



# The Slouch Hat

May  
2014

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*This Newsletter is  
a publication of  
the Geelong &  
District Sub-  
Branch of the*

*Vietnam Veterans  
of Australia As-  
sociation.*



GDVVAA president Rieny Nieuwenhof leads the large contingent of Vietnam veterans towards Johnstone Park on Anzac Day

## Another huge turnout for Anzac Day

An estimated contingent of more than 200 veterans marched behind the GDVVAA banner on Anzac Day, the numbers well up from last year. Veterans came from across the district to march with their mates. Families were prominent among the marchers, with many children and grandchildren proudly sharing the day with their elder family members. After the ceremony many veterans and their families moved to the Vietnam Veterans' Centre at Osborne House to enjoy the day.

# Vietnam Veterans of Australia Association Geelong & District Sub Branch

\* Honour The Dead But Fight Like Hell For The Living



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Geelong

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## **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee is made up of the President, the two Vice-Presidents, The Secretary, and the Treasurer.

## **The Committee**

The Committee is made up of the Executive, the Minute Secretary, and the remaining Committee members.

## **Meetings**

A members meeting is convened monthly, usually on the second Monday of the month, while an executive meeting is held on the fourth Monday of the month.

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# Update on the Vietnam Veterans Avenue of Honour

**The Avenue of Honour Sub-committee met recently. This is an edited report from the meeting**

Sub-Committee met on April 23 and had in depth discussion with Melbourne Road Boulevard Manager, Jon Halsal from COGG - Avenue of Honour Signage design has been agreed to as per drawing provided by Andy Treffry - Jon will supply contact details for Vic Roads for the approval application to be prepared.

- Jon will immediately replace the dead Iron Bark trees with the Avenue

- Jon will also take to issue of advertising along the Avenue to his Head of Department to enquire about shifting it to the north side of Mackie street intersection with Melbourne road.

- Arthur Roach representing the Korea Veterans is seeking a design and wording for the Korea Avenue signage

The refurbishment of the Historical Osborne Park Gates to be followed up with Heritage Victoria and an appropriate philanthropic trust

## Memorial Master Plan

It was decided to take Michael Byrne's suggestion to place the con-

cept of a competition with Deakin University Engineering Design Students and to incorporate the following ideas:

- Crossover and pathway from Osborne Park Gates to the sidewalk in Swinburne Street

- Pavers/Bricks to line the pathway for Veterans and their families to purchase to identify their Service in Vietnam

- Interpretative panels with night lighting along Swinburne Street to Osborne House Entry (Yet to determine how many)

- Seating along the sidewalk for viewing and for visitors to reflect on the panels

- Long Tan Cross to be placed within the garden area east of the Kokoda Memorial

- Memorial Panel at the Memorial facing Melbourne Road with the three Service Emblems

- Memorial Panel facing east to contain the 521 Vietnam Casualty list

Sub-committee considered the thought of only Geelong and District Casualties however there was only three and these could be highlighted on the proposed panel.

- Some form of Navy memorabilia to be sought to link the first Naval Cadet College in Australia with Osborne House



Above: Proposed signage to be used along the Avenue of Honour. The signs will display information on the major battles that took place during Australia's involvement in Vietnam.

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# President's report

Anzac Day has been our focus in the last few weeks and prior to the day there were a number of memorial services held. At the Lara RSL, young Ken showed his influence with the Air Force and organised a four plane flyover - how's that! I attended a service at the Geelong Hospital and laid a wreath, then spoke to the residents at Sea Views Manor, Ocean Grove. On Anzac Day the G & DVVAA was represented at all the services from the Pre-dawn to the presentation of medals to the football and netball players at the South Barwon v St. Joseph's games. We also presented at the Belmont High school assembly and Laurie Evans spoke to the Year 9 boys at St. Joseph's College. Thanks to all our representatives. Well done team.

The turnout for the march was the biggest for a long time. Those who know suggested that over 200 Vietnam Veterans marched behind our banner. There were a number of new faces; I hope that they continue their association with us and consider becoming members, if not already.

Many of those who marched or were spectators, came back to the VVA Centre for lunch and enjoyed a lovely day in the sun. The extension to our liquor licence proved very popular as there was plenty of room to spread out onto the grass. I even saw a dad having kick-to-kick with his children on the front lawn. The view across Corio Bay was just spectacular. Bruno organised a successful badge selling roster this year, with members so keen to help that four turned up for one shift. Your President misread the roster and let the team down. Sorry Bruno.

