



# The Slouch Hat

March  
2015

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*This Newsletter is a publication of the Geelong & District Sub-Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia*



## Our 2015 Leaders

**Elected at the AGM for the year 2015 is a group of men and women determined to make this year a memorable one for Geelong's Vietnam Veterans and their families.**

Led by President Rieny Nieuwenhof and Vice-Presidents Bernard Clancy and Ken Baker, the Executive includes Secretary David Weeks, Treasurer Michael Hoare and Welfare Officer Darby Drennan.

Other Committee members are Graeme Unmack (Bar), Les Fuller (museum), Nigel Wilson (Tennis / Men's Days), Jocelyn McMillan (Marketing), Peter Sullivan (Chef), Andy Trefferly, Bill Reid (Web site), Lyn Den Besten (Welfare Rep), Colin Walters, Brian O'Hara and Frank Cunningham, and Aivars Mikelsons (Minute Secretary).

Our Committee represents the interests of members and are always available to members for help with any questions they may have on the association.

**The significant event for 2015 will be the celebration of the 40th year of Vietnam Veterans in the Geelong region. There is discussion of a "dinner" somewhere in Geelong, and the Committee welcomes input from members.**

# Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Geelong & District Sub Branch

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



## **Postal Address**

PO Box 484  
Geelong, 3220

## **Visit us**

Osborne House  
Geelong

## **Contact Us**

Ph: 5277 0311  
Fax: 5222 5566

## **Website**

geelongvietnamvets.com

## **Email**

gdvva@gmail.com

## **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.

## **Executive**

### **Rieny Nieuwenhof**

#### **President**

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#### **Vice President**

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#### **Vice President**

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#### **Treasurer**

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## **Committee**

### **Aivar Mikelsons**

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#### **Marketing**

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#### **Curator VVC Museum**

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#### **Tennis/Mens' Days**

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### **Colin Walters**

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### **Frank Cunningham**

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### **Brian O'Hara**

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# Rieny's Report

## Welcome to 2015!

**This year will be another busy year for the Geelong & District Vietnam Veterans Association.**

### 2015 Executive & Committee

I wish to thank those members who accepted nominations for the 2015 Executive and Committee. It was pleasing to see that the membership has confidence in my leadership, by electing me as your President for the third year. I hope I can be of service to the Association. It is especially gratifying to see two females on the Committee – Lyn Denbesten and Jocelyn McMillan – they will bring some decorum to our meetings and be great assets. I thank them for accepting the nominations. To all others who put their hands up – THANK YOU. We have a great team leading our Association.

I also wish to thank Gary Ryan and Kevin Benson, who while they are having a rest from the Committee will still be actively involved in the Association.

May I thank Peter Thomas for taking on the role of editor of 'The Slouch Hat'. Peter is well known to the veteran community, knows much about the issues facing veterans and their families and is very competent with the use of the software. We look forward to informative and entertaining editions.

### VAN Office Consultation

Over the break I received a call from the DVA informing me that a period of consultation regarding the future model of service delivery by the Geelong VAN Office had been initiated.

The Geelong & district region had a month to consult ESOs and others about the most efficient service delivery by DVA.

After broad consultation with the region's stakeholders the conclusion was fairly obvious ... we don't want the Geelong VAN office to close and move into the Centrelink complex.

Experience from other regions where this happened suggests that the service delivery is much inferior and unreliable. A submission has been prepared, with a number of responses from the Geelong RSL, Geelong Surf Coast Veterans Centre, the TPI Association and Legacy, and many individual responses. These documents have been forwarded to the Acting Secretary at the DVA, Canberra. I also provided copies to Jeff Jackson RSL Victoria, Richard Marles MP, Sarah Henderson MP, John Eren MP Lara and State Minister for Veteran Affairs, Christine Couzens MP Geelong and the new CoGG Veteran Affairs portfolio holder, Stretch Kontelj.

We will have to wait for Minister Ronaldson's decision.



