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**John Leatherbarrow**  
**Jeff McConnell**  
**Noel V Parker**

Beaudesert RSL  
sub-branch



## **NEWSLETTER – Issue 4**

### **DECEMBER 2023**

## **Calendar of Coming events - 2024**

**BEAUDESERT RSL SUB BRANCH**

<b>22 December 2023</b>	<b>Sub Branch closed for Xmas/New Year</b>
<b>8 January 2024</b>	<b>Sub Branch office open</b>
16 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Sub Branch AGM & Nominations
25 April 2024	ANZAC Day
May 2024	Women's Auxiliary Mothers Day – Cent Auction
July 2024	President's Lunch
18 August 2024	Vietnam Veterans Day
14 September 2024	Peace Keepers Day
October 2024	Veterans Health Week
November 2024	Women's Auxiliary – Xmas Cent Auction

## **Members General Meeting**

(Wife/Husband/Partners most welcome)

**Next Meeting: TBA @ 2.00pm**  
**Venue: The Club Function Room**

♦ We hope you can attend for your input and support to the  
Sub Branch ♦

*We remember the following Sub-Branch Members who have sadly passed  
away this year 2023.*

♦ Robert "Bob" Russo (5.01.2023) ♦ Ernie Hardgrave (18.02.2023) ♦ Carlton Smith (26.7.2023) ♦  
Col Fisher (18.08.2023) ♦ Ralph (Noel) Burnett (17.10.2023)

**LEST WE FORGET**



## President's Message

Over these past several months following my not so pleasurable stay at Greenslopes hospital and my follow up recuperation, I resumed my elected role as President of the Sub Branch in order to put forward my resignation as President of this Sub Branch in November. I am doing this as my health is not as good as I would have expected and the advice to me is stop! In the interim, the Board nominated Carol Castles as acting President to carry the position of President and Ian Johnson as Acting Vice President. The membership will decide at the forthcoming AGM from nominations received as to who they wish to put forward as President for the wellbeing and prosperous continuation as a Sub Branch of the RSL. This Sub Branch is lucky to have Board members whose experience and capability carry us forward to new ground and new beginnings.

Over these past several months this Sub Branch has seen changes which the Board has dutifully risen to engage with vigor. Laudatory praise should go to the Board and to Ian Johnson in particular who has shown his professionalism and response to a role some would not envisage taking on.

The most welcome receipt of two new patient transport vehicles which thanks to the efforts of our Sub Branch Manager Joanne Crocker and with the expertise and attention of John Leatherbarrow and of course Mr. John Krause the Member for Beaudesert in assisting in obtaining a major grant to purchase and emblazon them with poppies and of course the assistance provided by the Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch Women's Auxiliary.

To those whose thoughtful good wishes and encouragement enabled me to carry on somewhat, I thank each and all of you. To the members of this Sub Branch, thank you for allowing me the honour of being your President even if for such a short engagement.

The future belongs to the Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch, the members and with the encouragement of the Board advising and directing members to all things that make for the betterment of our Veteran community.

It is beholding on the Board members to provide encouragement and ethical direction to the membership. The positions of those elected as Board members are directed by external agencies, most notably Queensland RSL, the SED RSL and others as applicable by law. Each member is bound by regulation and ability to ensure the continued prosperity and professional delivery of services to the membership.

We are extremely lucky to have a Pensions Advocacy Unit, PAWS, that is professional and diligent in its operations and dealings with Veterans, families and the DVA. Your Advocates Jay Collins and Chris Smith are trained and authorised by the DVA/ATDP and as such are your representatives to DVA and others applicable to individual cases. The assistance and dedication of our Wellbeing Support Officers is encouraged with Trudy Johnson and David Kassulke as backup for our wellbeing. Without PAWS, the Sub Branch would be one of the many RSL's missing out on an Advocates expertise in dealing with DVA and other organisation's. The Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch has had some trying and undeserved attention on many occasions and through all has come out with well-intentioned and deliberate directions as to the future of the Sub Branch and the wellbeing of its Veteran members, the community and of course families. There are yet many obstacles and hurdles to overcome and the continued participation in the affairs of this Sub Branch by the Veteran membership is paramount and to be encouraged. Our organisation is for the wellbeing of Veterans and families.

I thank the Board members as professionals in the roles they have been allocated and I wholeheartedly thank the Women's Auxiliary for their dedication to the Sub Branch and the paramount Objects of the League.

**Steve Monteath**

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## PAWS/Wellbeing

In November Jay Collins & I went to Greenbank Army Depot for the 11 CSSB Family day attended by around 150 personnel and families. There was a Wurst Van serving the biggest Wurst, a coffee van that had two ACD puppies which stole all and sundries hearts and the many visitors who took a great deal of time asking questions and looking for advice re Advocacy which Jay handled to perfection. The day was made by having available a vehicle that referenced and supported the Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch with virtually all the 'goodies' we had on hand being taken up by our numerous visitors. We were supported by the Senior Officer and subalterns who looked after us for the time there. We left at 1700 hrs. It was a grand day with our RSL receiving accolades from the senior staff and members.

