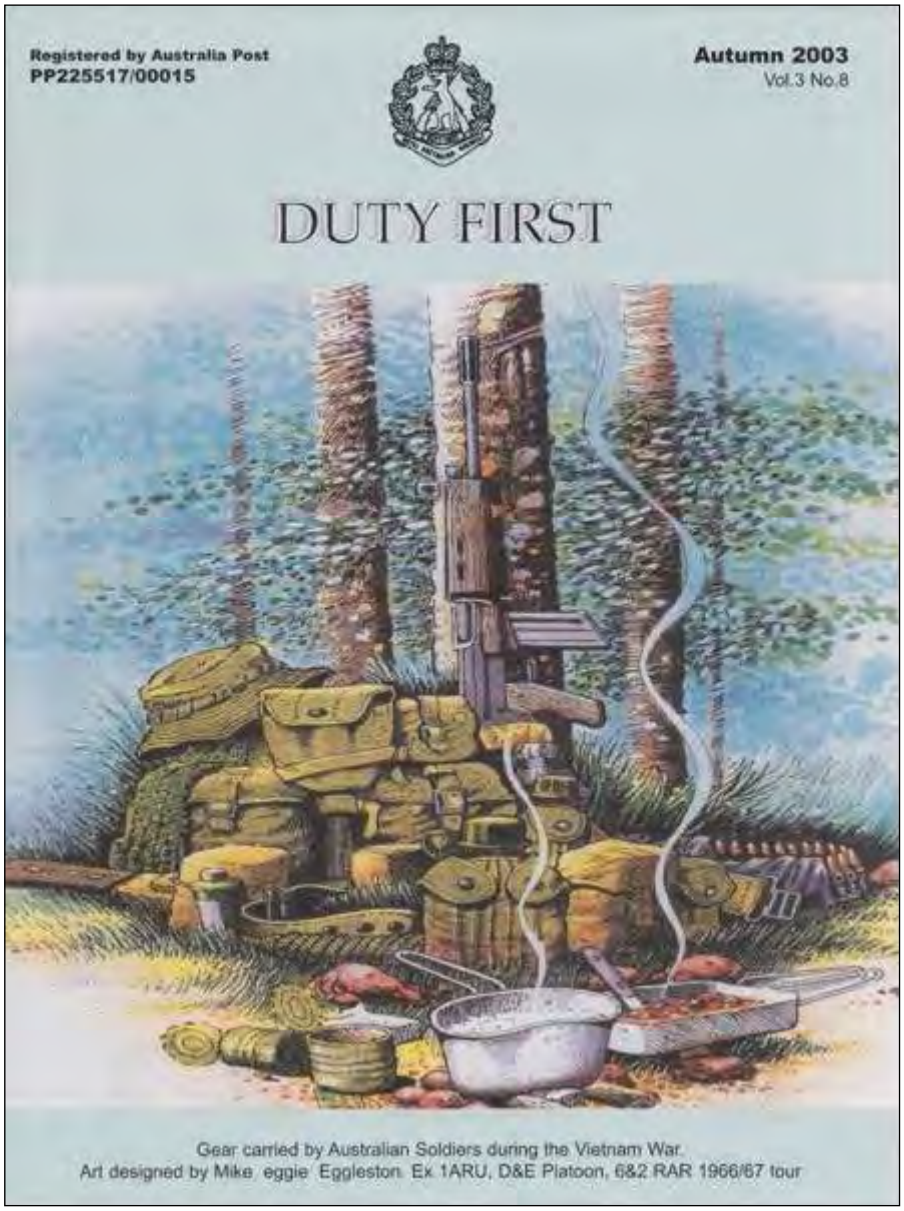
WESTERN OUTPOST NEWS

APRIL 2020

St Mary's Outpost the 'Train of Knowledge'

St Marys Veterans Centre

St Marys Outpost - VVAA
and St Marys RSL Sub-Branch



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DEADLINES FOR PUBLICATION

August 2020 ..... 15 July 2020
December 2020 ..... 15 November 2020
April 2021 ..... 15 March 2021
Articles of a general nature may be submitted at anytime,
please send to: davoddg38@gmail.com

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT
ST MARYS VIETNAM VETERANS OUTPOST
"WHERE IT ALL COMES TOGETHER"

I open my report by suggesting that now that the World is affected by the deadly COVID-19, to minimise the risk of infection, remember to follow the health and safety guidelines put out by our Health Authorities.

On the home front:

Our AGM held on Sunday 23rd February resulted in a minor changing of the guard, all positions were filled unopposed by the 2019 incumbents, with the exception of Treasurer; our long standing treasurer Ted Fish declined nomination this year and the vacancy was filled by calling for a treasurer nomination from the floor; George Perrin accepted the call and was duly elected as treasurer. I also take this opportunity to thank Ted for his past dedication.

Congratulations are in order to Sam Vecchio for his elevation to Life Member of the VVAA St Marys Outpost.

Our Pension team is progressing quite well, Hira passed her ADTP Course with flying colours, and, credit must also be given to her mentors for their expert guidance.

Our $1,000,000 note bookmark promotion was very well received by the veterans at the various hospitals we visit. You too can help spread the word; if you know of any younger veterans who would benefit from our services, then put their name and address on an envelope and we will post them one or two of our million dollar notes, that as you know, has our contact information printed on the back. We recently had a State VVAA meeting here at the train, where delegates seemed eager to take away a few million dollars.

Members are reminded that we now operate an EFTPOS machine for member convenience, take advantage of this service especially if you need to pay memberships that are due.

The "Ask me how" promotion put out by the RSL Sub-Branch in association with the Train is moving along quite well, if you want to assist with distribution of pamphlets contact the driving force behind the promotion, Dave Cuff 0416 036 185.

In conclusion, once again my sincere thanks go out to all members for your continuing support in all things relevant to the Trains Successful Operation.

Tony Mullavey
President

A man is brought into his new prison cell.
Already there is a long-time resident who looks about 100 years old.
The new man looks at the old-timer inquiringly.
The old-timer says: "Look at me. I'm old and worn out. You'd never believe that I used to live the life of Riley. I wintered on the Riviera, had a boat, four fine cars, the most beautiful women, and I ate in all the best restaurants of France."
The new man asked: "What happened?"
"Ah well," the old man replied, "One day Riley reported his credit cards missing."

HIGH OCTANE FUEL

It has always puzzled me as to why the German Luftwaffe kept on using 87 Octane Aviation Gasoline while the Americans and British used 100 Octane Gasoline in their Spitfire Fighters and Americans used 130 Octane in our P-51 and other fighters. This morning I discovered the reason!

This is a declassified article by the British Society of Chemists (Declassified in 2014)

It seems that the German and British aircraft both used 87 Octane Gasoline in the first two years of the war. While that was satisfactory in the German Daimler-Benz V-12 engine, it was marginal in the British Rolls-Royce Merlin XX engine in British aircraft. It fouled the sparkplugs, caused valves to stick, and made frequent engine repair problems.

Then came lend- lease and American aircraft began to enter British service in great numbers. If British engines hated 87 Octane gasoline, American, General Motors Built, Allison 1710 engines loathed and despised it. Something had to be done!

P-40 Mustang

Along came an American named Tim Palucka, a chemist for Sun Oil in their South East Texas Refinery. Never heard of him. Small wonder, very few people have.

