



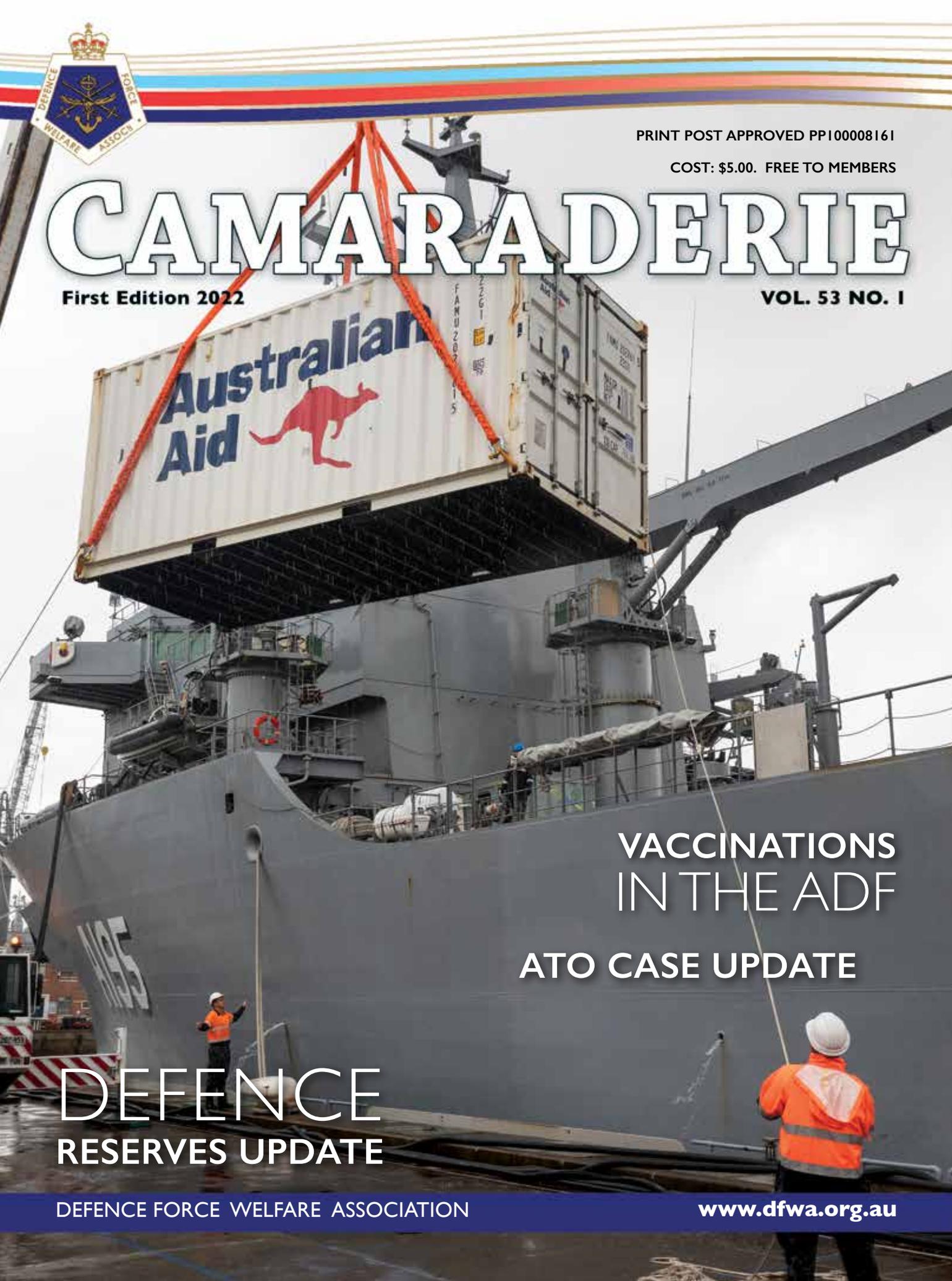
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CAMARADERIE

First Edition 2022

VOL. 53 NO. 1



VACCINATIONS
IN THE ADF

ATO CASE UPDATE

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THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION



Vol. 53. No. 1 First Edition 2022

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 to 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 9 June 2022.

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

Readers are well aware of the coming federal election, but may not know that it presents an opportunity for the Association to "put the screws" on the major parties on matters of concern to us. The National Office report outlines some of these issues, but there are of course many more. Readers are invited to use information in this and past editions should they have the opportunity to "shirtfront" their local candidates !

Les Bienkiewicz

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FRONT COVER

Royal Australian Navy personnel supervise the loading of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief supplies onto HMAS Supply at Fleet Base East, Sydney, prior to departing for Tonga in support of Operation Tonga Assist 2022.

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: Trevor Goodhew and Kerry Mellor.

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

NATIONAL OFFICE ROUNDUP (November 2021 - February 2022)



Yet another election looms and, if a growing groundswell of media pundits are to be believed, a change in Government is on the cards. Except of course, no one should ever forget, least the current Opposition, that the 2019 Federal election result was arguably such a surprisingly stunning one that very few predicted it even the night before.

Given the forthcoming election is now likely before the mid-year issue of Camaraderie is printed, it is timely to remind readers that DFWA has a deliberate policy of being careful to avoid being party political, confining itself to issues that have a direct impact on not only the welfare of its own body of members but very specifically also on the interests of still serving Australian Defence Force members, and all former members who are now retired. That specifically includes each of their families as well.

As a matter of principle, DFWA also has a policy of remaining outside the Defence policy debate, except where it may affect the well-being of serving ADF personnel and/or their conditions of service. A case in point is DFWA's recognized acclaimed Intervener role at hearings before Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal hearings, a role it pro-actively exercises in the leading up to and during every pay case that comes before it. Most will be aware but just in case not, the Tribunal is an independent statutory authority that determines salary and relevant allowances for members of the ADF, having regard at all times to the unique nature of military service.

As for the looming election, those draft DFWA Policy Objectives published in the November 2021 edition of Camaraderie have been refined to the following key ones – all sides of politics will be encouraged to address them. They are ones for which DFWA has long sought redress.

- **DFRDB Life Tables:** Redress the continued use of 1962 out-of-date life tables. Up-to-date tables should be used to calculate fortnightly payments after commutation for all DFRDB recipients. Financial injustices caused by the use of out-dated tables should be rectified.
- **Fair Indexation:** Redress all issues surrounding military superannuation, including DFRDB, MSBS, reversionary benefits, and benefit for invalidity pension recipients.
- **Repatriation of Medical Fees:** Redress the sometimes forced need by DVA clients to rely on the

good-will of health care providers, or to pay privately for treatment of accepted conditions. Fees paid by DVA should not deter providers from taking on veteran clients.

- **Improve DVA Claims Processing:** Redress known excessive delays in processing claims. Determinations should be clearly and fully communicated to clients.
- **Hearing Services:** Redress the severe dissatisfaction by veterans with the way hearing services are administered - DVA should administer services to gold card and white card holders.
- **Military Covenant:** Amend the Australian Veterans' Recognition (Putting Veterans and their Families First) Act to include a provision that the Commonwealth acknowledges that veterans, or their families, will not be disadvantaged relative to any other section of the community

Neither the Coalition Government nor the Opposition have yet issued their veterans'-related policies. If precedence is a guide, those policies will be held in so-to-speak escrow until some late politically convenient bewitching hour. Hopefully, each will make some commitment to redressing the Policy Objectives articulated in the preceding paragraph. There simply needs to be at least an acknowledgement that several issues have been outstanding for far too long. Such as the core issues surrounding DFRDB and MSBS, the Life Tables and Fair Indexation.

That said, credit is due to both sides of politics in the lead up to the 2019 election when each gave recognition to the value of ESOs generally, albeit Labor was pro-active about it by re-affirming its previous and long-held promise to support DFWA with a grant of \$100,000 per annum. The grant was in recognition that DFWA does quality work and serves a valued representative role in safeguarding the conditions of service of ADF members, and representing their interests at DFRT hearings. Labor's position has been that DFWA should be properly resourced, and that the \$100,000 per annum commitment would mitigate the difficulties it has in properly meeting its principal Aims and Objectives. The Government has thus far been silent about a similar grant but is encouraged to do so.

Such a grant is becoming imperative to the long term survivability of DFWA, given the known slow decline of its aging membership base which thus far has been its predominant source of funding. A small but generous flow of regular donations has helped a little, as has the welcome commitment of a major sponsor, namely The Bradford Exchange.

In the forgoing context, neither major Party should ever overlook the fact that DFWA's work is endorsed at the highest levels of Defence. Successive Chiefs of the Defence Force have reaffirmed their support of that work, stating inter alia:

.....*“DFWA provides consistent, high quality advice on issues ranging across remuneration, superannuation, compensation and conditions of service issues. It also provides a strong voice for current and previous serving ADF personnel.....”*.

Before closing, I would like to remind readers that, pending any likelihood that a promised grant will finally eventuate, membership subscriptions coupled with generous donations are virtually the only sources of income to keep our Association functioning on your behalf. Our voice can only remain strong among decision makers if we are able to

survive financially. Thus a plea. If you are a member, please consider encouraging someone you know to join. If you are not a member, please consider joining anyway. A membership application form is in this magazine for your convenience. To all 'Virtual Members', please think about becoming a full time member soon. You will be helping us in a meaningful way to continue our work unabated going into the future.

I have mentioned our sponsor in a previous para but to reiterate, The Bradford Exchange is a generous and valued supporter of DFWA. If you are ever after high quality collectable memorabilia for personal use or as a gift that marks commemorative occasions, please head to the company's web site to look through what they have for ready delivery. Their advertisement can be viewed in the pages of this Camaraderie.

Alf Jaugietis

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN



Veteran Leadership – A Health Hazard

Leadership of a national ex-service organisation (ESO) can be a health hazard! But only a health hazard if one succumbs to the demands of a confusing and often perplexing veteran, legislative and political environment that pervades every aspect of the Australian veteran space.

Veteran leadership is certainly not for the faint hearted or those who take offence easily. Nor is it a good post service fit for those who would prefer to take the dog for a walk or prune the roses when the call goes out for attendance at the AGM, especially if there is an election of office bearers on the agenda.

It is even more challenging in the 21st century when private contact details are readily passed around which enables personal abuse to reach into the leaders' family home. A strong supportive partner is a crucial asset for those in ESO leadership.

It is valid to ask why I am raising this issue now.

Strong, committed ESOs leaders are needed now more than ever if the issues that resonate across the veteran community are to be addressed. Such individuals are not stepping forward as readily as they have done in the past.

Despite the often-strident demands by veterans for 'action now' to resolve issues, hold the political and bureaucratic establishments to account and to provide RUOK support the 'workers' are few. The Bible's reference to the "harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" is as true today as it was 2000 years ago.

Traditional ESOs such as the DFWA continue to be defined by the events and issues that prompted their establishment. This despite DFWA now addressing issues that were not on anyone's agenda even fifteen years ago. Modern ESO's, such as they are, refuse to be defined as they tend to be single issue focussed and are protective of 'their' issue often to the detriment of the greater good. There is no utopia in the veteran issue space. With so many issues and demands on the table not everyone gets what they want.

Veterans' issues in the modern era will only be resolved if we collectively work together in a considered manner. Get beyond the 'my' issue focus and get the leadership that is prepared to take the fight to the decision makers.

Also, the veteran community must accept that there is always a political imperative behind what Government and Opposition tell us. Such imperatives do not necessarily echo the speeches on days of remembrance.

ESO leadership is not to be feared, rather it should be embraced and supported. It is time modern veterans stepped forward and volunteered to take the fight to government and leave the dog and the roses to others.

