

**EDITOR NOTES**

Hi from your new Editor.

Some of you will notice that things will change a little bit. Others will recognise that a seamless changeover just means that Ian Morrison has done good over the past 5 years. Thanks again Ian.

Please note that there is a new email address for articles, Ads and the like as well as a mobile contact. I encourage anyone who desires such things in the next Journal to use the correct contacts..

Please note that our December issue needs to be published & delivered by the first week of December, so our close-off date for items and adverts is Friday 4th November.

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Thanks also to the volunteers who assist us to get this Journal out to our members. Contact John Woodley at the Granville office if you want to help.

—ED.

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# Blue Ryan Steps Down



Blue Ryan was called up and served with 4RAR in Vietnam.

He later joined SAS, ending up as the SSM of the Counter Terrorist Squadron.

In 1997 the indexation of the Age, Service and other government pensions was improved so that they ceased losing value compared with Australia's improving standard of living. Except, that is, for the TPI pension.

The TPI pension was left to languish and fall further and further behind improvements in the level of community incomes.

Blue was incensed. As National President of the TPI

Federation he felt his members and all TPI pensioners were suffering unjustified discrimination. He felt, as the TPI's National President, it was his duty to protect the value of the TPI pension.

To do this it was necessary to stop the pension's backward movement by having it indexed in the same way that the Age, Service and War Widows pensions had been indexed.

So Blue began what turned out

to be a ten year campaign to secure the TPI pension against continuing decline and, as time went on, to restore the pension's lost value.

The Vietnam Veterans Federation strongly supported Blue in his campaign through representations to Ministers and the Department, article in this magazine and joining Blue and PVA representatives briefing back-bench committees.

The going was tough.

Ministers and the Department resisted strongly, claiming TPI pensioners were well off and that, in any case, the re-indexation of the whole of the TPI pension was impossible and could simply never happen.

'Well off compared with what', Blue asked. Indeed, compared with what TPI pensioners had lost, it was peanuts. And, Blue added, 'try to raise a family including buying a house on the TPI pension'.

Blue persisted, facing Ministers in TV debates and organizing a protest outside Parliament House in Canberra.

Along the way the campaign won some gains but it was not till 2007 that the Shadow Minister for Veterans Affairs, Hon Alan Griffin MP, convinced of the justice of the cause, persuaded the Labor opposition to make the more generous indexation a promise for the upcoming election.

This was the turning point.

Abandoning its previous claim that re-indexing the whole of the TPI pension was impossible and that TPI pensioners were just wingers, the government immediately matched Hon Alan Griffin's promise. A bill making the indexation change for the TPI and other veterans' disability

pensions was passed on the last day of sitting of Parliament before the 2007 election. The bill also included some increases so that the TPI pension re-gained much of its lost value.

Because of Blue's dogged persistence and hard work on behalf of TPI pensioners, they are now round \$5,000\* a year better off.

And that amount will increase as time goes by.

Over that ten year period and since, Blue has been intensely involved in campaigning for remedies to other injustices and flaws in the Repatriation system. The list is a long one.

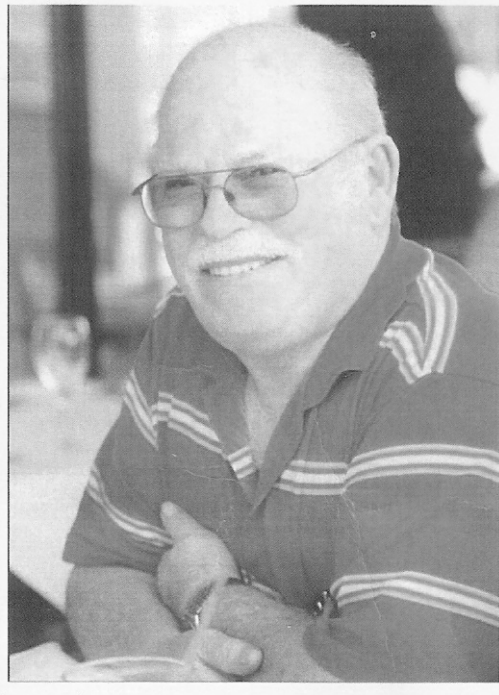
We will miss him. ■

\* As at March 2011.

Blue Ryan led the ten year campaign to restore the value of the TPI pension.

Because of Blue's leadership, TPI pensioners are now around \$5,000 a year better off





## Vale Nev Woodward

Neville Alfred "Woody" Woodward

20 July 1936 to 15 June 2011

"Woody" was born Neville Alfred Woodward in Griffith NSW on 20 July 1936. He went to school at Griffith and Parramatta NSW before joining the Army in March 1958. After Corp training at Ingleburn he was posted to 2RAR as an Infantry Rifleman. Between 1961 and 1963 Nev served in Malaya with 2RAR, and in 1965 he was posted to 5RAR as a Transport Sergeant. Nev then went to Sth Vietnam with 5RAR but was sent back home after 2 months because of Malaria which he contracted in Malaya.

