



# ***HOTLINE***

March 2013 Edition

## **DFWA Qld Branch Inc**

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## **Branch President's Report**

I hope everyone had a good Christmas and New Year; certainly from my perspective the break was appreciated. The weather was not kind to us with the rains, floods and bushfires. We have not had any calls for help from our members so we are hoping they are all getting through the period in one piece.

### **FairGo! Campaign**

With the election date set, we will now have to keep the fair indexation issue in front of the people and the politicians and that will be a challenge as we are a volunteer organisation with limited resources. There will be a lot of information coming out both through the FairGo! Campaign and DFWA, so please help to circulate it to your email contacts and via facebook etc.

You may have already registered on the StandTo website ([www.standto.org](http://www.standto.org)) to be kept informed or as a volunteer. Other Branch members are working behind the scenes to assist the campaign directors. When a call for action does go out in the lead up to the election, all the support you can give will be appreciated, and if you can see a particular area where you can assist, please do so. We have included an **Indexation Handout** with this mail-out that you might find helpful.

### **Australia Day Honours**

We had some really good news on Australia Day. Wally Buldo, our current Secretary/Treasurer and long time stalwart of the Queensland Branch received an **OAM** for his service to the community, particularly to veterans and their families. Congratulations to Wal. It is great to see his fine efforts recognised.

### **Contact list**

Many thanks for those who have responded and updated their contact details. Having your correct details will help us serve you better and assist with the dissemination of information. We are still however, getting a number of rejects on e-mail addresses we are holding so what we intend to do is to ring all our members just to say hello and also to check your e-mail details. So if you get a call, you'll know why.

...(continued Page2)

## **(Branch President's Report Cont...)**

### **Superannuation**

There has been a lot in the press lately about superannuation. The suspicion is that the Government has provided these 'leaks' to gauge public opinion when it comes to proposed changes to superannuation. Lindsay Tanner's 'dark arts' apply here. Government is keen to say how much they may save if various actions are taken but they are less than forthcoming about future costs that may be incurred, like those that may be accrued as a result of more people being forced on the age pension. There are two issues from our perspective:

- COMSUPER is not renowned for standing up for members when it comes to reviewing the effect of implementation of Government proposals, and
- Military Superannuation schemes are unique and we must quickly recognise the unintended consequences of any Government decisions and where necessary, fight to prevent further erosion in benefits.

### **Poziere's Remembered**

We sent out an e-mail advising of a raffle to raise funds for a memorial at Poziere's. We normally don't do this but this is an excellent cause. For those who did not get the e-mail and wish to have a look, tickets can be brought through the web site <http://poziere'sremembered.com.au/> The Battle of Poziere's was a six week struggle for the French village of Poziere's and the ridge on which it stands, during the middle stages of the 1916 Battle of the Somme. Poziere's is primarily remembered as an Australian battle that ended with the Allied forces in possession of the plateau north and east of the Village.

In the words of Australian official historian Charles Bean, the Poziere's ridge "is more densely sown with Australian sacrifice than any other place on earth."

This year, the people of Poziere's have decided to honour our Soldiers by building an Australian Memorial Park on the site of the worst losses by Australia. This project is intended for completion for the Centenary of the Battle in 2016. The Poziere's Remembered Association ask for your support to help make the Memorial Park a reality.

### **A Changing of The Editorial Pen**

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to our past Hotline Editor, Ken Railton. Ken retired from the position after the previous edition was published in December. As you know, Ken served as Branch President for many years before me, but rather than enjoy the quiet life as a retired President, he quickly put up his hand to help out when we found we were without a Hotline Editor.

Ken has done a sterling job as Hotline Editor over the past few years, producing a quality newsletter to both inform and entertain our Branch Members. Working to deadlines and pulling the content together in a balanced way is a challenging task, and the Committee is very grateful to Ken for his untiring efforts , often under difficult circumstances.

We are expecting to have a new editor in place for the July edition of Hotline, and to fill the gap for this edition, VP Ray Gibson offered to step into the editor's shoes.

Happy reading!

***Rob Shontridge***

**President**

**DFWA Qld Branch**

## **Opinion: *Leopard Spots... and the Political Landscape***

Having enjoyed the wit and wisdom of Ken's spirited editorial writings in past issues of Hotline, it is with some trepidation that I attempt to craft a piece of writing of comparable measure.

Noting DFWA's non-partisan political stance, I should emphasise that what follows is a personal *Opinion Piece* rather than DFWA Editorial comment. I take full responsibility for the content.

