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CAMARADERIE

First Edition 2021

VOL. 52 NO. 1

**UPDATE ON
VETS V THE ATO**

**NEW GUINEA
VOLUNTEER RIFLES**

**OPERATIONAL V NON-
OPERATIONAL SERVICE**

DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

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THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION



Vol. 52. No. 1 First Edition 2021

PROUDLY SERVING MEMBERS OF THE ADF AND THEIR FAMILIES SINCE 1959

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Please do not contact the Editor for membership enquiries. Membership enquiries should be directed your State Branch – see page 4.

Camaraderie is produced with the object of keeping members, their families and the broader ADF and veteran community informed of the issues being addressed by DFWA on their behalf.

It is published three times a year and distributed free of charge to every member of the Association usually in March, July and December.

Readers are particularly encouraged to submit brief articles for consideration for publication in *Camaraderie*.

Articles by members about their own views or experiences often stimulate wide discussions and alert other readers to particular points not previously highlighted or appreciated.

Readers are also invited to send letters for publication as "Letters to the Editor".

Material for inclusion in the next edition should reach the Editor at the above address, ideally as a MSWord document attached to an email, no later than Thursday 10 June 2021.

The views expressed in individuals' authored articles are theirs and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Association, except where expressly stated.

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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

COVID has been the focus of much of the nation's attention but the work of the DFWA in supporting the interests of serving members of the ADF, their families and veterans continues – the National Office report, the Presidents Pen and other articles in this edition explain.

Les Bienkiewicz

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FRONT COVER

Royal Australian Navy Nursing Officer, Lieutenant Cody Nash, from HMAS Penguin in Sydney, at a COVID-19 test site in Fawkner, Victoria. The ADF continues to contribute to the whole-of-government response to the COVID-19 pandemic with a range of personnel and logistics support. Defence has prepared responses to a variety of contingencies through the Emergency Management Australia-led response.

Photo courtesy of Defence Media

DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION



FOUNDED 1959



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Members of the Association are members of a State Branch of their choosing.

Members from Tasmania are normally managed by Victoria Branch, and members in the Northern Territory are normally managed by Queensland Branch. Residents in the ACT are invited to join the ACT Chapter of the NSW Branch.

Members with membership queries including change of address, or seeking advocacy advice, should contact their respective Branch. Full Branch details, including contact details, can be found on our website www.dfwa.org.au and in the Branch Reports at the end of this magazine.

If in any doubt, contact the National Office.

DFWA RELIEF FUND

The DFWA maintains a **Relief Fund** to provide financial assistance to those "in urgent and necessitous circumstances involving real hardship". Financial support is available to members of the Association; regular members of the ADF; Reservists on full time duty; or their widows / widowers and dependants.

The Trustees are: Major General Adrian Clunies-Ross AO, MBE (Retd); Trevor Goodhew and Kerry Mellor.

Applications for a loan or grant are made via State Branches.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN (November 2020 – February 2021)



A Deserved Recognition

Let me start this 'Report' on a positive note! The CDF has provided his Statement of Support for the contribution that DFWA makes in, "support of our serving members, veterans and their families".

He goes on to say that "DFWA has earned a reputation for balanced and well-prepared submissions to government". This, reputation reflects the hard work and dedication of the large volunteer base which support their organisation. The Statement commends the "consistent, high quality advice on issues ranging across remuneration, superannuation, compensation, and conditions of service.

This Statement is due praise for all members and contributors who toil under the DFWA banner. Well done!

The Year Ahead

Readers will be aware of the media speculation regarding the possibility of a Federal election later this year. Is it speculation or will we be confronted by a federal poll in the midst of COVID and various other challenges that confront governments and by implication, we the people?

There are presently several converging issues that, to me, could suggest that the DVA is being overwhelmed. DVA and by implication the ex-service community are being challenged by a combination of:

- a. The Productivity Commission Report (A Better Way to Support Veterans) and The Cornell Report (Veterans' Advocacy and Support Services Scoping Study), and the government's stance on each of them individually and collectively, continues to tax the resources of the more active and considered ESOs. How all of this activity and resultant ponderous consideration plays out in coming months will impact on us all for years to come.
- b. The changed notion of 'veteran', and the consequent issuance of the White Card to all who have served has caused unplanned and unforecasted (sic) implications for claims processing and excessive delays in their resolution. These delays are having detrimental impacts on many in the veteran community, including on families.
- c. The changing view of 'service' - operational and non-operational or war service and non-operational service. Elsewhere in this edition you will find two articles that it is hoped will generate discussion on this most topical question.

Into this mix is the present DVA employment strategy which is underpinned, "by the governments average staffing level cap designed to keep the APS manpower at 2006-07 levels". This has prompted an increase in the use of contract staff, despite the extra cost involved.

DFWA supports the work of the Secretary DVA, Ms Liz Cosson's as she seeks to balance the competing (budgetary) demands of the government and the veteran community. A balancing act which has shown positive results over the period of her tenure. That does not mean though that we as a representative organisation do not resile from telling the hard truth that we confront daily. It is a balancing act as, frankly, we have to be careful how we say and do as the results may not be to our advantage. It is called the 'Political dimension'

The Coming Election

Your DFWA is presently developing Policy Issues in preparation for the next Federal election. As stated earlier this may occur later this calendar year. This will, where necessary, be developed in tandem with the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO).

Broader Horizons

Currently the Australia Defence Association (ADA) is the only independent and staunchly non-partisan public-interest watchdog organisation and 'think-tank' covering topics involving strategic security, defence, and wider national security issues.

There is no ESO that seeks to actively prompt the Government and the public on the broader strategic issues that are impacting on us as a nation. The encroachment of China into national affairs, the American Alliance, the purchase of defence equipment and the strength of the ADF are just a few issues that demand attention.

Should DFWA be concerned with the lack of a considered veteran voice on these broader issues, or should be focus just on "ourselves" ?

Kel Ryan, National President, DFWA



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 Online at : dfwa.org.au/donate

NATIONAL OFFICE ROUNDUP (November 2020 – February 2021)



Who would have possibly thought 12 months ago that nation would still be still suffering lockdowns so severe that, in one State at least, saw it's residents isolated not just from the rest of the country but from household to household, and from their routine lives of work, school and play. Surely 2020 was the year from hell that is spilling into 2021. The crippling drought that pervaded the nation for years and the soul-destroying bush

fires and even subsequent floods of last year were bad enough, but the economically ruinous all-too-painful pandemic has likely wreaked more havoc than all other natural disasters in recent living memory combined.

But not to dwell on the Nation's woes, closer to home and the period since the last edition of *Camaraderie*, it should be noted that, despite continuing, rightful and strong calls for a Royal Commission into veterans suicides, the work of the interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention to inquire into suicides of serving and former members of the ADF has gained momentum and is rolling on apace. As is the welcome work of the Veteran Family Advocate, Ms Gwen Cherne, who is increasingly becoming influential in giving a stronger voice to veterans' families, particularly as servicemen and women transition from the ADF.

DFWA's position on the appointment of the interim Commissioner is that her appointment should be seen as an opportunity to lay out a framework for the future. The need to understand the reasons and background of the veteran suicides going back to 2001 is important for developing strategies going forward. DFWA welcomes the expansion of the Commissioner's Terms of Reference during the Parliamentary debate in December 2020 on the Bills establishing her appointment. Clarity is now in place confirming that any review of past Defence and Veteran Suicides can include any previous death by suicide, or suspected suicide, of ADF member or veteran.

Two other particular areas of concern that progressed over the last four months relate to the work of the newly established ADF Transition Authority, and the Government's interim response to the 69 recommendations made in the Productivity Commission's report 'A Better Way to Support Veterans.'

In the latter case, that response addressed 25 of the recommendations, with a particular focus on mental health, wellbeing, employment support and transition. The remaining recommendations will be addressed in the 2021-2022 Budget that looms mid year. The consultation process with the ex-service community to assist in the development of the Government's final response is ongoing at this very moment. Areas specifically under

examination include a possible Administration Act to overcome inherent acknowledged problems that three Acts impose, the potential need for two types of legislation for veterans support, a simplified MRCA, some harmonisation across different Acts, and the need for some changes to the Governance arrangements of DVA and its structure. Considerable feedback is already available from the many submissions received by the Productivity Commission into its inquiry into Compensation and Rehabilitation for Veterans.

As for ADF's Transition Authority, teething problems continue to prevail with numerous complaints flowing about the nature of the transition process at so-to-speak 'grass roots levels. All that, perhaps at least in part, caused by the postponement of all face-to-face ADF Member and Family Transition Seminars through to at least 30 June 2021. The Authority has informed that it is working on finalising the seminar schedule post that date, albeit there appears no assurance that face-to-face arrangements will actually operate later in the year. The transition process will thus likely remain problematic for many looking for guidance and/or assistance at a time that has proven to be stressful for most on leaving after giving military service to their country.

Moving away from specific campaign issue and/or politics, readers are invited to note that, as of 1 December 2020, DFWA's National Office has moved with the kind support of RMC's Commandant and staff to a new location within the Duntroon precinct at Building D2 on Bruche Road. The old location in Building A81 on Lavarack-Harrison Road served the Association well for nearly 30 years. Having been built as temporary accommodation for Cadets in 1972, the building and those close by are to be finally demolished.

No National Office Roundup could not be complete without acknowledging the welcome sponsorship by The Bradford Exchange. Their advertisements is within the pages of this *Camaraderie*. If ever in need of high quality collectable memorabilia for personal use or as a gift to mark a commemorative occasion, please consider an item from The Bradford Exchange as a buying option.

Finally, a big thanks is extended to those members and friends of DFWA who have kindly acknowledged the good work of the Association by donating just a little in recognition that membership dues alone would be insufficient to keep us functioning in the way we have since inauguration in 1959. Your donations are always gratefully received. Our purpose remains as rock solid as it did all those years ago; that purpose being to.....'foster the best interests and welfare of all members of the Australian Defence Force and their families in any matter likely to affect them during and after their period of service'.

Alf Jaugietis - Executive Director



DEFENCE FORCE ADMINISTRATION SUFFERS FROM BLOATING !

THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATIONS WEBSITE WWW.RARNATIONAL.ORG.AU AND IS REPRINTED WITH OUR THANKS

FORMER British army major turned military historian Cyril Northcote Parkinson settled comfortably into academia in post-war Singapore.

His colonial observations led him to publish his most famous work, Parkinson's Law, in which he postulated "work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion".

He also coined the term Orgmanship which, according to Parkinson, was "the tendency of all administrative departments to increase the number of subordinate staff, "irrespective of the amount of work (if any) to be done."

The Straits Times in Singapore identified it as "twice the staff for half the work".

Parkinson's Law of Triviality further stated that, "The time spent on any item of an agenda is in inverse proportion to the sum involved."

This, it might be noted, was in 1954 before PowerPoint had ever been thought of. To mask their numeric bloat, practitioners of Parkinson's Law should arrive at functions like cocktail parties half an hour late, then rotate.

Parkinson intended it to be satirical but touched a raw nerve when he observed, "Britain spent about \$500 million building a naval base at Singapore and the only fleet which has used it was the Japanese."

Darwin take note.

Last week former soldier turned academic Clive Williams noted in The Australian the Australian Army has 29,511 regular

personnel, plus 18,738 active reservists.

Williams further noted the Australian Army has 86 regular officers of general (star) rank, while the Army Reserve has 98, one general for every 271 soldiers.

By comparison the US Army had (in December 2019) 472,595 active-duty personnel, with another 191,007 in reserve, and an Army National Guard of 331,881.

The US Marine Corps is a separate service with 180,958 active members.