Nev transferred to RAASC as the Tpt Sergeant and held postings at E Command and HQ 10 ATF where he stayed until 1968. During this period he was detached to US Army 1st Divi, where he was MID (Mentioned In Despatches) for distinguished service. He saw duty with 186 AD Coy at Holsworthy, 1RTB Kapooka, and was promoted to Platoon Sergeant with 1TPT PL, 1TPT Sqn. In 1974 after promotion to Warrant Officer Class 2 (WO11), Nev was posted to 176 AD Sqn as the SSM. Further promotion saw him take postings to the Corp Training wing at Puckapunyal Vic., and finally to 177 AD Sqn as the Training Warrant Officer. "Woody" left the Army in October 1978 after 20 years of dedicated service to his country.

Soon after leaving the Army, this tireless man became 'edgy' and sought solace with the Vietnam Veterans Association. Soon his expertise with people in need, saw him take on a role as Pensions Officer, and helping to 'run things' around the office. Nev was always active with the Committee and took on the role as Secretary at the NSW Branch in 1996. A role he undertook with conviction and the same dedication he had for twenty years service in the Army.

Finally, after the death of his wife and 40 year partner, Pat, Nev with his own health problems kept under wraps, called it quits as Secretary in 2008 having served nearly 30 years with the Association, and well deserved his life membership. Nev couldn't rest for long though and was back doing pensions processing claims at Rooty Hill RSL where he was much admired for his efforts.

A tribute to the man's worth was the many relatives and friends of Nev Woodward, who over-filled the Pinegrove Memorial Park Chapel on 24 June to celebrate his life. Nev had lost his first wife to cancer in 2002, and married his long time partner Adele in late May this year. In June Nev elected to have a knee operation from which he was recovering in hospital. Sadly, this is where he suffered heart failure and passed away on 15 June 2011. He is survived by current wife Adele, son Jason, and daughter Leisa.

**REST IN PEACE SOLDIER**

# Does the Repatriation Commission have the right priorities?

The mental health of ADF members, veterans and their families has become a big issue.

And so it should be.

The children of Vietnam veterans have a 300% higher suicide rate than their equivalents in the general community. We don't want that horrendous statistic repeated for the children of our younger comrades in arms.

So it is vital to encourage the partners of younger servicemen/women as well as the servicemen/women themselves to seek help at the Veterans and Veterans Families

Counselling Service (VVCS).

One of the obstacles to partners attending counselling sessions is the cost of child care. It is simply a fact that young families struggling with veterans' psychological difficulties do not have a lot of spare cash.

As Professor Dunt said in his review of military mental health: 'There are too many barriers to seeking mental health care...'. Clearly the cost of child care is one of them.

So you would think the Repatriation Commission

would leap at the chance to remove one of those barriers, especially a relatively less expensive one like child care.

It is surprising, then, that the Repatriation Commission has rejected a request to finance such child care with the excuse that it is unaffordable.

What on earth are the priorities of the Repatriation Commission?

Certainly the overseas trips of dignitaries and Repatriation Commissioners for commemoration ceremonies are important. But are they as important as helping prevent the

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suicide of veterans' children? A Repatriation Commissioner or so less and a trip truncated by one day would go a long way to freeing money for child care.

Certainly, celebrating the centenary of the Gallipoli Landings is important. But is it as important as helping prevent the suicide of veterans' children? A tiny reduction in the celebrations and the planning for them would more than cover the cost.

Certainly building and maintaining monuments to the fallen is important. But couldn't just a little less be spent on stone memorials and more on helping to prevent the living children of our younger veterans sharing the horrendous suicide statistic of our Vietnam veterans' children?

What is the Repatriation Commission thinking?

Already its co-location policy has denied privacy to those attending VVCS counselling at some three locations, thus setting up one of Professor Dunt's 'barriers to seeking mental health care'; the kind of barrier that might just make some children's suicide more likely. Now it refuses to demolish another 'barrier' even though its demolition carries only a modest cost.

Child care is not just some optional nicety that can be shoved onto the veteran community to provide. It, along with counselling privacy, are clearly the responsibility of the Repatriation Commission to finance and implement.

The Repatriation Commission must get its priorities right.

Commemorations and memorials are important but helping to prevent that horrendous statistic repeating itself is paramount.

We hope the Minister will intervene. ■

The children of Vietnam veterans have a 300% higher suicide rate than their equivalent in the general population.

We don't want that repeated for the children of our younger veterans.

But are the priorities of the Repatriation Commission helping or hindering?

# Pharmaceutical Co-payments

## The New Deal for War Veterans

For details see DVA Fact Sheet HSV 132, Veterans' Pharmaceutical Reimbursement Scheme and Fact Sheet IS56 Qualifying Service Overview on DVA Web-site: [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au)

For many veterans there is a gap between the amount they pay out for pharmaceuticals and the amount they receive as a Pharmaceutical Allowance.

For veterans with Qualifying (War or War-like) Service this has meant they are financially contributing to the treatment of their physical and mental war wounds.

We were one of those ex-service organisations that made representation before the 2007 Federal Election for this intolerable situation to be remedied. Shadow Minister for Veterans Affairs, Hon Alan Griffin, recognized the immorality of the situation. He made fixing it an election promise.

The government has announced this promise will be implemented starting in January 2012.

It will work this way:

**Veterans who have a Gold Card or White Card, and are in receipt of a DVA disability pension and who have Qualifying Service, or veterans with equivalent status under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* will be reimbursed the difference between what they have paid out for pharmaceuticals and what they have received in Pharmaceutical Allowance.**

The Scheme will be effective from 1 January 2012, with the first reimbursements to be made in early 2013. ■

# Your Carbon Tax Compensation

Certain industrial processes, especially those involving the burning of fossil fuels, emit pollutants such as carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

The government has accepted scientific advice that this carbon pollution is contributing to global warming.