Thank you to Jacqui for prepping the vehicle and having it on hand to support the RSL PAWS.

**Steve Monteath**



**PAWS office is open for clients on Wednesdays by appointment only.**

Please call and make an appointment

**Ph: 5541 3720** or email:

[welfare@beaudesertslsubbranch.com](mailto:welfare@beaudesertslsubbranch.com)

**All these services below are available right now – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

- **Open Arms — Veterans & Families Counselling** service is available 24/7 on **1800 011 046**
- **Safe Zone Support** on **1800 142 072** is a free and **anonymous** counselling line for current serving ADF personnel, veterans and their families available 24/7
- **Defence Family Helpline** is available for ADF members and their families, available 24/7 — dial **1800 624 608**



**RSL Qld - Emergency Financial Support:**

- RSL Qld Will close from end of business on Friday, 22 December and reopen on 2 January 2024.
- As has been the case for previous years, RSLQ rosters two staff – a Client Contact Team member and a Wellbeing clinician – to respond to a limited range of financial support options over 27, 28 and 29 December.
- The Wellbeing team does not have capacity to run its entire suite of Wellbeing Services over the period 25 December – 1 January 2024.

**Open Arms (OAs - Homelessness Support:)**

OAs have advised that its regional offices in Queensland will be closed over the Christmas period. Its National hotline remains operational over the festive period.

- OA's regional offices in Queensland will be closed on Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup> and reopen on 2 January 2024.
- Veterans who contact subbranches for homelessness support during this period should follow the attached guideline for referral onto the Open Arms [National] Crisis Support line on 1800 011 046.
- Depending on the veteran's circumstances, OA may be able to fund up to three nights of Crisis Accommodation Support (CAS)
- OA is limited to providing a maximum of 3 nights of crisis accommodation per episode of support for a veteran. If a homeless veteran meets OA's eligibility for Crisis Accommodation, subbranches may need to fund additional period of accommodation past the three nights CAS and until RSL Queensland reopens on 2 January 2023.

*If you know of a Veteran who requires assistance, doing it tough or unwell please let us know. We have welfare bags available for those in need.*

We are concerned about any instances of homelessness in the Veteran community. If you or someone you know is in this situation, please contact 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

Veterans and their families who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness can access a wide range of support, including short term emergency accommodation in times of crisis.

Visit: <https://www.dva.gov.au/financial-support/income-support/help-buy-property-or-find-accommodation/homelessness-support>

**PAWS TEAM (Steve, Jay, Chris and Trudy)**

**Museum – Harry's Haunt**

Harry's Haunt is open on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday by our wonderful volunteers Phil, Barry, Maurice and Kevin.

We are always looking for more volunteers to assist with keeping Harry's Haunt open.

Please contact the Sub Branch if you are able to assist, or pop in on the days open to chat to our volunteers. We would greatly appreciate any help and your time.

**Office Manager/Secretary**

## Women's Auxiliary

The Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch Women's Auxiliary would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas for 2023.

In rounding out the year we held our Christmas themed Cent Auction on November 24 with nearly a full capacity venue. Again, as always, a great morning was had by everyone with many people walking away with a huge bundle of goodies and some of us not so lucky ones, better luck next time.

We are just rounding up the last of the Christmas cards from the schools and about to sort them out for delivery to all associations, nursing homes etc in readiness for the season. The children thoroughly enjoy participating in this project and I must say the elderly love receiving a card, they appreciated the time the children have put in. We must thank all the schools (13 in all) for letting us run this project each year and for their cooperation. Remember if you see any Christmas cards going cheap donations of cards are continuously accepted, as we use some 2000 - 3000 cards each year. by the time you receive this newsletter we will most likely have drawn out Christmas raffle, ably organised by Janice Heit. We must thank her for her time and all the business houses who kindly donated prizes or vouchers towards this raffle.

Another year bites the dust as they say, so here is to a great 2024 and to every one we wish you joy and good health.

**Joanne Heit**  
Women's Auxiliary

## Birthday Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the following members who had/will have their Birthdays.



**January, 2024**

- ◆ T. Barrell ◆ C. Castles ◆ R. Deans ◆ K. Evans
- ◆ J. Forbe-Smith ◆ B. Gordon ◆ I. Johnson
- ◆ S. Jones ◆ B. Lange ◆ C. Maher ◆ D. Philippi
- ◆ H. Pohlner ◆ H. Rye ◆ I. Smith ◆ I. Turnbull
- ◆ L. Venz



**February 2024**

- ◆ D. Baty ◆ R. Cronk ◆ A. Dadson ◆
- ◆ E. Day ◆ R. Dendle ◆ ◆ J. Ford ◆
- C. Goodwin ◆ P. Lester ◆
- S. Murphy ◆ B. Noy ◆ E. Rasmussen ◆
- R. Seymour ◆ A. Stewart ◆ J. Strudwick ◆
- J. Stubbs



