

VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
CENTRAL QUEENSLAND SUB BRANCH
PRESIDENTS ANNUAL REPORT
1st February 2009

Nick Quigley OAM – President

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2008 was a mixed year. For three and a half months Helen & I travelled about Eastern and Southern Australia in our Caravan. We met many Vietnam Veterans on the road and got to meet many more in van parks. Travelling takes the stress out of your life and you get to see so many places around Australia. We drove just over 12,000 kilometers and have not scratched the surface on the pile of places we'd like to visit. Health permitting we will head off again this year to see some more.

Meetings and Barbecues this year have been attended by members and families and occasionally visitors. During the hot months we provide salad lunches instead of a BBQ and the rolls have worked out well. At \$4 a head it is good value. Our thanks go to Phil and Pauline Aplin who organize the BBQs and the catering. Fund raising per the wheel has kept the meeting costs just showing a profit. Our Barbecues are held at the Kershaw Gardens at the Vietnam Memorial.



The two flags represent Private Kevin Prior and Private Jim Cox who were killed in Vietnam and came from the Rockhampton area, and left to right, Vietnam Veterans - Phil Aplin, Nick Quigley OAM, Neil Brewer, Tom Platts, Robert Busch, Gardner Paul Baker and Acting Mayor Rose Swadling

New trees are planted each year in the Memorial area and on the 15th August 2008 a tree was planted in Remembrance of Australians recently killed on overseas duty **Lance Corporal Jason Paul Marks** a local Yeppoon man was killed during a fire fight with

Taliban fighters southeast of Tarin Kowt in Oruzgan province, Afghanistan,

You can look at the **Kershaw Gardens Vietnam Memorial** on the Internet at <http://kershawgardens.tripod.com/kgvm.html>

The CQVVAA website is at
<http://cqvvaa.tripod.com>

For the last 21 years the CQVVAA has presented a bouquet of flowers and a certificate to the mother of the first born baby on Vietnam Veterans Day and ANZAC Day. The family is also presented with a teddy bear for the baby to enjoy later.

Congratulations to **Jacqueline (a Primary Teacher) and Michael (a Lab Technician) Conaghan** with their first child



born on the 18 Aug 2008 at 0637, a baby boy, Jezz Michael Conaghan weighing in at 5lb 4oz or 2385Grams

Later Jacqui sent an Email "We will certainly make a point of making this important day known to Jezz when he gets older... Hope to see you again one day soon.. take care Jacqui



Helen and I spent **ANZAC Day 08** in Junee and attended the Junee Dawn Service and 11am Parade. While here in Rockhampton Phil was able to attend the Rocky ANZAC Day presentation to **Elizabeth and Anthony Sinclair** for their second baby Cooper Sinclair. 7lbs 3ozs, 53cms, brother for Kyan, 22months.

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Our 2008 Christmas dinner was held at the



Rockhampton TAFE Wilbys Restaurant.

Excellent meals prepared and served by the students for the 2008 Semester. It was well attended and the raffle was won by Helen Quigley,



WINGS - 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 Woman's Health Center Cnr Derby and Bolsover Street Rockhampton. The group organises social outings, guest speakers and has a close tie to VVCS. **Contact Number Helen 4928 2554 or Kathy 4933 2457**



In August the Central Queensland Vietnam Veterans Association hosted **Don Tate** - a TPI and the author of *"The War Within"* which contains an analysis of the consequences of having fought in the Vietnam War. Don also showed a home movie he took in the field in Vietnam in 1969 and it showed

the full infantry experience - from patrols to air strikes - as well as ordinary activities, leave in Vung Tau, the people, the culture, etc

Expenses of \$50 were covered for Venue hire on behalf of **Ken O'Brien** who is a PhD Researcher for Queensland University of Technology and looking at the ongoing effects of PTSD. He spoke to local residents about the flow on effect of PTSD.

Our Association also donated \$200.00 to the **Vietnam Veterans National Museum**. Based on Philip Island, an incredible collection of Vietnam era memorabilia and history of every unit that served

The VVCS provides 12 months Gym programs for Veterans. Call VVCS **1800 011 046** and register your interest. Gym programs help your general health, aerobic and heart health and as we get older Gym workouts strengthen our bones. In conjunction with exercise Veterans can visit **Robert Stanton an Exercise Physiologist** and be given special exercises to help to improve back pain, sprains, muscle and joints. You will need a D904 referral form your Doctor.

Cockscomb Veterans Camp became an Incorporated group and more recently a piece of land approx one hectare has been cut off the original property and officially surveyed and approved through the Rockhampton Regional Council and will forever be set aside for Veterans. There are many that have had a hand in pushing this through and of course, all Veterans must be very grateful of Bruce & Liz Acutt who have made it all possible in the first place. <http://veteranretreat.tripod.com>

The CQVVAA has an interest in the operation of the **CQVSC Inc** and meetings are attended as required by a member of the executive.

And lastly, I have enjoyed the year, as with every other year too, even though I haven't been here for all of it. Having been the President for the last 12 years, maybe it is time for some new blood. Each year I have made it clear that I'm willing to continue, BUT if someone else would like to take the reins, I'm quite willing to stand behind then and help where I can.

So another year ends and again I'd like to thank my wife **Helen**, **John Elson** our Vice President, **Phil Aplin** our Secretary and **Pauline Aplin** our Treasurer, and **you our members** for participation and support through the year.