Global warming, in turn, the government has been advised, will cause increased frequency of extreme weather events like the Queensland floods, Victorian bush fires and the recent prolonged drought.

The government has accepted advice that Australia, being already susceptible to such events, will suffer more than most other countries.

So the government has put a tax on carbon pollution with a view to encouraging manufacturers to find less polluting processes.

Those paying the carbon tax will pass on some of it to consumers; at least till they find ways of reducing their pollution without increasing costs.

Treasury has calculated what costs will be passed on to consumers.

The government, using some of the pollution tax it collects,

will compensate most households for the extra costs.

This compensation will be in the form of a combination of lump-sum payments, ongoing fortnightly or quarterly supplements and tax reductions.

Payments will commence in May 2012 with the 'Clean Energy Advance', an upfront payment of between \$190 and \$374.

This will go to eligible service pensioners, seniors supplement recipients, war widows and widowers, disability pensioners, permanent impairment recipients and wholly dependent partners (under the *Military, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*).

Following the up-front payment, from March 2013, ongoing assistance for this group will be provided through either fortnightly or quarterly payments. These payments will amount to an increase in benefits of between \$7.40 and \$20.90 per fortnight.

A service pensioner on the single rate will receive \$250 upfront in May or June 2012 and after March 2013, \$13.50 in ongoing fortnightly payments, with couples receiving \$190 upfront each and from

March 2013, \$10.20 ongoing per fortnight.

For a veteran on a disability pension, their payment will depend on the rate of pension. Veterans receiving up to 100 per cent Disability Pension will receive \$132.00 upfront and \$7.40 per fortnight ongoing, while a veteran on Special Rate (TPI) will receive \$374 upfront in June 2012 and \$20.90 per fortnight in March 2013.

Veterans on a disability pension as well as a service pension receive both payments.

Children of veterans and members receiving payments under children's education schemes will also receive assistance.

They will receive two lump sum payments—in June 2012 and 2013—with ongoing assistance commencing on 1 January 2014.

Veterans that earn an income may also benefit from tax cuts. All taxpayers, whose income is up to \$80,000 will get a tax cut. The government estimates that most will get a cut of at least \$300.

This will be achieved by the raising of the tax-free threshold from \$6000 to \$18,200 in 2012-13 and providing \$445 of

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low income off-sets. (this will mean, the government says, those on an annual taxable income of up to \$20,542 will pay no tax.)

Household assistance will be indexed only to cost of living increases, so it will fall behind increases to the Service and Veterans Disabil-

ity pension to which it is attached.

The tax free threshold will increase to \$19,400 in 2015-16.

**Full details at :**

**[www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au](http://www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au)** or

**phone: 1800 057 590**

	Upfront assistance (9 month advance paid June 2012)	Ongoing assistance (from March 2013)
Service pension (single)	\$250.00	\$13.50 per fortnight
Service pension (partnered - each)	\$190.00	\$10.20 per fortnight
War Widow(er)s	\$260.00	\$13.80 per fortnight
10% - 100% disability pension	\$132.30	\$7.40 per fortnight
EDA rate	\$206.60	\$11.50 per fortnight
Intermediate rate	\$253.40	\$14.10 per fortnight
Special rate	\$374.40	\$20.90 per fortnight
MRCA wholly dependent part- ners	\$260.00	\$13.80 per fortnight
MRCA permanent impairment payments	\$132.30	\$7.40 per fortnight
MRCA Special Rate DP	\$374.40	\$20.90 per fortnight
Seniors supplement (single)	\$250.00	\$13.50 per fortnight (paid quarterly)
Seniors supplement (partnered - each)	\$190.00	\$10.20 per fortnight (paid quarterly)
Carer Payment (single) - paid by Centrelink	\$250.00	\$13.50 per fortnight
Carer Payment (partnered) - paid by Centrelink	\$190.00	\$10.20 per fortnight

More on the next page

Carbon Tax Compensation continued from previous page

	Upfront assistance (12 month advance paid June 2012)	Upfront assistance (6 month advance paid July 2013)	Ongoing assistance (from January 2014)
VCES and MRCAETS (at	\$110.00	\$60.00	\$4.00
VCES and MRCAETS (at	\$130.00	\$70.00	\$4.80
VCES and MRCAETS	\$190.00	\$100.00	\$7.20
VCES and MRCAETS	\$190.00	\$100.00	\$7.20

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## *Thank You*

*On behalf of all those hundreds of veterans and ADF members we are now helping and those that we shall, no doubt, be helping in the near future, thank you to all those who have so generously sent donations.*

*Tim McCombe*  
*President*

# Claims of servicemen neglect investigated by RSL Care Queensland

- By Miranda Forster
- From: AAP
- July 07, 2011 4:13PM

**CLAIMS that nursing homes are rationing incontinence aids suggest the federal government is failing returned servicemen, a national veterans' group says.**

RSL Care Queensland is also investigating claims by the Partners of Veterans Association (PVA) that veterans around the country are being forced to sit in their own filth.

Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia spokesman Graham Walker said he was horrified at the claims.

