



RTFV-35SQN Newsletter



02 November 2008

Hi All

I have attended a meeting with the Vets Affairs Minister, Mr. Alan Griffith. The meeting was about his advisory council. It seems a good idea. It will have no real power but will advise him on Veterans matters and a sounding board for him to float his and the Government's ideas, thoughts etc. The advisory council is as follows:

Dr Allan Hawke – Chair, ACT. Mr Frank Benfield, QLD. Group Captain Dr Robert Black AM RFD, S.A. Hon Graham Edwards, WA. Mrs June Healy OAM, ACT. Commodore Nick Helyer MBE RANR, NSW. Warrant Officer Peter Hind OAM, QLD. Mr Kenneth Kipping AM, ACT. Ms Gail MacDonell, NSW. Ms Anne Pahl, VIC. Mr Phil Pyke, TAS. Ms Donna Reggett, QLD. Brigadier Keith V Rossi (Rtd) AM OBE RFD ED, VIC. Brigadier Neil Weekes (Rtd) AM MC, QLD.

ANZAC Day 2009

Both John and I attended the Anzac Day Committee Meeting. We form up in much the same position as last year. Probably in Elizabeth Street but I will have more information nearer to Anzac Day. We were approached by Neil Hanckley, asking to join us

at the Port Office Hotel after the march. He is a member of 36 Sqn. They have about 16 to 20 members. The more the merrier. 2 Sqn is not interested in joining us. I will have a meeting with the Port Office in the New Year to finalize 2009 Anzac Day but if it is as good as this year that will be O.K. If you don't wish to march on Anzac Day or have a problem of getting to the city for the march but wish to attend the after march function, let me know. There are other options i.e. taxi, friend of family. It is important that we make contact and keep in contact with each other.

Medals for Vets

It is great news to see that the medal for the Battle of Long Tan has been awarded. Also all the soldiers can wear the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry Unit Citation. They can wear alongside of the U.S. Presidential Citation. Long overdue. Congratulations to all those diggers from 6 R.A.R.

Life Style Programme

My partner and I have done a life style programme which we found beneficial. It helps your partner to adjust and understand some problems that veterans have. It is a 3 to 4 day course. Some group sessions, some female/males

only. It is worth considering. You can also do a heart health programme with V.V.C.S. Contact details call 1800 011 046 plus I am happy to supply a list of addresses for each state. You can contact them with any problem. They will assist or pass you on to someone who can.

Website and email address.

If you would like an email address but don't have a computer you can obtain an email address at a council or shire council library or indeed through your family your email address is unique. You can use any name or numbers whichever you prefer and if the address you wish to use is available they will allocate that email address to you and that is your email address. If you don't get an email address don't worry as I will still post out newsletters. All I.S.P. providers will give you an email address and if you access through a public library there is no cost.

Our website continues to develop. I am getting a few stories from members but I need a lot more though. So send in more stories, jokes etc for our website.

Unfortunately our webmaster, Leo Galligan, lost his son-in-law recently due to cancer- Martyn

was 33 years old. Deepest sympathy to Leo and his family.

Mail to the Minister

This is a copy of an email I've sent to the Minister of Veterans Affairs.

"I am emailing you about a concern that I have with my local doctor. I feel it is discrimination.

I like to make the first appointment of the day as I get anxious and upset if I have to wait (this stems from Vietnam, waiting for attacks that did or did not happen etc. and you become anxious).

I was told by my L.M.O. doctor that I could not have the first appointment as these were for workers and paying customers not bulk billing. In my opinion if doctors can get away with this, they may start to say that they will only see veterans Mondays and Fridays or at any time of day they wish. They told me that this was for people who work. Most working people leave home between 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. to get to work and would find it hard to get to the doctors in the early morning. In my discussion with them I informed them that these workers they give priority to, if the diggers of WWI, WWII did not make the sacrifice that they did, would be working as a colony of Japan with the possibility of no doctors at all. I have had a specialist surgeon refuse to see me because I am a Veterans Affairs gold car holder. I am most upset about this form of discrimination. If it is allowed to continue it could spread throughout the whole veteran's community.

This incident has set me back at least 10 years. I thought all the stigma from Vietnam had finished but this incident proves that it hasn't finished.

I am the Honorary Treasurer/Secretary of RTFV-35Sqn and will inform all my members about this incident and see if they are having similar problems. I would like to get some media interest in this issue as I feel it concerns not only past veterans but future veterans who may incur the same problem."

I was subsequently contacted by Veterans Affairs saying there was nothing the Minister can do about this issue. They are sending me documents to complain to the State Health Commission.

History

I recently dug out my Bicentennial Diary and have come across some interesting dates:-

Thursday 5 May 1966:

First National Serviceman arrives in Vietnam

Thursday 28 April 1965:

First Combat Troops arrive in Vietnam

Thursday 19 February 1942:

Darwin bombed by Japan – 250 killed

Monday 11 April 1941:

Siege of Tobruk begins

Sunday 27 March 1939:

Australia's first military aircraft test flight

Thursday 31 March 1921:

R.A.A.F. founded

Sunday 20 March 1917:

Frank McNamara – first Australian airman wins V/C

Thursday 4 February 1874:

Mark Bell becomes first Australian born winner of V/C

I will include more events in future newsletters.

