



Twenty New Bundoora Units Now Open

Our new Ex-Service Accommodation (ESA) units were completed three months ahead of schedule and were ready to occupy before Christmas.

Our newest ESA site is located adjacent to our Bundoora Aged Care Home on Tower Avenue, Bundoora and brings our total number of units/apartments for veterans, war widows and their dependants to 315.

Executive General Manager Veteran Services, Chris Gray noted: "This couldn't come soon enough: we have a waitlist for our Ex-Service Accommodation and almost all the units are already occupied."

There are 18 one-bedroom and 2 two-bedroom units, in line with our experience that around 90% of our Ex-Service Accommodation is inhabited by a single person.

Energy efficiency has been an important aspect of this build, with electricity boosted by solar

panels, energy-efficient hot water pumps, double glazing, five-star rated reverse-cycle air conditioning, LED lighting and water tanks fitted to all units.

Each unit has a private rear garden and its own private garage, fitted with an electric vehicle charge point and insulated doors.

"A great deal of consideration has been put into these units to ensure that they are comfortable as well as being cost-effective for residents," says Chris.

"We hope that being adjacent to our Aged Care Home will lead to engagement between unit residents and aged care residents, and the Australia Day barbecue at the aged care home was a great start," says Chris (see page 10).



LEFT: A 2023 VISUAL IMPRESSION OF THE PROPOSED UNITS ON BOADLE ROAD, AND,

BELOW: THE REALITY OF THE FINISHED BUNDOORA UNITS.



From Our CEO

New Bundoora Units Complete

As detailed on the front cover, we are very pleased to have our twenty brand new Bundoora units complete, with some residents moving in before Christmas and almost all now occupied.

The build has gone very smoothly and I'd like to commend builders Costas Construction who have provided a very professional service throughout. They are supportive of our community and also made a sizeable donation to support veterans at the V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program.

We look forward to holding an official opening event in the coming weeks.

New Geelong 'V Satellite'

At our Geelong Ex-Service Accommodation site, we are progressing plans for the first 'V Satellite', a service offering transitional accommodation plus support, for up to ten veterans at a time, linked in to the V Centre in Ivanhoe for oversight, guidance and support.

Thanks to funding from the Federal Government's Veteran Acute Housing Program, we are able to take this important step forward in addressing the urgent needs of veterans who are in a transitional phase of their lives. The V Satellite will be a critical part of the pathway for veterans to access long-term housing and support.

Frankston South Development

Since our last issue, we have met with and/or been in touch with our Frankston South aged care residents, their families and our staff who work there, the ex-service accommodation residents, local neighbours, ex-service organisations, the local council and many others to talk about the plans for expanding our accommodation and services at this site.

We will continue to engage with the whole community as the project progresses.

At this stage, the plans remain with the Department of Transport and Planning and we do not expect any further news before April.

Partnering and Getting Involved

We are very grateful to Defence Health for their partnership with us and financial support of the V Centre over the past year.



It has been great to have Defence Health staff volunteering with us at several activities during the year (eg, see page 5) and we hope to see them again!

Partnerships of all types are increasingly important to our organisation as we work to respond to the current and emerging needs of the veteran community, extending our reach, building capacity and teaming up with both mainstream and ex-service organisations to achieve the best outcomes for veterans, their families and older Australians.

New Body: Veteran Care Australia

Leaders of veteran support organisations similar to Vasey RSL Care across Australia have come together to set up a new body to collectively advocate for the needs of the veteran community. Member organisations are RSL Care SA, RSL LifeCare (NSW), the Air Force Association WA



JANNA (CENTRE), WITH NATHAN KLINGE, CEO RSL CARE SA AND MICHELLE FYFE, CEO RAAFA AT THE SIGNING OF THE MOU IN JANUARY.

We are very pleased to be part of this new initiative that will strengthen our impact: there are many issues that affect us in similar ways and we can achieve more for our community working together.

Veterans In Need

As Australia burned and flooded in different areas at the same time, a veteran who lost his everything in bushfires was referred to us. As you can read opposite, we've been able to provide accommodation and do what we can to help get him through this terrible time. And that is indeed our purpose.

