



DEBRIEF

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HONOUR THE DEAD, But Fight like Hell for the Living

NATIONAL PRESIDENTS REPORT

Over the past month, and longer, there has been a lot of work done on preparing a response to the Productivity Commission draft report on DVA Structure and Services, this response is now completed and has been lodged with the Productivity Commission. Copies of the submission have been distributed to all V.V.A.A. State branches and should be available at sub branches by now.



We have also completed and lodged a submission to the Senate Defence Foreign Affairs and Trade committee reviewing legislation in parliament titled Australian Veterans' Recognition (Putting Veterans and their Families First) Bill 2019, more commonly referred to as the Covenant, Cards and Pins Bill.

At the time of writing we are still waiting to see the DVA Report into the future of Advocacy services however I have been advised this should be available in the near future.

Two of these three matters will not be resolved before the federal election is scheduled, at this time, for May 2019, and it will probably take some time for changes to be noticed.

Advocacy services and in particular the provision of professional indemnity insurance to volunteers within the V.V.A.A. continues to be a concern to me. I believe there is a large degree of misunderstanding, particularly at sub branch levels, while I am sure executives are working with the best of intentions but that is sometimes not enough, we need to be as certain as we can that we are not at any risk.

Branch and Sub Branch AGM are in full swing and I wish all executives a successful year in 2019 in all they attempt to do for our veteran community.

Ken Foster OAM JP

National President

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WHY A NEW NAME FOR VVCS: Why “Open Arms”

The background

The Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service – known to many as VVCS – has been officially relaunched as ‘Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling’ by the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Darren Chester, ahead of the Invictus Games Sydney 2018.

Following strong advocacy by Vietnam veterans, the service was established in 1982 as the Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service. In 2007, it was renamed VVCS (the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service) to reflect the fact that the expanded service was now available to all Australian combat veterans, including peacekeepers, and their families.

The rebranding as ‘Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling’ reflects that eligibility has again significantly expanded. The service is now available to anyone who has served a day in the ADF, and their family.

The rebranding was led by the independent VVCS National Advisory Committee (NAC), which unanimously agreed to the new name and tagline. The NAC includes representatives of all VVCS’s client cohorts, including Vietnam veterans, veterans and families, as well as other key stakeholders.

The Open Arms brand was co-designed with Vietnam veterans, currently serving ADF personnel, Reservists, partners and families, contemporary veterans and VVCS peer network advisers.

Open arms are a powerful symbol of support, safety and security to the veteran community, particularly for Vietnam veterans.

During the Vietnam War, many Australian soldiers saw the Bell UH-1 Iroquois ‘Huey’ helicopter as a lifeline as it provided critical supplies to them during an operation and carried them to safety afterwards. To let the pilot know where to land, a soldier had to stand in a field with open arms, completely vulnerable. The Open Arms logo reminds us of those brave soldiers.

It also represents families welcoming soldiers home, ground crew directing planes and the counselling service’s policy of welcoming those who need support with open arms.

Members of the veteran community who took part in focus group testing found Open Arms positive, welcoming and memorable. The name resonated with personnel in all three services, while also appealing to partners and families.

The renamed organisation will provide the same professional service through the same telephone number, but under a more recognisable and memorable brand.



**A SERVICE FOUNDED
BY VIETNAM VETERANS
1800 011 046**

OUR MILITARY HISTORY

EDITORS NOTE

Over the past few years I have extracted significant dates from the Australian War Memorials web site, These dates and incidents are history and rather than repeat the list for each month every year I would like to try an alternative approach.

Members of the V.V.A.A. will have first option to write a short history of their experiences in Vietnam to take pride of place in this section, I would like to keep the articles to about 1000 words but that is not set in concrete and if there are more stories the section may extend to several pages, it is your magazine and your history,

Lets record and share the experiences.

We need your stories! A book on the war is in the works, thanks to a top Australian publisher.

