



## Celebrating Twenty Years!

Saturday 6 July was the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Vasey RSL Care's creation, when Vasey Housing Victoria and RSL Care Victoria merged and our organisation was born.



The occasion was celebrated at our aged care homes, central office and The V Centre with an afternoon tea and anniversary cake.

Staff and residents who have been with the organisation for all or most of that time were invited to cut the cakes to mark the special occasion.

**Clockwise from top left: Brighton East staff Patsy (I) and Carol; Frankston South residents and staff; Brighton East resident Len; Brighton resident Judy; Bundoora staff.**

# From Our CEO

## Happy Anniversary Vasey RSL Care!

**We are celebrating our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary throughout the year with a variety of events and activities.**

There has been a lot of 'water under the bridge' since Vasey RSL Care came into being on 6 July 2004. There have been highs and lows over these two decades – some trying times balanced out by some great achievements, as our organisation and wider community respond to the changing needs of veterans, war widows, their families and the wider Victorian population.

Those who follow us on social media will have been enjoying seeing '20 Years over 20 Days'! It's very moving to be reminded of all the people who have been part of this journey – many sadly no longer with us. And in another twenty years, (whether or not we are around to see it!) I am confident that Vasey RSL Care will be 'Continuing the Mission', standing up for the veteran community, and working to improve lives.

## Aged Care Employee Day – 7 August

A large proportion of the Vasey RSL Care staff are employed to support our aged care residents at Brighton, Brighton East, Bundoora and Frankston South, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including public holidays!

Our staff deserve to be appreciated every day – not just on Aged Care Employee Day – but this is a day when we stop to take note of the caring work they do, the passion they bring to their roles, and the commitment they have to each individual in our care.

## Vietnam Veterans' Day – 18 August

Vietnam Veterans are the largest cohort of veterans supported by Vasey RSL Care, in all of our services. Over 60,000 young Australian men fought in Vietnam and more than 500 paid with their lives. A further 3,000 were known casualties of the Vietnam War. However, an unknown number are invisible casualties, bearing mental scars of the horrors of this long conflict.

It's important that we acknowledge the difficult time that these men had and recognise the challenges they and their families have faced over the past 50+ years. We owe it to them to give them the respect they deserve, provide care and support needed, and show our deep appreciation for their service to our nation.



## Our Advocacy Continues

The V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program has been running for six months: the fact that all apartments are occupied demonstrates the need for this unique program. Program participants have experienced a variety of issues that have led them to need this service – issues that are not easily resolved. We admire and applaud each V Centre veteran for the work they are doing, encouraged and supported by our staff and the many support services partnering with us to deliver the Program.

I get to The V Centre regularly and have got to know some of the veterans: it's wonderful to see positive change taking place in these people, given the right environment and the right support.

We had belief in the capability of The V Centre to change lives and we are now seeing that happening.

We continue to advocate to government at all levels for their financial support, and with our new Sponsorship and Fundraising Officer, Kylie Dick, now on board, we will be developing our fundraising strategy to support the ongoing functioning of The V Centre and other aspects of our Strategic Plan.

## Royal Commission Final Report

The final report and recommendations from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide are due for release on 9 September.

This is a difficult topic that requires careful and considered responses: it has touched many in our community and if you need support during this time, please make sure you reach out to those around you, to the services available, to friends, family or other supports.

**Janna Voloshin,  
Chief Executive Officer**

# Marking Homelessness Week with Support

**Homelessness Week – this year, 5 to 11 August – draws our attention to the growing issue of homelessness and aims to build community support and government commitment to end this issue.**

Again this year, Vasey RSL Care's Executive Management Team (EMT) provided support to 'Mitcham Community Meal', a weekly meal for people in need.