Volunteering: The most humbling selfish act of kindness (Fuller)

Kel Ryan

The Australian Army Lysaght Hut - a *Short History*

by PAUL ASBURY

In late April 1965 the Australian Government announced the deployment of the 1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment and support group to assist the Government of South Vietnam including the provision of Civil Aid.

In his capacity as the Director Engineer Stores (DES) at Army Headquarters in Canberra, Lieutenant Colonel John M. Hutcheson MC, ACM, TSM (RVN) & Bar RAE⁽¹⁾ designed a prefabricated metal accommodation building for use by the Australian forces in South Vietnam (SVN). The Army/DES tender specifications for the building included:⁽²⁾

- A minimum of nuts & bolts;
- A high wind loading;
- Be designed for concrete & earth floors; and
- Be friendly to the soldier erectors (easy to erect).

John Lysaght (Australia) Ltd met the specifications and had the lowest tender for an initial order of about fifty huts. The Lysaght tender also included strong Corrugated Behlan Roofing with deep corrugations which made the roofing material specifically structurally strong. Hence, the number of fixings was about half that of standard CGI roofing. Further orders were placed progressively for Lysaght Huts as a reserve against future requirements in Australia and overseas against a scaling approved by the General Staff and placed in the Engineer Stores Regiment at Penrith for issue to units and projects approved by the relevant Army Authority.⁽²⁾

So the Lysaght Accommodation Hut was born. The official Army name for it was:

Building, Prefabricated, Ready Cut, Accommodation, 60 ft. x 25 ft. x 10 ft. but it was universally known by soldiers as the "Lysaght Hut".

(Some mistakenly called it a "Kingstrand Hut" but this was an earlier aluminium hut designed by Hutcheson for an urgent requirement of the Pacific Island Regiment in PNG in the mid 1960s. The Kingstrand Hut was not produced by John Lysaght Ltd).⁽²⁾

Colonel Hutcheson advises that in 1967 a Lysaght Hut cost about \$4,000 and the six wooden crates about \$2,000.



AFPO 4 at IATF, Nui Dat, Phuoc Tuy Province, South Vietnam in early 1968. Photo: LCpl A.J. Ludington

It is not known (without examining the archived records) how many Lysaght Huts were sent to SVN. Their uses included a field hospital (three huts end-on-end), mess halls, offices, workshops and storage huts.

In SVN huts were erected at the Australian Logistic Support Group (ALSG) at the port of Vung Tau and at the 1st Australian Task Force (IATF) base at Nui Dat.

In the early 1970s, some unused huts still in their crates were returned from SVN to Australia because it was considered that a proportion of the stock was surplus to the future requirements of AFV.⁽²⁾

Because the involvement of Australian Forces in SVN had wound down, the huts at Nui Dat were disassembled by the ARVN Engineers and taken to the Delta region in SVN in late 1971 after IATF abandoned the Nui Dat Base. The barracks for the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV) at Van Kiep were built using residual stock from 55 Engineer Stores Squadron in November - December 1971. The whole ALSG base at Vung Tau was signed over to the US/RVN forces in February 1972 by Hutcheson as the Chief Engineer AFV.⁽²⁾

Notes: (1). Later promoted to Colonel. A good summary of his early Army service is at :

http://www.aussiewardogs.org/resources/downloads/Capt_John_M_Hutcheson_MC.pdf

(2). Source: Colonel John M Hutcheson MC, ACM, TSM (RVN) & Bar, Ph.D, BE, BCom, MBA in September 2016.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OPERATIONAL & NON OPERATIONAL SERVICE – ANOTHER VIEW

Dear Editor,

I support Peter Evans suggestion (Camaraderie Vol 52 No 3 Dec 21 p10) and even think it should become a policy corner stone of the DFWA.

When a serviceman and woman commit themselves to say, 20 years' service in the Armed Services, they commit their lives. The RAN, RAAF or the Army decide when, where and under what conditions they serve. Many will serve in operational conditions, some in very hazardous conditions. Others on operational service might push a pen, drive trucks or fuel aircraft. Those who do not perform operational service must maintain themselves ready to do so at short notice throughout their military careers. Twenty years' service exposes all who do it to all the conditions sustained due to military service, no matter what that service might entail. Their families serve too.

It is therefore only fair that equal after-service conditions

should apply so, after long full-time service, there is a strong argument that all should receive a Gold Card on attaining a certain age, say 70 years.

I recently spent a week in hospital for an unexpected operation on my heart and DVA covered everything, even sending a wonderful lady to visit me. Words cannot fully express my gratitude to the powers that be for issuing my Gold Card!

It took the RSL many years to successfully lobby for a Gold Card to be provided to our aged World War 1 veterans, then our aged World War 2 veterans, then all aged veterans with operational service so what better role could there be for the DFWA than to take up and continue the fight on behalf of all long-serving men and women of our Armed Services? It would certainly attract membership.

Yours faithfully

Lt Col Peter Murray (Retd)

AUSTRALIA UNDER ATTACK

Dear Editor,

On page 16 of Camaraderie, Vol 52, No3, there is an article titled Australia Under Attack. The author notes that next year is the 78th anniversary of the first of the Darwin attacks in 1942 and then quotes some other instances from that year of Japanese attacks. The author rolls over to Nov 1943, ending with the figure of at least 111 attacks. I am a bit confused as to where the statistics begin and end, because having gone as far as Nov 43, the most horrific and unpunished atrocity doesn't even rate a mention.

I refer of course to the 14 May 1943 sinking of the Australian Hospital Ship Centaur, off the northern tip of Morton Island. The sinking was so fast that of the 332 souls on board only 64 survived. With this, we have a death toll from a single event that is more than 5 times greater than the total quoted in the article.

The Japanese war history admits that the sinking was the work of their submarine I-177 under the command of Lt Commander Nakagawa. This murderer had form, and was tried after the war as a war criminal for the machine-gun murder of the survivors of British Chivalry in the Indian Ocean as well as Sutlej and Ascot.

He was never tried for the Centaur murders, and in spite of questioning in later life by the press, refused to speak of it and took the story to his grave. A malicious man to the end. Also, though the murder is acknowledged in the official Japanese war history as Nakagawa's work, the Japanese Government itself has never apologised for these murders.

Yours faithfully,

Shane Brosnan

12 MONTH FREE HEALTH & FITNESS PROGRAM

for Returned Veterans and
Peacekeepers and those covered
by the ADF Firefighter Scheme

DVA provides a free 12-month health and fitness program that can be delivered to returned Veterans and peacekeepers with operational service and those covered by the ADF firefighters scheme anywhere in the country. The program is flexible and able to accommodate participants living in metropolitan areas, regional or remote areas, those still working or retired, studying or with other time constraints. Run on behalf of the DVA by Corporate Health Management the program aims to help you increase your physical health and wellbeing through practical exercise support and 12 months of health coaching and advice on healthy lifestyle choices provided by one of our team of highly qualified allied health professionals.

AM I ELIGIBLE??

Started 20 years ago for those returned from Vietnam, the Heart Health Program is free and now open to all returned veterans and peacekeepers with operational service and those covered by the ADF Firefighter Scheme who have not previously done the Heart Health Program before. To check your eligibility visit <https://www.veteranshearthealth.com.au/eligibility/>

INDIVIDUAL HEART HEALTH PROGRAM – HOW IT WORKS

Each participant receives 12 months of healthy lifestyle coaching from a highly qualified and dedicated allied health professional via fortnightly health coaching calls with information and advice tailored to each individuals health and fitness goals. The health coach will use their extensive knowledge along with health surveys and food diaries to guide you through the program. The program covers a range of topics including:

- setting healthy goals

- nutrition and diet advice
- advice on lowering alcohol consumption
- developing better sleep patterns
- stress management
- managing diabetes
- taking care of your body
- managing your weight
- and maintaining a healthy heart

PROGRAM EXERCISE RESOURCE – EXERCISE HOW YOU LIKE TO

The program can provide an exercise resource to help participants to exercise the way they like to or provide an opportunity to try something that's different than the usual. Resources can take the form of:

- Assistance with the cost of a gym or pool membership or
- Provide a piece of exercise equipment for use at home or
- Provide assistance with accessing new exercise or training gear

REGISTERING YOUR INTEREST

Registering your interest or checking eligibility is easy. Simply visit <https://www.veteranshearthealth.com.au/eligibility/> and follow the steps. Or please call the program phone number 1300 246 262 at any time. The Program is delivered on behalf of the DVA by CHM Corporate Health Management Pty Ltd Toorak Place, 521 - 529 Toorak Road, Toorak VIC 3142.

Their contact details are phone 1300 246 262, Email: hearthealth@chm.com.au and website <http://www.veteranshearthealth.com.au>



MARCHING FORWARD

To the Left or the Right?

by WIN FOWLES

We live in a digital world. Things are on or off, full or empty, up or down, left or right, true or false. No shades of grey.

But human beings are analogue. We see most things not in absolute terms but by degrees. By shades of grey. The glass may be half full. A person's opinion may be partly correct and partly wrong. The weather may be warm or cool.

Because of our digital world and because we humans like to categorise each other, we attach labels to people. These labels usually reflect the opinion – right or wrong – of the labeller(s) and may be embraced or rejected by the person labelled.

Political opinions attract labels. Other matters do too. But political opinions generate the most heat – not necessarily light – so let's look at those first.

What's your political label? Are you left wing or right wing? Today's identity warriors want to label everybody as one or the other, which confuses the hell out of me because I reckon I'm both. Let me explain.

Enlisting in the ADF means many labellers unilaterally declare I'm right wing. Same with you if you are or were an ADF

member. ADF membership and right wing are synonymous. Aren't they? Well, no...

While serving, many men including me took active steps to open military positions to women. That makes me left wing.

But I insisted that the physical, psychological, education and training standards required for a given position were the same for both women and men. No lowering of standards. Right wing.

However, physiological differences and society's expectations as well as good order and military discipline mean that women and men need – and on my watch received – separate ablutions and sleeping arrangements. Left wing? Or is that right wing? Or just common sense?

Meanwhile, the same disciplinary standards applied to both women and men. Sentencing a woman to the same stretch in the slammer as a man would have received for the same offence drew sharp intakes of breath from some at the time. Right wing?

Much earlier, as a cadet, I participated with others in activities viewed by the hierarchy as subversive – helping create an

'underground' newspaper with a likeminded friend, and writing and acting in an annual revue regarded as so far out that the hierarchy banned future revues. Left wing.

More contemporarily, I despair at the atrocious abuse hurled across most so-called 'social' media. Social it isn't. Appalling it is. Of course left wingers excoriate right wingers and vice versa. Neither extreme gives an inch. Neither covers itself with glory. I don't know which label applies to me here, left or right. I reject both.

Progress is not possible without change. Change is left wing's province, or so left wingers claim. That's why left wingers prefer the label 'progressive'.

But change for change's sake means throwing the baby out with the bathwater. That's anathema to right wingers, who prefer the label 'conservative'.

The implication is that left wingers own a monopoly on change, progress, new and better ways of doing things. Meanwhile, right wingers only want to leave things as they are, unable to adapt, cling to the past.

Neither is true. Progressives can resist change; conservatives can initiate change.

You can do your own research into examples of political, military or business progressives and conservatives who resist or initiate change. Perhaps start with Prime Minister Howard (conservative) and his post-Port Arthur gun laws that alienated many of his natural constituents. Mr Howard is hardly a left winger but he did what the left wing wanted done.

Then there's Prime Minister Hawke (progressive) and his championing of the Accord, which kept a lid on wages despite his natural constituency being trade union wage earners. Mr Hawke was certainly not a right winger but the Accord was applauded by big business and others who are usually placed in the right wing camp.

