



Bagpipes play at Long Tan Cross for first time since 1969

Posted by Vietnam Swans on January 14, 2012

Last Saturday, 7 January 2012, there was a soft opening of the Worldwide Arms Museum in Vung Tau. To mark the occasion, owner, Robert Taylor, flew out two pipers from Melbourne. The pipers, Iain Townsley (ex British SAS with 23 years experience) and Roy Gilmore played from the turrets of the castle-like museum.

Officials from the Ministry of Culture in Hanoi were so impressed with the dignity of the event that they agreed to a request made on behalf of Iain and Roy to play at the Long Tan Cross the following day. In a very significant gesture, on this occasion, not only did the Government officials generously allow the pipers to play several pieces of music, they also gave permission for them to wear their uniforms and medals.

From the roadway, the pipers played as they marched 100 metres towards the Cross. They continued playing at the Cross. Swannie, Glenn Nolan who was in attendance, believes that this is the first time that pipes have been heard at Long Tan since the Cross was raised on the third anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan in 1969.

“There wasn’t a dry eye”, said Glenn. “The hairs stood up on the back of everyone’s neck. It was moving to say the least.”

We thank the Vietnam Swans Football Club for permission to publish this moving story and photo.



CONTACT!

Honour the dead, but fight like hell for the living.



We acknowledge the passing of Merv Gould 1 RAR (First Tour)
13 December 2011 RIP

Merv Gould will be remembered as a great bloke, who helped Vietnam Veterans in his work with other vets in establishing the Back to the Bush program at Bruce Rock every year.

Note from Judy Gould:

Dear Friends,

Thank You for your kind words ,thoughts and prayers. Our extended families have been deeply touched by the compassion and thoughtfulness shown to us all, and you will never be forgotten.

Judy and family.

Calendar of events.

12th February. Open day. ANZAC Cottage. 2.00pm.

27th February. Committee meeting. 7.00pm.

11th March. Annual General Meeting. Army Museum . Fremantle. 1.00pm.

16th April. Committee meeting. 7.00pm.

25th April. ANZAC Day (see President’s Report, page 3)

13th May. General meeting. Army Museum. Fremantle. 1.00pm.

22nd to 24th May. National Council/Congress. Geelong. Vic.

**Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia W.A. Branch Inc.
President's Report January 2012.**

Welcome to 2012. It is time to crank up the press for another year and give you an update on what is happening in the V.V.A.A. and the V.V.A.A. W.A.

V.V.A.A. Budgetary submission. A submission has been sent to the relevant Federal Government departments, outlining the concerns of the V.V.A.A. with regards to, reviews of military compensation, indexation of military superannuation and pensions, the pharmaceutical scheme, set top boxes, home medicines review and the effects of the carbon tax.

A similar submission has been made by the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations, the V.V.A.A. submission fully supports and endorses the ADSO efforts.

As we are all aware consecutive Federal Governments, make election promises and budgetary policy and initiatives, we also know that these policies can be long winded and usually watered down, when implemented.

While the V.V.A.A. has raised these above issues previously and received answers from the government in the past, we are not happy with those answers or progress on these issues.

1 LIFE. I have recently been approached by and had a meeting with the 1 LIFE Organisation, a W.A. state government supported mental health and wellbeing group, with counselling services and information on Mental health and Suicide prevention. A very good publication, Taking Care of Yourself and Your Family, is available from 1 LIFE, I will have copies of this book in the near future, should any member require a copy

The programs and services offered by 1 LIFE, complement and overlap with those services offered to veterans and their families by the V.V.C.S. These services could be of benefit to our country members and veterans in the country areas.

Annual General Meeting. By the time you receive this newsletter, it will be less than 5 weeks until the AGM and nominations for the state executive, will have closed. At this time, no nomination has been received for the position of State Secretary, it is critical for the future of the state branch, that this position to be filled. Most of the current executive and committee members have re-nominated for 2012 and one new nomination has been received for the committee.

I urge all members to consider the future of the V.V.A.A. W.A., if you have the time and the skills required to carry out the Secretary's position or fill a committee vacancy put in a nomination or come to the AGM and nominate from the floor, on the day.

Meentheena Station. In a recent conversation with Derrick Phillips, regarding progress on the veterans' retreat in the Pilbara region, the news is good. The retreat will be operational in April and the official opening is planned for July, which, coincides with the Marble Bar races.