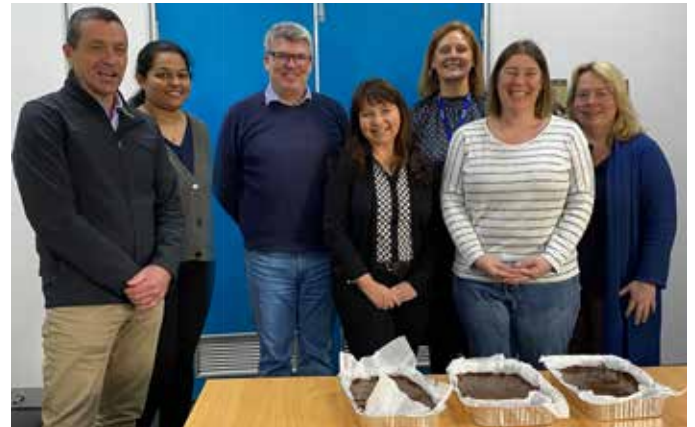
EMT members got together with Central Office staff, to bake chocolate hedgehog slice: this was delivered to Mitcham by Senior Executive Officer, Tamara Paton and

General Manager Veteran Services, Chris Gray for the Meal on 4 August.

"This is a small way that we can give practical help, but more importantly, it reminds us of all the people living on our doorstep who are doing it tough," says CEO, Janna Voloshin.



EMT members and HR staff, gloved up and working hard on the chocolate hedgehog slice...



...and with their finished goodies. L to R: Chris, Vineela, Rich, Janna, Sarah, Tamara and Milka.

## Our Positive Duty

As part of Vasey RSL Care's commitment to providing a safe and inclusive workplace, we take very seriously our obligations around preventing workplace sexual harassment and harassment or discrimination on the basis of someone's sex. Our goal is for such conduct never to occur in Vasey RSL Care workplaces, but if it does, that we respond fairly and with empathy and understanding of the impact it can have on the individual involved.

Unlawful conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature could occur between any parties in the workplace, including employees, contractors, residents, clients, participants, consultants or visitors. We expect everyone who engages with our workforce to treat one another with respect and not engage in such behaviour or judgements.

All Vasey RSL Care team members receive periodic training on these topics and have channels to get guidance or to raise concerns if anything occurs. Vasey RSL Care has a Positive Duty Action Plan to support continued enhancement of protections for everyone in our workplace against sexual harassment and sex-based harassment or discrimination. Please visit the [humanrights.gov.au](http://humanrights.gov.au) website for more information.

**Everyone has the right to feel safe and to be treated respectfully at work.**

**Sexual harassment, sexist behaviour and sex discrimination will not be tolerated.**

**If you experience or witness any of these behaviours at work, it is safe and appropriate for you to report it to a senior manager.**

**Vasey RSL Care has a Positive Duty to eliminate these behaviours.**



# Recognition of Our World War II Veterans

To mark the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II in 2020, the Australian Government produced a Commemorative Medallion and Certificate of Commemoration for every living veteran of WWII.

The Australian Department of Veterans' Affairs states:

"While Australia can never repay the debt we owe almost one million Australians who served, this medallion and certificate are a small but meaningful way we can thank living veterans of the largest global conflict of the 20th century."

Many members of our community received their certificates and medallions in 2020. However, we have recently discovered that some of our residents had not received one, and in 2020, it was not possible to have ceremonies due to the pandemic. For both reasons, our aged care homes held presentations for all our World War II veterans.

## At Frankston South Aged Care

Eight of our Frankston South residents were presented with their certificates and medallions at a ceremony in July (pictured below).

Frankston RSL President, Kevin Hillier presented Doug Smith, Doug Wicks, Bert O'Leary, John Nankervis, Phyllis Ketting-Olivier, Veronica O'Neill, Albert (Buzz)



Cousins and Trevor Freeman with their certificates and medallions.

Regular readers may remember the article about Doug Smith's top secret role in World War II (Winter 2023 issue, available on our website) and we've now discovered another secret operator...

## Veronica O'Neill (née Drinkwater)

Veronica 'Ronnie' Drinkwater signed up to join the service during World War II and was chosen to become a decoder, secret work which she was not permitted to talk about for fifty years after her discharge in 1945.