This means the US Army has one general for every 2045 soldiers and the Marine Corps one per 2919 marines.

At the turn of the century, deputy chief-of-army Major General Taffy Hartley was tasked with streamlining Army Headquarters at Russell Offices in Canberra.

Previously it had been dispersed across several 1960s buildings in the same location, which were deemed no longer fit for use and demolished.

A single, multi-storey building was built to contain all service HQ as well as ADF HQ.

Without deference to any other considerations, Hartley was set a staff limit of 100, the Centurions. The cull was done without any perceptible loss in efficiency or output.

When you wish upon a star, makes no difference who you are.

Ross Eastgate



MEDICALLY DISCHARGED VETERANS VS THE TAX OFFICE

AN UPDATE

AS AT 18 FEBRUARY 2021

by John Lewis - President DFWAQ.

This is the fourth article in Camaraderie concerning the veteran challenge to the ATO taxation applied to the Class A and Class B Invalidation Benefit payments received from the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) and Military Superannuation and Benefits Scheme (MSBS).

The saga started with veteran objections to taxation assessments before 2016. CSC and the ATO treated the Invalidation Benefits as lifetime non-reviewable pensions and were taxed at the marginal rate. The Superannuation Industry Supervisory Regulations (SISR) state the criteria for payments to be a pension. The Invalidation Benefits did not meet any of the criteria. There were numerous objections and some frankly, dirty tricks, played by CSC and the ATO in refusing to answer which part of the SISR they were applying to classify the payments as a pension. The refusal and delays totally ignored the “model litigant” principles they were supposed to be applying. Since then, the matter has proceeded through the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, during which the tax law was specifically changed to fix a “fatal flaw” in the ATO case. Despite this law change, the AAT upheld the veterans’ objections.

FEDERAL COURT DECISION

The ATO appealed the AAT decisions to the full bench of the Federal Court. The court’s decision was handed down on 4 December 2020.

Mixed Result

The court dismissed the ATO appeal in the cases of Wayne Douglas (DFRDB and Retrospective medical discharge) and Shane Walker (MSBS post 20 Sep 2007) and upheld the ATO appeal in Peter Burns’ case (MSBS pre Sep 2007). This was summarised on the ATO Website on 19 January 2021.

<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Super/In-detail/Withdrawing-and-using-your-super/Treatment-of-military-invalidation-benefits-following-Federal-Court-decision/> as below:

Veteran Win. The Court determined that specific invalidity benefit payments paid under pensions that commenced on or after 20 September 2007 by the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) Scheme and the Military Superannuation Benefits (MSB) Scheme are superannuation lump sum payments rather than superannuation income stream benefits.

ATO Win. The Court also determined, in Commissioner of Taxation v Burns, that specific invalidity benefit payments paid under pensions that commenced before 20 September 2007 under the DFRDB and MSB schemes are superannuation income stream benefits and therefore have been taxed correctly.

No Further Appeal. The ATO decided not to seek leave to appeal the Douglas and Walker decisions to the High Court. The ATO advised that Test Case Litigation Funding, provided to veterans up til that stage, would not be available to Peter Burns if he decided to seek leave to appeal his case to the High Court.

THE LEGAL REASONS

On 11 February, the ATO issued a Decision Impact Statement which summarises the legal issues and the decisions. <https://www.ato.gov.au/law/view/view.htm?docid=%22LIT%2FICD%2FQUD103of2020%2F00001%22>

These are paraphrased (less some legalese) below:

Issues decided by the Court

A superannuation income stream benefit under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (ITAA) is a superannuation benefit specified in the Income Tax Assessment Regulations 1997 (ITAR) that is paid from a superannuation income stream. A superannuation benefit that does not satisfy these requirements defaults to be a superannuation lump sum under the ITAA.

The cases considered three broad issues:

- whether the ITAR did specify superannuation benefits to be superannuation income stream benefits;
- whether the invalidity benefit pension was a superannuation income stream under the ITAR because it was a pension under the Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993 (SISA Act) where the rules under which the benefits were paid complied with the pension standards set out in the Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Regulations 1994 (SISR); and
- in the cases of Mr Burns and Mr Douglas, whether the invalidity pension was a superannuation income stream under the ITAR because it was an income stream that had commenced before 20 September 2007.

A - Specification of superannuation benefits to be superannuation income stream benefits

The Court accepted the Commissioner's argument that the definition of 'superannuation income stream benefit' contained in the ITAR during the relevant timeframes did provide the requisite specification for superannuation benefits to be superannuation income stream benefits. While acknowledging some concerns with the drafting, the Court observed that this position was consistent with the purpose of the definition in the ITAR. The text of the definition regulation did not preclude the Court from giving effect to the purpose of the 2007 amendments to both the ITAA and the ITAR which brought in the concept of a superannuation income stream benefit.

In making this finding, the Court was not required to consider issues concerning the application of amendments made to the ITAR in 2018 which were made with retrospective application to specify superannuation benefits to be superannuation income stream benefits. [This is reference to the Government changing the law in the middle of the AAT hearing to overcome the "fatal flaw" in the ATO argument.]

B - Superannuation income stream - pension standards test

The Court held that the rules of the MSB Scheme (the MSB rules) under which the invalidity benefits were paid do not satisfy the pension standards in the SISR. In order to satisfy the relevant standard in sub-regulation 1.06(2) of the SISR, the MSB rules had to ensure:

- the pension is paid at least annually throughout the life of the primary beneficiary or reversionary beneficiary, and
- the size of payments of benefit in a year is fixed, allowing for variation only as specified in the governing rules.

The Court found that the MSB rules do not ensure the benefit is payable for the lifetime of the recipient. The fact that the pension could be cancelled (due to their invalidity classification being reviewed) meant that the MSB rules do not ensure that the pension was paid at least annually throughout the life of the primary beneficiary, nor were the size of the payments fixed, subject to variation as contemplated by the MSB rules. The Court came to a similar conclusion with respect to the rules of the DFRDB Scheme which do not ensure that the benefit is paid at least annually or at least annually for the person's lifetime.

C - Superannuation income stream - pension that started before 20 September 2007

The Court found that under the MSB rules, once a person is retired on the ground of invalidity, from the point in time that the person is first classified as Class A or Class B, that person becomes entitled to an 'invalidity pension' - namely 'invalidity benefits' under Class A or Class B - the amount of which will vary according to the terms of the MSB rules. The invalidity pension payments were

an 'income stream'. Accordingly, a pension that commenced before 20 September 2007 that was subject to reclassification between Class A and Class B (and was not cancelled and recommenced) meets the definition of a superannuation income stream. This was the case with respect to Mr Burns.

The Court found that the arrears payment made to Mr Douglas under the DFRDB Scheme was part of an income stream that was a pension within the meaning of the SISA Act. However, Mr Douglas was subject to a determination made by the CSC on 4 November 2014 that created an entitlement to invalidity payments that were taken to have commenced on 2 September 2002. The Court found that the entitlement to the arrears payment did not arise until 4 November 2014.

The 'statutory fiction' under the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Act 1973 (DFRDBA) that Mr Douglas was taken to have been retired on the ground of invalidity or of physical or mental incapacity to perform his duties from 2 September 2002 did not extend to the application of the ITAA. Accordingly, the deeming which operated by reason of the DFRDBA did not create or deem an income stream for the purposes of the ITAR to have commenced before 20 September 2007.

ATO View of Decision

"The Commissioner accepts that it was open to the Court to decide that the MSB rules and the DFRDB rules under which the invalidity benefits were paid did not satisfy the requirements of subregulation 1.06(2) of the SISR. Accordingly,

- *Invalidity benefits paid under pensions provided under the MSB Scheme or the DFRDB Scheme that commenced on or after 20 September 2007 are superannuation lump sum benefits.*
- *Invalidity benefits paid under pensions provided under the MSB Scheme or the DFRDB Scheme that commenced before 20 September 2007 are superannuation income stream benefits."*

Comment: This was the key argument put forward by the veterans since Day 1 of this saga. Veterans had called on both CSC and the ATO to state which part of the SISR they were applying to classify the Invalidity Benefit as a pension.

- For several years, both CSC and the ATO refused to answer, "Which specific criteria in SISR 1.06 are being applied to define our payments?" They could not answer because there was no criteria they could reference. Solution: Avoid, delay, distract.
- Each tried to pass responsibility for the decision to the other. IGTax confirmed that CSC was responsible for deciding the nature of the payments and reporting them to the ATO, however CSC stated they took advice from ATO.
- All CSC literature, and letters to banks when veterans were applying for mortgages, stated clearly that Invalidity Benefits were not lifetime pensions but were subject to review.

However, this same advice did not reflect in the notice CSC gave to the ATO.

- Freedom of Information request indicates that in Oct 2018, in the middle of the AAT Hearings, one part of ATO claimed “until very recently, the ATO were not aware that Invalidity Benefits were subject to regular medical review”, yet this had been the basis of the veterans’ objections to the ATO. At best, left hand did not know what right hand was doing, at worst, a lot of avoid, deny, bum-covering, and delay.
- CSC obfuscated in best “Yes Minister” style to a question put to the CEO at the Senate Estimate Committee, stating each individual case was different and they could not therefore answer generally, other than say that the criteria of SIS Reg 1.06 was met in each case. Yet, the CSC and ATO was refusing to answer that question from individual veterans for their own specific case. Unfortunately, the Senator who asked the question was not sufficiently on the ball to pull the bureaucrat up and delve further.
- Letters to MPs produced the same standard response from the Ministers’ or PM’s offices, that the SISR 1.06 was being met. It was not.
- The words of Justice Logan in his AAT decisions are worth repeating:
 - “The reply of CSC ...was, with all due respect, singularly unhelpful... It is CSC, not the Commissioner of Taxation or the Tribunal in his place, which is charged with the calculation and administration of payments ... both the Commissioner, Mt Douglas and the Tribunal are entitled to look to the CSC for assistance. On the material before the Tribunal, the best assistance that CSC has offered entail no explanation of how it came to specify” incorrect amounts of payments made.
 - “..if the encounter in this case is any guide, to the prospect of being “broken by age and war” must now be added for members and former members of the ADF the prospect of encounter with how we as a Nation State have come to regulate and tax the bargain struck on enlistment”

WHAT NEXT?

ATO. The ATO advise the following:

We are developing a streamlined income tax amendment process for eligible individuals who received invalidity benefit payments under pensions provided under the DFRDB and MSB schemes that commenced on or after 20 September 2007. This streamlined approach will make the process of objecting simpler and will provide an extension of time to object. The amendment process will require information from the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) as well as information we already hold. We are working on having all necessary data to provide this streamlined service as soon as possible. We expect to be able to provide further information on the process and how individuals can determine their eligibility on our website in February 2021.

If you have already lodged an objection you do not need to do anything. Once we have the relevant information to determine if you require amendments to your tax returns, we will advise you of that outcome and whether you are able to participate in the streamlined process.

DFWA. The planned streamlined approach involving ATO and CSC to the benefit of affected veterans is welcomed. However, it needs to be monitored as experience in “streamlined approaches” adopted by bureaucracies have tended to be streamlined for the benefit of the bureaucracy rather than the recipient. We shall continue to monitor the situation and seek answers to several questions.

STREAMLINED PROCESS

Details of the streamlined process are expected in the ATO website update in February. The following areas need to be addressed:

Notification. Many veterans and estates of deceased veterans are probably unaware of this change in treatment.

- Are all veterans who have received or are receiving Invalidity Benefits going to be contacted?
- Are the estates of deceased veterans going to be advised so that correct taxes are applied as well?
- Is CSC or the ATO responsible for making contact?