Both Howard and Hawke acted in the best interests of the nation at the time. They were above labels. But the lovers of labels can get into a lather when someone steps out of their pre-ordained box. Arguably, that's most obvious these days with gender and race politics. Misogynist old men are easily labelled as right wing. That's fine except when all old men including me are labelled misogynist. And misandrist women fighting for feminist causes in noisy street demonstrations are easily labelled left wing. That's fine too except when all women demonstrators are labelled misandrist. Not all old men are misogynists and not all women demonstrators are misandrist, so the all-encompassing labels surely cannot apply.

What about newspapers? 'The Australian' and 'The Herald-Sun' (and others) are blasted by the left because those papers are News Corp publications. News Corp in their view is headed by Voldemort or, as he is known to we muggles, Rupert Murdoch. News Corp papers are therefore right wing. Far right.

Totally biased.

But is that really the case?

'The Australian' carries opinion pieces by people well removed from the right wing label. They include Phillip Adams, Julia Gillard, Anthony Albanese and Graham Richardson. Rabid left wingers may try to excuse them on the grounds that their contributions are mere tokens but that means the apologists also must be accusing them of willing participation in tokenism. That's a lurch too far, particularly for a former prime minister. And for a potential prime minister.

Meanwhile, rabid right wingers launch into 'The Guardian' and 'The Age' for much the same reason except from the opposite end of the political spectrum. Left wing. Far left. Totally biased. But both these papers carry opinion pieces written by people labelled as conservative.

The media waters are muddied further by reporters choosing to opine rather than report. Try reading a piece in 'The Daily Telegraph' on a given incident. Then read 'The Guardian' on the same incident. Each paper claims to report unbiased fact but it is not unusual for a casual reader to believe each is reporting on vastly different incidents rather than the exact same one.

The lines between reports and opinion pieces are more than blurred these days in all media. And opinion pieces are often labelled 'analysis' to give them more gravitas and the appearance of objectivity.

So how do we decide a newspaper's or broadcaster's label, if indeed we need to? Editorial stances are a good guide. The quantum of opinion pieces also helps. Are most left leaning? Right? Do your own media analysis but be objective when doing so.

The monarchy versus republic issue is more polarising than the media, or so we are led to believe if the volume of noise by both pro and anti brigades is any guide. But need it cause so much angst?

The monarchy has served our Federation well for more than a century, in my view. Does that view make me an unreconstructed right winger?

But the status quo will not last forever. When the Queen passes the baton, an Australian republic becomes more beneficial, again in my view. I suppose that makes me a radical left winger.

But let's do the republic properly. The best way to appoint an Australian president is by a two thirds majority of both houses of parliament sitting together. I'm a strong supporter of former PM Keating here, and he's hardly a right wing conservative.

Leaving the cost aside, a popular election for president will likely see us with a politician as our head of state. That sets the scene for conflict between a future prime minister and a future

president because both can claim the authority of the people even if we make constitutional changes to limit the powers of the president. Anyway, referenda enjoy a lousy track record so can we be sure of making these essential changes without delaying the republic cause for decades? Or forever?

Regardless of referenda, can you imagine eminent Australians of the calibre of Ninian Stephen or Zelman Cowen or Quentin Bryce or Peter Cosgrove submitting themselves to a competitive presidential election campaign?

What about successful former governors-general with party political backgrounds such as Casey, Hasluck and Hayden? Would even they submit themselves to such a campaign? I think not.

Would we get an elected Labor or Liberal apparatchik or, at best, a 'neutral' former cross-bencher? Or a cricketer? Regardless, our successful Westminster system would be gone.

I suppose that labels me a pro-republican left winger with an anti-populist right wing view that aligns with a former Labor prime minister. Will my head explode?

Talking of explosions, briefly consider terrorism.

Some labels or lack of labels for terrorists relate more to today's sensitivities (known as political correctness to some) than to standard left/right tags.

Neo-Nazi terrorists are labelled right wing, usually 'far right'. No arguments there. But Islamist terrorists are never labelled as either left wing or right wing despite their being, in my view, clearly in the same far right category. Too sensitive, one supposes. Anyway, ASIO recently saved the labelling day by scuttling the right wing tag of neo-Nazi terrorists and subdividing the generic terrorist label into new subsets – political or religious. Clever move. No mention of left or right. Can't offend anybody. Well done, ASIO.

Looking back at Australia's post-Federation history, it seems to me we are well served by alternating our governments from time to time. And no, I'm not advocating for any political party in this election year. We've made mistakes, certainly, but we've made progress in diverse fields – which is not to say that more cannot be achieved. Life expectancy has increased by ten years in my lifetime. Indigenous issues receive attention and, more importantly, action. Women are no longer second class citizens. Our GDP per capita is in the world's top twenty, with market capitalisation of our domestic companies in the top dozen, as is our quality of life in most indices. The arts thrive. And more.

Would we be better off if we were governed by one party, left or right, since Federation? I think not. Why? Because all soldiers know that left, right, left, right is the only way to march forward.

Valour Park memorial to recognise Afghanistan VC recipients

Plans have been lodged for a major memorial to the Australian soldiers who were awarded the Victoria Cross in Afghanistan. The memorial is proposed for Valour Park in Watson, which the ACT Government and the National Capital Authority upgraded in 2017.

Valour Park already contains the Apex Memorial which commemorates the 76 Apexians who died in World War II, and the Junior Farmers Memorial, recognising young farmers who died in service to Australia. Charitable organisation The Remembrance Driveway Council is behind the proposal, which is designed to enhance the experience of those visiting Valour Park by building on the presence of the existing memorials. In 2019 the council ran a two-stage design competition for the development of a memorial to honour the four VC recipients from Afghanistan – Cameron Baird (deceased), Mark Donaldson, Daniel Keighran and Ben Roberts-Smith. The panel, which included the father of Cameron Baird, selected Moir Landscape Architecture as the successful consultant to proceed to develop the design. The council's Carolyn Tallents said Moir Landscaping's entry got the nod for its poetic, peaceful response and organic form which offered containment and space for contemplation on an individual level but also enough room for small ceremonies. The DA says the concept builds on

the symbolism of the Victoria Cross Medal, drawing from the laurel wreath and crown, and references Afghanistan.

The memorial will be composed of granite, concrete and weathered, engraved steel, while a Victoria Cross plaque will be in bronze. Ms Tallents said the council was in the early stages of fundraising for the project and has set a target of \$500,000. The Australian War Memorial may provide some assistance. DA approval will give the council two years to build the memorial, although it hopes to start construction in 12 months.

The council has been dedicating roadside rest areas between Sydney and Canberra to Australia's World War II and Vietnam VC recipients since 1995 and decided a few years ago that living recipients would be recognised as well. It has established 23 sites to-date, and a site has been picked to honour Keith Payne VC AM, although work cannot begin until the site has been redeveloped.



DISABILITY PAYMENTS

Exempted From The Income Test

The Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (Exempting Disability Payments from Income Testing and Other Measures) Bill 2021 was recently passed and has some important elements. It enacts the 2020-21 Budget measure to exempt disability payments from the income test under the Social Security Act 1991 from 1 January 2022.

Centrelink payments such as the Age Pension will also increase as a result of this, removing the need for DFISA (Defence Force Income Support Allowance). DFISA will no longer be paid from 1 January 2022.

Veterans and their partners do not need to do anything, the payments will be made automatically.

The Disability Income Rent Test will also be removed so that disability income does not reduce Rent Assistance. This means from 1 January 2022, some veterans will receive more Rent Assistance, or receive Rent Assistance for the first time.

DVA encourages any Service Pension, Income Support or Veteran Payment recipients who also receive Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA) Disability Pension, Military, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRC) Permanent Impairment or Special Rate Disability Pension (SRDP) and who pay private rent above the following thresholds, to update their rental accommodation details if they have not already done so, in order to receive Rent Assistance.

Individuals can update their details via MyService or by phoning DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372). For those eligible, Rent Assistance payments will be made automatically.

REHABILITATION PILOT

The Bill also contained amendments to establish a two-year pilot for non-liability rehabilitation. The pilot is a voluntary program designed to help veterans who have not made a claim for compensation, with access to psychosocial and vocational rehabilitation support.

DISABILITY PENSION NAME CHANGE

The Disability Pension is being renamed the Disability Compensation Payment to better reflect the nature of the payment. This is a change in name only, and will not change the way the payment is made or how it is treated by other organisations.

WANT FURTHER INFORMATION?

The above measures took effect on 1 January 2022.

The Disability Compensation Payment (formerly known as Disability Pension) became exempt from the income test under the Social Security Act 1991. Centrelink payments such as the Age Pension will increase as a result, removing the need for DFISA. In addition, Rent Assistance became available or increased for some veterans.

Those who had previously received DFISA found that on the first payday of 2022, 13 January, part of the DFISA payment was reduced. On payday 27 January, there will be no DFISA paid. However, social security payments from Centrelink will increase accordingly.

The part payment on 13 January is because the effective date of 1 January falls in the middle of a pay period. As Centrelink paydays differ for each person, they do not align with DVA veteran paydays. Veterans can check pay day amounts in their Centrelink online account and their DVA MyService account.

Veterans and their partners do not need to do anything, as the payments will be made automatically.

Unfortunately, some of the letters advising of the changes to veterans were delayed, meaning some veterans did not receive a personal explanation as to why their DFISA payment had been reduced prior to 13 January.

Further information can be found on the DFISA page of the DVA website under "What's New".

Help DFWA Help Veterans
CONSIDER DONATING!
 Online at : dfwa.org.au/donate



RECENT DONATIONS: Thank you to recent generous donations received from John Saunders, Ernie Gimm, Allan George and Michael Delaney (AAA Army Surplus & Collectables).

Current Issues of Concern for the Defence Reserves Association

by IAN FLAWITH
VICE PRESIDENT RESERVES

Australian Defence Force Veterans' Covenant (Veterans' Covenant, Veteran Card, Lapel Pin and ADF Reserves)

This issue, highlighted in last year's report and the subject of an article published in the July 2020 edition of *Camaraderie*, remains unresolved. Many long-serving Reservists are denied access to the Veteran Card, and it is difficult to imagine how a more divisive, discriminatory, unfair, and administratively costly scheme of service recognition of Defence Reservists could have been devised. The issue can be resolved by DVA simply accepting, without condition, that all those who serve, or have served, in any part of the ADF warrant the title 'Veteran'. All Veterans would then be entitled to receive the Veteran Card with an associated notation of eligibility. Importantly, this would include access to the treatment of mental health conditions under the provisions of non-liability health care. It would also deliver access to the touted business benefits, organisations and community groups who support the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant.

Success in achieving a positive outcome to this issue will likely be assisted by two current developments: the outcome and recommendations of the Royal Commission into Veteran and Defence Suicides and second, data that will be forthcoming from the 2021 Census, revealing among other things, the number of personnel who have served in the Reserves including those without one day of full-time service.

DRA submission to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicides

The DRA submission to the Royal Commission, Notice to Give Information, was submitted on 25 October 2021. Details of the submission are available to view on the DRA website: <https://dra.org.au/>

The DRA is now identifying members who may wish to give evidence to the Royal Commission about their experience with Defence and DVA and the impact of these experiences on their mental health and wellbeing.

A major DRA achievement – inclusion of the ADF Service question in the 2021 national census

In 2016 the DRA launched a campaign to have a question included in the 2021 census that would, among other things, highlight the number of individuals who had served in the ADF Reserves, including those who had served in both the fulltime and part time components of the ADF.