Veterans Affairs

Bureaucrats are saying returned service personnel are feigning illness. This reminds of a book called "Gallipoli Sniper". Billy Sing was an accredited with over 200 kills as a sniper at Gallipoli. He was evacuated three times from Gallipoli with dysentery, shrapnel and bullets wounds. He was later wounded after Gallipoli in France. In all he was wounded three times by bullets or shrapnel. Also he was gassed (mustard gas). Apparently the diggers could hear by the noise of the shells that they were gas and had time to put their gas masks on. Billy Sing being a sniper was forward of the main trenches and was slightly gassed. He spent 6 weeks recovering in a hospital.

But with all his wounds, gassing etc he was discharged as medically fit (which he wasn't). He worked in the bush, cane cutting, roustabout, miner etc but after the war he could not return to cane cutting. He took advantage of the land that diggers received. At times he was too ill to work the land. He eventually came to live

in Brisbane to receive better medical treatment. He died aged 57 in 1953 in West End, Brisbane. His lungs had virtually stopped operating – so much for being discharged ‘medically fit’.

I encourage every veteran I meet that if they haven't claimed from Veterans Affairs to do so.

Entertainment

If you are in Brisbane and looking to take your grandchildren for a day with a difference, I can recommend the Tramway Museum at McGinn Road, Ferny Grove. Concession is \$9, children \$6, kids under 5 are free. It is open Sundays 12 noon til 3 p.m. subject to weather. They don't take the trams out in the rain. The kids get about 10 rides on the trams. The oldest being 1901 not bad considering electric trams only started in 1897. Horse drawn before that. There are a few old buses plus the rescue truck that towed the broken down trams – well worth a few hours. There is a tram shop that sells memorabilia of days gone by.

Qld. Rail Museum, North Street, Ipswich – This is an excellent outing for adults and children. There are enough activities for all ages. There are model railways, clowns, magic shows, various activities like dress ups, three wheelers to ride on miniature roads and railway crossings and

stations, room of mirrors, throwing activities, skittles etc. They have a tilt train simulator the kids and older kids 60 and over, can drive. The kids can get on board diesel, steam and electric trains. There is actually a workshop tour. You could spend a whole day at the Museum. Costs are \$14 adults, \$10 for children and children under 3 are free. Well worth a visit with or without kids.

I attended the Bronco/Titan match at Lang Park. It is no longer just a game. Before you go in there is merchandise, balloons for the kids etc when you get inside cheer squads, eat a pie you could win \$750, tug of war etc. The whole thing is an experience. Even the train ride home in a packed train. Well worth the effort.

Into golf?

I am now Secretary of the Arana Leagues Social Golf Club. We have about 40 to 50 players with about 30 or more playing every second Saturday 9 holes with the occasional bus trip playing 18 holes. About once a year we do an overnighter. Any of our members wishing to play are more than welcome. I won the “B” grade net this year. I am a dead set chocker. I had rounds of 42 + 50 + 50 lost by two strokes.

RTFV-35 Sqn ring

The ring has been the reason that this newsletter has been late. The RTFV-35Sqn rings have finally been finished. I am very pleased with them. Everyone I have showed them to is impressed. They cost \$290 each. They are 15 grams/silver. I have had mine engraved underneath with my name and '69 – 70'. By doing the engraving it has personalized the ring and when I hand it down to my grandson it will be a great keepsake. Pictures of the ring appear later in this newsletter.

The engraving is hard to do because of the depth of the ring. I can get the ring engraved for \$25 for anyone purchasing a ring or you can go to an engraver to see if he can do it. As for sizing the ring to fit your finger any jeweller will be able to do this for you. I have had to purchase 5 rings.

The photo does not do the ring justice but everyone who has seen it says “wow”.

And finally

I still have about 14 shirts left. There must be 14 of you guys who want a shirt with RTFV/35Sqn logo.

I am still chasing fees for membership. \$5 p.a. or \$50 for life membership.

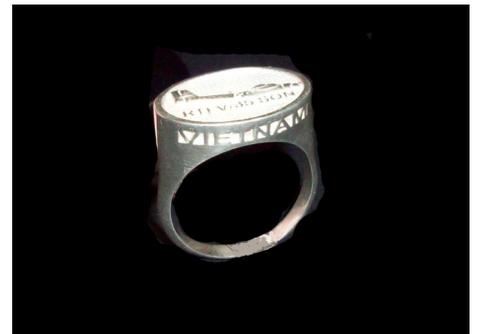
John Sambrooks

The RTFV-35 Sqn Ring



Have your name engraved on the under-side - \$25.00.

On the opposite side to the word "Vietnam", are the figures "1964—1972".



The ring contains 15 gms of silver.

\$290.00 ea.



4 sold in two weeks—order yours now.

Contact your Secretary—Treasurer, John Sambrooks for more details.