He took a French formula for enhancing the octane of Gasoline and invented the "Cracking Tower" and produced 100 octane aviation Gasoline. This discovery led to great joy among our English Cousins and great distress among the Germans.

A Spitfire fueled with 100 Octane gasoline was *34 miles per hour faster at 10,000 feet.*

Spitfires

The need to replace engines went from every 500 hours of operation to every 1,000 hours. Which reduced the cost of British aircraft by 300 Pounds Sterling. Even more, when used in 4 engine bomber.

The Germans couldn't believe it when Spitfires that couldn't catch them a year ago started shooting their ME-109 E and G models right out of the sky.

Of course, the matter had to be kept secret. If the Germans found out that it was a French Invention, they'd simply copy the original French patents. If any of you have ever wondered what they were doing in that 3-story white brick building in front of the Sun Oil Refinery on Old Highway 90, a few miles from Beaumont, that was it. They were re-inventing gasoline.

The American Allison engines improved remarkably with 100 Octane gasoline but did much better when 130 octane gasoline came along in 1944. The 130 Octane also improved the Radial Engine Bombers we produced.

The Germans and Japanese never snapped to the fact that we had re-invented gasoline. Neither did our "Friends" the Russians. 100,000 Americans died in the skies over Europe. Lord only knows what that number would have been without "Super-Gasoline".

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Brains of older people are slow because they know so much.
People do not decline mentally with age, it just takes them longer to recall facts because they have more information in their brains, scientists believe.
Much like a computer struggles as the hard drive gets full, so too, do humans take longer to access information when their brains are full.
Researchers say this slowing down process is not the same as cognitive decline.
The human brain works slower in old age, said Dr. Michael Ramscar, but only because we have stored more information over time. The brains of older people do not get weak.
On the contrary, they simply know more. Also, older people often go to another room to get something and when they get there, they stand there wondering what they came for.
It is NOT a memory problem, it is nature's way of making older people do more exercise.
SO THERE. Now when I reach for a word or a name, I won't excuse myself by saying "I'm having a senior moment." Now, I'll say, "My disk is full!"
I have more friends I should send this to, but right now I can't remember their names.
So, please forward this to your friends, they may be my friends too

ST MARYS RSL SUB-BRANCH

PRESIDENTS REPORT

It is with a heavy heart to announce the passing of a friend and very popular sub-branch member, Kevin John Dunnicliffe OAM. Kevin passed away on the 7th of December. Kevin joined this sub-branch in May of 2003, he was very mischievous, and I will, as many of you will, miss him dearly. His funeral was held the 16th of December 2019 at St Nicholas Catholic Church Penrith, and just before Christmas we lost Clifford Bruce (Shorty) Cornish. Shorty joined us in Nov 2014. He fought a long fight with cancer and his funeral was held at Pinegrove's north chapel on the 30th of December 2019 May they rest in peace.

The reporting period is as follows: -

Children's Christmas Party – **23rd Nov** – Santa's helpers gathered at the St Marys RSL Youth Hall, to prepare for, and setup the annual Children's Christmas Party. The stage setup with Christmas decorations and a beautiful Christmas tree with lights flickering behind Santa's chair.

Quietly seated, a dedicated group of sub-branch members with their wife's and family member's, stuffed envelopes with tokens, for the children to redeem their treat's, which gave them the opportunity to have soft drinks, ice creams, fairy floss, Icey's, face painting/tattoo's and plaster painting. After working faster than Santa's Sled, the job was done, to which they cheerfully talked about their achievements with an ice cream in hand.

24th Nov – Santa, being the smart man that he is, arranged for the children's wrapped presents to be delivered by Sam Vecchio's family and Tony Briffa, prior to his arrival. With the party in full swing, the number of rides and activities were almost too hard to choose from and which one to go on first, with Dodgem Cars, Pirate Ship, Jumping trampoline, Spinning Tea Cups with the two best activities being the Rock-Climbing Wall and the Mobile Zoo with Reptiles (very hands on) was very popular with the children.

The highlight of the day was the arrival of Santa, and as all the children had been very good this year, Santa was able to give each child an excellent present, which I believe they all enjoyed very much. Thanks Santa. I would like to thank Sam and Kitty Vecchio and their family, Tony Briffa and his trusty Ute, Ian Wilson, plus everyone who helped make the day a success. I can say on behalf of all the children, thank you to all involved.

2nd Dec - I attended St Marys Public School's Community Morning Tea, where I was able to pass on some tips on how they could apply for Saluting Their Service Grants, it was simple, I dobbed in Tony Fryer.

7th Dec - We made our way to the Masonic Lodge Hall at Orchard Hills and once again the company & the food were both excellent. Thanks to Sam and Kitty Vecchio and his band of merry helpers for a great day - well done to all involved. Later on that night, Tony Fryer attended 21 ACU's end of year Parade, and presented a cheque for $1500.00 on behalf of the sub-Branch, thank you Tony.

10th – 16th Dec - School Presentation Night's, were attended by Ken Ward – Bidwell HS, Tony Fryer – Colyton High and Erskine Park HS, Ted Fish – St Clair H S, Frank Lawton – Emmaus College, Ann from Gilgandra SB – Gilgandra HS & Ron Blakely – Cambridge Park HS, and Bennet Rd PS.

16th Dec – Kevin Dunnicliffe's funeral.

30th Dec – Shorty Cornish's funeral.

3rd Feb – First Management Meeting for 2020

4th Feb – First Anzac Committee Meeting, where our theme for this year is, Medical Personnel in Active Service.

12th Feb – Annual General Meeting & General Meeting – As a result of the AGM there was only one change to your Executive Committee, and that being David Cuff who is now one of our Vice Presidents. John Foeken decided to not stand for any positions and I thank him for all his help whilst he was on the committee.

24th Feb – 2nd Anzac committee meeting was held and final decisions were made and last-minute changes to the program and run sheet where made.

3rd Mar – Once again we made our way to Randwick Army Barracks to do our twice yearly AFOF care packaging extravaganza. With the packages all boxed up with goodies and a flyer promoting the services available through the Train, we made our way to Souths Juniors for an enjoyable lunch. Before returning back to St Marys via the Darrell Lea Chocolate outlet store. Thanks to all involved, I sure you all had a great day.

9th March – Frank Lawton was invited to attend 202 ACU Blacktown, to give a presentation to the local Cadets.

While finalising this report, we are expecting to see the completion next week of an upgrade by Penrith Council to the memorial at Jack Jewry Reserve. The new plaques will identify just who Jack Jewry was … an omission from the previous memorial. A small ceremony will be planned at the new memorial to thank Penrith Council for their response to our concern.

