



Connecting with kiwi veterans in Australia

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About VA News

VA News is published four times a year by Veterans' Affairs New Zealand—Te Tira Ahu Ika a Whiro.

Our team takes care in writing great content and—to the best of our knowledge—has sourced accurate information.

The views expressed in VA News are not necessarily those of Veterans' Affairs or the New Zealand Defence Force.


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Cover image: Army veteran Robert Ross, and his daughter Annabelle, at a Perth forum – full story on page 6.



New Zealand Government

From the Head of Veterans' Affairs

Kia ora tātou

In recent weeks, our outreach and engagement programme saw over 300 Vietnam veterans and their families attend a Vietnam Veterans' Health and Wellbeing Expo in Auckland.

Veterans from across Auckland and the Waikato came together and had the opportunity to meet with local service providers and receive brief assessments to support them in independent daily living. Veterans also met their mates as well as Veterans' Affairs staff. It is really important for us to bring veterans together in this way so they can get information face-to-face. It's also a great way for us to find those Vietnam veterans who are still not accessing the various services available to them through Veterans' Affairs. If you know of a Vietnam veteran who may not be familiar with the services available to them, please encourage them to register with us and have them give us a call – we are only a phone call away.

In June, we took our outreach and engagement programme across the Tasman and interacted with a broad range of New Zealand veterans in both Melbourne and Perth. These forums were very successful and provided an opportunity for veterans and their whānau to learn more about our work and the support available to them in Australia. It was great to see so



Bernadine Mackenzie,
Head of Veterans' Affairs

many of our contemporary veterans in attendance. They were very keen to register with Veterans' Affairs and to pass back through their own networks, the information they had received from us first hand. Veterans' Affairs is also trialing new ways in which to engage with veterans who are still currently serving in the New Zealand Defence Force. This includes getting them to register with us before they transition out of uniform into civilian life.

To assist in keeping our veterans up-to-date with information and upcoming events, Veterans' Affairs recently launched its very own Facebook page. I encourage you to take a look by visiting www.facebook.com/NZVeteransAffairs.

Calling all Vietnam veterans

If you're a Vietnam veteran you're eligible for extra support from Veterans' Affairs. In addition to the support available to all qualifying veterans, such as healthcare and independent living support, Vietnam veterans can access additional support.

- **Annual medical assessment.**
A free yearly check-up with a medical practitioner.
- **Ex gratia payment.**
If diagnosed with a specific medical condition.

Your family is also eligible for support:

- Counselling for family of veterans.
- Ex gratia payments for surviving spouses and partners, as well as natural born children.

You do not need to be living in New Zealand to qualify. Get in touch with Veterans' Affairs if you're not already registered.



Boost for services to veterans and their whānau

In April Minister for Veterans, the Honourable Ron Mark, announced additional funding to support the wellbeing of New Zealand's veterans and their families.

The funding will go towards health and wellbeing assessments for veterans to ensure that when they leave the Defence Force they are linked to the right support services.

“The review of the Veterans’ Support Act 2014 published by Professor Ron Paterson identified that we need to do more for our veterans and their families,” says Ron Mark. “This new funding package will address some of his key findings, and help meet increasing demands for services.”

“We now have upwards of 31,000 contemporary veterans in New Zealand. These younger veterans

need early interventions to prevent service related mental and physical health conditions from getting worse.”

The new funding will be used to better support these veterans by ensuring they are contacted soon after they leave the New Zealand Defence Force, and provided with a health and wellbeing assessment. If needed, veterans can then be quickly connected to a health provider or support service, so they will get the help they need, as soon as possible.

“The health and wellbeing of our veterans and their families is paramount, and we are delivering significant improvements in that area. But veterans are proud people, and sometimes they don’t turn to Veterans’ Affairs until it’s too late. This is why early interventions are vital.”

The Minister also announced a capital injection to upgrade Veterans’ Affairs existing client management system.

Head of Veterans’ Affairs, Bernadine Mackenzie, welcomed the announcement.