And we need your stories, yarns, reflections, anecdotes and more to make it be the book we aim for. This book will tell the history of the war under the working title of *"Our Vietnam, Heroes, The People, The Stories & the facts"*

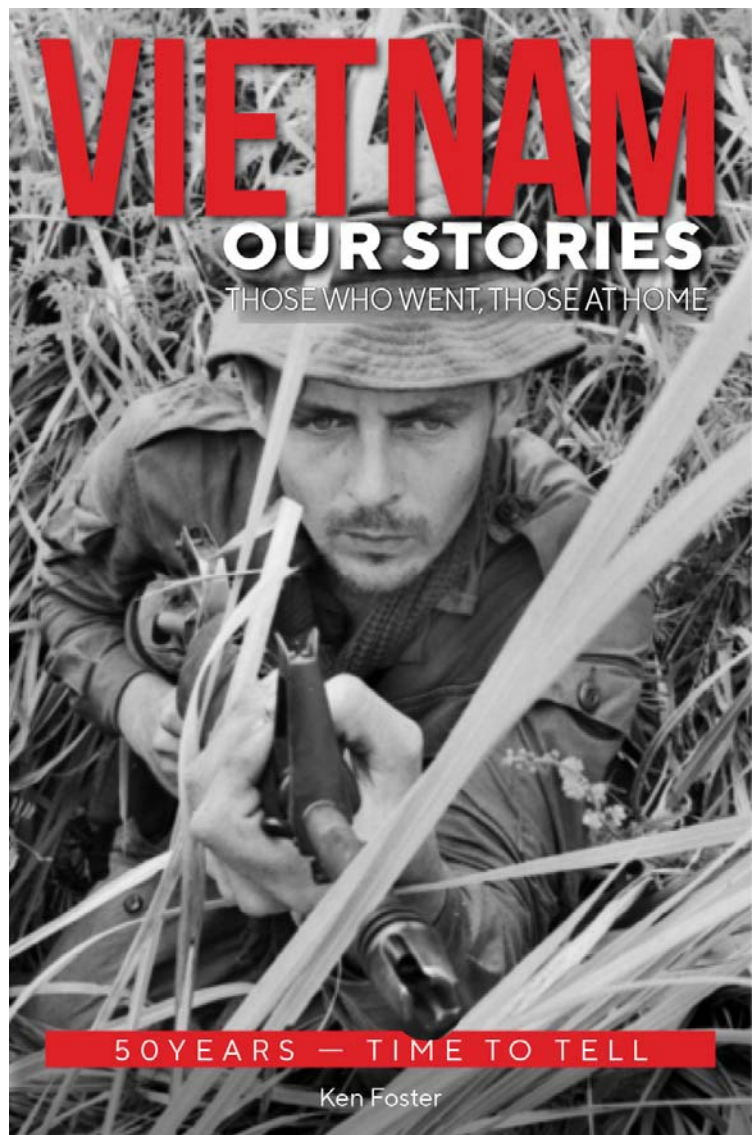
Any stories funny or wry, sad or sombre, offering insights, untold tales and thoughts that reflect what the 50,000 Aussies who went to Vietnam went through.

Many histories are told through the memories of top brass and we want a dinkum account that as near as possible captures the spirit of Vietnam Diggers as the war retreats from the memory of some people, but remains alive to so many others. We want to preserve those memories forever in the best way possible.

Send your stories to the Editor Debrief, aim for up to 1000 words, and they will be forwarded to the publisher.

Include your current residential area (City, suburb, town) and photos then and now can be included.

Lets get this done by end of March 2019



REVISED COVER OPTION.

GREATER RECOGNITION FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

NEW legislation introduced into Federal Parliament will provide better recognition of the unique nature of military service and further acknowledge the service and sacrifice of veterans and their families.

The Government's *Australian Veterans' Recognition (Putting Veterans and their Families First) Bill 2019* will establish an Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant, and as part of a wider recognition package, a card and lapel pin will be provided to veterans.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said it was a project he has been working on with ex-service organisations since becoming the Minister almost 12 months ago.