The DRA was driven to do this because of the policy that had been introduced by DVA to exclude certain reservists from the definition of ADF Veteran. To be classified a veteran, someone who had served exclusively in the Reserves, needed to have served at least one day on full time service. When challenged on this policy, DVA explained that neither they nor Defence could produce a figure for the number of personnel who had served in the ADF Reserves. Without a number, DVA was unable to calculate their liability and so it was decided to limit the number who could qualify as an ADF Veteran, by requiring at least one day of full-time service. The DRA therefore determined to have a question included in the 2021 census that would provide the figure that neither Defence nor DVA could deliver.

The first release of data from the 2021 census is to occur in June 2022 and will include ADF service data. It will then fall to the ESO community to obtain essential and targeted information, to force DVA to move beyond their current area of interest and engagement.

For example, DRA will pressure DVA to include all those with any form of service in the ADF Reserves in the definition of Veteran, given that DVA will now have an accurate indication of its additional liability, noting this liability would likely only extend to the provision of mental health treatment and care under the non-liability health care provisions. It would however entitle all veterans, including those who served solely in the ADF Reserves, to a Veteran card.

There will be a wide range of information and data available from the census, depending on how the data is interrogated and interpreted, addressing the specific interests and requirements of the various ESOs.

Employer Engagement

In my 2020 Annual Report I indicated that DRA would maintain a watching brief on the introduced changes to Defence employer engagement. This included the implementation of a Strategic Relationship Model and the establishment of the Defence Employer Partnering Network (DEPN). The DRA brief was to assess their effectiveness in ensuring the maintenance of the strong and fundamental relationship between Reservists and their employers. To this end, DRA has engaged with Reserve units and formations and indications to date have been positive. As Deputy President of the DRA, I was invited by Defence to be a member of the selection panel in deciding the outcome of the 2021 national employer support awards. The level of support provided to their reservist employees by the nominated employers in the various categories was excellent. There was a strong indication of an effective and supportive relationship between Defence and the employers of Reservists. DRA will continue to monitor and report on this significant matter, directly related to capability generation.

DRA National Conference 2021

The DRA National Conference was successfully conducted on Saturday, 14 August 2021. With lockdowns across the country in August, the number of actual attendees was limited to members and guests of DRA SA, who assembled at the Naval, Military and Air Force Club in Adelaide. However, several hundred participated as virtual attendees as the conference was conducted as a webinar from Adelaide. The theme of the Conference was based on the old Latin motto, 'If you want peace, prepare for war: the contingent role and tasks of the ADF Reserves'. Key speakers included the Defence Minister and the Shadow Minister for Defence as well as a number of senior ADF officers. The Conference provided an opportunity to discuss what the government would demand from the ADF Reserves in preparing for war; how this would be achieved by the ADF; where, in terms of role and tasks the Government and ADF might employ the Reserves; and when, in terms of the mobilisation process, would the Reserves be likely to be deployed? Video presentations from the conference are available to view on the DRA website, <https://dra.org.au/>

The 2022 DRA National Conference will be conducted in August in Melbourne. It is likely the DRA will continue with the webinar format, as it allows access to, and participation by, many DRA members who might not otherwise be in a position to attend the conference. The cost of delivering a webinar format will require direct sponsorship in support of the conference.

What is in the numbers?

Defence Reservists include Navy Reservists, Army Reservists and Air Force Reservists. According to the Defence

Introductory Briefing to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicides, on 1 July 2021 there were 40,145 Reservists out of a total uniformed service of 100,381. The median age of the Defence Reserves is 43 years compared to 31.2 years for permanent members of the ADF, and the median length of service of Defence Reserves is 17 years, compared to 8.2 years for permanent members of the ADF. In other words, Reservists are on average older than permanent members of the ADF and serve on average twice as long as permanent members of the ADF.

Under the Defence Total Workforce System (TWS), Defence Reservists are classified as:

Service Category 5: whose service extends across financial years and who have security of tenure for the duration of their approved commitment to serve - 18,500 Reservists. This category was previously known as the Active Reserve; a term that is still used colloquially.

Service Category 4: who provide contingent capability at short notice, usually medical specialists - 34 Reservists.

Service Category 3: who provide a contingency capability by indicating their availability to serve or who are providing service to meet a specific task within a financial year - 11,225 Reservists. This category was previously known as the Inactive Reserve.

Service Category 2: who do not render service and have no service obligation. They are liable to call out - 10,386 Reservists. This category was previously known as the Stand-By Reserve and is primarily former members of the permanent/regular force who are compulsorily transferred and serve for five years unless they nominate, and are accepted, to transfer to another category.

At any point of time, there are also Reservists on Continuous Full Time Service (CFTS) who are considered to be permanent members of the ADF in either Service Category 6 or 7 for a defined period.

The 2020-21 Defence Annual Report provided detail of the ADF Reserves paid strength; that is those who actually rendered service: Navy - 1,757; Army - 15,949; Air Force - 3,739; total - 21,445.

The Service Chiefs would argue these figures are acceptable, as they meet their immediate casual workforce requirements. The salary for those Reservists who render service is found from the Services' annual appropriation and so there is no desire on the part of a Service Chief to employ a reserve force that is larger than necessary.

Consideration of what should be the strategic size and capability required of the Defence Reserves, and how this would be achieved and funded, is perhaps a theme for a future DRA annual conference?

A SPOT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MILITARY HISTORY –

We Remember Bill Lynas

William James Dalton (Bill) Lynas (1886-1947), miner and soldier, was born on 20 December 1886 in New Zealand. After his father was appointed manager of a Western Australian sawmill in about 1901, Bill was educated at Busselton. On leaving school he worked in grocery and briefly managed a store at Brookton. He probably moved to the Marble Bar district following a tin rush in 1906; in 1910 he was employed as a storeman on a mine at Moolyella.



In September 1914 Bill Lynas enlisted in the 16th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, and sailed for Egypt in December. He served throughout the Gallipoli campaign as a signaller, and was promoted lance corporal, then second lieutenant in January 1916. He was engaged in Egypt until June, then went with his battalion to France. He won the Military Cross in August 1916 for a dangerous reconnaissance mission as intelligence officer and the capture of thirty prisoners. Later that month, his work in preparing an attack and leading stretcher parties won him a Bar to the M.C. Promoted captain in April 1917, he spent six months with a training battalion in England but, on hearing that his unit was in action again, illegally re-joined it. In June and July 1918, although wounded, he distinguished himself near Hamel when his management of a very successful raid brought a second Bar to his M.C. and his leadership in a major attack won him the Distinguished Service Order. In December he was mentioned in dispatches.

Lynas sailed for Australia in February 1919 and when his A.I.F. appointment ended in June was placed on the reserve of officers, Australian Military Forces, as a captain. He returned immediately to Moolyella. While overseas he had investigated mining developments and, backed by English money, took up tin-dredging in partnership with W. Atkins. He also became an agent for Copley's Bank of London in buying base metals

and mined for asbestos. As the post-war boom in metals subsided, so did Moolyella. Lynas sought concessions from the State government in 1924 and when the application failed, altered his occupation on the electoral roll from miner in 1926 to philosopher in 1928: he was so designated for the rest of his life. Friends who knew him at this time described him as 'a wild spirit' and 'a terrible tease' with 'a touch of larrikinism'.

In June 1940 Lynas was recalled to full-time military duty and went to the Middle East in April and May as an A.I.F. troopship adjutant. During a second voyage in September and October he was injured on board and his appointment was terminated on medical grounds in April 1942. On 4 August 1944, in the Perth registry office, he married Enid Coates.

Bill and his wife settled at Nullagine in the Pilbara district and on 1 September 1945 he was appointed part-time secretary of the local roads board. Survived by his wife, he died of coronary vascular disease at Nullagine on 12 January 1947 and is buried there. 'Bill' Lynas was one of the finest fighting leaders that Australia produced. The combination of military decorations he won is extremely rare.



Tribute to Bill Lynas at the Nullagine Lookout

UPDATE - 15 FEBRUARY 2022

MEDICALLY DISCHARGED VETERANS VS ATO – THE SAGA CONTINUES

Government to introduce retrospective legislation to reverse the Federal Court decision

John Lewis Qld Branch

Last Camaraderie provided an update on implementation of the Federal Court decision and the difficulties encountered. Some parts managed by the ATO seemed to go well. The management by CSC continues to be questionable, a point mentioned by Justice Logan in his AAT decision on Douglas.

The problems with the withholding tax rate outlined in last Camaraderie were fixed up within a couple of weeks by ATO action. Unfortunately, CSC poor communication in August last year, led many veterans to believe their invalidity pension was being taxed more. It wasn't but this caused a lot of stress and panic. Veterans contacted their MPs.

On 24 November 2021, the Assistant Treasurer, Michael Sukkar and the Minister for Defence Personnel, Andrew Gee announced:

- New legislation to reverse the Federal Court Douglas decision and redefine invalidity benefits as income streams.
- Veterans who were better off because of Douglas decision would receive a new non-refundable tax offset giving the same tax benefit as Douglas.
- The legislation would be retrospective.
- The bill will be introduced in February 2022 and veterans would not be worse off.

A stated reasons for this legislation:

Almost 6800 veterans would have had more tax withheld from their pension payments as a result of this court decision, meaning less money in their pockets every fortnight. In some cases this was up to \$100 per fortnight.

The Facts:

- As explained in last Camaraderie (Vol 52 No 3 page 21), the withholding tax applied to the invalidity benefits since the Douglas decision was higher than previously, resulting in reduced fortnightly payments but having to

wait until the end of the FY for a Tax Refund. It did not increase tax on the Invalidity Benefits. For the greater majority, at least 6800, probably more, it reduced taxation significantly.

- The fix to the problem - by changing the withholding rate of PAYG tax on the fortnightly lump sum - and resulting in increased fortnightly payments, was quickly implemented.
- The Douglas decision was in December 2020. This problem should have been identified by CSC in early 2021 and fixed. Instead, CSC announced the problem (with no solution after 8 months) in August 2021 without proper explanation. This caused panic. The problem was not with the Douglas decision, it was and is with CSC and its delay in implementing the change and to let veterans know. (Bungle 1)
- Even with the delay bungle, a simple honest explanation of the problem in August 2021, and what CSC and the ATO were doing to address it, would have avoided all the unnecessary stress. (Bungle 2).

The spin of the Media Release perpetuates the CSC miscommunication regarding withholding tax problem. The "fix" did not require a change in legislation.

ANOTHER REASON FOR THE LEGISLATION

"Thousands of veterans were also facing the prospect of being hit with a notice for back-taxes going back to 2017. It would have devastated so many vulnerable veterans."

No actual numbers of "so many vulnerable veterans" or their circumstances have been provided. DFWA has identified areas where a small number of veterans (under 1000 according to the ATO) who may be worse off due to the Douglas decision. Some may be faced with back-taxes.

VETERANS WORSE OFF DUE TO THE DOUGLAS DECISION

- Those on small invalidity payments. Veterans with a lower level of invalidity (Class B) and whose medical assessment means they are likely to be able to work again considering their current education, training and experience and therefore do not qualify for a Disability Superannuation Benefit (DSB). These may have lost a general age offset only available to those on income streams, not lump sums.
 - Those who received back payments for previous years. If a veteran is retrospectively medically discharged, they will receive a back-pay of all the pension that they would have received going back to their discharge date. The Lump Sum Payment in Arrears (LSPIA) offset reduces the tax liability of a person who receives back-pay that is attributable to prior tax years.
 - The offset calculates the tax liability as if the person had received the back-pay in those prior years. It ensures that the person isn't paying more tax than they would have if they received the pension in those prior years when they were meant to.
 - The ATO does not appear to be applying this offset to Invalidity Benefit lump sum payments. This means that all the back payments are taxed in the year received, rather than calculating the tax in each of the years the back payment was due and coming up with a total.
 - The effects of this may not be apparent to those whose pensions are also Disability Superannuation Benefits (DSB), because of its effect in reducing tax liability. However, those veterans who do not receive the DSB tax benefits, may now have a debt, which could be subject to the demand for "back taxes". Indications are that ATO has dealt sympathetically with these, advising veterans to withdraw objections, and the ATO would not seek back taxes, as is within ATO discretion.
 - The ATO interpretation of the LSPIA legislation is being challenged by some veterans.
- Those likely to be Affected by the Untaxed Plan Cap and Low-Rate Cap in the Future. Lump Sums count towards these Caps. Income streams do not. Reaching the Cap triggers higher taxation. The effects are on a small number of those veterans on higher overall incomes and will impact some years into the future. These would not be affected by clawback as the effects have not yet impacted.