The Department of Veterans Affairs was failing in its duty to returned servicemen, he told AAP.

"The Department of Veterans Affairs, though paying all this money and though having an agreement (with the Department of Health and Aging), actually doesn't have a clue about whether the services are being delivered to individual veterans," he said.

"If they don't know whether the Department of Health is actually delivering these services, well, they simply in our view are renegeing on their responsibilities."

PVA spokeswoman Gail McDonnell today told the ABC veterans' children had to buy incontinence aids for their parents.

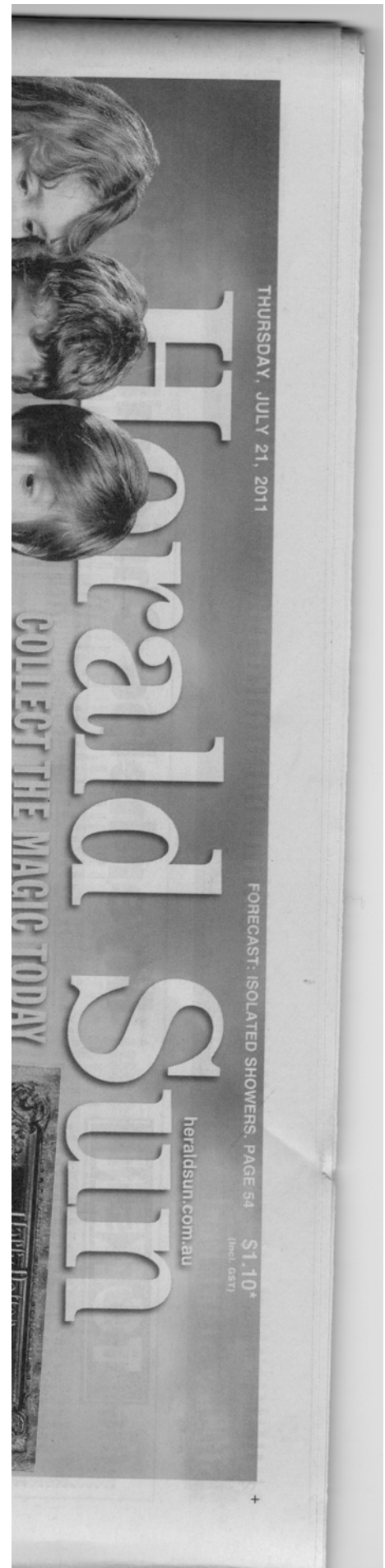
"Countless people ring me and say they just buy the extra incontinence aids themselves so their mother doesn't have to be so embarrassed," she said.

"Because they get full, they get smelly and they're too embarrassed to come out of their room."

RSL Care Queensland chief executive Ross Smith said he was looking into the claims.

"By and large we'd investigate and if there's a need to fix something then we'd fix it," he said.

The Department of Veterans Affairs was approached for comment.



**Here's an  
important  
survey  
it's in all our  
interests to  
fill in.  
It's about  
Aged Care  
...and none  
of us can  
escape  
getting old.**

**T**here is disquiet in Australia about our Aged Care system.

This disquiet extends to the aged care of veteran and war widow Gold and White Card holders even though their aged care is financed by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Of course, many veterans and war widows in the Aged Care system receive excellent care but we are hearing more and more complaints.

However, many of those with tales of aged care residents not receiving their entitlements or them being charged too much, won't make an official complaint. They fear reprisals on the frail and vulnerable veterans or war widows.

The Partners of Veterans Association of Australia want to find out just how widespread is this dissatisfaction. To do this they are conducting a professionally designed and analysed survey. Participants remain anonymous.

If you have a relative, a friend or acquaintance in aged care who is a veteran or war widow Gold or White Card holder, please participate.

The survey is on-line.

You will find it at:

<http://tinyurl.com/Agedcare-DVA>

If you are unable to do the survey on-line you can contact Jan Wallent and ask for a hard copy to be sent to you.

janice@picknowl.com.au

08 8276 3788 ■

# Senator Ronaldson's Private Member's Bill

## Episode Two

### The Story So Far

In our last edition, we told the story of Senator Ronaldson's private members bill being introduced into the Senate.

It was a bill to improve the indexation of DFRDB/DFRB military superannuation pensions for those over 55 years old.

Presently these military superannuation pensions are indexed so they increase in accordance with increases in the cost of living (Consumer Price Index) alone.

The bill sought to index these pensions so that they would increase in accordance with increases in the average wage (MTAWE) or the cost of living (CPI) whichever is the greater.

This change would be important because the average wage usually increases at a higher rate than the cost of living.

This same change to indexation was made for other government pensions in 1997. Pensions such

as the Age, Service and War Widows pensions have, since then, enjoyed indexation based on increases in the average wage or the cost of living, whichever is the greater.

In 2007, after a ten year campaign, this change was won for the TPI, EDA, TTI and General Rate disability pensions.

Now Senator Ronaldson was trying to introduce it for the over 55's DFRDB/DFRB pensioners.

In our last edition we told how the Senate divided on the issue. The government sympathized but said the change could not be afforded at this time. The Coalition said savings could be found in the Defence budget to pay for it and the change should be made. The Greens said they would support the change if the tax on mining super profits was increased to cover its cost. Senator Fielding supported the change and pointed to the vastly more generous indexation of

Parliamentary superannuation. Senator Xenophon, who was the deciding vote sent it to a Senate Committee for consideration.

