

VASEY RSL CARE NEWS

The Quarterly Newsletter of Vasey RSL Care

New Memorial Wall at Frankston South

The fully updated and renovated Memorial Wall at Vasey RSL Care Frankston South was completed just in time for ANZAC Day.

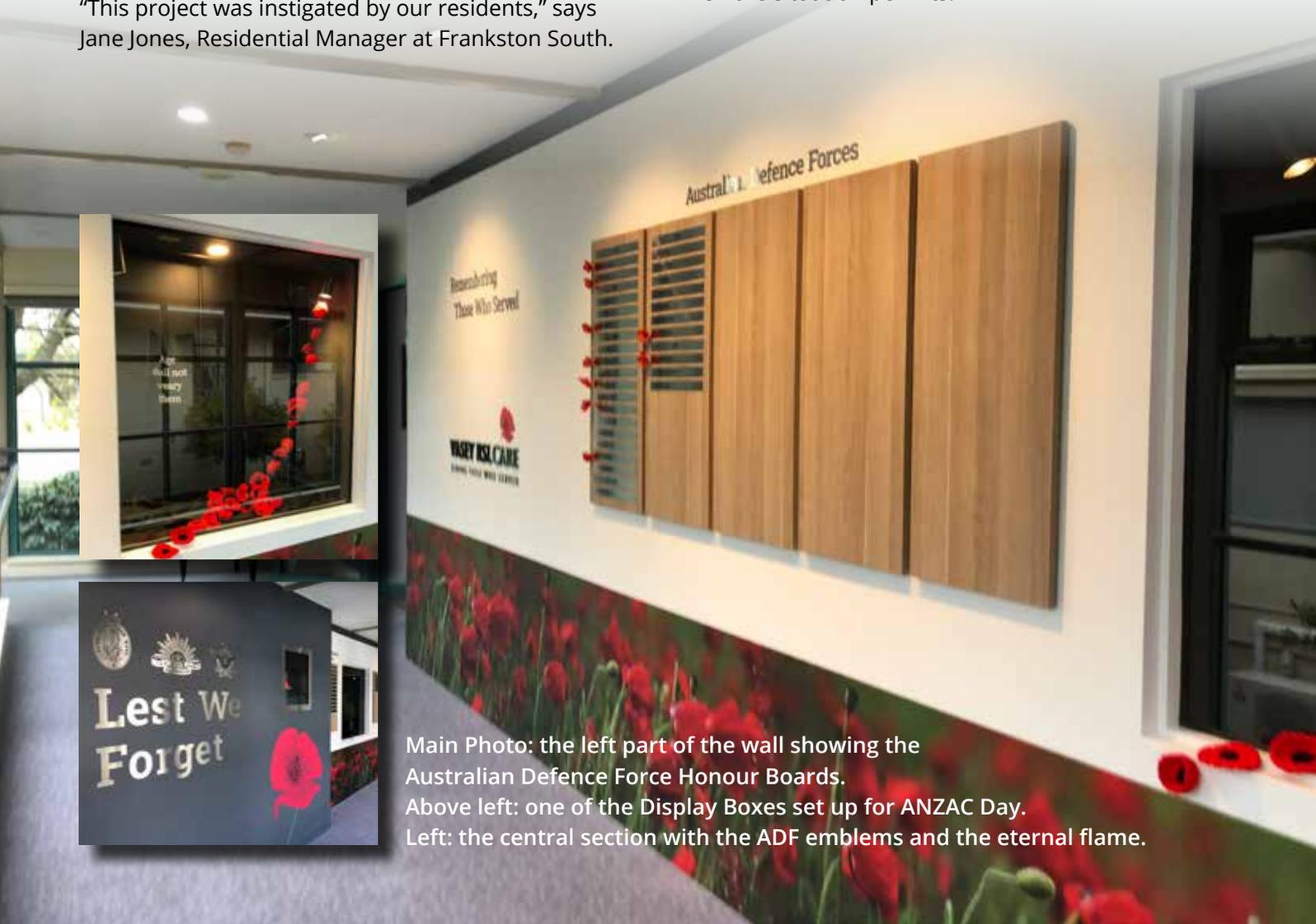
After almost two years, residents, visitors, volunteers and staff at Frankston South can now see the names of our veterans on the honour boards.

The majority of the funding for this project was received from the state government's 'Victoria Remembers' Grants Program, a funding program that supports groups and organisations across the state to maintain, renovate and develop memorials to those who have served.

"This project was instigated by our residents," says Jane Jones, Residential Manager at Frankston South.

"Residents were hoping for two new features – an eternal flame and the emblems of the Australian Defence Forces. I think we have achieved that and more with the new design. It is professional and contemporary while maintaining strong links to our heritage. The response has been very positive."

A short private ceremony to dedicate the Memorial Wall was held for veteran residents on 22 April and an official opening will be held at a date in the future when the situation permits.