### VVAA State Council

The State Council (AGM) met in Albury on 28<sup>th</sup> February. Planning for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the battle of Long Tan in 2016 are well developed and more information will be forthcoming from our State Executive this year. Our contribution to the anniversary quilt is being developed by Teresa Lawrence, a local artist and illustrator. Our panel will depict iconic scenes of key features around Geelong.

### Beach Cricket Match

The Beach Cricket 'grudge' match against the Outer Eastern SB at Ocean Grove didn't eventuate due to very poor weather and lack of a suitable pitch. All participants returned to the VVA Centre and we had a very pleasant and comfortable afternoon out of the wind and rain. We hope to try again in 2016. It was disappointing that so few members of the Geelong SB attended, I don't think we would have been able to field a full eleven. We lost by default.

### Avenue of Honour

Ken Baker, Vice President and Chairman of the AOH Sub Committee, has a report on our progress with the City of Greater Geelong for Stage two of the Project.

I hope G & DVVAA members have seen the new signage on Melbourne Road ( North and South)? And if you look carefully you will see new trees that have planted replacing those that had died.

I have written to the Geelong Council CEO Dr. Gillian Miles, about the removal of the community billboard from the Avenue of Honour. I have been assured that Council will look into it. We know we have the support of Richard Marles MP and Senator Michael Ronaldson, who agree that such a billboard is inappropriate within the dedicated Avenue of Honour honouring those who sacrificed their lives and served in the Vietnam War. **(Continued next page)**

From page 4...

### 2015 Calendar

I hope members have placed the 2015 VVA Calendar on the fridge. The calendar is on the last page of the 2014 Christmas edition of the 'Slouch Hat'.

### VVAA State Council

The State Council meeting will be held at the VVA Centre Geelong on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May. We expect the State Executive and over 50 delegates to attend.

### Negotiations regarding our Lease at Osborne House

Letters have been forwarded to the Geelong Council regarding the renewal of our lease at Osborne House, which expires in December this year. We are working with the Osborne Park Association and the Maritime Museum Committee of Management to ensure our leases are extended for a further two years.

### New Colour Bar

A new colour bar has been added to the front of the VVA Centre. The old one was looking quite tired and faded. Do you display a Vietnam colour bar on your car or caravan? Stickers are available in various sizes from the VVA Centre.

### Pay Day Lunches and other Events at the VVA Centre

All members know that each 'pay day' week we have our Friday Lunches at the VVA Centre. These are great and happy times for those who attend. I would ask that all members should come along to as many lunches as possible. Our cooks prepare delicious meals for only \$10, the bar is open and Frank runs a very amusing and enjoyable raffle. Come along and have some fun! Support YOUR Association.

There are other important events such as ANZAC Day, Grand Final day, Melbourne Cup and the Christmas lunch-

eon. As well, there are other 'fun' theme days during the year and special guest speakers from time to time, providing valuable information on a range of topics.

Sue Ryan co-ordinates the Ladies Luncheons, held at various places. Come along and enjoy each other's company.

### Pako BBQs

Each month members run the Pako BBQ outside Heritage Meats, Geelong West. We are always looking for Team members. The BBQs raise on average \$500- \$600 for the Association which goes into the welfare of veterans and sponsoring Association events.

### 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

This year we celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of our Association. A special event is being planned and we will need to get your enthusiastic support to make it a wonderful event. More information is found in this edition of the Slouch Hat.

### Website

Bill Reid has worked on our Website, it is a work in progress, and members can refer to the website for upcoming events. Our main form of communication is email so please check your computer regularly for messages from us.

