

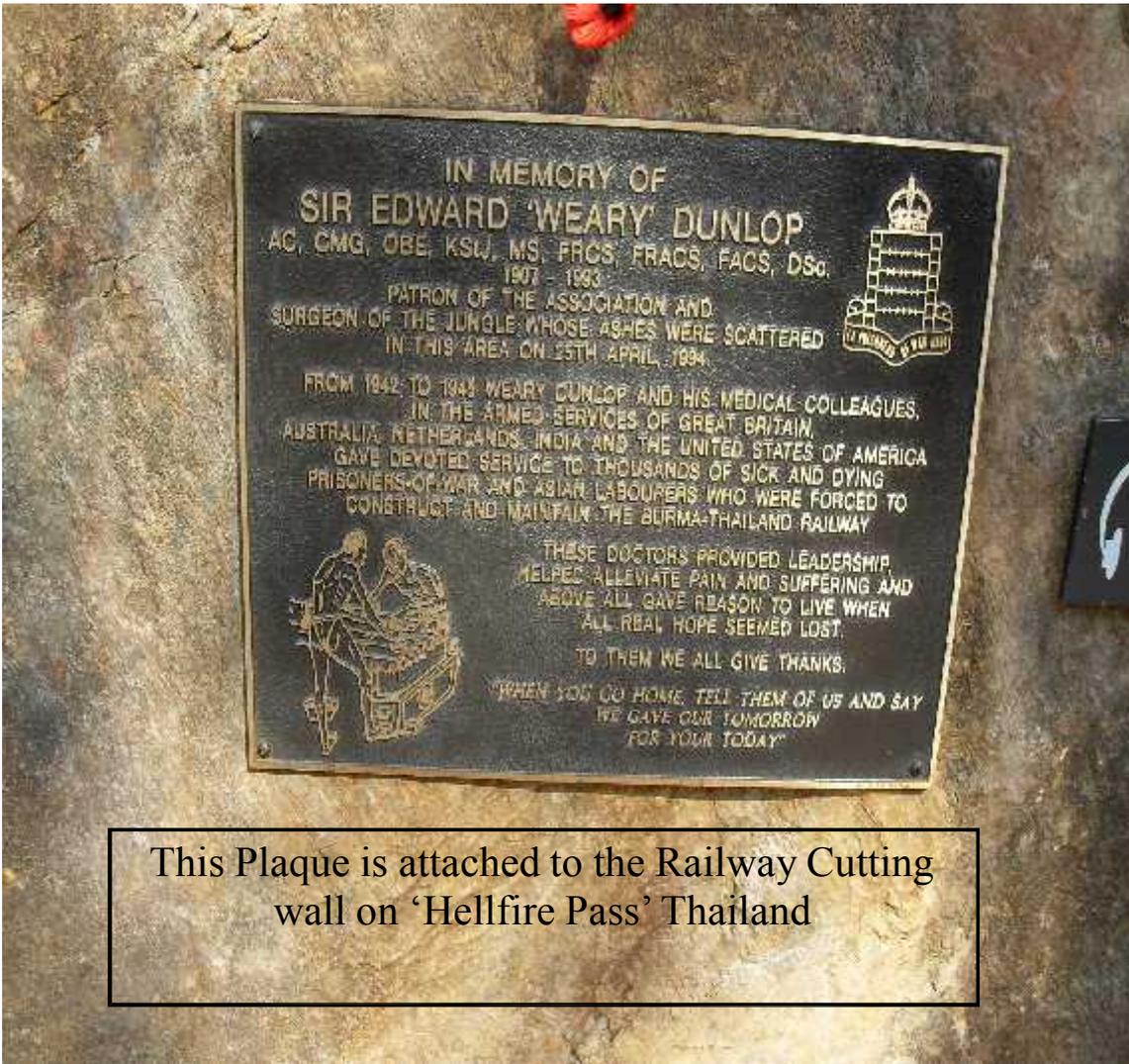
WESTERN OUTPOST NEWS



April 2013 Issue

**St Mary's Outpost the
'Train of Knowledge'**

St Mary's Vietnam Veterans Outpost & St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch Combined Newsletter



This Plaque is attached to the Railway Cutting wall on 'Hellfire Pass' Thailand

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Note: The Outpost General Meetings are held Bi-Monthly from January at 10.00am at the 'TRAIN' On the THIRD THURSDAY of the month.

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Google: St Marys RSL Sub Branch Phone:
9623 6555 or 0418 114 976**

VVAA ST MARYS REPORT - APRIL 2013

The State AGM was held recently with the following positions filled:

1. State president Mr. David McCann
2. State Secretary Mrs Pam Forsdike
3. State Treasurer Mr Tony Walker
4. Vice Presidents Mr Len Schulz and Mr Greg Cant
5. Mr Ken Foster Appointed as State Advocate.

One of the major functions of the AGM and General Meeting was to ratify the new "Welfare Committee". This committee was ratified by the general meeting and consists of the following members: Ken Foster OAM, Len Schulz OAM, David McCann and Greg Cant.

One of the first points of business for the committee was to write a letter of thanks to the Vietnamese Community who raised the funds and advise them of how we were to both invest and disperse them and to arrange to have all acquittal documents available for their inspection if so desired.

