

# VASEY RSL CARE NEWS

The Quarterly Newsletter for the Vasey RSL Care Community

Spring 2022

## Vietnam Veterans' Day Commemoration

The residents at Vasey RSL Cheltenham Ex-Service Accommodation were honoured to welcome Victorian Minister for Veterans, the Honourable Shaun Leane MP, the Army Cadets from Mentone Grammar School and members of the ADF from HMAS Cerberus to their recent Vietnam Veterans' Day Service.

With a number of Vietnam Veterans living at Vasey RSL Cheltenham, 18 August is an important day of commemoration for the village.

Thanks to resident Keith Walsh, a service of commemoration was held on Sunday 14 August with Vietnam Veteran residents David Yole as MC and Alan Murphy giving the address.

Wreaths were laid in memory of all who have given their lives in service of our country by Hon Shaun Leane MP, Councillor Jenna Davey-Burns, Deputy Mayor of the City of Kingston, Mr Meng Heang Tak MP, State Member for Clarinda, resident Margaret Hope and GM – Veteran Services, Chris Gray.

Thanks to the Australian Army Band for providing their drummer and bugler, and to the Young Veterans for the barbecue which followed the service.

*Photos (clockwise from top left):*

- Village residents Margaret and Mary with Cr. Jenna Davey-Burns and Mr Meng Heang Tak MP.
- ADF Members from HMAS Cerberus formed the catafalque party.
- David (MC), Sandra, RSL Vic State Treasurer Tim Holden, Vietnam Veterans State President Bob Elsworth AM, Alan, Keith, Minister Leane, David, Ian, Meng Heang Tak MP, Chris Gray & Cr. Davey-Burns.
- Chris Gray lays a wreath.



## From Our CEO

We are now officially into spring and you may share my sense of relief as Victorian daily new COVID-19 cases have finally begun to fall. It's still not a cause for celebration, but perhaps some guarded optimism.

As well as the continuing battle to keep our residential community safe, there have been many other activities over the past few months and I'd like to draw your attention to the following:

### V Centre Update

In early August, we invited experts in the fields of homelessness and veteran support services to attend our V Centre Program Design Workshop, held at our former Ivanhoe aged care facility/future V Centre.

Representatives from seven organisations joined us and provided helpful insights and advice.

### Ex-Service Events

After over two years of planning and postponement, the Victorian Department of Veterans Affairs is finally able to hold its Victorian Ex-Service Organisations (ESO) Summit in early August.

I had the opportunity to give a short presentation on Vasey RSL Care's services, including our expanding home care service, the extension of ex-service accommodation to regional Victoria, and the future V Centre - which is really striking a chord with the ex-service community.

The Veteran Services Team attended the latest ADF Transition Seminar in Melbourne a couple of weeks ago and we continue to strengthen our relationships on both an individual and corporate basis.

### More Regional Units

After our successful trip to Wodonga in May, we again chose winter to visit the ship-wreck coast, namely Warrnambool (pictured above with Chris Gray).

In June, we purchased a six-unit property in Warrnambool and we take possession in September. They are two-bedroom units and the property is centrally located, less than ten minutes walk to the shopping centre and even less to the main station. The units are being purchased occupied so refurbishments will be organised as vacancies arise, with new tenants being from the ex-service community.



### Residential Wellbeing Focus

There are two exciting new initiatives in our residential aged care homes aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of all residents through nutrition: the first is the introduction of an increased amount of dairy and the second is an initiative of our food services contractor, Medirest, called Meal Vision. Please see the next page for more information on both of these.

### More Research

Evidence-based practice is the basis of all our activities, and following on from the valuable findings of our research into veteran accommodation preferences last year, we are now conducting research into the experiences of those seeking our services. Some readers may have been invited to a focus group or asked to fill in a survey and I encourage you to participate if you can. This is vital for us, ensuring our future plans are based on real experience.

### Royal Commission Interim Report

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide delivered its interim report on 11 August having held hearings in Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Townsville and Hobart. Further hearings will continue prior to the June 2024 delivery of the final report.

### Aged Care Employee Day

On 7 August, we marked Aged Care Employee Day with a little gift to each of our staff - just a token of our appreciation for their commitment to our residents and clients and loyalty to the organisation.

Not all our staff work in aged care of course, but they all have a unique and vital role to play and we could not do what we do without them. It's especially important to acknowledge those 'at the coal face' and it was lovely to be able to pass messages on to them that came in from our whole community.