Assistance. The need for corrective action was due to mistakes by CSC and ATO. The CSC owes a fiduciary duty to the veteran beneficiary. CSC has duty to act in the beneficiaries’ best interest. Clearly, in this case CSC did not, in spite of veterans’ raising the issue. CSC must now do their utmost to restore trust and be proactive in rectifying the situation.

- How is CSC going to assist their members in gaining the benefit of the Court decisions?

Doctors’ Certificates. If two doctor certificates are required:

- What support is CSC providing so veterans can ensure that they certificates are worded correctly?
- If there are possible adverse financial effects based on when these medical certificates are received by CSC, what action is being taken by CSC to minimise the adverse effects considering that the whole situation arose because of historical misreporting of income by CSC?

Payments and PAYG Summaries.

- From what date will CSC be reducing PAYG deductions from Class A and B payments?
- How are past CSC PAYG Payment Summaries to be corrected? And When?

Accrued Rights

The historical misinterpretation of the law by CSC and ATO goes back a long time.

- Are veterans going to be limited in the number of previous years they can object to their assessment or will they able

to seek review, lodge objections for all Tax Years where the Invalidation Benefit was wrongly taxed?

- If not able to object for all years, why not?

CSC and DVA Lump Sum Calculation Mistakes

Justice Logan commented adversely on CSC and their calculations of the lump sum involved in the Douglas Case. CSC overstated his income associated with the lump sum back-payment by about \$90,000. CSC failed to explain their mistake at the AAT, and it is not known what action, if any CSC has taken to ensure such mistakes do not occur in the future.

While ATO advise they are working with CSC to have a “streamlined service”, there is no mention of DVA. If a veteran has also been receiving Incapacity payments from DVA, these are offset against any Invalidation Payments received from CSC – veterans cannot receive two payments for the same condition. This results in complex and lengthy calculations, as those DVA payments over the years must be subtracted from the Lump Sum to be paid by CSC for the same period. There have been large on-going problems in this area. Recent history regarding calculations of payments by CSC and DVA have not been encouraging.

- What is CSC doing to ensure that the mistakes highlighted by Justice Logan in his Douglas decision, do not occur again?
- Has DVA engaged with CSC to ascertain if there is a need to review offset calculations regarding Incapacity Payments?

Comment: Taxation of Lump Sum Payments, including Invalidation Benefits.

DFWA is not qualified to give financial or taxation advice. Every person’s financial and taxation situation is unique. DFWA recommends any veteran who will be in receipt of a lump sum back payment to seek professional financial/accountancy/taxation advice.

Some of the factors to consider could be:

- Lump sum back payments of Invalidation Benefits are generally taxed in the year of receipt of the payment.
- The rate of lump sum taxation is referenced to the average taxable income of the taxpayer over the previous two years.
- The rate of taxation for Financial Year 2020/2021 is lower than the last few years.
- There may be strategies to reduce the taxation on the lump sum if the taxable income over the previous year was reduced.

For example, if it was possible to reduce the taxable income this financial year (FY 20/21) and delay a claim for and payment of a lump sum Invalidation Benefit to next financial year (FY21/22), the tax on the lump sum may be less than if it was paid this financial year. However, each case is different. For

example, the lump sum may be needed asap to pay off debt, the taxable income of previous years may already be as low as it can be, and many other considerations.

Recent lump sums have been significant with retrospective medical discharges of over 40 years.

Each case is different and professional advice is recommended.

ANOMALY

The Federal Court decisions create an anomaly that veterans whose payments of invalidity benefit payments commenced after 20 Sep 2007, are taxed more beneficially than those whose payments commenced on 19 September and before.

The glaring inequity of this situation is illustrated the following scenario with Veterans A and B who enlisted on the same date and had the same rank and pay and were also discharged on 1 April 2000.

- Veteran A was medically discharged on mental health grounds and was granted a Class A Invalidation Benefit payment from that date. Veteran A continues to be taxed at the marginal rate.
- Veteran B was discharged, but at own request. Veteran B had the same mental health condition as Veteran A; the symptoms were there in the medical record, but the mental health condition was not diagnosed. Years later, after some problems and treatment, Veteran B sought advice and decided to apply for a retrospective medical discharge and apply for the Invalidation Benefit. A Class A pension was granted, and payments commenced after 20 Sep 2007.

Veteran B with the same service and medical condition would be taxed at a more beneficial rate than Veteran A whose payments commenced on 1 Apr 2000. As those payments should have been paid from 1 Apr 2000, Veteran B gets a lump sum back payment to cover those years. But as the actual payment commenced after 20 Sep 2007, it also gets taxed at the more beneficial rate.

DFWA will continue to monitor the situation and the ATO and CSC implementation of the Court’s decisions which have been a benefit to many veterans. Bearing in mind previous experience with the ATO and government, any action initiated by them to address an anomaly, would be of benefit to the Treasury, not the veterans. DFWA, along with others in the Veteran Community, is continuing to monitor any moves by government for changes to Regulations or Legislation which could remove the benefits obtained from these Court decisions.

(The opinions and comments are the author’s alone and do not necessarily reflect DFWA view)

THE NATURE OF OPERATIONAL & NON-OPERATIONAL SERVICE

by Kel Ryan and Kerry Mellor

INTRODUCTION

The recent report by the Productivity Commission ((Compensation & Rehabilitation for Veterans – A Better Way to Support Veterans) has prompted discussion on the nature of compensation rendered due to military service. There is an important point of principle here:

- a. In non-operational service the safety of the troops involved is the paramount consideration. If there is a peacetime activity, including training for war, (which is invariably made as realistic as possible), involves a risk that makes the taking of casualties inevitable, the activity either does not proceed, or, if in progress, is stopped. The casualties cannot be justified; and
- b. In operational service achievement of the mission is the paramount consideration. While it is a core responsibility of commanders at all levels in war to achieve the mission with a minimum of casualties, if casualties are inevitable, they have to be accepted as part of the cost of achieving the mission.

Thus, the two categories of service are fundamentally different in that respect and the distinction made is applied in the administration of veterans' care. It is appropriate and should be preserved.

LEGISLATION OVERVIEW

The changing nature of service, particularly operational service (war service) is acknowledged in the Productivity Commission Report. The Report refers to the "maze of service types", the determination of eligibility and level of benefits in an overlapping confusion which only bewilders veterans, advocates and DVA itself.

The relevant Veterans' Compensation Acts, VEA and MRCA identify eleven types of service, each attracting different provisions of the Acts to arrive at an appropriated level of care and/or compensation.

The Report further identifies the miasma and confusion inherent in veteran entitlements with the observation that, "The

legislation is overlapping and so a number of veterans have eligibility under multiple Acts" (p.193). This eligibility includes under the Defence Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (DRAC), though DRAC deals only with service of a non-operational nature.

The Report further highlights the fog that surrounds terminology and its application to veteran eligibility. It cites (Campbell 2011a) that warlike and non-warlike service can also be referred to informally as 'operational service' under the VEA Act 1986. These terms are peppered throughout the Report and are not helpful in their application.

UNIQUE NATURE OF MILITARY SERVICE

The principle of 'The Unique Nature of Military Service' has been accepted and adopted by the Australian Government. This 'unique' principle is supported by the commitment that a member of the ADF makes for the high purpose of the defence of the nation. This commitment demands the surrender of the most fundamental human rights guaranteed under the UN Charter of Human Rights adopted in 1948, namely:

- Life;
- Liberty; and
- Security of the Person.

This surrender in trust to the State is for the higher purpose of the defence of the nation. In Operational service, in certain circumstances, there is the inevitable implication for the individual ADF member of the surrender of these rights is that he/she is obliged to:

- Obey orders to act when there is a high probability that he/she will become a casualty; and/or
- Obey orders to apply lethal force, offensively or defensively.

This is an imposed, inevitable logic on those engaged on Operational service. Ordinary considerations of service, such as health and safety are entirely subordinated to the achievement of the mission. The inescapable obligation arising out of such service is not an ordinary obligation an employer provides in a safe workplace but is a recognition of the unique nature of the service rendered.

THE 21ST CENTURY BATTLE SPACE

The simplicity and brevity of the War Pensions Act 1914 is in stark contrast to the myriad of veteran related legislation today. This Act, which was assented on 14 December 1914, outlines in 16 paragraphs to, “provide for the grant of Pensions upon the death or incapacity of Members of the Defence Force of the Commonwealth and Members of the Imperial Reserve Forces resident in Australia, whose death or incapacity results from their employment in connexion with warlike operations”.

Today we are confronted with an embarrassment of legislation and regulation and studies that confound the veteran care space. The legislation that is in place today is problematic at best and often uncompromising when applied to the changed veteran space today and particularly the changing nature of conflict.

TYPES OF SERVICE

It is valid to ask, ‘Should we distinguish between operational and non-operational service in the 21st century?’ The nature of deployments continues to evolve with advancements in technology and its application to the battle space. The world has become smaller, the areas of deployment are within reach as specialist’s, analysts, operational staff at far removed headquarters or other organisations with a support-to-military-ops-rear roles, are not force assigned or in the AO. Often, they have remained within the nation, but they are very much part of the fight.

How does legislation provide for long term medical and psychological injuries for, for example?

- a. Cyber operators protecting Australian critical infrastructure and/or conducting offensive cyber operations on states/actors overseas; and
- b. UAV operators and pilots in Australia, supporting operations, potentially using lethal force.

Compensation schemes dating from 1914 have been part of the bargain between the Commonwealth and a Defence Member. The temporal happenstance of an injury should not affect the support that a member receives. The achievement of the mission is a defining factor between operational and non-operational service. The mission is always paramount.

The level of acceptable risk is determined as part of the mission analysis but is most definitely rolled into the mission. An example of such missions is the RAN patrol boat activities off NW Australia, “chasing first Taiwanese clam boats then later Indonesian traditional fishermen”. Such were a RAN task but were not given ‘operational’ titles though the ships were fully armed at all times. This due to the uncertainty of the reaction of the crew of the ships being boarded.

The evolution of conflict and ADF deployments today tells us that there is more to ADF service than simply training to fight and fighting. There are the ‘in-between’ activities, some of which get the “operational” designation, and some do not.

Notwithstanding the complexity (real and apparent) of the evolving service environment and the rapidly changing battle space, there are some basic and enduring characteristics of human conflict:

- All conflict involves the imposition of the will of one side over that of the other. Victory involves submission of the will of one to the other, either by acceptance of the futility of further action or removal of the capacity for further action. In short, surrender or death. In circumstances short of a struggle for vital national interests, compromises might be accepted, and accommodations reached, but the endpoint of any conflict where compromise is impossible or defeat unacceptable, for the defeated there is only surrender or death. It is this point which military service has to be prepared to confront.
- The history of warfare is one of continuously evolving weapons and tactics. Especially in the field of technology, the dominance of one technology over another is inevitably of short duration; countermeasures are not long in making their presence felt. Today the ability to apply force remotely from a secure area in the form of drones and other unmanned platforms, or to fight in cyber space, will be countered effectively by a determined enemy sooner rather than later. If vital national interests are at stake, the endpoint is where it always has been - victory or defeat. Defeat will always mean surrender or death.

CONCLUSION

There is a need for government to clearly define the nature of ‘operational’ and ‘non-operational’ service in the context of the unique nature of military service. Such definition should allow for:

- a. The compensation of members who have not left the nations shores, have encountered at least some of the conditions of operational service and who were instrumental in the conduct of the mission.
- b. The ongoing provision of agreed remuneration, allowances and honours that recognise the fundamental nature of operational service, and its attendant risks; and
- c. The permanent recognition of operational service in the battle space as unique and appropriate.

