

VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
CENTRAL QUEENSLAND SUB BRANCH
PRESIDENTS ANNUAL REPORT
1st February 2010

Nick Quigley OAM – President

1 of 2

A tremendous amount of emails in from the National and Queensland head offices, elections of new executive and the resignation of executives as well. It is a big job and more so in the shoes of the Secretary of the organisation. We are all getting older and our span of patience is getting shorter, but the few that put their hands up for the positions are doing a mighty job. Phil & Pauline Aplin have been a great asset to the CQVVAA. Phil keeps the members informed by Email and Pauline keeps a tight grip on the finances. Between them they organise the salad lunches and the raffle that we all enjoy after the meeting. From me, a hearty thank you and I'm sure each and every one of you will feel the same.

In general the Veteran community continues to bicker and create avenues of infighting. No one is happy. The Minister for Veteran Affairs is in constant confrontations with factions of Veterans, it will only end when there are no Veterans. The RSL is certainly not helping to rally the troops to one voice. Most Veterans are members of one or the other major groups, ie VVAA, TPI and VVF and some the RSL as well. Each group have their own agenda and ideas of what is a fair go and no parties think the same. The Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters (PMAC) has been operating since October 2008 and although Veterans thought it would provide a avenue of access to relay problems to Government, it has done very little for Veterans at the grass roots end of the line. You can read yourself what has been done at [PMAC http://minister.dva.gov.au/PMAC/index.htm](http://minister.dva.gov.au/PMAC/index.htm)

In Rockhampton our own avenue to the Government was set up with meetings organised by the CQVSC Inc and our local Federal Member Kirsten Livermore MP. Phil and I have attended all the meetings at this forum, representing the CQVVAA. One of our questions was the issue on Pharmaceuticals and the cost to Veterans. This issue is still being debated by PMAC and the Government. Another issue was assistance for Heart Health Programs. The Minister has answered saying that the Government is looking at the possibility of subsidising membership, but no further action has come forth. As Vietnam Veterans



we have learnt to live with that, it took 16 years to get a Welcome Home, and then only because it was organised by Vietnam Veterans.

On the 21st of June 2009 the RSL foreclosed on the VVAA and took **ANGUS House** back for their own use. The VVAA had successfully run ANGUS House for 23 years providing accommodation to Veterans who required access to hospitals in Brisbane. The RSL / VVAA saga of Angus House started in October 2004 when it was muted that the RSL were going to take it back.

Issues on the positive side, **John Elson** and I spoke on two occasions to Grade 10 students at North Rockhampton State High School about Vietnam, the lead up to the war and the effect Vietnam had on returning servicemen. On both occasions the teachers and students were very receptive and appreciated our time.

John Elson organised movie outings for Veterans and we enjoyed five outing to the cinema. Remember those with TPI can go to the movies free of charge for most sessions.

In early April members were invited to **Brad & Robyn Bauers** place to enjoy a wine tasting. The afternoon saw all of us enjoy a vast range of wines, some home made and others commercial. Brad having German ancestors has continued the family tradition of wine making and makes a very palatable drop.

Helen & I were in wet New Zealand for **ANZAC Day 2009** and Phil reports that the numbers of Veterans marching were down. The banner and the flags are becoming a problem to carry and organise and this year the banner and the flags will only be used on Vietnam Veterans Day.

Remembrance Day 11th Nov has Rockhampton divided due to Veteran factions again. The Rockhampton Regional Council saw fit to promote the 11th November at the Frenchville Sports Club along with the Capricorn RSL and the Cities own consecrated memorial on the Fitzroy River was not attended by any of our local, state or federal members. However again I was pleased to see members of the CQVVAA in attendance at the riverside.

VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
CENTRAL QUEENSLAND SUB BRANCH
PRESIDENTS ANNUAL REPORT
1st February 2010

Nick Quigley OAM – President

2of2



At the end of the City service, attendees gathered at the North Rockhampton Cemetery to remember those who were killed during WW2. One rose was carefully laid at the foot of each stone. Our thanks to Meagan Murry who was in her last year at Heights College for playing the Last Post.



Hugo and Dad Elliot.

For the last 22 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. **18 Aug 2009 our Vietnam Veterans Day** Mum Henrieke and Baby



On **ANZAC Day 2009** Daniell and Bruce Franks gave birth to baby Ben at 0245, 4080g. Congratulations to both families and we wish you well for the future.

This year the **VVCS** ran a one day course for Veterans and their partners at the North Street Annex. I'm pleased to report that many of our members took advantage of this great program. VVCS holds a meeting in Rockhampton once a year and always asked what courses or programs Veterans would like held in the area.

The VVCS also 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.

Cockscomb Veterans Camp Incorporated All Veterans travelling through Rockhampton, Yeppoon or Emu Park are invited to stay at Cockscomb, information is available at <http://veteranretreat.tripod.com>

On the 18th August at 11am each year a service is held for Vietnam Veterans Day.

The CQVVAA has kept an interest in the operation at the **Central Queensland Veteran Support Center Inc** and meetings are attended as required by a member of the executive.

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

Our Meetings and are held at the **Kershaw Gardens Vietnam Memorial** and you can get the next meeting date from the **CQVVAA website** at <http://cqvvaa.tripod.com>

For those who haven't got Broadband at home you can access the internet from a Seniors Kiosk. In Rockhampton the kiosk is in the Rockhampton City Library up stairs near COIN. Information on a location near you can be found on this website <http://www.necseniors.net.au/>

And lastly, I have been away for part of the year but enjoy the camaraderie of the meeting / lunch Having been the President for the last 13 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.