**March 2024**

- ◆ G. Beulah ◆ E. Binstead ◆ S. Kable ◆
- ◆ D. Kassulke ◆ D. Percy ◆ R. Reid ◆
- J. Richardson ◆ C. SMith ◆ R. Smith ◆
- M. Wilkie

## Welcome New Members – 2023

- ◆ J. Barkley ◆ R. Maher
- ◆ M. Caitling ◆
- ◆ E. Macdonald ◆ J. Venz

## SUB BRANCH NEWS



### **QAS Patient Transport** **Information for Members**

Our 2 new vehicles have been well appreciated within the community. They have new signage and look amazing! Since we have had them (4-5 months), they have done over 10,000kms each. We have transported 127 patients in October with our drivers doing 303 hours and 9514 kilometers. It seems to be getting busier leading up to the Christmas period. Our drivers are committed to their voluntary roles in the community and due to the holidays and time-off some of them are having, others have done more days than normal. I applaud all the drivers for their commitment and dedication to our community and that they have a wonderful time off over the Christmas & New Year period.

If you, or anyone you know, can do one day a week (or more) to provide this service, we would be happy to



hear from you. Restrictions are no problem as we can work around this.  
I'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.



**Transport Co-Ordinator Jacque Plummer**

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## BEAUDESERT SOCIAL GOLF CLUB



There is no requirement to be a member of the Beaudesert Social Golf Club, however, they would love to see more ex-Military and Veterans in their ranks. It is a great day with 18 holes of golf, morning tea, BBQ lunch and prizes in excess of \$100. They have players of all skill levels, but the main aim of the day is to have fun, enjoy yourself and meet some likeminded people. They have our own Handicap System so everyone regardless of ability has a fair chance to win prizes. Why not come along and have a game?? For more information contact the Beaudesert Golf Club.

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## DVA NEWS

### Pensions and allowances to rise from 20 September

21 September 2023

From 20 September 2023, some veterans and their families will receive an increase to their pension payments in line with increases to the cost of living. You don't have to do anything to receive the increase, it will automatically be applied to your payment.

The first full payment at the new rates of pension will be payday 19 October 2023. The pension paid on payday 21 September 2023 is not affected as it covers pension entitlements for the fortnight to 18 September 2023. The pension for payday 5 October covers entitlements for the period 19 September 2023 to 2 October 2023 and will be paid partly at the old rate and partly at the new rate.

The maximum rate of single service pension will rise by \$32.70 to \$1,096.70 per fortnight and the maximum rate for couples will increase by \$24.70 to \$826.70 per fortnight (each).

The Special Rate of Disability Compensation Payment (T&PI payment) will increase by \$53.00 to \$1,729.20 per fortnight. The Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA) rate will increase by \$28.60 to \$933.20 per fortnight and the 100 per cent General Rate of Disability Compensation Payment will increase by \$18.40 to \$600.30 per fortnight.

The pension paid to war widow(er)s will increase by \$33.80 to \$1,116.30 per fortnight (including the energy supplement), while the ceiling rate of the income

support supplement will rise to \$331.40 per fortnight. Certain benefits under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) will also increase. The weekly MRCA wholly dependent partner payment will increase by \$16.90 to \$558.15. This is paid fortnightly (\$1116.30).

The indexation factor used to index pensions each March and September can be based on either the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (PBLCI) or Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE). For 20 September 2023, the indexation was driven by PBLCI.

For more information on the new pension rates, call **1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)**.

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## QUEENSLAND ESO FORUM

15 NOVEMBER 2023

Earlier this month, on Friday 3 November, RSL Queensland and Legacy Brisbane hosted the second Queensland Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) Forum for 2023

The Forum welcomed more than 80 attendees from 40 organisations across the sector who came together for a day of collaboration and connection.

Setting sights on the year ahead, the Forum provided the opportunity for ESOs to share their vision and key learnings and consider collaboration on future initiatives to better support veterans and their families.

Presentations and updates were shared from RSL Queensland, Legacy Brisbane, Young Veterans, Department of Veterans' Affairs, Defence, Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation (GMRF) and the Repatriation Medical Authority, which all placed a key emphasis on veterans' health and wellbeing. Queensland Assistant Minister to the Premier for Veterans' Affairs and the Public Sector, Bart Mellish MP also addressed the Forum.

Participants had the opportunity to ask questions of each of the presenters, and there was a particular focus on health initiatives and transition support services for the Defence and veteran community.

Throughout the day, there was a sense of shared purpose and mutual support in the room, with ESOs keen to continue working together to advocate for the

needs of veterans and their families, to secure a bright future for current and ex-serving Defence personnel.



If you are unsure what support is available, please contact DVA on **1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)**. If you know someone in need, please pass on this important message – DVA is there to help.

## OTHER NEWS

WWII pilot Warrant Officer John Shoesmith (Retd) celebrated his 100th birthday on 9 August.