The first Sub-Branch to receive a Grant for Welfare Travel from the funds was St Marys and our Treasurer has those funds in hand now. The Committee also received a request from an individual Vietnam Veteran living outside of the Bathurst area who wanted to know if the Welfare Committee could help him with travelling expenses to get to and from Orange as he had signed up to do the Departments Heart Health Program in Orange along with his mates from there. We had to unfortunately advise him that this fund was not, and cannot be, used to assist individuals, only sub-branches and only with travel expenses that BEST funding no long wishes to cover.

There was also some discussion at the meeting of a recent event where the Courts were able to subpoena the files of a veteran from VVCS. Again unfortunately, although our National Body as well as the RSL and Peace Keepers took up the fight against this, it is apparent that there is no form of Dr Client Privilege when you are speaking to a counsellor. The Courts have ruled that they do have the rights to access these documents , but have given assurances that the argument presented by the party wishing to gain access will have to be overwhelming. Having seen rulings made by Magistrate Pat O'Shane, this does not fill me with confidence. The National Conference is to be held in May in Coolangatta and this is another subject that will come under discussion.

Closer to home we have ANZAC Day rushing down to meet us again. How is it

Possible that the year gets away so quickly? All planning is in place for both Commemoration Sunday and ANZAC Day. The RSL Sub-Branch have advised they intend to have the official opening of the new display wall in the St Marys RSL Club after the Sunday Commemorative Service.

The ANZAC Dawn Service will be held at St Marys RSL Club commencing at 05.30am followed by the traditional breakfast at the Club. Members proceeding to the City March may take advantage of the 'free' bus which leaves outside the club, remember that this service is one way only i.e. You make your own way home.

Planning has also commenced for the VVA Day in August. I guess by now you should all know that Dianne Lindsey has consented to appear and sing a couple of numbers for us. A guest speaker at this time has not been arranged and we (the RSL Sub-Branch & VVAA St Marys) would like to hear from you, the members, some of your ideas on who you would like to have as your guest speaker. We are trying to steer clear of politicians especially with this being a politically charged year. Timing will be tight with the extra entertainment within the Service, however, we must not lose sight of the actual significance of Vietnam Veterans Day and that is to remember our mates who died and those who survived, many with lifelong injuries.

I believe that Marilyn Bell (VAN Parramatta) is looking for volunteers that are prepared to join the "*Men's Peer Health Program*" as delegates, there has been one or two long term members who have dropped out needing a rest. Anyone interested please contact Marilyn at Parramatta VAN office directly on 9893 9892.

Don't forget that Bi-Monthly General Meetings are now held in the 'Train' general office commencing in January, we recently had one in March and the next one will be in May, meetings commence at 10.00am. Emails will be sent out to those members who have their emails registered with us at the office shortly before each meeting as reminders. Apart from these newsletters, if you don't attend the meetings you only receive info 'second hand' so don't whinge about decisions afterwards.

Well I imagine Easter has now gone by since this newsletter was posted, so I can only say "Hope you had a happy and safe Easter break"

Greg Cant
President

VVAA ST MARY'S OUTPOST EDUCATION REPORT MARCH 2013

The Outpost E-Team is experiencing the usual busy program for school Term 1. Its worth noting that a few schools have shifted focus from the Vietnam War Era in line with upcoming syllabus changes whilst others (six new schools to our program to date) have requested our services. History teacher networks in both government and non-government schools advocate the Outpost Education Program.

The following engagements booked/addressed in school Term One:

- *** 17 Presentations on Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War with approximately 2500 Year 10 Students.
- *** 4 student research assignments supported.
- *** 1 School ANZAC Service Vietnam Memorabilia display organised.
- *** 11 requests to date for guest speakers for school ANZAC Services.

Included in the above was/is the outreach visit to Gilgandra High School and the upcoming school presentation at the Scheyville National Service Officer Training Unit (OTU) as a venue as requested by one school.

Requests for guest speakers for school ANZAC Services will continue over the coming weeks. School inquiries will outnumber the availability of the six willing Outpost members. Hopefully other ESO's will also respond to school communities.

School Term 2 bookings are being addressed as planned.

Thank you to Outpost members for their support and involvement with E-Team programs.

Vin Cosgrove - Co-ordinator
VV Education Program.

Classroom Jokes:

- Q. Why were the early days in history called the dark ages?
A. Because there were so many knights.
- Q. Where was the Declaration of Independence signed?
A. At the bottom





Pupils from The Scots College Bellevue Hill with Vin & Nancy Cosgrove. Students dressed in Vietnam era uniforms as part of the Education Team presentation; a highly successful visit.



HMAS MELBOURNE/FRANK E EVANS COLLISION
3rd JUNE 1969

The skipper of the HMAS Melbourne, Captain Stevenson, which was involved in the collision with the US Navy ship Frank E Evans has finally received an apology from the Australian Government.