Janna Voloshin
Chief Executive Officer



“It was a strange situation to be in”

When catastrophic fires threatened his six-acre property near Seymour, CFA volunteer and Vietnam veteran Jeff Swain (pictured) knew the risks all too well. He evacuated with his dog, Geordie, but heartbreakingly had to leave behind his sheep, including a lamb he'd raised by hand.

By the next day, Jeff's worst fears were realised: his home and sheds were destroyed, and most of his livestock were lost – but amazingly, the lamb survived.



Despite everything, Jeff didn't really think to ask for help, feeling that there were many people in greater need than him.

However, RSL Victoria heard about Jeff's situation and their staff were able to find him emergency accommodation that could also take Geordie, until more permanent housing could be found.



Staff from our Veteran Services team are in regular contact with RSL Victoria and when they found out about Jeff needing longer-term accommodation, they were able to provide a suitable unit in our Ex-Service Accommodation (ESA). With the bushfire taking just about everything he owned, Jeff is being supported by Box Hill RSL and the Vietnam Veterans Association Australia (Vic) to replace essential furniture while his insurance claim is finalised.

“The assistance I received made all the difference to me,” Jeff said. “It is veterans helping other veterans get back on their feet.”

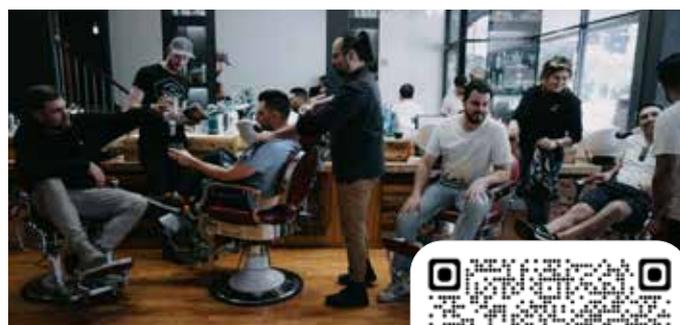
“For me it was a strange situation to be in,” Jeff added. “I had spent so many years with the RSL raising money and making sure that other people got taken care of, it had never really occurred to me that I would be on the receiving end of support like this.”

‘The Handsome Man’ Welcomes Veterans

The Handsome Man, barber and coffee shop at 127 Bell Street, Ivanhoe, (right beneath our Ivanhoe Ex-Service Accommodation apartments and around the corner from the V Centre) has generously offered to support the veteran community with:

- Pay it forward buzz cut or short back and sides
- Pay it forward coffees for veterans

If you are in the area and can spare a few dollars, please pop in and shout a coffee for a veteran.



Alternatively, jump online and shout a haircut or buzz cut for a veteran >>



ANVAM and V Centre Cooperation

ANVAM, the Australian National Veterans Art Museum, was founded in 2013 by Tanja Johnston to support the mental, physical and social wellbeing of the veteran community through facilitated arts engagement. As a veteran-led organisation, it provides an innovative model of care to support veterans' wellbeing and has been incorporated into the V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program.

ANVAM received funding from the ANZAC Day Proceeds Fund, provided by the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Office of Veterans to run an arts program at the V Centre in Ivanhoe.

The open studio facilitated art engagement program has been taking place weekly, offering V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program participants a chance to develop their individual creativity.

For some, this is the first time since primary school that they have thought about art: program facilitators encourage each person to find a medium that they feel comfortable with and support their creative journey.

There is plenty of research showing the benefits of art

to our mental wellbeing: art can help us relax, reduce anxiety and assist with processing emotions. It can improve self-confidence, and can help us develop problem-solving and visual-spatial skills. It brings people together and encourages social connection.

According to ANVAM, art has been part of the support for veterans for more than 100 years and its role has been especially important for convalescing veterans.

V Centre participants are currently working on art for the forthcoming FOVA event (see back page).

Support ANVAM

ANVAM's home at the former Repatriation Clinic, 310 St Kilda Road, is now at a critical stage following the Federal Government's announcement on 4 February 2026 that they plan to dispose of this property.