Ronnie (pictured below) was part of the Central Bureau Intelligence Corps, set up by General MacArthur, consisting of intelligence personnel from Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand and the Netherlands. (Continued >>>)



**(From opposite)** It was initially located in Melbourne before moving to a large house in Brisbane in late 1942. The house was called Nyrambla, but Ronnie and her colleagues worked out of a garage in the back of the mansion, so they became known as 'The Garage Girls'.

Ronnie's work was recognised by the Queensland Government in 2002 with a Certificate of Recognition for World War II service. In the covering letter, Paul Lucas MP noted:

"Through your work, the Central Bureau cracked Japan's air codes, water transport codes and later the main army code, which was an important contributor to

the end of World War II.

"Our society owes a great debt of gratitude to you, not only for the lives of allied service personnel that were saved by the shortening of the war, but also for the freedoms that people like me and my family can enjoy as a result of the work and sacrifice of your generation."

Ronnie told us she was "happy and proud to be part of the ceremony and a 'Garage Girl'", and her family and friends thanked us for organising this event for our veterans, noting how proud they are of their mother and her contribution to World War II.

### At Brighton Aged Care

Presenting the Certificates and Medallions to our Brighton residents was Peter Corfield, Welfare Officer at Beaumaris RSL Sub-branch.

He thanked residents Betty Cooper, Marie Laurenceson, Audrey Baker and Annie Overs for their role in defending our country during World War II, and presented the Certificates and Medallions. Pictured (l to r): Betty, Marie and Audrey.



### At Brighton East Aged Care

Eight residents at Vasey RSL Care Brighton East were presented with their certificates and medallions in a ceremony in late June.

World War II veterans Arthur Mulford, Bill Craig, Cecil O'Brien, Harold Ristrom, Jack Smith, Marjorie Waring, Tony Barnes and Walter Bowden received their Certificates and Medallions. Pictured (l to r): Cecil, Marjorie and Tony (please see website for more photos).



### At Bundoora Aged Care

At our Bundoora Aged Care Home, a ceremony was held for resident Henry Storey. Henry served in the Royal Australian Air Force from September 1943 to February 1946 as a flight rigger. He served many areas including the recruit centre, the schools of technical training, engineering and air armament, to name a few. He was promoted to leading aircraftsman in August 1944.

Henry was presented with his Certificate and Medallion by Watsonia RSL Sub-branch President, Bill Wyndham and is pictured with (from left): Lifestyle Coordinator, Linda, Watsonia RSL Appeals Officer, Tom Johnson, Residential Manager, Nicole, General Manager Veteran Services, Chris Gray, General Manager Residential Services, Corinne Lyon and Bill Wyndham.



# Staff Visit the Australian War Memorial



Staff members (from left), Lisa O'Driscoll, Shelly Nayer and Natalie Best lay a wreath in memory of Private Barry James, who was killed in service to our country in the Vietnam War.

A video of this ceremony can be seen here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qLIMMYaBfs>

Staff from Vasey RSL Care attending the End of Life Directions in Aged Care (ELDAC) Showcase in Canberra, took the opportunity to visit the Australian War Memorial and to view the Major General George Vasey section.

"We approached the staff to introduce Vasey RSL Care and the connection we have to the Australian Defence Forces and the AWM," said Lisa O'Driscoll, Clinical Quality Manager at Vasey RSL Care.

"We were invited to participate in the Last Post Ceremony and had the privilege of laying a wreath and paying our respects to the selected soldier honoured in the ceremony.

"That day, the soldier was Private Barry James who served for Australia in the Vietnam War. He was killed in action on 5 June 1969, at the age of just 20.

"This experience provided a meaningful opportunity to deepen our understanding of the organisation's ties to veterans, both past and present," added Lisa.



## Quality End of Life Care at Vasey RSL Care

Vasey RSL Care is one of 150 organisations that participated in a program to improve end-of-life care through the ELDAC (End of Life Directions in Aged Care) Linkages Program.

"Three of our aged care homes took part in this program – Brighton, Bundoora and Frankston South," said Corinne Lyon, General Manager Residential Services, Vasey RSL Care.