Heart Health and follow up health and exercise programs. You would be aware of the Heart Health Program, available through the V.V.C.S. A new tender has been let for this program, the new service provider is located in Jandakot. More information is available through the V.V.C.S. if you wish to participate in the program. For those who completed the Heart Health program and wish to continue in an exercise/health program, there are a number of exercise clinics in the Metro area, that can provide follow up programs. To be eligible, you must have a Health Repatriation Card and a D904 referral from your General Practitioner. There is no cost for participation in these programs.

DVA Dental Services. A range of dental services, including preventative treatment are covered by DVA. There has been instances of dental clinics, claiming that DVA do not cover dental services, this is incorrect. In some cases, dental hygienists, due to qualification levels, are not recognised by DVA. If these services are provided by the dentist or dental clinic, DVA will cover the treatment.

Hollywood Private Hospital Strengthens Relationship with Veterans

Hollywood Private Hospital in Nedlands continues its strong relationship with WA veterans via the Z Special Unit as well as specialty programmes offered by The Hollywood Clinic.

In 2011, the Z Special Unit International donated its remaining funds of \$100,000 to Hollywood Private Hospital's Research Foundation as the Z Unit called it a day. The Z Special Unit International is an ex-service organisation founded by decorated war hero the late Mr Jack Wong Sue that wound up due to dwindling numbers of its Veteran members.

The organisation has been a generous supporter of the Research Foundation and has decided to donate its remaining funds to the Foundation which fosters medical research by Hollywood Private Hospital doctors and staff that lead to improvements in medical care and the health of the community.

Three of the five surviving diggers attended a lunch held at Hollywood Private Hospital where Ernst Baints, chairman of Z Special Unit International, presented the Foundation with the \$100,000 cheque.

Terry Bayliss Manager of the Hollywood Private Hospital Research Foundation said the foundation is not-for-profit and donations greatly assist the foundation to achieve improvements and advancement in medical care.

"We are overwhelmed by the generosity of Z Special Unit International. Their contributions over the years have made significant research advancements in areas from orthopaedics to Alzheimer's and even palliative care. We may not have furthered our knowledge in these areas without their kind support," said Mr Bayliss.

Hollywood Private Hospital covers all the running costs of the Research Foundation so that one hundred percent of contributions can be used for their intended purpose – supporting medical research. The foundation raises funds from hospital social events, staff contributions and community donations.

Hollywood Private Hospital is also donating all proceeds to the research foundation from the sale of its book *Everyone's a Hero – Celebrating 70 years of an amazing hospital* which to date is \$70,000. The Hollywood Clinic, based at Hollywood Private Hospital, also supports veterans with various programmes. The Clinic is a 40-bed unit providing excellence in acute psychiatric in-patient and day-patient care for private patients, entitled veterans and war widow/ers.

The Clinic offers a diverse range of specialised treatment programs for the management of depression and anxiety, alcohol use, post traumatic stress (for Vietnam Veterans), and trauma and recovery programmes for recently returned veterans and uniformed personnel both currently serving and non serving.

The programs are conducted by a carefully selected, skilled and experienced multidisciplinary team of health professionals, which includes clinical psychologists, registered mental health nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, art therapist, physiotherapists and dieticians.

For further information on treatment programs at The Hollywood Clinic, contact 9346 6801.

Hollywood Private Hospital is a modern, 499 bed, state-of-the-art acute care hospital in Nedlands. The hospital is a part of Ramsay Health Care Group – Australia's largest private hospital operator.

Are those who fly Aussie flags racist?

Research done by a University of Western Australian academic, Farida Fozdar, shows Aussie flag fliers are more racist than others, and 34% of them thought that the White Australia Policy had saved Australia from the problems that other countries experienced.

See: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-01-24/aussie-flag-bearers-more-racist3a-survey/3790172>

Possibly she should have also interviewed those with the sign on their car : If you don't like it, leave! That would have been more interesting.

How many Vietnam Vets are still alive?

Someone wanted to know how many Vietnam Veterans are still alive and kicking from the Vietnam War of 1962-72!

From the DVA Treatment population figures (still alive as such), there are 32,719 receiving DVA entitlements as at SEP 11 (3,900 are dependents!) = 29,219 Veterans

There were roughly 52,000 (?) who served and not knowing how many do not receive DVA entitlements that leaves around 22,781 who cannot be identified as still living, passed on or otherwise not on anyone's books!

Pepe Prendergast (Coral Reunion Network).