*Janna Voloshin,  
Chief Executive Officer*





# Additional Dairy Reduces Hip Fractures

Vasey RSL Care was involved in a research project conducted by a group of researchers based in three countries – Australia, Netherlands and USA – to investigate whether dietary sources of calcium and protein would have an effect on hip fractures and falls in older adults.

The research was a two year randomised controlled trial with 7,195 participants: 68% were female, the average age was 86 years, and they were living at 60 accredited residential facilities in Australia.

Thirty facilities provided residents with additional milk, yoghurt and cheese while the other thirty were the control group and continued to provide their usual menus, in line with dietary requirements and regulations.

The outcomes from the research study were that increasing calcium and protein intake via additional dairy products had benefits for residents, not just in the number of hip fractures from falls, but also by reducing the number of falls.

Key findings were a 33% reduction in all fractures, a 46% reduction in hip fractures and an 11% reduction



in falls. Furthermore, weight and lean mass of limbs was maintained among the additional dairy group.

We worked closely with Medirest to incorporate more milk, yoghurt and cheese into our winter menu, with examples like more milk-based soups and cheese sauces, and menu items like Vegemite and cheese scrolls and potato dishes with milk/cheese.

Milk is also offered at all times, cheese and crackers as an option for morning tea and yoghurt provided as an option for morning and afternoon tea.

We are now planning similar changes to increase milk, cheese and yoghurt in the spring menu.

# Back on the Buses Again!

They may be wearing masks, but there is no doubt that there are ear to ear smiles behind them. This group of delighted Bundoora residents are on their first bus trip since COVID-19 began and they couldn't wait to get going.

From left, Marie, Doreen, Margaret, Irene and Wally were extremely pleased that bus trips were finally back on the Lifestyle Program, after 2½ years absent.

This first trip was a scenic drive around the King Lake area, and residents noted how much development had continued during COVID-19 with large new developments in Morang and Hawkstowe.



The drive brought back lots of memories and residents shared stories, chatted and enjoyed being out and about together again, as well as a visit to the ice cream shop!

Residents at all our aged care homes are now back to enjoying regular bus trips – and thank you to our volunteer bus drivers without whom we could not do these.

# Meal Vision™: New Initiative at Vasey RSL Care

Vasey RSL Care partners with Medirest to provide food services at all four of our aged care homes, with all food prepared on-site by Medirest staff. 'Meal Vision' is being introduced by Medirest to all our sites to collect detailed information about residents' food preferences and intake.

Meal Vision has a number of goals, to:

- Accurately record the nutritional intake of each individual resident,
- Spot any individual trends, such as eating more or less than usual,
- Provide data so that meals can be better tailored to the needs of the residents, and to
- Monitor that meals are served at the correct temperature.

Meal Vision uses a scanning device to scan each meal just prior to being served to the specific resident, and then to scan the plate when the resident has finished with it.



**This system is not only able to determine how much the resident has eaten, but how much they have eaten of each item on their plate.**

Meal Vision uses artificial intelligence to continually learn and add to the data gathered. After a few months, the system will

have gathered enough data to begin providing useful reports that can record changes in an individual resident's appetite and to get a good picture of what meals overall are more or less popular with the residents at each aged care home.

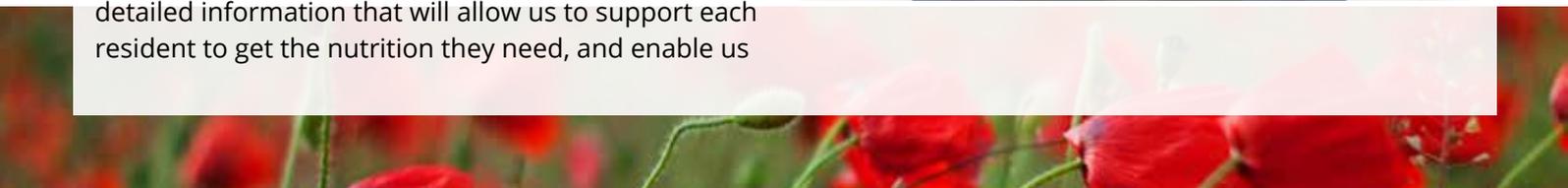
It is expected that after Meal Vision has been in place for a year, with all recipes and nutritional data in the system from each season, we will have access to more detailed information that will allow us to support each resident to get the nutrition they need, and enable us

to tailor the daily menu to ensure residents are being served the foods they enjoy.