*Warrant Officer John Shoesmith during his time in the RAAF*

*By Flight Lieutenant Rob Hodgson*

A Sherwood-Indooroopilly RSL Sub Branch Life Subscriber, John flew a clutch of 'classic warbirds' for the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) during the war, including the CAC Boomerang and Supermarine Spitfire. Enlisting during the dark days of early 1942, John was selected for pilot training. What followed was intensive training, progressing from the classroom to cockpit. Upon receiving his Wings, he moved through several flying Squadrons, culminating in active service flying Spitfires in 452 and 79 Squadrons.

"I received no instruction before my first flight in a Spitfire – but there was a training manual on the cockpit seat," he says.

What followed was active service in what is now Indonesia, as the Allied forces pushed the enemy back.

A key role of the Spitfire – and one that it was not initially designed for – was ground attack.

"It took great skill to dive bomb a bridge and drop 250-pound bombs whilst under fire," he explains.



*John celebrated his 100th birthday surrounded by family, friends and members of the RAAF*



At the conclusion of the war, John – like many of his generation – returned to civilian and family life. But he continued to hold strong memories of flying the Spitfire

– undoubtedly one the most well-loved aircraft in aviation history.

“It was the best plane I flew – and it had such a surge of power at maximum throttle,” he says with a twinkle in his eye.

In later years, John maintained his passion for the aircraft – and ‘kept his eye in’ – tackling missions on the Microsoft Flight Simulator computer game with Spitfire add-in.

Group Captain Dennis Tan, Senior Australian Defence Force Officer at RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland, represented the Air Force for an early birthday celebration at John’s home on 8 August, presenting him with some Air Force mementos.

These included a framed image of one of 100 Squadron’s flying Spitfires, based at Temora, New South Wales, signed by Commanding Officer Jason Easthope. 100 Squadron is a historical squadron which was re-formed in 2021 to coincide with the Air Force centenary and maintains and operates heritage aircraft.

Himself a pilot, GPCAPT Tan considered it a special honour to be able to present the mementos to John and ‘talk flying’ with a fellow aviator.

“All the aircraft that Warrant Officer Shoesmith flew would be considered ‘classic warbirds’ these days, and what an amazing collection of aircraft to have in a pilot’s logbook,” GPCAPT Tan says.

“It is a very special honour for me to spend some time with one of our veterans who has flown them.”

The current Commanding Officer of John’s old unit, 79 Squadron, noted the importance of remembering those who had gone before in his unit.

“79 Squadron has been formed for times of conflict and those who served in the unit during these times did so with courage and resilience,” Wing Commander Grant Taylor says.

“It is a joyous occasion for the current members of 79 Squadron to wish John a happy 100th birthday as one of

the men who faced the enemy at a time when Australia needed it the most.

“The skills John demonstrated against the enemy during WWII are now being taught to the future generation of fighter pilots, continuing a legacy which underpins the need for high quality training in high quality people.”



*After graduating from pilot training, John saw active service in Indonesia during WWII*

Today, 79 Squadron forms part of 78 Wing of the Air Combat Group and is headquartered at RAAF Base Pearce, Western Australia. The Squadron operates BAE Hawk 127 aircraft and has the mission of training and graduating aircrew for follow-on conversion to fast jet aircraft.

The Squadron also supports Australian Defence Force operational training.

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## **Remembering the Burma-Thailand Railway** **80 years on**

### **16 October 2023**

The prisoners of war who were forced to work on the Burma-Thailand Railway during the Second World War occupy an important place in Australia’s wartime history.

The terrible conditions and brutal treatment they endured serve as a reminder of the horrors of war. The Burma-Thailand Railway was built 1942-43 with the intent of supplying Japanese forces in Burma. The sea routes previously used were vulnerable after the Allies prevailed at the Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway in May and June 1942.

The Japanese aimed to finish the railway as quickly as possible, to supply their armies in Burma in preparation for operations against British India. To do so, they used some 60,000 Allied prisoners who had been captured from across Asia and the Pacific in early 1942.

When the labourers were unable to keep up with the timetable, the Japanese instituted the ‘Speedo’, a period of intense, almost around the clock work. Along with the prisoners of war some 200,000 rōmusha (Asian labourers) were forced to work on the railway.

The workers battled grueling conditions, starvation, mistreatment and diseases as they toiled away on the 415-kilometre stretch of railway. The largest and deepest cutting across the length of the railway is known as Hellfire Pass, where some 700 Allied prisoners of war died between April and June 1943 when work

was carried out almost around the clock.

Bombardier Hugh Clarke of the 2/10th Australian Field Regiment, who survived the ordeal, said the railway ‘looked like a scene out of Dante’s Inferno’ as prisoners worked through the night by the light of flaming torches.

About 13,000 Australian prisoners of war were forced to work on the Burma-Thailand Railway, and by the time it was completed on 16 October 1943, some 2,800 Australians, 11,000 Allied personnel and 75,000 rōmusha (Asian labourers) had perished. The Japanese captured over 22,000 Australians during the Second World War. More than a third of these men and women never returned home.

Last month, the Department of Veterans' Affairs' Hellfire Pass Interpretive Centre was among four winners to receive a gold standard award in the 2023 Thailand Tourism Awards under the Historical and Culture category. Located in Kanchanaburi, Thailand, the Hellfire Pass Interpretive Centre and Walking Trail are dedicated to those who suffered and died during the construction of the Burma-Thai railway during the Second World War.