Australian Government

VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families
Counselling Service

What's happening at VVCS in 2012?

As you may know, VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service is a service available to all Australian veterans, peacekeepers, their families and eligible ADF personnel.

VVCS can provide support for lifestyle, health and family matters as well as issues relating to military service. Counselling is free and confidential and experienced staff can assist veterans and their families.

The National Advisory Committee (NAC) to the Minister of Veterans' Affairs on the effectiveness of VVCS is visiting WA on 31 Jan 2012 for consultations with clients, stakeholders, Defence representatives, and VVCS staff. The NAC's main role is to provide advice, guidance, and consultation on the needs of the veteran and Defence community and opportunities for the growth, direction and priorities of VVCS. The NAC comprises representatives from the Veteran and Defence communities, medical and allied health professionals, key VVCS client groups and representatives from DVA.

Group Programs and Workshops

In addition to counselling services, VVCS runs groups and workshops to help you lead a healthier and happier life. These programs cover a range of topics and issues including relationships, anger, anxiety and stress, depression, lifestyle and transitional issues. Most groups are available to eligible clients of VVCS and are offered during/ after business hours and in regional areas when possible.

“Why would I want to do a group or workshop?”

Some of the benefits that people gain from doing VVCS programs can include;

An understanding that “I am not alone” and that others share similar concerns and experiences.

An improvement in self-esteem and assertiveness.

Learning a proactive approach to managing personal challenges.

An improvement in relationships and communication skills.

Developing new skills like relaxation or anxiety/ depression/anger management strategies.

To find out more about VVCS services and programs, consult the attached group programs brochure or call VVCS on 1800 011 046 or visit our website. www.dva.gov.au/health/vvcs

Supporters' corner: Zamia Cafe. Kings Park. Hollywood Hospital. Rigby's Tavern. Don Kyatt Spares, Kewdale.

President's Report continued:

Country area representatives. This idea was raised some years back but was not followed through at that time. I would like to introduce this initiative, having members in country areas become a V.V.A.A. W.A. point of contact in their respective areas. I would like to hear from any country member, who is interested in becoming involved in establishing this network of V.V.A.A. W.A. representatives in W.A. It would be preferable that you have internet/e-mail access, for ease of communication, as you will be considered as a committee member.

ANZAC Day. Planning for ANZAC Day is in progress.

6.00am- Dawn Service, Kings Park.

7.30am- Vietnam Veterans' Service, Vietnam Memorial.

From **7.00am-** Gunfire Breakfast, Rigby's. .

10.00am- Perth city march and service. Social function and lunch at Rigby's, following the march and service.

5.30pm- Sunset Service, Anzac Cottage.

I have yet to receive any information from Perth Racing, regarding tickets for the Diggers' Cup Race Meeting but I am hopeful that we will again be issued tickets for this event.

Dates, to keep in mind.

14th of July 2012. Sausage Sizzle. IGA. Canning Vale.

18th of August 2012. Vietnam Veterans' Day Service, Kings Park. Remember, as the 18th is on a Saturday this year, the Service will be held on that day, not on the Sunday.

Richard Williams., State President.

Fatty Liver (Non-alcoholic Fatty Liver and Alcoholic Fatty Liver)

Because of this generation's aging, obesity and life-style, Fatty Liver Disease (FLD) is seen as the next great health epidemic. American figures are showing that this is now affecting 33% of European-Americans, and Australia is following the trend. This medical summary may be informative:

“The Adult Treatment Panel III defines metabolic syndrome as having three of the following: visceral obesity, hypertension, elevated fasting blood glucose, hypertriglyceridemia, or low high-density lipoprotein (HDL) levels. The criterion for visceral obesity is a waist circumference greater than 40 inches in men and greater than 35 inches in women. Hypertension is defined as blood pressure greater than 130/85mm Hg. Glucose levels above 100 and triglyceride levels of 150 or greater are considered elevated. HDL levels below 40 for men and below 50 for women are considered low [National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP) Expert Panel on Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Cholesterol in Adults (Adult Treatment Panel III), 2002]. Because as many as 90% of NAFLD cases have at least one component of the metabolic syndrome and as many as 33% have three or more components, NAFLD is characterized as the hepatic manifestation of the metabolic syndrome”. (Lam & Younossi, 2010, p. 121)

This condition affects the quality of our future lives, and the good news for most of us is that it is reversible. See your medical practitioner for advice. (Editor)

Men's Shed Gosnells

The Gosnells Community Men's Shed is progressing quite quickly. A decision has been made on a site in the heart of Gosnells and it is likely that meetings may commence at that site by July, 2012.