A trial of the system is underway at Vasey RSL Care Brighton East, Kamesburgh and our staff are receiving information and training from Medirest to understand the benefits to residents and to ensure they know how to use it.

"Food is such an important part of our lives and improving both the enjoyment and nutrition for residents are important goals for us," says Janna Voloshin, CEO.

"This evidence-based innovation has the potential to make dining more enjoyable for residents, improve their nutrition and spot health changes earlier."





# The Growing Home Care Team

One of the goals of our Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and running its full length is the expansion of our Home Care Program and aiming to increase the number of Home Care clients to 375 by 30 June 2025.

One important objective is to develop a plan reduce our reliance on external service providers and move to our own staff providing the services.

A number of new staff have already been recruited and the team is building on the solid foundations of our existing program.



The number of home care clients is already on an upward trajectory adding around 40 clients per year for the past two financial years.

**Find out more about our Home Care:**

T: 03 9810 5570, [homecare@vaseyrslcare.org.au](mailto:homecare@vaseyrslcare.org.au)

*Pictured are:*

**Front row:** Nina Gackenheimer, Rich Davey (GM Community Services), Mishelle Ansems (Manager), Elsa Bramwell and Johnny Fu

**Back row:** Danielle Wilson, Jacqui Cramer, Julie Swanson, Mandy Wakely and Lisa O'Driscoll.

# ESA Residents get behind the Tank's 'wheel'

Sixteen residents from Vasey RSL Cheltenham and Frankston South Ex-Service Accommodation (ESA) Villages had a great day at South Gippsland Tank Adventure Park at Wonyip.

The trip was financially supported thanks to the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and arranged by resident David Hughes with residents travelling in the Vasey RSL Care Frankston South bus.

*Photos: (right) The group gets ready for action; (below from left) Jeanette and Alex are in an M113A1 Armoured Personnel Carrier; plenty of mud; and Lauren.*



# Our Dignity Quilts

Each of our aged care homes has a beautiful hand-crafted quilt made for us by the members of Quilts of Valour Australia.

Since its beginning in 2012, Quilts of Valour Australia has made quilts for soldiers affected by war and for the immediate families of fallen soldiers, as well as for a military hospital in Germany, and for service personnel and their families in Afghanistan.

In 2016, Quilts of Valour Australia presented Vasey RSL Care with a quilt for each of our aged care homes.

Our quilts are designed as *Dignity Quilts*, which is draped over the body of our resident after they have died, giving family, friends, residents and staff the chance to honour the resident as they leave us on their final journey.

Our quilts were made by Wyn Roper, Sharon Siacci, Jennifer Ray, Bronwyn van't Hof, Jo Botherway and Dorothy Meadows OAM. Wyn says:

*"I really liked the idea of making these quilts and we decided to make the quilt design distinctly Australian by using the 'Chandlers' Cottage Under the Australian Sun' fabric. The design has the military emblems in the middle surrounded by patch blocks that represent*



*crosses for veterans who have died. The next round of shapes are called 'Flying Geese' - triangles that represent the person flying free from their earthly body after they have died. The final round of Australian flowers represents the veteran's connection with our wonderful country. The colour range of all fabrics is also typically Australian."*

# Melbourne ADF Transition Seminar

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) run frequent seminars in cities and towns around Australia where there are large populations of ADF members and veterans.

These seminars provide a wide range of information and resources so that those about to leave the forces or those who have recently left have access to current information, guidance and support for a successful transition to civilian life. The seminars are also open to family members and support people.

Members of our Veteran Services Team, including Anne Warden, Veteran Services Coordinator (pictured) attended the recent Melbourne seminar to provide information about our accommodation services.





# Supporting Warrnambool Region Veterans

**You may have read about the official opening of our three Wodonga Ex-Service Accommodation units in our last issue: we are now very pleased to announce the purchase of a six-unit site in Warrnambool.**

The Vasey RSL Care Strategic Plan 2021-2025 notes a number of regional areas as the focus for potential expansion of services within the metropolitan Melbourne region and in regional Victoria (see right).

Sites have been chosen based on a number of factors, including veteran populations, existing support services and ex-service organisations in the area and the local economic situation.