*A week is a long time in politics*, so the old saying goes. That being the case, the coming months will resemble an eternity, not just for the politicians but for all of us who will be inundated with facile media coverage of the election campaign: countless media releases concocted by political spin doctors, lightweight media interviews, and staged photo opportunities of politicians feigning interest in things that matter to their constituents.

OK, so I have a jaundiced view of election campaigns, but I'm not alone. Most of the people I talk to are equally sceptical and refuse to be duped by the very predictable charade of pork barrel promises to enrich our lives in exchange for votes for one politician or another. As you have probably gathered, it's about now in the election countdown that I stop listening to all politicians.

*Leopards don't change their spots*, so another old saying goes. Rather than choosing who should govern our Nation based on a grab-bag of *snake oil* promises during an election campaign, a more reliable indicator of what we should expect from the next Government can be found in the track record of the Parties and their politicians over the life of the current Parliament.

Using that yardstick, and putting the spotlight on the Defence community, it is difficult to view the ruling political elite in a positive light. Regrettably, there have been too many examples of Government action and inaction that have disadvantaged current and former members of the ADF and their families. The DFWA website ([www.dfw.org](http://www.dfw.org)) has good coverage of these matters if you need further detail.

A more troubling sign is the reticence of Defence Portfolio Ministers to seriously engage with veterans' organisations on such matters, and the all too common practice of using standard form letters replete with inaccurate *facts* and tiresome spin in response to personal letters from veterans. It speaks volumes about the prevailing attitude among senior Government ranks towards those who have served their Nation in uniform.

So, if the current Government is returned for a further term, why on earth should we expect anything different in terms of policy approaches to veterans' issues?

And what about the Coalition? Being in Opposition makes it more difficult to judge likely Coalition performance in the next term if it is to form Government.

It must be said that the Coalition record in veterans' affairs when last in Government was less than inspiring. However, the Shadow Defence Portfolio Ministers in the current Parliament are a very different lot to their predecessors. They have raised and forcefully advocated many veterans' matters in Parliament, and they have vigorously opposed Government measures that were considered detrimental to the Defence community. Don't take my word for it. It's all there in the Hansard Parliamentary Record for anyone who wishes to become more informed.

Importantly, Shadow Ministers have shown a keen willingness to genuinely engage with veterans' groups and individuals to grasp the significance of the things that matter to veterans.

Future budget uncertainty and fiscal responsibility might initially limit the extent to which a Coalition Government would right the many wrongs inflicted on veterans by past Parliaments, but at least there is acknowledgement that genuine grievances exist. This is a refreshing first step, and a light-year ahead of where the current Government chooses to be.

For me, the choice on 14 September is a *no-brainer*.

*Ray Gibson*

## ***Wally's Words***

(Words of wisdom from our esteemed Secretary/Treasurer/Senior Advocate)

I would like to thank all the members who have promptly and uncomplainingly renewed their subscription; there are still some outstanding but I am sure they will come to the party.

I would also like to remind you that if you do not have a cheque account, you do not need to take out a bank cheque or purchase a postal order which will cost you money. All you need to do is:

Go to a **Bank of Queensland** Branch and deposit your subscription, or donation, in the following account:

**Account name: Defence Force Welfare Association; Account No 10480398; BSB 124-076.**

The Bank of Queensland will not charge you for the transaction.

As the treasurer, I also maintain the membership data base and I would like to thank you for the updates to your contact details. After every mail out of Camaraderie we get a few magazines returned marked "address unknown." The December mailout was no exception; we received the following returns:

**Mrs HG Cook** was at 14 Wellington St Lutwyche 4030;

**Sgt SC Leonard** was RAAF Base Townsville, Qld 4818;

**Mr J Gearn** was at Mt Carbine Hotel, Mt Carbine Qld 4871;

**Mr P Carey** was PO Box 1247 Gympie Qld 4570;

If anyone knows their whereabouts, please let us know.

Now, with my advocate hat on, I would like to once again bring to your attention, some updates on DVA matters.

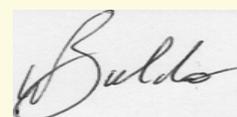
DVA will now pay for the treatment of the following conditions, although they may not accept them as being Service caused:

- All types of cancers
- All types of nervous conditions
- TB, if you are unlucky enough to suffer from it.

The Statement of Principles (SOP) on prostate Cancer has been amended by the Repatriation Medical Authority by adding "smoking" as a cause to prostate cancer; and finally

The Administrative Appeals Tribunal has decided in favour of a War Widow whose husband died of a heart condition. The AAT determined that the condition was causally related to his service in New Guinea during WW2.

If you or any of your mates have been knocked back or were not aware of the above, please contact the nearest RSL or give me a ring on 0438327210.