"The Government has introduced this legislation to provide a formal way for all Australians to show their appreciation to the men and women who secured the freedoms we enjoy today and to their families who have supported them," Mr Chester said. "I have consulted extensively with the ex-service community on the development of this Bill, including discussions with our 5-Eyes counterparts in the United Kingdom who have put in place similar measures.

"The covenant, card and lapel pin will allow the community — whether they are employers, businesses, community groups, veteran or sporting organisations — the opportunity to recognise the service and sacrifice of the men and women who have served our nation.

"Our government is committed to putting veterans and their families first and this legislation is part of a greater suite of measures we are putting in place.

"This Bill will create a separate Act to provide symbolic recognition for all veterans, and does not change current entitlements.

"Importantly, the Bill before Parliament includes a statement requiring the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) to adopt a beneficial approach when interpreting legislation and applying a fair, just and consistent approach to veterans' claims. It's part of our ongoing efforts to transform the culture of DVA."

The Government has received a positive response from businesses which are supportive of the recognition program. The covenant includes an oath, which all Australians will be encouraged to take at community commemorative events, and is underpinned by the new Veteran Card and an Australian Veteran Lapel Pin and a Reservist Lapel Pin.

More information on the Australian Defence Veterans Covenant can be found on the [DVA website](#).



Australia's Vietnam War' Website.
University of New South Wales Canberra
Vietnam.unsw.adfa.edu.au

The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP
Treasurer

The Hon Darren Chester MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC

Fast-tracking support to SEATO doctors and nurses

The Coalition Government is fast-tracking delivery of the Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card for members of the Australian civilian surgical and medical teams who provided medical aid, training and treatment to local Vietnamese people during the Vietnam War.

This follows a decision in the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook that, after nearly 50 years, justice is being done for this group of brave Australian doctors and nurses for their selfless contribution as members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).

This support has been brought forward a year earlier, from 1 July 2019, to provide these doctors and nurses with the support and access to medical treatments they need.

Eligible members of the Australian civilian surgical and medical teams will be able to submit an application for the Gold Veteran Card as soon as the Bill has passed the Parliament, which will be available on the DVA website.

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said the Government has listened to the concerns of these men and women and acknowledged the importance of providing them with a Gold Veteran Card as soon as possible.

"This measure will ensure eligible former members of those teams are able to gain access to treatment for all injuries or illnesses, not just those that may have arisen as a result of their employment in Vietnam," Mr Frydenberg said.

"During the Vietnam War, about 240 doctors and 210 nurses, and a small number of administrative and technical personnel worked in Vietnam under contract with the then Department of External Affairs.

"They played a significant part in Australia's contribution to the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) aid program in South Vietnam between 1964 and 1972, providing medical aid in Vietnamese civilian hospitals and training to local medical staff."

Mr Chester said this measure recognises that while the medical teams were not under the direct command and control of the Australian Defence Force during the Vietnam War, they were exposed to hazards and dangers as a result of working in a conflict zone for the Australian Government.

"These professionals put their lives and careers on hold to voluntarily travel to a warzone to provide much needed medical assistance and training, and I am pleased to see this new measure being implemented this year," Mr Chester said.

Reappointment of Director of the Australian War Memorial

The Honourable Dr Brendan Nelson AO will continue as Director of the Australian War Memorial until 31 December 2019.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said Dr Nelson had made a significant contribution to the Australian War Memorial since his appointment as Director in December 2012, including extensive upgrades to the Memorial and overseeing the Centenary of Anzac program.



"Dr Nelson's contribution to the Australian War Memorial has been outstanding as it continues to raise awareness of the service and sacrifice by current and former serving members of the Australian Defence Force," Mr Chester said.