A PADRE REFLECTS

THE AFGAN WAR CRIMES REPORT

Like many of the hundreds of thousands of living veterans in Australia, with more than 120,000 of them in South East Queensland, I have spent the last few days struggling with a diverse range of emotions, from shock to disgust, to anger and grief, as we have become more aware of alleged criminal behaviour by rogue operators within the Special Air Service Regiment and an apparent culture of silence and misplaced loyalty that perpetuated this.

I'm mindful that there are multiple dimensions to the issues raised and I have listened to many people who have made a wide range of criticisms. Listening without judging, discerning the real facts, and reflecting on our values is more important now than coming to hasty conclusions on minimal information.

As I have prayerfully reflected on an appropriate response, I had an image reminiscent of the disciples of Jesus standing before the crucifixion in bewilderment. How could this have possibly happened, and where do we go from here.

This sad and sorry story has a long way to play out yet, but I would just hope that our wider community will understand that for us veterans this alleged behaviour is so utterly reprehensible, so inconsistent with our values and indeed incomprehensible. We have been formed, and served, as peacemakers, using lethal force where necessary, but displaying courage, integrity and compassion, even when it involved significant sacrifice, suffering and loss. What is positive is that many operators have courageously come forward with evidence of unacceptable behaviour, and matters of concern are now going to be investigated thoroughly by the AFP.

It is perplexing that men who are alleged to have perpetrated or collaborated in crimes had earlier been considered by selectors, to be among our best people. No doubt some of them will be identified as having shown great physical bravery in other actions. But under sustained stress without close supervision and accountability, with ongoing unrelenting operational demands, and without a clear hope and vision for how this mission could be completed, they have appeared to cross a line of morally acceptable behaviour to take the law into their own hands. Perhaps of more concern than the initial incidents, are the allegations of coverups, lies and

coercion of junior soldiers in violation of our core values, displaying a lack of integrity and moral courage. Given that trials will involve the word of one soldier against another, it would certainly be redemptive if those who were guilty, showed the courage to now tell the truth.

Justice is necessary for both alleged perpetrators and those that have accused them. Consolation and support is needed for many innocent and not so innocent victims of what is truly an evil turn of events. Accountability of everyone in the chains of command involving criminal activity needs to be scrutinised.

With my younger son Paul still serving in the military, I take some consolation that the broader culture of our military is manifestly good and sound, with solid professional development, great transparency, and highly visible accountability. There clearly seems to have been a fundamental weakness in that a small section of our community was trusted to be able to operate independently, secretly and with limited accountability. Even before legal proceedings have started the military system has moved to ensure that this will not happen again.

Meanwhile the veteran community will need be doing our best to tend to the wounded, ill, and injured that have resulted from our military having been on continuous sustained operations for the last 20 years. But we can't do it on our own. More veterans have taken their lives in recent weeks. Sadly, more will no doubt succumb to shame and guilt over the coming months. We need the whole community to support us in this journey, and understanding and compassion will help. Honesty, restorative justice, forgiveness and reconciliation, could also help facilitate this.

Lessons need to be acknowledged, governance improved, and corrective action thoroughly implemented.

Our country is still served by many good and Godly servicemen and women. Like Jesus we may have experienced betrayal, we will need time to process our emotions, but we will rise again.

*Gary Stone OAM
The Veterans Padre
President Veterans Care Association Inc*

www.VeteransCare.com.au

OPERATIONAL & NON-OPERATIONAL SERVICE - A MEMBER'S OPINION

BY CHRIS LOWIS

Even if it were possible to draw a bright line between operational and non-operational service, it does not necessarily follow that the level of veteran care should have anything to do with that line.

Much of the discussion about categories of service - operational vs. non-operational - tries to cover the whole field of veteran care. But veteran care is a big field. Perhaps there are parts of that field where it makes no sense to maintain the distinction. It is important to consider the context.

For instance, I would argue that in terms of rehabilitation and compensation, there is no justification for differentiating between warlike, non-warlike, hazardous, peacetime, or any other category.

“... the Veterans' Entitlement Act is an awkward marriage between compensation and recognition ...”

If a veteran has an incapacity from something related to their service, it should not matter if that service was on operations or not: the claims process should be the same, the rehabilitation provided should be the same, and the amount of compensation paid should be the same.

The productivity commission report recommends removing the distinction between operational and non-operational service in the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act in two key areas. It recommends moving to a single, lower standard of proof - a reasonable hypothesis - for the purposes of proving an incapacity is related to service. It also recommends moving to a single

rate of compensation for permanent impairment compensation. Implementing these recommendations would, to all intents and purposes, remove the distinction between types of service from that act.

Neither of these recommendations take anything away from anyone's operational service, but they both improve access to rehabilitation and compensation for all veterans covered by that act, regardless of operational experience. Isn't that a good outcome?

On the other hand, the Veterans' Entitlement Act is an awkward marriage between compensation, and recognition. It is the latter which might make it difficult to move away from differentiating types of service for determining eligibility for entitlements. Recognition has been woven into the fabric of that act.

For instance, entitlements such as service pension or a gold card after 70 years of age recognise the toll of operational service. Both entitlements are, if you will, recognition with a dash of compensation.

What if eligibility for the service pension, for example, was expanded to include those who have served a qualifying period, rather than needing to serve on operations? This does not take anything away from anyone, but it would recognise the unique nature of military service, which may include deploying on operations. Wouldn't that also be a good outcome?

If we are going to have the operational vs non-operational service conversation, we need to understand what the context of the discussion is. Just because it makes sense in some aspects of administering veteran care, does not mean it makes sense in all aspects.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ISIS ARMOUR

What a wonderful article by Alistair Pope “The Rise and Fall of ISIS Armour” in the last edition of *Camaraderie*. I think it’s the best expose I have read on the subject, which as far as I know, has not been published in the media. My thanks to him and I look forward to a follow up article.

This does lead into the subject of nearby Afghanistan. I wonder why we are still there, even as a military detachment, surely, it’s time we abandoned the situation and leave the population to their own devices. It seems to me we continue to do the bidding of USA, and it’s time we retired from that obligation too.

Evan Allanson

HEARING AIDS

Whilst I am fortunate enough not to have to wear a Hearing Aid (*Camaraderie*, Vol 51 No 3), Bert Hoebee’s research, shining light into dark corners, and way ahead comments, are all timely (especially to remind people of the Covenant and the Act of Parliament’s requirements of providers), easy to follow and a credit to his diligence.

I congratulate him on his article.

Gerald McCormack

MICHAEL JOHN STRACHAN BRYCE AM, AE, KStJ

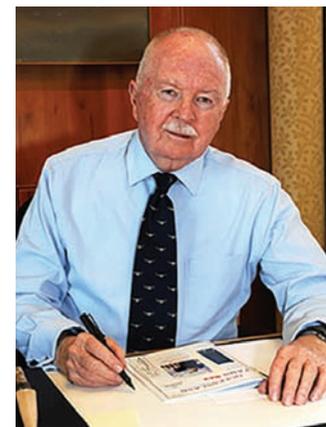
13 June 1938 - 15th January 2021

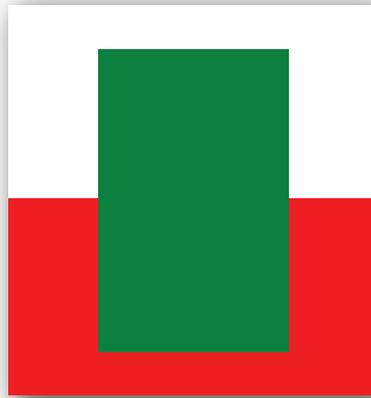
Michael was former Patron-in-Chief of DFWA during the period his wife, Quentin Bryce, was Governor General (2008 – 2014).

His interest in defence started as a cadet in the Air Training Corps and he later completed National Service training in the 1951-1959 scheme. When studying architecture at the University of Queensland he joined the Qld University Sqn and followed that with service in 23 (City of Brisbane) Sqn earning the Air Efficiency Award (AE) and later, the National Medal. During his Citizen Air Force (CAF) service, he was appointed Honorary ADC to the Governor of Queensland. He had a distinguished career in architecture, serving in professional and academic bodies and receiving many professional awards and the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2006.

He retired from professional work when Dame Quentin became Governor General to avoid any hint of a conflict of interest. However he enthusiastically took on other roles as patron to professional and veteran related bodies. His interest was real, and DFWA benefitted from that. He and Dame Quentin did a lot of low key “behind the scenes” work with veterans and their families, with no publicity, but achieving much. After Dame Quentin retired, he relinquished the role with DFWA, but he retained his interest in veteran issues and attended every DFWA Qld Branch Member and ESO Annual Briefing each year at Victoria Barracks. He was always well-informed and brought a broad perspective to veteran issues.

He will be missed. We were very privileged.
Lest We Forget.





Keepers of the Gate

New Guinea Volunteer Rifles: 1940-1943

by Phil Ainsworth & Alistair Pope

The Awakening

The ongoing Sino-Japanese war in China, the outbreak of war in Europe, the alliance of Japan with the Italian-German Axis and the increasingly aggressive rhetoric of the Japanese finally stirred the Australian government to the danger we faced on our territorial perimeter, particularly in Papua and New Guinea with its extensive and lucrative gold mining operations and plantations.

On 4th September 1939, Australian Army Headquarters ordered the raising of the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR), a citizen force that could draw on local expertise and knowledge. There was a second (if unintended advantage) in that the men who went to live and work in New Guinea were of an independent and self-reliant 'pioneer mindset' who saw challenges, but no obstacles. A cosmopolitan group from Europe, the British Isles, New Zealand, Australia and Asia, whose homes and livelihoods were in New Guinea, hastened to join.

The initial strength of the battalion was limited to 20 officers and 400 other ranks, but this was increased in June 1940 to 23 officers and 482 other ranks. The early enthusiasm in recruiting stemmed mainly from returned soldiers of the 1914-18 War, but by mid-1941 the unit had lost many of its younger members who had rushed off to join the AIF and other services. While the isolation of the volunteers and the remoteness of many areas was a disadvantage, a growing realisation of the danger of war in the Pacific led to another upsurge in recruiting in late 1941.

The NGVR has the distinction of being the only Australian army militia unit raised, mobilised, engaged in a war and finally disbanded overseas without ever serving in Australia! The headquarters of the NGVR was originally at Rabaul with sub-units located at Wau, Bulolo, Salamaua, Lae and Madang. Fit men between the ages of 18 and 50 were accepted. Enlistment was for a two-year period without pay except for an allowance of £1.00/year (about \$20 in today's money). The NGVR uniform consisted of a khaki shirt and trousers made locally from material sent from Australia. The Army supplied felt 'Slouch' hats, bandoliers, leather belts, boots and puttees. Brass NGVR shoulder badges were worn. Arms consisted of WWI vintage rifles and some Vickers and Lewis machine guns.

When the regular army 2/22nd Battalion 'Lark Force' arrived in Rabaul in August 1941, the NGVR Commanding Officer Major WM Edwards, moved the battalion headquarters to Bulolo on the mainland. After Japan attacked Malaysia, Singapore and the Dutch East Indies, the Battalion was placed on full-time duty and mobilized on the 21st January 1942. That same day, 60 Japanese aircraft simultaneously bombed Lae, Salamaua and Bulolo. Major EW Jenyns of NGVR, visited the civilian Administrator in Lae, who declared a state of emergency and handed control over to Jenyns.