THE MAIN IMPACT OF THE DOUGLAS DECISION

The main tax benefit from Douglas comes for those severely disabled veterans who have been certified by two medical practitioners as unlikely to be ever gainfully employed in a capacity for which they are qualified because of education, experience or training. The Invalidity Benefits are therefore classed as Disability Superannuation Benefits paid as lump sums (DSB-LS). The DSB-LS payment includes a (compensation) tax-free proportion and a consequent reduced taxable income. The new legislation changing payments to income streams, removes the tax-free amount and increases the taxable income. The tax on the taxable income is then reduced by a new offset equal to the tax-free proportion. It gives the same tax benefit as Douglas. See examples 1-3.

EXAMPLE 1: WITHOUT A DSB

Jayden was born on 1st of March 1990 and joined the Navy on 20th of January 2009. He was medically discharged on 1st of June 2016. Jayden receives a Military Super Class A Invalidity Benefit. Jayden's fortnightly Invalidity Benefit pension of \$2000 (without the DSB modification) is made up of:

Tax-Free Component	\$0 (Current Tax-Free Component as lump sum)
Taxable Taxed Element	\$50
<u>Taxable Untaxed Element.....</u>	<u>\$1,950</u>
Pre-Tax Invalidity Benefit.....	\$2,000 (Current Benefit)
Less Tax Payable	- \$311
Fortnightly Pension.....	\$1,689

EXAMPLE 3: How the new tax offset provided by new Legislation may work to produce the same tax benefit.

Jayden's income is no longer classed as series of lump sums, but as an income stream, and Jayden has qualified for the DSB.

Tax-Free Component	\$0 (Tax-Free Component as income stream)
Taxable Taxed Element.....	\$50
Taxable Untaxed Element.....	\$1,950
Pre-Tax Invalidity Benefit.....	\$2,000 (Current Benefit)
Less Tax Payable.....	- \$311
New Tax Offset.....	\$304 (retains same tax benefit as Douglas)
Fortnightly Pension.....	\$1,993 (Same Pension in hand as Douglas)

EXAMPLE 2: WITH A DSB-LS

Due to the two doctors certificate, Jayden is entitled to the modification of a DSB-LS according to the compensation formula taking into account the days served before medical discharge and days to retirement from date of discharge. This is used to determine the tax-free component of the current benefit.

Jayden served from 20th of January 2009 to 1st of June 2016, which is 2,690 days. Had Jayden served until compulsory retirement age, he would have served until his 60th birthday on 1st of March 2050, which is another 12,326 days.T

Modified Tax Free Component =

$$\text{Current Tax Free Component} + \text{Current Benefit} \times \frac{\text{Days to Retirement}}{\text{Service Days} + \text{Days to Retirement}}$$

Modified Tax Free Component =

$$\$0 + \$2,000 \times \frac{12,326 \text{ days}}{2,690 \text{ days} + 12,326 \text{ days}}$$

Because of that modification, Jayden’s modified fortnightly pension becomes:

Tax-Free Component.....	\$ 1,641	(The new Modified Tax-Free Component)
Taxable Taxed Element.....	\$ 50	
Taxable Untaxed Element.....	\$ 309	
Pre-Tax Invalidity Benefit.....	\$ 2,000	
Less Tax Payable.....	- \$ 7	
Fortnightly Pension.....	\$ 1,993	

Jayden is \$309 better off each fortnight as a result of the Disability Superannuation Benefit modification available as lump sum.

THE HIGHLY CONTENTIOUS AREAS

Consequent Non-Tax Beneficial Effects of Douglas. The DSB-LS provides a lower taxable income. This reduced amount may mean some disabled veterans and their families become eligible for consequent services and benefits, e.g., Family Tax Benefit, childcare subsidy, and low-income health care card. Not all veterans will need or take up these services, but many of the severely disabled will. Such payments depend on the family situation and change with time e.g., the FTB benefits depend on family taxable income, with the benefits up to \$7500 per child per year. In Jayden’s case above, the reduction in Jayden’s taxable income of approx. \$42,000pa would likely have a significant effect on FTB, depending on his partner’s taxable income and the number, ages, and student status of children up to age 19.

The joint media release highlights that the government is acting swiftly to avoid the “potentially harmful financial implications for some veterans” due to Douglas. There are now potentially harmful financial implications for some veterans due to new legislation outlined in the joint media release. None were disclosed in the joint media release.

Veterans who have received FTB and other services and benefits based on Douglas may also have made new financial commitments, e.g., a mortgage.

As these consequent effects are not “tax benefits” it is therefore unlikely they will be included in the tax offset to be introduced by this legislation. If so:

- Some veteran families (unknown numbers) will have their financial benefits and services cut. They may then have difficulties in meeting new financial commitments.
- As the legislation is retrospective, previous payments of these benefits may be “clawed back” and place these families in debt, and with now reduced income to pay it back.

Family breakdowns affect the veteran parent, the non-veteran ex-partner parent and the children. Changes in tax law should not affect financial arrangements in these areas. That should be the province of Family Law.

The joint media release stated “Having their pensions cut and then slugging them with back taxes would have been unconscionable” when referring to a relatively small number adversely affected by Douglas. The new proposed legislation has potential for a similar effect on an unknown number of veterans.

Liabilities for Child Support. In family breakdowns, child support payments are based on the adjusted taxable income and the starting point for this is the taxable income.

As a result of the Douglas decision:

- the non-custodial veteran parent will pay less in child support at the same time as getting an increase in income due to tax reduction; and
- a veteran with custody of children will gain an increase in tax-free income and an increase in child support payments from the non-custodial parent

Canvassed general view is that changes adversely affecting child support payments for veterans' children or increasing child support payments from non-custodial ex partners when the custodial parent is getting an increase in income as result of reduced tax, is unacceptable and would not pass any "pub" test

The proposed legislation is likely restore child support arrangements to the pre-Douglas situation. This effect of the proposed legislation is supported, however:

- The same effect could be achieved by including the tax-free component (Example2) of the DSB-LS in the list of other components already considered in the determining adjusted taxable income used for assessing child support payments. These already include MRCA payments by DVA, which in practice, are offset by Invalidity Benefit payments received from CSC – as they are regarded as compensation for the same medical condition.
- This option would ensure that child support issues are addressed by the same child support legislation/ regulation which addresses the related DVA offset compensation payments, rather than the proposed taxation legislation.

There are other areas in Family Court where this same Invalidity Benefit subject to the Asset and Income split due to questionable reporting of the nature of these benefits by

CSC. This has been treated inconsistently in different cases in the Family Court, often to the detriment of the veteran. CSC's original questionable reporting to the ATO led to the Douglas case, so there is a history of CSC getting it wrong. This is a separate issue and needs to be addressed as outlined in the last Camaraderie (Vol 52 No 3 page 20.)

SUMMARY

The outline above is based on the joint media release and discussions by DFWA representatives with Assistant Treasurer, Michael Sukkar, Minister for Defence Personnel, Andrew Gee and staff, the shadow Minister for Veteran Affairs, Shayne Newmann, exchanges with ATO staff and discussions with other ESO and veteran organisations and affected veterans. These consultations are continuing and further action is anticipated if and when legislation is introduced and being mindful that a Budget is expected in May and an election is coming up.

The actual legislation has, at time of writing, not yet been tabled. By time of publication of this Camaraderie, the situation depicted above and the author's views, may have changed. The DFWA website, Facebook page and eNewsletter will provide up to date news.

John Lewis

AIR FORCE EQUIPMENT BRANCH HONOURED

Air Force logisticians, past and present, were honoured with a plaque at the Air Force Memorial in the Chief of Air Force Memorial Gardens, RAAF Base Point Cook, late last year. Then Director General Logistics – Air Force Air Commodore Grant Pinder unveiled the plaque to recognise the role of the Air Force Equipment Branch, since its formation in November 1920.

Members of Logistics Branch – Air Force, No. 21 Squadron, and No. 100 Squadron were joined by retired members of the Air Force Equipment Branch to observe the unveiling and consecration of the plaque. Speaking at the unveiling, Air Commodore Pinder said it represented more than just the Air Force Equipment Branch.

"This plaque is dedicated to all who have served, and are serving, in the various trades, musterings, branches, categories and specialisations that have rendered distinguished service as members of the Royal Australian Air Force," Air Commodore Pinder said.

"It also serves to acknowledge those who have family and friends that have served, as well as those members who have paid the supreme sacrifice in the service of our nation."



CONGRATULATIONS MARK WAINWRIGHT OAM

DFWA members warmly congratulate Mark Wainwright who has been honoured in the Australia Day Honours with a Medal in the Order of Australia. Over many years Mark has provided welfare and advocacy support for scores or even hundreds of veterans seeking assistance not only in Western Australia, but in several other States.

DONOVAN JOYNT, VC:

A Man of this Time

by LTCOL ALISTAIR POPE, PSC, CM, (RETIRED)

The Australian Character of Yesteryear

I have quite an extensive military library. Among my books are half a dozen biographies written by WWI soldiers and another half dozen books written about them. I much prefer the former personal accounts as they are a truer representation of the culture and attitudes of the period as they encapsulate the characteristics of the Australians of the early 20th century.

There is something about the stories they tell that has always puzzled me because I know that a dozen soldiers could not have collaborated to create the Anzac of yesteryear as a myth for posterity. Yet the single theme that runs through every story is their unity of outlook and unshamed pride in being Australian.

If we compare our Australian society today to that of yesteryear, it appears that somewhere along the way we lost our national spirit and our pride in our country. Donovan Joynt's unvarnished story of his life and times perhaps helps to answer the question of whether or not Australians today are true descendants of the first Anzacs or are now a shadow of our forebears.

THE GREAT ADVENTURE BEGINS

Prior to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, the Australian Colonies had raised contingents from 1845 onwards to fight in the Maori Wars in New Zealand, through the farcical commitment to the Sudan in 1885, the Relief of Peking (Beijing) in 1900 and the Boer War from 1899-1902. These ad hoc forces were raised with relative ease as all colonies (and then the federated Commonwealth from 1911)



maintained a form of a universal, if rudimentary, military training scheme. In both city and country, being a member of your local militia unit was regarded as both a mark of status and an obligation to the nation from school to adulthood.

Shooting competitions and sporting challenges between rival militia and artillery units were often also the centre of local social life. When the Victorian Government offered the British Government an all-volunteer contingent of 626 men to fight in the Boer War, over 4,000 applications were immediately received.

It is therefore unsurprising that when Australia declared its support for the British Empire on 15th August 1914 to commit an all-volunteer Infantry Division and a Light Horse Brigade the ranks were quickly filled. In fact, the response was so

great that just a month later the decision was made to raise another Infantry Brigade and two more Light Horse Brigades. The AIF continued to grow throughout the war, until there were five infantry divisions, two mounted divisions and a mixture of other units.

As is apparently the Australian way, the first contingent of the AIF suffered from widespread equipment shortages that delayed its deployment and their initial engagement on the fatal shores of the Gallipoli Peninsula on 25th April 1915. By 3rd May about 2,300 Australians of the 8,800 who were to die on Gallipoli had already been killed. The 16th Battalion landed on the evening of 26th April and moved to their positions in Monash Valley. Only 307 of its 955 men survived their first week in the frontline.