I must apologise that our Website site is currently down. Bill Reid is working on restoring it and updating content. In the meantime emails and a slow mail are our main ways of getting the messages out there. Remember you can always phone the VVA Centre to find out when things are on or just drop in, there is someone on duty each day ( 10am – 3pm).

The new Committee is full of ideas and already we have a number of events organised which need your support... the Bus Trip to Seymour, the formal Dining - In night, the trip to Phillip Island and of course the Ladies Luncheons continue thanks to Sue Ryan. Yoga and Tennis each week are quite popular. Please get behind these events, they are organised for you.

Ken and the Committee have met a few times already preparing our submission for the Avenue of Honour proposal. Things are moving and thanks for your input and ideas.

Darby Drennan, our hard working Welfare Officer, is working with a number of members helping them through some personal issues and dealing with DVA.

Our Pay Day barbecues continue to be very popular and the introduction of a theme is working well. The green day, in advance of St. Patrick's Day, saw many members wear something green. Your President was seen with some new green



hair, quite an improvement. We are so lucky to have a team of cooks, with Sully and Kev doing a great job. They also gets lots of help from others, including Col , Wayne, Tack and others. The raffle is developing legend proportions with Frankie and Dot doing a fantastic job getting the prizes ready. But don't look in the bucket!

We have hung the pictures of our Past Presidents in the foyer and this is creating much interest. Whilst this initiative is a work in progress it does highlight our long and important history as an organisation.

I hope all members are checking the date of events on their fridge calendar. All events are organised for the entertainment and welfare of members, so make sure you come along and enjoy the company of others, in a relaxed and friendly environment.

I am also on the Geelong RSL Commemorations Sub Committee and we are planning the events, in Geelong, for the centenary of Anzac Day 2015. There are a number of initiatives in the pipeline and if we can pull them off, the event will be very memorable indeed. We are working with great purpose and involving many other groups, especially the City of Greater Geelong.

Recent heavy rains have damaged the upstairs area of Osborne House and as a consequence the lights in the foyer had to be removed. The COGG are working on fixing the problem and we should soon have full lighting restored. At the moment it is a little like a disco when you walk in.

Please keep Mick Mutton in your thoughts and prayers as he continues his fight against disease. We also wish any other members who are experiencing ill-health a speedy recovery and hope they soon feel better.

We look forward to as many members and their friends coming along to the Pay Day barbecues and other events that are being planned. Your support is really important.

Rieny Nieuwenhof  
President

From page 4...

## Veteran Welfare Provision in the Geelong Region

At a recent Forum a number of agencies and ESOs gathered to share their contribution to the provision of veteran welfare in the Geelong district. What is apparent is that there are many agencies and ESOs who are very active in the support of veterans.

In my opinion what is needed however, is greater co-operation between these agencies and ESOs.

I would like to see a Memorandum of Understanding developed so that duplication can be avoided and that each agency knows what the others are doing.

The Geelong Welfare Hub seems to me the most appropriate central agency to bring the others together. There are many services available to veterans and their dependents. However, maintaining this provision in the face of increasing demand will be the future challenge, as entitlements and funding are being reviewed.

These are some of the organisations with comments about their purpose and objectives.

### Geelong & Surf coast Veterans Centre (Peter Thomas)

Provides welfare counselling on DVA pensions and related issues; Two volunteer Advocates to take rejected claims to the DVA and Appeals Tribunal; Many veterans still don't know where to go when facing difficulties; New legislation (VEA Act, MRC Act and SRC Act) make claims more complex; Advocates have found that the DVA response to claims needs to be more strategic and timely; DVA needs to be more empathetic and understanding of veteran needs.

### Geelong RSL (Toni Podbury)

Respond to the needs of all veterans 77% of their Welfare budget goes to younger veterans; Provide emergency financial support; When veterans become clients they become a lifelong responsibility for the RSL; The lack of Welfare Officers is a growing concern as needs rise; Two paid Advocates work from ANZAC House, one responsible for Geelong; The tailored response from the RSL includes financial, medical and aged care support; The number of younger veterans is increasing and their needs are often quite complex.

### Veteran Affairs Network (Kerry Mills)

Some 20 years in the same location with extensive welfare provision in the Barwon region; Covers over 5,000 clients Ageing and health issues are the main challenges facing veterans; Compensation and Pension claims are referred to GSCVC; A wave of younger veterans needing assistance is expected in the near future; The fast tracking of claims is essential and has been promised by the Minister.