**As we enter 2015 I call upon all Vietnam Veterans, Associate members and their families to support your Association by participating in as many events/special days as you can. Don't leave it to the faithful few to do all the work. Besides you are guaranteed to have a great time.**

*Rieny Nieuwenhof -  
President*

**Heritage Quality Meats**  
We Supply All Restaurants, Clubs, Hotels & Pubs  
Specialising in Bulk Meats, Cryovac, Spit Hire, etc.  
**5229 3462**  
VMA No: P625  
200 Pakington St., Geelong West







# Portarlington Golf Club

with Geelong & District Vietnam Veterans  
Association of Australia and



GEELONG SURFCOAST VETERAN CENTRE

## Centenary of Anzac Golf Day

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

Individual Men's & Ladies STABLEFORD Events

*Open to all veterans, non-veterans, partners and friends!*

Prizes for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Men & Ladies - 2 NTP's Men & Ladies - Straightest Drive Men & Ladies

8.30am Assembly for 9:00am Shot Gun Start

**Entry Fee: \$35 per player PAYABLE WITH ENTRY FORM\***

*Includes light lunch – please advise any special dietary requirements*

\*Entries close on Monday 9th March 2015

Silent Auctions

Raffles

*Proudly Sponsored By:*



- Heritage Meats
- Barwon Foods

- RSL Geelong
- Highton Cellars

**Golfers and non-golfers: This is a great day out. You can be competitive or play just for fun. There are vacancies in the field and we want YOU to join us at Portarlington Golf Club on 16 March. Entries close on 9 March. Entry Form is on Page 13.**

# Memorial and Avenue Project Moving Forward

**Chairman of the Avenue of Honour and Memorial Sub-committee, Ken Baker, says the project is moving forward.**

Committee members are: Frank Cunningham, Nigel Wilson, Colin Walters and Les Fuller. Our President Rieny, has also participated in a ex-officio capacity and has been actively involved in all aspects .of the project.

Following the special evening for gleaning ideas from the general membership, the sub-committee has developed a three stage plan for the significant enhancement of our existing avenue and Memorial.

## **Stage 1 – Avenue of Honour**

- ◇ Replacement of drought affected trees
- ◇ New Avenue signs
- ◇ Removal of the COGG Community Billboard

## **Stage 2 – Creation of a Memorial Park around the existing Memorial**

- ◇ Construction of a pathway from the Osborne Park Gates to Swinburne Street
- ◇ Commemorative pavers to line the pathway
- ◇ Construct crossover form Melbourne road kerb to Osborne Park Gates
- ◇ Provide garden beds to beautify the Osborn Park Gates each side of the crossover
- ◇ Place a Commemorative “Roll of Honour” Panel within the park
- ◇ Place bollards and or trees to identify Memorial Park extremity

## **Stage 3 – Interpretative panels along the northern side of Swinburne St to Osborne Park**

Preparation of panels for telling the story of Vietnam from:

- ◇ Australian Army, Navy and Air Force actions in Vietnam .
- ◇ Civil Aid programs such as Medical services to the Vietnamese

- ◇ Significant battles such as “Long Tan” and others
- ◇ AATTV and Army Nurses

The placement of a significant Vietnam icon (ie Long Tan Cross) or similar in the grounds of Osborne House near to the Lone Pine tree (WW1) and Kokoda Memorial (WW2)

**Stage 1 is complete with exception of the removal of the COGG Community Billboard which is still under consideration and is being actively perused with Council.**

We have set the end of 2015 for the completion of Stage 2 and to date we have had encouraging signs from Council staff who are drawing plans for the establishment of the park. Once received, they will be displayed.

We have begun the sale of commemorative pavers and seek your support in this. See Page 8. These pavers will show relevant Vietnam Veteran service details. They will be laid along the pathway.