Main Photo: the left part of the wall showing the Australian Defence Force Honour Boards.

Above left: one of the Display Boxes set up for ANZAC Day.

Left: the central section with the ADF emblems and the eternal flame.

From Our CEO

Continuing the Mission: A Major Transition

Over the past few weeks, we have delivered important news to our community regarding the forthcoming closure of Vasey RSL Care Ivanhoe and its transition to become the 'V' Centre to support younger veterans.

This has been a difficult decision to make, knowing that it affects lives and livelihoods.

Our residents are our top priority: we are offering moves to our other aged care homes at Brighton, Brighton East, Bundoora and Frankston South, as vacancies permit. Our Ivanhoe residents will take priority on vacancies during these next few months. Where this option does not suit the resident, we will support them to find appropriate care outside our organisation. We will do everything possible to ensure that each person is supported throughout this transition.

We do not want to lose our wonderful staff and over these next few months, we hope to be able to offer them roles or shifts at our other sites wherever we have availability, and of course, depending on their preference. Redundancy packages will be an option for some staff, but we hope to retain as many as possible.

Responding to Need

Vasey RSL Care is a mission-led organisation. We have a responsibility to evolve to respond to the changing needs of the ex-service community.

Research shows there is a need for support options for those younger veterans who find it difficult to transition to civilian life: some struggle with PTSD, unemployment, financial issues, relationship breakdown, substance abuse, homelessness and self-harm. It is a tragic fact that homelessness and suicide rates are higher for ex-service personnel than for equivalent age groups in the general population (see our White Paper, 'Continuing the Mission' for details).

This last fact has come to the attention of federal government and a new Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide was announced on 19 April by Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP. Our organisation made a submission for the Terms of Reference for this Royal Commission, informed



by the lived experiences of some of our ex-service accommodation residents, for which we are very grateful.

Vasey RSL Care's mission is to 'Serve Those Who Served' and we have the knowledge, experience, skills and expertise to respond to this need: therefore we must.

A New Initiative: the 'V' Centre

The 'V' Centre will offer short-medium term accommodation combined with a range of 'wraparound' services to support those younger veterans experiencing complex problems, and to build a support network around them to give them the ongoing resources to help them overcome their challenges.

Vasey RSL Care Ivanhoe is located adjacent to the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, with its long history of supporting veterans and its excellent facilities, including the highly-respected psychological ward (Ward 17). Furthermore, our new Ivanhoe ex-service apartments will be ready in under two years to provide longer term accommodation to veterans and war widows. This area is already an important zone for the support of younger veterans and the 'V' Centre will add a vital intermediate service to help ensure success in the civilian world.

Thank You

As we embark on this next step, I would like to thank all those affected for the way this news has been received. Residents, families and staff at Ivanhoe, your support for the goals of the organisation is commendable. We are committed to achieving them.

Janna Voloshin
Chief Executive Officer



Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS)

The Australian Government launched the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) on Thursday 1 April 2021. SIRS aims to reduce injury and harm to residents and older people accessing aged care services by expanding the range of incidents aged care providers are required to report to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC).

From 1 April onwards, aged care providers must identify, manage, resolve and report all serious incidents that have occurred, or are alleged or suspected to have occurred, in our aged care homes.

Vasey RSL Care supports SIRS and all efforts by our government to reduce the risk and prevalence of elder abuse and neglect across the aged care sector.

“SIRS is aligned with our commitment to a zero tolerance of abuse and the promotion of a culture of openness and transparency,” says Janna Voloshin, CEO.



The aged care sector already had compulsory reporting requirements for incidents, so this is not completely new: however, SIRS extends the types of incidents that must be reported, specifically those occurring between residents and those where one or both may have a cognitive or mental impairment. Rather than three reportable incident types, there are now eight.

“We see this as positive action on the part of our government to develop a more open system where incidents of any sort are fully disclosed to all parties concerned,” says Janna Voloshin, CEO. “We believe this is an important initiative for the protection of older people.”

Read more: <https://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/news-and-events/the-serious-incident-response-scheme-sirs-now-in-place/>