ENTER DONOVAN JOYNT

Donovan Joynt had not joined the first recruiting rush as

he was a farmer and needed to harvest his crops before answering the 'call to arms'. While he waited he received a message that his father was dying. He rushed to his bedside in time to say goodbye and then settled his father's affairs before returning to his farm. There he found that his pea cop had been razed in a bushfire and his potato crop was ruined by white moth grubs. This misfortune would have broken the spirit of a less resilient person, but like many a pioneering Australian he weathered the blows as best he could, sold whatever he had remaining and travelled to the Recruiting Office in Melbourne. Having served as a corporal in the Victorian Rifles, Militia, Joynt applied for officer training and was one of those who were accepted.

On graduation he was promoted to Sergeant Instructor! This was a personal disappointment as it meant that he and his fellow 'officers' missed the Gallipoli fiasco. After further training he was granted his Commission as a Lieutenant and posted to command a draft embarking for Egypt. Their staging at the Pyramids Camp was brief as the Gallipoli Campaign had already ended, so shortly afterwards orders arrived for their move to France and the Western Front.

Lt. Joynt's story about this period reads like a tourist's excitable travel diary. Like many Australians (then and now) he had a desire to visit and see the wonders of England and Europe. If some places were drab and dull compared to the blue skies of Australia he failed to notice.

FIRST BLOOD AT POZIERES AND THE YPRES SECTOR

The bloodbath of the battle for Pozieres had been raging for some weeks when Donovan was tasked with taking a small group of six replacements forward to the 5th battalion in the front line. During a short stop one of this 'clean skin' group mused that he was more afraid of being afraid when under fire than he was of death itself. The others agreed and Joynt recorded that he thought to himself "How will I behave?" We can now answer both questions: Joynt became a fearless warrior and all six men in his reinforcement group were killed in the next few months.

Joynt joined A Coy, 8th Battalion, only to find that there was the only one officer still alive and the Company consisted of only fifteen men under constant artillery fire. Three more men were killed while awaiting an expected German attack that never came. Joynt records at they were ready and determined to 'put up a show' and that the pitifully few in his small band were actually disappointed when no attack came. Yet, as the carnage went on Joynt and others expressed their regret that they had missed the worst of it. One would expect that they would thank their luck that they had missed

the slaughter, but instead they cursed their fate at not being at Pozieres with their mates.

In 45-days the three Australian divisions lost 23,000 killed or wounded with Pozieres Ridge costing 7,000 casualties alone.

First Raid, First Wound

Gaining intelligence through raiding enemy trenches was a highly dangerous but essential venture. One night Joynt led his raiding party of eight volunteers as they crawled across the 50m separating them from the enemy trenches. They became entangled in a maze of low barbed wire that had not been detected. They overcame this by simply standing up and charging with wild cries. The German sentry surrendered, but some other German soldiers threw grenades and wounded Joynt and one of the raiders. Having captured a prisoner and some papers the raiders moved to withdraw. Joynt stayed to the last, but then found his right arm was paralysed and he could not climb the parapet to leave! He walked down the trench until he found a step and was finally able to exit. Unfortunately, as he crossed 'no-man's land' his puttee legging became entangled in the barbed wire. He could not untangle it and collapsed due to his wound. Fortunately, LtCol Gordon Bennett, CO of the 6th Battalion (who later commanded the ill-fated 8th Division in Singapore) and his runner saw him and ran to his aid. His wound was far more serious than he thought and he was sent to England and a hospital there to recover and convalesce. His near-death experience had not dampened either his enthusiasm or that of his recovering comrades '... who longed to be back with their mates.'

BACK TO THE FRONT

Joynt was now the experienced, hardened veteran he had once wondered if he could ever be. He did not lack imagination and was not fatalistic about the fact that death stalked them all. An example was where the Germans voluntarily withdrew to a better position. Noticing that there appeared to be nobody occupying the German trenches he casually walked forward to low ridge. The trenches were indeed empty. He continued his lone and unauthorized reconnaissance until he reached the first trench line of the formidable 'Hindenburg Line'. As he turned to retrace his path bullets began whizzing past so closely that he had to take cover. An hour later he made the final dash followed by another volley. On return to his lines he found six bullet holes in his coat, but none had even scratched him!

ANOTHER BATTLE OF ATTRITION AT PASSCHENDAELE

In October 1917 several close comrades from his battalion, who Joynt describes as 'magnificent and fearless officers'

were killed, once more thinning the ranks of the veterans. Among them was his brother Gerald. It would seemingly be impossible for Joynt not to be affected by these accumulating catastrophic events, yet if his writing is anything to go by he remained undaunted and determined. There is no indication that he questioned the purpose of the war, or the cost in lives. Australia was committed to the war and it must go on until it is won!

THE FINAL CHAPTER

After all that had happened, it is hard to know what motivated Joynt to take ever-increasing risks and more daring feats of arms. He had seen too many of his comrades die to have developed an 'immortality syndrome', but his Victoria Cross citation records several actions in which he rallied his troops to attack strongly defended positions in the face of machine gun fire and artillery shelling. His élan and reckless courage broke the spirit of the defenders and brought about their surrender. On 25th August 1918 his luck ran out and he was severely wounded by an artillery shell. His war was over.

Despite his unstinting service and sacrifice for his country (and the British Empire) in 1929 when the Great Depression made his farm unprofitable the Closer Settlement Board foreclosed on his soldier settlement farm and financially ruined him. Later, when he commanded a militia battalion, he was accused by the Army of misappropriating £300 from regimental funds. A simple audit would have shown that rather than make an extra £300 profit, or taking the money himself he had lowered the prices in the soldier's canteen.

Joynt never complained about the cards fate had dealt him, nor the people who treated him badly. He was a man of the 'old school' who never indulged in introspection or self-doubt. He prized his word as his bond and his honour above all else. Despite his financial struggles, he dedicated himself to the establishment of The Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance, the foundation of the Returned Services League as a place for old comrades to meet and as a service to former soldiers. He overcame further obstacles as a Founder of Legacy, an organization established to look after the children of deceased soldiers.

After WWI, Joynt served in the militia. In WW2, now a Major, he enlisted in 1939 and served until 1944 when he was discharged with the rank of Honorary Lieutenant Colonel.

THE CULTURE OF MODERN TIMES

Lt Donovan Joynt, VC was a courageous hero, yet when peace returned he was mistreated at every turn by Government bureaucrats, military bureaucrats (both uniformed and civilian) and local officialdom. One example will suffice: in

1968 all-living Australian VC holders were invited to attend a ceremony and a series of functions in London. The RAF would assume responsibility for their travel and accommodation from Singapore (where the Commonwealth Brigade was based). The RAAF was asked to assist in the movement of the Australians to Singapore. They declined, so Joynt, VC and his fellow heroes paid for their own commercial tickets to Singapore. No other Commonwealth country followed Australia's lead ...

Despite all the trials, setbacks and obstacles he experienced, Joynt never deviated from following his own path of honour and integrity.

Donovan Joynt, VC was a man of his time the like of which is becoming ever rarer.

Yet my own assessment is that given the opportunity many of today's young Australians would unselfishly rise to the call to arms to defend Australia. But once again the failures will be at the strategic political, bureaucratic and senior military leadership levels. The greatest concern is that there is clear evidence of a whole cabal of powerful forces within Australian society who appear to be determined to divide our national unity and are acting against our sovereign and defence interests.

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4. <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lay-percy-perce-7125>
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6. The title of Donovan Joynt's biography is taken from the Rudyard Kipling poem: 'The Lost Legion' which begins:

*There's a Legion that never was 'listed',
That carries no colours or crest,
But, split in a thousand detachments,
Is breaking the road for the rest.*



Corporal Cosmo

Hello and Happy New Year! There's been a fair bit happening on the personnel side; too much in fact to cover in this short space, so I'm going to hit the top three:

- Leaving the ADF
- Travel Allowances – ADF Business Travel
- Vaccinations in the ADF

Leaving the ADF

During the latter half of 2021, mainstream media was reporting on The Great Resignation, also reported as The Great Relocation and The Great Reshuffle. Whatever you might have heard it referred to as, it is clear that the impact the global pandemic we know as COVID-19, has prompted large portions of the workforce to re-evaluate how, where and when they perform their employment. The ADF has not been immune to this development.

The pandemic has exposed fault lines and opportunities. A factor compounding the situation for the ADF is perhaps the strategic direction announced by the Prime Minister, at the Australian Defence Force Academy, on 1st July 2020. In his address, the PM announced growth in capability investment will increase to \$270 billion (from \$195b) over the next decade. A key element of the Strategic Update was the Federal Government's intent to increase Defence collaboration with Australian Industry.

More work in the Australian Defence Industry equates to more opportunity for experienced ADF members to gain geographical stability and to apply their trade skills and expertise in a different employment setting. Which brings me to what you need to consider if you're thinking about leaving the ADF or what is commonly referred to as 'Transitioning'.

Transition Resources

Once you've made the decision to separate from the ADF, especially if you're like me and it's the only job you've had(!), you need to know what has been put in place to assist ADF members with transition. Most of you will have heard of the Transition Manual – it is now known as the ADF Member and Family Transition Guide, and will also be aware that there is a Pay and Conditions Manual (PACMAN) chapter on Career Transition.

However, remember that there are many different types of circumstances under which members leave the ADF. It's vitally important to 'bone-up' on these publications

to understand what is in place to support you, the member – and their family dependants, if you have any – as you transition from the ADF, in your particular circumstance.

For instance, were you aware that in 2021 Defence Determination 2021/04;

- increased Career Transition Training up to \$5,320 per member
- provides up to \$1,000 for professional financial advice when transitioning to civilian life
- in certain circumstances, covers the cost of travel and accommodation for a member to attend career transition training or a seminar
- provides up to 23 absence days to attend various career transition activities.

All Career Transition Assistance Scheme benefits and eligibility criteria are detailed in Part 2 (Career Transition), of Chapter 2 (ADF Career), of the PACMAN.

If you're thinking about leaving the ADF for greener pastures, take the time to read these documents, get yourself an ADF Transition Coach and have a great transition.

Travel Allowances – ADF Business Travel

At the outset, an important distinction:

Departmental Travel is travel where the Defence Travel Card (DTC) is used. i.e. you travel interstate to attend a meeting or course.

Conditions of Service Travel is travel where you do not use your DTC, such as travel on posting, reunion travel, NOK travel, etc.

This discussion is about Departmental Travel, or business travel.

A little bit of 'water cooler' talk led to what expenses can and cannot be paid for with your DTC when undertaking official travel. The usual, cries of, 'they're taking money off me by changing the policy', (they haven't), were made and it didn't take long for the discussion to turn to, 'what exactly are, incidentals?' and 'you can't include a beer or wine in the price of your meal'.

I'm not going to tell you what you can and can't use your DTC to pay for when undertaking business travel. I will point you in the direction of some useful resources that might assist you in avoiding being 'on the mat', explaining why you purchased this or that with your DTC.

Well, what is an incidental expense? Here is the definition from the Travel Policy Glossary:

Incidentals: Incidentals are any expenses incurred by a Traveller during Official Travel on behalf of Defence, related to the travel being undertaken, not including transport, meals or accommodation costs.

That's a fairly broad definition if you ask me. Fortunately, the good folks in Defence Travel Policy have put together a list of over 50 frequently asked questions in relation to Travel Reform Stage 2 – there's a hot link to it at the bottom of the Policy page on the TravelConnect intranet page on the DPN. The questions relating to Incidentals are towards the bottom. The main thing to remember is there is a daily limit on incidentals. If something untoward or unexpectedly happens – incidental to successful completion of your travel – and you need to spend more than has been authorised to rectify the situation, you will need section 23 approval from whom authorised your travel before you spend additional money.