Background: On the night of 2/3 June 1969, Melbourne and her escorts were involved in anti-submarine training exercises. In preparation for launching a Grumman S-2 aircraft, Stevenson ordered Evans to the plane guard station, reminded the destroyer of Melbourne's course, and instructed the Carrier's navigational lights to be brought to full brilliance. This was the fourth time that Evans had been asked to assume this station that night, and the previous three manoeuvres had been without incident. Evans was positioned on Melbourne's Port Bow, but began the manoeuvre by turning starboard, towards the Carrier. A radio message was sent from Melbourne to Evan's bridge and Combat Information Centre, warning the destroyer that she was on a collision course, which Evans acknowledged. Seeing the destroyer take no action and on a course to place herself under Melbourne's bow, Stevenson ordered the carrier hard to Port, signalling the turn by both radio and siren blasts. At approximately the same time, Evans turned hard to starboard to avoid the approaching carrier. It is uncertain which ship began to manoeuvre first, but each ship's bridge crew claimed that they were informed of the other ship's turn after they commenced their own. After having narrowly passed in front of Melbourne, the turns quickly placed Evans back in the carrier's path. Melbourne hit Evans amidships at 3.15am, cutting the destroyer in two.

Captain Stevenson was Court Martialled and the defence submitted that there was "no case to answer" resulting in the dropping of the charges against Captain Stevenson. Despite this outcome, his next posting was as chief of staff to a minor flag officer, seen by him as a demotion. The posting had been decided upon before the court-martial, and was announced while Stevenson was out of the country for the courts-martial of Evans' officers; he did not learn about it until his return to Australia.

FINALLY:

The Federal Government has apologised to Captain Stevenson (Rtd) for being made the scapegoat for one of Australia's most devastating Naval disasters in which 74 American Navy personnel died when the collision occurred during exercises off the coast of the Phillipines. Mr Stevenson, now 91, has received a letter from the Defence Minister finally acknowledging he was "not treated fairly" by the government of the day and the Australian Navy.

Sergeant STUBBY was a stray, homeless mutt who saved more lives, saw more combat, and performed more heroic feats than most people could ever hope to accomplish.

This fearless Pit Bull Terrier started his humble life as most stray animals do - hungry, cold alone, and stranded in the town of New Haven, Connecticut. Living garbage can to garbage can without so much as a doghouse roof over his head. One day this poor dejected little canine happened to stumble



Sgt STUBBY

onto the parade ground on the campus of Yale University, where it just so happened that men of the 102nd Regiment, 26th Infantry Division were training for their eventual deployment to fight in World War 1.

This adorable little dog was taken in by a soldier named **John Conroy**, who named the pup 'STUBBY' on account of his little stumpy tail. He was soon adopted by the soldiers and before long this intelligent little dog learned the 'Bugle Calls'. Not long after his 'adoption' he had free reign on the Campus and when the order came down for the 102nd to ship out to battle, Conroy just stuffed the dog into his greatcoat and smuggled on board a ship bound for France, they even had a set of 'dog tags' made up for the new member of the Unit and proclaimed him the 'Unit Mascot'.

During his tour of duty STUBBY did his part to raise morale to the war-weary soldiers on the front lines; he also participated in 17 battles and four major offensives. In February 1918, he found himself under constant artillery and sniper fire for over a month straight with no respite, responding by howling and barking in a "battle rage" every time gunshots started ringing out. He was wounded in action later that month in a chemical weapons attack, when the Germans launched some mustard gas that poisoned the little dog so hard it nearly died. The clever little dog learned to smell the mustard gas before it became lethal; he apparently became so adept at it that any time a gas canister exploded near American lines, he would run up and down the trenches barking and biting men until they put their gas masks on, an act that saved countless lives. STUBBY the war dog was wounded in combat in April 1918, when he was hit with a German hand grenade while participating in the assault on the German town of Schieprey. Despite receiving shrapnel wounds to his forelimbs and chest, STUBBY survived the grenade blast, lived through some emergency surgery, and spent his convalescence time cheering up the wounded men in the field hospital. Sgt STUBBY died in 1926 and is now in the Smithsonian's Museum of American History.

St Marys RSL Sub-Branch – First Report for 2013

2013 began with no change to the Sub-Branch Executive line-up at the AGM elections in February. The team for 2013 consists of:

President – Mr Ron Kelly

Vice Presidents – John Foeken and Terry Burn

Honorary Treasurer – Ted Fish

Honorary Secretary – Tony Fryer

Assistant Secretary – Ron Blakely

Ordinary Members:- Michael Wiesel, Greg Cant

The Sub-Branch Committee members again comprise Bill Heath, Ted Spencer,

Reno Ciantar, Uwe Schoenherr, Chris Winmill, Burke Rogge and Tony Mullavey.

Chris Winmill and Lee-Ann Taylor have volunteered to represent the Sub-Branch at the RSL District Council, and at the annual RSL State Congress next month (May) in Coffs Harbour.



The timing of this issue of the Newsletter will most likely coincide with final preparations for our annual ANZAC Commemorative Services. Again this year, we will conduct our march along Queen Street to Victoria Park on Sunday 21st April, where our Service will be held. It's a time for us all to join with our local community to remember those 100,000+ Australians who have given their lives in our Defence Forces in order to protect the way of life and freedom that we all enjoy today. We should also remember the hundreds of thousands of Australians who have been wounded (physically or mentally) in the same cause; The march will commence from Coachmans Park or nearby, on Queen street at 1430hrs; the ANZAC Service in Victoria Park will commence by 1500hrs. See if you can encourage some neighbours to come along. Immediately following this Service, everyone will be invited to return to the St Marys RSL Club for appropriate refreshments. Once assembled at the Club, we will conduct a brief formal ceremony to officially open our newly constructed 'Corridor of Honour', dedicated to all Service personnel who have served Australia in times of conflict. Whilst the design is directed more towards educating our local community (young and older alike) in the history, traditions and culture of the Australian Defence Force, please take time to browse through the corridor yourself.

