



Winter 2022

VASEY RSL CARE NEWS

The Quarterly Newsletter for the Vasey RSL Care Community

Liz Vasey Koschitske Cuts the Ribbon

We were delighted to have Mrs Jessie Mary Vasey's granddaughter, Liz Vasey Koschitske speak at the Official Opening of our Wodonga Ex-Service Accommodation, and declare them open by cutting the ribbon.

"This was an important opportunity for us to meet with the organisations supporting veterans in the Wodonga region," says Chair of the Vasey RSL Care Board, Mike O'Meara OAM. "We were made to feel very welcome by this community and it is clear that there is a need for affordable accommodation for the veteran population in this region, as elsewhere."

Mike talked to guests about our strategic plan to expand support to regional veterans and war widows, with Wodonga being our first location outside Melbourne/Geelong.

We were delighted to have Wodonga Mayor, Cr Kev Poulton and state member for Benambra, Bill Tilley MP

(himself a veteran) say a few words about the veteran community and the accommodation situation in the region.

Liz Vasey Koschitzke lives locally and spoke passionately about the importance of the work her grandmother began after World War II and how meaningful it is to her to see her legacy continuing through Vasey RSL Care.

Our sincere thanks go to all who attended the opening, from local government, Albury and Wodonga RSL sub-branches, RSL Victoria state executive and senior management, current serving ADF members from the local base, staff from Soldier On, Open Arms and the Hume Veterans, who we are already working with.

"We are committed to our strategy to encompass the veteran community right across Victoria, and we look forward to strengthening our ties with Wodonga," says Mike. More details: www.vaseyrslcare.org.au



Liz Vasey Koschitzke pronounces the units officially open. From left, General Manager Property Services Steve Best, Board Vice Chair Barry Lee, CEO Janna Voloshin, Liz Vasey Koschitzke, Board Chair Mike O'Meara OAM, and General Manager Veteran Services Chris Gray.

From Our CEO

I would like to begin by sharing the news that this week State President RSL Victoria, Dr Robert Webster OAM wrote to our Chair, Mike O'Meara OAM, to advise that the previous resolution to sell Vasey RSL Care by June 2022 had been rescinded. He wrote, 'Since earlier this year, the RSL has considered Vasey's Emerging Strategy and this has helped inform the State Executive decision along with consultations with Vasey RSL Care Company Members.' This confirmation is greatly welcomed and provides clarity and reassurance for both Vasey RSL Care decision makers and our community members.

Strategic Plan Progress

Despite the ongoing effects of the pandemic on our organisation, we have been able to make significant progress towards our longer term goals.

In early April, Victorian Minister for Veterans, the Honourable Shaun Leane and Victorian Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers, the Honourable Anthony Carbinis made a visit to our proposed V Centre in Ivanhoe to learn more about its development. Interest at this level is very encouraging and is further confirmation of the direction being taken (see back page for more).

Wodonga Opening: As you may have read on the front page, Mike, Chris and I visited Wodonga for the Official Opening of our three units. Property Services staff organised renovations and the units were ready for occupation early in 2022. The Veteran Services Team has made connections with many of the ex-service support groups in Wodonga and thanks to the Hume Veterans, two units are already occupied – an indication of the need for this service.

It was a great honour to have Liz Vasey Koschitzke speak at the opening, reminding us of the difficult conditions for World War II widows and their children. Her grandmother not only set up Vasey Housing but also lobbied government for improved widows pensions in recognition of the sacrifices their husbands had made. She noted how sad it is that this accommodation is still needed today but wonderful that her grandmother's legacy lives on.

We are continuing to explore options in other parts of Victoria where there are high numbers of veterans.



Since COVID, many Melbournians have chosen to make a 'tree-change', and while this is beneficial in increasing the population in regional cities, it has made it harder to find affordable housing.

Bundoora Visitors: Prior to the recent federal election, we had a visit at Vasey RSL Care Bundoora by Senator Jess Walsh and then Shadow Assistant Minister for Health and Ageing and member for Cooper, the Hon Ged Kearney, who is now Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care.

Both have a strong interest in aged care and Ms Kearney started her working life in nursing.

In the News

Anyone watching the ABC News or The Business on Monday 30 May will have seen our staff member, Ashish Sood, interviewed about his role as a male working in a caring role in the aged care sector.

Journalist, Dan Ziffer was investigating the barriers for men to work in aged care and how this might change in the future. Congratulations to Ash on a very engaging interview. (A link to the video is available on our website.)

New Leadership Roles at Vasey RSL Care

Current and future growth in the Home Care program has determined the need for a General Manager Community Services to lead this growing team and we are delighted to have Rich Davey joining us soon.