If you would like to support ANVAM to retain their premises, please visit the page below:



A FORMER V CENTRE PARTICIPANT EXPLORES PAINTING ON BARK, AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF HIS CULTURAL HERITAGE.



A Trip to the Beach for Brighton Residents



Residents from Vasey RSL Care Brighton East had an outing on their minibus to their local beach recently.

"Aren't we lucky to live by the bay?" said Lifestyle Coordinator Leanne.

Residents enjoyed afternoon tea with a million dollar view across the bay with the city in the distance.



Support for Our Community

Defence Health partnered with us to support participants at the V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program for one year: this ‘Sponsor a Room’ partnership has delivered vital funds and has given Defence Health staff a greater awareness and understanding of the veteran community. We have loved having them volunteer with us and look forward to that continuing.

Throughout December, Defence Health staff volunteered at several of our aged care homes and this experience helped create connection and companionship between residents and volunteers.

These moments of care make a real difference to residents’ wellbeing and remind us of the importance of honouring those who served.

“The volunteers had a fantastic time and found it so rewarding,” said Rosie, Vasey RSL Care Brighton East Lifestyle Coordinator.

Below are some of the reflections and comments from the Defence Health volunteers.



What the volunteers said about their experience...

It was great! We were really efficient as a team and were able to set up two Christmas trees and decorated two rooms.

We got some nice feedback from residents on our decorating!

I felt quite relaxed and at peace while putting up the Christmas decorations

with my Defence Health team.

All the staff we interacted with at Vasey were cheerful, welcoming, and fun-loving! Three hours passed very quickly but I am glad my team and I were able to get a lot done in a short time. Special mention

for Gary and Greg at the cafe who shouted one of the best coffees in Melbourne!

It was such a heart-warming experience volunteering at Vasey RSL Care in Brighton East! We managed to persuade a few residents to hang some baubles on the tree and we even got a round of applause when our tree was complete.

We also got to sit and chat with another resident who brought us so much joy with her singing and made us giggle with her remarks of some of our colour choices!

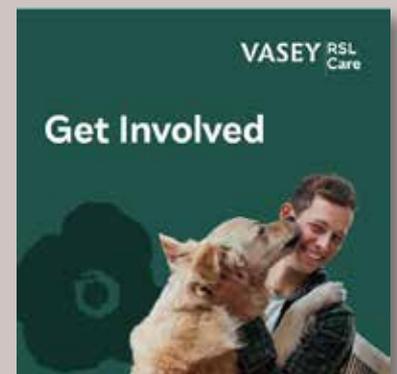
A great way for us to connect to our purpose and I definitely hope to be back in the future for another visit!

Get Involved!

If you, or your organisation, are interested in getting more involved with Vasey RSL Care, whether it’s through a partnership, sponsorship, volunteering, holding a fundraising event, or simply finding out more, please take a look at the ‘Get Involved’ booklet on our website >>>

Or contact us at:

communications@vaseyrslcare.org.au



Honouring Veterans and Mrs Vasey

A new Memorial honouring our veterans and Mrs Jessie Mary Vasey OBE CBE has been installed at Vasey RSL Care Brighton East.

Residents, families, staff and visitors can read about Mrs Vasey and our origins, or take a moment to contemplate the service and sacrifice of our ADF and allied service members.

Located to the left of the main door as you enter our Brighton East home, the new Memorial honours the veteran community and the legacy of Mrs Vasey.

To engage young visitors and help them understand more about the ANZAC Tradition, there are also some books and activities provided.



We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Victorian State Government who provided funding for this Memorial through the 'Victoria Remembers' grants.

Bunnings helps Vasey RSL Care Brighton East

We'd like to say thank you to Oakleigh Bunnings for some very welcome donations for our courtyard gardens at our Brighton East aged care home.

Last year, they generously donated succulents, herbs and veggies for our raised garden beds in our

Castlefield Unit (which we are pleased to say are doing really well).

This year, we asked for their recommendations for the shady Finchal Unit Courtyard and they came up with fuchsias.



As well as the plants, they also donated hats, a hat rack and umbrellas, so no matter what the weather, residents can get outdoors and enjoy some fresh air in the courtyard.