Today, 80 years on, we pause to honour their memory. Lest We Forget.

## FUNNIES from Jacquie





Columboola Country  
would like to thank you  
and all of your members for your service

## All Veterans - 25% off

Families, Friends and pets welcome

# Columboola Country Veterans Retreat

- \* Well appointed cottages
- \* Away from everything
- \* Fishing, Swimming
- \* Creekside settings
- \* Modern amenities
- \* 265 acre property
- \* Peace and Quiet
- \* On-site cottages
- \* Bush camping
- \* Powered sites
- \* No crowds
- \* Just relax

Navy  
Army  
Air Force

Served  
Serving  
Retired  
All welcome



Call: 07 4665 8293  
1381 Ryalls rd, Columboola  
(1/2 way between Chinchilla & Miles QLD)

Cabins: \$100/ night  
Cottages: \$100/ night  
Powered sites: from \$15/ night  
Non-powered sites: from \$10/ night

**\*\* Every 3rd night is free \*\***  
**\*\* extra 25% discount for veterans \*\***  
General public welcome

Please feel free to copy, display  
and send this to any, if not  
all of your members



## Roustabouts RV



Do you love to get away within South East Queensland and Northern NSW on weekends?

Do you dream of getting away on a longer trip to places within Australia?

Do you like travelling our country in security and in the company of friends and like-minded people?

Do you enjoy caravanning and mixing with good friends at Club social events?

**Then the Roustabouts RV Club is for you!**



This RV Club is for families, singles, working people, retirees, Army, Navy and Air Force veterans, emergency services personnel with access to a caravan, motor home, camper trailer, 5th wheeler, camper van or slide on camper who wish to be part of an active RV and caravan club. Our membership is primarily South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales, but extends along the Australian eastern seaboard.

## Year 2023 In Review

### Australia Day Bowls Club Presentation





## ANZAC Day

- Dawn Service



- Main Service









- Rathdowney Service



## **ANZAC Lunch**







## **Volunteers Week in May**



Presentation for Maurice Macaulay - retiring as volunteer driver



**27<sup>th</sup> July 2023 - Korean Veterans Day**



**August 2023 - Farewell to Dianne (Admin Assist/Transport Coordinator)**



**President's Luncheon – 5 August 2023**







## **18 August, 2023 - Vietnam Veteran's Day**

- Kooralbyn



- Beaudesert







## **14 September 2023 - PEACE KEEPING DAY**



## **Remembrance Day**





## **November 2023 - Women's Auxiliary Xmas Raffle fund raiser**



## **Sub Branch Christmas seat**



## **24 November 2023 - Women's Auxiliary Xmas Cent Auction**





## **29 November 2023 – SED Life members lunch**



John & Victoria Middendorp – presented by Noel Parker a Plaque for their dedication and volunteering to the Sub Branch to be put up at Harry's Haunt.

## **2 December 2023 - Volunteers Christmas Lunch**







# Message from the Secretary

I wish to personally thank all volunteers who have dedicated their time and effort to the Sub Branch for all our members in 2023. Without volunteers, the Sub Branch would not exist.

The Sub Branch has made many changes over the last few years and pleasing to see arrival of new Board members being nominated and voted in, with focusing on our core objective and getting back to basics, being Welfare for our veterans. We have had some challenging times in the last couple years and hoping next year will be smoother sailing. We continue to ensure to keep with the Sub Branch core objectives for Welfare of our members and veterans in the community is a priority and to abide by ACNC Charitable regulations.

Our main focus next year will be preparations for a new accessible Sub Branch office and Welfare Hub for our members and families now and into the future. A drop in communal area accessible for veterans to come in and have coffee and tea, utilise the library and chat to our volunteers, a welfare hub for advocacy, BBQ area to invite veterans and families for social BBQ days and a chance to socialise with other veterans.

The Sub Branch Advocates have been very busy assisting veterans with their claims. Thank you for your dedication and the extra hours working from home.

The Patient Transport drivers, thank you for your kindness and patience. The days can be long and tiring, but you continually each week make yourself available to transport our community to their specialist appointments. You truly are gratefully appreciated by one and all.

Museum Volunteers, Phil, Barry, Rodney, John, Victoria, Kevin and Maurice thank you for opening Harry's Haunt each week allowing people to visit and enjoy the displays of memorabilia. The feedback in the sign in book is one of gratitude and marvel of the display whilst visiting Harry's Haunt. John and Victoria unfortunately are no longer able to volunteer due to moving away from the area and distance to travel. On behalf of the Board and members we thank them for many years they have volunteered their time and we wish them the very best.

The Women's Auxiliary have continued to support the veterans with their fund raising in their Cent Auctions this year, running around purchasing raffle prizes, assorting and wrapping and then lugging them from Sub Branch to Cent Auction events, not an easy task. Joanne Heit, thank you for all that you do with the organisation and with the assistance of Janice Heit. A lot of time and effort and commitment has not gone unnoticed and very much appreciated by all. Also thank you for assisting me this year when I needed it.

