



VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA GEELONG & DISTRICT BRANCH



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THE SLOUCH HAT NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2019

Welcome to the April 2019 issue of the Geelong and District Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Newsletter - "[The Slouch Hat.](#)"

Your "Vietnam Veterans Centre" is located at
31 Mt. Pleasant Road, Belmont.

Telephone: **03 52433700.**

The centre is open every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday (except public holidays), call in and have a coffee, a social chat, or to just get the latest gossip. We can also advise you on who to contact if you require assistance.

Volunteers are required to staff the office, so if you have a free day, and would like to be a part of the team, call the office, or drop in and find out more about how you can help, and keep the centre open.



Check out the Geelong Vietnam Veterans website (or call our office) for any information regarding meetings, lunch dates or events happening throughout 2019.

****The Geelong Surf Coast Veterans Centre:** *For all matters relating to welfare and pensions contact the centre on 035222 6003, or call in and see the staff at 14 Griffith Street, Grovedale.*

G & D.V.V.A.A. AGM.

On Monday February 18th, 2019, the Geelong Sub-branch held its Annual General Meeting, and your committee members for the coming year are listed below:

President:	Rieny Nieuwenhof	Vice President:	Brian O'Hara
Vice President:	Bernard Clancy	Secretary:	Gary Ryan
Treasurer:	Mick Hoare		

Committee Members: David SIKORSKI (Merchandising), Ken BAKER (Avenue of Honour Project), Frank CUNNINGHAM, Kevin BENSON (Catering), Nigel WILSON (Tennis/Commemorations), Aivar MIKELSONS (Minutes Secretary), Chris Schaper, Les Fuller (Museum), Neil DAW (Webmaster/Newsletter).

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Again, may I sincerely thank all the members of the G & DVVAA Committee who have continued their generous work for the Association, its members and families.

In regard to 2019 there are a number of things to bring to members attention.

- VP Brian, Treasure Mick and myself met with the Community Consultant in regard to the Master Plan being developed by CoGG for the Osborne Park precinct. Notice that the Council has broadened the scope of this consultation to include all elements of the Osborne Park precinct, not just Osborne House and the Stables. This has involved a number of other players e.g.: Port of Geelong Authority, Grain Corp, Coast Guard, NGCC, NGFC, Heritage Victoria, apart from the Hamilton Group, who seem to be very active in promoting their concept plan. We have attended the OP Precinct Workshop meeting.

- 2019 Memberships are now due, and are coming in steadily. We really hope the Association will continue to sustain and even improve its membership base.

- Federal MP Sarah Henderson, Member for Corangamite, attended our Friday lunch to present the grant to the Association. Thank you to VP Ken who has steadfastly followed up to keep the momentum going for the AOH panels project. We would hope that all works are completed by August 2019.

- This coming year I would like to see the Association form a Social Sub Committee, whose role would be to plan activities for the membership e.g. Day Tours, picnics, special interest group gatherings etc. It seems that night time functions don't attract the numbers we hope for so let us try day time functions/events.

- As there is no early conclusion to the Osborne House saga our 2000 odd historical artefacts remain in storage. Obviously, this is not ideal as it robs the general public and our members from access to our 'story'.

Finally, may I thank all those who have volunteered to be part of the 2019 Executive and Committee. We move forward with optimism.

Rieny Nieuwenhof
President

KEN BAKER'S REPORT

2018 has been a year of frustration and endless meetings regarding the Stage 3 Project at the Vietnam Avenue and Memorial in North Geelong. Early in the year after numerous meetings with COGG, we gained an "In Principle Support" for the Stage 3 Project.

The following amendments were proposed and accepted: -

The total number of glass panels reduced to 9, two in the Avenue ie at both ends, North and South. To have placed them along Swinburne Street was considered to be stepping outside of its current location in Melbourne road.

- Instead of telling a more detailed story of Australian Forces involvement in Vietnam the focus will be complement the existing perforated panels with information pertaining to these photos and leave a knowledge base for future generations. The placement of QR Codes on the panels will allow the public to go to the Australian War Memorial site for any further information that may be sought.
- COGG Arts and Culture have said that it would prefer that the wording surround the photo and not be placed over the top of the photos as is the case with the Seymour Vietnam walk.

Computer file for production of the Navy panel was completed and is ready for production and it provides a realistic view of what is expected for the remaining panels.