The Senate Committee produced two reports, one supporting the change and one opposing it.

### The 2nd Senate Debate

On 16 June, the bill was re-introduced into the Senate.

The government again said they thought it a good idea but it could not be afforded at this time. The Opposition supported it and said it could be afforded at this time. The Greens again said they would support the change if the tax on mining super profits was increased to cover the cost. Senator Fielding supported it.

Now it was up to Senator Xenophon. Which way would he vote?

Unfortunately, Senator Xenophon, citing the need to be fis-

cally cautions, was against the change.

In the end, the bill was voted down.

### Up the proverbial creek

So where does that leave DFRDB/DFRB military superannuation superannuants?

Up the proverbial creek.

Why do we say that?

Because the superannuation, being indexed only to the cost of living as measured by the Consumer Price Index, will continue to fall behind community income standards.

Why will this happen?

Because community incomes are rising faster than the cost of living (CPI).

Why are community incomes rising faster than the cost of living (CPI)?

Because the average wage is rising faster than the cost of living.

And what of the indexation of the Age, Service and War Widows pensions?

Indexation of these pensions is superior to that of our military superannuation because they are increased in accordance with increase in the cost of living (CPI) or the average wage, whichever is the greater. And increases in the average wage are usually greater.

And what of the indexation of Parliamentary pensions.

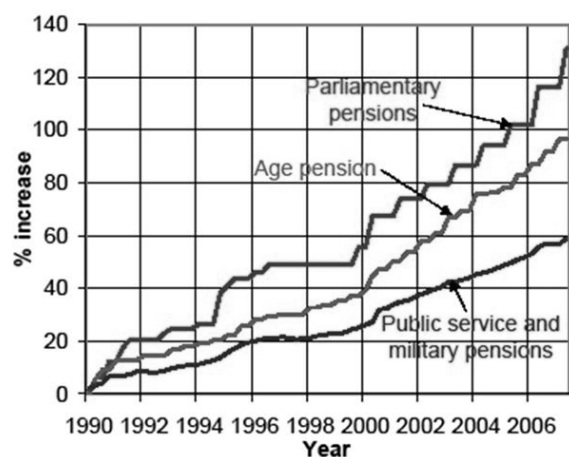
Most present parliamentarians will received superannuation much more generously indexed than even the Age, Service and War Widows pensions. They are doing alright thank you very much!

The diagram on the right shows how the different indexing of military, Age and parliamentary pensions has influenced the way they have risen over that last twenty years.

Now you couldn't call that fair, could you? ■

Should DFRDB  
military  
superannuation  
pensioners continue  
to fall further  
behind community  
income standards?

That was the  
question.



# One Good Turn...

Jim Bourke started it. He was determined to bring them home.

We had left four soldiers and two airmen in Vietnam, all Missing-in Action, Presumed Dead.

It took years of dedication and hard work, at first without government assistance.

But eventually with the help of comrades, our government, the Vietnamese government, Vietnamese villagers and, last but not least, former enemy soldiers, Jim Bourke's efforts resulted in our boys being found and brought home.

It meant a lot to us all.

Vietnam veteran Bob Hall served with 8RAR. Vietnam veteran Derrill de Heer

served with 8RAR and 4RAR. They work at the Australian Defence Force Academy where, for several years now, they have been developing a computer data base able to show on a map the location of every 1 Australian Task Force enemy contact. As well as the mapped location, there are details available from reports of the contacts made at the time. Contact locations can be accessed by battalion, area, date etc.

Bob and Derrill are working towards putting this information on a web-site and asking veterans who participated in contacts to add information.

In the meantime they realised that the information they had would be helpful to the Vietnamese in their efforts to recover the large number of

their troops who are Missing in Action Presumed Dead in what was Phouc Tuy Province.

And for the Vietnamese villagers, recovering lost remains is even more significant than it is for us. They believe the souls of those not given burials at the right place and in the right way, wander. And some wandering souls can torment their relatives, blaming them for their predicament.

So in March 2010, Bob and Derrill travelled to Vietnam and presented the information to the Veterans Association of Vietnam. They then travelled to what was Phouc Tuy Province where they met up with the Dat Do Veterans Association, the Vung Tau Veterans Association and the 33 PAVN Regiment Association.

*(Continued on page 16)*

Finding and 'laying-to-rest' those Missing  
-in-Action has always been important to  
the families, the military and the  
nation.



Left:

Bob Hall and a 33 PAVN Regiment veteran at the 33 Regiment *Tradition House* (Regimental museum) at Binh Ba village on 15 June 2010 .

Below:

Derrill de Heer and a D445 veteran at the Dat Do Veterans' Association where he was demonstrating the database showing the locations of all 1ATF contacts that resulted in a VC or PAVN death and burial.

(Continued from page 15)

Bob and Derrill's offer of help is greatly appreciated and the work is ongoing.

There is more information in intelligence reports in the official records that would be useful. Bob and Derrill have requested a grant to gather that information. The request was refused.

Sad really because one good turn deserves another. ■



## debunking the myths ...

### ... That all peacetime service in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) is covered by just one piece of legislation

Peacetime service is covered under the MRCA, the SRCA and the VEA.