Our ANZAC Dawn Service will again occur at 0530hrs on Thursday 25th April. As was the case last year, we will have the large live-video screen on the double-decker carriage to enable the anticipated large crowd to clearly see the entire Service. Of course, breakfast will be available immediately after the Service. Collect your 'free drink' tickets as you enter the Club – these may be used in the Club between 0600hrs and 1300hrs on ANZAC Day **only**. Photos from these Services will be available on the Sub-Branch website by early May on (http://www.vvaastmarys.com.au/StMarysRSL_Sub-Branch/) periodically as there is much information to view and interesting links to allied websites on relevant information.

The St Marys RSL Sub-Branch has once again appointed the VVAA St Marys to provide all service-related pension and welfare services. The teams that provide these services are all qualified under DVA guidelines to do so. They perform a vital and efficient service to all members. If you are going into hospital for a planned operation/treatment involving a couple of days or more, please contact John Foeken (RSL Sub-Branch Vice President and Welfare Co-Ordinator) on 9833 4700.

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding Sub-Branch matters at any time, please contact the Secretary by mail (PO Box 3093 South St Marys 2760) or email (stmsub@tpg.com.au).

Ron Kelly - President

Tony Fryer - Secretary



Governor King Day Club

**Sponsored by St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch
"An RSL Service to the Community"**



We started back on the 16th January this year. Unfortunately, one of our long serving members of 6 Years, Vera Whitley, departed for the South Coast to live with her son, Vera will be missed at the Club.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held after our return with Ted Fish presiding, all positions were filled as per last year.

The State Administrator of RSL Day Clubs. Mr. Ross Baker, paid us a visit recently, he presented Allen Greenwood with a Certificate of Appreciation for his service to the Day Clubs Committee.

Don Watters has been on the sick list during the month after having surgery on his knees, Don is a regular volunteer and we hope he his back with us real soon.

Mick Reilly is back after looking after his grand children for the past fortnight and has returned for a well earned rest.

As usual after the Christmas break, we have experienced a slow start to the year with attendance down quite considerably, additionally, we have to cope with a lot of sickness within the club, these problems are always unavoidable but we are confident things will improve as we progress through 2013.

On the 27 February we had a retired senior Corrective Officer visit the club, he spoke for about 90 minutes about the differences between the various prisons including Long Bay, Goulburn and other prisons. At the end of the presentation he answered many questions from the group.

We had a visit from the Day Clubs organiser Tom Barnsley and Margaret Hodkinson who gave a very good exercise segment in Mick's absence.

We visited the St Mary's Historical Society in St Mary's to view their ANZAC display. We were treated to a very good presentation on St Mary's and Governor King and his family, the presenters wore period costume in the style

Of the day of Governor King, all in all a very interesting visit.

Mick Reilly



Allen receiving the Certificate from Ross Baker



Members of the Historical Society in Period Costume

RSL CORPS OF GUARDS

The RSL Corps of Guards is looking for new members. If you would like to assist with ceremonial activities and engaging with visitors to the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park, Sydney then have a think about it.

To be eligible to be a member of the RSL Corps of Guards you must be a financial Service member or Life Member of the League in New South Wales, male or female. There is a selection process and not all applicants will be selected to serve at the ANZAC Memorial. As a volunteer and once you have passed the induction and training course, you would have to be willing to give of your time to promote the RSL, the ANZAC Memorial and uphold the ANZAC Spirit.

We promise you that once bitten by the Memorial bug, you will never be the same again.

For more information go to the RSL NSW website: www.rslnsw.org.au

A Sappers' War: How the legendary Aussie Tunnel Rats fought the Viet Cong.

A book review of Author Jimmy Thomson about the action-packed true-life stories from the unsung heroes of Australia's war in Vietnam..."We make and we break"...

Tunnel Rats was the best selling, true story of Sandy McGregor and his legendary troop of engineers who were the first Allied troops to discover and explore the labyrinth of Vietcong tunnels near Saigon.

A Sappers War plunges deeper into the adventures of Sandy's 3 Field Troop and goes beyond, giving readers a rare insight into what it took to be an army engineer in Vietnam. Not only were these sappers' in and out of tunnels, clearing caves and bunkers, detecting and defusing bombs and removing booby traps - they suffered the consequences of arguably the greatest Australian military blunder since WW1.

Despite arguing vehemently against the creation of the 10km long Barrier Minefield, Sappers had to lay its 23,000 deadly jumping jack mines. Then, when the VC began stealing the mines to use against Allied troops, ironically it was Sappers who had to deal with the recycled mines in the field. Little wonder they suffered more casualties than any other unit in Vietnam.

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Imprint: Allen and Unwin RRP 27.99

St Marys RSL Bowling Club

The bowling club invites all members and visitors to utilize the excellent facilities available with our two greens, spacious bowls lounge and function room. We have a great social bowls programme and free coaching for those interested in starting out. Bowls are available from the club, so there is no cost outlay to start your new pastime.

We also have a strong representation in both male and female pennant teams (representative) which is available to any member to enter. You don't have to be a champion bowler to play pennants. So come along and join in the fun.

