army, I am very impressed, but not in the least surprised. I know he would be as embarrassed as hell to think this had leaked out, let alone going viral.....

Gary Mayer was Lt Peter Cosgrove's sig in Vietnam, in fact he was with him when Lt Cosgrove won the MC.

As we all know Lt Cosgrove is now General Sir Peter and seemingly a good bloke at that.

But my mate Gary, who now resides in Maleny in the Qld hinterland, has a battle with cancer and all efforts to halt the dreaded killer are near exhausted.

Last weekend he got a call from his old skipper saying that he was in Brisbane and would like to drive up to Maleny for a cuppa.

And he did just that.

An unmarked BMW with 2 fed coppers aboard followed by a 4 wheel drive with more feds made the trip up and a fair bit of bullsh*t was relived over the cuppa.

About 2 hours later, the General was on his way back to Brisbane for the VIP flight back to Canberra.

Now is that a fair dinkum good bloke or what??? !!!



For those who travel, often the best food is a truck stop.

I wonder what the waitress would have to say if someone actually ordered their breakfast as this guy did?

A trucker came into a 'Truck Stop Cafe' and placed his order.

He said, "I want three flat tires, a pair of headlights and a pair of running boards."

The brand new blonde waitress, not wanting to appear stupid, went to the kitchen and said to the cook, "This guy out there just ordered three flat tires, a pair of headlights and a pair of running boards. What does he think this place is, an auto parts store?"

'No,' the cook said. 'Three flat tires... mean three pancakes; a pair of headlights... is two eggs sunny side up; and a pair of running boards... are 2 slices of crisp bacon!'

'Oh... OK!' said the blonde. She thought about it for a moment and then spooned up a bowl of beans and gave it to the customer.

The trucker asked, 'What are the beans for, Blondie?'

(I love this one...!)

She replied, 'I thought while you were waiting for the flat tires, headlights and running boards, you might as well gas up!'

FOR ONCE THE BLONDE GETS EVEN!!!!



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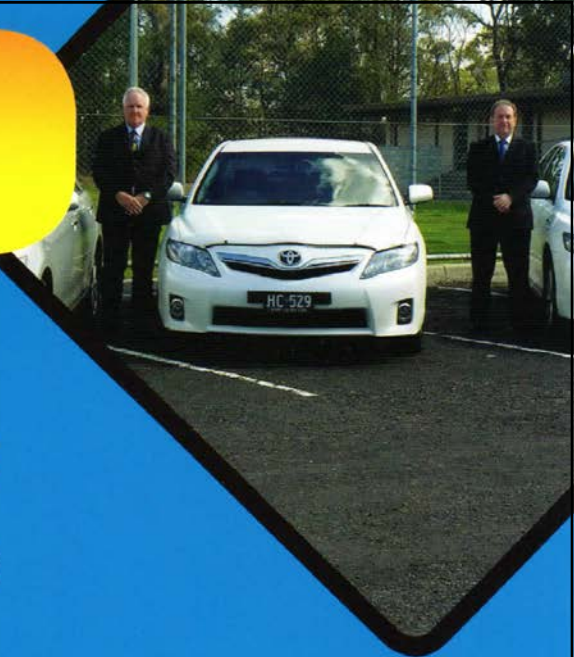
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A CLASSICAL PIECE OF NAVAL POETRY

Their blood ran cold with horror
As they gazed on the awful scene
Their faces paled with anguish
And their gills turned faintly green

For seldom has anyone suffered
As they did that horrible day
Never before have humans
Behold such a grisly display.

There on the deck before them
The shattered remnants flowed
And a steady stream of crimson
Sought its level on the Burma Road.

And they stood in breathless silence
As men who were stricken dumb
for they had just seen the duty PO
Drop a case of Pusser's rum...
R.I.P.



Copied from Royal Naval Association Orkneys Page

INVITATION FROM DUBBO

Pam Forsdike OAM

NSW State Secretary WAA

Dear Pam

During 21-24 April 2017 the centenary of **Public High School Education in Dubbo NSW** will be celebrated in Dubbo with a number of events. One of these events will be a commemoration service at the Dubbo Cenotaph on Sunday 23 April 2017. I have enclosed a press release about this commemoration. Would you kindly circulate the information in this press release to your members.