Ron Blakely
President March 2019

MICHAEL JOHN FITZGERALD SOLICITOR

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HMAS VOYAGER

Beware the mood of angry sea with Nature's tempers short
When ships in big seas cannot seek the safety of a port
Night can be total darkness when cloud cover hides the moon
Voyager's crew unaware of the scene to be played out soon

That night off Jervis Bay for many would be their last
The Flag ship carrier Melbourne with fine record in the past
The gunship Voyager on exercise as plane guard on the sea
A Daring Class destroyer with crew two hundred ninety-three

An unsuspecting bridge of two ships on collision course
The flight carrier sailing closer with a monumental force
The evening watch they held their breath it was far too late to turn
Thirty-two kilometres from the coast they braced with grave concern

The ships moved closer to each other those final seconds till
The crash of heavy steel then suddenly all was still
The Voyager had been cut in half and whatever one might say
Whatever orders given that night are history to this day

The Voyager's forward section with the youngest men on board
Sank within moments underwater their prayers would be ignored
The turmoil and the panic of those young men trapped inside
Forward messdecks with no escape and hatches could not be pried

Nigh on twenty minutes held suspended under surface
They tried in vain escaping, but their attempts were without purpose
The desperation of those young sailors does not even bare thinking
That the sea should taunt so many those moments before sinking

Men heard the sailors shouting whilst others were singing prayers
They realised the hopelessness and futility that was theirs
Some knew their death was imminent and die they knew they would
Brave crew that couldn't escape assisted others they knew who could

Voyager's sailors swimming free went back to save trapped crew
Time went on but hopes were gone for the fate of eighty-two
The Melbourne crew bewildered as they stood and watched in awe
Rescue boats saved seventy men they could have done no more

It was there on February ten the year nineteen sixty-four
On Tuesday night where this nation on their newsreels saw
Where HMAS Voyager once the nation's boast
Sank near the base at Cresswell off Australia's south east coast

As Melbourne neared Garden Island, it begged the question how
The watchful crowd with tears streaming observed the carrier's bow
There would be questions to be answered but one should not lose sight
The families of those young sailors would never forget that night

Among the dead included HMAS Leeuwin's finest sons
In messdecks 'neath where Voyager once proudly fired her guns
Many of these sailors were aged no more than sixteen years
Their graves in cold deep water, their loved ones grieve with tears

The Voyager had sunk and taken eighty-two young boys
They will lay motionless with their ship in the quiet, no noise
Their whispers carried by the winds across the tip of each passing wave
Fate has chosen the Tasman for their grave
Like their fathers before them they will grow not old
These lads have found their part of ship in the cold

There is brotherhood among those who served before the mast
True sailors remain men of the sea to their very moments last
When a ship has seen the last sun rise and sinks to waters deep
And sailors see the sky fade to darkness before eternal sleep

Colin James *(Reprinted by kind permission of the author)*

MENTAL HEALTH: COMBAT VETERANS MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN LATER LIFE.

Military veterans exposed to combat were more likely to exhibit signs of depression and anxiety in later life than veterans who had not seen combat, a new study from Oregon State University shows.

The findings suggest that military service, and particularly combat experience, is a hidden variable in research on aging, said Carolyn Aldwin, director of the Centre for Healthy Aging Research in the College of Public Health and Human Sciences at OSU and one of the study's authors.

"There are a lot of factors of aging that can impact mental health in late life, but there is something about having been a combat veteran that is especially important," Aldwin said.

The findings were published this month in the journal *Psychology and Aging*. The first author is Hyunyup Lee, who conducted the research as a doctoral student at OSU; co-authors are Soyoung Choun of OSU and Avron Spiro III of Boston University and the VA Boston Healthcare System. The research was funded by the National Institutes on Aging and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

There is little existing research that examines the effects of combat exposure on aging and in particular on the impacts of combat on mental health in late life, Aldwin said. Many aging studies ask about participants' status as veterans, but don't unpack that further to look at differences between those who were exposed to combat and those who weren't.

Using data from the Veterans Affairs Normative Aging Study, a longitudinal study that began in the 1960s to investigate aging in initially healthy men, the researchers explored the relationship between combat exposure and depressive and anxiety symptoms, as well as self-rated health and stressful life events.

They found that increased rates of mental health symptoms in late life were found only among combat veterans. The increases were not seen in veterans who had not been exposed to combat.

Generally, mental health symptoms such as depression and anxiety tend to decrease or remain stable during adulthood but can increase in later life. The researchers found that combat exposure has a unique impact on that trajectory, independent of other health issues or stressful life events.

"In late life, it's pretty normal to do a life review," Aldwin said. "For combat veterans, that review of life experiences and losses may have more of an impact on their mental health. They may need help to see meaning in their service and not just dwell on the horrors of war."

Veterans' homecoming experience may also colour how they view their service later in life, Aldwin said. Welcoming veterans home and focusing on reintegration could help to reduce the mental toll of their service over time.

Most of the veterans in the study served in World War II or Korea. Additional research is needed to understand more about how veterans' experiences may vary from war to war, Aldwin said.

Aldwin and colleagues are currently working on a pilot study, VALOR, or Veterans Aging: Longitudinal studies in Oregon, to better understand impacts of combat exposure. The pilot study is supported by a grant from the OSU Research Office and includes veterans with service in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf and the post-9/11 conflicts. The researchers have collected data from 300 veterans and are beginning to analyse it. Based on their initial findings, they are also planning a second, larger study with more veterans. They expect to see differences between veterans from different wars.

"Each war is different. They are going to affect veterans differently," Aldwin said. "Following 9-11, traumatic brain injuries have risen among veterans, while mortality rates have lowered. We have many more survivors with far more injuries. These veterans have had a much higher levels of exposure to combat, as well." About one-third of the participants in the pilot study were female veterans, Aldwin said.

From: https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/07/190702160110.htm

ST MARYS RSL CLUB

Corner Mamre Road and Hall Street St Marys
Ph 9623 6555 www.stmarysrsl.com. au

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Ring Reception for details.

DINING at ST MARYS RSL –

TERRACE CAFE
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Mon - Fri 12-3 pm $12 Lunch Specials
Check Board for Specials

FORTUNA *Chinese Restaurant*
Open for Lunch at Noon and Dinner at 5 pm (Closed Mondays)

TAB FACILITIES
Sports Bet FOX Sport SKY Channel

WHAT'S ON .....

MONDAY - Rock and Roll Dancing 7-10 pm

TUESDAY - Bingo 7.00 pm (electronic pads available)

WEDNESDAY - Monthly Raffle 7pm 2nd Wed of Month

THURSDAY - Bingo 11.30 am
- Texas Hold'em Poker 7 pm
- **MEMBER'S Badge Draw** $3000-$5000 from 7 pm

FRIDAY - Bingo 11.30 am
- CLUB BRASHS–Playing Retro Music 8 pm-12 am

SATURDAY - Meat Run RAFFLE 4-6 pm
- Rock'n'Roll Bands, Shows and Lounge Music 7.30 pm - Midnight

**** Check "**WHAT'S ON BOARD**" for Details ****

Is gambling a problem for you? G-Line (NSW) is a confidential anonymous and free counselling service
FREECALL 188 633 635

Sometimes you come across a real gem like this letter to the editor in a recent *Australian*: "The Cole Inquiry has to separate the wheat from the chaff because the AWB couldn't see the wood for the trucking fees."

SUNSET STATION SINGERS

A Very Worthwhile Volunteer Group

Late last year I witnessed my first Vietnam Veteran funeral at Pinegrove when Clifford "Shorty" Cornish was laid to rest after a battle with cancer. Shorty was a member of this choir.

The group first started around 15 years ago to support Vietnam Veterans, their family and friends in the St Marys-Penrith district. All the men in the original group, including Shorty, were themselves Vietnam Veterans. Shorty had a story to tell regarding his call up to fight and it goes like this – before the "lottery" call up, he had joined the army voluntarily and was already a soldier when he got his "lottery letter" to say he had to answer the call and "join up". He had a laugh when he told them that he was already in the army!!

