

Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Veterans' Association of New South Wales Limited

E-Newsletter August 2022



Cross country skiers, near Perisher Valley, Kosciuszko National Park, NSW. Photographer: Jaime Plaza van Roon/AUSCAPE.

Welcome to the August issue of the TPI NSW E-Newsletter

In this issue you will find a copy of the speech given by AVCAT CEO Len Russell at the TPI NSW Christmas-in-July function held on 5 July 2022 at Club York. The newsletter also contains information about two upcoming reunions:

1. 21 Engineer's Support Troop (EST) 2022 Reunion in Foster/Tuncurry from 29th August to 3rd September 2022
2. The 50th anniversary of HQ & HQ Coy, 1st Australian Logistic Support group, South Vietnam 1965 – 1972 in Broken Hill from 20th March to 24th March 2023.

We hope this e-newsletter will not be just one-way communication and that you will share your ideas and experiences with other TPI NSW Association members. If you have information that you would like to share please email: editor@tpinw.org.au. We look forward to hearing from you.

Victoria Dawson

Editor, TPI NSW Association

Email: editor@tpinw.org.au

TPI NSW – Xmas-in-July Address by Len Russell, CEO, AVCAT

On Tuesday the 5th of July Len Russell, AVCAT CEO, spoke at the TPI NSW Christmas In July Luncheon.

Thank you for the opportunity to talk about the work Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust (AVCAT) does on behalf of the wider veteran community. I acknowledge and thank, TPI NSW for their generous and long term financial assistance to AVCAT. Your assistance supports up to ten scholars at a time as they undertake their tertiary studies.

AVCAT HISTORY

The story of AVCAT begins in 1985 when the Australian Vietnam War Veterans' Trust (AVWVT) was established to distribute the Australian share of the funds received from the Agent Orange legal settlement in the USA to Vietnam Veterans and their dependants.

The AVWVT distributed funds as cash payments to Vietnam Veterans in deserving circumstances. A small proportion of the initial funds were set aside to assist widows seeking support for the care and education of their children.

FAST FORWARD TO AVCAT IN THE 21st CENTURY

AVCAT was established in 2003, marking a name change from the Australian Vietnam War Veterans' Trust to the Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust (AVCAT). Since 2003 we have continued to expand on our legacy by assisting both the children and grandchildren of Australian ex-service men and women to a better future through tertiary education.

All AVCAT scholarships support full-time tertiary study at university, TAFE, or a registered training organisation. The courses are from a wide variety of disciplines including arts, aviation, hairdressing, archaeology, bookkeeping, law, and medicine. Our support is there to enable scholars to achieve their dreams through education.

WE SUPPORT VETERAN FAMILIES

The 2021 census data highlights that service can come with unexpected challenges, affecting not only the veteran but their families.

The data shows that 54% of current and former ADF members have one or more long-term health conditions. This is compared with the lower figure of 38% of the general population who report living with one or more long-term health conditions.

THE COST OF EDUCATION

The domestic fee schedule for the Australian National University in 2022 states that a degree of 48 standard units ranges from \$30,000 to \$40,000, and costs more for courses such as medicine or law.

Certain courses in humanities, law, economics, commerce, communications, and visual arts have had a significant increase in their fees in the last few years. Fees in these subjects have increased up to 113% with a full four-year program in some disciplines now costing approximately \$58,000. (Visentin, October 2020)

One full year of an arts degree in 2020 cost students \$6,684 and the government contributed \$6,116. In 2021, students were charged \$14,500 for one full year whilst the government lowered its contribution to \$1,100. (Visentin, October 2020)

It is no surprise that many families struggle to support their children through tertiary education.

Talking about the numbers is one thing. It is always good to remember the real achievement of AVCAT is in the everyday lives of our scholars. Supporting scholars is all about giving a 'hand up' as they strive to achieve their academic goals.

AVCAT SCHOLARSHIPS

AVCAT manages around 250 scholarships each year. The success rate of our scholars is much higher than the national average.