"The Australian War Memorial is a world-class institution and as it approaches the period after the Anzac Centenary it's a critical period as a memorial to the members of the Australian armed forces who have died or served in conflict.

"Our \$498 million investment in the Australian War Memorial's redevelopment announced last year will ensure we honour all Australians who have served in our armed forces, and those men and women who serve today and help tell their stories in new ways."

In 2016, Dr Nelson was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for his services to the Parliament of Australia, to the community, to the advancement of Australian international relations and to major cultural institutions.

Dr Nelson has also been conferred Honorary Life Membership by the Returned and Services League of Australia (New South Wales Branch).



NEW APPOINTMENT BRINGS UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE TO COUNCIL OF THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

THE Council of the Australian War Memorial will benefit from the unique perspectives of its latest appointment, Ms Gwen Cherne.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester today announced that Ms Cherne would serve on the Council for a period of three years, replacing Rear Admiral Ken Doolan AO RAN (Ret'd).

"Ms Cherne is an active member of the War Widows Guild of Australia NSW, and a strong advocate for current serving families and those who are having difficulty settling into civilian life following transition from the defence force," Mr Chester said.

"Ms Cherne has a wealth of experience working in and with government agencies, non-government organisations and the United Nations and, as a war widow herself, will have a unique perspective to offer the Council.

"I have no doubt Ms Cherne will be an asset to the Council and will provide valuable insight as the War Memorial plans its \$500 million expansion to proudly tell the stories of veterans from recent conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Solomon Islands and East Timor."

Acknowledging her new role Ms Cherne said, "I am keen to work in the interests of veterans and the defence community, and make them proud.

"It is important to continue the Australian War Memorial's efforts in helping educate the Australian public to better understand the sacrifices of our serving men and women and their families, recognising the scars of their service," Ms Cherne said.

The Council of the Australian War Memorial has oversight of the executive management and policies of the Memorial.

Mr Chester thanked outgoing member, Rear Admiral Doolan for his dedication and hard work in preserving and sharing Australia's military history as part of the Council.

"Not only has Ken served on the Council for nine years, but three of those were as Chairman and in 2016 he was inducted as a Fellow of the Australian War Memorial for his outstanding contribution to the Memorial, significantly over and above what would normally be expected.

"Thank you Ken for your service, both in and out of uniform, to Australia and in ensuring the stories of our veterans are told to future generations."

More information about the Council can be found on the Australian War Memorial website.

If you would prefer to have this publication emailed directly to you please forward your email address to the National Secretary at secretary@vvaa.org.au.

Don't forget to advise him if the address changes.



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If the mountain seems too big today
then climb a hill instead
if the morning brings you sadness
it's ok to stay in bed
if the day ahead weighs heavy
and your plans feel like a curse
there's no shame in rearranging
don't make yourself feel worse
if a shower stings like needles
and a bath feels like you'll drown
if you haven't washed your hair for days
don't throw away your crown
a day is not a lifetime
a rest is not defeat
don't think of it as failure
just a quiet, kind retreat
it's ok to take a moment
from an anxious, fractured mind
the world will not stop turning
while you get realigned
the mountain will still be there
when you want to try again
you can climb it in your own time
just love yourself til then

Wise men, when in doubt whether to speak or to
keep quiet, give themselves the benefit of the
doubt, and remain silent

- Napoleon Hill
Silence Quotes

 www.brainquotes.org

YOUR ACTIVITIES REPORTED IN DEBRIEF

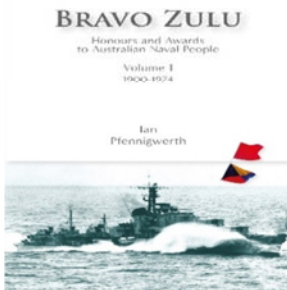
States and sub branches are encouraged to contribute reports on their activities,
particularly an opportunity to let others know what is happening in your area.