Sadly, the time had come, Dianne Mulder retired in the middle of the year after working at the Sub Branch for 5 years alongside me and coordinating QAS Patient Transport. Dianne was a very dedicated employee, always caring and thoughtful in everything she did and was such a great support to me in assisting in many ways. We look forward to Dianne returning next year to volunteer when she is able to in her spare time.

The Board members of the Sub branch, I truly am grateful for your commitment, expertise and guidance. Each Board meeting is held with respect, consideration for the members and for the continuance of the Sub Branch. It has not been an easy few years and times of frustrations, but we are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel (I hope). Next year I look forward to more members considering in nominating as a Board member, we have a great dedicated team who also look forward to more joining to keep the Sub Branch running for future and younger veterans to take over.

Members, thank you for your support, lovely emails, and your feedback over the years I have been here. On many occasions on Commemorative Days or functions, your gratitude for my work and efforts are appreciated. I wish to thank you all, what I do for you is not a job but a privilege and to give a little back is nothing compared to what you have done for us. I enjoy every day I come to work at the Sub Branch and am in awe of the Volunteers who generously dedicate their time and effort each day to ensure the Sub Branch can continue opening the doors each day. I have met so many amazing people and look forward to new members joining our family.

I wish you all a wonderful Christmas with your family and friends cherish the ones we have and remember the ones we have lost.

Thank you one and all.

Sincerely,

**Joanne Crocker**





*Merry Christmas*

*May your Christmas sparkle with moments of love, laughter, and goodwill.  
And may the year ahead be full of joy and prosperity.*

**The Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch will be closed from  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2023  
Re-open on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2024**

The Board and Secretary would like to thank you for your continued support and wish all our members and their families a very Merry Christmas surrounded by family, friends and many blessings for the coming year.  
Warmest thoughts and best wishes for a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year.  
May peace and prosperity follow you always.

***We wish to acknowledge and express our gratitude to the following for their valued support and assistance throughout 2023;***

- ❖ Members
- ❖ Sub Branch volunteers (Advocates, Welfare, Patient transport drivers, Museum, Commemorative Committee)
- ❖ Women's Auxiliary
- ❖ Hon Scott Buchholz MP Federal Member for Wright
- ❖ Jon Krause MP Member for Scenic Rim
- ❖ Scenic Rim Council
- ❖ Cr Michael Enright
- ❖ Qld Mounted Cadets Inc.
- ❖ OC 100 ACU Beaudesert (Cadets)
- ❖ 11 CSSB (Greenbank Army Reserves)
- ❖ Venerable David Lunnis
- ❖ Pastor Josh Cox
- ❖ Pastor Mark Ironside (Harvest Point)
- ❖ AJ Bush & Sons (D. Kassulke)



Australian Government  
Department of Veterans' Affairs

# Fully funded mental health care for veterans



The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) offers fully funded treatment of mental health conditions through Non-Liability Health Care (NLHC) to all veterans who have completed one day of full time service in the Australian Defence Force (ADF), and some reservists. The mental health condition/s do not need to be related to ADF service, and a claim for compensation is not required. This treatment can be accessed for as long as it is needed, and at no cost to the veteran.

## What conditions are covered?

DVA will cover the cost of treatment for eligible veterans for all mental health conditions, including, but not limited to:

- posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- depressive disorder
- anxiety disorder
- alcohol use disorder
- substance use disorder
- phobias
- adjustment disorders
- bipolar disorder

## Who is eligible?

Current and former full-time members of the ADF can access fully funded mental health treatment through NLHC (mental health). This includes reservists who have at least one day of continuous full-time service (CFTS).

CFTS is defined as:

- full-time service in the permanent forces of the ADF
- a reservist who has been formally designated to be on full-time service by Defence
- a reservist who has been called out for full-time service by the Governor General under the Defence Act.

CFTS does not include training conducted as reserve service days.

Reservists without CFTS may still be eligible if they have either:

- Disaster Relief Service
- Border Protection Service
- involvement in a serious service-related training accident.

## How is it accessed?

The Veteran White Card is used to pay for mental health treatment through NLHC (mental health). Many veterans have White Cards that already cover NLHC (mental health). To check if your White Card covers mental health treatment, or to apply for a White Card if you don't already have one, you can log into [MyService](#) or call DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372). Veteran Gold Card holders are already eligible for mental health treatment.

If you have concerns about your mental health, speak with your general practitioner (GP) in the first instance. Your GP may refer you to a mental health provider, such as a psychologist or psychiatrist. Before your appointment, check the healthcare provider will accept the White Card for payment.

## What treatments are funded?

Treatment for mental health conditions funded under NLHC (mental health) may include:

- treatment from a mental health provider such as a GP, psychiatrist, psychologist, mental health social worker, or mental health occupational therapist;
- mental health admissions to a public or private hospital;
- mental health treatment delivered at a day procedure facility;
- prescribed medication for mental health conditions;
- relevant pathology and medical imaging services required to assess and diagnose mental health conditions;
- DVA recognised alcohol and drug treatment programs; and
- services provided by Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling.

