

VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
CENTRAL QUEENSLAND SUB BRANCH
PRESIDENTS ANNUAL REPORT
2 February 2003

Nick Quigley – President

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Meetings and Barbecues this year have been well attended and once again we need to thank **Pauline and Phil Aplin**, who do the catering.

Our Barbecues have continued to be held at the Kershaw Gardens in the shady area of the Memorial to the right of the entrance off Fraser Street. You can look at the KGVM on the Internet at <http://talk.to/veteransupport> and click on the Kershaw Gardens link. We thank the Rockhampton City Parks & Gardens Department who maintain this area and provide access on BBQ days.

ANZAC Day in Rockhampton was a credit to all the organisers. Held in the City on the Riverside CBD. It is pleasing to hear that more than twelve Veterans attended schools. Some addressing the assembly while others planted trees. Students are becoming more aware of the reasons why we should remember ANZAC Day and their schools must be commended for the time and the teacher's efforts promoting ANZAC Day.

I attended Gogango State School, 60k west of Rockhampton. A one-teacher school and fifteen students and a community of people who all rallied together to make the day a great success.

The ANZAC Day Baby was presented with a Teddy Bear and Mum flowers and a Certificate. This year's **ANZAC Day Baby is Jake Jamahal Blyth** born at 1037 on the 25th April 2002 and weighing in at 3990grams (8lb 13ozs). Jake is a brother to Kiel and Breanna and third child to Trish and Jamahal Blyth of Rockhampton.

Vietnam Veterans Day 18th August 2002 was for the first time at Cockscomb Veteran Camp. A huge success and a very memorable day with a short service and the Dedication of the Memorial by

Chaplin Gavin Brown. The first wreath was laid by (Bindi) Ronald YowYeh Ex 6RAR D Company. The 42RQR provided the guard and a lone piper piped the lament. Families of Veterans who have died since Vietnam, laid Wreaths. Plaques for each past Veteran were placed on the memorial. The day ended with a BBQ lunch with more than 200 Veterans and their families attending. Vietnam Veterans Day 2003 will be at Cockscomb on Monday 18th August, at a time to be determined.

The **VVDAY Baby** was **Che Andrew Sander** born at 0403 weighing 3090 fourth child to Lindas Sander

Kershaw Gardens Vietnam Memorial. A short service was held at the KGVM and the area blessed by Rev Bob Buckley a returned Veteran himself. Several more trees were planted

The "BEARCAT GRUNTS" Newsletter has **not been produced since Jun 2002.**

The future of Bearcat Grunts is not in doubt. It will come together one day, in the mean time to catch up on what is happening in this area, get a copy of the Cockscomb Chronicle.

Central Queensland Veteran Support Center <http://talk.to/veteransupport> is into its fourth year of operation. With a very good success rate, Veterans of the Central Queensland region must thank the Pensions Officers and Advocates who put many voluntary hours into the pending cases.

Working out of the Lone Pine building at 6 Archer Street, Monday to Friday between 0900 and 1300 there are now eight pensions officers, 3 case officers and one Advocate.

The **Rockhampton Drop In Center** 310 Quay Street has had a steady flow of Veterans both local and visiting. It is not

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run by the CQVVAA but is part of the Veteran Community. It is a place where you can relax with a cup of tea or coffee and talk over any problem, go back in time and tell a few stories or get some help on a subject or just talk about the weather. The Australian Navy Cadets TS Rockhampton owns the building. \$2 is collected from each attendee to help pay for the consumables. Internet and Email is available for those who don't have it at home. The rent each year is \$240 and very soon we will need to fund raise to pay the rent.

Cockscomb Veterans Camp
<http://veteranretreat.tripod.com> has attracted many visitors from outside the Rockhampton area. The CQVVAA has nothing directly to do with the running of Cockscomb. It is managed by the Cockscomb Veteran Community who hold regular working bees on Tuesdays starting at 0900. If you haven't already, you should get a copy of the Cockscomb Chronicle to keep up to date with goings on at Cockscomb. BBQs are 2nd March, 30th March, 4th May, 18th August, 28th September and 29th November.

The VVCS third Heart Health Program had 16 Veterans taking part in a Gym program at the Central Queensland Community Sports Centre at the University. At the end of the course the numbers dropped off and today only a handful still attend

Rockhampton Veterans Just Walk It leaves from Central Queensland Community Sports Centre 1715 on a Wednesday only. We walk for approx 45min at a brisk rate and lap the CQU Campus.

The Heart Foundation supports the Just Walk It program and walkers are rewarded for their efforts with certificates, caps, water bottles and Tee shirts.

A few of our members took part in FREE computer lessons provided by **COIN ROK**. The basic class covers everything from plugging in, turning on and through to operating Windows, Internet and Email. More advanced classes are also available. If you are interested you should **RING the COIN centre on 4923 2561 Monday to Friday between 0900 and 1600**. Classes are daytime only.

Australia Day 2003 saw "Our Angelic Mum" **Jean R Williams** author of "Cry in the Wilderness", "The Devils Rainbow", "Children of the Mist" and "Harvest of Tears" receive an **OAM** for her untiring advocacy for Vietnam Veterans and their families, congratulations Jean!

Our Christmas Party was once again a rip-roaring night at Footlights Theatre Restaurant at Yeppoon. Organised again by Phil & Pauline, this time staying at Tropical Nights Motel. We had the best seats in the theatre; a great show, good meal and I look forward to this year's party.

Peter & Jill Davis have transferred to Townsville to be near to their grandkids.

My thanks go to **Helen**, my wife for her continued assistance and support.

To **Phil Aplin** who has made a marvelous job of being the Central Queensland VVAA Secretary.

To **Pauline Aplin** who also has excelled as our Treasurer and raffle prize buyer and to **Jim Drever**, who looks after the Drop in Center when I'm away and is our memorabilia, patches and badges and collectables agent. A special thanks to the **Veterans and their families** who attend meetings, barbecues and functions & support our fundraising efforts.