Social Bowls Programme

Tuesday	Any Pairs	9.30am Start
Wednesday	Any Pairs	10.30am Start
Thursday	Ladies Bowls	9.30am Start
Friday	Mens Pairs	1.00pm Start
Saturday	<u>Free Coaching</u>	10.00am – 12 noon
Saturday	Any Pairs	1.00pm Start
Sunday	Turkey Trots(mixed Bowls)	9.30am Start

Contact the Bowls Office via Club Reception on 9623 6555



Bowling Club Greens and Function area.



Coming to Rooty Hill RSL soon is Rod Gregory - a runner up in the finals of Australia's Got Talent.

Saturday 1 June

- **Time:** 8PM
- **Tickets:** \$23 Members/\$25 Visitors
- Adults only



After only 12 months, as a performing comedian, Rod Gregory auditioned for Channel Seven's, "Australia's Got Talent" hoping for just 2 minutes on national TV, he came fourth in the 2011 Grand Finale.

Rod Gregory, 'The Old Fella,' at the age of 67 was forced into early retirement after three serious back operations. His retirement came after 53 years as an active mixed farmer (in his younger days as a shearer, and for the last 13 years was a viticulturist in his own vineyard). To Rod, retirement was a dirty word, reluctantly after much encouragement from the family, he decided to write short stories of his farming days. This venture mysteriously found his way into completing a ten week comedy course. Rod's life completely changed, when he found that he had never felt more alive than when he was performing, as they say, "one door opens as another closes."

Rod Gregory, 'The Old Fella' has mastered the craft of comedy, with his clever use of risqué Aussie humour entwined within stories that successfully send infectious laughter rolling throughout audiences from his first spoken word till the very end of his performance. 'The Old Fella' character has managed to break down barriers between age, gender and beliefs throughout our nation along with taking a bit of country into city living rooms; Rod's gusto and 'have a go' attitude is inspirational. Rod has just released his first CD and it is sure to plant a smile on the faces and in the hearts of all who hear it, no matter where they reside.

DON'T MISS IT

Pets of Older Persons (POOP's)

It is well documented how therapeutic pets can be for the older person. However, age and disability often restricts owners from seeking veterinary assistance for their pets.



POOP's was established in 2003 at St Joseph's Hospital in response to the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) identifying the problem with elderly pet owners refusing hospital admission as they had no one to care for their pets.

St Joseph's Hospital formed a partnership with RSPCA NSW to assist the older persons in the community care for their pets.

POOP's has now been extended to cover clients in all areas that require this service. We provide the following services:

- Monitoring of pets by POOP's staff.
- Support in caring for pets.
- Access to veterinary assistance when required.
- Foster accommodation of the pet should the owner require hospitalisation
- Assistance with pet food if needed.
- Organise grooming.
- Fostering of pets is also available for elderly hospital inpatients.
- Dog Walking.

The service is available to any elderly person owning a pet who does not have relatives or friends willing to take responsibility for the pet.

All POOP's services are available to Palliative Care patients in the community of any age who do not have the social supports to care for their pets. The POOP's program is as much about human welfare as it is about animal welfare. POOP's caters specifically for people over 65 years of age who cannot access veterinary assistance due to age and disability who have no relatives or friends willing to take responsibility for the pet.

For any enquiries phone 02 9770 7555 and ask for the POOP's Co-ordinator.



Podiatry
Exercise Physiology
Massage Therapy
Sports Dietitian
Chiropractic
Physiotherapy
Sports Physician
Orthopaedic Surgeon

PRACTITIONERS & SERVICES

PRACTITIONERS

- Podiatry
- Exercise Physiology
- Physiotherapy
- Massage Therapy
- Sports Dietitian
- Chiropractic
- Sports Physician
- Orthopaedic Surgeon

SERVICES

- Hydrotherapy
- Hydrotherapy Group Classes
- Group Exercise Gym Classes
- Pilates
- Shock Wave Therapy
- Dry Needling
- Customised Orthotics

If you have any questions about any of the services provided please ask one of our friendly administrative staff.



Don't forget to check out www.wssmc.com.au as well as like "Western Sydney Sports Medicine Centre" on Facebook to stay up to date with all of the latest news and articles.

TAB FACILITIES

Sports Bet
FOX Sport
SKY Channel

TERRACE CAFE

Check Board for Specials
Open Daily for Lunch & Dinner
Serving Light Meals, Snacks, Sweets & Coffee

Monday

Bingo 11.30am
Rock & Roll Dancing 7-10pm

Tuesday

Bingo 7.30pm

Thursday

Bingo 11.30am
Texas Hold'em Poker 6.30pm
DJ Stuart plays 60's, 70's & 80's in the Lounge
and MEMBER'S BADGE DRAW
\$3000-\$5000 From 7pm

FRIDAY

Bingo 11.30am
DJ Stuart In Lounge 8pm -12.30

Saturday

Meat Run 4-6pm
Duo in Lounge Area 7.30pm-Midnight
Live Band in Audi 1st Sat/Month

Sunday

Raffle, Trivia & Music 4-8pm

ST MARYS RSL CLUB

"The Place To Be"

FORTUNA Chinese Restaurant

Open for Lunch at Noon & Dinner at 5pm (Except Mondays)

www.stmarysrsl.com.au

Is gambling a problem for you? G-Line (NSW) is a confidential, anonymous & free counseling service.
FREECALL 1800 633 635

The Veterans' Home Maintenance Line

The Veterans' Home maintenance Line (VHML) is a toll free telephone service for members of the veteran community which:

- Provides advice on general home maintenance matters;
- Provides local referral to reliable efficient tradespeople with appropriate qualifications, and both professional indemnity and public liability insurance cover;
- Provides 24 hour access for emergency repairs;
- Offers a home inspection service to identify current or possible future maintenance problems and is available during weekdays in business hours; and
- Provides links to Government subsidised services where possible.