Pictured here are resident Ruth and Oakleigh Bunnings Activities Coordinator, Dan, who was in it boots and all.

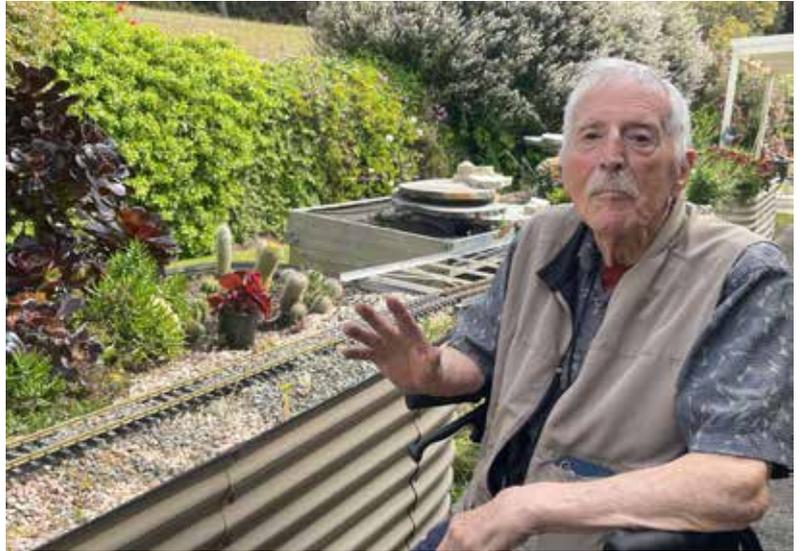
"It's now up to us to keep it watered and weed-free," says Lifestyle Coordinator, Rosie.

"Challenge accepted!" she adds.



Hobbies keep Mind and Body Active

It is vital to our wellbeing that we do the things that give us joy and pleasure in life: for Vasey RSL Care Frankston South resident Geoff Green, that is his model railway. It is located just outside Park Lodge and features bridges between raised garden beds that have been landscaped to provide a scenic journey.



Lifestyle Coordinator, Ruwan, had a chat with Geoff and found out that his interest in model railways goes all the way back to 1947 when he visited the Seymour train engine workshop: “Uncle Jim was a train driver,” Geoff tells us, and that inspired his lifelong love of railways.

Geoff owned his first model railway only about twenty years ago, when he and his son had the opportunity to put one together.

For train lovers out there, Geoff’s model railway is G Gauge, and he has plans to extend the line a little and keep improving it.

“It reminds me of travelling around the countryside when I was young, he says. “It’s a good feeling to see the train running up and down the

tracks. I hope my fellow residents, staff and visitors enjoy it too.”

If you are visiting Frankston South, pop over and check it out. You might very well find Geoff out there!

Be the Voice! Your Voice is Powerful

Calling for members for our Consumer Advisory Bodies and Quality Consumer Advisory Body.

Being part of your Consumer Advisory Bodies helps your voice to be heard. The information you provide goes directly to our governing body, the Board, and helps shape the way your care service is run.

Consumer Advisory Bodies can help solve problems and improve care. They give you a way to talk about care

and service quality with others and share this with our organisation’s leadership.

Membership is open to residents and to residents’ representatives.

Please contact your Residential Manager to express your interest or to find out more.



Behind the Scenes of the New Aged Care Act

With the arrival of the New Aged Care Act on 1 November 2025, the work behind the scenes to have everything in place has been a major undertaking for our residential and community services teams. For residential care, the assessment and care plan process has been an important step.

One of the many undertakings was to review the new suite of assessments and care plans in our clinical documentation system and update them to meet our clinical needs and the requirements of the Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards.

We set up a clinical working group to undertake this work: over a period of two months, the group reviewed, reconfigured and trialled 73 assessments and 22 care plans.

When this was complete, the clinical teams met with every aged care resident to carry out a full

reassessment of their care needs using the new assessments and care plans.

This process took nearly four months, during which staff met with 350 residents, 5,600 new assessments were completed, and around 3,500 care plans were developed.