Submission of the project was lodged with the Department of Veteran Affairs for a grant under "Saluting their Service" major grants scheme at the end of March 2018. We kept requesting progress each month until finally we received the Minister's Letter that the grant

totalling \$20,000 had been approved on 21 December 2018. Budgeted outlay for the project totals \$27,000. The balance will be sourced by a grant from Geelong Connected Communities (founded by Bendigo Bank) of \$5,000 (already approved) and \$2,000 from Sub-branch from funds already held.

So: 2019 the following time frame is proposed:

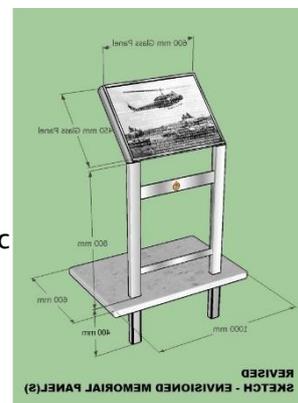
Feb 2019, Finalise the application and lodgement for a works permit to COGG noting that the site is now covered by a heritage overlay.

Commence the computer files for the remaining 8 panels. Mar 2019, production of the glass panels and stainless-steel frames, refer drawing hereunder.

Apr 2019, concrete frames in place around the Memorial and along the Avenue, using the same method as with the Memorial path ie exposed aggregate. Placement of the glass panels onto the frames.

May 2019, Official opening with an invitation to the Minister for Veteran Affairs Darren Chester, to unveil.

Arron McGlade COGG has informed the Sub-branch that the existing perforated steel panels along the avenue have been under sized footings and foundations as the panel at the Mackie Street end of the Avenue has fallen over. A consultant's report has been received that the engineering was not sufficient for the wind coming across the railway yard. These panels will need to be removed and re-designed and correction works undertaken. It is expected that these remedial works will be completed by Anzac Day commemorations 2019.



Cheers and best wishes to all

Ken Baker

Geelong Connected Communities is a community company established for the benefit of every Geelong resident. This company is a vehicle for all of Geelong to work together and experience the benefits of having its own community company, and as such, are a supporter of our Memorial Precinct and Avenue of Honour projects. Check out their website for more information about projects in the Geelong region at: www.geelongconnectedcommunities.com.au.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Meetings: Monday, April 8th, 2019. Monday May 13th, 2019.
Tuesday June 11th, 2019. Monday July 8th, 2019.

** Committee Meetings commence 9.30am, General Meeting commence 10.30am: Vietnam Veterans Centre, 31 Mt Pleasant Road, Belmont.

Pay Day Lunches: Every second Friday: April 12th, May 10th and 24th, June 7th and 21st, July 5th, 2019. (Note: No Pay Day lunch on April 26th due to ANZAC Day on the 25th, and July 19th due to a function yet to be determined -TBA).

** All held at the North Geelong Football Clubrooms, Swinburne Street, North Geelong, commencing at 11.30am (unless otherwise stated – check the website for updates). Contact the Veterans Centre to make your bookings on 0352433700, Monday, Tuesday or Thursday.

'Pako BBQ': Don't forget the 'Pako BBQ', 4th Saturday of every month, outside Heritage Meats, 200 Pakington Street, Geelong West.

Mixed Tennis: Tennis is held on the 2nd, 4th and 5th Wednesdays of every month at All Saints Tennis Club, 113 Noble St, Newtown, commencing at 9.30am (weather permitting). No cost, comfortable exercise and a "cuppa" to finish with. All welcome to join the growing band of tennis players for exercise and fun. Contact Nigel Wilson (0417 542034) or check our website for further information.

Ladies Lunch Dates: Ladies, please keep your eye out for regular emails outlining the Ladies Lunches, held on the third (3rd) Thursday of each month, at various venues in the Geelong area. If you require further information please contact the Centre (03 52433700) or Sue Ryan (0418 898190) for details.

Special Events: Thursday April 25th, 2019 – ANZAC Day. Dawn Service 6.00is at Eastern Park, Geelong. March and service commence 10.30am, Geelong

July 19th – Christmas-in-July Function. Format and venue TBA.

August 9th to 17th – Vietnam Veterans Badge Selling Week.

Sunday, August 11th – Vietnam Veterans March & Service, Melbourne Road Memorial Precinct, North Geelong.

Sunday August 18th – Vietnam Veterans Day 2019.