The Bindyi Club (The Ex-Students of Dubbo High School & Dubbo College Association) is assisting with the organisation of this centenary in Dubbo next year.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Bourke

Bindyi Club Committee Member

PRESS RELEASE

The Committee organising the Centenary of Public High School Education in Dubbo in April 2017 are seeking ex-students and teachers of Dubbo High School, South Dubbo High School, Delroy High School and Dubbo College who have served or are still serving in the Australian Military.

On Sunday 23 April 2017 there will be a service at the Dubbo Cenotaph to honour former servicemen including Rawdon Middleton VC. All current and former servicemen & women of these Dubbo schools are encouraged to participate in the service and wear the appropriate medals.

For more information..

Please contact Doug Butcherine (doughu@bigpond.com) ph 02 6882 2323.

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to all the advertisers that support this publication.



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Minchinbury Community Hospital offers a bus pick-up and drop-off service at minimal cost for day rehabilitation, just another way for us to make it easier to look after YOU!

www.mhsminchinbury.com.au

A man went to church one day and afterward he stopped to shake the preacher's hand. He said, "Preacher, I'll tell you, that was a damned fine sermon. Damned good!" The preacher said, "Thank you sir, but I'd rather you didn't use profanity." The man said, "I was so damned impressed with that sermon I put five thousand dollars in the offering plate!" The preacher said, "No sh*t?"



ST MARYS RSL YOUTH CLUB

ACTIVITIES FOR ALL



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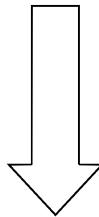
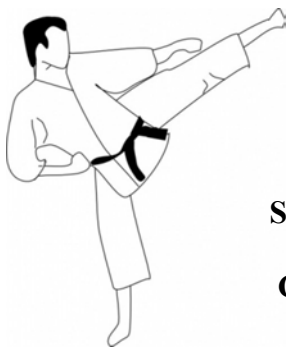
JUDO

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KARATE

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**ST MARYS RSL YOUTH CLUB
(NEXT TO RSL CLUB)
CNR MAMRE RD & HALL ST
ST MARYS 2760**

Problem solved!

Once upon a time the Government had a establishment in the middle of a desert. Parliament said someone might steal it at night. So they created a night watchman position and hired a person for the job. Then Parliament said, "How will the watchman do his job without instructions?"



So they created a planning position and hired two people: one person to write the instructions and one person to do time studies. Then Parliament said, "How will we know the night watchman is doing the tasks correctly?" So they created a QC position and hired two people: one to do the studies and one to write the reports. Then Parliament said, "How are these people going to get paid?" So they created the following positions: a time keeper and a payroll officer, and hired two people. Then Parliament said, "Who will be accountable for all of these people?" So they created an administrative position and hired three people: Officer Grade 1, Officer Grade 2 and a Legal Secretary. Then Parliament said, "We have had this command in operation for one year and we are \$280,000 over budget. We must cutback the overall cost." So they laid off the night watchman.



St Marys 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 MARYS RSL SUB-BRANCH COMMITTEE

President:	Ron Kelly	0408 684 276
V/President:	Ron Blakely	02 9623 6555
V/President:	Frank Lawton	02 9623 6555
Treasurer:	Ted Fish	02 9623 6555
Secretary:	Tony Fryer	0414 557 692
A/Secretary:	Ron Blakely	0411 131 849
Committee:	Tony Mullavey	0416 231 993
	Michael Wiesel	02 9623 6555

ST MARYS VETERANS CENTRE COMMITTEE

PHONE: 02 9833 4700 FAX 9833 4022

President:	Tony Mullavey	0416 231 993
V/President:	George Perrin	0412 824 219
V/President:	John Foeken	0409 329 688
Secretary:	Sam Vecchio	0418 247 325
Treasurer:	Ted Fish	02 9833 4700
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Assistant Treas.	George Perrin	0412 824 219

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 organisations 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.

John Davison - Editor



Anzac Day 2016
'Thank You Dad'



Afghanistan VC Recipients plus poppies.



Afghanistan - two sappers and their bomb
detection dog plus poppies.



Explosives detection dog and handler
plus poppies.



Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier
plus poppies.



Marble version of a folded
flag representing a life lost
plus poppies.