The outcome is that all our residents have up-to-date rights-based care plans that reflect each person's individual goals and preferences, presented in a new format to help make them clearer and easier to understand.

Upholding and Maintaining Standards

Vasey RSL Care is committed to upholding and maintaining the highest standards of conduct and ethical behaviour in the organisation, to promoting and supporting a culture of corporate compliance and good corporate governance, and above all, ensuring an environment that is safe for everyone.

A key part of this is making sure anyone can safely raise concerns if they notice practices or situations that may affect the safety, rights, or wellbeing of residents, staff, or the organisation.

Commonly known as 'whistleblower legislation', our Whistleblower Procedure ensures that a person reporting an issue (ie a whistleblower) can remain anonymous when making a disclosure about the suspected misconduct or improper circumstances in relation to dishonesty, fraud or corruption.

The procedure includes details about:

- What is an appropriate disclosure;
- How to make a disclosure;
- Options of who to make the disclosure to;
- The process of investigating a disclosure;
- How the organisation will provide support and protection to whistleblowers making a disclosure.

Find out more >>>



REMINDER: Food Services Feedback

Our food services provider, Morrison Living, offers a simple way for residents and family members to provide feedback on residential aged care food services. Feedback is collated and reports are sent to Residential Managers each month.

The system is available in dining rooms, where Morrison Living staff can assist, or you can simply scan the QR code shown here to access the system.



When feedback is received, the Morrison Living team is alerted and will look into the situation and respond.

We encourage you to use the system to provide any feedback about our residential food services.

Community Services: Support at Home



The past few months have marked one of the most significant shifts in aged care service delivery as the new **Aged Care Act and the Support at Home program came into effect on 1 November 2025. The Act is rights-based, providing clearer accountability and a more consumer-focused model.**

The introduction of Support at Home marks a major shift for older Australians choosing to stay independent at home. With the many changes involved, there has been a great deal happening in the background.

Preparation

As with residential care, behind the transition we have been preparing our team, systems and processes for the new regulatory and service requirements, a major task that has kept the whole team busy for over a year.

The team was progressing well towards the Government's original date of 1 July, so when the date was put back to 1 November to give all aged care providers and Government more time to prepare, our team was in a strong position.

Education for our Staff

Sector-wide education and training provided by the Department of Health and Aged Care and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) has been undertaken by our Community Services team so that staff have a full understanding of both the foundations of Support at Home and strengthened Quality Standards, and the governance expectations and updated reporting obligations for providers.

Systems Preparation

We established a multidisciplinary Support at Home Working Party with six control groups to provide structured oversight across IT and systems, pricing, service updates and governance. This coordinated approach has worked well.

New Support at Home Funding Model

In order to support consistent, rights-based, person-led care, the new funding model introduces clearer service levels, increased transparency and changed participant contributions. It aims to simplify how services are understood and delivered, and how new pricing structures, service agreements and system changes are being rolled out.

The Work on the Ground

Operationally, our team has been focusing on verifying services and updating pricing, followed by the complex task of migrating Home Care Package participant data into the new Support at Home systems in readiness for new claiming and statement processes.

Maintaining continuity of care for participants is our first priority: we are committed to implementing the extensive requirements of the new Act with minimal disruption to service delivery.

Up and Running

Across our Community Services team, we believe these reforms will be beneficial to those older people who are able to remain in their own home with the care services they need.

The changes will improve our ability to communicate clearly with participants and families, increase transparency, and support informed decision-making. Participants will notice new Support at Home statements and changes to our communication processes: these are both important steps in building confidence in the new system amid the many changes it creates for everyone.

As we move further into 2026, our focus remains on embedding these reforms while keeping participants at the centre of their care, delivering safe, reliable care services, strengthening community partnerships, and staying up to date on Support at Home.



Is Mum or Dad on a Support at Home waitlist?

Don't wait: give them the comfort and dignity they deserve today.

WITH MORE THAN 88,000 OLDER AUSTRALIANS WAITING FOR FUNDING APPROVAL UNDER SUPPORT AT HOME AND A FURTHER 120,000-PLUS AWAITING ASSESSMENT, VASEY RSL CARE CAN PROVIDE SELF-FUNDED SERVICES FOR THOSE NEEDING SUPPORT IN THE INTERIM. GIVE US A CALL TO FIND OUT MORE: 03 9810 5500.