On 23rd January 1942, the Japanese invaded Rabaul. The 2/22nd Battalion defence line was around the harbour, with local elements of NGVR under their command defending the northern flank with medium machine guns and a mortar. The NGVR men fought until resistance was of no longer possible,

then either shared the fate of other prisoners-of-war or withdrew south across New Britain to the Open Bay and Wide Bay areas for eventual evacuation.

Together with about 160 other Australian soldiers, a number of NGVR soldiers were massacred at Tol Plantation on Wide Bay by their Japanese conquerors. This barbarity was followed by Australia's worst single Australian marine tragedy when the Japanese naval prison ship *Montevideo Maru* was sunk in the South China Sea on 1st July 1942 by an American submarine, *USS Sturgeon*. 36 NGVR soldiers were among the 1,053 Australian POW's, civilians and miners from Rabaul and nearby New Guinea Islands who drowned in the disaster.

Rather than these atrocities intimidating the NGVR volunteer 'amateurs' they formed independent detachments at Wau, Salamaua, Bulolo and Lae and prepared to fight. Assuming a Japanese landing at Lae was imminent, and with NGVR on full time duty, all civilians departed from the town on 24th January. This left six RAAF signallers and six NGVR soldiers in Lae. Meanwhile, other NGVR groups defended strategic points in the area, with their headquarters nearby. NGVR had about a company strength of less than 100 men in the Lae area by this time.

When the Japanese landed at Lae on 8th March 1942, NGVR withdrew westward towards Nadzab. The Japanese also landed at Salamaua the same day, with the NGVR men there withdrawing across the Francisco River after destroying the bridge. Positioning a section at the river, the others moved south to the NGVR HQ at Mubo. Most of the Japanese appeared to be in no hurry to move inland, but a party of about 60 advanced to Komiatum, half way to Mubo, on 18th March and destroyed the NGVR stores dump there.

Although the Japanese remained in the Lae town area and did not move forward, the NGVR men faced new problems. As the only administrative representative of law and order, NGVR had assumed responsibility for several thousand indentured labourers from the mines who had been recruited from many outlying districts, but who were now without support and unable to return to their homes. The NGVR established support depots and they became the first of the army of carriers who proved so vital in transporting supplies to the frontline during the fighting that followed.

The newly promoted Colonel Edwards sent six NGVR soldiers to find out what the Japanese were doing in Salamaua. The Japanese knew they were there but failed to find them. As the local people were suffering punishments from the Japanese for assisting the Australians, NGVR withdrew to avoid causing further trouble for them. Similar NGVR posts were established along the Markham Valley and at Heath's



NGVR with captured Japanese flag, Wau 1942

Plantation closer to Lae to monitor Japanese activities. The NGVR men filled a large intelligence gap by keeping in touch with and containing their enemy.

Unfortunately outlying advance parties of the 2/1st Independent Coy were decimated in the Japanese attacks on Manus Island, Rabaul and Kavieng. The first reinforcements originally intended for the 2/1st Independent Coy were diverted to the NGVR at Wau and arrived by walking in over the precipitous Bulldog Track. The 2/5th Independent Company AIF, with supporting attachments, flew into Wau from Port Moresby on 23rd May to further reinforce the NGVR soldiers. These units formed 'Kanga Force'. Their role was to conduct a limited offensive to harass and destroy enemy personnel and equipment in the area. The OC Kanga Force considered there were 2,000 Japanese in Lae and 250 in Salamaua, whereas Kanga Force had only 450 combat fit soldiers to meet the many possible Japanese threats. To seize the initiative, the OC ordered raids on Salamaua and Heath's Plantation west of Lae. The Salamaua raid was carried out quickly as a result of previous scouting work. Early in the morning of 29th June, 71 members of NGVR and 2/5th Independent Company raided and killed at least 100 Japanese at a cost of three men slightly wounded. This successful raid caused the Japanese to reinforce their perimeter at Salamaua. Although the raid on Heath's Plantation was also successful, it lacked the essential element of surprise and the raid's leader was killed.

Although NGVR remained in good spirits, the deprivations and continuous operations in hostile terrain without adequate supply and medical support took their toll, with many falling sick with malarial fever and other tropical diseases. The number of men fit for combat steadily dwindled. As food resupply failed the soldiers became increasingly dependent on local food sources. Japanese air raids, their

intimidation of the local people and the physical difficulty of getting rations forward to feed the carriers and NGVR troops had a cumulative effect that threatened to stop Kanga Force activity.

When the operational focus shifted to the Milne Bay and Kokoda Track battles, NGVR remained in Wau and continued to monitor the Japanese. 1942 had been NGVR's golden year, but by early 1943 too few men were left for the unit to be an effective force. NGVR was disbanded and lost its identity. However, the remaining NGVR soldiers were attached to the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU) for the rest of WW2 due to their knowledge of the country, the local languages and customs.



Regimental Colour

Queen's Colour

The Queen's and Regimental Colours were presented on the 17th May 1969.

Battle honours were awarded for Rabaul, Wau and South West Pacific, 1942-1943

The NGVR soldiers came from many walks of life. Despite the fact that some were too old to join the AIF and others were considered medically unfit or were unable to enlist in the AIF as they were employed in restricted occupations, yet they fought hard and successfully against the odds. It was the NGVR men who initiated and organised the Papuan and New Guinean labour force which was to become a vital contributing factor to the success of the Allied campaign in the New Guinea archipelago.

A unique and remarkable unit indeed.

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<https://nominal-rolls.dva.gov.au/veteran?id=849452&c=WW2> – Basil Fairfax-Ross CAPT 2/12 Inf Bn

OOPS!

Congratulations to the eagle-eyed readers who pointed out to me that in the last edition of Camaraderie, it was stated the RAAF PC-21 Pilatus aircraft entered service in 1889 .. of course, it was 1989.

I could say this was an intentional error to test the readers ...

Editor



If you're a veteran
or serving member
of the Australian
Defence Force entry
to the Museum
is on us

Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC)
has a long history of serving members of the
Australian Defence Force.

We greatly value and appreciate the commitment and loyal service of our veterans, serving members of the Army, Navy and Air Force, and cadets.

As a way of saying thanks, CSC is providing every single Defence Force veteran, serving member and current cadet with a **complimentary pass** to the **Australian National Maritime Museum.**

If you're a Defence Force veteran, a serving member, or a current cadet just show the Museum's front of house team your valid ADF ID card, a DVA-issued card, service medals, or arrive in uniform and you'll receive free entry to the Museum.



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Supporting loved ones through difficult conversations

Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling (Open Arms) is Australia's leading national provider of high quality, free and confidential counselling and support services for Australian veterans and their families.

Similar to other community-based mental health services, Open Arms clients experience depression, anxiety, substance use challenges, workplace struggles, relationship concerns and parenting and family issues. The difference with Open Arms is that staff members have specialist training in the military experience. And, while they support families experiencing the routine daily challenges, they also understand the unique stressors that military and veteran families experience relating to the posting cycle, training exercises, deployments, partner employment, and more.

When someone you care about is going through a rough patch, it can be hard to know what to do or say. Open Arms would like to encourage people to check in with friends and family in the lead up to stressful periods, but not everyone finds it easy to talk. Luckily, there are resources and strategies available to help you talk to and care for a loved one.

Open Arms offers free access to LivingWorks Start, a one-hour online program that teaches participants how to recognise when someone is thinking about suicide and how to connect them to professional help and support.

Providing a safe space for someone to talk is important, however, this might feel like a daunting task. Before you look out for others, you need to look out for yourself. If you're not in the right headspace or you don't think you're the right person to have the conversation, try to think of someone else in their support network who could talk to them.

When planning a chat, it is important to choose the right moment, practice good listening skills and follow up on both their and your own mental health.

PLANNING

Plan a time to talk without interruptions and have the conversation in private, if possible. You might find it helpful to talk

while engaging in another activity. For example, you could talk together as you play sport, wash the dishes, clean the yard, go for a walk or drink coffee.

To start a conversation, keep it simple and direct. You might say: *I've noticed X, Y and Z ... Are you ok?*

Just be yourself and take the time to listen. Listen to the person without judgement and reassure them that you care.

TALKING

Actively listen to their answers. You do this by listening, reflecting and seeking clarification: *It sounds like you're feeling angry because of XYZ, am I right?*

Take what they say seriously and don't interrupt or rush the conversation. This is not the time to argue with them, to tell them you know how they feel, or try to solve their problems. This is the time to listen, reflect and clarify.

Encourage them to explain: *How are you feeling about that? or How long have you felt that way?*

If they need time to think, sit patiently with them in silence. Allow them time to vent if they want to. Don't be afraid to allow silence.

While it is important not to jump to solutions or try to 'fix their problems', where appropriate it is useful to be positive about the role of professionals in getting through tough times.

You could say: *it might be useful to talk to someone who can support you. I'm happy to help you find the right person.*

SEEKING SUPPORT

Reaching out to a professional can feel like a daunting step, so you might want to offer support for the person to do this. For example, you could choose a support person together or offer to make or take them to an appointment.

You can also encourage them to reach out to Open Arms. Open

Continued page 34



Corporal Cosmo

Greetings Readers and welcome to another New Year. One wonders what 2021 may bring – my wish is that 2021 is replete with good things for you!

Delay to annual adjustment of ADF Accommodation Assistance

We're kicking 2021 off with a win! The first piece of news I have to report is that the Annual Review of Accommodation Assistance and Contributions (Living-In charges) has been delayed by six months. This delay is sensible and fair as it mirrors the six-month delay to the implementation of the new Workplace Remuneration Arrangement (WRA 2020-2023), (2% increase), approved by the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal (DFRT), in November 2020.

Personnel Policy & Employment Conditions (PPEC) of Defence People Group (DPG) have made the decision to implement adjustments of Service residences, rent-allowance & ceilings and living-in accommodation contributions on the 8th of July, due to the broader economic impacts associated with COVID-19.

This is a very sensible decision by PPEC as it would not go down too well with serving members and their families to cop a six-month delay to pay increases but have to cough-up for increased cost-of-living expenses, administered by DPG.

Further information may be found in DEFGRAM 032/2021 and of course the Pay & Conditions Manual – specifically, chapter 7 – ADF Housing and Meals and Defence Determination 2016/19, Conditions of Service.

Changes to the provision of legal assistance to ADF members (DEFGRAM 041/2021)

[Defgrams are an important source of information for all Defence Department personnel. To keep up with changes, you should check Defgrams regularly.]

DEFGRAM 041/2021 issued on 1st February 2021, piqued my interest as it affects serving members.

Legal assistance services to ADF members includes advice in relation to:

- Wills and powers of attorney
- Notices to Show Cause
- Defence Force Discipline Act matters
- Administrative inquiries
- Other general personal legal issues

The Director of Defence Counsel Services has assumed responsibility for managing legal assistance services for ADF members. This Office can advise ADF members whether they are eligible for legal assistance and arrange assistance by an ADF Legal Officer, by contacting:

- Navy members:
navy.legalassistance@defence.gov.au;
02 6266 1190
0455 958 304 (after hours)
- Army members:
army.legalassistance@defence.gov.au;
or by phone:
 - WA & Overseas: 08 9269 8076 (M,W-F) and 08 9269 4414 (Tues.)
 - NSW & ACT: 02 8108 4926
 - North QLD: 07 4446 1977
 - South QLD & NT: 07 3903 6402
 - VIC, TAS & SA: 02 6053 5425
 - After hours: 0408 133 961
- Air Force members:
raaflegalassistance@defence.gov.au;
02 6266 1190
0477 390 668 (after hours)

Conclusion

It's a fairly brief update for this edition. If you would like me to provide information on a condition of service or another financial aspect related to service in the ADF, I encourage you to drop me a line. Take care and keep your mates safe!