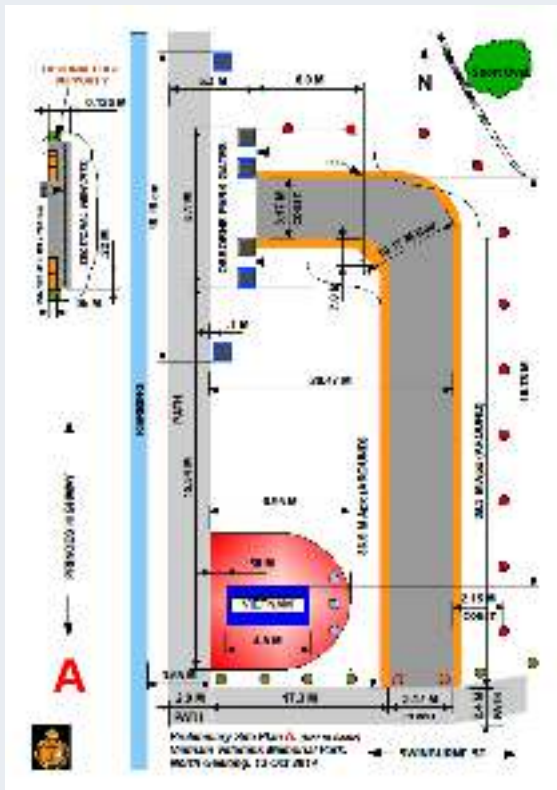
Within the Memorial Park is to be a Hooped panel which acknowledges the 521 sacrifices that were made in Vietnam. Lighting of the panel will further enhance this Roll of Honour.

Detailed plans are on display at the Geelong Vietnam Veteran Centre in Osborne House. Please take time to peruse them.

Stage 3 timeline is for completion by 16 August 2016, in time for the 50 anniversary of “Battle of Long Tan”.

Graeme (Ferret) Unmack has taken up the task of seeking information for the panels proposed in Stage 3. Ferret may ask you for details of various battles etc. and the sub-committee appreciates any help that you may be able to provide him with.

A decision will need to be made very soon on what the icon in Osborne House grounds will be. Suggestions welcome. (To page 7)



There is still a very long way to go with the project and we seek your full support to endeavour to bring about its completion, and leave the City with a sub-

stantial legacy on the service that Vietnam Veterans made to Australia, between the years 1962–1975.



## Where are They?

**How many Geelong and District Vietnam Veterans are there? Why aren't they in our Association? Or to be more specific our Sub-branch?**

At the end of January this year, there were 201 financial members comprised of 12 Life, 124 Ordinary, 59 Associate and Six Second Members.

You probably know a veteran or veterans who just haven't bothered to become members of our Sub-branch. Or to renew their membership.

How about asking them to join us. We have a lot to offer as you are sure to know.

**If you do find an interested Vietnam Veteran, ask him to contact our Secretary David Weekes on 0419 347 194 or email him at [dvdwks@bigpond.com](mailto:dvdwks@bigpond.com)**







## RSL asked to Recognise Veterans

**VVAA Victorian Branch President Bob Elworthy has written to RSL Victorian Branch President David McLachlan asking to have recognition of Veteran or Service member status on RSL membership cards. His letter follows:**

“Dear David

One theme that has been repeated to me whilst doing the rounds of VVAA Sub-Branches and during our quarterly State Council meetings has been the lack of visibility of the status of veterans and service personnel on the current RSL membership cards. I discussed this informally to Dr Webster last year.

As you would be aware the current membership card for all forms of RSL membership are very similar, and one has to look carefully at the bottom left hand corner to ascertain the status of the card holder. It is the view of the membership of the Victorian Branch of the VVAA that RSL membership cards issued to veterans and service members should carry a clearly distinguishable mark to identify the status of the holder. Our preferred option is for the card to bear the three service colours, in clearly visible vertical bands in the centre of the card, with the status “service” more prominently displayed.