83% of the 2018 AVCAT scholarship cohort



Left to right: Victoria Benz, Department of Veteran's Affairs, Jean Bright, TPI NSW President Patrick Bright, Len Russell, Chief Executive Officer of AVCAT, and TPI Federation President Patricia McCabe at the TPI NSW Christmas-in-July luncheon. Photographer: Jenny Wang.

completed their scholarship in 2020, either graduating or choosing to continue their tertiary education.

The national average for tertiary study completion is 64%-66% after 6 years of study (Norton, A. Cherastidtham, I. Mackey, W. (2018). Mapping Australian Higher Education 2018 (2018-11). Grattan Institute.)

The high success rate of AVCAT scholars can be attributed to the support and monitoring of scholars throughout their scholarships, the connection of scholars with their veteran family members and the community spirit amongst AVCAT scholars.

Each scholarship applicant is independently assessed as being in financial need, showing academic potential in their chosen area of study and being in deserving circumstances.

AVCAT manages the Long Tan Bursaries on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs and non-government sponsored scholarships on behalf of ex-service organisations, and corporate and individual donors.

These scholarships, including the TPI NSW

Scholarship, provide crucial opportunities for the children and grandchildren of veterans, who, without such a scholarship, may not be able to achieve a tertiary education.

FUNDS DISTRIBUTED TO SCHOLARS

Funds distributed in sponsored scholarships and bursaries have increased substantially year on year. In 2016 it was just \$642,896. In 2021 AVCAT gave nearly one million dollars in the support of scholars.

THE FUTURE

Next year in 2023 we are celebrating the 20th anniversary of AVCAT. This is an important milestone, and we look forward to sharing our celebrations with you.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our work with you. Your support makes a positive and lasting impact on the lives of the children and grandchildren of veterans.

Len Russell
CEO, AVCAT

Phil, Andy and the Surveys

In July 2022, surveys were posted out to all members of TPI NSW, asking for their feedback on a range of issues. Around 1000 surveys have been returned to the TPI NSW office, which is an excellent result. The results of the surveys are currently being analysed and will be published in *Salute* when the analysis is complete. Phil and Andy worked on the returned surveys and you can read about this in the report below:

Monday morning, call from John Szabo, “Phil we have a few surveys coming in and we’ll need a hand to get them open and sorted”. Me, “No problem, John, be in on Thursday. Andy should be in, and we can get them done”.

Arrived at the office on Thursday to be met with a small mountain of 600 plus surveys, as the pictures show, might take more than an hour or two. Folks, I am not complaining. It is an outstanding response and, as I write, the total is well over 1000 and John has the system in place to collate the results which he no doubt will talk about in *Salute*.

A quick scan through a few showed that there is an overwhelming request for more and better communications, but people are reluctant to supply email addresses; I know some people don’t have them, but I am sure there are a lot more out there than we have received.

Emails are a quick, efficient, effective and cheap way for us

to keep you up to date. Be it a quick news sheet to supplement the quarterly *Salute* or a call for support, please consider it.

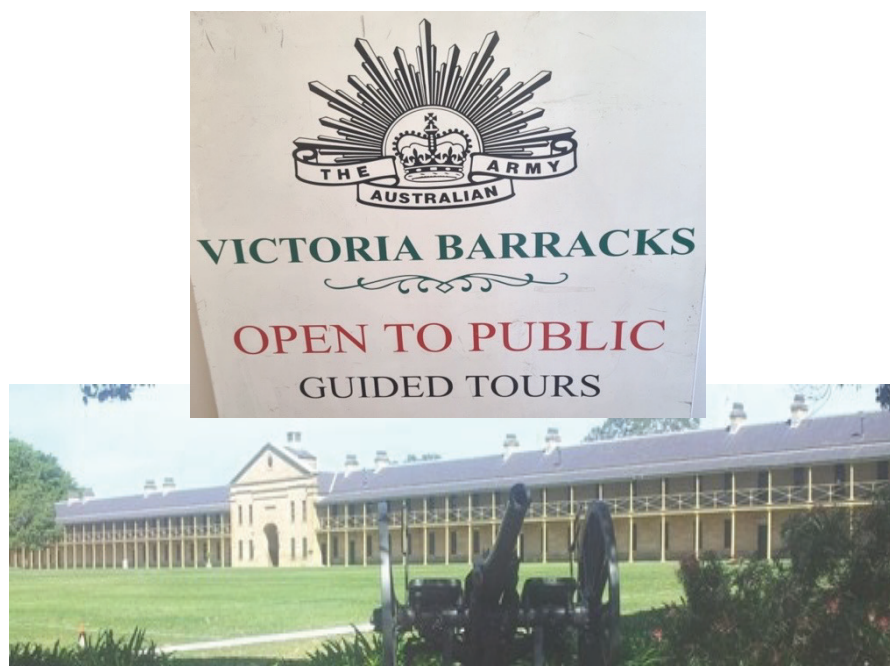
But well done folks. As young Mr Grace would say, “You have all done verry well”.