For further information on any of the abovementioned events, please contact our Vietnam Veterans Centre, Belmont, on 03 5243 3700. The above list of events is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances, so don't forget to check out the Sub-branch Website to see what is happening, and to catch up on what has been making news.

PASSING OF MEMBERS

The editor has realised that in recent issues of the new-look "Slouch Hat Newsletter", since it re-appeared in mid-2018, a very obvious and important element within the newsletter has been overlooked – the acknowledgement of our members who have passed away. I very much regret that this oversight took place and the following is a list of members who are no longer amongst us:

Thomas P. GARTLAND, 3715723, passed away 25/08/2018.

John F. AINSWORTH, 3791408, HQ 1ATF, SVN 07/1970-05/1971, passed away 21/09/1018.

Letwinski (Lewis) VITALI, 3789949, AFV Detachment, SVN 11/1968-09/1969, passed away 19/01/2019.

Peter James TAYLOR, 3789542, 25 Supply Platoon, RAASC, SVN 05/67 – 05/68, passed away 14/02/2019.

NEWS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED



The recipient of the Tommy Simpson Award for 2019 is Graham Christie. Graham has been a long serving member of the Sub-Branch and has worked tirelessly for many years in Queenscliff and the Geelong region on behalf of Vietnam Veterans. He received the 2018 Shrine of Remembrance Medal in recognition of his service.

Thomas (Tommy) Simpson was a local Geelong lad (born in 1939) and served in Vietnam with the Royal Australian Artillery with 105 Field Battery. He was killed on December 9th, 1965. The award is named in his honour.

During the last week of February, some members of the sub-branch and their wives/partners/girlfriends (or all three), journeyed to Beachport, South Australia, for a week of well-earned R & R, relaxing with some golf, a winery tour, swimming, and some touring through the local districts. Great company made it easy to enjoy a social drink and meals together. Below are a few snap shots of the happy campers working hard:



AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE VETERANS' COVENANT

The Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant was announced by the Prime Minister, the Hon Scot Morrison MP, and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Darren Chester MP, on 27 October last year.

The Covenant encourages Australia to recognise and acknowledge the unique nature of military service, and support veterans and their families.

The Covenant includes an oath, which the Australian people will be encouraged to take at community commemorative events, such as Remembrance Day.

The new Veteran Card and an Australian Veteran Lapel Pin and a Reservist Lapel Pin underpin the Covenant.

The intention of the Covenant is to provide employers, businesses, local communities, and veteran and sporting organisations the opportunity to commit to supporting veterans and their families.

Veteran Card

Veteran applicants, new to DVA, can apply for the new Veteran Card by creating a MyService account and, there, request a Veteran Card.

Please note

This is the commencement of the implementation of the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant.

Registration is aimed at applicants new to DVA.

Current DVA health card holders will be issued with the new Veteran Card over the coming months.

Registration includes the following:

As a veteran you are eligible for free treatment under the Non Liability Health Care (NLHC) arrangements for mental health, should you ever need it

During the application you will be asked to provide your bank details, as you may be eligible for a fortnightly payment supplement, associated with the NLHC arrangements
Applications received prior to 18 February 2019 may receive an interim physical card by post, with the new physical Veteran Card following a few weeks later.

The Government is working with Australian businesses and community organisations to discuss tangible recognition and services for Veteran Card holders.

More information, including a list of participating businesses, will be available on this website over the coming weeks.

The Veteran Card will make it easier for Australians to recognise and respect the contribution that veterans have made to Australia and for our veterans to connect with the broader Australian community.

The Veteran Card is available to anyone who has served in the Australian Defence Force with at least one day of continuous full-time service.

Eligible Reservists, including those engaged in Disaster Relief Service, Border Protection Service, or involved in a serious service-related training accident, will also be able to request a Veteran Card.

The card will help Australian businesses, service providers and community organisations to identify veterans so they can offer their acknowledgement and respect. For example, the card could provide a platform for businesses and community groups to provide tangible recognition and service to holders of the card.

It is important to note that the respective business or organisation determines what concessions, if any, they choose to offer to a veteran and their family. There is no obligation for a business or organisation to offer a concession.

The appearance of the Veteran Card is a rebadging and redesign of DVA's current health treatment and concession cards (Gold, White and Orange).

Existing DVA health cards (Gold, White and Orange)

All existing DVA health card holders (Gold or White) and concession card holders (Orange) do not need to apply. Your existing services and entitlements are maintained. Health providers and participating businesses will recognise your existing card.