We have also appointed a Governance Officer to manage the increasing governance requirements and the anticipated changes resulting from the Royal Commission, and prompted by the ongoing pandemic, we have created an Infection Prevention and Control Manager position: both roles will assist our future effectiveness and compliance.

**Janna Voloshin,
Chief Executive Officer**





Royal Australian Air Force Honours Alan

The centenary year of the Royal Australian Air Force, March 2021 to March 2022, was a year of important commemorations for all who have been part of this service. One aspect of their commemorations was to honour RAAF members turning 100 during the centenary year. Our resident, Alan Day, was one of these, turning 100 in February.

On a glorious sunny autumn day at Vasey RSL Care Frankston South, resident Alan Day was the proud recipient of his Certificate of Recognition – Centenarian Veteran by the Royal Australian Air Force.

The beautifully framed certificate was presented to Alan by Warrant Office Bradley Parmenter and Flight Lieutenant Joshua Moore from RAAF Base Point Cook, in the presence of Alan’s daughter, Leonie Omond, members from the Darwin Defenders 1942-45 Melbourne group, Robyn Bell, Michele Gallin and Bernadette Lightfoot, Alan’s good friend and fellow Knight of St John, Mr Alex Anderson, and Alan’s fellow residents at Vasey RSL Care Frankston South.

Alan was born in Ivanhoe and was just 18 when he attended RAAF training camp in NSW. Due to an accident, he became a medical orderly and was in Darwin when the bombs fell in 1942. He went on to serve in the Pacific in Morotai and Borneo.

As a founding member of the Darwin Defenders 1942-45, and in later years as their President, Alan has attended annual commemorative services in Melbourne and on several occasions has travelled to Darwin for significant services on the anniversary of the bombing of Darwin.



One of Alan’s aims has been to educate the younger generation on the significance and importance of the events of Darwin in 1942: his Darwin Defenders Memorial Poem is now recited by primary school students at the annual commemorative service at Melbourne’s Shrine of Remembrance.

For many years, Alan called Mornington home and he tirelessly assisted in fundraising efforts for Legacy, the War Widows Guild and the Weary Dunlop Foundation before coming to live at Vasey RSL Care.

Congratulations, Alan on this recognition of your service - and your centenary!



Darwin Defenders Memorial Poem by Alan Day KJSJ-FAIM

On the 19th February 1942
Darwin, on our Australian soil,
was bombed by a foreign invader.

Brave young Australian soldiers
battled them courageously.
They fought and lives were lost.

Down the long long ages glory shall ever shine
for those who fought and died
to save Australia for you and mine.

From left: Flt Lt Joshua Moore, Bernadette Lightfoot, Michele Gallin, Robyn Bell, WO Bradley Parmenter and Leonie Omond surround Alan Day.

Commemorating ANZAC Day



Vasey RSL Care Brighton WWII veteran Betty Cooper had a wonderful time attending the Victorian State Premier's ANZAC Day lunch.

She was thrilled to meet dignitaries and renew old acquaintances.

A group of veterans from our ex-service accommodation also received an invitation to the lunch – Dorelle from Frankston South, Simon from



Ivanhoe and Alan from Cheltenham, joined General Manager Veteran Services, Chris Gray and are pictured with DVA Deputy Commissioner Michael Harper.



Alan also took part in 'The Last Post' ceremony on 24 April at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance.

Accompanied by a group of Cheltenham residents, he laid a wreath to honour the biggest deployment of Australian troops since World War II, when 6,300 Australians deployed to the Vietnam War on 25 April 1966.



Alan recited the Ode before the Last Post was played.



Vasey RSL Care Board Chair, Mike O'Meara OAM and CEO, Janna Voloshin attended the ANZAC Day service at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, held outdoors in the Remembrance Garden containing memorials to wars and conflicts that Australians have been involved in.

Mike and Janna laid a wreath in memory of all who have given their lives in service to our nation.

Cheltenham Ex-Service Accommodation residents held their service of commemoration welcoming the Mentone Army Cadets



and the Charlie Company 5/6 Royal Victorian Regiment who provided the catafalque party. The service was well attended by residents and their guests.



Cheltenham will be holding their Vietnam Veteran Service of Commemoration on 14 August at 11 am – all are welcome.





Music is Good for the Soul...

It is a well known fact that music is good for our mental health and relieves stress: playing a musical instrument goes a step further since mastering a new skill boosts both mental and physical health, improves self confidence and motivation, and provides a greater sense of wellbeing. When this is done in a group, these benefits double!

Residents at Cheltenham have a guitar playing group that meets regularly with members having varying skill levels.