Phil Hurren
Director, TPI NSW



Left to right: Andy Brown, TPI NSW volunteer, and Phil Hurren, TPI NSW Director, with the surveys at the TPI NSW office in York St, Sydney.

Victoria Barracks Tours



Free guided tours of Victoria Barracks, Paddington, conducted by the Corps of Guides, have now resumed as from June 2022. They are held on each **Thursday, at 10:00am**.

Visitors should present themselves at the VB Pass Office, on Moore Park Road around 9:50am to be processed. **Photographic ID is required.**

Tours take approximately one-and-a-half hours. The Museum should reopen in September 2022. When it does, we suggest visitors check it out. Museum admission \$5.00.

After visiting Victoria Barracks, we suggest visitors go to the **Paddo RSL Club**, just near the Barracks, on Oxford Street, for a bite to eat, thus making it a lovely day's outing. For further details please contact **David on 0447 600 966.**

If anyone is interested in becoming a Guide and a Member of the Corps of Guides for Vic Barracks, they should contact our **Commandant, Mr. David Lynch on 9389 3899.**

David will be only too pleased to discuss this with prospective Guides.

Reunions & Functions

21 Engineer's Support Troop (EST) 2022 Reunion Foster/Tuncurry Monday 29th August to Saturday 3rd September 2022

21 EST Sappers, partners and mates are all welcome to join us.

Please contact: 21estcommittee@gmail.com or

Phil Hincks 0414 761 032 or

Joseph Bonnicci 0429 399 306 for more information.



Broken Hill Reunion 2023 50 Year Anniversary Monday 20 March to Friday 24 March 2023

Reunion is for Headquarters and Headquarters Company. Friends are welcome.

For reunion and accommodation details contact Tony Brown on 0428852736 or

email tr4950@optusnet.com.au



CLUB BLACKTOWN

Family Friendly

Newly renovated Level 1, with Both indoor and Outdoor Play areas to keep the Kids entertained.

Parents can relax and enjoy Cocktails from the Greens Bar and Delicious Mediterranean Style Food From Villaggio restaurant.

40 SECOND AVENUE, BLACKTOWN NSW 2148 | 02 9933 7600

Proud Sponsors of Blacktown & Districts TPI Social & Welfare Club

Invitation: Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPIs) & Special Rate (SR) Veterans

The Blacktown & District TPI Social & Welfare Club's members invite TPIs/Special Rate (SR) to come and experience our club.

The club meets at 1:00 pm on the first Thursday of each month at Club Blacktown (formally the RSL club).

This invitation stands for our general meetings.

Prior to the monthly general meetings, members and wives/carers meet in the Villaggio restaurant to socialise (about 11:45am). Meetings are held in a room set aside on the day. Post-meeting members are treated to cold or hot drinks and more socialising in the Villaggio restaurant.

If attending a meeting contact Ian Brady

ibrady@bigpond.net.au to arrange a member to meet & greet you or just walk in.

The club is the most active TPI Social & Welfare Club in the state, with a different activity each month which could be a meet at a point of interest/ event or a day coach trip.