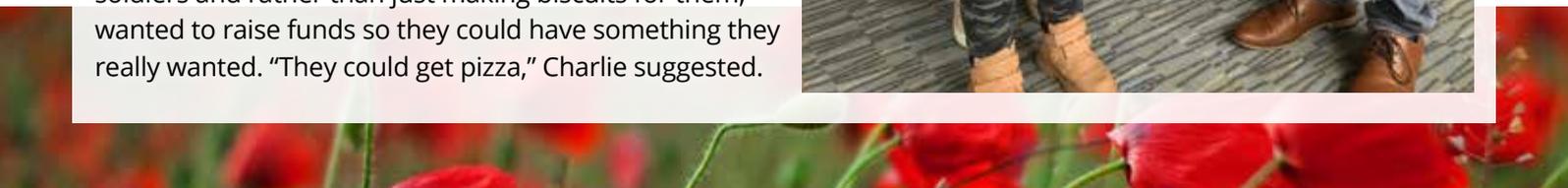
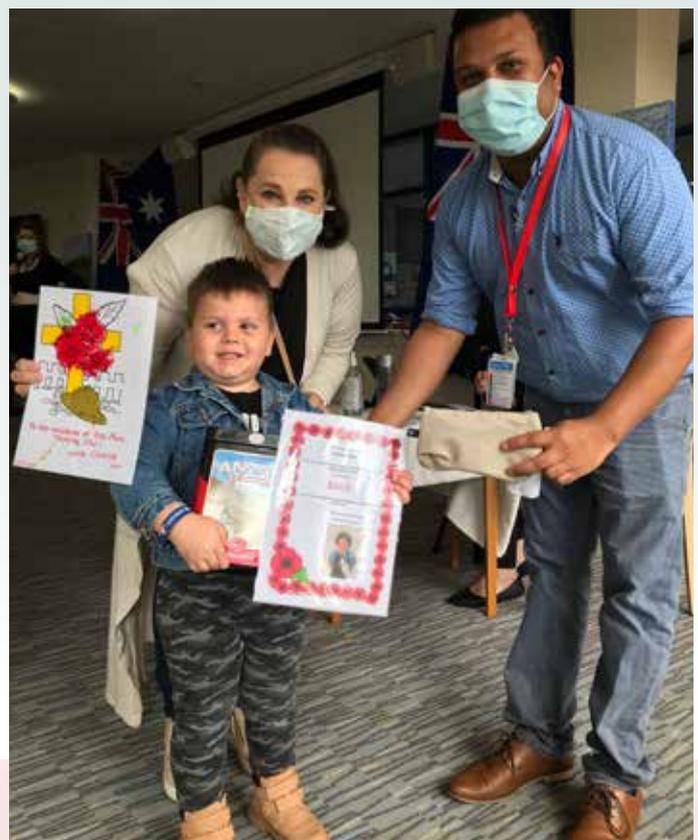
Never Too Young to Care about Others

Vasey RSL Care Frankston South residents were on the receiving end of a lovely donation from 4-year-old Charlie Gourley, pictured right with his mum Amy and Frankston South Lifestyle Coordinator, Ruwan.

On ANZAC Day, Charlie presented \$345 to the residents at our Frankston South home – money he had raised by baking ANZAC biscuits and selling them at his day care and to his friends and family.

Charlie began helping his mum cook from a very young age and by 2½ he was a regular in the kitchen. Some of his favourites are chocolate cake and enchiladas. It seems like cooking is in the genes – his grandmother loves baking and his auntie is a chef.

Charlie was motivated to make ANZAC biscuits after his mum read him a story about a little girl making them for her dad who was a soldier during the war and sending them off to him. He wanted to do something for the soldiers and rather than just making biscuits for them, wanted to raise funds so they could have something they really wanted. “They could get pizza,” Charlie suggested.



ANZAC Day Commemorations

Vasey RSL Care Brighton



Vasey RSL Care Brighton commemorated ANZAC Day with a full service inside. Veteran residents played a big role on the day: wreaths were laid by three Air Force veterans, Victor, Albert and Annie. The flag was raised by Veteran nurse Betty who served in New Guinea and Patricia, Veteran nurse who served in Egypt, and now in her 100th year, read The Ode. After the service, residents, staff and visiting family paid their respects at the flagpole. Resident Albert and his wife of 70 years, Bernice, sat in the sun and reflected quietly on his service.



Vasey RSL Care Brighton East



Vasey RSL Care Brighton East marked ANZAC Day with an indoor morning service with residents, staff and special guest Flight Lieutenant Mark Medwell delivering the commemorative address. Residents Geoffrey (standing left) laid a wreath in memory of all those who have lost their lives in service, Ben (standing right) led the Lord's Prayer, Heather (seated right) read the Ode, and Ron (seated left), who has sadly since passed away, recited 'In Flanders Fields'. In the afternoon, residents watched a movie on the big screen and home-made ANZAC biscuits were served with afternoon tea.



At the Vasey RSL Care Ex-Service Units in Cheltenham, a very well-attended outdoor service was held, organised by residents, led by Keith (pictured). The catafalque



party was provided by C Company, 5th/6th Battalion, Royal Victoria

Regiment (below being presented with a model EF88 rifle in recognition of their support). Right, CEO Janna Voloshin lays a wreath.