Who is eligible?

VHML is available to all members of the veteran community.

Who Pays For The Service?

The advice or referral for home maintenance is free, but you are required to pay for any work undertaken by the tradesperson, including any call out fee. You are also required to pay for the home inspection service.

Follow Up

The VHML staff may contact you after the work has been completed to ask whether you are completely satisfied with the service that was arranged.

What VHML does not do?

The VHML does not provide:

- Financial assistance for the work undertaken;
- Financial or legal advice; or
- Answers to questions about pensions or other Veterans' Affairs matters.

How to apply:

Ring 1800 80 1945

And ask for home maintenance advice or a referral to a tradesperson.



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 - 12.00pm

Wednesday: 9.00AM - 12.00 pm (Ladies Class)

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 & other technology related issues.

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

Aussie Banner & Flag Co. Pty Ltd (ABF Signs)

Boats, Banners, Awnings, Vehicles Factories, Shop Fronts, Magnetic Signs, Illuminated Signs, Computer Vinyl Signs.

**Banners & Bunting
Flags (National, Corporate, School)
Exhibitions & Street Banners.**

1/20 Hall Street St Mary's 2760

Contact: Tom Bell 0418 447 389

Phone: 9623 2937

Fax: 9623 2934

ausban@pnc.com.au

NEPEAN WIVES OF VIETNAM VETERANS
WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

A great start to 2013 with three new members joining our group, which goes to show there is a need for this type of support in our community.

In February, 12 ladies enjoyed our summer retreat to 'Bullwarra' in Terrigal. The weather was perfect and a few brave souls ventured into the pool for a relaxing swim whilst others lazed around the pool or just enjoyed the break from cooking, cleaning etc. Of course a lot of talking, laughing and shopping was enjoyed by all.

A further 24 ladies enjoyed a wonderful day out to Stanwell Tops, unfortunately there were no hang gliders at that particular time, we then went on to Shellharbour for a lovely lunch, followed by a stop at Kiama for shopping or just siteseeing. Once again the weather was perfect for us.

It seems like we are always going away....so in May, 12 ladies will be going on the 'Pacific Pearl' for a four day cruise, which will stop at Moreton Bay for the day. This will give us time to recover our land legs for a while.

In May we will also be holding our annual "Biggest Morning Tea". See our invitation below.

Don't forget our Craft Group meets on a Tuesday in the Youth Hall from 1.00pm till 4.00pm at a cost of \$5.00 which includes a teacher and also afternoon tea. Some of the ladies have been busy making Turbans for the Cancer Clinic at Penrith, as well as matching Scarfs. These items are very much appreciated by the staff and patients.

We have again made up 'Care Packages' for our troops overseas, these are for Service Woman as well as the Service Men and we haven't forgot the Doggies and their Handlers.

Our exercise Group will be starting again in a few weeks and we are very lucky to have a young man as our volunteer instructor!



(Continued next page)

Nepean Wives of Vietnam Veterans Women's Support Group

Invitation

*We wish to extend an Open invitation to attend our Annual Nepean
Cancer Clinic and "Look Good Feel Better" fundraiser **HIGH**
TEA*

To be held at 10.00am on Thursday 16th May 2013

At the

St Mary's RSL Youth Club Hall

Adjacent to St Mary's RSL Club

Cost: \$10.00 per Guest

*All proceeds going to the Nepean Cancer Clinic & "Look Good Feel
Better" Organisation*

RSVP Thursday 9th May 2013

Phone: Maureen 9675 3998 or Maree 9623 7126

*Nepean Wives of Vietnam Veterans Women's Support
Group*

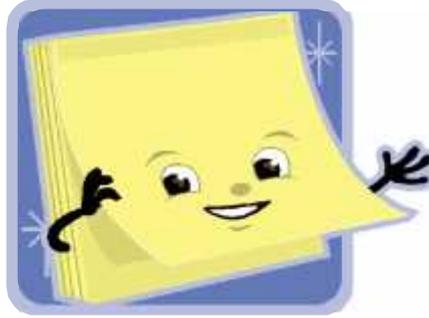
*This is a non-profit community based support group for
wives of veterans and are part of the VVAA St Marys.*

The group meet on the second Thursday of each month

at 10.00 am at the

St Mary's RSL Youth Club Hall.

Phone: Cheryl Mullavey 9625 9363



**IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING DAYS OF
OPERATION FOR PENSIONS AT THE VVAA
ST MARYS OUTPOST**

Pension claims at the 'Train' are now carried out on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday between the hours of 9.30am to 1.00pm, however, these timings are flexible depending on availability of Pension Officers.

Anyone wishing to see a particular Officer should phone the office first to ensure they will be in attendance.