It is the opinion of the members that re-branding veteran and service member cards will have a significant impact on these particular members who will feel more valued for their service. A rebranded card will clearly distinguish veterans and service members from the other levels of RSL membership that do not require ADF service as a prerequisite to join the RSL, and when displayed to RSL staff and others, the card will assist in reflecting positively on what the Returned and Services League of Australia is really all about. Who knows, a rebranding of the cards, and thus an acknowledgement and appreciation of their unique status, might encourage other veterans and service members to join their local RSL. “

Yours sincerely  
R W Elworthy

—o0o—

## RAAF Sub-branch Seeks Correct Vietnam Conflict End Date on Australia’s Memorials

**The VVAA RAAF Sub-branch is concerned at the historical inaccuracy of dates displayed on many Memorials commemorating Australia’s involvement in the Vietnam war.**

The Australian Vietnam Forces National memorial in Canberra carries an incorrect date according to the Sub-branch.

In a submission to the State Council Meeting at Albury on 28 February 2015, the Sub-branch recommended that ‘a further approach be made to the National Council seeking their support, with National to formally request a review of the matter with the Director of Estate Management, National Capital Authority, Canberra.’

The Sub-branch also suggested an approach be made to the Victorian Veterans’ Council and RSL, Victoria, advising of the date anomaly and seeking their assistance to rectify the concern.

When a cease-fire settlement was finalised in 1973 in Paris, the Australian then formally determined our involvement in the Vietnam war was from 1962 to 1973.

The RAAF Sub-branch argues that following skirmishes/incursions during 1974 by communist forces and major cease-fire breaches in 1975 the RAAF again became involved in Vietnam.

RAAF Detachment S provided relief/humanitarian flying Red Cross supplies and assisting the airlift of refugees and orphans in South Vietnam and out of the country.

Detachment S continued its mission until the fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975. It then evacuated Australian Embassy Staff and RAAF Airfield Defence Guards from Vietnam.

The Australian Government then formally amended the Vietnam conflict end date to include the RAAF 1975 Vietnam service.

Hopefully, in the near future all Australian memorials will carry the official Vietnam conflict date as 1975.

—o0o—

## It’s tough at the top.

The president mentioned in his report that the colour bar had been upgraded over the entrance into Osborne House. President Rieny is climbing the ladder of success while ‘helpers’ Vice-President Ken Baker and Treasurer Mick Hoare watch on. A bright new colour bar now resides atop the entrance to Osborne House.



## *Is this Indoor Cricket?*

Our recent Beach Cricket Match (Sunday 1st Feb) with Outer Eastern VVAA Sub Branch was washed out at Ocean Grove, due to poor weather and beach conditions .

So, back to the VVC we went to cook the BBQ and enjoy some Coldies and a Chin Wag.

Unfortunately, so few members of the Geelong Sub-branch attended, we would not have been able to field a full eleven. We lost by default.



# VVAA National Responds to Family Study Report 2014

## The Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia has responded to the Vietnam Veterans Family Study Report 2014.

The study, in the opinion of the V.V.A.A., confirms V.V.A.A. opinion that a series of mental health conditions and their sometimes fatal outcomes are related to the military service of Vietnam veterans.

In his response, National President Ken Foster commented upon each of the four volumes of the study .

In his conclusion to the report, the National President pointed out that there were serious concerns within the V.V.A.A. that medical conditions experienced by the children and grandchildren of Vietnam veterans are linked to the chemical exposure of the veteran and that this has not, to date, been fully investigated,

It was noted that there appears to be little or no regarding any multi-generational effects on family health matters.

A number of cases continue to be investigated in an attempt to confirm the suggested link and it is important to note that no alternative explanation has been given that refutes the suggestion that a chemical exposure is involved.

The V.V.A.A. are constantly made aware of concerns from Vietnam veterans and their families that unex-

plained medical conditions may be related to the veterans exposure to chemicals and the multi-generational effect of this chemical exposure.

The V.V.A.A. do not believe the examination of this possible relationship has been fully investigated and as a minimum that where questions are asked an alternative explanation is given.

We thank the government and in particular members of the Scientific Advisory Group and the Study Consultative Forum for the time and effort expended on this study and will take this opportunity to make recommendations we feel necessary.