- Corporal Cosmo

Remember: Corporal Cosmo's comments are their own, reflecting their opinions only.

LAST MAN STANDING

VX41491 SERGEANT
ARTHUR CHARLES SCHOLES
2/8 BATTALION, 2ND AIF



By John Wilson



Our best friend, Arthur Scholes who served in the 2/8 Battalion, 2nd AIF is now fighting his last battle. I have been privileged to know Arthur all my life. He has been an inspiration to me and he and his lovely late wife Pearl, were close friends to Audra and me when we lived in the Sunshine

Coast from about 2000 to end 2003. Like so many other citizen soldiers, sailors and airmen and women, Arthur and his best mate, Johnny Martin stepped up when WWII broke out to serve and defend Australia. They had successive enlistment numbers. Johnny Martin is long gone, but Arthur is still alive and living on the Sunshine Coast. He will be 100 years old on 27 July 2021. This remarkable man has serious health issues and we sincerely hope that he fights on, as he did eighty years ago, to achieve his centenary.

Arthur's story is a remarkable one. He enlisted in the Army in Melbourne on 26 June 1940. "At that stage I was 18 years of age and like all young boys wanted the adventure. I put my age up two years to make sure that I could go overseas because in those days, the story was going around that you had to be 21. So according to the army records I am 100 years old this year but according to my mother I'm only 98."

Consider this timeline. On 4 July 1940 he marched into the Infantry Training Battalion and on 7 August he was made Acting Sergeant. He embarked for the Middle East on 15 September

1940 with 2/8 Bn 2nd AIF and his acting rank was confirmed on 5 December 1940. On the morning of 21 January 1941 Arthur and his platoon attacked Tobruk along with the rest of 2/8 Bn. At the age of 19 he led his platoon through the wire and they went on and attacked Fort Pilastrino. "I was at the attack and capture of Tobruk and then went right through to Benghazi where I spent three months in the desert campaign. Arthur admits, "I was a good soldier John, but I wasn't always a 'good' soldier." He admits that he took an interest in the sites of Egypt and, unfortunately, lost his three stripes after being AWOL in Alexandria.

On 31 March he embarked with his unit to Greece as part of that campaign. "After the desert campaign I was sent over to Greece and I was in the Battle of Vevi Pass on the border of Greece and Yugoslavia in April of 1941. "I was taken off Greece by a destroyer and we left 6000 men on the beach to go into the prisoner of war camp. "I then went up to Syria on the border with Turkey, mopping up the last of the French. "I spent the last of my time in the Middle East up on the Turkish border, then the Government in Australia called me back because they wanted us to defend Australia."

2/8 Bn returned to Australia and Arthur disembarked on 23 May 1942. "They gave me seven days' leave when I arrived home from the Middle East in Melbourne and the upside of that of course is that I got married in that seven days. I asked for 14 days leave to go on my honeymoon, but the Army said that they needed us up North to fight the Japs so I was only allowed seven days. Pearl and I were married on 3 March 1942 and, after a wonderful week's honeymoon, I decided that I really enjoyed that, so I took another week off." I didn't go back to camp when I should've, so I went AWOL and had a honeymoon with my bride."

With his hearing badly affected by bomb blasts, Arthur's days

as an infantryman were ended. He served his time in the Islands Campaign with 1st Army General Hospital. He served five and a half years in the army, in four major campaigns, until he was discharged on 8 September 1945.

His and Pearl's is a wonderful love story. Married for over 70 years they radiated so much love to friends and family. Arthur gave me tremendous encouragement through my Army career and they were both so supportive of Audra in her Army career. He, like many other veterans, suffered from PTS. I asked him how he coped. He said, "Pearl helped me John. She would wake me up in the middle of the night and say, Arthur, you're fighting the War again Darling." She got me through it."

Arthur kept in touch with his old comrades and always marched on ANZAC Day. But, sadly, he reflects, "all my men are gone now." He marched in Buderim, QLD for 30 years but last

year he, along with us all, had to mark ANZAC Day in a different way. He told me, "John, it was marvellous. I walked out to the front of my place and there were all my neighbours thanking me for my service. It was very moving."

At 99 years of age, our dear friend Arthur Scholes is approaching the end of his long life. He has colon cancer but, as in the rest of his life, he is approaching this challenge with great courage. He is one of the last WWII veterans still wearing the red and white patch of the 2/8 Bn. He is still in very good spirits; he's still got his sense of humour and he knows exactly what's happening in the world and to him. He is an outstanding member of a disappearing generation who did so much for us during WWII and after in building Australia post war. Arthur said it felt good when the war ended. "It's something that I did, and I did well, but I wouldn't say that I'd do it again," he said. "I've got good friends and I've got no enemies."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



MORE ON DEFENCE VALUES - A MEMBER MUSES

Editors Note: In the last edition of Camaraderie, we published the newly promulgated Defence Values. Many responses were received, summed up in this members letter to us.

On the subject of "New Defence Values" (Camaraderie Vol 51 No3), it's not clear to me how I survived 25 years Army service, without these so called (and written) "values".

The Army, 35 years ago anyway, Served with courage, integrity, and respect. As result it was an excellent Army - we carried the traditions and lessons from two world wars, we passed them on from Korea, Malaya and Vietnam. We, the RAE, always strived to do our best, and Army did too. The six "action stations" were neither needed or called for. Perhaps these are a salve for the higher commanders now in service.

What is this rubbish about ADF and APS "operating in in joint and integrated environments". Are the APS now wearing a uniform or doing entrance training to the ADF - few would pass the tests.

The ADF has always operated under guidance of the PM, Cabinet and the Defence Minister, with input from the Secretary of Defence and his staff. And there was also interface with the APS on many subjects. Was not the Public Service Act 1999 s 10 sufficient? And what precisely is meant by the last sentence "ADF and APS Values... Defence Behaviours".

My thoughts are that Army lacks leadership at the top and I am appalled that a CDF would condemn his own Army troops.

Yours Faithfully

Evan Allanson



Words from

Wonderland

by Win Fowles

Lewis Carroll of Alice in Wonderland fame died more than a century ago but was as modern as tomorrow when it came to changes of meaning - and usage - of words. We can learn from him.

His Humpty Dumpty said it best:

“When I use a word”, Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, “it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less.”

Incarnations of Humpty are alive and well in 2021. How often have you heard folk give an old word a new meaning? Or invent a new word by manipulating the language? Or use a word to death for no good reason?

Then there’s the gobbledegook beloved of today’s Sir Humphreys and self-proclaimed influencers and their ilk. Their words are impressive and are delivered portentously, but a brief analysis finds little or no meaning that the listener can act upon.

He has his followers but to me Deepak Chopra is this field’s clear leader. What do his fine New Age words really mean? What do I need to do so my life will benefit? My attempt at translation follows each of these brief Chopra quotes. But I may be wrong because I really don’t know what the man is trying to say. You may well do better:

“In the midst of movement and chaos, keep stillness inside of you.” (Be calm.)

“The less you open your heart to others, the more your heart suffers.” (Listen.)

“Happiness is a continuation of happenings which are not resisted.” (Don’t think for yourself.)

Then there are new words to describe old activities. Sometimes the new word is better. Once upon a time we used to *resign*, *retire* or *separate* from the ADF. Now we *transition*. Transition is a better word because it encompasses all the earlier words and, importantly, implies that leaving the ADF is merely a step in life. The old words do not look beyond ADF service.

But are some words these days reminiscent of Chopra? Or Orwell?

What does the latest catchcry, *Army in Motion*, really mean? Is it merely that we must change if we are to progress, something that the Army has always sought to do albeit with varying degrees of success? Or something else?

It is true (and timeless) that change is essential for progress in any organisation, including the ADF. One supposes that today’s ‘Army in Motion’ is seen as a better term to encourage progress than yesterday’s exhortations to merely ‘embrace

change'. AiM is certainly more *woke*, whatever that word may really mean. And thank heavens the new term is not 'Army in a Motion', which has entirely different and highly unpleasant connotations.

Changes to words but not actions can give the illusion of progress, as many have recognised over the millennia. And adding shock words can give the illusion of strength to an argument, at least until the shock word itself becomes tiresome and ineffective through overuse. Today's overuse of copulative swear words is a prime example. They detract from an argument rather than adding strength.

So does using *impact* instead of *effect* when describing matters other than artillery actions. Gunners fire for effect into an impact area. They do not fire for impact into an effect area. The distinction is clear here but pencil pushers who claim that their recommendations will *impact* the ADF as opposed to *affecting* it are guilty of overusing a shock word for no good reason. You'd better f***ing believe it.

Which brings me to today's habit of turning nouns into verbs in the interests of brevity. Saying that an Olympic swimmer wants 'to medal' instead of saying she wants 'to win a medal' is now normal. Despite pedants claiming otherwise, I don't really see downside in turning these nouns into verbs. The meaning is clear, which surely is the main issue, so why rail against this evolution of English?

Pedantry has its place but so does advancement of the language. Let's not turn English into a latter day Latin, revered but dead.

And let's hope our athletes medal magnificently at the 2021 Tokyo Olympics. Meanwhile, let's also not go into a paroxysm of pedantry when reading a sentence starting with 'and', 'but' or 'or'.

But not all changes are welcome. You may disagree but I loathe the fact that *savings* are now derided as *hoarding wealth*. And *lessons* are now *learnings*, at least to some public figures who should know better. Not to mention that certain matters are *more unique* than plain *unique* when something can only be unique or not unique. Uniqueness does not have degrees.

Then there are pejoratives. As an old white male I am *offended*

(sic) when supercilious scribes write sneeringly about *old white males* while lauding males who are old but not white. I am equally offended by sneers shot in the opposite direction.

Judgements made solely on the melanin content of one's skin are appalling. Why accidents of birth still see folk with axes to grind reject Martin Luther King's transformative 'I have a dream' speech are beyond me. Remember what King said:

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

More, these days we are exhorted to be *nuanced* in our dealings with each other and with countries such as China for fear we may offend. Nuanced niceness may have its place but much of today's nuance is yesterday's appeasement. Surely true diplomacy lies elsewhere?

George Santayana had it right when saying that those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. That does not mean we should live in the past; quite the opposite. Remember the past, live in the present, plan for the future. There is no progress without change.

Let me endorse Lewis Carroll:

"I can't go back to yesterday - because I was a different person then."

So why all these changes in words and meanings, some sensible and some merely politically correct? The answer is power, authority, superiority, a leader's human urge to be seen to be different from (and better than) his or her predecessor. As Alice replied to Humpty Dumpty:

"The question is", said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."

To which Humpty responded:

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master - that's all."

That's all.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN JOIN ONLINE? SIMPLY GO TO dfwa.org.au/join AND FOLLOW THE PROMPTS.