The singing group are affiliated with the Train St Marys Outpost. Their motto is "if you can talk, you can sing". I encountered the group at the Vietnam Veteran's Ceremony at the St Marys RSL last year and decided to join. I must confess that I haven't sung since high school in 1963 and did "chicken out" once, but finally got up the courage to take my "not so great singing voice" and join. To date I haven't regretted it as they are a great bunch of men and women who enjoy singing, mainly at aged care facilities and nursing homes and I can say this, those facilities I have sung with the group are ever thankful that a little bit of cheer comes into the lives of those they care for and the dedicated carers who look after them. Last year the group sang at 20 aged facilities.

So, if you are a senior who has the time to volunteer to join the group and thinks they can't sing, don't judge yourself like I did, just join. We especially would also love to see more male members. It has given me great pleasure just seeing the joy on the faces of the old people and a chance to have a small chat with them.

We practice every Monday from 7 pm at the RSL at St Marys, if you are interested in joining in please contact Rhonda 0408 218 965.

By - Lyn Forde (with help from other members).

An older couple is lying in bed one morning, having just awakened from a good night's sleep.
He takes her hand and she responds,
"Don't touch me."
"Why not?" he asks.
She answers back, "Because I'm dead."
The husband says, "What are you talking about? We're both lying here in bed together and talking to one another."
She says, "No, I'm definitely dead."
He insists, "You're not dead. What in the world makes you think you're dead?"
"Because I woke up this morning and nothing hurts."

Blacktown and Districts TPI Social and Welfare Club

Blacktown and Districts TPI Social and Welfare Club meets on the First Thursday of each month (except January) at the Blacktown RSL Club. Meetings start at 1:00 pm

The Club is open to all TPI Veterans (including Veterans under the MRC receiving the Special Rate of Disability Pension), and welcomes their Carers and Friends.

To join the Club a Veteran must be a subscribing member of the TPI Association of NSW Ltd.

Apart from the Monthly Meetings the Club arranges at subsidised cost, a function, generally each month, which could be a Bus Trip, Luncheon, BBQ.

The Club's Welfare Officers also keep in contact through Hospital and Home visits to those who cannot make the Meetings.

A Newsletter is also distributed to all members, either by email or by 'snail mail'

For further Information, please contact Committeeman:
John Davison at
mobile: 0411737446 or email: davoddg38@gmail.com

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DARWIN AND RETURN APRIL – MAY 2017

PART 11

After encamping and having a biscuit for lunch it was time to join Don in the pool. It was a very warm day; I wouldn't like to be there in summer, so a dip in the pool was most welcome. Thank goodness the pool had a roof over it, we would have been burnt very easy.

I went for a walk around the Hotel, which was the main building in town, not the only one. I couldn't find out why it was called the Heart Break Hotel; I did find out why it is Cape Crawford even though it's 150 km inland; the hills around the town look like it could have been the coastline millions of years ago, hence Cape.

Out the front of the hotel were the fuel pumps and in an area there were some old single cylinder Lister diesel engines and a couple of old truck chassis. No doubt they would have been used locally in the past. Also on the lawn out the front was a helicopter. I sat and talked to the helicopter pilot who was sitting on the veranda. He did flight over The Lost City which is one of the local attractions.

There weren't many amenities in the park. I only found 2 showers and toilets, one of which was out the back of the hotel, for patrons use. There would have been a bit of a line up if the park was busy. At least it was a good shower. There were 2 caravans parked near me and the owners were outside one talking. They summoned me over, I took my chair with me and we talked for about three quarters of an hour. They were travelling together and were National Servicemen who served time in Vietnam. We had plenty to talk about. We also talked to road workers who told us that there were 2 sections of repairs on the road to Barkly. That had me worried as my bike doesn't handle too well in the dirt.

I had a tin of peaches for tea, then walked over and sat on the hotels veranda where Richard joined me. I usually don't drink, but it was so hot I allowed him to shout me a beer.

The next day I was up at 0600, and was packed before the others had risen. We were ready to leave by 0815. I had a cup of coffee in the hotel while I waited on the others. We fuelled up then set of for Barkly Homestead 375 km to the south. As normal I let the others go ahead. The road was as the one from The Hi Way Inn, single lane bitumen, but the surface was a lot better. After travelling about 20km I noticed the cloud formation. I had seen a documentary on SBS about this type of cloud over the gulf and these looked the same. It was very interesting. These clouds are called Morning Glory Waves.

About 60 km out I came across the first section of roadworks. It went for about 2km, and wasn't too bad at all, the dirt was packed down and caused me no trouble. There was a bit of traffic heading north on this road, which meant I had to stop and get off the road to let them pass. The clouds dissipated and being cloudless turned out very warm. There was a slight headwind. It doesn't seem to matter where or which way you are going up in the North Country there is always a headwind.

As the day before I caught up with the others at a rest area about 100 km out. They left not long after I got there. Other travellers were stopped there too. One who came over and spoke to me was on his way to Borroloola. After chatting for a while we found we knew a person in common, Gary Parker, who attends the Eastern Creek Branch of the Ulysses Club. It is a small world. I made another stop about 200 km out and put the 10 lt spare fuel in the tank. The next section road works started about 40km from Barkly and went for about 30km. They

were widening the road, so whilst they were working on both sides of the bitumen it was left intact but very narrow but there was no need to slow down. All my worrying about road conditions was in vain.

The junction of the road from the Cape is opposite the Barkly Homestead on Number 1. It was good to get there, it had been a long haul. I fuelled up on my arrival; Richard was there as he was yesterday telling me Don had paid for my camp site. The time was 1425; it had taken me just over 6 hours to do the 375 km. We set up camp next to a covered table and chairs. Our bikes weren't allowed on the grass camping area. Again I joined Don in the pool after encamping. The other thought it was too cold to go in, but the water was just right and what I needed to help cool me refresh. There was mobile coverage here so was able to ring home. I received a text from Ken; he rode home in 2 days after leaving us at Katherine. He too had camped at Barkly on the way home. In his text he told me that there was a bad headwind between Barkly and Camooweal. What's new, he had used 15 lt to do the 260 km. Ken rides the same as Don, a BMW 1200GS. I went with Richard over to the Roadhouse and shouted him a beer as he did the night before. So much for me being a tea totaller. The camp kitchen wasn't much to talk about but it had power and I was able to make a cup of tea and fill my thermos. I had a tin of Spam with Baked Beans for tea. We all went to bed about 2000.

We were up at 0630, I had to use another blanket during the night, it was cool but not cold. Richard had walked over to the Roadhouse and bought me a coffee, so I didn't worry about breakfast. We were travelling again by 0800. There was a headwind, but the day was to be fine. I rode at my usual speed of 90 kph, it wouldn't be good to push too hard against the headwind, fuel consumption would be up. I caught up with the others at Avon Downs Rest area and then again at the Northern Territory-Queensland Border, 12 km from Camooweal. Richard said he'd gone onto reserve at 240 km, giving him 12 km/lt. A headwind makes the difference. We took photos at the Border then rode the 12km to Camooweal. I used 19.94 lt in the 260 km to Camooweal, 13 km/lt.

We sat in café there after fuelling up and bought a cup of coffee and a sausage roll. Don had a pie with his coffee, it was lunch time and I hadn't had breakfast. We sat in the café for a while resting up and then we were on our way again.

The road condition now is a 100% better than what it was when Don and I first traversed it back in 1994. Back then as soon as you crossed from Northern Territory to Queensland it became a narrow stretch of bitumen with a few wide sections. Now it is an excellent highway.