ELDAC has a full list of aged care homes that have undertaken this program:

<https://www.eldac.com.au/Service-Development/Participating-Sites/VIC>

Corinne and the team are passionate about providing the very best end of life care:

"Through this program, providing our staff with opportunities to engage in discussions and broaden their understanding has been extremely valuable.

"And of course, it's not just beneficial for residents," Corinne added. "Our care and support extends to residents' loved ones as well."

**One family told us:**

"I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the night staff that were on duty the night mum died. Their kindness, comforting words and support were greatly appreciated. Their empathy made all the difference in what was a difficult time. What a wonderful team dedicated to their residents."



# Vietnam Veterans Day, 18 August

18 August is the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, one of the most significant conflicts for Australians who served in the Vietnam War: 18 Australians were killed and 24 wounded. This day has been chosen as the day of remembrance for all who served and died in the Vietnam War.

Vietnam Veterans are now the largest cohort of veterans across Vasey RSL Care's services. As our CEO, Janna Voloshin said in her Vietnam Veterans Day message:

"Sixty thousand Australian men served in the Vietnam War... five hundred did not return. There were over three thousand known casualties.

"But there are many more who have born the scars of this war privately, suffering its effects in silence.

"It's important that we acknowledge the difficult time that these men had and recognise the challenges they and their families have faced over the past 50+ years."



Services of commemoration were held at our aged homes, including Vasey RSL Care Frankston South, where we now have eight Vietnam Veterans. We were very pleased to welcome John Biles from the Vietnam Veterans Association (pictured right), who gave an address as part of the service. Wreaths were laid by Vietnam Veteran residents, Geoff and Norma.

Lest We Forget.



Joining Janna for the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital's service of commemoration on Friday 16 August, Vasey RSL Care Board Chair, Mike O'Meara OAM laid a wreath in honour of all Vietnam Veterans, together with General Manager Veteran Services, Chris Gray and staff and participants from The V Centre.



## Reminder: Food Services Feedback

Our food services provider, Morrison Living (formerly Medirest), offers a simple way for residents and family members to provide feedback on residential aged care food services.

The system is available in dining rooms where Medirest staff can assist. Alternatively, simply scan the QR code shown here to access the system.

Feedback is collated and reports sent to Residential Managers each month.

If a complaint is received via the system, the Morrison Living team is alerted and will look into the situation and provide a response.



# Quilt of Valour Presented to ESA Resident Ian

**Quilts of Valour Australia is an organisation that makes quilts for veterans and service personnel of the Australian Defence Force and our Allies, and the immediate family members of Defence Force Personnel who have passed away. They are in recognition of their service, sacrifice and valour.**

Each quilt is made personally by one of their members for a specific person. Every quilt is unique.

Earlier this year, resident Ian at Geelong Ex-Service Accommodation was presented with his own quilt by Phil Watson from Quilts of Valour Australia.

Members of the Tibbermore Social Club gathered for the occasion and to witness the presentation.

The beautiful quilt was made by Glenys Hopkins of Bay Quilters Beaumaris and features a number of panels with poppy surrounds, while the inside is stitched in the shape of gum leaves. A huge amount of work goes into every quilt made.

Ian was lost for words but accepted the quilt on behalf of all the social club members.



Phil and Ian had both served in the Regular Army and found they had some other things in common – both had been given Scottish names and both had grown up on sheep farms.

Thank you to Quilts of Valour for the wonderful work you do to honour veterans and their families.

## Big thanks to the Geelong Lions Club

Earlier this year, our Geelong Ex-Service Accommodation was very pleased to receive a defibrillator, generously donated by the Lions Club of Geelong.

This life-saving device is a welcome addition to the community and has been installed in the entrance to the community hall, for easy access by all residents.

Resident Ian, representing the Tibbermore Social Club, presented a certificate of thanks to members of the Geelong Lions Club – President Geoff Boehm, Secretary Michelle Challis and member Dee Love.

Geoff, Ian, Michelle and Dee are pictured below and the defibrillator can be seen on the wall behind them.