ALTERNATIVELY, PLEASE COMPLETE THE APPLICATION BELOW AND FORWARD IT TO YOUR NEAREST DFWA BRANCH / CHAPTER:

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Rank Family Name

Given Names Post Nominals

Address

..... State Postcode

Contact Telephone Year of Birth

Email

I AM: Serving Retired Navy Army Air Force Allied
 Spouse of ADF member Widow/Widower of former ADF Member N/A

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(T) 02 8335 5447 (E) nswbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 062-220 Acct 10266228

DFWA QUEENSLAND BRANCH, RUSI Bldg, Victoria Barracks Brisbane c/- Enoggera Mail Centre Qld 4051
(T) 07 2102 9879 (E) qldbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 124-185 Acct 10480398
(Queensland Branch also administers NT membership)

DFWA VICTORIA BRANCH, Victoria Barracks Melbourne (H Block), 256 - 310 St Kilda Road, Southbank VIC 3006
(T) 03 9282 4959 (E) vicbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 833-205 Acct 20700279
(Victoria Branch also administers TAS membership)

DFWA WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BRANCH, Irwin Barracks, Karrakatta Community House, Karrakatta WA 6010
(T) 08 9383 4055 (E) wabbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 066-192 Acct 10378174

DFWA SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH, PO Box 573, Stirling SA 5152
(T) 0409 577 035 (E) sabbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 833-205 Acct 20374231

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Vice President (Navy):	TBA
Vice President (RAAF):	Alan Hind
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Treasurer:	Ralph Hannaford
Secretary:	Alan Hind
Assistant Secretary:	TBA
Project Officer:	John Kane
ACT Chapter:	Les Bienkiewicz
Location:	Victoria Barracks Building 96 Locked Bag 7005, LIVERPOOL NSW 1871
Telephone:	(02) 8335 5447 (4 lines) + Voice Mail
Email:	nswbranch@dfwa.org.au

CONTACT GROUPS

CENTRAL WEST	SHOALHAVEN
Anthony (Tony) Horsington	Mr Christopher Clifford
45 Dalton Street	6 Platypus Avenue,
PARKES NSW 2870	SANCTUARY POINT NSW
Mobile: 0412 299 331	2540
	Ph: (02) 4443 7725

HUNTER VALLEY	
David Winkelmann AFC	Mr Kevin C Buchanan
PO Box 467,	12 The Triangle,
MAYFIELD NSW 2304	CULBURRA BEACH NSW 2540
Ph: (02) 4968 3811	Ph: (02) 4447 2461

A report to NSW Branch and ACT Chapter members is provided in the insert NATTER.

NEW MEMBERS

Your President and Committee offer a warm welcome to the DFWA family to the following new members who have recently joined the NSW Branch and ACT Chapter:

LTCDR L F Biddle, Mrs J B Plowright, Mr P Raue, and CMDR J Robson AM.

VALE

It is with sadness and regret that we advise of the death of the

following members:

Mr M Condran, FLGOFF J H Dennis, LEUT J A Duncan JP, WGCDR M Hyndes, Mrs J Moon, Mr A R Owens BEM, Mr R N Pierson, Mrs M Reynolds, Mrs C Sansum, GPCAPT W Stickley AFC.

ACT CHAPTER (NSW BRANCH)

President:	Les Bienkiewicz
Treasurer:	Paul Jones
Postal Address:	PO Box 4166 Kingston ACT 2604
Email:	actchapter@dfwa.org.au
Telephone:	(02) 6152 9166 (answering service only)
Convenor ACT DWG:	Christine Lamb. Should you wish to contact the DWG please leave a message at (02) 6265 9776 or send an email to dwg-act@dfwa.org.au

The ACT Chapter Committee has met to discuss activities for the coming year. Emphasis will be on providing support to the Defence Widows Group, advocacy and any welfare matters that may occur. Continuing support to the National Office, by way of administration and input to submissions etc will continue as usual.

Again, we thank the NSW Branch for its support to us and taking over the majority of our governance and administrative responsibilities.

VALE

With the recent closure of the ACT Branch and transfer to the ACT Chapter (NSW Branch) we have been remiss in not notifying the deaths the following members since mid 2020:

BRIG Peter Bray; Sqn Ldr Kevin Courage; Mr Derrill De Heer; AM Selwyn David Evans; Mrs Patricia Hurditch, Mrs Elaine Pennock, CAPT Hugh Stevenson, Mr Robert Wallace Thompson, Mr John Percival Woodyard, Mr Trent Keary, Mr Murray Robert Elliott and Mr John Stanley Hyndes.

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Telephone:	(07) 2102 9879
E-mail:	qldbranch@dfwa.org.au
Office Hours:	Tue – Wed: 1000 to 1400 hrs Fridays: 0900 to 1100 hrs

ACCESS TO VICTORIA BARRACKS BRISBANE

With the raising of COVID restrictions also came the good news of some slightly more flexible arrangements for Committee Members to renew their Defence Common Access Cards (DCAC), ie security passes. What was a bit of a rigmarole getting escorted access to the Pass Office inside Enoggera Barracks to get a pass for Victoria Barracks together with a Police Check every year. This has been replaced by simpler system with the Pass Office relocated to the entrance (requiring no escort) and Police Checks every 3 years only for those who need escort rights.

QLD BRANCH RE-ORGANISATION

The Qld Branch re-organisation was on hold until the direction of the DFVA National Constitution re-write was known. Progress in this area has been very slow and no timetable for its completion has yet been addressed.

NATIONAL COMMISSIONER FOR THE DEFENCE AND VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION

The first of several planned meetings with the Commissioner was held in Brisbane in January attended by DFVAQ and other veteran-related organisations.

OUTCOMES OF THE JANUARY COMMITTEE MEETING

- A Vote of Thanks was extended to former Vice President

SEQ and Secretary Pat Jackman who unfortunately had to resign due to illness. His contribution and unfailing good humour will be sadly missed.

- Approval was given for change to the DFVAQ Telephone Number in anticipation of Defence removing the current system and going to VOIP in the near future. The adopted telephone system comes with both Voice Mail and text mail forwarding of left message to committee members. It can also redirect calls to a committee member's phone during periods when the member is available for DFVA duties at home or on the move. Changes to the re-direction can be done remotely.
- Planning for the DFVAQ Member Welfare and data update check were progressively approved

John Lowis
President

SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH

Patron	His Excellency Hieu Van Le AC, Governor of South Australia
President	Lee Bowes
Deputy President	Vacant
Immediate Past President	John Wilson
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Membership Officer	Vacant
Contact:	0412 574 444 or email sapresident@dfwa.org.au

2021 is a year of establishment and consolidation. Our aims are to build our presence, establish networks, and win funding to assist serving, veterans and their families. We have built a strong liaison with business and with Flinders University which gives a strong platform to work with. Over the past 2 years we looked at our organisation and agreed that we must change our culture. If we continue with the way we were we would not progress and continue to roll on and achieve little. Our committee is changing to a younger and dynamic group who are more aware of the present and are in a position to take us to the next level.

Our AGM which was supposed to have been in Dec last year had to be cancelled due to the CORONA virus. It will now be held on the 25 Feb. Our reason for the change is that this meeting will be the launch of what we hope will be a new organisation with a new vision for the now and future. We have invited a number of business people who we consider can assist

us and we them. Our Premier has accepted our invitation to attend along with the shadow Minister of Veterans Affairs. The evening will end with drinks and nibbles and guests will have time to liaise and meet the others involved in our group. Our National President Kel Ryan will also get to meet these people and see the direction we are taking.

Associate Professor Ben Wadham Strategic Plan for 2021 is:

- a. Establish a veterans advisory group
- b. Host an international webinar series on women in the military and military sexual trauma
- c. Establish an HDR veteran and first responder research group
- d. Host an international webinar series showcasing Open Door research on veterans and first responders
- e. Build an on-campus presence and contributions with CILT and ASVA.
- f. Establish an Australasian round table on veteran transition, integration and wellbeing (AUS and NZ) -run one session
- g. Develop their social media and web presence.

His current activities are:

Building a university/veterans sector collaboration with DFWA that establishes a strong a reputable ex-service organisation while contributing to a meaningful evidence-based research on veterans transition integration and wellbeing. Developing a framework and evidence to address veterans' transition and preparation for employment. The project involves a collaboration with DFWA, Meechi Consulting, Australian Student Veteran Association (ASVA) and Flinders University (Centre for Innovation, Learning and Teaching). The project includes engagement with tertiary education sector, SA trade entities, Tertiary Admissions centres and credentialing innovators. The aim is to produce solutions to military service recognition of experience, service to higher education and to a wide range of employment options through trades apprenticeships and university studies.

During the month we attended a meeting with Dr Bernadette Boss CSC The Interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veterans Suicide Prevention. She explained her roll and it her asking questions regarding a number of items that she had presented. We hope that she went away with some positive thoughts.

We were also invited to attend the launch of the Freemasons Centre for Male Health and Wellbeing which was held at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI). We meet with a number of dignities and came away with further follow ups regarding our roll and how they may assist us and vice versa.

At the AGM we say farewell to our Treasurer Ian Smith who has decided to hang up his magenta biro. Ian took the job when we reformed and has decided to live the good life up in the

hills. We will certainly miss his expertise and great humour. Also leaving is SQNLDR Robyn Evans who has been posted and will be doing other RAAF duties. We wish her well and thank her for her commitments. Trish Mathews has also decided to resign due to the little time she has between work and running a wine business. Thanks Trish and keep the red nectar flowing.

Now Next and Beyond.

Lee Bowes
President

VICTORIA BRANCH

Patron:	The Honourable Linda Dessau, AC, Governor of Victoria.
President:	Stephen Turner
Vice President Navy:	Shaun Rodenburg
Vice President Army:	John James
Vice President Air Force:	Darryl Topp
Secretary/Treasurer:	Greg Powell
Location:	Victoria Barracks Melbourne (H Block) 256-310 St Kilda Road SOUTHBANK VIC 3006
Telephone:	(03) 9282 4959 (+Answering Service)
Facsimile:	(03) 9282 7089
Email:	vicbranch@dfwa.org.au
Office Hours:	Tue and Thur 0900 to 1500 hrs

The saying 2020 hindsight has taken on a whole new meaning now that last year is behind us. Hopefully 2021 will see Victoria (and the rest of the World) emerge to something that seems more normal.

Branch activities in Victoria and our ongoing interaction with other Ex Service Organisations and the various government and departmental forums that deal with veteran matters has been, for the past year, mostly conducted over the internet. Until a significant portion of the community has been vaccinated then this situation is expected to remain the status quo. Fortunately, the hard yards done by the majority of Victorians has meant that small face to face meetings are now permitted so the Executive Committee is planning to hold its 2021 meetings physically not virtually.

VALE

Since the last edition of Camaraderie, the Victorian Branch has been advised that the following Victorian members have passed away:

Mr R. Magilton; MAJ M. Knight MBE; Lest we forget.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Branch's finances continue to be well managed by our Secretary / Treasurer.

The Branch was successful in its ANZAC Day grant request to the Victorian Veterans Council. This funding will go some way to offsetting the Branch's contribution to the cost of producing Camaraderie and the Branch information supplements.

DIARY DATES

The Branch Executive Committee meeting dates for 2021 are:

Wednesday 24 February

Wednesday 26 May (includes the Branch AGM)

Wednesday 26 August

Wednesday 24 November

The Branch Executive Committee meetings were normally held at the Mail Exchange Hotel, corner Burke and Spencer Street, Melbourne commencing at 11.00 am. Hopefully this can continue in the future.

DFWA (Vic) members are most welcome to attend Executive Committee meetings although attendee numbers may be restricted due to ongoing COVID directions from Victoria's Chief Health Officer.

Those wishing to attend are requested to contact the Branch Secretary (Greg Powell) at least five business days prior to the meeting. Doing this will ensure that numbers do not exceed any COVID restrictions and that sufficient copies of the relevant meeting documents are available for all attendees.

Stephen Turner - Commander RAN (Rtd)
President, DFWA (Vic)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA BRANCH

Patron:	The Honourable Kim C Beazley AC
President:	Richard Usher OAM
Vice President:	Max Ball
Secretary:	Allan Austin
Treasurer:	Lou Halvorson
Postal Address:	Irwin Barracks KARRAKATTA WA 6010
Telephone:	(08) 9383 4055 (Answering Machine A/H)
Office Hours:	Mon and Wed 1000 to 1400 hrs
Email:	wabran@dfwa.org.au
Location:	Karrakatta Community House Matapau Road Irwin Barracks KARRAKATTA WA 6010

A more detailed report will be provided to WA members in the Branch newsletter 'The Western Front', which will be posted to members with their copy of Camaraderie.