Australia Day Around Vasey RSL Care

Getting Together

Residents at Vasey RSL Care Ex-Service Accommodation Cheltenham enjoyed good company and a barbecue lunch followed by scones.



Meeting New Neighbours

With our Ex-Service Accommodation now open at Bundoora, the new neighbours were invited to join residents at our Bundoora aged care home for their Australia Day festivities.

The day featured various competitions including lamington eating and thong throwing, in addition to the delicious barbecue.



Sun, Sausages and Songs

Aussie! Aussie! Aussie!

The sun came out for residents and families of Vasey RSL Care Brighton East for a perfect Australia Day barbecue. Thanks to everyone who made it a great day. Special shout out to excellent tong-work from Brian, Zig and Monish!



A Barbecue and a Reunion

Residents from Vasey RSL Care Frankston South were treated to an Australia Day barbecue thanks to the wonderful people from the Seaford, Frankston Rosebud, Rye, Long Beach, Dromana and Sorrento RSL Sub-branches together with the Frankston and Mornington Peninsula Vietnam Veterans. This was the 22nd time they have provided this event for our Frankston South community, for which we are incredibly grateful!



Resident Bruce, a Vietnam Veteran, met a fellow veteran he'd served alongside on the same battlefield in the Vietnam War.

The unexpected reunion stirred deep memories and strong emotions. As Bruce reflected on those difficult times, he said, "I'm surprised we survived."

For those of us living safely today in Australia, it's hard to picture what these young men went through: it's a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by our veterans and the importance of ensuring there are opportunities for their stories to be remembered, shared and honoured.

The barbecue was not just a celebration of Australia Day but also a valuable opportunity for connection, remembrance and gratitude.



New Veteran Housing & Support Officers

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide made many recommendations around providing greater support for veterans experiencing homelessness. The Veteran Acute Housing Program (VAHP) grants were opened and our submission for Veteran Housing & Support Officers (VHSO) was successful. The team is now in place with one full-time and two part-time VHSOs.

Filling one role is Adam and sharing the second role are Neisha and Jane.

Veteran homelessness in Australia is nearly three times the rate as the general population (5.7% compared to 1.9%). The term 'homelessness' relates not just to those who are sleeping rough, but those who don't have a permanent home; for example, they may be sleeping in a car, caravan, bungalow or other temporary shelter; they could be 'couch-surfing' at friends' or families' homes; or they might be staying in inadequate or overcrowded accommodation.

Around 6,000 ADF personnel leave the forces annually and of these, around 300 become homeless each year (AHURI 2019).

The role of the VHSOs is to provide a much-needed service to connect veterans seeking housing and support with the services and organisations providing it.

"Most importantly, we are able to provide veteran-specific support and direct veterans to services that understand their needs," says Georgie Thobis, Vasey RSL Care Housing Manager.

Veteran Services Team Visit NE Victoria



Georgie (Housing Manager), Adam (VHSO) and Emma (Tenancy Officer) - pictured left - made a trip up to Wodonga and surrounds in February to meet with the veteran community.

On their first day, the team

presented at a Veterans Information Session held at the Wodonga RSL Sub-branch (below left), then met with the Wodonga Veterans Hub Wellbeing Coordinator,

Vanessa (below middle) and dropped by our Ex-Service Accommodation in McFarland Road, where they were able to hand over a home to a homeless veteran who moved in a couple of days later.

The next day, the team dropped into Wangaratta RSL Sub-branch where they met veterans over morning tea, before visiting the Salvation Army at Beechworth.

They said a quick G'day to Ned (below right) before heading back to Melbourne.

Thank you to the Wodonga Veterans and Families Hub, Wodonga RSL Sub-branch, Albury Legacy Group, LLC, Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling, Wangaratta RSL Sub-branch, Benalla RSL Sub-branch and Hume Patient Transport for the warm welcome and hospitality.

We look forward to seeing you again next time.