In the mean time the organizers are busily arranging for all the necessary details to be finalized, including seeking Incorporation, preparing a Constitution and so on. Already some 50 men have put their hand up to become involved with the shed and it is looking as though it will have a substantial membership by the time the shed is open for business. The Rotary Club of Southern Districts has agreed to commit some \$30,000 towards the project and is hoping to attract funding from Lotteries West and other local organizations to ensure the shed is a quality development to serve the community of Gosnells and surrounding areas.



Capturer of iconic Vietnam image passes away

Mike Coleridge 11 July 1933– 10th January 2012

Earlier this month the PR Photographer who captured the image etched into the rear wall of the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial on ANZAC Parade in Canberra passed away peacefully in a Canberra Hospital.

That widely recognised photo depicts members of 5pl B Coy 7RAR on 26th August 1967 awaiting a helicopter lift back to Nui Dat and Mike Coleridge shunned publicity and in 2002 at the 10th anniversary Service of our Memorial had to be strongly persuaded to pose for a re-enactment of the photo that is now recognised as the iconic image of Australians in the Vietnam War. Mike also only agreed to attend the 2002 Service and march if his beloved grand-daughter could march with him.

Mike was born in Slovenia, Vietnam Veteran, Photographer, and nice bloke.

Pete Ryan, President

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Photo EKN/67/0130/VN Thanks to AWM for permission to publish.

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John Pollack 1922-2011: Friend of Vietnam Vets- RIP

John Pollack was born in Austria in 1922 but fled when the Nazis arrived. His family migrated to Australia, via Scotland in 1939, and he served in the Australian army, in Australia, during the war. He later went to Sydney University and after completing his PhD in Canada he worked for 50 years at Sydney University.

His contact with Vietnam vets came with his understanding of the affect of Agent Orange on the human body.

"... from the 1970s began to think about the social and moral responsibilities of science. He participated in and helped generate many campaigns and groups including Social Responsibility in Science (SRS), Toxic Chemicals Committee (within the Total Environment Centre), and the Centre for Human Aspect of Science and Technology. He contributed to inquiries into, and campaigns against the use of pesticides and industrial hazardous waste, and the home telephone would regularly ring

for his advice and help as Vietnam veterans or individuals with multiple chemical sensitivity or chronic fatigue syndrome sought his assistance. John advised and assisted the Veterans in the Royal Commission on the use and effects of chemical agents on Australian personnel in Vietnam and gave evidence on the links between Agent Orange and health problems. Later he published leaflets on heavy metals and a small book on how toxins effect and break down in the body. He was committed to devising new procedures that would accurately assess the toxicity of hazardous chemical mixtures and participated in many government committees to try to raise safety standards in chemical use".



Long Tan Vietnam Hero on List of Victoria Cross Possibles

The Commander at the helm of the historical and bloody Battle of Long Tan has welcomed the addition of an "unsung hero" of the Vietnam War to the list of candidates for a retrospective Victoria Cross. Lt Colonel (Retired) Harry Smith said it was "only right and proper" that the Defence Honours Awards Tribunal investigate posthumous VCs for soldiers in the Vietnam and Korean conflicts alongside those for the two World Wars.

"I am cheered that my formal application for Warrant Officer Jack Kirby for his sustained gallantry at Long Tan has been accepted.

Throughout the battle 'Big Jack' disregarded his own safety while braving enemy fire to distribute ammunition," commented Smith. "Jack continuously exposed himself to enemy fire to carry wounded Australians over his shoulder back to the Company Aid Post. He also rushed out of the D Coy perimeter to silence a wheeled enemy heavy machine gun which was setting up less than 50 metres away from the Australians. Jack knew instinctively that in just a few moments this heavy machinegun would be able to strafe and decimate the Australians. He killed the enemy machinegun crew, then rushed back and continued to carry on handing out ammunition, moving around the entire company position and giving out words of encouragement."

"It is an abysmal situation that not one VC was awarded in the Australian Task Force battalions between 1965 and 1972, although they fought significant battles such as Long Tan, Coral-Balmoral and Bin Ba," said Colonel Smith.

"It is particularly shameful when you consider that in those 10 years Australia lost some 520 young men and another 2,200 wounded." We thank Martin Walsh (Red Dune Films) for permission to publish this story. January 12, 2012.