

CONTACT !



*Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans and
Associated Forces Inc.
Newsletter*

June 2009

CONTACT !

© JOURNAL OF BLUE MOUNTAINS VIETNAM VETERANS & ASSOCIATED FORCES INC.
incorporating RAAF VIETNAM ASSN. & QANTAS "SKIPPY SQUADRON" ASSN.

ABN 74 645 329 198

CFN 17276

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THOSE WHO SERVED IN ALL POST WORLD WAR II CONFLICTS

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Your Committee

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<i>Secretary:</i>	<i>John Fenton</i>	<i>tel (02) 4647 9742</i>
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<i>Welfare Coordinator:</i>	<i>Ray Westwell</i>	<i>tel (02) 6352 1945</i>
<i>Yard Maintenance</i>	<i>Peter Jones</i>	<i>tel (02) 4751 8833</i>

12 July

09 August 13 September

11 October 08 November

2009 Committee Meeting Dates
All meetings commence 1000hrs at
Legacy Office, Raymond Lane
Springwood

Welfare Officers

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PRESIDENTS REPORT

Just a short report this time as most members are aware I've been off the scene for the last few weeks.

Our new team is settling in well and starting to catch up on the large backlog of administrative matters. Good news for our lawn mowing crew, they have finally received their ride on mower back after the motor was repaired under warranty. Just in time for the quiet period, how do they manage that !!

Preparation for Memorial Day is moving along well, with travel arrangements and accommodation plans for Keith and Florence Payne well in hand. I would also like to mention that there **will be** a shortened march this year. Look for the STOP PRESS note in this newsletter.

Without dwelling on my recent minor medical problems I would highly recommend anyone having one or two knee replacements or hip replacements to go into Rehab as it really speeds up the recovery period.

My report would not be complete without sincere congratulations to our longstanding member John King for this recent award of the OAM. Congratulations John from all of us.

Jack Lake

President

The President and the Committee wish the following members who share May as their Birth month a very Happy Birthday

Robert Greenwood, E James Haynes, Robert Greenwood AFC, Ray Ashton, Stan Wilson, George Whatman, Warren Flint, Ken Howard, Stew Bonett, Tom Anderson, Clive Bond, Graham Dunstan, Keith Bosley, Rick McLean, Ron Aitken, Max Hemmy, Nev Rogers, Stew McAlister MBE, John Harris, Terry Byrne, Bob Massina, Bob Trease, Ted McEvoy, Rex Britton, Mike Churchin, John Kiewiet, Glynn Young, Mick Hunter, John Hasler, Richard Stone, Barry Dean, Col Field, Richrad Moxey, John Dennett, Wayne Darcy, Ted Gadd, Terry Pracy, Col Jackson, Ken Fell, Dave Healey, Willem Hazewinkel, Michael Bolton, Alan Braid, Henry Fabisiak, Dennis Ryan, Vickie Barnes, David Glasson.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BLOKES and Vicki - DON'T OVERDO THE CELEBERATING

Welfare Waffles

Firstly I would like to thank John Staal for his endeavours with welfare matters over a very long period. John has requested a break from these duties because of his many other commitments. There has been an increase in the number of disability claims submitted in recent weeks. We do encourage members to address their concerns regarding service related disabilities with our welfare officers as soon as practicable.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs has stated that families of deceased veterans will be presented with an Australian flag as a mark of the veteran's service to Australia, a small quantity of flags have been provided by our local Federal Member, Bob Debus MP. These flags are for presentation in the mountains area, for those Welfare Officers further afield requiring a flag to present to a member's family, please approach your local Federal Member

John Fenton

For Ray Westwell

World War II - Victory in Europe - VE Day, May 8th

On 7 May 1945 the German High Command authorised the signing of an unconditional surrender on all fronts: the war in Europe was over.

The surrender was to take effect at midnight on 8-9 May 1945. The following day, 8 May, was declared VE (Victory in Europe) Day, but in Australia, celebration was tempered with the knowledge that the war in the Pacific was still to be won. It was to be another 3 months before victory in the Pacific was realized.

Australians serving overseas joined wholeheartedly in the celebrations. While in the major Australian cities there were similar outbursts of rejoicing, overall, the mood across the country was sombre. Churches held thanksgiving services and on 9 May 100,000 people attended the service at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne. On that day in Canberra the editorial writer of *The Canberra Times* fancied that the floodlights over the Australian War Memorial stood "in bright relief against the darkness which is now passing from Europe, and soon from the entire world".