### Recommendations:

1. That the government extend the availability of mental health services and treatment to the descendants of Vietnam veterans and that no age limit is imposed on the provision of services.
2. That the government develop a compensation program to financially support the descendants of Vietnam veterans where it can be shown a link exist between the child and the veteran's military service.
3. That the government further and fully investigate the link between the exposure to chemicals and herbicides by Vietnam veterans and their descendants.

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## The Right Dose

**Taking the right medicines at the right time is important. Taking medicines at the wrong time or in the wrong combination may make you sick—or worse.**

The Department of Veterans' Affairs subsidises a Dose Administration Aid (DAA) Service to all eligible DVA card holders.

DAA's organise your medicines to help you take the right pills at the right time. They have special compartments that hold each of your solid medicines (tablets and capsules) labelled to show you the day, and when in the day, you should take them.

Your DAA is packed for you by your Pharmacist. They will be able to answer any questions that you might have about it. Your GP and pharmacist as a team monitor your use of the DAA. Used correctly, a DAA Service is a good strategy

to make sure you get the most out of your medicines.

If you take a lot of medicines, or find it difficult to manage your medicines, a DAA may help. The DAA Service is useful if you often forget to take your medicines, are confused by your medicines or require assistance to manage at home. **If you are in a hospital or residential care facility, you are not eligible to receive the DAA Service.**

If you think a DAA Service will help you manage your medications, then see your GP. If your GP thinks you will benefit, they can give you a DAA prescription for six months.

It costs nothing for the service, however you will need to pay for your medicines as normal. The DAA Service will not affect or count toward the safety net. Your entitlements will not be affected if you receive the DAA Service.

Further information on the DVA DAA Service is available on the Department of Veterans' Affairs website: [www.dva.gov.au/health/daa](http://www.dva.gov.au/health/daa)



## Current Pension Rates

These rates are current from 1 January 2015 to 19 March 2015.

### Current maximum rates

Singles rate Pension	\$776.70
Pension Supplement	\$77.60
Total	\$854.30

Couples rate Pension (each)	\$585.50
Pension Supplement (each)	\$58.50
Total (each)	\$644.00

### Disability Pension rates

Special Rate (T&PI, blinded or TTI)	\$1,311.30
Intermediate Rate	\$ 890.10
Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA)	\$ 724.20
General Rate	

100%	\$ 466.10	50%	\$ 236.90
95%	\$ 443.18	45%	\$ 213.98
90%	\$ 420.26	40%	\$ 191.06
85%	\$ 397.34	35%	\$ 168.14
80%	\$ 374.42	30%	\$ 145.22
75%	\$ 351.50	25%	\$ 122.30
70%	\$ 328.58	20%	\$ 99.38
65%	\$ 305.66	15%	\$ 76.46
60%	\$ 282.74	10%	\$ 53.54
55%	\$ 259.82		

## Discount Vehicle Servicing Offer for our Members

The Bennett Automotive Group has offered a 15% discount to Vietnam Veterans.

Their service centre is Ultratech Motors, 79 Pakington Street, Geelong West, phone 03 52218477.

To get the discount you must show your membership card before your vehicle is serviced.

Owner Steve and Operations Manager David will attend our next BBQ to introduce the discount scheme to those present.

They have given a \$250 voucher as one of the excellent prizes to be offered at our Golf Day .

# Gary's Gear



If you're looking for some great gear to wear proudly or to give someone as a present, then get in touch with Gary Ryan. He has stocks of embossed clothing and a wide variety of other products for you.

**Remember, the small profits from each sale go to Veteran's welfare.**

Here's a few suggestions. Check with Gary for more specials and current pricing as you never know, he might have put them up or down.

**Polo tops @ \$33** (2 colours, grey or black).

**Rugby tops** (new this year) @ \$43 ( navy with denim collar or black with red or navy collar).

**Blue Shirts @ \$40**, long sleeve or short sleeve.

**Stadium Jacket** (new this year)@ \$53. Good value for money.

**Baseball caps @ \$15** and supporters caps @ \$15

**Special! Name badges are now available, a must for all members. Order yours now.**



All this and more, but sorry, no steak knives! Whatever you want, you can get it from Gary. Drop into the centre to make your choice.

## Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service

Provides 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 . **Phone::Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service 1800 011 046 FREE**

# GDVVAA ENTRY FORM

## Conditions of Entry

To view Conditions of Entry, visit the Clubhouse or visit the website: [www.portarlingtongolf.com.au](http://www.portarlingtongolf.com.au)

CONTACT PHONE No. or EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Address	Exact Hcap	Club	Golf Link No.

Please make Cheques payable to: **Portarlington Golf Club**

Post Entry Form to: **Tournament Secretary**  
**Centenary of Anzac Golf Day**  
**Portarlington Golf Club**  
**130 Hood Rd**  
**Portarlington 3223**



Enquiries: **Tournament Secretary, Bob Stoward 0428 597 697** **Portarlington GC PH. 5259 3361**

### **Credit Card Payments (\$3 fee applies)**

Card Type: Please Tick  Visa  Mastercard

I authorize the Portarlington Golf Club Inc. to debit my Credit Card for \$\_\_\_\_\_ (incl \$3 fee)

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sizzling Snags Will Boost Welfare Fund

Our popular BBQs in Pakington Street and at Bunnings not only make our customers happy, they also help boost our Welfare Fund.

The Pako Street BBQs are held on the fourth Saturday of the month. The next BBQ will be on 28 March.

The BBQs are a fun affair and those on duty have a great morning. We could use a few more members to help out so we can spread the load currently carried by a few.

The few hours involved each month not only earns dollars for the Welfare Fund but also is quite a social event.

If you can spare a few hours each month please contact Frank Cunningham on 0429 316 379 or email [dotandfrank@live.com.au](mailto:dotandfrank@live.com.au)

—o0o—

## Are You Current?



Some of our members appear to have forgotten to pay their annual subscriptions to the Sub-branch. Are you one of them?

It's now 2015 and although most have renewed their memberships, there are a few who have dropped off the list.

David Weeks needs to hear from you as soon as possible. The VVAA is here to help each and every Vietnam veteran and works hard on our behalf to keep our needs and entitlements before Federal and State governments.

Your committee works hard to provide a wide-reaching social and welfare program for our members.

Your membership subs go a long way towards making things happen.

**If you aren't current, or are finding it difficult to renew your membership, please contact David Weeks on 0419 347 194 or [dvdwks@bigpond.com](mailto:dvdwks@bigpond.com). He would like to hear from you.**



**Each day, 31 Australians are expected to be diagnosed with leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma.**

That would be our entire membership in less than a week. Scary stuff!!

The World's Greatest Shave is the Leukaemia Foundation's biggest fundraiser, and it's coming to the Geelong Vietnam Veterans Centre on 20 March, 2015.

This year, our team has pledged to shave, cut, colour or wax to raise valuable funds to reduce the impact of these diseases through research and free emotional and practical support (like transport and accommodation).

Dorothy and Frank Cunningham, Maris and Les Grace and Jocelyn McMillan have all pledged to shave and are looking for sponsors.

You'll have plenty of time to catch up with any of our "shavers" prior to the event for cash donations, or you can log on to [www.worldsgreatestshave.com](http://www.worldsgreatestshave.com), click sponsor, click sponsor a shaver and enter the name of the person you wish to sponsor. **All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.**

Alternatively, you might like to join our team. Please contact me by phone on 0419-890052 or via email at [mammalong@hotmail.com](mailto:mammalong@hotmail.com) and I'll be able to give you the details to get started.

**Jocelyn McMillan**

### DVA General Enquiries

Metro Phone: 133 254 \*

Regional Phone: 1800 555 254 \*

Email: [GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au](mailto:GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au)

DVA Website: [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au)

Factsheet Website:

<http://Factsheets.dva.gov.au>

\* Calls from mobile phones and pay phones may incur additional charges.