Email text in Word or photos in JPG to the editor at www.debrief@vva.org.au

Honouring the Service of Australia's Naval Men and Women

Before Federation, colonial naval officers were recognised for steadfastness and courage while serving in South Africa and China. This tradition was enhanced by the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) through its distinguished record during World War I. Navy men won Australia's first awards for gallantry in the face of the enemy in 1914, and they went on to consolidate this reputation for excellence and daring in European, Middle East and Asian theatres of war and throughout the uneasy peace that followed.

In 1939 RAN men - and later women - went to war again, cementing our Navy's reputation as a steadfast ally and determined enemy, and from 1946 the RAN fought in Korea, Malaya, Malaysia and Vietnam while developing its capabilities for sustainment, training and naval diplomacy in a Cold War world. Its Middle East engagement, from the 1991 Gulf War to this day, and in sensitive operations in the South Pacific and Southeast Asia demonstrated our Navy's capabilities and gained it international respect through the service of its men and women.



Now, in *Bravo Zulu* (navalese for 'Well Done'), Australians have a magnificent resume of the trials, tribulations and triumphs of their Navy in 115 years of service, illustrated by individual accounts of its men and women who received Imperial, Australian and foreign honours and awards for their service, gallantry or bravery. *Volume 1* covering the period 1900-74 was released in 2016. Launched by Australia's Chief of Navy in November 2018, *Volume 2*, covering the period 1975-2014, concluded this nine-year research project.

The second book, with 882 pages, describes the development and activities of the RAN from 1975, with separate chapters devoted to the Navy's role in the 1991 Gulf War, in the 1999-2000 UN East Timor peacekeeping operation, enforcement of UN sanctions on Iraq, the 2003 Iraq War the continuing service of naval people in Iraq and Afghanistan, ashore and afloat and, of course, border security operations in Australia. Above all, *Bravo Zulu Volume 2* is about people labouring mightily to ensure that Australia's Navy is acknowledged internationally for its organisational capability and operational reach. The book is illustrated with maps, diagrams and 160 photographs.



Readers like *Bravo Zulu Volume 2*

'It is a magnificent achievement and both volumes will continue to be an essential resource for anything I ever write in the future'.

'My family are especially proud to read the entry about my contribution and happy to read the stories of other recipients. I particularly like the way that the work is tied to the history of the RAN.'

'You and your team deserve great credit for providing another wonderful addition to our Navy's historical collection – BZ to you!'

'I am amazed at the material you and your team have gathered, and the level of detail within each story. I can really appreciate why this has been a labour of love for you for so long.'

Owning a Copy

Hardcover edition of *Bravo Zulu Volume 1* \$85; *Volume 2* \$90. Two-volume set \$170.
Postage and handling \$15 per volume.

Visit Ian Pfennigwerth's Naval History site: <https://www.nautilushistory.com.au/>

Or buy through the online re-sellers listed at <https://www.echobooks.com.au/military/bravo-zulu/>

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ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY BOATSWAIN'S MATE



The Boatswain's Mate (BM) provides the specialist knowledge, training and supervision of the more advanced seamanship evolutions including anchor work, rope work, small boat handling and operations, berthing, towing, helmsmanship, and replenishment (re-fuelling) at sea. In addition, BM Sailors are the Navy's close range weapon specialists, maintaining and operating weapons such as the Typhoon and Mini-Typhoon electro-optical remotely fired gun systems and the 12.7mm heavy machine gun. The BM is also the Navy's subject matter expert in F88 Austeyr rifle, F89 machine gun, 9mm pistol, 870P shotgun and batons. Along with other work groups, selected BMs can be nominated to attend the demolition charge preparation course.

The Boatswain's Mate category is also heavily involved in Boarding Operations and Force Protection. Additionally, within the seamanship area of employment, you will be able to perform the following tasks: tying knots, rope-work and work with buoys and shackles. You will also conduct ships husbandry (corrosion control), and evolutions associated with the movement of ships in harbour. Later in your career, as an Able Seaman, you may sub-specialise as a Navigator's Yeoman (NY) or Shipborne Lifesaving and Survival Equipment Maintainer (SLSEM).