A Little Light Humour in Motion

Seen recently on a Septic Tank Truck in west Qld: "Yesterday's Meals on Wheels"

Another Septic Tank Truck in NSW had the slogan: "We are #1 in the #2 business"

..... STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

The Memorial Service is to start at 12:00hrs, please be in place no later than 11:45hrs and where possible close to your Unit Banner to ensure an orderly assembly at the Memorial Park.

The Lithgow Highland Pipe Band will provide music suitable for the occasion prior to the commencement of the service.

Your Committee has advised that there will be a reduced march. All members and all other Associations are encouraged to march under their Unit / Association banners. You are advised that there will be Cadets assisting as Flag Marshals during the Beating of the Retreat, but unlike previous marches the Cadets will not be assisting as banner bearers.

The proposed march will commence immediately after the service at the Memorial and then proceed east along Macquarie Road turning left into the Springwood Sport Club car parking area.

..... STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

PADRE'S CORNER

How often have I heard it – “You know Padre’, I’m not religious, but I do believe in God.”?

OK then, What is religion? Or What does it mean to be religious? To a lot of people, being religious means sticking to certain churchy traditions and formal rituals and it can also mean being sober, serious, lacking enjoyment in life and a restricted sense of humour. In fact some early Christian writers and some later “religious” leaders considered that because religion and faith was such a serious matter any enjoyment in life must be a sin. Nearly 300 years ago, John Wesley (of Methodist faith) wrote:

“I can’t think that when God sent us into the world He decreed that we should be perpetually miserable in it, that all mirth is vain and useless, if not sinful” if this was so “Why did the writer of the Psalms encourage us to be happy in the Lord?”

But look at the example of Jesus Himself. He attended parties, banquets and receptions. In fact some of His enemies called Him a glutton and a wine-bibber – in our terms a guts and boozier. He was neither but He enjoyed life!

OK then what is religion?

The Bible says true religion is not ritualistic actions of formal procedures, it is an attitude of heart and mind which means we look to God in Jesus for forgiveness of our short-comings and for the strength to act and live the way He wants us to. Then we often find “Religion”, whatever form it takes, can help us to worship and follow The Almighty – and enjoy life while we do so.

Going back to the original statement, “...but I believe in God”, let me say straight up, believing that God exists, and that He is the author of creation, is not enough to get us a ticket into Heaven. Even the Devil believes that and there is no way he is on the way to God’s eternal presence.

Believing in God and doing good, as best we can, is heading in the right direction but even that cannot get us through the ‘Pearly Gates’ – the plain fact is that everyone of us has broken so many of God’s instructions that we just can’t make up for it on our own. Belief in God needs to include belief in His Son, Jesus, and not just that He existed, but that through His death He made it possible for our bad bits to be forgiven and then that means of course, we go to God’s presence when we die – Heaven.

I am not “religious” – that is tied up by men’s rules for worship – but I do use man – made forms to help me worship God. And I believe in God, that He sent His Son Jesus to bring us back in to close contact with Him and that means a place with Him in Eternity.....Where do you stand?

Bill Wheeler
02 4754 4575

Life's tragedy is that we get old too soon and wise too late.



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2173 Corporal Ernest Albert Corey MM and three Bars

(The only soldier in the British Commonwealth to be awarded the Military Medal four times.)

Ernest Albert Corey was born on December 20, 1891, in the tiny settlement of Numeralla, NSW, on the slopes of the Southern Alps near the town of Cooma. Educated at Thirbegal Public School, about 20 miles from Cooma he left school to become a blacksmith's striker at Martin's Smithy in Cooma – where he was working when the Great war erupted in 1914.

When the "Men from Snowy River" recruiting march left Delegate for Goulburn, in January 1916 the group numbered 30. By the time they had covered the 220 mile march, by way of Nimmitabel, Cooma, Thredbo, Michelago, Queanbeyan, Bungendore and Tarago, their strength had increased to 144 – Corey joined them in Nimmitabel. At the time of his enlistment he was described as being 5' 7½" tall and 154½ lbs.