#### What legislation provides compensation coverage for peacetime service in the ADF?

Injury and death compensation for all service since 1 July 2004 is provided under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (the MRCA). However, coverage for peacetime service before this date will vary according to individual circumstances.

Compensation for all peacetime service since 3 January 1949 is available under the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (the SRCA), which includes those injuries and deaths which were covered under its predecessor Acts the *Compensation (Commonwealth Government Employees) Act 1971* and the *Commonwealth Employees Compensation Act 1930*, but there is certain service that is also covered by the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA).

#### I thought that the SRCA only applied to public servants

The SRCA is the Commonwealth's workers' compensation legislation that applied to all employees of the Commonwealth. This included members and former members of the ADF, reservists, cadets and cadet instructors and certain other persons who hold honorary rank in the ADF, as

well as members of certain philanthropic organisations that provide services to the ADF. Since 1 July 2004, SRCA has not applied to ADF service.

#### When am I covered by the SRCA?

The SRCA provides compensation coverage for all members and ex-serving members of the ADF from 3 January 1949 until (and including) 30 June 2004. Injuries, deaths and diseases during that period are covered. However, the eligibility criteria varied during this time. Service covered includes: • being at work, including usual breaks such as lunch; • travelling between home and tie-work; • during authorised and published activities outside normal hours of duty; and • while

undergoing approved Career Transition Training around the time of your discharge under an arrangement made by the ADF.

#### Is VEA meant only for ADF service overseas?

Good question! The VEA is broadly designed to provide eligibility for members of the ADF, and their dependants, who served in wars and other conflicts or in peacekeeping forces. However, there is limited VEA coverage for ADF members who served during peacetime, and this is available where an individual completed at

least three years' service during the period 7 December 1972 to 6 April 1994. This coverage was introduced by the Whitlam Government to assist in the maintenance of ADF personnel levels at the time of the abolition of conscription. Associated with this Government decision are specific VEA provisions for national servicemen, which provide disability pension eligibility for those service men and women who were serving on 6 December 1972 and who chose to complete the period that they were originally required to serve. The three-year requirement mentioned above for peacetime service during 1972-94 does not apply to national servicemen who completed their period of service, recognising the fact that national servicemen were engaged for less than three years. Also, any members who enlisted before 22 May 1986 and who served continuously until after 6 April 1994 are also covered for service after that date.

#### When am I covered by the VEA?

The VEA provides compensation coverage for injuries, diseases and death resulting from defined periods and types of service prior to 1 July 2004. You are covered under the VEA if your injury, disease or death resulted from: • peacetime service (after completion of a three year qualifying period)

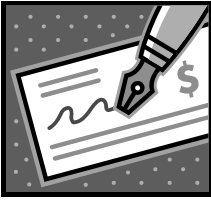
– from 7 December 1972 to 6 April 1994. Members who enlisted before 22 May 1986 and who served continuously until after 6

April 1994 are also covered for service after that date; • all periods of operational service, peacekeeping service and hazardous service; and • warlike operations (for example, East Timor, Gulf War) and non-warlike operations. A member who had not completed the three-year qualifying period before 7 April 1994 is only covered under the VEA, if he/ she was medically discharged within that time.

#### If my service is during the period covered by the VEA, does this mean that I can claim under the SRCA as well?

If your claim relates to an injury, disease or death occurring before 1 July 2004, you may be eligible to claim under both the SRCA and the VEA. Claims are assessed against the relevant criteria of each Act and liability may or may not be found in a claimant's favour, depending on the circumstances of his or her claim and the medical evidence and other evidence which is available. If you receive a disability pension or a war widow/er's pension under the VEA and you receive additional compensation under the SRCA (in respect of the incapacity or death for which you are being paid a pension under the VEA), the amount of pension is reduced (offset) by the amount of compensation also received. This is to ensure that you do not receive double compensation for the same incapacity or death.

*This article was reprinted in its entirety from "Vet Affairs" newsletter June 2011. Vol27No2\_7.*



# Letters



D J Preece emailed us with a copy of a letter ( by Neil Weekes AM MC, Brigadier Retired) to Senators, the Prime Minister, and the Opposition leader, and we decided to reprint it here in its entirety.

**Senator Nick Xenophon    Senator Penny Wong**  
**Senator Bob Brown        Senator Kate Lundy**  
**The Hon. Prime Minister Julia Gillard MP**  
**The Hon. Tony Abbott MP**

*Following the senate's rejection of the Fair Indexation Bill on 16th June 2011, I forwarded a number of emails to your office to express my bitter disappointment on the senate's decision as, in my view, it was a shameful betrayal of the men and women who have served our Nation in the Australian Defence Force for 20 years or more.*

*I was appalled that this decision was primarily based on financial restraints and yet our politicians, including you, never hesitate to approve an increase to your own salaries, despite the financial state of the nation!!*

*It is a complete mockery for members of our parliament to attend the funerals of our young warriors who have been killed in action, and to observe a minutes silence in the House of Representatives, and in the Senate, and yet you reject a Bill which would have aligned the increases in DFRB and DFRDB superannuants pensions with our old age pensioners. This disgraceful decision, obviously based on Party Lines, has alienated the Veteran Community and it has ensured that DFRB and DFRDB superannuants will see their measly pension (average annual pension is approximately (\$23,000) continue to lose its purchasing power. This will be exacerbated by increases to the cost of electricity, increased vehicle registration, increased cost of food, increased cost of petrol, increased insurance cost, increased medical costs and the list goes on and undoubtedly will include new taxes!!*