As a Leading Seaman BM, you have the option of becoming an Officer of the Watch (OOW) on Armidale Class Patrol Boats (ACPB) by obtaining your Limited Navigation Watch keeping Certificate (LNWC) or Coxswain of an LHD Landing Craft (LLC).

Petty Officer Boatswains have the ability to increase skill levels by obtaining a Navigation Watch keeping Certificate (NWC).

Salary

On completion of initial military training and initial employment training you could earn a package worth at least: \$78,108 p.a.

Plus generous superannuation

Salary is based on Other Ranks - Non Technical entry. Package includes service and uniform allowances but does not include additional allowances or deductions for tax, meals and accommodation.

Australian Memorial: Phuoc Tuy Province

Not many would know that after we left Vietnam in 1972 the Vietnamese from Phuoc Tuy Province (now Baria-Vung Tau) erected this memorial for the Australians.

Of course the Communists destroyed it after they took over much to the disgust of a lot of locals!

It is the intention of the NVVM to try to recreate this memorial as a part of the entrance to the new museum.

If you have any information or can assist in any way, physical or financial please contact;

NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM

25 Veterans Drive, Newhaven, Phillip Island VIC 3925

www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org.au



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ADVOCACY CORNER.

The V.V.A.A. Administration Handbook Policy AP001 requires, at the end of the application form, details of a sponsor branch and relevant signatures.

The V.V.A.A. National Council directed that the State Branch President be made aware of who is representing in the state, that said there is provision for a delegate to sign on behalf of the State Branch President.

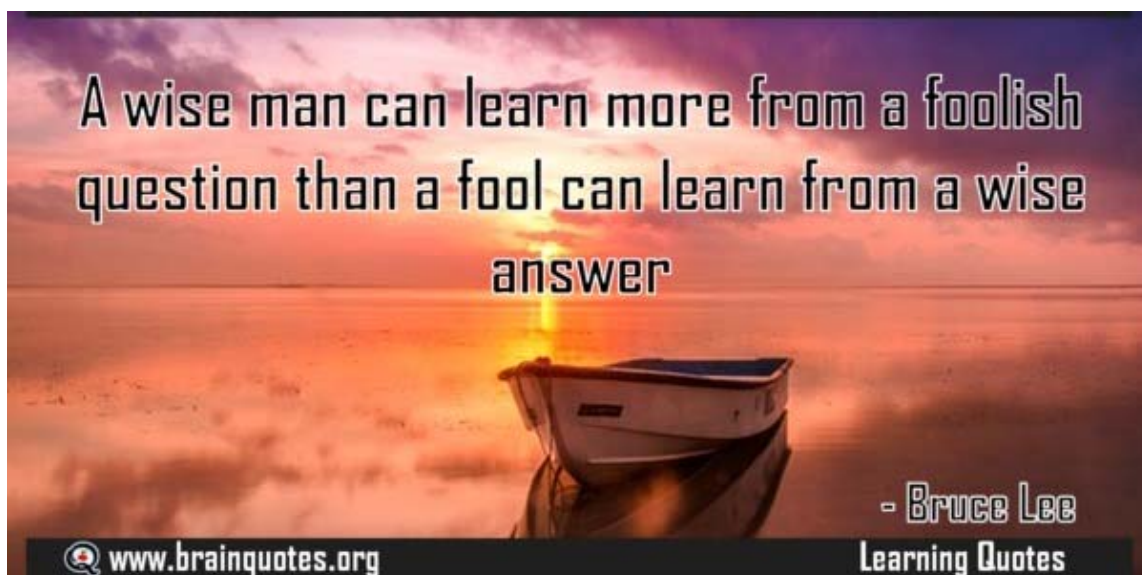
I would suggest that if the State Branch President decides to delegate to any Sub Branch President, and Sub Branch President in turn delegates to a member of the Sub Branch Executive that should be in writing.