Following training at Goulburn camp, Ernie Corey left Australia in September 1916 on board the Port Sydney bound for England with the 4th Reinforcements for the 55th Battalion (5th Division). After spending three months with the 14th Training Battalion at Hurdcott, he left for France to join the 55th Battalion at Montauban, on the desolate moorland of the old Somme battlefield. He was posted to the grenade section of "C" Company, and his first introduction to the front line was in the Guedecourt sector, shortly before the Germans withdrew from their Winter positions in front of Bapaume.

On April 2, Corey took part in his first battle, the capture of Doignies, one of the villages held by the Germans in front of the Hindenburg Line. Shortly afterwards the 55th and other units of the 5th Division were withdrawn for a well-earned rest, but a few weeks later the Division was recalled to the front to relieve the 1st Division near Bullecourt where heavy fighting had been taking place.

In the early hours of May 15, the Germans launched their seventh and final counter attack of the battle in an attempt to drive out the Australians and the British on their left. The attack, preceded by a shattering bombardment of heavy and light trench mortars, reinforced later by guns of all calibre, was repulsed by one of the 55th's sister battalions, the 54th, which was holding the right flank of the Australian position.

Losses on both sides were heavy, and during the morning, the Commanding Officer of the 55th, Lieutenant Colonel P.W. Woods, then in support, called for volunteers with a knowledge of first-aid, to assist

ATTENTION CURRENT and EX-SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED AT RAAF RICHMOND

One of the Hawkesbury Regional Museum's most popular displays will return soon; the RAAF Display, affectionately known as The RAAF Room, is being reinstalled. All facets of the original display were created in 1988 with the help of many organizations including the Hawkesbury Historical Society, RAAF Richmond staff and numerous base personnel contributing items for display. The Museum was temporarily closed late 2008 / early 2009 for renovation of Howes House and relocation of some displays to the new extension in Baker Street. The RAAF Room is to remain in the Georgian building Howes House which is found in Thompson Square, Windsor. The Regional Museum Staff are hoping to re-open the Museum in 2010 to the public. The display will include Military and Social aspects that have gone to create the Hawkesbury Region as we know it now. In particular, aspects of RAAF families growing up in the region. Many of us would remember the early 1960s floods that created an island of the Base and all but went over the rail bridges. On behalf of the Hawkesbury Regional Museum I would like to ask all fine members of RAAF Richmond, past and present, to search your old boxes for anything that could be used to remember our Base. If you think what you have maybe worthy or if you think it is not worthy, please contact Diana Robson on 02 4560 4586. You can also email your queries to drobson@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

Never be afraid to try something new. Remember that a lone amateur built the Ark. A large group of professionals built the Titanic.

Editor's Tip

Do you have trouble with finding the elusive form required to be submitted to claim ATO GST Exemption for your particular case (car or car parts):

1. **disabled veteran** (Nat NO. 3418-11.2006), or
2. **person with disability - gainfully employed** (Nat NO. 3419-11.2006).

Here's the go:-

- a. Open the PC to your particular provider location bar (Mozilla Firefox) or Internet Explorer (Google) search box, Type in **ato.gov.au** and **search**.
- b. This opens the ATO Homepage (Bookmark this page for Mozilla users or add to Favourites List for Explorer users).
- c. In the top left hand search box click on **find a form or publication, all forms, search**. A **Nat Number** search box is located at the top centre of the new page. Insert the number: **3418 for disabled veterans** or **3419 for person with disability - gainfully employed**.

Hey Presto ! you are now ready to print

**VOLUNTEER
LAWN MAINTENANCE SERVICE**

We are **desperately** in need of volunteers living within the Blue Mountains / lower Mountains area, who can give about one day a week or fortnight, to **supervise work-for-the-dole participants** with lawn maintenance for needy disabled veterans and war widows.

You won't need to bring any tools as all equipment and transport will be supplied by the Association.

If you are able to help please telephone Peter Jones on (02) 4751 8833.

Requests for lawns to be mowed can be made through the office on (02) 4751 8528, however, if you would like more information please call Peter Jones.