# VIP Guests Visit Vasey RSL Care

**Developing strong relationships with government, service organisations and the Defence Force is an important aspect of our advocacy for veterans and their families. We were pleased to welcome a number of visitors to our services over the past few months.**

We were honoured to host Commanding Officer Captain Ben Favelle CSC, Commander Zanker and Leading Seaman Felicity Reed from HMAS Cerberus for a visit with our staff and veteran community.

Beginning at 'Ward 17' (the psychological trauma recovery ward) at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, the group witnessed the support provided to veterans and their families.

The tour then headed just round the corner to The V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program and to meet participants.

This was followed by a visit to the Ivanhoe Ex-Service Accommodation at Samma Place including the shared terrace on level 10 and lunch at Box Hill RSL.

We appreciate Captain Favelle and his team taking the time to visit and find out more about our support services for the veteran community.



**We welcomed a group from the National Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) to The V Centre.**

Secretary, Alison Frame (centre), Deputy Commissioner, Michael Harper and Repatriation Commissioner, Kahlil Fegan, were welcomed by Chair, Mike O'Meara OAM (a past long-serving DVA Deputy Commissioner), CEO, Janna, Senior Executive Officer, Tamara Paton and General Manager Veteran Services, Chris Gray.

Our visitors were impressed by the facility and inspired by the participants. The V Centre is filling a vital gap in services and providing much-needed support and connections that make a lasting difference.

We were very pleased to welcome State Member for Frankston and Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer, Paul Edbrooke MP back to our Frankston South location.

Residential Manager, Brian, CEO, Janna and Lifestyle Coordinator, Ruwan, took Mr Edbrooke on a guided tour of the aged care home. This was followed by a visit to the Ex-Service Accommodation, finishing up with a cup of tea with some of the ESA residents.



One of Paul's areas of public policy interest is social housing:

"As a growing provider of veteran-specific social housing through our ESA program, keeping veteran organisations and members of parliament up to date on our service and plans for the future is essential," said CEO, Janna Voloshin.

"We appreciate the interest shown by all our visitors: we look forward to continuing to build these important relationships so together, we can support and empower veterans and their families."

# Walking Off The War Within: 12 October 24

The annual 'Walking Off The War Within' (WOTWW) is taking place at Lake Pertobe in Warrnambool on Saturday 12 October.

"Take part in Walking Off The War Within in Warrnambool and help fight depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Together we can shine a light on mental health."

This annual public event, organised by Asset Connect Communities' Adam Kent, himself a veteran, is suitable for everyone - families, individuals, all abilities, all ages.

Join Emergency Service Personnel, Defence Force Personnel and members of the public to walk in memory of Nathan Shanahan, a returned soldier and firefighter, and other Service Men and Women who have taken their own lives after battling mental health issues. Nathan was a fierce advocate for mental health and PTSD; sadly, Nathan lost his battle in December 2016. Walking Off The War Within is one way Nathan's legacy continues.

**The Challenge: complete the ultimate '20km with 20kg' or simply walk any distance you can, with or without a pack.**

The event will be held at the BBQ area opposite The Beach Kiosk at Lake Pertobe, Pertobe Road, Warrnambool.

General Manager Veteran Services, Chris Gray says: "During my first WOTWW a few years back, Adam and I talked about our mates, the good times, the bad, we laughed, and we remembered - and before we knew it, 20ks was done! It's such a great way to reconnect and recharge. Give it a go! What have you got to lose?"



**Tickets: Free, \$10, \$25 or donation**

This is an inclusive event that is available to everybody. Registration is available for \$0, \$10, \$25 or a nominated amount of your choice.

Money raised through ticket sales goes to cover the event running costs and any excess is donated to local charities that work in the field of mental health and suicide prevention.

**Sign up!**

Go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/>

Click 'Find event' and search for 'Walking off the war within', location Warrnambool.



## Support the Saluting Excellence Conference

Thurs 28 November 2024



As a not-for-profit, Vasey RSL Care looks to our valued business partners for financial support for our annual Saluting Excellence Staff Conference.

In our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, we are seeking sponsorship from organisations with whom we share a close and trusted working relationship: your sponsorship makes a major difference to us.