As before they went ahead, I caught up with them at a rest area about 90km from Mt Isa. As I road into the rest area they started waving me away, I thought they wanted to get rid of me. I kept going towards them, the ground turned to blue metal and was about 50 mm deep. The back wheel started to lose traction, but I steadied and both feet down got through it. They tried to warn me. They stayed for a while then got going. I had a couple of cups of tea and spoke to others that had pulled into the area.

I stopped where the memorial to the people that first built the road during WW11. The road was a vital link between Mt Isa and the Northern Territory.

An adventure by Ross Pearson, known to you all as a member of the Veterans Outpost, St Marys RSL Sub-Branch and a member of the Ulysses M/C.

Part 12 in the next issue ....

Memories; by Mick Le Breton, 5 Platoon 5 RAR:

I believe I was the replacement for Errol Noak, RIP the 1st National Serviceman to be killed in Vietnam.
Late September 1967, I joined 5 Platoon, 5RAR and was put into forward scout for my first operation.

It was on Tonton Island about 600 metres off the coast of Vietnam.
The battalion was lifted onto the island by about 40 Hueys and 10 gunships.
The island had a small mountain in the centre. It was about 300 metres above the water.
The second chopper came in just above us and set off a mine!

We had landed about 200 metres up the hill, on top of it was a Pagoda.
The nogs then opened up on us....just one heavy machine gun.
We went to ground and within 3 minutes a fighter came roaring past. The pilot or his mate, was so close, he gave us a wink, then one rocket and no more Pagoda.
We spent 2 nights there and then came back to base at Nui Dat.

For about 3 days we came under fire from below, the first time l heard the 'snap' of bullets.
6 RAR did send backup. So when we went on an op in late December, and returned 24th December with the word being we were having a day off on Christmas Day, we believed there was to be a truce. Then the big day comes, with what had been set up -ie fair dinkum food, grog...grog!

11o'clock comes and we were told 'all bets off' -we were going back out! Joe Devlin, RIP a great and utter larrikin, had the guts to tell everyone who mattered, that we were not. (However, we were and we did).

About a day's walking later, we laid an ambush. Joe had the gun M60 and l was his No 2 (Lance Jack). Soon we heard noises coming down the track. We were about 6 metres from the track in light bush, they would have been past 8 blokes before us...15 further down the path.

Their forward scout's eyes and mine connected. The obvious happened and all hell broke out...artillery and at least maybe 50 machine guns-mainly rifles and grenades. When all quietened down, we moved off the track and we buried the poor bloke. I had had a gut full of that war, but still had 6 months left to go.

Two weeks later we (B Coy-about 100 men) went to search for VC in Hoa Ton, very close to Nui Dat. But the brass had intelligence. I think there were two or three VC killed in that initial skirmish.

When our search was over and we were leaving, l passed a little boy about 10yrs old. l gave him a smile and a wink. He gave me a look of hate which l could never forget.

The utter stupidity and futility of War!

Mick Le Breton, Leura NSW:

EDUCATION PROGRAM REPORT

APRIL 2020

A brief report due to the school year just beginning and the fact that bookings for the program trickle in across the school year.

However 5 college presentations have been completed at the time of writing this report. In keeping with previous years' tallies 45 or so school visits are anticipated including Anzac and Remembrance Service guest speaker requests.

Across 15 years of operation the Outpost Education Program has presented at 106 school/ college locations; some as many as 14 times across that period bringing the total number of school presentations to in excess of 830.

The following Education Program progressive information has been reported in previous newsletters across the years but is worthy of further publication for the benefit of new members to the Outpost. The Outpost Education Program presents at a broad range of educational settings under the banner and supervision of the NSW Dept of School Education, The Catholic Education Office and The Independent Schools Commission. Clearly these administrative bodies cover both Government and non-Government schools. Also significantly the Outpost Education Program visits a wide range of social-economic educational environments operating under these overarching authorities throughout the western and southern suburbs of Sydney to the perhaps more affluent locations across our state capital city involving some of the most prestigious schools/colleges.

Outreach visits North (St Joseph's Aberdeen), South (Monaro High Cooma), West (Gilgandra High) among others make up country connections to the program. Considering these locations along with Sydney and Metropolitan schools the program's footprint; emanating from the Outpost covers an impressive area, one that members can be proud of.

A recent review of schools visited across the years show NSW State Schools (co-educational), Catholic, Anglican, Christian, Muslim and Jewish schools involving boys only or girls only presentations. This information overview shows the VVAA St Marys Outpost Education Programs caters to a very diverse mix of students from prominent religious groups and naturally, in 2020, involves students from all corners of the world - Aboriginal, Indigenous, those with generations of Australian Citizenship to those recently arrived in this country. The faces in the 2020 student audiences, are vastly different to the presentation groups of our earlier years particularly in the Sydney and Metropolitan environs.

Vietnam Veterans service and sacrifice may have been 50 or so years ago which makes it all the more important that today's rich cultural mix of students hear about our Vietnam War story and our place in Australia's Military History.

While all secondary schools are required to address the National History Syllabus as part of their education programs, a variety of approaches are utilised when covering the Vietnam War, one of the optional studies open to teachers and students. Given the 521 Australian service personnel who paid the supreme sacrifice across the Vietnam War along with many others who bear the scars of active service it is in some sense comforting to know that students and teachers alike have a particular passion for the Vietnam Topic, confirming "We Will Remember Them".

Mentioned in previous Newsletters also, the volume of excellent resources now available to teachers and students: books, DVD's, documentaries, movies, student study and research

material abound. These resources together with the extensive and excellent Vietnam Gallery in the Australian War Memorial along with the treasured Long Tan Cross provide other interactive and engaging excursion opportunities for students and teachers. The Australian National Vietnam Forces Memorial situated just down Anzac Parade from the Australian War Memorial provides another wealth of information and history for students to absorb. The memorial has become a treasured site for remembrance of Australia's participation in the Vietnam War. Men and women who were there, and students of history who were not, visit this site from around Australia and overseas to pay their respects and to try, in their own way, to make sense of events that are now 5 decades past. The 34 inscriptions on the wall of words of the memorial give students a feel for those Vietnam War actions. The three concrete memorial "seats" located either side of the Memorial originally designed to commemorate the "Missing Six", now also display the details of their repatriation home and their final resting place - 'HOME AT LAST". A sad but beautiful conclusion to their service and sacrifice. **Lest We Forget**.

The St Marys Outpost continues its excellent work in support of veterans. The Outpost Education Program continues to respond to schools to assist with student study and research of the Vietnam War Topic.

Included with this April report are two articles which came to my attention while re-organising reference material:

Firstly; LEGACY AND THE INFANTRY COMBAT BADGE. Having spent 17 years as a Legatee and a further 30 or so years supporting Legacy, I believe this article originally published in the ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT JOURNAL - DUTY FIRST (Autumn 2003 Vol 3 No 8) will be of interest to some Outpost members (see page17).

Secondly: COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION. An article referencing Sir Fabian Ware, the founder of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Having visited Commonwealth War Graves at Gallipoli, in France, Belgium and Papua New Guinea while commemorating family service members who paid the supreme sacrifice during WW1 and WW2 I was struck by the beauty, reverence, serenity, organisation and upkeep of war graves. A visit to any one of the Commonwealth War Cemeteries is a sobering experience (see pages18-19).