- Social events are subsidised.
- Longer 3-day country tours are also conducted once per year.
- The purpose of this invitation is to encourage TPIs to join our club and participate and socialize.
- You are encouraged to join the TPI Association of NSW to give it strength in numbers when dealing with government.

DVA Media Releases

Defending with Pride

The Hon Matt Thistlethwaite, MP

Assistant Minister for Defence

Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs

31 July 2022

Today, the launch of a special commemoration is taking place at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne, highlighting stories of service from lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people in the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence, the Hon Matt Thistlethwaite, MP, said he was honoured to attend the launch of the

Defending with Pride: Stories of LGBTQ+ Service Exhibition. "This exhibition is the first of its kind for an Australian war memorial. All Australians who serve in our defence forces should be honoured for their service to our country," Minister Thistlethwaite said. The stories of service from across our great country are as unique as the individuals who share them, and each one deserves to be told.

"The exhibition was supported through the Australian Government's Saluting Their Service Commemorative Grants Program, which is designed to commemorate the service and sacrifice of Australia's Defence Force in wars, conflicts and peace operations. "This will be my first visit to the Shrine of Remembrance since my appointment as Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs, and



Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne, Australia at sunset. Photographer: Pixilated Planet

I'm honoured to also be attending the Last Post service," said Minister Thistlethwaite. "The Shrine has been an important part of commemoration in Australia since it was founded in 1934 and I look forward to visiting this very special memorial."

To find out more about the Shrine of Remembrance and the *Defending with Pride* exhibition, you can visit the Shrine's website: <https://www.shrine.org.au/>

To learn more about the *Saluting Their Service* Commemorative Grants Program, visit the DVA website: <https://www.dva.gov.au/about-us/overview/consultations-and-grants/grants-and-bursaries/saluting-their-service>

MEDIA CONTACT:

Ben Leeson (Assistant Minister Thistlethwaite's Office): 0404 648 275
DVA Media: media.team@dva.gov.au

Editor's Note: Defending with Pride Exhibition Under Attack

On 1 August 2022 Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance opened a special exhibition to commemorate the history of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) people in Australia's military. *Defending with Pride* is the first exhibition of its kind at an Australian war memorial and is set to be open until July 2023. Stories of current and former ADF personnel are at the centre of this immersive exhibition. A two-part podcast has also been produced as part of *Defending with Pride*. The podcast can be accessed [here](#).

Sadly, plans for night-time rainbow lights to illuminate the Shrine's colonnades were scrapped because of abuse and threats directed at Shrine staff. Shrine CEO Dean Lee described some of the targeting of the Shrine over its *Defending with Pride* exhibition as "hateful". Further details can be found [here](#).



A Day to Honour Veterans of the Korean War

27 July 2022

The Hon Matt Keogh, MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

Today is Korean Veterans' Day, when we pause to remember the service and sacrifice of some 18,000 Australians who served in the Korean War.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Matt Keogh said that 27 July marks the signing of the armistice in 1953 which finally put an end to more than three years of bloody conflict. "In 1950, when communist North Korea invaded South Korea, the Second World War was still fresh in our minds and Australia's defence forces had completed a mass demobilisation – the last thing anyone wanted was another war," Minister Keogh said.

"Australians answered the call to arms and joined a United Nations coalition to repel the invading forces. More than 350 Australians lost

their lives during the Korean War and in the post-armistice period, with more than 1,200 being wounded and 30 taken prisoner. Personnel from all three armed forces served, including nurses of the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps and Royal Australian Air Force Nursing Service.

“After three years of fighting in harsh conditions, Australians remained for another four years to help maintain a fragile truce,” Minister Keogh said. “While some may call it ‘the forgotten war’, we have never forgotten the Australians who served with distinction in the Korean War, especially those who paid the ultimate price.

“I ask all Australians to join me in paying tribute to all those who served in this conflict on Korean Veterans’ Day.

“Lest we forget.”