Group member, Lauren says that playing both the drums and guitar have been hugely beneficial to her: "When I am playing, none of the competing negative thoughts gain purchase in my head", she says.

Guitars 4 Vets Australia (G4VA) are offering veterans a guitar and ten free lessons. Veterans can apply through www.guitarsforvetsaustralia.com

If you have a spare guitar you no longer use, you might like to consider donating it to G4VA.



New Workshop for Frankston South ESA

Our ex-service accommodation at Frankston South now has a large workshop where excess furniture and white goods can be stored ready to provide to new residents who don't always have all they need.

A big shout out to the volunteer-based organisation, Serving On, sponsored by **BAE Industries** and **Soldier On**. Soldier On donated the workshop.

Vasey RSL Care Property Services prepared the site and laid the concrete slab.

Then, the build took place on 8 June, with nine veterans teaming up with Soldier On volunteers to brave the Melbourne winter for the construction.

A fantastic partnership! Thank you to all involved.



Residents Helping Us Out

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues with high daily new cases in Australia, all staff who work at our aged care homes are required to do a regular Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) before they come to work. Putting together packs of tests for over 500 staff to take home is a big job - but we had help!



We'd like to give a big shout out to all the kind residents who volunteered their time putting kits together for us over the last few months.

This is one of the many additional tasks that the pandemic creates for the aged care sector.

Thank you to Dorothea, Kath, Marie and Merle who got together and Lyn who put kits together in her room.

We are fortunate to have wonderful residents helping us out with this and no doubt, bringing back memories of their past volunteering activities!

Thank you very much to all involved.

Pictured above (from left) are Bundoora residents, Dorothea, Kath, Marie and Merle. Great work ladies.

Have You Had Your Say Recently?

Your views are important to us. Whether you are an ex-service accommodation resident, home care client, aged care resident, family member, staff member or have any other connection, your views offer us vital insights that help us discover areas where we can improve.

Vasey RSL Care is committed to continuous improvement **and** with your input and assistance, we can better understand the needs and expectations of our community. Whether you have a complaint about something or a suggestion for an improvement, we would like to hear from you. And if there is something you particularly like, we'd like to know about that as well.

All feedback is gold! And that's why our Have Your Say form is gold. Pick up a form from our aged care homes, or use our online form at www.vaseyrlscare.org.au/about-us/have-your-say/

Your feedback can be anonymous, but in that case we will not be able to provide you with details of any actions taken or outcomes.

HAVE YOUR SAY!

COMPLAINT? COMPLIMENT? SUGGESTION?

Your views are important to us: they offer us valuable insights that help us continue to improve all that we do. Our organisation is committed to continuous improvement and with your assistance, we can better meet your needs and expectations. Thank you for helping us improve our services and care.

Return completed form to the 'HAVE YOUR SAY' box or mail to:
 Vasey RSL Care
 Reply Paid 88355
 Hawthorn VIC 3122



Duke of Edinburgh Shield Winners 2022

For a number of years now, Vasey RSL Care has sponsored the Victorian RSL Duke of Edinburgh Shield, where bowlers get together at 15 locations across northern Victoria and across into NSW to battle it out for the glory of their club.

Around 1,500 RSL Victoria bowlers enjoyed perfect weather for this year's Duke of Edinburgh Shield Competition at the end of April. Two days of keenly contested competition took place from Eaglehawk to Corowa and from Benalla to Barham. At the end of the weekend, the winner at each site had been decided:

Venue:	Winner:
Corowa RSL	Ocean Grove RSL
Corowa Civic	Deniliquin RSL
Cobram	Bundoora RSL 1
Barooga	Barooga RSL
Tocumwal	Clayton RSL
Barham	Moama White
Yarrowonga BGBC	Frankston Rays
Mulwala	Altona 2
Yarrowonga BC	Queenscliff/Point Lonsdale
Benalla	Benalla White
Deniliquin	Warrnambool RSL
Mathoura	Inverlock RSL Gold
Rich River	Traralgon RSL
Bairnsdale BC	Bairnsdale 2
Eaglehawk	St Arnaud RSL



Congratulations to all site winners and to overall winners, the bowlers from the Ocean Grove, with Inverloch RSL Gold coming second and Queenscliff/Point Lonsdale third.

General Manager Veteran Services, Chris Gray, attended the award presentation on 15 May to present the winners' Shield - pictured below (2nd from right) with Shield committee member Tim Nabbs (2nd from left) and members of the successful team.



Pictured from top: Winners, Ocean Grove; Bundoora 1 - winners at Cobram; Best rink winners - Ocean Grove; Ocean Grove Shield Presentation.