Pictured from left to right are Rob Shortridge DFWA QLD President, CDTPO Emma Finucan, MID ANC Ben Wadsworth, CDTPO Nick Dent and John Lewis DFWA Qld.

## Navy Cadets Rest Easy

Cadets of TS Gayundah at Bulimba in Brisbane were the happy recipients of a cheque for \$1000 donated by the Defence Force Welfare Association. Qld President Rob Shortridge presented the cheque on the first training day of 2013 to LEUT Wendy Broxham, CO TS Gayundah, who said the donation will help purchase much needed beds for cadets' overnight camps.

## DFWA QLD – Sunshine Coast Update – February 2013

DFWAQ's representative on Queensland's beautiful Sunshine Coast is Win Fowles. DFWA members on the Sunshine Coast can contact him at 0418 75 15 48 or [winfowles@bigpond.com](mailto:winfowles@bigpond.com).

### Win reports:

With the election now some seven months away, I've started visits to each of the endorsed candidates in the Sunshine Coast electorates of Fisher, Fairfax and Wide Bay. The idea is to raise DFWA's key issues with each candidate so they are informed about matters that are of concern to us. Of course, DFWA does not support or oppose any political *party* but does support or oppose certain *policies* that affect serving and/or former ADF people and their families, an important and clear distinction that sometimes needs careful explanation to candidates and to their various supporters or opponents.

I've addressed a number of Coast organisations, including the Sunshine Coast branch of the Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia, in recent months on DFWA issues. The VVAASC branch is Queensland's largest. I was a little surprised to find out how many VVAA members receive DFRDB superannuation pensions, particularly when conventional wisdom says that many Vietnam veterans are national servicemen who would not have had the opportunity to do so. A few are MSBS super pensioners. The feeling of injustice regarding unfair indexation is, not surprisingly, strong in VVAA circles whether or not the VVAA member is a DFRDB/MSBS super pensioner.

Other Coast organisations and individuals I talk with on DFWA issues are taken aback ("gobsmacked" is a better word) when they find out that ex-service people pay tax on their super pensions, suffer a declining standard of living because of unfair indexation, and receive an average dollar amount that is way below the couples rate of the age pension. And I continue to be surprised at the numbers of good people who believe all ex-service men & women get subsidised housing, free medical & dental, cheap groceries, and free rides with the RAAF. It is clear to me that we in DFWA have a battle ahead of us to inform the taxpaying public, upon whom we depend, about the unexaggerated facts of these sorts of matters.

## TPI/EDA Veteran Travel Pass

The Queensland Government Totally and Permanently Incapacitated/Extreme Disablement Adjustment Veteran Travel Pass (TPI/EDA Veteran Travel Pass) entitles eligible TPI/EDA ex-service men and women to unlimited free travel on approved public transport services throughout Queensland.

The TPI/EDA Veteran Travel Pass is a plastic credit-card size photographic identification pass that will have the eligible TPI/EDA veteran's name, DVA file number and expiry date printed on the pass.



The TPI/EDA Veteran Travel Pass is available to Queensland residents who hold a Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs Repatriation Health Card – for All Conditions (Gold), that is embossed TPI or EDA.

The TPI/EDA Veteran Travel Pass does not include any other arrangements that might be in place in individual states or territories.

Current TPI Veteran Travel Passes will remain valid until the expiry date printed on the pass.

To apply for the TPI/EDA Veteran Travel Pass, complete a [TPI/EDA Veteran Travel Pass Information and Application form](http://www.support.transport.qld.gov.au/qt/formsdat.nsf/Forms/QF4947) ( <http://www.support.transport.qld.gov.au/qt/formsdat.nsf/Forms/QF4947> ) and post to:

TPI/EDA Veteran Travel Pass  
Reply Paid 1139  
Eagle Farm, QLD, 4009

## Barracks Shopping Centre Supports DFWA QLD



Last Christmas, the Barracks Shopping Centre offered to donate the proceeds from its Gift Wrapping Service to DFWA QLD. We were delighted to accept the offer and provided a suitable collection container in the form of a military helmet and some DFWA posters to explain what we do.

The Gift Wrapping Service raised \$700 in donations and to our greater surprise, the Shopping Centre Management then matched the donations with a grant of a further \$700. Two Management Centre staff from the Barracks Shopping Centre were invited to one of our Friday morning teas to pass on the very welcome proceeds.

**Pictured above are Christine and Victoria from the Barracks Shopping Centre Management team presenting the funds to a very appreciative President Rob Shortridge.**

## Committee Member Bio: **Brian Allen**

After a period of National Service with the British Army, I enlisted in the Australian Army (RAEME) in 1959. For the next 20 years, I found myself in a range of interesting postings to base workshops and some other obscure jobs in Australia and overseas.