Can an alcoholic drink be purchased with a meal using DTC?

Pay and Conditions Manual (PACMAN) part 1.3.38 specifies that the cost of alcoholic drinks is excluded from meal costs. This applies to ADF members whilst undertaking domestic and international Official Travel, and to APS employees whilst undertaking international Official Travel. This answer is taken directly from, yet another, document listing 47 FAQ about payment of official travel costs. Whilst it states that the cost of alcoholic drinks is not included in the meal costs published in the PACMAN, it does not explicitly state that alcohol cannot be purchased using a DTC. Nor does PACMAN specify if non-alcoholic drinks are included in the cost of a meal. Interesting.

When using your DTC, I encourage readers to use all the resources available on Defence Finance Group's TravelConnect intranet page (DPN) and remember that when using your DTC, there should be no financial loss or gain to the member.

Vaccinations in the ADF

Defence personnel are strongly encouraged to access a COVID-19 vaccination.

Vaccination of Australian Defence Force (ADF) members is an important force health protection measure, as well as a work health and safety measure. It helps protect the fighting capability of the ADF.

The COVID-19 vaccine has been included as a routine immunisation for ADF members, just like the flu, tetanus and measles vaccinations. Every COVID-19 vaccine in Defence will be given through an informed consent process, where individuals are informed of the risks and benefits of vaccination.

ADF members are not vaccinated against their will or without their consent.

ADF members who do not wish to receive the COVID-19 vaccine are restricted from being able to perform certain roles, such as those in high-risk settings where the risk of infection and consequences from COVID-19 are high.

Australian health experts recommend that all adults be vaccinated against COVID-19. The pandemic is still causing severe disease and many deaths around the world. As Australia opens up to the rest of the world, it is expected that there will be a level of COVID-19 in the community. Those who are unvaccinated will be most vulnerable to getting infected and most likely to pass it on to others.

If you're an individual or supervisor in the ADF and you have unanswered questions about COVID-19 vaccination, I encourage you to review the list of nearly 50 COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs listed on the Joint Health Command intranet page.

Cheers for now,
Corporal Cosmo

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





THE PADRE'S *Corner*

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide

In my column in the previous addition of *Camaraderie* I reflected on how we can prevent veterans suicide and shared some elements of the initial submission I made to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. Subsequent to that article I was formally subpoenaed to appear and give evidence before the Commission in open court and also was invited to participate in an expert panel discussion with the Commissioners and two psychiatrists, two clinical psychologists, and a medical doctor who have been working intensively with veterans.

Many people saw the evidence that I gave in the Royal Commission live stream, and thanked me for it, but then asked "Can we have any hope that something good will come out of this Royal Commission?" They also asked me what the experience was like for me to have been involved so directly. I hope you are fascinated by my response to these questions.

Overall I need to say that we absolutely can have hope that good can come from this. The commissioners and their key staff are really impressive individuals, well read into the issues and committed to making and implementing solid improvements. Moreover, to my delight on first of February DVA minister Gee announced that an additional \$20 million would be made available almost immediately to organisations that can provide well-being programs for veterans to assist in reducing suicide. Those who saw my testimony know that this was something that I specifically spoke to at the Royal Commission, vigorously demanding that funding be made available immediately and not waiting for any conclusion or even interim recommendations from the Commission. I thank those staff at DVA who have got this ball rolling so quickly.

As you are reading this Royal Commission will be conducting hearings in the southern states and they will have accumulated a wealth of insight into how we can better improve the health of our veteran community. They plan to provide interim recommendations by mid year. But we all can get involved - anyone watching the commissions proceedings can be moved to initiate or fix things within their areas of influence.

I see the benefit of the Royal Commission as being something much more than what its recommendations will name. It is an extraordinary exercise in truth telling, naming and acknowledging our past failures, acknowledging all the good work that has been done by those working in veterans health space, and mobilising people of goodwill to get moving. I see much good that can come from this. Indeed my life experience is that telling the truth will set us free. Even if it's painful and difficult to do.

The Commission's proceedings broadly had traumatised veterans or families of veterans, giving testimony of their pain and suffering in the morning sessions and had organisations such as my own Veterans Care Association giving testimony in the afternoons as to how we can better address the situation. By the time I gave my testimony on the afternoon of day four I was quite emotionally bruised by hearing so many tragic tales of bullying, rape, assault, leadership failures and many other heinous afflictions caused by ADF members to other ADF members. In my own testimony I gave acknowledgement of this completely unacceptable behaviour by members of our defence force but also indicated that this was the behaviour of a few and not the many. But as the testimony continued into the following week I had to admit that the ADF still has to seriously address cultural changes in order to minimise such bad behaviour that contributes to suicides.

In one hour of intensive cross-examination by a barrister, I offered insights into core areas that need to be addressed. These included education in holistic health, a refocus in funding from acute care to prevention, and early interventions, the intentional addressing of moral injury, and the promotion of veteran identity and purpose.

I concluded by echoing the testimony of my son Major Michael Stone's testimony on day one, that "medicating, compensating and isolating hasn't worked, but prevention and early intervention will". I assured the commissioners that we could turn the situation around by recognising and



Gary, wife Lynne and family at the Royal Commission Hearing

empowering and funding our veterans community and raising up and mobilising a whole army of veterans carers who can assist in transforming the current situation. I would welcome you to read or see the video of my one hour testimony on the royal commission website, day four.

Yes I reiterate that we can have hope that we can reduce veteran's suicide. Some of this will come from action by the government and directly from this Commission. Some of this will come by the actions of good people who initiate supportive activities, and some of it will be a result of divine intervention. In my 30 years of service as a chaplain I have interviewed thousands and thousands of soldiers in crisis, with hundreds of them who had suicidal ideation or had even already had a suicide attempt. To the best of my knowledge all of them are still alive. I have heard the most extraordinary tragic stories of abuse, betrayal, shame and guilt. Some of these can be addressed by practical advice and support, but the most significant change that I have seen in people in despair has come when they have realised that HOPE and HEALING is possible. For some this really was a Divine inspiration - albeit facilitated by a caring person who had hope that nothing was impossible to be turned around, and that God has ways of touching us that we can be open to.

I have encouraged suicidal veterans to believe that they could forgive/let go , and/or be forgiven by God and others, and that they could actually play a part in making the world a better place by turning their sorrows into joy as they helped

other people in need. This of course was witnessed to many years ago by Jesus and has been lived out by his followers and the followers of many other faiths, and other people of goodwill, over the centuries. Helping others is the healthiest medicine for all of us. Many suicidal veterans are now alive and thriving because they realised they could become a veteran carer, and now are.

The real hope that we can have is that we all can play a better part in helping people get healthier and then stay healthy, no matter what our or their past tragic experiences have been. I close by recalling the advice to me of former navy chaplain Bishop Geoffrey Mayne. "Work to help others as if everything depended upon you, and pray in the hope that everything depended on God". My life experience has shown me that God can help us find a way through the most difficult of situations.

Friends may we do our best to be people of care and compassion, whatever our situation ,and with whatever resources we have. May we have hope and may God bless us in this endeavour.

Kind regards
Gary

Gary Stone OAM
The Veterans Padre
www.VeteransCare.com.au

DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION



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:

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I AM: Serving Retired Navy Army Air Force Allied
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A report to Branch 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 member who has recently joined the NSW Branch/ACT Chapter: LS A Hansch, Norman Russell.

VALE

It is with sadness and regret that we advise of the death of the following members: Mrs J L Gernhoefer, WGCDR JW

Gildersleeve MBE, MAJGEN R A Grey AO DSO, Mr T R Kelly, Gp Capt Tucker and Mrs Jeanette Plowright.

SERVICE DEATHS – ACT CHAPTER

The Defence Widows Group of the ACT Chapter maintains a watch of deaths of serving and retired ADF members. Over the past months the passing of the following was noted:

Aspinall, Kevin Herbert, Maj (Rtd); Burrell, Philip John, CPO (Rtd); Cartwright, Kenneth Henry, LCDR; Cole, Eric George; Fleming, Edward Lloyd, Dr; Foster, Ian Anderson 75 (NZ) Sqn/ RAF Bomber Command; Hutchinson, Eric Neil Lt Col (Rtd); Kibbey, David William; McIntyre, Richard John, WO (Rtd), Roberts, Francis Adrian COL (Rtd); Tucker, Ronald Holder, GP CAPT (Rtd),

QUEENSLAND BRANCH

President:	John Lewis
Exec Vice President:	Robert Shortridge
VP – South Queensland:	Rod Murray
VP – North Queensland:	Vacant
VP – Sunshine Coast:	Win Fowles
VP – Townsville:	Vacant
VP – Cairns:	John Wilson
Secretary:	Vacant
Treasurer:	Walter Buldo
Membership:	Vacant (Walter Buldo acting)
Communications Officer:	Deb Keir
Administration Officer:	Sharyn Hughes
IT/Project Officer:	Chris Lewis
Advocates:	Wally Buldo, Clem Russell
Welfare/Funerals:	Harry Mee, Pearl Mee
Hon Solicitors:	Cleary Hoare
Office Address:	RUSI Building, Victoria Barracks, Petrie Terrace, BRISBANE.
Postal Address:	RUSI Bldg, Victoria Barracks Brisbane, c/o Enoggera Mail Centre, ENOGGERA, QLD 4051
Telephone:	(07) 2102 9879
E-mail:	qldbranch@dfwa.org.au
Office Hours:	Tue – Wed: 1000 to 1400 hrs

The end of last year, instead of being a winddown for Christmas and New Year ended up a bit more active than usual, especially on the political front.

QLD STATE POLITICAL LEVEL

The Qld Veteran Council Bill was passed and had two main changes that DFVAQ had raised in our submission.

- Previously only two of the 8 positions on the Council were designated as being filled by veterans. The Bill requires at least four of the appointed members must be veterans or from the veteran community. Two Councillors will be nominated by two ESOs (of the Minister's choice) and two others appointed by the Minister. This could be through competitive recruiting.
- The Bill was reworded to "The Minister must establish a veterans' reference group and approve the terms of reference for the group." the "may" was replaced with a "must".

The Bill still has drawbacks concerning mixing of functions, skills and experience required and provision of independent advice to the Minister, however ensuring at least half are veterans can mitigate some of the risks envisaged. The act does not preclude the Chairperson being a veteran, nor does it require it.

Qld ANZAC Day Trust. The Trust provides annual grants to veteran support organisations each year. (DFVAQ received approximately \$5000 this last year.) DFVAQ submitted a nomination for a Trustee position last year and names were submitted to the Premier for decision. There have been delays in making the appointment. As the Trust is to be administered by the new Qld Veteran Council in the future, it is uncertain if the pending Trustee appointment will go ahead.

COVID Uncertainty. The Qld Shadow Minister for Veterans requested DFVAQ advice on situation which arose with a couple of veteran family constituents. ADF members were refused entry to venues as they were unable to get their vaccination "green tick" on the QLD mobile phone checking in application, even though they were fully ADF vaccinated. The simple solution seemed to be for ADF members to provide their Medicare Card number to their ADF Health Facility which is an "authorised vaccination provider" and can enter such data into the Australian Immunisation Register.

VETERANS DAY 18 NOVEMBER 2021 - AUSTRALIA ZOO

VP Win Fowles arranged with Andrew Wallace, local Member for Fisher (and now Speaker of the House of Representatives) for DFVAQ to have a stall at Australia Zoo on Veterans. Veterans usually get a discount to the zoo, but on this day, it was free for the veteran and one other. A big thank you for Australia Zoo, especially in these times of tourist lockout. Numbers have dropped by over 80%. There are still many animals to be fed and the Zoo has had to shed over 200 staff.