MEDIA CONTACT:

Stephanie Mathews (Minister Keogh’s Office):

0407 034 485

DVA Media: media.team@dva.gov.au

\$70.6 Million to Help Veterans Stay Healthy at Home

27 July 2022

The Hon Matt Keogh, MP

Minister for Veterans’ Affairs

Minister for Defence Personnel

The government has today committed to ensuring veterans and veteran families have the services they deserve, committing an additional \$70.6 million in funding over four years to increase Veterans’ Home Care fees for domestic assistance and personal care services.

Minister for Veterans’ Affairs Matt Keogh said this funding will help to ensure important domestic assistance and personal care support through the Veterans’ Home Care program is delivered to the veteran community. “The Veterans’ Home Care program provides veterans and their families with assistance in their homes, to help them stay safe and independent for longer,” Minister Keogh said. “This commitment will benefit providers of Veterans’ Home Care Services, and importantly it will benefit some 37,000 veterans, war widows and widowers who receive services delivered through the Veterans’ Home Care program.

“The Department of Veterans’ Affairs delivers a system that empowers veterans and their families to improve their health and wellbeing; to stay well, age well and engage fully in social and economic life. Investment in tailored programs to support wellness and connection to community will deliver better health outcomes for our veteran community. The Albanese Labor Government is committed to undertaking a series of practical measures to ensure older Australians and Australians with disability have access to the care they need and deserve at home. Supporting veterans to stay in their homes goes hand in hand with that.”

The Veterans’ Home Care funding will continue until 30 June 2026. Find more information on the program [here](#).

MEDIA CONTACT:

Stephanie Mathews (Minister Keogh’s Office):

0407 034 485

DVA Media: media.team@dva.gov.au

Free 12 Month Health and Fitness Program

for Returned Veterans & Peacekeepers

Did you know the DVA provides a free 12-month health and fitness program that can be delivered to returned veterans and peacekeepers with overseas operational service? This program is available throughout Australia, and can accommodate participants living in metropolitan, rural or remote areas. The program is also flexible, and people who are retired or still working, studying, or with other time constraints can take part. Run on behalf of the DVA by Corporate Health Management, the program aims to help increase your physical health and wellbeing through practical exercise support and 12 months of health coaching and advice on healthy lifestyle choices provided by one of our team of highly qualified allied health professionals.

Am I eligible?

Started 20 years ago for those returned from Vietnam, the Heart Health Program is free and now open to all *returned veterans and peacekeepers with overseas operational service* who have not previously done the Heart Health Program. To check your eligibility visit: <http://www.veteranshearthealth.com.au/eligibility/>.

Individual Heart Health Program—How it works

Each participant receives 12 months of healthy lifestyle coaching from a highly qualified and dedicated allied health professional via *fortnightly health coaching calls* with information and advice tailored to your specific health and fitness goals. The health coach will use their extensive knowledge, along with health surveys and food diaries, to guide you through the program. The

program covers a range of topics including:

- setting healthy goals
- nutrition and diet advice
- advice on lowering alcohol consumption
- developing better sleep patterns
- stress management
- managing diabetes
- taking care of your body
- managing your weight
- maintaining a healthy heart

Program Exercise Resource—Exercise how You Like to

The program can provide an exercise resource to help participants exercise the way they like to or provide an opportunity to try something that's different from the usual.

Resources can take the form of:

- assistance with the cost of a gym or pool membership
- providing a piece of exercise equipment for use at home
- providing assistance with accessing new exercise or training gear

Registering Your Interest

Registering your interest or checking eligibility is easy. Simply visit: <http://www.veteranshearthealth.com.au/eligibility/>, and follow the steps. Or please call the program phone number, **1300 246 262**, at any time to speak to one of our team.

Kind regards,
Heart Health Team, DVA Heart Health Program

Contact and Feedback

We value your feedback!

If you have any feedback on what we are doing, please contact us through the following channels:

By Post:

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Level 4, 55 York Street,
Sydney NSW 2000
GPO Box 4429, Sydney, NSW 2001**

Email: editor@tpinsw.org.au

Phone: (02) 9235 1466

Free Call: 1800 649 216

Website: www.tpinsw.org.au

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Our mission is to ensure the welfare of all members and their recognised carers