NEW MEMBER

The President and Committee offer a warm welcome to Mr Henry Morello (ex RAAF) who lives in Rockingham.

VALE

With deep sadness we note the passing of Willian (Bill) Beaton.

RAFFLE TICKETS

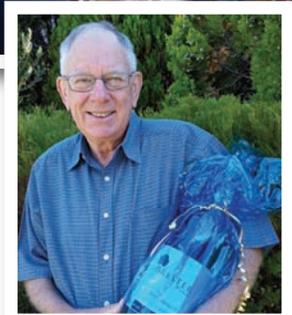
Raffle books will be sent out to all members with this edition of Camaraderie, except those who have requested not to receive them. We do ask you to support this worthy cause as it does bring some income into the Branch to support the work we do. If you do not receive raffle books, then please consider making a small donation in lieu. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH REPORT

The annual Christmas lunch was held in December despite fears that Covid restrictions might have forced its cancellation. It was held in the newly opened brand new RAAFA facilities at Bull Creek, and a great time was had by all. As usual Steve Lucks ran the raffle, and there were over 50 prizes on offer. Thank you to everyone who donated a prize.



Many of the members enjoying the Christmas lunch in the new building at RAAFA Bull Creek
Pictured right: Allan Austin with the jeroboom of cabernet merlot that he won in the raffle.



AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT COMMISSION (ACNC)

As the WA Branch is a registered charity, we have to submit an annual report to the ACNC called an 'Annual Information Statement' (AIS) by 31 January each year. This shows governments, our members and the public that our Association is well-run, transparent and delivers programs for our members. For the first time, this year we were invited to include details about our Branch programs in the AIS. This information will be displayed on the Charity Register. The register was searched more than 3 million times last year, and

is an independent, authoritative record of our Branch's work and finances.

OFFICE RENOVATIONS

We have been advised that several renovation works will be carried out at the DFWA office in Karrakatta, as part of the extensive upgrade within Irwin Barracks. A new kitchen will be installed the whole house upgraded to install facilities for

the disabled. We do not anticipate any of these works will impinge on the operation of our office.

Richard Usher OAM
President,
WA Branch

Poets *Corner*

'A THOUSAND MEN ARE MARCHING BY'

By Alistair Pope

A thousand men are marching by
A glassy stare in every eye
As they pass the sky grows red
We are not the living, but the dead.

Our lives were lost, taken away
Yet we all sought to live another day
Then guns and bullets toll'd our bell
And we were the ones they sent to Hell.

Far away, our loved ones grieve
Told by 'patriots' they must believe
Our sacrifice was for the cause
But the reason they're given is 'just because...'

Our ghosts wish to see skies of blue
For me, "Dear wife, I dream of you"
It was not easy to leave for fields of battle
But you were spared the cry of my death's rattle.

As the Sun sets o'er this land once more
Silence, where loud there was the cannons roar
All is peace, where before was endless noise
The guns are quiet, so let's all rejoice.

What's done is done for evermore
So never again will you open the door
To greet me as we embrace and kiss again
Because my love, you sleep alone, but with me
there are a thousand men.

'THE PEN AND THE SWORD'

By Harry Curby
(re: the Afghan War Crimes Report)

How mighty is the pen from a writer's armchair,
Like the warrior's sword used to fight in warfare,
An author's reflections and musings about strife,
But a soldier skirts death while under orders to preserve life.

Shock horror a war crime has now come to light,
Was it response born of terror and rage causing plight,
All reason has gone and in the blink of an eye,
In madness, deed's done, a bullet's now on its way,
All's grist to the flour-mill as an old adage does say,
Like the military trained to respond as they may.

Battle's now over, fit and injured home bound,
Leaving mates killed in action in some faraway land,
Writer's pen keeps moving, pondering along,
But the survivors war battles remain ever on,
Each suffering traumas, no matter which side they're on.

Continued from page 21

Supporting loved ones through difficult conversations

Arms is available 24/7 by calling 1800 011 046. The service is free and confidential and there is always a team member, who understands the military experience, available to answer your call. The Open Arms website also offers a range of self-help tools that can help you or the person you care about feel calm, take some time out and think more clearly about a situation.

Open Arms is also the host of an anonymous 24/7 support line – Safe Zone Support – which was created to help vulnerable cohorts of veterans and their families who might not otherwise seek mental health support due to concerns about protecting their identity – including those in the Special Forces. Safe Zone Support’s specialist counsellors can offer help to veterans and their families without needing to know who they are. Calls to 1800 142 072 are answered 24/7, and are not recorded. For more Information visit: openarms.gov.au/safe-zone-support

Your GP is another good place to start, with tailored health checks available for the ex-serving community, and the ability to direct your family member or friend to the appropriate professional care.

FOLLOW UP

Put a follow up reminder in your diary to call them in a couple of weeks. If they're really struggling, follow up with them sooner. You could say: *I've been thinking of you and wanted to know how you've been going since we last chatted.*

These types of conversations can be stressful to have, so you should seek help for yourself and also have an opportunity to debrief if required.

For immediate help when life may be in danger, call 000.

OPEN ARMS

Veterans & Families Counselling

A service founded by Vietnam veterans, now for all veterans and families



Defence Force Welfare Association

The Association does much work on your behalf - from lobbying Government to improve conditions to assistance to individuals. We cannot do it without financial and human resources. Your tax deductible donation will help us continue our good work. If you are able to help us financially you can make a donation at dfwa.org.au/donate. Alternatively please detach the form below and send it along with your tax deductible donation. A receipt will be issued to you.

DONATION

To The National Office, DFWA PO Box 4166, KINGSTON, ACT 2604

Please accept my donation of \$ to the Defence Force Welfare Association

Your donation will go towards the daily operating costs of the Association.

Tick here if you wish your donation to be allocated to the DFWA Relief Fund

Rank/Title Name

Address

State Postcode Phone

Alternatively, make an electronic deposit as follows:

Account Name: Defence Force Welfare Association BSB: 833 205 Account Number: 20656807

You can also make a credit card donation:

Go to dfwa.org.au/donate and follow the link.





Endorsed by the
Defence Force
Welfare Association
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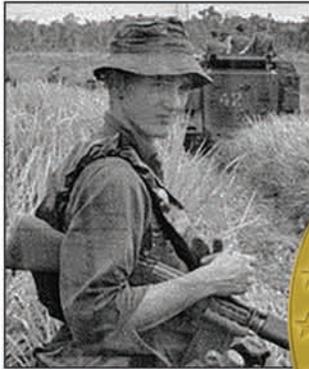
VIETNAM VETERANS HONOURED



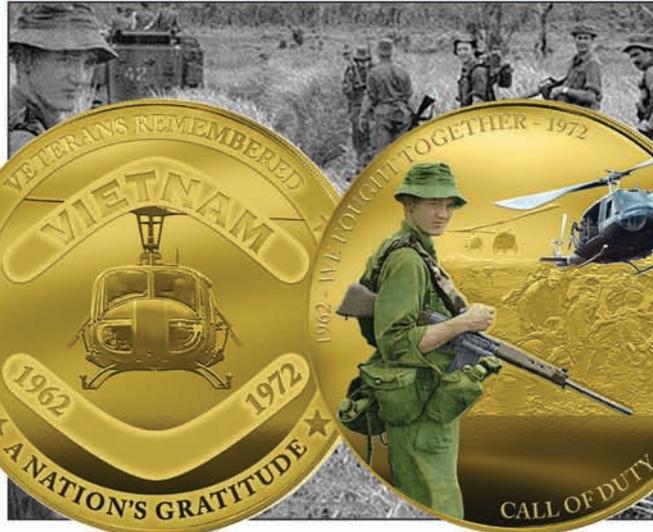
55th Anniversary of Australia's First Troop Deployment Remembered

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Historic 24-carat Gold-layered Coin Honours One who was Only 19



He was only 19, yet served his country with honour like his father before him



Gunship, troop carrier, med-evac – the Iroquois “Huey” chopper became an iconic symbol for our Vietnam veterans

Available now for just \$29.99, plus P&H

Vietnam 55th Anniversary Commemoration

Our Vietnam veterans remain unique heroes in the Anzac legend. No service personnel before or after the conflict have endured as much on and off the battlefield. Like the diggers of previous generations, they are deserving of our respect.

From 1962, when the first military advisors entered the region, the Vietnam theatre has polarised popular opinion. As our troops were committed to action against the Communist People's Army of Vietnam in 1965, it became apparent that the Vietnam conflict would be a war unlike any other. Waged on the nightly television news as much as on the battlefield, civilians saw war in all its ugly brutality. By the time of the Tet Offensive in 1968, serious questions were raised as to why our troops were fighting there in the first place. Were the Communists really a threat to our freedom? As the casualties mounted, so did the political rhetoric.

Caught in the middle were our diggers. Whether they joined up freely or were conscripted 'nashos', they became unwitting casualties of a war nobody understood or wanted. The worst was to face them upon their return home. Spat at, abused, denied return servicemen status that their fathers had enjoyed, they retreated from society. By 1987, our Vietnam veterans were duly given the recognition they so justly deserved. Their call to duty has reverberated through the Anzac legend, a lone voice seeking solace amongst the heroes of Gallipoli, Kokoda, Korea and other conflicts which have become part of our collective history. That voice is now given substance and form in the “Call of Duty – Vietnam 55th Anniversary

Commemorative” golden proof coin

Struck to a high specification and layered in pure 24-carat gold, only 9,999 numbered issues will ever be minted. It is available now for only \$29.99 – a saving of \$50.00 – plus \$9.99 postage and handling.

Due to the extreme limitation, only the earliest responders will successfully secure this proof coin honouring our Vietnam veterans. A Certificate of Authenticity detailing important provenance information pertaining to the coin will be issued with the coin. Peak collector interest is all but assured for this long overdue commemoration to those who were only 19 and with it the potential of a swift, early sell out

of the “Call of Duty – Vietnam 55th Anniversary Commemorative.”

The earliest applications will receive the lowest edition numbers. For this reason applications will be processed on a strictly first-come, first-served basis and are limited to one per Australian household. Successful applicants also qualify to view the next coin in the *Veterans Remembered Commemorative Collection* for only \$79.99 (plus \$9.99 postage and handling) sent entirely without obligation on our 14-day home approval service. All the coins are minted to Proof quality, the highest possible collector quality. Applicants may cancel at any time and all purchases are covered by The Bradford Exchange 14-Day Money-Back Guarantee.

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An elegant, high gloss case to display the coin will also accompany a future delivery and is yours FREE as part of your collection. Shown with a Certificate of Authenticity.



Each commemorative is individually numbered, meaning no two are alike. Yours is the one and only issue of its kind – the ultimate collector's item



Shown larger than actual size of 38.6mm

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YES, I wish to apply for the “Vietnam 55th Anniversary Commemorative” for just \$29.99 (plus \$9.99 P&H). I do not need to send any money now.

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117693

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms First Name Surname

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Postcode

Phone Email Signature

Please allow between 2-10 business days for delivery. All sales subject to product availability and reservation acceptance. Credit criteria may apply. Our privacy policy is available online at www.bradford.com.au. You must be over 18 years old to apply. From time to time, we may allow carefully screened companies to contact you. If you would prefer not to receive such offers, please tick this box.



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introductory rate.*

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- Additional cardholder at no extra cost.

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Find out why this credit card is getting tongues and tails wagging at defencebank.com.au/creditcard

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