*This is compounded for those surviving spouses who only receive 5/8th of the DFRB/DFRDB superannuants' pension which continues to be indexed against the CPI. It seems inequitable and immoral to me that the surviving spouse of a politician pensioner has his/her pension indexed against the increases to the salary of a back-bencher. Does this mean that a politician's spouse makes such a huge contribution to the defence and well being of our Nation when compared to the spouse of a lowly soldier, airman or*

*navy personnel? Where is the justice in this?*

*Could you please explain to me why the Government has accepted the recommendation by the Matthews Review that the CPI remains the most appropriate method of indexation for military superannuants? If this is a legitimate argument, then please explain to the Veteran Community why **your** pensions are not increased against the CPI when you retire?*

*The Matthews Review does suggest the use of an Analytical Living Cost Index and the Government introduced the Pensioners and Beneficiaries Cost of Living Index (PBCLI) the day after the Matthews Review was released. Why was the PBCLI not accepted as a fair indexation for military superannuants?*

*Apparently my emails, to which I referred in my opening paragraph did not reach your office. Consequently I am enclosing copies of both emails to your attention. Please note that they have been distributed to a very wide distribution list and most recipients have in turn redistributed them to their own mailing lists.*

*You should be aware that this decision has angered the Veteran Community and we will continue to fight for a "fair go", especially as the Labor Party has abandoned the spirit of its election commitment to conduct a review that would address the inadequacy and inequity of the indexation method (CPI) which has not kept up with the cost of living.*

*This is immoral, it lacks the principle of a "fair go" espoused by all politicians and especially by the Labor Party. How do you explain this to a Veteran who has fought for his country, who has been sent into action by his Government, who has seen his mates fall in action, who has readily surrendered his own freedoms so that our nation can meet its international commitments and to ensure our Nation remains free?*

*I formerly request that you acknowledge receipt of my letter and that you provide me with your answers, not your Party Line answers, to the questions I have posed in this missive.*

**(by Neil Weekes, AM, MC Brigadier Retired  
Patron of 3 Townsville ex-service organisations)**

**Jim Wilson** of Kellyville writes...

Dear Sir,

Beginning in August 2008, I commenced consultations with one of your councillors, Mr Steve Emmerson to investigate my eligibility for an increase to my existing DVA pension.

Thanks to the advice & efforts of Steve, a suitable increase became effective in April 2010. This increase has made my enforced retirement much more bearable, relieving me (of) some financial worries.

Since then Steve has continued to work with me on other related matters & I thank him & your organisation for this,

Kind regards, Jim.

---

#### LOOKING FOR:

**From:** Darrel Herbert **Sent:** Friday, 8 July 2011 8:56 AM

**To:** 'Kevin Bovill' **Subject:** MATE

MORNING Kiwi

I wonder if you could be of assistance

I am looking for a guy I served with 75/76

His name is **Thomas Chinnery**, he was a Army Apprentice, 25 intake.

I have found him on the army apprentice association website, they say you can log in on the forum page but I am having trouble .

Any ideas ? We served at Holesworthy 1<sup>st</sup> Field Eng.Regt RAEME. Kind regards, Darrel

Email: darrel.herbert1952@gmail.com

**From:** Marg Tucker [mailto:marg\_tucker@hotmail.com]

**Sent:** Thursday, 7 July 2011 10:15 AM

**To:** bestav17@bigpond.com **Subject:** C R Burns

Hi,

I worked with a **Colin Robert Burns** No. 3793578 Cook in Vietnam in 1969 17 Cons. Squad. Would love to get in touch with him. Is he on your books? Is there any way I can hook up with him?

Thanks

Ken Tucker 2789351

Jeff Gilbert asks

I am seeking some assistance in trying to locate a **Raymond Walsh** MM, who was a medic with 3 RAR on their second tour of duty. His service number was 39567; DOB: 14/02/1943. He was in country with 3 RAR from 15.02.71 - 13.10.71 according to the Nominal Role and received the MM during this tour. I do not know what State he enlisted from but he was not a Nasho.

I would like to obtain his current address & contact details and was wondering if anyone could assist. If you cannot, could you provide me someone who may be able to help locate him. One of our RAAMC members wants to make contact. Thanking you in anticipation.

Jeff Gilbert

Secretary 1Aust Field Hosp Association

Mob: 0409 240 238 Phn:03 5772 1828

Email: je.gilbert@internode.on.net

## BOOK REVIEW

If you are wondering what happened to book reviews, I can only offer one excuse; WE NEVER GOT ANY. If you want this item to continue, grab a book, read it, then write something good or bad about it critically, send it to me, and I will consider its merit within these pages.

Of course we get some advertising stuff from the likes of Publishers, but these are not really a review, just a synopsis of what the book is about. Now and then we get a plea from a self-published work, and if its from a member Veteran, we will more than likely offer them free space somewhere.

Like this one;

Reference: Telephone discussion with the Editor

1st August 2011.