For example, in 1962, I was posted to 2 Base Workshops at Liverpool where we assembled WW2 trucks after removing the thick preservative coatings. At 1 Armoured Regiment, I was involved with the introduction of the German Leopard tanks, complete with German manuals which caused a near panic rush to translate them!

Whilst at 3 Base Workshop in 1965, I was offered a posting to Korea's UN's British Commonwealth Component, as a Cpl driver/clerk to an Australian Army Major. We had an old Chevy with the Australian flag in place of a number plate. When there was a meeting at Panmunjom between the North Korean and UN Delegations, my boss also attended as the Australian representative. I drove him there in the old Chevy which would wallow like a whale on the dirt roads, especially around corners.

Another unusual posting was to Woomera as a Sergeant Clerk in with the Joint Service Trials Unit [JSTU] which was testing the ground to air Rapier Guided Missile. Initially the missiles had minds of their own as they often went for the clouds, but later, they behaved as they should. This was also the time when the European space rocket was tested, so we would pause on the way to the Rapier range and watch the launches.

When at Army HQ at Melbourne's Albert Park Barracks in 1970, I was involved with the RAEME personnel posting team. I was authorised to post myself to 102 Field Workshop at Vung Tau, where in my spare time, I helped teach English at a local school.

From Vietnam, I flew to Singapore in an RNZAF Bristol Freighter and from there to the UK by RAF aircraft. I took 6 months leave without pay to spend time with relations and friends in England. One of the jobs I took while in the UK was as a chauffeur driving a company director around London in a big black Daimler, but when I was offered a uniform I declined, not admitting I already had a military one!

I had a further run of postings back in Australia and I retired as a Warrant officer in 1980. I then spent the next 8 years in London to be with my parents, returning to Brisbane for 3 months of each year via the US which made for an interesting lifestyle.

I became involved with DFWA QLD around 2005, which is where I caught up with Wally Buldo again, having first met him in Vietnam. The DFWA Secretary at the time said he was retiring and he gave me the job even though I was not into such a commitment. Because of my other obligations especially with overseas travel to the UK and US, I later resigned to make way for a more committed person to step forward, but I continue to work on the Committee and provide office support where I can.

### **New Polo Shirt Available!**

The new polo shirt is proving to be popular with our members and sales are going well. It is great to see our members happily promoting DFWA by wearing the high quality shirt. If you would like to order a shirt (male/female), go to the Order Form on the next Page.

### **DFWA Website Upgrade**

The DFWA website is being progressively upgraded and this has affected access to current information on the QLD Branch Pages. If you have been having difficulty finding up-to-date information on the QLD pages, please bear with us. We will hopefully be *ops normal* again in the near future.



## DFWA QUEENSLAND BRANCH INC PRODUCT ORDER FORM

DFWA QLD INC

Victoria Barracks Brisbane

Phone: 07 3233 4480

ENOGGERA QLD 4051

Email: [qldbranch@dfwa.org.au](mailto:qldbranch@dfwa.org.au)

**Your Order Details**

Title.....Initials.....Surname.....

Address.....

Email:.....



Item	Size Code	Quantity	Postage	Unit Price	Total
Bisley Blue Shirt—Men's	XL, L, M, S		XXXXXXXXXX	\$39.95	
Bisley Blue Shirt—Women's	XL, L, M, S		XXXXXXXXXX	\$39.95	
DFWA Cap with Embroidered Badge	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX		\$7.00	\$15.00	
DFWA Lapel Badge	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX		\$2.00	\$5.00	
JB's Wear DFWA Polo Shirt	XXL, XL, L, M, S		\$5.00	\$30.00	
<b>Shirt Size Code:</b>				Subtotal	\$
Extra Extra Large = XXL Extra Large = XL Large = L Medium = M Small = S				-----	
Shirts with long sleeves and other colours are available on request				Postage	\$
				-----	
				<b>Balance Due</b>	<b>\$</b>

**Payment:**

Internet Banking/Direct Debit: Bank of QLD BSB 124 076 Account: 10 480 398

OR

Enclose Cheque/Money Order: \$..... Signature:..... Date:...../...../.....

**Notes:**

**Sizes:** Bisley Shirt sizes are generally one size larger than most other brands. For example, if you normally take a Large size, this would be similar to a Medium in the Bisley shirt range. If in doubt, check the Bisley size at your local retailer.

**Postage:** Bisley Shirt prices include postage and handling. If ordering other items with shirts, no additional postage required. If ordering a cap together with a badge, cap postage only is required.