The members application form could be noted with that delegation and amended accordingly. There is a degree of responsibility involved in signing this as a sponsor organisation.

I would suggest that the member and all levels of administration keep copies of applications, supporting documents and authorisations

The policy indicates an annual appointment as V.V.A.A. Advocacy Co-ordinator and registrar and this happened in May, all current advocates authorities expire on 30 May 2019 and any requested now would be to that date.

Applications for authorisations from 1 June 2019 may be lodged at any time and will be processed by the registry by the due date following the annual appointments at the V.V.A.A. National Congress.

**HAVE YOUR SAY— LETTERS TO DEBRIEF ARE WELCOME**

The subject matter should be generally of interest to Vietnam Veterans and their families. Brief, to the point letters have a better chance of publication. Photographs should be of good colour, quality and subject matter, in jpg or similar format. Text should be submitted in Word format with minimum formatting. Vietnam Veteran writers must identify themselves by name, state, Vietnam Unit and Tour dates. Email: debrief@vvaa.org.au

REUNIONS

**HEADQUARTER COY,
1ST AUSTRALIAN LOGISTIC SUPPORT GROUP**
and it is held in BALLARAT,

from the meet and greet on the 8TH NOVEMBER
2019 till the 11TH NOVEMBER 2019

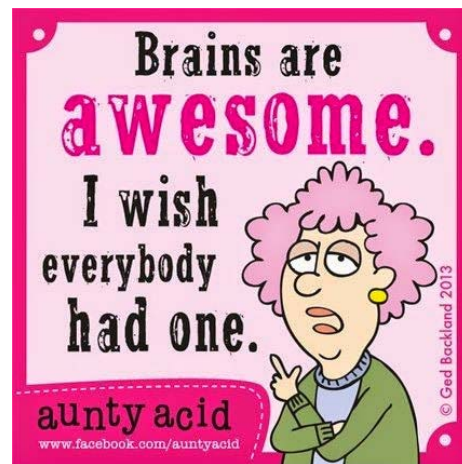
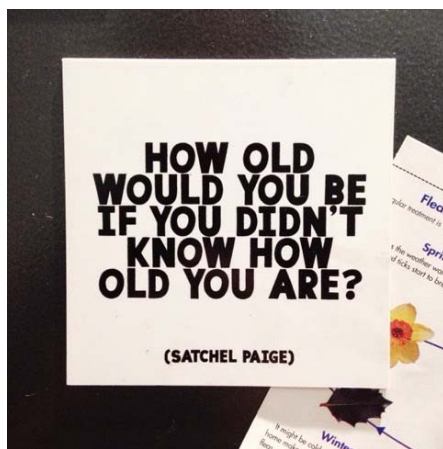
for ACCOMMODATION AND REUNION DETAILS
contact TONY BROWN on 0428852736 or
email on tony11raye13@bigpond.com.

30 Terminal Sqn Reunion Townsville 2019

16-18 August 19

An event to get all past and present termites
together in a fun and relaxed atmosphere to
share the trials and tribulations of being a ter-
mite (and possibly some tall tales)

Craig Ingram
Unit 5 28 lowth St Rosslea Qld 4812
0407173321
craingram@westnet.com.au



VETERAN FRIENDLY RETREATS

Future listing of these facilities should be available on the various VVAA State branch web sites
and these can be accessed through the web site www.vvaa.org.au



Veterans and Veterans Families
Counselling Service



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Membership enquiries welcomed



THE WAR WIDOWS GUILD OF AUSTRALIA

"We all belong to each other. We all need each other. It is in serving each other and in sacrificing for our common good that we are finding our true life."



A strong part of the Guilds History is the origins of its Logo.

The kookaburra was adopted as the Guilds Logo from its early inception and remains today.

The Kookaburra is also present on all War Widows' Guild Badges.