Vin Cosgrove OAM
Co-ordinator,
Vietnam Veterans Outpost Education Program

HERE'S THE SITUATION:
You are on a horse, galloping at a constant speed.
On your right side is a sharp drop-off.
On your left side is an elephant traveling at the same speed as you.
Directly in front of you is a galloping kangaroo and your horse is unable to overtake it.
Behind you is a lion running at the same speed as you and the kangaroo.
What must you do to get out of this highly dangerous situation?
See answer below.
Get off the merry-go-round and go home you old fart, you've had enough beer for one day!

LEGACY AND THE INFANTRY COMBAT BADGE

From 1967 to 1970 I was the Director of Infantry and Regimental Colonel of the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR). I was very fortunate that the Chief the General Staff (CGS) at the time was Lt Gen Sir Thomas Daly KBE DSO. From 1951 to 1952 he had been Director of Infantry and maintained a keen interest in the Infantry Corps. From 1952 to 1953 he had been the Commander of the 28 Commonwealth Brigade in Korea when I had been serving as a company commander with 1 RAR.

Shortly after my appointment as Director, the CGS sent for me and said 'David, the Infantry Corps is expanding very fast and I wish to be kept advised of any major happenings or problems'. That was a wonderful invitation to a new Head of a Corps, which expanded from four to nine regular battalions from 1965 to 1967.

This expansion allowed three RAR battalions to serve in Vietnam and one to serve in Malaysia. It was a very busy time for the infantry Corps.

In early 1970 I was sent for by the CGS. During our discussion I suggested that it was time for the Infantry Corps to have an Infantry Combat Badge to be worn by Infantrymen who had served overseas in operations.

The United States had such a badge which was a Silver Rifle on a blue background. The CGS agreed with enthusiasm and told me to design a suitable badge for Australia.

I returned to my office with no ideas for a suitable badge. On that day I was in civilian clothes and was wearing a small bronze Legacy Badge in by lapel. I glanced down at this badge which I removed and inspiration came.

Each new member of Legacy is presented with a Legacy Badge described as follows: 'The Badge of Membership consists of a Torch and a Wreath of Laurel with its points inverted – the Torch is the emblem of service and sacrifice and the Wreath of Laurel is the symbol of Remembrance.'

I turned the Legacy Badge upside down so that the Laurel Wreaths were pointing upwards and started sketching. After several tries I reached a possible solution. I changed the shape of the Wreath and replaced the Torch with an Infantry Bayonet. Bronze seemed a suitable colour for an Australian Infantry Combat Badge. Then I gave my sketches to an artist and took the results to the CGS, who agreed with the design and told me to go ahead.

The Infantry Combat Badge (ICB) is now proudly worn above Medals or Medal Ribbons by members of the Infantry CORPS who have served in an infantry unit for at least 90 days in operation.

I hope that those wearing the ICB might be inspired to join Legacy and help look after the widows and children of departed comrades.

David Thomson

A man goes to a pet shop. There he sees a parrot with a red string tied to its left leg and a green string tied to its right leg.
He asks the owner the significance of the strings.
"Well, this is a highly trained parrot," replies the shop keeper. "If you pull the red string he speaks French. If you pull the green string he speaks German."
"And what happens if I pull both the strings at the same time?" the shopper asks.
"I fall off my perch you dumb idiot!" squawks the parrot.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Sir Fabian Ware: Founder of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Too old to be accepted for army duty, Fabian Ware arrived in France in command of a mobile unit of the British Red Cross in September 1914. He was quickly struck by the lack of any organisation responsible for the marking and recording of the graves of fallen soldiers and became determined that this should change.

With his persistence the War Office realised that proper care of the war graves would boost the morale of troops at the front and comfort relatives at home. The work that Ware had started of recording and maintaining graves was recognised with the foundation of the Graves Registration Commission in 1915, which became a part of the army.

As early as 1916 Ware encouraged help from distinguished horticulturalists at Kew and from the most famous architects of the day on how the cemeteries and memorials should be designed to best commemorate the sacrifice of Commonwealth forces. All this time he was campaigning ceaselessly for an official organisation to be set up to do this.

On 21 May 1917 his diligence was recognised when the Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission was established by Royal Charter with Ware as its Vice-Chairman.

During the war, Fabian Ware was twice Mentioned in Despatches and ended the war as a Major-General. In 1920 he became a Knight of two orders in recognition of his tireless work during the Great War. After the war he explained his motivation saying, "Common remembrance of the dead [of the Great War] is the one thing, sometimes the only thing, that never fails to bring our people together."

A waiter brings a customer the steak he ordered with his thumb over the meat.
"Are you crazy?" yelled the customer. "What are you doing with your hand on my steak?"
What?" answers the waiter, "You want it to fall on the floor again?"

Fabian Ware and King George V inspect graves in Tyne Cot Cemetery, 1922

Sir Fabian returned to the War Office following the outbreak of the Second World War while continuing his duties for the Commission. With the help of Winston Churchill he gained agreement for the Commission to keep a record of civilian casualties as well as servicemen and women who fell.

Major-General Sir Fabian Ware died on 28 April 1949 and is buried in Holy Trinity Churchyard, Amberley where his grave is marked by a Commission headstone (left). He once wrote "...working for the Commission engenders an exceptional type of zeal and personal devotion." It was these qualities in Fabian Ware which led to the very existence of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission is responsible for marking and maintaining the graves of those members of the Commonwealth forces who died during the two world wars, for building and maintaining memorials to the dead whose graves are unknown and for providing records and registers of these 1.7 million burials and commemorations which are found in most countries throughout the world.

Enquiries about the location of individual burials and commemorations may be directed to the office below or to the Debt of Honour Register, a search by surname database at the Commission's web site at **www.cwgc.org.**

For further information contact:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission
2 Marlow Road
Maidenhead
Berkshire
SL6 7DX

Tel: +44 (0) 1628 507200
Fax: +44 (0) 1628 771208
Email: casualty.enq@cwgc.org

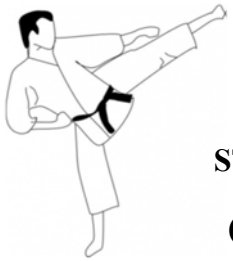
A guy bought his wife a beautiful diamond ring for Christmas.
After hearing about this extravagant gift, a friend of his said: "I thought she wanted one of those sporty four-wheel-drive vehicles."
"She did," he replied. "But where was I going to find a fake Jeep?"

ST MARYS RSL YOUTH CLUB ACTIVITIES FOR ALL

BOXING 0425 302 432

JUDO0403 218 871

KARATE 0417 285 128



ST MARYS RSL YOUTH CLUB
(NEXT TO RSL CLUB)
CNR MAMRE RD and

BELL "IROQUOIS" HUEY UH1H

No other aircraft in the history of aviation evokes the emotional response the Huey does… combat veteran's or not… she is recognised all around the world by young and old, she is the ICON of the Vietnam war, U.S. Army.

"EAGLE ONE" was purchased by Patrick Soars in Houston Texas in 2007, Serial No. 66-16301 and has had a long and proud history in the U.S. army seeing service in the Vietnam conflict (in a training and utility role), Gulf War I and finished her life with the Texas National Guard and Texas Search and Rescue Services.