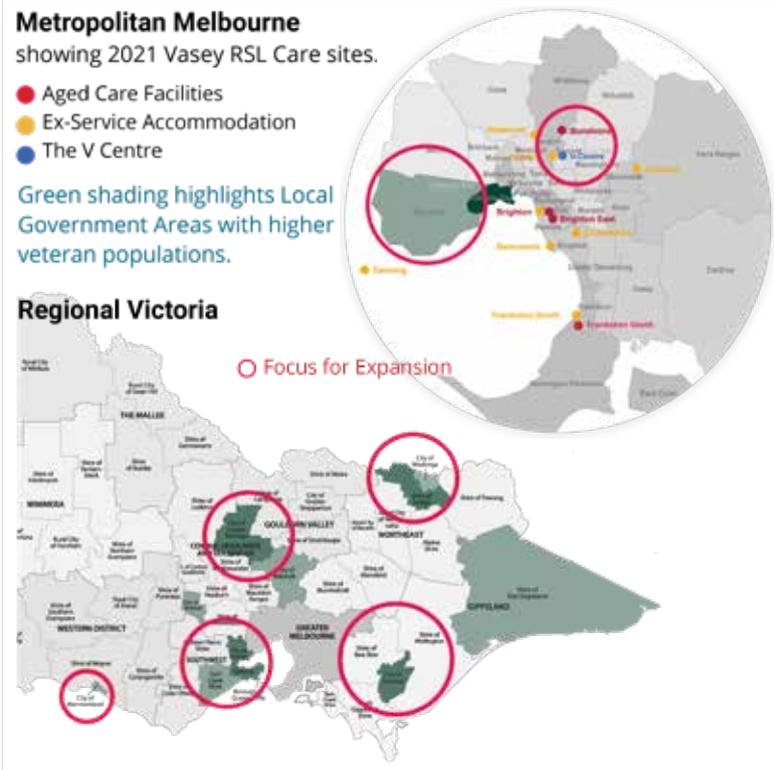
The purchase was made in June and Vasey RSL Care will take possession in September. The site (pictured below) is made up of six 2-bedroom units each with its own carport. The site is in the centre of town, close to Warrnambool Base Hospital and a ten minute walk to the main shopping centre.



The units have been purchased occupied so refurbishments will be organised as vacancies arise, as with our existing ESA units. As existing tenants vacate, new tenants will be from the ex-service community.

The announcement was made at a dinner held by Melbourne Legacy on Thursday 25 August, bringing together people from the ex-service community in the region and beyond to launch their Victorian Veteran Family Services to regional Victoria to support veterans and their families impacted by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, currently under way.

“We would like to congratulate Adam Kent from Legacy, who is based in Warrnambool, for a wonderful event, which showed the extent of the support for



Information above is taken from the Vasey RSL Care Strategic Plan 2021-2025 (visit website for full document).

the veteran community not just in this area, but right across the state,” said Janna Voloshin, Vasey RSL Care CEO. “We have already connected with ex-service organisations in the Warrnambool region including RSL Active, the Bravery Trust, the RSL sub-branch and a number of support services. There is a very active veteran community here, and as with Wodonga, this had a major bearing on our decision.”



Right: Janna makes the announcement about the Warrnambool ex-service accommodation at the Legacy Dinner, with Legacy’s Adam Kent (left).

# Saluting Excellence Awards: Nominate Now!

This year's Saluting Excellence Staff Conference is set for **Thursday 1 December**: this is the day when staff who are nominated for a Saluting Excellence Award will find out if they are a winner!

If you have not already made a nomination and would like to do so, please visit:

[www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/awards-2022](http://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/awards-2022)

**Closing date: 5pm, Fri 9 Sep.**



## Sponsorship Opportunities Now Open!

We are pleased to invite sponsorship from organisations with a close and valued working relationship with Vasey RSL Care to sponsor this year's conference.

Without our sponsors, this event would not happen and we greatly appreciate your support.

## Theme: Resilience

Our theme this year is 'Resilience', and (COVID permitting) it will take place at the Manningham Civic Centre at 699 Doncaster Road, Doncaster (pictured) on Thursday 1 December.

We will be sending sponsorship invitations to previous sponsors in the next 1-2 weeks. If you would like to be included, please forward details to:

**Email:** [communications@vaseyrslcare.org.au](mailto:communications@vaseyrslcare.org.au)

# 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: \*\* \_\_\_\_\_

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Alternatively, donate online: [www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/heros-wish/grant-a-heros-wish/](http://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/heros-wish/grant-a-heros-wish/)

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

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