"After about 15 years of research **Richard Barry** has finally completed his manuscript called *The Tenth*. This book of 556 pages contains about 270 coloured and black & white images sent in by veterans. Although the book is obviously about the life of the Tenth Intake through the years 1967-69 it will resonate with all diggers no matter what National Service Intake or if you were a Regular Soldier. It is an extremely detailed memoir of comical incidents coupled with sad stories. It is a very personal reflection of a bank teller who ended up as a Forward Scout in a foreign country fighting an elusive enemy. It is compulsory reading for any family member of a soldier from the 1960's.

The self-published (could not afford one of the large publishing houses) hard copy without dust cover book has been very successful and if substantial orders continue it will be necessary for a second print. It is not a money-making exercise and Richard is happy just to recoup out-of-pocket expenses. Many thanks for the support.

The cost is \$75 (includes \$15 postage and special packaging anywhere in Australia). If you would like to place an order Richard can be contacted on

Phn: 02 6792 3114 Email: [richyvon47@hotmail.com](mailto:richyvon47@hotmail.com)

Addr: PO Box 43, Narrabri NSW 2390.

Any book reviews should be addressed to:

VVPPAA NSW Branch Inc.

Attn: The Editor

PO Box 170

Granville NSW 2142

Email: editorvvfagran@bigpond.com

## Thank you for assisting us on Vietnam Veterans Day

We would like to thank everybody for the fantastic attendance at this year's Vietnam Veterans Day Service & Function held at the Bankstown District Sports Club. Things were a bit chaotic for a while as the numbers far exceeded that which was indicated to us. Now you know why we ask for tickets to be pre purchased prior to the event if at all possible. We were expecting roughly 180, we catered for 220 & roughly 260 turned up. This also threw the seating plan out the window somewhat but thanks to the Club personnel & our trusty volunteers we managed to prevail. We also appreciated the patience & understanding of all those present. A blow out of this magnitude does put a strain on resources but we got there. Everybody thoroughly enjoyed the entertainment by Double Exposure & we even managed to feed the masses. The Sports Club Directors via President John Murray assured us of their continuing support which is very reassuring.

We would also take this opportunity to thank the staff on the day, and just say what a good job they done.

The raffle was very well supported & we would like to acknowledge all the generous donors;

The Sharp Corporation, Supercheap Auto - Liverpool, Bankstown Sports Club, Cabra-vale Diggers, Fairfield RSL, Castle Hill RSL, Bunnings Crossroads, The Korean Vietnam Veterans Association, Hong Ky Meat Wholesalers & The Phat Ky Butcher Shop, as well as the several anonymous donors.

Again, thank you very much for the donors support.

## ABOUT US

Our organisation around Australia is run by volunteers with a handful of paid advocates and office assistants where they are needed. Our income is derived from Government benefits, grants, and your valued membership fees, along with raffles, and the very generous and appreciated donations.

We aid and assist all ex-service, current service personnel, and their families, of Australian forces and our Allies, whether that service was during war-time or peacetime, and including those Peacekeepers and Peacemakers. Several years ago we even changed our name from The Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, to now (the) Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association of Australia, to amplify our services. We are an affiliate of (The) Vietnam Veterans Federation Inc.

Our assistance includes those making claims on the Department of Veterans Affairs concerning any disability which may have been due or caused by their service. Sometimes that assistance also includes applications for a variety of pensions and assistance schemes run by the department and other Government agencies, both State and Federal.

**WE DO THIS AT NO CHARGE OR EXPENSE TO THE APPLICANTS. IT IS, AND ALWAYS HAS BEEN A FREE SERVICE TO VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES.**

All our Pensions Officers and Advocates are TIP qualified, which means they have undergone training and information pensions courses run by qualified trainers from 'Veterans Affairs' and assures veterans of the best advice about their claims and applications we can give.

Most of the personnel at our Branches around Australia have themselves served in the armed forces and been subjected to the labyrinth of forms that government need to process your claim or application. We speak with compassion from experience.

We do not give financial advice except as a general alert as to what you may expect to be responsible for when making some applications in relation to a pension. This advice can never be expected to relate to your specific circumstance and we encourage all those concerned about such matters to always seek qualified advice from accountants, tax agents and financial advisers.

We are always seeking volunteers at our many branches, so if you think you can answer a phone, file some documents, take the mail around to the post office, make a cuppa, bored at home, then we want you. Otherwise feel free to wonder in, see what's happening and make a donation to the organisation.

Thanks.

## MEN'S SHED

**Regents Park Veterans &  
Community Men's Shed Inc.**

*Keep Learning and Keep Active !*

**We are a vibrant and growing organisation helping those wishing to take the boredom out of retirement, and getting your minds and hands active with a project or two.**

**We are open**

**Mondays, Tuesdays & Wednesdays**

**9:30 - 4:30**

**You can find us at**

**356 Park Rd., Regents Park NSW 2143**

**You can phone us on**

**02 9644 7433**

**You can email us**

**regentsparkmensshed@gmail.com**

*To all those well meaning folk who find our intended errors within this journal, we give a hearty cheerio and many thanks for proving our publications are read at least by you, and some even from cover to cover.*

*However, as is by the very nature of printed material that there are bound to be the odd unedited error that has escaped my eagle eye. On occasions where errors appear on lists, it is imperative that you advise us via The Secretary in the first instance.*

*Where there has been a spelling mistake, be sure you check the Ukrainian Dictionary, cross out the offending word, rewrite it correctly beneath that word and pat yourself on the back!*