40th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATING THE BATTLE OF BINH BA — JUNE 1965

The 40th anniversary of one of the most significant Australian battles of the Vietnam War will be commemorated this year. The Battle of Binh Ba was fought in early June 1969 in central Phuoc Tuy Province in a village located 5 kilometres north of the Australian headquarters at Nui Dat. Early in the morning of 6 June an Australian tank and an armoured vehicle had been fired on by a Rifle Propelled Grenade (RPG) from a house as they passed through the village of Binh Ba. The village was occupied by a strong combined force of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army regulars. The Australian Task Force Ready Reaction Force involved more than 330 Australians, consisted of D Company 5RAR, a troop of tanks (two from 1 Troop and two from 2 Troop 1st Armoured Regiment) and an Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) Troop with preparation from No. 9 Squadron Gunships. The group assaulted Binh Ba from the west and heavy fighting followed as they encountered fierce North Vietnamese opposition. The fighting was of an intensity rarely matched in any other period of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

An Australian force of infantry and armour moved in after awaiting approval from the local district chief to enter the village. Extensive efforts were made to clear the village of civilians. Fierce close-quarter fighting ensued, with tanks providing support with their formidable firepower. The enemy soldiers kept undercover, firing from doorways and windows, then jumping into underground bunkers the villagers had built to protect themselves from attack. By the end of the second day most of the enemy were either dead or had withdrawn. One Australian was killed during this battle, Pte Wayne Teeling from 10 Platoon D Company. There is some confusion on Australian wounded during this battle, all documents sourced for this article indicate between 8 and 11 Australians wounded. Operation Hammer concluded with a sweep through the village at 8am on June 8, 1969. It is estimated that at least 91 enemy soldiers were killed during the battle, with six wounded and eight taken prisoner. The town was severely damaged during the battle and although some civilians were killed during the fighting, Australians were sent to distribute food and aid and to begin work on rebuilding the village immediately after the battle.

Minister of Veterans' Affairs, Mr Alan Griffin said "It is a battle not widely known outside military and historical circles, yet it is a testament to the superb fighting qualities of Australian forces," "Like the Battles of Long Tan and Coral/Balmoral, the Battle of Binh Ba resulted in Battle Honours being awarded to Australian units involved in the Action."

RAFFLE RETURNS - IMPORTANT NOTE

DEAR ALL, IN THE LAST RAFFLE WE NOTED THAT SOME CASH RAFFLE RETURNS WERE MISSING SOME LOOSE MONIES FROM DAMAGED ENVELOPES, A SAD FACT OF THE POSTAL SYSTEM. TO COMBAT THIS — WHERE POSSIBLE PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL RAFFLE MONIES ARE FORWARDED AS CHEQUES, MONEY ORDERS OR DIRECT BANKING TO: BLUE MOUNTAINS VIETNAM VETERANS AND ASSOCIATED FORCES INC. **(NOTE: THE A/C NAME MUST BE WRITTEN IN FULL)**, BANK—WESTPAC, BSB 032-837, ACCOUNT N^o. 138817

The President and the Committee wish the following members who share June as their Birth month a very Happy Birthday

Gordon Werrin, Alex Barker, Bill Turner, Dusty Durston AM. Max Turner, Towers Stanley, Penrose Bill, Fred Gosbee, John Chalker, Mal Spendelove, Graeme Scurr, Maurie Rutherford, Rene Wilson, Jack Reilly, Rus Boxsell, George Schubert, Hans Gutjahr, Ted Haslehurst, Jeff Williams, Fred Alimpic, Jim Tucker, Rob Farrell, Stuart Spinks, John Barbour, Rod Besier, Bob Burcher, Mal Barnes, Robbie Duncan OAM, Stan Kaluza, Roger Dive, Lyndsay Williams, Tony Adamski, John Riemann, Bruce Skipworth, Gary McFarlane AFC, Dennis Wotherspoon, Rob Warren, Mike Ryan, Arthur Feltham, John Bee, E. John Wilson, Bob Metcalfe, Eric Eastebrook, Charles New OAM, Mike Matters, Tom Brownjohn, Peter Maher.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BLOKES - DON'T OVERDO THE CELEBERATING

Vale



Mr. Kenneth Deacon
313958 A/CPL Royal Australian Service Corps
176 Airborne Dispatch Company

598159 L CPL Royal New Zealand Army
161 Bty

30 Aug 1940—06 Jun 2009

Lest We Forget



FIND A MATE

ARE YOU looking for old friends, drop a line to the Editor and your request will go to our members to help through **Contact!** 600 Listening Posts are better than one researcher.