If it is considered beneficial, your GP can refer you for extra services like exercise physiology, physiotherapy or nutrition advice alongside treatment from a mental health provider. These supports will generally provide short-term assistance, for example to help you develop a healthy eating plan or a self-directed exercise plan.

## Where can I find more information?

To learn more about NLHC (mental health), visit [www.dva.gov.au/nlhc-mental-health](http://www.dva.gov.au/nlhc-mental-health) or call DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

For immediate support, contact Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling for free and confidential counselling services available 24/7. Call Open Arms on 1800 011 046 or visit [www.openarms.gov.au](http://www.openarms.gov.au).





Australian Government  
Department of Veterans' Affairs

# Get support for social wellbeing and employment



Join our trial program to help eligible veterans with tailored support for social wellbeing and employment.

## What's involved?

Veterans who participate will be allocated a professional consultant who will develop an activity plan that aligns with their individual goals and needs in their civilian life.

The activity plan will last for three to six months and can include support funded by DVA to:

- build new social connections in your local community
- become job-ready
- change careers or adjust to the civilian workforce
- get a Medicare Card or engage a suitable GP.



## Am I eligible?

You can join the program if you:

- feel you would benefit from the supports available
- have separated from the Australian Defence Force or are in the process of transitioning
- live in Australia
- have no accepted liability or you are waiting on the outcome of your first claim with DVA
- are not already participating in a DVA rehabilitation program
- your service is covered under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA)* or the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988 (DRCA)*.

## Find out more

To find out more, email [NLR@dva.gov.au](mailto:NLR@dva.gov.au), or call 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

We'll send you more information about the program, including what it covers and what it doesn't. We'll also send you a questionnaire to help us work out the types of support services that may suit you.

If you're accepted, your consultant will contact you to help you develop your personal plan.





23 November 2023



## **Gordon Legal's Investigation into the MATES program and the DVA**

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### **Our work**

1. Gordon Legal has commenced an investigation into the Veterans MATES program, which has been conducted by the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the University of South Australia since 2005
2. We understand that the personal medical information of a significant number of veterans and their family members has been routinely provided to and used by the University of South Australia, without appropriate consent
3. We believe that the DVA and the University of South Australia should be held accountable for their actions. As a first step, we plan to lodge a representative complaint with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.
4. We are also investigating alternative causes of action that might be available to affected individuals.

### **What veterans can do to assist**

5. We are particularly interested in speaking to individuals who have successfully lodged a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, and have received documents from the DVA and/or the University of South Australia in response to their request.
6. If you are interested in speaking to Gordon Legal, you can contact us on (03) 9603 3000. You can also contact us by email at [veterans@gordonlegal.com.au](mailto:veterans@gordonlegal.com.au).



**IS THIS THE BIGGEST PRIVACY BREACH BY A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT? – WE THINK SO.  
MATES PROGRAM – BRIEF, ISSUES AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS.**

**ITS COMMENCEMENT:**

The Veterans MATES program commenced in 2004, its purpose being, “a program with the aim of improving the use of medicines and related health services in the veteran community.” Since 2004 the University of South Australia, (UniSA), has been contracted by DVA to deliver the program on DVA's behalf to over 300,000 DVA clients. DVA have paid/committed close to \$100 Million to run this program.

**WHAT ARE VETERANS UP IN ARMS ABOUT?**

That our privacy has been breached, that is we never consented to our personal information, treatment etc., including, for white card holders, their Medicare data, being forwarded to a third party.

**HOW DID VETERANS DISCOVER THIS MASSIVE PRIVACY BREACH INVOLVING MORE THEN 300,000 DVA CLIENTS?**

In late April 2023 there was an adverse finding by the OAIC against DVA for a breach of privacy and an order to pay the veteran \$5,000. The veterans' complaint to the OAIC was lodged in 2017, and that is not a typo, taking 6 years to finalise.

**WHO HAS RECEIVED VETERANS' PERSONAL INFORMATION?**

: The UniSA, as per their contract with DVA. UniSA then shared information with University of Adelaide and Phoenix Australia to undertake some studies.

**SOME ISSUES/QUESTIONS:**

- : DVA claim there was no data breach. We agree. It is a privacy breach.
- : Veterans never gave their consent and veterans who have submitted an FOI of evidence DVA have of us consenting, resulted these FOI's being refused as, “no document exists.”
- : The privacy reach involves every service a veteran has received, (GP, Specialist, pharmaceutical, applied services etc.) that DVA has paid for. It also includes ALL services paid for by Medicare – resulting in a breach of not only DVA data but Medicare data.
- : DVA claim veterans could have opted out of this program which raised the question of how could we opt out of a program we never knew we were part of? If DVA claimed veterans could always opt out of the Mates program, why did DVA only add OPT out information on the Website THIS year?
- : Think of the public outcry if this was also done to non-veterans with a Medicare Card? They would never get away with it but veterans are apparently fair game.