This fine ship was rescued from perhaps a fate of spare parts and was dismantled and rebuilt to the zero time condition you see today with the help and assistance of **Australian Native Landscapes Pty Ltd** and **Heliaust Pty Ltd.** This ICON of the Vietnam War is perhaps the greatest example of her type in Australia, set in the livery of an American Army VIP transport "slick" she has been restored to the highest of airworthy standards. "EAGLE ONE" is a living reminder of the brave and dedicated crews that rode this magnificent machine into combat. The owners of "EAGLE ONE" are humbled and honoured to be able to fly and display this [illegible] "Grand Old Lady".

"EAGLE ONE" proudly sponsored by

ANL
AUSTRALIAN NATIVE LANDSCAPES PTY LTD
'Everything for your garden'

"LONG LIVE THE HUEY"

Minchinbury
Community Hospital

Rehabilitation | Surgical | Medical

Physiotherapy and Hydrotherapy

Minchinbury Community Hospital offers inpatient and day patient personalised rehabilitation services to suit your needs. Our team of caring professionals are here to assist patients reach their individual goals and work in conjunction with their families to meet any of their concerns.

DID YOU KNOW: Depending on your health fund product, your health fund may cover your hospital stay with no out of pocket expenses? We also accept self-insured, DVA and Workers Compensation patients.

Contact our friendly Administration team for more information and your health fund eligibility 02 9625 2222.

Surgical & Medical

Our highly qualified and talented visiting Specialist Surgeons perform a wide variety of specialist care including:

- Ophthalmic Surgery
- General Surgery
- Orthopaedic Surgery
- Dental Surgery
- Plastic Surgery
- Gastroscopy and Colonoscopy procedures

Minchinbury Community Hospital has been providing expert rehabilitation and nursing care to the local community for the past 10 years.

www.mhsminchinbury.com.au
facebook.com/MinchinburyHospital
02 9625 2222
Cnr Great Western Highway & Rupertswood Rd Rooty Hill NSW 2766

The hospital is within easy reach of all major arterial roads including M4 & M7 with free onsite parking

Did I tell you that the local Woolworths store burnt down last night. It is now Coals.

Current Repatriation Benefits for Gold Card Veterans - As of 01 Jan, 2020:

Here is the list of Pharmacy Medications available to Gold Card Veterans - but let me say that when you go to your doctor make sure you take the list with you as he/she may not be aware of all these medications being available to Veterans under the RPBS scheme; if you should have any problems ask your Doctor to contact ***DVA Pharmacy approvals on 1800 552 580*** *for an Authority.*

Repatriation Benefits List:

(The following is a list of some of the products, that are available on a Doctors prescription, for Gold Card Repatriation Patients)
(Some require a DVA Authority)

Skin Care:

Sorbolene and Glycerine Cream, Calmurid Cream, Pinetarsol Solution, Hamilton Skin Therapy Wash, QV Bath Oil, QV Cream -- (DVA Authority required)

Hair Care:

Sebitar Shampoo, Sebi Rinse Conditioner, Selsun Nizoral Shampoo, -- (DVA Authority required)

Sun Care:

15+ Cream, Lotion, and Solarstick, Ego Sun Sense 50+, Aquasun.

Oral Hygiene:

Savacol Aquae Spray for Dry mouth

Allergies:

Telfast, Claratyne, Zyrtec, Phenergan, Drixine Nasal Spray, Beconase Nasal Spray, Rhincort Nasal Spray, Sudafed, Demazin Tablets

Cough Mixtures:

Senagar & Ammonia, Durotuss
Fibre Supplements & Laxatives:
Nucolox, Normacol, Metamucil, Coloxyl with Senna, Senokot, Movicol powder sachets, Glycerine Suppositories.

Dressings:

Micropore Tape, Cutilfilm Plus Waterproof Dressings, Melolin Dressings, Handy Bandages, Cotton Wool, Betadine Antiseptic, Solugels, Barrier Creams, Disposable Gloves, Prantal Powder, Bactroban Cream or Ointment.

Antifungal Agents:

Lamasil cream, Canesten Cream, Loceryl Nail Paint,
Hydrozole Cream -- (DVA Authority required)

Haemorroidal reatments:

Proctocedyl Ointment -- (DVA Authority required)
Suppositories, Anusol.

Ear Preparations:

Ear Clear for Wax, Waxsol, Ceromol Ear Drops,
Eye Drops: Ircal Eye Ointment, Refresh Tears Plus 15 mil.

Vitamins Minerals:

Calcium sup Tablets, (Caltrate), Vitamin B1 (Betamin), Magnesium Tablets (Mag-Min), Accomin Liquid Tonic,
OsteVit-D – (Vitamin D) -- (DVA Authority required)
Multivitamins – (DVA Authority required)

Joint Pain - Arthritis:

Metsal Cream or Liniment, Arthro-Aid (Glucosamine). Osteomol 665
Paracetamol (replaces Panadol Osteo Tablets)
Voltaren Emulgel -- (DVA Authority required)
Fish Oil Capsules 1000mg -- (DVA Authority required)

Sexual Health:

Viagra, Cialis, Caverject

Pain Relief:

Asprins - Cartia, Astrix Capsules, Cardiprin, Paracetamol, Ibuprofen, Panamax Co, Panadeine Forte.

Weight Loss:

Optifast, Xenical. (Dietician & Doctor to get DVA Authority)

Various:

Nicorette Patches (Quit Smoking), Vermox, Imodium, Gastro-Stop, Ural Sachets (Urinary Alkalinizer)

* Always check with your GP, as this list changes from time to time.

*(You could have been paying full price for any of these items without realising you could have them on a prescription, thereby reaching the **Safety Net of $316.80** sooner. Remember after your **48 prescriptions per annum, at $6.60 each your prescriptions are free.)***

Some Pharmacies are charging discounted scripts at $5.60 each, be aware if you take the discounted price you will need to accrue **$319.20 (57 scripts) to reach the Safety Net**.

https://www.pbs.gov.au/browse/rpbs

COMPUTER TRAINING CLASSES

Computer Classes are conducted at the Vietnam Veterans Train situated at the St Marys RSL Club in Mamre Road St Marys as follows:

Tuesday:	9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Wednesday:	9:00 am - 12:00 pm (LadiesClass)
Thursday:	9:00 am - 11:00 am

Thursday classes teach Digital Photo manipulation using Photoshop Elements 5, only 5 students at a time **Bookings essential.**

The Tuesday and Wednesday classes are informal and we teach mixed classes from the 'beginner' to the more experienced and retired seniors wanting to familiarise with current software and learn to use the Internet to send E-Mails and carry out research and other technology related issues.

For more info call Keith 9833 4700 or email vietvet@tpg.com.au

THE TRAIN - SEAT OF KNOWLEDGE

The Beginning

Everything has a beginning South Creek Station is one such place. A Meeting of businessman Mr P McDonald and Project Builder Mr A S Knot, men with a vision did on 15/11/1993 meet to discuss a project which would benefit the community and unbeknown at the time the Out-Post was destined to have a future. And the lease of land owned by St Marys RSL Club and Ex-servicemen Ltd, enabled the project to get under way. It took a lot of forethought and hard work and negotiations with the Council and community. Work actually started on the project began 12 months before the inaugural meeting. Construction of the station building was done with physical assistance of members of local Rotary Club under the guidance of Mr Terry Knott.