Sponsorship starts at just \$500 for a Supporting Sponsorship and up to \$5000 for a Major Sponsorship.

**Contact our Sponsorship and Fundraising Officer for more details: [kylie.dick@vaseyrslcare.org.au](mailto:kylie.dick@vaseyrslcare.org.au)**



# 'Share Our Care' Today!



What could be a better gift for someone you care about than to ensure they receive the support they need?

Our 'Share Our Care' Referral Program will reward you and the person you refer to us with a \$100 Gift Card each!



It is well known that word-of-mouth is the best possible recommendation: so we are asking our community to refer our Home Care to friends or relatives over 65 who could use a bit of assistance at home.

Either, fill in the details opposite and return this to us and we will get in touch with your friend/relative (please make sure you have their permission):

Or, fill in **your** details, pass this page on to your friend or relative, and when they contact us, we will note down your details as the referrer.



When the person you referred signs up with our Home Care, we will send you both your \$100 Gift Cards!\*

## 'Share Our Care' Referrer (Your) Details:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## I would like to refer my friend/relative for Vasey RSL Care's Home Care:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Veteran: Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_ Don't know \_\_\_

## I have read and noted the Terms and Conditions.

Return to (no stamp required): Vasey RSL Home Care, Reply Paid 88355 Hawthorn VIC 3122.

\* **Note:** full terms and conditions can be found on our website: [www.vaseyrslcare.org.au](http://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au)

# Your Bottles can help Vasey RSL Care!

Vasey RSL Care is now a 'Donation Partner' for Victoria's 'Container Deposit Scheme' (CDS), the Victorian Government's recent initiative to encourage recycling of bottles and cans.

You can now collect your cans and bottles and take them along to one of the many collection points around Victoria.

Every eligible drink container is worth 10c: check for the 10c mark on aluminium, glass, plastic and liquid paperboard drink containers, including soft drink bottles, glass beer bottles, canned drinks and juice cartons.



And here's where we are asking for your help!

1. Collect your bottles & cans
2. Find your nearest drop off point ([cdsvic.org.au/](http://cdsvic.org.au/)), and
3. Choose Vasey RSL Care as the Donation Partner!

Thank you for helping the environment AND veterans.



# Our New Outfits and New Colours



Image: Vasey RSL Care Bundoora staff enjoying a treat in the sunshine on Aged Care Employee Day.

We have recently updated our staff uniforms and made a number of changes to respond to requests from staff and our community.

The new uniforms reflect our corporate colours and the different colours indicate different roles:



Personal Care Staff are in Green



Laundry Staff wear Mint Green



Nursing staff wear Midnight Blue



Administration and Central Office Staff wear Red



V Centre staff are in Grey and Black

## Will You Support Our Heroes?

**'Hero's Wish' honours veterans and war widows by fulfilling their dreams and adding to their treasured memories.**

To make a donation to Hero's Wish, please complete the form below and send it to:  
Ms Janna Voloshin, CEO, Vasey RSL Care, PO Box 203, Hawthorn VIC 3122



I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support Hero's Wish.

- My cheque, payable to Vasey RSL Care, is enclosed
- Please debit my credit card: number\* | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | ■ | \_ | \_ | \_ | ■ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_
- Mastercard     VISA    Name on card:\* \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:\* \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry:\* \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ CVV\* \_\_\_\_\_ (3 digits)

Address: \*\* \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \*\* \_\_\_\_\_

\* Please provide these details so we can process your donation.  
\*\* Provide address &/or email if you would like a receipt sent.

Or, donate online:  
[vaseyrslcare.org.au/donate/](http://vaseyrslcare.org.au/donate/)



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**Home Care & Veterans Home Care** 03 9810 5570 | **Ex-Service Housing & Veteran Support** 03 9810 5500 (opt 2) | **The V Centre** 03 9810 5589  
**Residential Aged Care:** Brighton 03 9596 7485 | Brighton East 03 9519 3400 | Bundoora 03 9466 9615 | Frankston South 03 9787 2844