### Legacy (John Moug)

Welfare limited to legatees and their dependents; Legacy is an independent organisation; Legacy's focus is mainly on the provision of permanent housing and educational bursaries;

Legacy provides a social network for members eg. Ladies Friendship Day; Main challenge is the transition from Legatee independent living to higher care facilities; Increasing focus on the dependents of Legatees

### Carry On Victoria (Geoff Eagles)

Carry On is a small organisation and tends to keep a low profile; Main function is the provision of housing and supporting educational needs of dependents; Carry On doesn't provide emergency accommodation; Carry On can provide a crisis grant of up to \$1,000 for emergencies

### APPVAA (Paul Copeland)

APPVAA has some 1300 members with its main role is advocacy for younger (contemporary) veterans; Problem of distance and remote locations a real issue for Advocates, support is border-less; Social media is an important means of keeping in touch; New government legislation is complex and time consuming in getting claims together; There is an increased reporting of mental illness, including PTSD.

### Diversitat Geelong (Anna)

Diversitat provides all kind of services for veterans as members of the community; Financial Counselling is provided for those veterans who have financial difficulties; Personal budgeting and personal repayment plans are developed with the veteran; Veterans are helped with 'lump-sum' payouts and the management of these funds; Diversitat receives referrals from many sources; Special assistance for those suffering addictions .. gambling, alcohol, medications; Emergency financial assistance can be organised; Referrals are made to other agencies, eg Beyond Blue

### The Geelong Clinic (Valya Bazalicki)

The Geelong Clinic runs a number of programs for veterans There are residential programs for veterans suffering PTSD; Programs on Anger Management, Alcohol Dependence etc.; Veterans are referred to the Veterans Counselling Service.

### Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (Australian Government)

A service founded by Vietnam veterans; Provision of free, confidential counselling and support for veterans; Enhance family functioning and parenting; After-hours counselling through Veterans Line; Group programs; Referrals to other services or specialist treatment programs

### GDVVAA (Rieny Nieuwenhof)

Friendship, support and welfare for Vietnam Veterans and their dependents; Social gatherings on a regular basis at the VVA Centre, Osborne House; Welfare Officer on site each Tuesday for counselling and advocacy; Referral to other agencies for special assistance; Crisis financial support upon application and meeting of criteria.

### Other Unit Associations

Many veterans belong to Unit Associations which provide support and welfare eg. National Servicemens Ass.; Naval Mens Ass.; 10<sup>th</sup> Medium Regiment Ass.; etc.

# Anzac Day 2014

There were several GDVVAA members who made the journey to Torquay and watched the sun come up during the dawn service. Aivar laid a wreath and others grabbed coffee to keep out the early morning chill.



# Anzac Day 2014

(Top) Rieny laid at wreath at the church service and caught up with Father Kevin beforehand. (middle) Families were prominent at the march while Ken laid a wreath at the RSL service. (bottom) How many veterans does it take to fix a banner? Andy thinks he's grown a bit.



# Anzac Day 2014

(Top) Andy still trying to be tall; Sully not really listening and Ken welcomes Rod. (centre) Still working on that banner while the veterans gather; At last, we've got it. Geniuses! (bottom) Waiting, waiting, and stepping off.



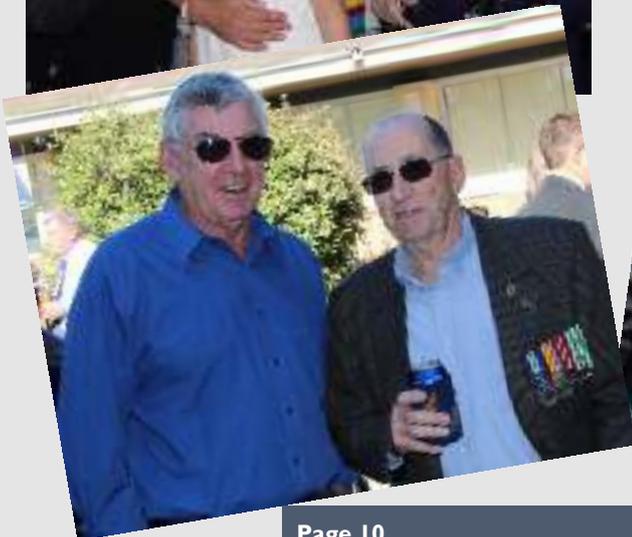
# Anzac Day 2014

(Top) There were many young people who took part in the march (middle) Tack tries not to step on Aivar's heels; the Vietnam veterans contingent was the biggest yet. (bottom) Veterans seemed very happy during the annual march.