DFVAQ assembled the kit we usually take to the ADF Defence Member and Family Transition Seminar held in the Brisbane Exhibition Centre. As these seminars have been suspended due to COVID, some of the handouts were a bit dated, e.g., phone numbers. Luckily, this was picked up by Sharyn Hughes who quickly arranged updating. Michael Hughes also did the bulk of the stall-holding, answering queries and giving out our showbags as Win and Qld President, John Lewis, were called away for some time. Andrew Wallace had arranged an internet face to face meeting with the Minister for Veteran Affairs and Defence Personnel, Andrew Gee MP.

We invited Duty First Legal Service - By Veterans | For Veterans, to share the stall space with us. This is a newly started not for profit legal service focussed on areas where veterans and families often require specific assistance and knowledge of DVA, CSC and the ADF experience is required. They are trying to get charitable status as their intention is to offer low cost or pro bono support in cases where the veteran cannot afford the normal legal fees.

MEN'S SHEDS AND SHE SHEDS.

DFVAQ supported and MC'd the Defence and Mental Health Symposium in October. During the symposium, one researcher observed:

- *(Mental Health practitioners) found (that) encouraging (ADF) "transitioners" to get involved in blokes' groups – a new team to replace the ADF team – assisted (with transition).*
- *Men's Sheds are a good place of similar blokes' relationships – not tied to booze/gambling like some Ex-Service Organisations. A place where they can drop in when convenient or as arranged amongst selves.*

Discussion included:

Many have learned from defence force culture to avoid talk about feelings and emotions and that meant rarely did we seek help. Probably because of this, post discharge, some of us are less healthy, drink more, take more risks and suffer more from isolation, loneliness, and depression. There is sometimes a relationship breakdown, unsettled permanent employment, loss of children following divorce, physical or mental illness are just some of the problems that men we find difficult to deal with on our own. We tended to down-play injuries and illness. not that we did not take an interest in our own health and well-being.

VP SEQ Rod Murray has taken a lead in encouraging other ESO to encourage veterans to make use of these facilities and for the Qld Mens Shed Association and Australian Mens Shed Association to welcome veteran participation. We are aiming to share articles in newsletters and magazines and look at joint ventures in seeking grants and participation in Transition Seminars. (Note: Not all Men's Sheds are Men only (although most are). Some are mixed and there are even some female only sheds "She Sheds".)

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Introduction of Retrospective Legislation Reversing the Federal Court Decision Regarding Taxation of DFRDB/MSBS Class A and Class B Invalidity Benefits Pensions.

As DFVAQ has had the lead on this due to our involvement with the three veterans with test case litigation funding to support the AAT and Federal Court proceedings in Brisbane. Our initial written submission to the Ministers resulted in meetings several meetings. President Kel Ryan meeting with Minister Gee, in his Minister for Defence Personnel role, former National President David Jamieson with Assistant Treasurer Sukkar, our Executive Director with Minister Gee's staff, and Qld President John Lewis with Qld MP Shayne Newmann, Shadow Minister for Defence Personnel. John L also met with RSLQ, ADSO and representatives of affected young veteran groups. This resulted in a further submission to the Minister and considerations of legal action against CSC which is now ignoring the Federal Court decision. The matter is on-going and is reported on the website and elsewhere in Camaraderie. It was a busy Christmas and NewYear!!

SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH

Patron	Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC
President	Brigadier Mick Burgess
Past President	Lee Bowes
VP Navy	Aaron Hannam
VP Army	Mark Freer
VP Air Force	Taylor Harcourt-Heron
VP Wellness	David Everitt
Secretary	David Helman OAM
Treasurer	Mark Evens
Membership Secretary	Gavan Phillips
Convener Women Veterans	Charmaine Lock
Committee Member	Lee Bowes
Committee Member	Jodie Clark
Committee Member	Ben Wadham
Contact:	0419 858 774 or Email: sa.admin@dfwa.org

Having taken over as President of the SA Branch from Lee Bowes just prior to the NATEX, I have spent time getting to know the organisation, the mission, the people and the opportunities that present themselves here in SA.

The NATEX provided some great background for me as to what we are delivering on behalf of our members and our focus areas the next 12 months. One of the themes that emerged through meeting was how we, as an organisation, were looking to evolve and remain relevant in the family of Defence organisation. This is a space which is at times crowded and newer organisations drawing attention and funding; the benefits of which are not readily apparent. Our National President addressed this point on evolution in his opening to the last edition which I fully support.

I have also been buoyed by the enthusiasm and ideas which emanate from the committee and members here in South Australia. Although I have known a number of them for many years, to see the focus and open discussion, as well as the existing strong connections they have forged across the political, academic and industry, has reinforced my decision to join and to lead the organisation here.

We recently held our first strategy meeting (in my time as President) in which we also sought to match the opportunities and capabilities that we have locally to the National mission and focus. Although we are in the early stages of this process, the review is being strongly supported and is revealing genuine capabilities to ensure that working-aged veterans can see value in what DFVA has to offer. Connecting with this group locally will be vital for the continued valuable contribution to policy development and accountability during implementation for which DFVA is renown. The outcomes of our review will be passed back to the National level to inform and maybe help guide others.

I thank, again, Lee Bowes for the calm stewardship of DFVA-SA during his time as President and I look forward to working with all members for the improvement of services to ADF members, veterans and their families.

Cheers Mick Burgess

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

COVID continued to dominate all activities in Victoria since the last edition of Camaraderie. This included the Branch's ability to fully participate in veteran related activities and forums. While Government imposed lockdowns now seem a thing of the past, the transmissibility of the Omicron variant has resulted in many veterans and their families minimising contact with their fellow Victorians. This situation is not expected to change in any significant way until the majority of Victorians are fully vaccinated with three doses of the vaccine.

From early January the Branch office in Victoria Barracks has been open and general Branch administration has been undertaken.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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

VALE

The following Branch members have passed away or have become known to have passed since the last edition of Camaraderie:-

Mrs B. Carruthers / Mrs S. Taylor / WGCDCR L. Hubbard / MAJOR B. Goodchild / Mrs R. Goodchild / Mrs B. Hargreaves, / Mrs L. Brumby / CAPT W. Brumby / LTCOL K. Petersen / WGCDCR C. Kilsby MBE, AFC / Mrs W. Kirkland / Mr G. Hepburn

DIARY DATES

Branch Executive Committee meetings scheduled for 2022 are: Wednesday 23 February & Wednesday 25 May (this will also be the Branch Annual General Meeting). The remaining Branch Executive Committee meetings for 2022 will be confirmed at 25th of May meeting. The Branch Executive Committee meetings are normally held at the Mail Exchange Hotel, corner Bourke 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)

WEST 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:	wabbranch@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 Mrs Barbara Wilmot.

VALE

With deep sadness we note the passing of Shirley Maude (widow of the late CMDR Reg Mathews)



Many of the members enjoying the Christmas lunch at RAAFA Bull Creek.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Mark Wainwright OAM who was awarded a Medal in the Order of Australia in the Australia Day Honours list for his service to veterans. Mark has been active giving pension and welfare advice to hundreds of veterans for over twenty years, and this is a very well-deserved recognition for his outstanding work.

RAFFLETICKETS

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 fortunately without any Covid restrictions. Mr Peter King, Deputy Commissioner for DVA was our guest and the lunch was attended by over 60 members. We conducted a short Christmas Quiz, much to the enjoyment of all present. As usual Steve Lucks ran the raffle, and there were more than 50 fabulous

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. Our report was submitted on 9th January and acknowledged by the Commission the following day.

WORK AT IRWIN BARRACKS

Preliminary works have commenced at Irwin Barracks in preparation for the major Barracks make-over forecasted with the closure of Leeuwin Barracks. We believe none of this work will affect our office at Karrakatta Community House. 13 Brigade at Irwin Barracks Karrakatta is being revamped with some new command arrangements, new equipment and vehicles. A Squadron 10 Light Horse has been upgraded to become a Regiment and has the Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicle, the 6x6 Surveillance & Reconnaissance Vehicles (a variant of the Mercedes-Benz G-Wagon) and the Hawkei PMV comprise the regiment's key operational vehicles.

DFWA SHOP

If you wish to place an order for any of the DFWA Shop items, please complete the order form details below and send your order to the address shown.



Men's Bisley Shirt
A high quality collared shirt with embroidered DFWA badge. Light blue colour and available in long or short sleeve. Size range XL, L, M, S.
\$45.00 including postage



Women's Bisley Shirt
A high quality collared shirt with embroidered DFWA badge. Light blue colour and available in long or short sleeve. Size range XL, L, M, S.
\$55.00 including postage



DFWA Polo Shirt (JB's Wear)
Smart looking polo shirt in Navy blue with gold trim and embroidered DFWA badge. Size range XXL, XL, L, M, S.
\$36.00 including postage



Zip Front Jacket
Navy blue polar fleece with DFWA embroidered badge. Size range XXL, XL, L, M, S.
\$40.00 including postage



Zip Front Vest
Navy blue polar fleece with DFWA embroidered badge. Size range XXL, XL, L, M, S.
\$35.00 including postage



DFWA Metal Lapel Badge
Attractive enamel finish with single pin attachment.
\$5.00 including postage



DFWA Cloth Pocket Badge
with three attachment pins.
\$10.00 including postage



DFWA Embroidered Cloth Patch
On a navy blue background.
\$10.00 including postage



DFWA Cap
Navy blue with DFWA embroidered badge.
\$15.00 including postage

DFWA Shop Order Form

ITEM	SIZE	QTY/SIZE	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
1. Bisley Shirt - Men's	XL, L, M, S		\$45.00	
2. Bisley Shirt —Women's	XL, L, M, S		\$55.00	
3. DFWA Cap	xxxxx		\$15.00	
4. DFWA Lapel Badge	xxxxx		\$5.00	
5. DFWA Polo Shirt	XXL, XL, L, M, S		\$36.00	
6. DFWA Cloth Badge	xxxxx		\$10.00	
7. Embroidered Patch	xxxxx		\$10.00	
8. DFWA Zip Front Jacket	XXL, XL, L, M, S		\$40.00	
9. DFWA Zip Front Vest	XXL, XL, L, M, S		\$35.00	

TOTAL DUE \$

Notes:

1. Please note that Bisley shirts are generally one size larger than most other brands.
2. All prices include postage.
3. Please specify the size required (where applicable) in the quantity column

Please enter your contact and payment details below and send your completed order form to:

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Victoria Barracks Brisbane, Enoggera QLD 4051

Or email your order and payment details to:

qldbranch@dfwa.org.au

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Title Initial Surname

Address

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Postcode Phone

Email

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Internet Banking/Direct Debit:

Bank of QLD BSB 124 185 Account No: 10 480 398

Or enclose Cheque/Money Order: \$

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2022 is a significant year in our military heritage. We will be seeing milestone anniversaries for a number of major engagements such as the Battle for Australia, Messines, Kokoda, El Alamein and Bullecourt. The Bradford Exchange will be creating editions which reflect the importance of these events in our appreciation of the unfolding Anzac story. In addition, we have commemorated Australia's latest Victoria Cross recipient, Teddy Sheean, with the support of his family.

As we approach our own 50th anniversary, The Bradford Exchange will continue to proudly support the men and women of our defence force whose duty and service to our nation represents the best of what it means to be Australian.

To see our diverse range of military-themed editions, go to www.bradford.com.au/lwf or call 02 9841 3311



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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

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Alternatively, make an electronic deposit as follows:

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

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



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