## Changes to Rehab Appliances Program

If you are a Gold or White Card holder (with assessed need due to an accepted disability), you can access aids or appliances to help you maintain independence in your home through the Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP).

Aids or appliances prescribed through the programme can include continence products, mobility and functional support aids, Personal Response Systems, Home medical oxygen, diabetic supplies, Continuous Positive Airways Pressure (CPAP) supplies.

RAP appliances are available based on an assessed clinical need made by a health provider such as a general practitioner, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech pathologist (speech therapist).

Your Local Medical Officer (GP) can provide the necessary referral to an appropriate allied health professional who can assess your need for RAP aids and appliances. Your GP can also offer advice and make requests in writing to DVA. Changes to the Rehabilitation Appliance Program (RAP) have seen the inclusion of several falls prevention items in the National Schedule of Equipment (the Schedule).

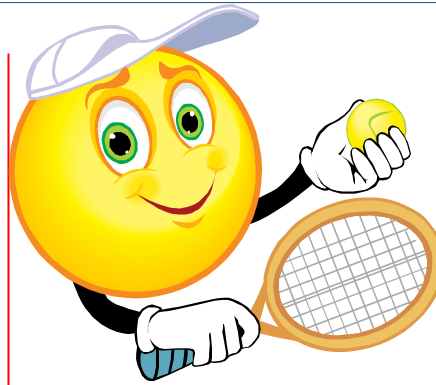
The RAP Schedule was enhanced to include a range of the falls prevention items which were supplied through the HomeFront programme. At the same time, the provision of items and services through HomeFront and the Veterans Home Maintenance Line (VHML) ceased from 6 February 2015.

These changes eliminated unnecessary duplication of assessments between the RAP and the Home Front programme. The inclusion of these falls prevention items in the RAP Schedule reduces 'red tape' and will result in an easier assessment process for eligible veterans as only one assessment will now be required.

The RAP assists eligible members of the veteran community to be independent and self-reliant in their own homes through the provision of a wide range of clinically required aids and appliances which are available on the Schedule.

Eligible veterans can continue to access the falls prevention items in the same way they access other items on the RAP Schedule by asking their GP for an assessment. If the falls prevention item is clinically required, the item will be supplied to them.

For more information about DVA's RAP program please call 1800 555 254 FREE (country).



## Tennis is On Again

**Since Christmas, Veterans, wives and guests have got together for a game of tennis on three occasions, with an average attendance of eleven people.**

This is especially encouraging, as for both of the January gatherings we needed to relocate to Kenwith Park Tennis Club, while the All Saints' courts were re-surfaced.

We returned to All Saints' on 11 February and those present enjoyed playing on the rejuvenated courts. As another challenge to our memories we introduced the new "Fast four" method of scoring for all of the sets played and this was accepted and enjoyed by all.

During the year, we must be alert to the fact that our numbers will always fluctuate, depending on whether people have temporarily migrated to the warmer northern temperatures or are away on holidays.

As always, the emphasis is on both the exercise component (only doing what feels comfortable) and the social side. After a active time on the court we break for morning tea, to relax, enjoy one another's company and sometimes we even enjoy a cake baked by Jim Ellis.

*If there are Vets and partners out there who haven't yet come along, we ask you please consider having a social hit on a regular or irregular basis.*

During 2015, it is planned that Veteran's tennis will continue to be held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at All Saints' Tennis Club, 113 Noble Street, Newtown at 10.30am.

**Dates for the next three months are 11<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> April and 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> May.** We look forward to seeing you there.

**Nigel Wilson**





### Share the News

**Don't keep all the good news to yourself!**

The Slouch Hat is your newsletter. If you have a gripe or a compliment or something you want answers to, let us know.

All you have to do ring Peter Thomas, editor of The Slouch Hat on 0417 374 249 or email him at [thomasp@bigpond.net.au](mailto:thomasp@bigpond.net.au)

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