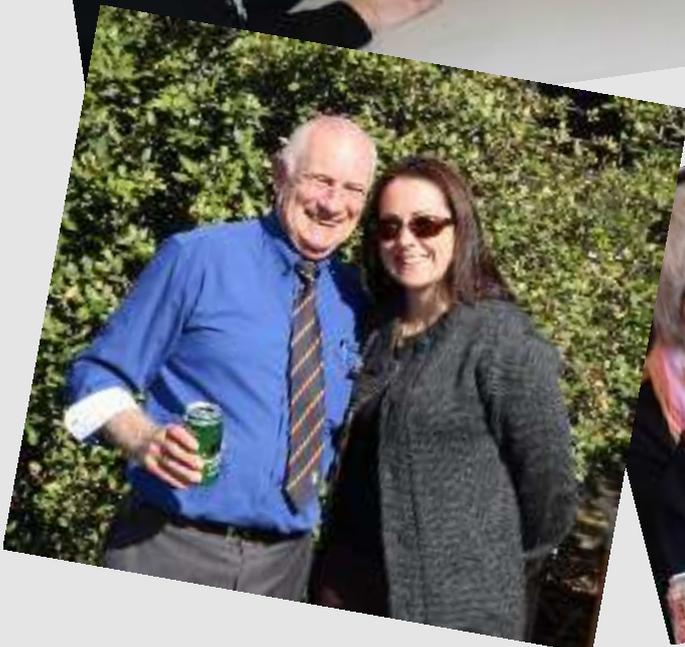
# Anzac Day 2014

(Top) It was a great day to enjoy the lawns at Osborne House with the extended temporary license proving very popular (middle) Three old salts talking rubbish; Old and young beautiful women! And the sunglasses have it (bottom) Two duos enjoying the sunshine—you choose which duo looks the best.



# Anzac Day 2014

(Top) The Miles mob; Dot and a young raffle winner (middle) a family gathering with a joyful president close at hand (bottom) Father and daughter; and a serious conversation.



# *Life in the GDVVAA*

(Top) The ladies had a great trip to Sorrento recently (middle) Man and his best friend; Kevin tries to pick up; Nigel has a visitor at the Pako barbecue. (bottom) Rieny addresses the meeting on the Avenue of Honour. Belmont Youth Club has Vets night for badminton Tuesday 6-7:30 and they would love to see a few more come along. Just roll up to the hall in High St Belmont next door to Belmont Lodge, donate \$2 and join in the fun Geoff Miles and Jim Ellis helped to lay a new rubberised floor surface that makes the jolts a little softer.





## A TRUE LOVE STORY



**This 89 year old woman was arrested for shop lifting.**

**When she went before the judge in Cincinnati he asked her, "What did you steal?" She replied, "A can of peaches."**

**The judge asked her why she had stolen the can of peaches and she replied that she was hungry. Then the judge asked her how many peaches were in the can. She replied 6.**

**The judge said, "Then I will give you 6 days in jail."**

**Before the judge could actually pronounce the punishment, the woman's husband spoke up and asked, the judge if he could say something on his wife's behalf. The judge said, "What is it?"**

**The husband said, "She also stole a can of peas."**

## Stuff you didn't know you didn't know!

Men can read smaller print than women can; women can hear better.

Coca-Cola was originally green.

It is impossible to lick your elbow.

The State with the highest percentage of people who walk to work:

Alaska

The percentage of Africa that is wilderness: 28% (now get this...)

The percentage of North America that is wilderness: 38%

The cost of raising a medium-size dog to the age of eleven: \$16,400

Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.

The first novel ever written on a typewriter: Tom Sawyer.

Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king from history: Spades - King David; Hearts - Charlemagne; Clubs - Alexander, the Great; Diamonds - Julius Caesar

$111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987, 654,321$

If a statue in the park of a person on a horse has both front legs in the air, the person died in battle. If the horse has one front leg in the air the person died because of wounds received in battle. If the horse has all four legs on the ground, the person died of natural causes.

Q. What do bulletproof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers and laser printers have in common?

A. All were invented by women.

Q. Half of all Americans live within 50 miles of what?

A. Their birthplace

And last of all, at least 75% of people who read this will try to lick their elbow!

**All very interesting? Well, there's more to come.**



## Vandals (idiots) make their mark

People may have noticed a story in the Geelong Advertiser that our Vietnam memorial, on Melbourne Road, was vandalised just before Anzac Day.

It is thought that this was an opportunist attack and the memorial was cleaned up very quickly, thanks to Laurie.

The Police are investigating and hopefully they will identify the vandal. In the many years the memorial has been there this is the first time something like has happened. Let's hope it's the last.



## Bloke's Day Out attracts lots of attention

This year's event was again held at Eastern Beach.

It was fantastic weather and our display attracted a good number of visitors.

Thanks to Kerry Mills, from the VAN Office, for all the printed materials.