The new-look card will be issued to you automatically over the coming months, along with a Veteran Lapel Pin and Oath as part of a phased roll-out. Orange Card holders will also receive their new-look card in due course.



The Oath

A key objective of the Covenant is recognition and support of the Australian community for veterans and their families.

The Oath is a declaration on behalf of the Australian people to give an enduring and formal recognition of the valued contribution that current and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and their families make today, and have made in the past, to our country.

The Oath is not intended to replace the Ode, but is an additional commitment of respect to Australia's military veterans.

The Oath may be said at special events such as community commemorative events, such as Remembrance Day.

Veteran Lapel Pin and Reservist Lapel Pin

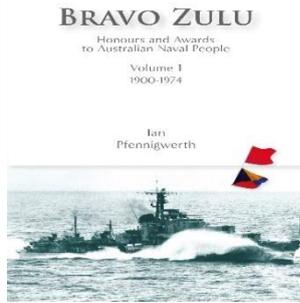
The Veteran Lapel Pin and Reservist Lapel Pin provide a way for the public to recognise and connect with veterans and acknowledge their service to the nation. The pins will help identify veterans when they aren't wearing their uniform or medals.

The pins will be available for distribution in the first half of 2019.

Bravo Zulu Volume 2 by Ian Pfennigwerth

Honouring the Service of Australia's Naval Men and Women

Before Federation, colonial naval officers were recognised for steadfastness and courage while serving in South Africa and China. This tradition was enhanced by the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) through its distinguished record during World War I. Navy men won Australia's first awards for gallantry in the face of the enemy in 1914, and they went on to consolidate this reputation for excellence and daring in European, Middle East and Asian theatres of war and throughout the uneasy peace that followed.



In 1939 RAN men - and later women - went to war again, cementing our Navy's reputation as a steadfast ally and determined enemy, and from 1946 the RAN fought in Korea, Malaya, Malaysia and Vietnam while developing its capabilities for sustainment, training and naval diplomacy in a Cold War world. Its Middle East engagement, from the 1991 Gulf War to this day, and in sensitive operations in the South Pacific and Southeast Asia demonstrated our Navy's capabilities and gained it international respect through the service of its men and women.

Now, in *Bravo Zulu* (navalese for 'Well Done'), Australians have a magnificent resume of the trials, tribulations and triumphs of their Navy in 115 years of service, illustrated by individual accounts of its men and women who received Imperial, Australian and foreign honours and awards for their service, gallantry or bravery. *Volume 1* covering the period 1900-74 was released in 2016. Launched by Australia's Chief of Navy in November 2018, *Volume 2*, covering the period 1975-2014, concluded this nine-year research project.

The second book, with 882 pages, describes the development and activities of the RAN from 1975, with separate chapters devoted to the Navy's role in the 1991 Gulf War, in the 1999-2000 UN East Timor peacekeeping operation, enforcement of UN sanctions on Iraq, the 2003 Iraq War the continuing service of naval people in Iraq and Afghanistan, ashore and afloat and, of course, border security operations in Australia. Above all, *Bravo Zulu Volume 2* is about people labouring mightily to ensure that Australia's Navy is acknowledged internationally for its organisational capability and operational reach. The book is illustrated with maps, diagrams and 160 photographs.

Owning a Copy

Hardcover edition of *Bravo Zulu Volume 1* \$85; *Volume 2* \$90. Two-volume set \$170.

Postage and handling \$15 per volume.

Visit Ian Pfennigwerth's Naval History website: <https://www.nautilushistory.com.au/>

Or buy through the online re-sellers listed at

<https://www.echobooks.com.au/military/bravo-zulu/>

SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT

<p><i>Dear God,</i></p> <p><i>Please send clothes for all those poor ladies on grandpa's computer.</i></p>  <p><i>Amen</i></p>	<p>Getting Old Should Require Training ...</p>  <p>I bought a new stick deodorant today. The instructions said: "Remove cap and push up bottom." It hurts to walk, but whenever I fart, the room smells lovely.</p>
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An eagle was sitting on a tree resting, doing nothing.

A small rabbit saw the eagle and asked him, 'Can I also sit like you and do nothing?'

The eagle answered: 'Sure, why not.'

So, the rabbit sat on the ground below the eagle and rested. All of a sudden, a fox appeared, jumped on the rabbit and ate it.

Moral of the story:

To be sitting and doing nothing, you must be sitting very, very high up.

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