Veterans attending the 'Train' for the first time to start a claim should allow for at least two hours for the interview as initial interviews can be time consuming.

Interviews are carried out on a 'first in first served' basis

No Pension claims are carried out on Thursdays, this being kept clear for administration and maintenance.

Sydney West Integrative Clinical Health
Health, Sport & Lifestyle Centre
1 & 2. 136 Queen Street
St Marys NSW 2760
Mob: 0451 829 794
E: ehsan.hamdy@bigpond.com



SPEALISED PAIN MANAGEMENT - NOT A GYM

- **Lower Back**
- **Shoulders & Upper Back**
- **Knees & Lower Extremities**
- **Old Injuries**
- * **Neck Pain**
- * **Hip & Joint Pain**
- * **Muscle Pain**
- * **All Chronic Pain**

Services currently available include:

Private Consult Rooms
Qualified Clinical Physiologist
Accredited Exercise Physiologists
Accredited Practice Dietician
Accredited Conditioning Specialist
Certified Nutritionist
Certified Musculoskeletal Dry Needling
Certified Ultrasound Therapy

Note: With a D904 referral from your GP, eligible veterans with a DVA Gold or White Card may be entitled to the above treatments.

Simply Call:

0451 829 794 (Direct Number) or 02 9833 3075 (Reception)
And ask to speak to “ESAN” from SWICH

THE DIGGER

From that fatal day,

April 25th 1915

The digger has fought many conflicts since then,
But never in his homeland
He's seen his mates die beside him,
He's tried his hardest
To make Australia what it is today.
He's fought with other nations,
Helping them as well as himself,
He's recognised all over the world,
And when he dies he will go to heaven,
Because he spent his time in hell,
He may have fought for his country
But he died for his mates.

Lest We Forget. By

Lachlan Vecchio
10 yrs old, 2013.

What affects the rate of the Service Pension?

Your living arrangements and your income and assets affect the rate of your Service Pension. For example, if you live with your partner your Service Pension is paid at the couples rate not the singles rate. If you have dependent children, you may be eligible for additional allowances paid by Centrelink.

If you receive a disability pension under the VEA, or a permanent impairment payment or special rate disability pension under MRCA as well as a Service Pension, the disability pension or MRCA payment is not counted as income for service pension purposes, although it can affect how much rent assistance you may receive.

The Changi Chapel Museum Singapore

The Changi Museum is dedicated to all who suffered during the dark years of WW2.

Through letters, photos, drawings and personal artefacts, the Museum chronicles the compelling story of POWs and civilian internees during their years in captivity. It is a story about great adversity, inspiration and remarkable heroism.



New galleries now trace the *History of Changi* from a rustic village to its role in the defence of Singapore and its transformation into a large internment camp in 1942.



Standing in the courtyard is the *Changi Chapel* - a symbolic replica of simple churches and chapels built by internees as places of comfort and solace. Today the *Changi Chapel* is a point of pilgrimage for veterans and families of ex-POWs.

Replicas of the famous *Changi Murals and the Changi Quilts* are on display in testimony to the spirit of resourcefulness and ingenuity that kept morale up and ultimately ensured survival.

Paying tribute to all who fought for the defence of Singapore and Malaya is the new section *We Remember*.

Through sketches, drawings and paintings, the new Wartime Artists section captures intimate details of men, women and children behind the walls and barbed wire.

Regular guided tours are available.

When visiting Singapore a 'must see' place to visit is the 'Battle Box' at Fort Canning (easy to get to), it was the Subterranean Command Centre of the British Malay Headquarters during WW2 and is where General Percival and his General Staff made the dreadful decision to surrender. (We all know what happened after that!!)

Gary Fizzell.

**St Marys Area Community Development Project Inc.
St Marys No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)**

What is NILS?

The No Interest Loans Scheme provides interest free loans for individuals and families on low incomes. It's a community based program that enables people to access fair, safe and equitable credit for the purchase of goods and services.

How does it work?

When the borrower makes repayments to a NILS program, funds are then available as a loan for someone else in the community. This is called 'circular community credit' and is a real demonstration of the community in action. Loans are usually paid back by CentrePay deductions.

What are the loans for?

NILS is generally for the purpose of essential household items like a fridge, washing machine, TV, bed or clothes dryer. NILS may also be provided to meet other essential needs like health aids or education costs. NILS is **NOT** for emergency relief, bond or rent money, living expenses or debt repayment.

Who is eligible?

St Marys area NILS is available to low income earners who have lived in the St Marys Area NILS boundaries (postcode 2747 Claremont Meadows only or 2760 St Marys, Colyton or Oxley Park only) for at least 3 months. It has limited funds so you must have a health care card or pension card and/or be of genuinely low income (e.g. Earning no more than the minimum wage as set by the Government) All NILS projects are run by local community groups, who try to provide loans to as many people as possible.

How much can you borrow?

It varies, but usually \$800 to \$1,200 and the repayment period is usually around 12-18 months.

If you have proved you can repay the loan within the preferred time, without causing you hardship, your application will go to the Loan Assessment Committee. If approved you will be contacted and be required to sign a contract after which, you will be given a cheque payable to the retailer agreed to by the Assessment Committee, you can then go ahead and make the purchase.

