

**VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
CENTRAL QUEENSLAND SUB BRANCH
PRESIDENTS ANNUAL REPORT
5th February 2006**

Nick Quigley – President

1 of 2

Where do I start ... Meetings and Barbecues this year have been attended by VVAA members and families and although the weather at times wasn't the best, I'd say the salad rolls are still tops. My thanks to Phil and Pauline Aplin, who organize the BBQs and the catering.



Our Barbecues have continued to be held at the Kershaw Gardens in the shady area of the Vietnam Memorial. You can look at the Kershaw Gardens Vietnam Memorial on the Internet

at <http://kershawgardens.tripod.com> Each year we thank the Rockhampton City Parks & Gardens Department who maintain this area and provide access on BBQ days. The area always looks good and it is also good to see our special trees grow around the memorial area.

ANZAC Day in Rockhampton brought a change of the march route. From ANZAC House to Victoria Parade, under the old Fitzroy Bridge into Quay Street and on down to William Street, down onto the River Bank and the service held at the Riverside CBD. The new route doesn't hold up normal city traffic and is a somewhat shorter march for the aging Veteran population. This year's breakfast was organised as a fund raiser for the Capricornia Military & Artefacts Museum and the National Services Association. Archer Street 42RQR was



open for the first time in four years providing an area for a kitchen and bar.

A small number of Veterans attended schools to talk about ANZAC Day. On behalf of our Association, Tom Platts & I spoke to the Girls Grammar School about "women at war"

Our ANZAC Day baby was born at 0714 at the Rockhampton Base Hospital and is the first child and daughter for Lisa and Andrew Walz. Baby April Ann arrived weighing 4.6Kg This year is the 90th Anniversary of the ANZACs landing at Gallipoli and the 18th ANZAC Day Baby to be presented with a Teddy and Certificate. Congratulations to Lisa and Andrew and your proud families and friends who we met at the hospital.



On Vietnam Veterans Day 2005 and with a large gathering a new front entrance plaque on the brick wall was unveiled Using today's technology and with the use of a plasma cutter the new logo was cut in two pieces from stainless steel under the guidance of Steve Schatkowski and Queensland Steel Products. A huge effort and Cockscob Veterans can now be very proud of the logo.



Our Vietnam Vets day baby was born on the 18th August at 0239 at the Base Hospital

Rockhampton BOWARRIE INGUI third child for Natasha Auda and Lonnie Ingui and another brother for sister Alintia (7) and Darrell (3) A teddy for Bowarrie, flowers for Natasha and a certificate explaining the significance of the 18th August.

Central Queensland Veteran Support Centre Inc., <http://talk.to/veteransupport> The CQVVAA is a participating & affiliated organisation ensuring that a consistent service to Veterans is provided in the CQ area. CQVSC is into its seventh 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.

Working out of the Lone Pine Ltd building at 6 Archer Street, Monday to Friday between 0900 and 1300 there are now three pensions officers plus three in training, 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.

The Rockhampton Drop In Centre at 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. CQVVAA oversee the operation which 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. \$2 is collected from each attendee to



help pay for the consumables.

Robert Busch & John Elson have been opening up this year and they ensure we have fresh milk and something good to eat.

WINGS girls Kathy Jensen and Helen Quigley. Women In Need Group Support (is a group for Vietnam Veteran wives & partners) meet at 10am on the first Tuesday of every month at the North Street Annex at the corner of North and West Streets Rockhampton. The group organises social outings, guest speakers and has a close tie to VVCS. Contact Number Helen 4928 2554, Kathy 4933 2457

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

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2of 2

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.

The VVCS has recently put out a new 2006 Services brochure. Some members may have received one in the mail, however, if you didn't copies are available at the CQVSC in Archer Street. VVCS hold a number of very good programs for Veterans and their partners. If you haven't attended a Lifestyle course, I can recommend this particular course as one of the best I have attended. The VVCS provides 12 months Gym courses for Veterans and if you haven't attended a program before and would like to call VVCS 1800 011 046 and register your interest.

Many changes are taking place in our Veteran Communities. Just this month the Government reshuffle has sent De-Anne Kelly MP packing and moved Bruce Billson MP in as the new Veterans Affairs Minister. 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. Never, try to submit your own claim for a pension, always seek the assistance of a qualified Pensions Officer. For those members who are not on Email, information may be posted to you during the year. If you acquire Email please advise Phil Aplin, it saves on postage. A huge amount of Email comes from both Federal and State Headquarters and is automatically passed on to members with Email. I know that all Veterans are not on Email, but for the cost of a simple computer and a dialup Internet connection, you can keep in touch with what is going on in your neighbourhood, your state and our nation, plus what is happening overseas. Join the Information Technology world and keep informed.

Ongoing FREE computer lessons are 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. COIN hosts a Groups web page and Veterans and their families in the Rockhampton area can access information on service at <http://www.capricornia.org/Members/COVSC>. Information on this web page is maintained by Nick Quigley

It was reported in The Morning Bulletin on the 9th Jan 2006 that one Jules Shelley, Vietnam Veteran had been attacked by a group of people. John Elson & I investigated the possibility of Jules being a Veteran on the basis that he may need welfare and pensions assistance. However, after checking official documents and speaking with his family it was determined that Jules was indeed NOT a Veteran nor had he served in any of the services. Under the Defence Act, 1903 as amended, it is a federal offence to

claim to be a returned soldier, sailor or airman, subject to six months' imprisonment and a fine of up to \$3300. Further it is an offence to wear a service decoration to which you are not entitled, attracting additional penalties. Jules provided a signed apology which was published in The Morning Bulletin on the 21st Jan. The compiled case files on Jules Shelley have been sent to the Australia New Zealand Military Impostors net (previously the CPMH) just in case he re offends.

"AUSTRALIAN soldiers are being forced to buy their own combat gear because of sub-standard issued equipment." From the Courier Mail written by Lachlan Heywood on the 23rd Jan 2006. High among the complaints were discomfort, chafing and restricted movement caused by the issued equipment. "Pack contains insufficient room to carry all equipment that is required to complete tasks. Also, pack is uncomfortable and causes skin to be rubbed off from mid to lower back," one complaint said. It is a far cry from the days when we were in the Services. But I bring this to your notice in this report because I feel that most of us still have an interest in Military matters. Keep in touch with what is going on in the Services, another reason for being on the Internet.

I suppose my report sounds like an Information Technology report, well it is in a way. Amongst the Veteran community we are now experimenting with a fairly newly developed program. SKYPE is a means of talking over the Internet to other Skype connected people. The big thing is the cost – FREE. It'll cost you a head



piece with a microphone and download the software from www.skype.com run the provided test and you are on your way. With Skype V2 comes the means of doing a video link with your caller and anywhere

in the world for FREE.

The 2005 Christmas lunch was well attended by members at the Kalka Hotel. Marcia won the raffle and our thanks go to Phil & Pauline again for chasing everybody up again for the lunch.

A number of times through the year I get calls from Veterans looking for free accommodation and meals. Only a couple of days ago I had a call from the son of a Vietnam Veteran and all I could do was send him to Ozanam House in Alma Street. But after reading the Accommodation report from Angus House it appears that there is a growing trend of desperate people looking for help. 20 a month are fed and housed at Angus House.

So another year ends and again I'd like to thank my wife Helen, John Elson, Phil & Pauline Aplin, our executive and you our members for participation through the year