Our digger model in full army greens, including ammo belt, and dummy hand grenades proved very popular with the youngsters.

Let's hope the display and the time taken by those who volunteered for the day, pays off.

## Coming Events

**Book in soon for these events.**

May 15: Bus Trip to Seymour ( places are limited)

June 20: Formal Mixed Dining In Night

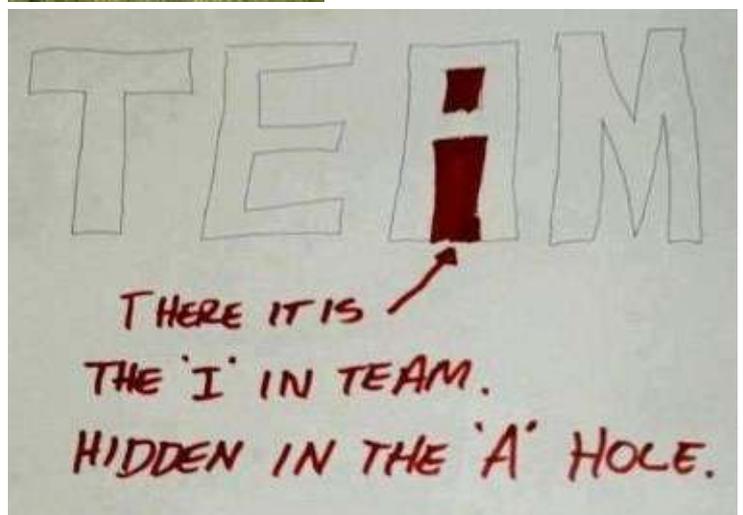
July 18-20: Tour to Phillip Island

August 15: Vietnam Veterans Annual Dinner

August 17: Vietnam Veterans Memorial Service

August 18: Bus to Shrine of Remembrance for Vietnam Veterans March

**The Geelong Partners of Veterans Association meets at the Black Sheep at 10.30am on the first Monday of each month for coffee and cake. For more information call Joy Herman on 0409 343950.**





## Volunteers sell Anzac Day badges

Bruno organised a very successful badge selling roster this year. Volunteers manned the sites around Geelong with Lynne D (as she is known in the social pages) taking along her own special helper.

## Membership

Financial Membership to April 28.

Life: 11

Ordinary (Service): 158

Associate: 71

Second: 7

Honorary: 6

**Total: 253**



There are 45 Ordinary members and 18 Associate members who have not renewed their membership from 2013. Membership fees remain at \$28 and \$10 respectively. Functions that require sub branch subsidy are only open to financial members.

The committee will contact non-financial members in May and June to ensure their welfare needs (if any) are being met and at the same time seek their commitment to the sub branch.

This action is in line with the policy of the Victorian State Executive to ascertain the health and wellbeing of all known members by 2016.

## Have any news?

Have a story to tell or an idea to share? Maybe you want to write a letter to the editor, or send in a photo.

If so, then please contact Steve Strevens, editor of The Slouch Hat. Call 0418 534 526 or email [scstrev@hotmail.com](mailto:scstrev@hotmail.com).

## Poetry corner

Two poems by Kerry Thompson which have been submitted for readers' enjoyment.

### Heartfelt

They were all once young men.  
 The Government made them the fighting machine.  
 But the young fellows actually seemed keen.  
 Training and new skills acquired.  
 And ready to go.  
 For Queen and country.  
 The politicians thought so.  
 Marriage and children followed on slow.  
 Caring and sharing if you allow so.  
 Love, honour and obey.  
 Naturally we're talking about the Army, Okay.  
 The children have grown and got lives of their own.  
 We should be happy together on our own.  
 The pride they carry can lead to a fall.  
 But it only takes a telephone call.  
 Blackness can release horrific fears.  
 To quell the terror of this big empty space.  
 The boys have their own welfare system in place.  
 The Government turned the boys into men.  
 Now the men have to fight the system again.  
 I try to manage your care.  
 When I'm told" I'm alright Jack".  
 Look after my mate over there.  
 Please fellas, give us a chance.  
 We won't turn our backs.  
 Between us we can beat,  
 Repat, Repat.....

### Life's Trade Off

Family for Army mates  
 Bosses for sergeants  
 Decisions for orders  
 Sports for military training  
 Tools for rifles  
 Youth for experience  
 Peace for war  
 Homeland for Vietnam  
 Houses for tents  
 Footy fields for paddy fields  
 Recognition for humiliation  
 Peace of mind for PTSD  
 Life for death  
 The biggest trade off of all.

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You may find some errors in this Newsletter. That is in keeping with our policy of having something for everyone.