

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

6 February 2005

Nick Quigley – President

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Meetings and Barbecues this year have been well attended and once again we need to thank Phil and Pauline Aplin, who do the catering. This year the group introduced the idea of having a salad roll and cold meat for lunch in the hotter weather. This idea has been adopted well by the members.

Our Barbecues have continued to be held at the Kershaw Gardens in the shady area of the Vietnam Memorial. You can look at the KGVM on the Internet at <http://kershawgardens.tripod.com> We thank the Rockhampton City Parks & Gardens Department who maintain this area and provide access on BBQ days.

Helen & I were away in New Zealand for most of April, but arrived home in time for **ANZAC Day in Rockhampton**. Held in the City on the Riverside CBD. ANZAC Day this year was bigger than last year, ie the numbers were up and the participation of schools on an increase. Rockhampton was host to the Australian Army Trackers & War Dogs Association put together by Bob Bettany Ex 1 & 6 RAR. The CQVVAA assisted the Trackers with organising their weekend and Phil and I visited the Trackers to welcome them to Rockhampton on their arrival.

A small number of Veterans attended schools to talk about ANZAC Day, which last year fell on a Sunday and schools held their service on the Friday. On behalf of the association, I spoke to Lakes Creek and Port Curtis Road Schools.

The CQVVAA presented a cheque to the **CWA Ladies committee** to assist with the ANZAC breakfast. The ladies reported a steady flow of breakfast starters, but did note that the numbers were dwindling.

At 2:30am on ANZAC Day 2004 Samantha Hayter and Barry Collett had this year's **ANZAC Day Baby**. 2970grams Kallum Barry Collett was presented with a Teddy bear and Samantha a certificate and a bouquet of flowers.

On the May Day long weekend the **Vietnam Veterans Motor Cycle club (VVMC)** staged the Stone Run to Cockscomb.

An overall success both for Cockscomb and the VVMC with some 70 VVMC members attending the three day ride. CQVVAA members assisted with the BBQ for this event.

Vietnam Veterans Day 18th August 2004 was for the third time at Cockscomb Veteran Camp. Tony Dawes reflected on the age of those men who were killed in Vietnam. Chaplin Kaye Ronalds spoke about the ongoing commitment Australia has throughout the world. Kaye blessed our 7 new plaques adding to the ones already on the memorial bringing the total to 41.

The first born **baby on VVDAY** is presented with a Teddy Bear and a Certificate while mum receives a bouquet of flowers. This year baby Geniveve Easey arrived at 0015 (15 minutes past 12 midnight) weighing 4230grams and the third child for Julie and Richard Easey. Julie wrote to our association thanking us for our thoughts and gifts.

For **VVDAY 2004 at the KGVM** a Sterculia Quadrifida rain forest tree commonly known as the "Peanut tree" or "bush tucker tree" was planted by Robert Busch and Councilor Rose Swadling. It will be a few years before we can pick the fruit, but it will become a great shade tree for our Memorial area.

One of our own **local Veterans Dave Morgan** who is a weather technician spent some time down at the Australian Antarctic Base. For his third trip away Dave went back to Casey Base on the 2nd Feb 2004 intending to stay for another 12 months. Unfortunately Dave had a fall on the ice and became a medivac patient back to Australia. Dave is still on sick leave.

Central Queensland Veteran Support Centre Inc., <http://talk.to/veteransupport> has become an incorporated organisation or ESO in it's own right. The CQVVAA are signatories to the BEST Funding and are foundation members of CQVSC. It is into its sixth year of operation. With a very good success rate, Veterans of the Central Queensland region should thank the Pensions Officers and Advocates who put many voluntary hours into the cases.

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Working out of the Lone Pine building at 6 Archer Street, Monday to Friday between 0900 and 1300 there are now six pensions officers, 2 case officers and two Advocates.

Our Association provides two of these Pensions Officers with Helen Quigley and John Elson. I provide administration and computer skills to CQVSC and its members. And our association was able to help CQVSC with the purchase of a 5x licence antivirus software and an ADSL router. It should be noted here too, that the VVF are also signatories and have provided on going assistance with the purchase of stationery and other items since the beginning.

The Rockhampton Drop In Centre has moved to the 156 Bolsover Street on the ground floor adjacent to the TPI Office. There has been a slower than normal, but a steady flow of Veterans both local and visiting. It is not run directly 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. I moved the Drop in Centre from the Australian Naval Cadets Unit when we were having difficulty paying the rent. \$2 is collected from each attendee to help pay for the consumables.

Robert Busch has been opening up this year and he ensures we have fresh milk and something good to eat.

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 holds 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. To obtain a copy ensure that Nick Quigley has your Email address or if not your postal address. The Christmas BBQ was well attended and enjoyed.

Rockhampton Veterans Just Walk It On a Wednesday at 1715. We walk for approx 45min and cover around 6-8 kilometres depending on the weather. If you would like to join this group call Nick Quigley on 49282554

The Heart Foundation supports the Just Walk It program and walkers are rewarded for their efforts with certificates, caps, water bottles and Tee shirts. Walking is free and just like Gym work it is good for your ongoing health.

For those who feel that **Gym** work and weights is too hard to attend, why not consider coming to the seniors' slower Aerobics class at 0830 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I'm sure you'll enjoy the 45 minutes with our instructor. Membership to the Community Sports Centre Gym is approx \$275 a year and includes Gym, Pool and Aerobics. The VVCS provides 12 months Gym courses for Veterans. One is presently running at Norms Gym on the Southside. If you have not been on a Gym program and would like to attend call VVCS 1800011046 and register your interest.

Ongoing FREE computer lessons provided by **COIN Rockhampton** with the basic class covering everything from plugging in, turning on and through to operating Windows, Internet and Email and now more advanced classes are also available. If you are interested you should RING the COIN center on 4923 2561 Monday to Friday between 0900 and 1600. Classes are daytime only.

Many changes are taking place in our Veteran Communities and Government support is not always on the side of the Veteran, you need to ensure you keep well informed about your rights, renew your membership with the Association and add your voice and write to your politicians when you are not happy. For those members who are not on Email, information will be posted to you during the year. If you acquire Email please advise Phil Aplin, it saves on postage.

WINGS (women in need group support) has been operating successfully in Rockhampton, for more information contact Helen on 49282554 or Pauline on 49286711 Meetings are held at the YWCA in Robinson Street

My thanks to my wife **Helen, John Elson, Phil & Pauline Aplin** our executive and you our members for participation through the year.