**WHAT DVA ARE CLAIMING AS OUR CONSENT:**

DVA's so called justification for this release is when veterans receive an initial or updated treatment card, white or gold card. In recent years it has been attached to a letter saying as a **condition** of using this card we agree to our personal information being shared. This is despite our treatment card being issued to cover our accepted medical conditions DVA are required by law to fund. **Using our card for its intended purpose IS NOT and has NEVER been CONDITIONAL.**

**WHAT ACTION CAN I TAKE?**

Make an FOI request to <mailto:Information.Access@dva.gov.au>. *"I request copy of any personal information of (Insert Name and DVA Number) that has been disclosed or otherwise provided to the University of South Australia (to the MATES program or any other activity) in the last 360 days. If this scope captures more than 20 pages of (Insert name) personal information, I limit the scope to just the most recent 20 pages."*

Kindly confirm receipt of this email and your compliance with my request.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name] [DVA Reference Name]

If you have received a response to your FOI requests, are incensed about your personal information being forwarded to third parties without your consent and want to hold DVA accountable for their unlawful actions you can contact Gordon Legal, see attached details.

For more information see DVA Privacy Breach Facebook page.

**From DVA Privacy Breach Working Group.**



## BATHROOM & TOILET

Assistive bathroom and toilet equipment is available to help a person access and use bathroom and toilet facilities safely for their daily hygiene needs.

Bathing and toileting include both 'stand alone' equipment such as shower chairs and over-toilet aids as well as design fixtures like grab rails and other fittings that may be put into or added to the design features of a bathroom or toilet area.



## DAILY LIVING AIDS

At Mobility Zone, we offer an extensive range of products to assist with daily living needs. These products include modified, easy-to-use versions of common household items as well as special equipment to assist with a variety of tasks. Our selection of independent living aids encompasses dressing aids, kitchen aids, gripping aids, cutlery, crockery, reaching aids and assisted living items.



Pictures are for illustration purposes only. Larger selection available in-store and online.

## WHY CHOOSE US



**FREE** In-Home Demonstrations

Hire Equipment

**“MOBILITY AT AFFORDABLE PRICES**

Servicing and Repairs - Available on all types of mobility products

*Because life's too beautiful to be lived with boundaries.*

**Family Owned & Operated**

At Mobility Zone, we are more than just a business - we are a family. Our commitment to our clients and community is unwavering, and we take pride in providing exceptional customer service. With a combined experience of over 15 years in the healthcare equipment sector, our reliable, honest, and caring staff are always here to help.

Mobility Zone has expanded into the Scenic Rim! Beaudesert Showroom **Now Open**

15 Trade St, **Ormiston** 4160  
07 3134 4674

Hours: Mon-Fri: 8.30am-4.30pm  
Sat: 9.00am-12.00pm

7/1 Telemon St, **Beaudesert** 4285  
07 3472 6900

Hours: Mon-Fri: 9.00am-4.00pm

Info@[mobilityzone.com.au](mailto:mobilityzone.com.au)  
[www.mobilityzone.com.au](http://www.mobilityzone.com.au)

# Mobility Zone



## Live Life Without Limits

## Product Guide



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## SCOOTERS

We have a diverse range of mobility scooters to suit your needs and preferences. Our selection includes lightweight and portable scooters that can be disassembled for easy transportation and heavy-duty models that can tackle steep hills. With our scooters, you can enjoy a leisurely walk with your pet, do your grocery shopping, or travel internationally with ease.



## POWER CHAIRS

Our extensive range of power chairs are uniquely crafted to cater to a diverse range of mobility needs. We provide models with varying weight capacities, seat sizes, and configurations that will meet the specific requirements of our customers.



Pictures are for illustration purposes only. Larger selection available in-store and online.

## WHEELCHAIRS

We have a vast array of wheelchairs available to suit the specific needs and requirements of individuals. Manual wheelchairs come in folding, rigid and tilt-in-space options, providing ease-of-use and optimal support. There are compact wheelchairs that are easy for carers to get in and out of the car. Wheelchair range caters to all ages. Additionally, custom wheelchairs can be tailored by a Complex Rehab Team to suit the exact needs of an individual.



## BEDS & MATTRESSES

Our bed and mattress range includes hi-low, floor line and hospital beds, as well as a variety of mattresses tailored to meet individual needs.



## CUSHIONS

Our most common range of mobility cushions includes foam cushions, gel cushions, air cushions, and hybrid cushions.



## SEATING

Our static chairs offer comfortable and supportive seating for extended periods of sitting, promoting good posture and reducing the risk of complications. Our lift/recline chairs provide extra support and assistance with standing and sitting, with motorised mechanisms for adjusting the seat backrest, head tilt and lumbar. They also offer additional features such as heated/cooling seats and massage functions.



## WALKING AIDS

Our range of walking aids include indoor/outdoor rollators, 2-1 rollators, knee walkers, walking sticks, canes and crutches. Mobility Aids can enhance safety and independence by helping prevent falls and allowing the user to be more mobile.