E.John as a boy cadet ???

For all your stationery, computer consumables



*Kevin Blakelock (ex Vung Tau ferry)
of Office Choice Springwood,
3 Raymond Mall, Raymond Road,
Springwood.*

Telephone (02) 4751 5360 Facsimile (02) 47515946

*continued from page 6 — CPL E.A. Corey MM****

the stretcher bearers to clear the wounded. Thirty men, including Private Ernie Corey, responded and went into no-man's land, working up to the German wire, and carrying the wounded back about a mile-and-a-half to the dressing station. For 17 hours they laboured without rest. Later the Commanding Officer of the 54th wrote to Lieutenant Colonel Woods expressing his appreciation of the splendid work.

For their courage and devotion to duty, Corey, Jack Buckley, Frank Groutsch, Leslie Jackson and Alex Thompson were awarded the Military Medal – all Immediate Awards granted by General Birdwood – and four other soldiers were mentioned in 1st Anzac routine orders.

Corey's citation read:

"During the enemy attack on front line facing Queant on 15th May 1917, Pte Corey, whilst acting as a stretcher bearer, showed great courage and devotion to duty. Although under direct enemy observation, he carried out his duties continuously for 17 hours without rest, and in a manner worthy of the highest commendation. Although an untrained stretcher bearer, he, together with the rest of the bearing party saved by first aid the lives of seriously wounded men. The Commander of the 54th Bn wrote an appreciation for the help given, and specially mentioned the stretcher bearing party for their good work."

After Bullecourt, the 1st, 2nd and 5th Australian Divisions enjoyed a long rest of some four months preparing for the Ypres campaign. Ernie Corey decided to become a regular stretcher bearer, and when the Battalion moved up to take part in the Battle of Polygon Wood at the end of September, he was a member of the bearer section, under Lance-Corporal Dawson. After the battle, Corey was recommended for a Bar to his MM for the coolness and bravery he had shown throughout the operation.

The citation for his first Bar read:

"This stretcher bearer showed great courage, devotion to duty and untiring energy during the attack on Polygon Wood on the 26th September 1917. The greatest danger did not deter this man from doing his duty when his services were required, and he tended the wounded and carried them to places of safety continuously throughout the engagement, often under very heavy artillery and machine gun fire. Throughout the whole operations he set a fine example of bravery and coolness to all ranks."

End of part 1. Part 2 will be published in the next issue. Part 2 will contain the details of two further awards of the Military Medal.

Brian Day continues his series on
Australian and other VC winners .



Laid to rest among comrades and friends, Australian heroes all.
Medic CPL Albert Ernest Corey MM and 3 bars



Light Horse Trivia

The Emu Plume adorned on the Light Horsemen's felt hat enhanced part of the ethos and legend of the Australian digger. In 1914 there were 23 Light Horse Regiments on the Order of Battle. General Order 109 of 1903 listed the following plumes to be worn by Light Horse Units:

NSW – Black Cock's feathers; Vic – a single Emu feather;
WA – Black Swan feathers; Qld, SA and Tas – Emu Feathers.

A note from our VVCS friends

Articles and events from the recently published VVCS Calendar will be published in **CONTACT!** for those of us that still need the occasional assistance and / or reassurance from these very caring and capable people.

For the immediate months there are several Programmes mentioned in the VVCS Programme Calendar to consider, they are:

"Sleep and Relaxation" :- TBA July, Dubbo NSW.

"Anger Management" :- TBA September, Gosford, NSW
:- 10 & 17 September, Campbelltown, NSW
:- TBA July, Parramatta, NSW

"Relationships" :- TBA 8 week programme August & September, Central Coast / Illawarra, NSW

"Partners Programme" :- TBA August, Parramatta & Sutherland, NSW

"Heart Health" :- dates and times TBA. This is a lengthy programme and due to its depth has yet to be given a start time. Available at Nth Sydney, Strathfield, Wollongong, Central Coast.

And not forgetting our younger veterans, a programme titled **"Stepping Out"** run over two days, Monday 31 August and Tuesday 1st, September is being programmed for ADF Transitioning Members and their Partners to be held in the Sydney Region.

These Operation Life Workshops are there to assist all of us and our families, please give these programmes your support. For further information on any of the above Programmes **contact your nearest centre on 1800 011 046**

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