Vasey RSL Care Cheltenham ESA





Vasey RSL Care Bundoora

At Vasey RSL Care Bundoora, the ANZAC Day service was held outdoors. We were very pleased to have Troop Commander Maxin Ayres from Simpson Barracks who gave the address, while resident Norm raised the flag. We were very fortunate to have Bev Hayes once again playing the bagpipes, and this year, we welcomed bugler Dawson Conceirca from Macleod College who played the Last Post. It was a very moving service and we are grateful to all involved.



Vasey RSL Care Frankston South

Vasey RSL Care Frankston South residents, families and staff commemorated ANZAC Day with a service followed by morning tea. Representing the Royal Australian Navy, Lieutenant Sky McPhee delivered our commemorative address. Veterans Mamie (above left) and Ted read poems, David recited 'The Ode' and Daryl (top right) laid a wreath in memory of all lost through service. Audrey (right) served in World War II as a Corporal in the Royal Army in Great Britain and can be seen wearing her war service medal and army side cap.



Vasey RSL Care Ivanhoe

Residents and staff at Vasey RSL Care Ivanhoe commemorated ANZAC Day with a moving commemoration outdoors, with residents Jim, Kath (right), Ken, Patricia and Fred taking an part in the service. Residents were happy to welcome back one of our COVID-19 volunteers who assisted us during 2020 - ex-serving Airman Chad (RAAF). The service was followed by a delicious morning tea.



Vietnam Veterans Support Ex-Service Villages

In our last issue, we brought you an update on donations from the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAA), Victorian Branch, to our Frankston South and Croydon Ex-Service villages. This time we bring news from Geelong.

At our Units at Bell Park in Geelong, residents requested a memorial to all those who have served. This would be a focal point for memorial services on ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day, and a place where residents could stop to remember those they served and especially those who are no longer alive.

Thanks to the generosity of the Vietnam Veterans Association Australia (Victoria) and Mr Bob Elworthy AM, State President, a beautiful natural memorial has now been installed.

It is made up of a local rock, generously donated by stonemasons WM Buckle & Sons in East Geelong. The rock bears a plaque with the emblems of the RSL and the VVAA and the inscription:

This Memorial is Dedicated to the Men and Women of Australia who Served our Country and Gave their Lives for our Freedom.

Lest we Forget.

Residents at Geelong are looking forward to inviting members of the VVAA to a barbecue lunch when COVID-19 restrictions permit.

“You never forget the people you served with,” said Chris Gray, General Manager Veteran Services. “We really appreciate the support of the VVAA Victoria and WM Buckle and Sons. This is a meaningful memorial that Geelong residents will appreciate and value.”



Above left: the location of the flag pole with the new paving and planting, before the installation of the Memorial Rock. Middle: the rock and spot light are installed. Right: close up of the plaque with emblems and inscription.

Cheltenham Residents Take up Yoga

Natalie from Roving Redhead Yoga visits the Cheltenham Ex-Service Accommodation each week (when not in lockdown) for an exercise class on Wednesday mornings.

At the moment half a dozen residents have joined the class and it is slowly gathering momentum.

Natalie specialises in helping people get started and has a lot of experience in leading sessions for people with illnesses or injuries, or who have just not done much exercise for a long time.

“Natalie is great,” says resident Keith. “She motivates

us to do something for ourselves - she’s got a great personality and helps everyone feel relaxed.”

If any Cheltenham residents are interested in joining the sessions, contact Keith for details.





Vaccination: Another Layer of Protection

By 8 June, residents at all our aged care homes will have had both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine: we are very pleased that the majority of residents have chosen to have the vaccination.

This process has taken considerably longer than originally anticipated, and the vaccine was made available only to residents rather than both residents and staff. At most locations, there were a number of spare doses and staff who were on-site at the time were offered these. Otherwise staff had to organise their own vaccinations.

Our residential managers have also had their work cut out for them organising flu vaccination clinics for residents and staff around the COVID-19 clinics.

"We are pleased to have this extra layer of protection in place for residents," says CEO Janna (pictured).



"However, it doesn't mean we can lower our guard or reduce any of our other protective measures."

New variants are appearing in other parts of the world and it is highly probable that a booster vaccination will be required each year, much like the flu vaccination.

"We strongly recommend that everyone takes advantage of the free COVID-19 vaccination as soon as you are eligible," Janna says.

"We all have a responsibility to each other to prevent the virus spreading and reaching those who are most vulnerable to its effects - older people and especially those we care for here at Vasey RSL Care."

Creative Residents at Croydon ESA



Joan (right) and Dianne from our Ex-Service Accommodation (ESA) at Croydon are part of a Patchwork Group that meets regularly in the Croydon ESA Community Hall.

The group has made this beautiful quilt to honour those who have served. The husbands of three Croydon residents served in Vietnam so this is particularly poignant to them.

The Croydon Hall underwent a major renovation a few years ago and is now a very comfortable place: Joan commented on how much the residents appreciate the work done by Steve Best and Chris Gray to make it into the welcoming space it is now.