Second stage was the preparation for the rails to be laid alongside the platform. Rails and Sleepers were transported by road from the Australian Defence Industries site at North St Marys. Everything for the site was brought by road on trailers and lifted into place by crane. Some vandalism occurred during the early days which necessitated immediate action to prevent re-occurrence of such wanton damage. It was decided to acquire a guard dog for this purpose, it proved successful.

Eventually the project came to fruition which had many long and prosperous years to the community. The complex had a unique blend of tourism and training and community use. And unbeknown at the time the Out-Post was destined to have a future. It took a lot of planning and hard work and tribulations with the Council and community. Eventually the project came to completion which provided many long and prosperous years to the community.

St Mary's Vietnam Veteran's Outpost "Seat of Knowledge"

Ex- Military personnel that served for many years in Australia and foreign lands being told what to do, how and when, did it willingly and unhesitatingly found civilian life confronting on being discharged from the service. Many were at a loss and perplexed on return to civilian life and miss the camaraderie so prevalent during their time in the military. People whom they could rely on have disappeared out of sight but not out of mind. Some experienced extreme difficulty settling into civilian life while others had no problem and then there were those who re-enlisted and made it a career.

Back home with our family, and in employment. We all looked for something not knowing what it really was, something was missing. It just wasn't the same as it was when we went away. We thought about joining the RSL but we weren't welcomed there. We were the younger generation, didn't know what war was, basically shunned by the World War II Vets. We had to find our own domain.

From humble beginnings;

Several people shone like a beacon had in mind a meeting place where Vets could meet, have a chat and a coffee and a bite to eat. Hence the train came to fruition. The word spread rapidly and ex-members from the three services gathered there daily. This is what was needed a Meeting place of our own. The Vietnam Vets just like a band of brothers rallied together and there were those who had a vision looked over the horizon and decided to do something to assure the Vets that there was help where they could find solace and a place in civilian life. All would be fine

A committee was formed and painstakingly over many months these men from all walks of life, but ex-military applied their aptitude. It is people of this ilk that get things done

irrespective of their differences and station in life they were a team with a farsightedness. And some decades on the team members have changed but the spirit and determination of those taken their place are the same.

Early Monday to Friday morning ex-vets are sitting on comfortable benches, hail rain or shine having a good old chin wag.I suppose talking rubbish or exaggerate a little,**"The Train"** is well appointed, with an office and staff, a Hon Secretary and a President together with Advocates specially trained people who have passed various courses through DVA to equip them to assist Veterans' to put in claims for medical problems sustained during their military career. They are people of integrity with the expertise to put clients at their ease as it could be daunting at the first interview.

"The Train" is well equipped with a library, TV room and meeting room not to mention a computer room which is open Wednesday and Thursday for those who want to hone their skills in computer literacy under the guidance of a tutor at $2 a session, those who are most frugal would consider it a bargain. You also get a cup of coffee.

Volunteers give freely of their time and provide cheer to those less fortunate, than them-selves who are in hospital or confined to home care. These men and women travel countless kilometres each week and spend unlimited hours in visitations and offering advice when needed also advising on entitlements to which they might be eligible.

On the last Thursday of the month an ex regular soldier John and a cohort or two should I say volunteers organise a BBQ for all and sundry and there are no shortages of participants. Local and State members also have on several occasions partake of the generosity of the Veterans' informality and stay on for a chat and leave more wisely of their experience. Reno, our Station Master (has a nickname for everyone) is in charge of an entourage of willing helpers (The Train Washers) who keep the train spic and span and the recent purchase of a ride-on mower; "Ken's domain" ensuring the surrounding area is well manicured and pristine. These ex-veterans take pride in what they do and itis a credit to them. Servicemen and women from all conflicts: the Korean War (Forgotten War), Malayan Emergency (FESR) Indonesia, Vietnam and subsequently Afghanistan, Iraq, Timor and Peacekeeping rolls. All are welcome with open arms and support at the Train.

Bus trips are arranged several times during the year for the benefit of member's Reno together with our entrepreneur and bus captain Ted "OAM" the man who organises these outings is conversant of the many places of interest and historical value which draw the attention of members. Ted never fails to please; he goes out of his way to ensure we all have a good time and is always given an enthusiastic accolade on return to base. As Treasurer Ted's pecuniary expertise enables him to ensure the accounts of the Train and sub-Branch are deftly prepared and will pass any scrutiny and ensure that we are solvent which indeed is an enviable position to be in.

We have amongst us Tomas our Poet laureate a quiet unassuming Irish man conspicuous not only by the lilt of his Irish brogue and laughter but by his well-worn green cap jauntily hiding his greying hair. He is admired by a wide circle of friends and acquaintances and in particular the Veteran community. He is blessed with a vocabulary which he puts to good use with his poignant poetry with a chosen verse that can bring a tear to the most rough and down-to-earth men who are not ashamed to show their emotion? Tom a Veteran has seen things on the Battlefield and no doubt the selected verse comes from the heart and a reflection of his mates and what he has seen. We are fortunate to have Tom as a mate. Tom is lucky to have a consummate chef as his wife, who spoils us from time to time with her culinary prowess. She puts it to good use and we are fortunate to be the recipients of one of her beautiful creations a fruit cake which we eagerly devour at morning tea.

We have many talented people at the train who are experienced in many fields and can offer advice when required. The small but proficient office staffs are capable of handling any situation that may arise. Many inquiries are varied and complex but are dealt with the know-how by these gregarious volunteers.
This is only a synopsis of the value of the advice accessible from the trained staffs that is readily available to assist. We encourage all Veterans in need of advice or just a little socializing to drop in anytime say Hi and have a cuppa.
We are situated at the Corner of Hall St and Mamre Road St Marys, in the car park of the RSL.
In conclusion it would be remiss of me not to mention the man behind the scene, our Honorary Secretary Sam Vecchio an unassuming man, diligent and responsive to his position, at times a thankless position with more complaints than accolades, but undaunted his characteristic attitude allows him to overcome any adversity. We are thankful to Sam for the many hours he spends at "The Train" for the benefit of the members.

James (Jim) Reardon

IF YOU, OR A VETERAN YOU KNOW, IS FEELING

THEN IT'S TIME FOR A CHAT WITH OUR WELFARE OFFICERS
VISIT THE VETERANS CENTRE, LOCATED IN

"THAT TRAIN"

CNR MAMRE ROAD and HALL STREET ST MARYS

THE BEST TIME TO ACT IS NOW!

FLAGS AT HALF MAST

The tradition of lowering flags to half mast as a sign of remembrance is believed to have its origins on the high seas. As a sign of respect or honour for important persons, sailing ships would lower their sails, thus slowing the vessel and allowing for the VIP's own vessel to come alongside and for him to board if so desired. Lowering of sails was also used to honour VIPs who were reviewing a naval procession from the land. In time only the ship's flags were lowered in a symbolic gesture. This practice was also adopted on land.

For information about Australian national flag protocol, please visit It's an honour, a web site managed and maintained by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Yokohama, Honshu, Japan. As the Australian flag hangs at half-mast, a bugler from the 67th Infantry Battalion plays the Last Post during the burial service for a dead Australian soldier at the British Commonwealth war Cemetery.

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Corner Mamre Road and Hall St.

The RSL Sub-Branch monthly meeting is held the second Wednesday of each month at 6.30 pm in the auditorium, refreshments provided. The office is open most mornings between 10.00am-12noon and can be contacted on **9623 6555**.

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John Davison - Editor

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