For further enquiries or to make application contact:
PH: 9673 2169

Update - New Contracts for Booked Car Scheme Providers (BCWD)

Under Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) is required to approach the market on a regular basis, usually every three to five years, for the purpose of procuring services from third parties.

DVA released a Request for Tender (RFT) for the provision of taxi and hire car services as part of its Booked Car Scheme in June 2011. Following an extensive evaluation process, this tender has now been completed and successful taxi and hire car companies started providing transport services to eligible DVA clients on 1 March 2012.

The purpose of the tender process was to ensure that appropriately licensed and accredited taxi and hire car companies are able to provide eligible DVA clients a reliable, timely and high quality service with trained drivers who are in tune with the needs of the veteran community. DVA has made it a high priority that all transport providers are committed to ensuring their drivers are properly trained and have an understanding of the needs of the veteran community.

Have any of my entitlements for veterans' transport changed?

NO. In fact, as a result of the open tender process, the overall number of vehicles available to transport DVA clients has actually increased with DVA having access to a mixture of both taxis and hire cars. There will also be greater vehicle coverage, and in most cases, additional services have been offered to DVA to meet the specific needs of the veteran community.

As some current providers will no longer be providing transport services, you may find that you have a different vehicle and driver to transport you to your medical appointments. While the driver and vehicle may be different, please be assured that the drivers are attuned to the needs of DVA clients. Should you require special assistance, drivers will be made aware of this requirement.

Eligibility to the BCWD scheme has not changed and the DVA will be working with transport providers and health providers to ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements.

To report transport issues or complaints with service:

PH: 1300 550 455 (Metro areas)

1800 555 254 (Regional areas)

Heavenly Celebration Funerals believe that families want honest and comprehensive answers regarding their funeral arrangements. Our funeral home Web Site provides you with vital information to help relieve some of the burdens of this difficult time.

At Heavenly Celebration Funerals, we pride ourselves on providing quality products and dignified service at an affordable cost. We understand that the emotional and financial burdens can be overwhelming and our goal is to alleviate as much stress as possible during this time.

Phone: 02 9623 6656 0418 250 242

Email: michelle@heavenlycelebrations.com.au

Web: www.heavenlycelebrations.com.au

Stroke Numbers Rise

The number of stroke victims is set to grow to catastrophic levels, the National Stroke Foundation says.

Publishing a report on the cost of strokes to Australia, foundation chief executive, Erin Lalor said successive governments had neglected the area.

Previous estimates had put the number of Australian stroke victims at 350,000 but the report found there were more than 420,000 stroke survivors in 2012.

It said this was set to grow to 700,000 by 2032.

There were almost 1000 strokes in Australia every week and last year there were almost 130,000 stroke survivors aged under 65.

(Source: DT March 19)



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info@rapidsolutions.net.au
Licence # 189931c

Are you a Grandparent or relative caring for children?

If you are a grandparent or relative caring for a child you may be eligible for assistance from the Family Assistance Office, the Child Support Agency, Centrelink and Medicare Australia.

Your care may be a formal or informal arrangement. Formal arrangements include those where the care of the child is being managed by a state or territory welfare authority or with a family law parenting order in place. Informal arrangements are those where family members have come to a private agreement about who cares for the child.

Note: Grandparents and relatives will not generally be eligible for assistance if the parent/s of the child also live in the same household.

Grandparents and other carers may be able to get Family Tax Benefits and/or Child Care Benefit including the Child Care Rebate if they meet eligibility requirements. In some cases you may also be eligible for payments of Baby Bonus or Maternity Immunisation Allowance.

For further information: Online - www.familyassist.gov.au and
www.centrelink.gov.au

Brochures are also available at the 'Train'.

**MICHAEL JOHN FITZGERALD
SOLICITOR**



**Level 8
65 York Street Sydney 2000**

Phone: 9283 2500 or 0419 440 990

**FAX: 9283 2600
ABN 18095746334**

St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch
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**.

St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch Committee

President:	Ron Kelly	0408 684 276
V/President:	Terry Burn	0407 834 499
V/Pres:	John Foeken	0409 329 688
Treasurer:	Ted Fish	02 9623 6555
Secretary:	Tony Fryer	0414 557 692
A/Secretary:	Ron Blakely	0411 131 849
Committee:	Greg Cant	0425 208 622
	Michael Wiezel	02 9623 6555

VVAA ST MARY'S OUTPOST COMMITTEE

PHONE: 02 9833 4700 FAX 9833 4022

President:	Greg Cant	0425 208 622
V/President:	Tony Mullavey	0416231993
Secretary:	Sam Vecchio	9833 4700
Treasurer:	Ted Fish	9833 4700
A/Sec/Office Mgr:	Gary Fizzell	0418 114 976

This newsletter is produced and printed at the VVAA St Mary's Outpost in association with the St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch. It is provided free of charge to members of both associations. Views and statements made within the magazine are not necessarily the views of the St Mary's RSL Sub-Branch or the VVAA St Mary's; the Editor and the organizations are not giving legal, accounting or other professional advice and therefore do not accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the opinions or information contained in the magazine. We believe that the sources are accurate at the time of publication. Care should be exercised by readers who attempt to use this publication as a source of reference material for any purpose other than its intended use, which is light informative reading on topics of interest for the veterans of both associations.

Gary Fizzell - Editor

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