“The health and wellbeing of our veterans and their families is paramount”

– Hon Ron Mark,
Minister for Veterans

“The extra funding will go towards simplifying the application process, and allow our staff to deal with more complex cases earlier. Improved IT systems will mean that routine transactions can be carried out electronically, freeing up staff to spend more time on working directly with veterans” said Bernadine.



Troops returning from a six-month deployment to Iraq and the Sinai Peninsula.



Justin, from Independent Living, helping a veteran select an aid to keep them well and independent at home.



Auckland and Waikato Vietnam veterans' health the focus of expo

More than 300 Vietnam veterans and their family members attended the Vietnam Veterans Health and Wellbeing Expo organised by Veterans' Affairs in Manukau. Veterans' Affairs, working in partnership with Ranfurly Veterans' Trust and Auckland University of Technology, brought together 16 veteran support agencies, providers, and support organisations.

Vietnam veterans from Auckland and the Waikato were invited to the expo, which featured support and services in a "one-stop shop". Veterans met Veterans' Affairs case managers, veteran support organisations, and local service providers, received a health check, and were provided seminars and tools to support independent daily living.

Bob Storey served in Vietnam attached to the 3rd Cavalry Regiment, RAAC, from 1970 to 1971. As a member of Ranfurly Veterans' Trust and patron of the Vietnam Veterans Association he volunteered as a connector for the expo, contacting other Vietnam veterans and encouraging them to register. Bob got an overwhelmingly positive response when contacting veterans about attending the expo, and said it was great that Veterans' Affairs had taken the initiative to run the expo.

"Certainly we're not young, but we're not old-old either. We're 65 to 75 most of us, so we're at an age where some assistance can make a lot of difference," Bob said.

"From simple things like long shoe horns, ranging right through to the more serious things, were all covered."

Joe Henry, who represented Auckland Tangata Whenua at the expo's mihi whakatau, also served in Vietnam from 1970 to 1971 as a radio operator for Victor 5 Company. Now a kaumātua at Middlemore Hospital, he said the veterans were able to help each other in different ways.

"Even just talking to other veterans, they all mentioned different things that I wasn't aware I was entitled to," he said.

While feedback from those who attended indicate the expo was a resounding success, Veterans' Affairs believe a large number of Vietnam veterans are not accessing the services available to them – around 600.

Head of Veterans' Affairs Bernadine Mackenzie said bringing together Veterans' Affairs and affiliated organisations in one place was a great way for Vietnam veterans to get information face to face.

"We know the value in sitting down with our veterans and talking with them about what they need," Bernadine said. "It helps us to make sure that they are getting the support they need for independent daily living."



A Vietnam veteran completing a quick health and wellbeing assessment with a healthcare professional from HealthCare New Zealand.



Head of Veterans' Affairs Bernadine Mackenzie with veteran Bunny Tumai.



“I met some mates I’ve never seen before, in one case I saw a couple I hadn’t seen since 1970.”

– Bob Derwin, Vietnam veteran

Waikato couple’s Vietnam connections

Jimmy Tainui, a lead scout with Victor 4 Company, was among the first group of New Zealand soldiers sent to Vietnam in 1965. He did a second tour a few years later.

“The first time we only had six months over there, but the second time was for 12 months,” he said.

For Jimmy, the expo was an opportunity to learn about entitlements and assistance, but also to catch up with mates. Maryanne met Jimmy after he left the Army and met many of Jimmy’s Victor 4 friends around that time too. “They’re like family,” she said.

Maryanne said that the expo was an opportunity to find out not only what Jimmy was entitled to, but also to reconnect. “It’s good for him to see mates,” she said.

Maryanne’s three sisters also married New Zealand Army soldiers, two of whom served in Vietnam and one post-Vietnam. “For them too it was great just to come along and see what was available, even though one’s husband did not serve in Vietnam” she said.

Above: Jimmy and Maryanne Tainui.



Sharon Cavanagh, Manager Veterans' Services, at a VA Forum in Melbourne.

Australian outreach a success

Veterans' Affairs headed over the Tasman in June for a series of forums for kiwi veterans living in Melbourne and Perth.

The forums provided veterans with the opportunity to learn about what support they can get when living abroad and the opportunity to speak one-on-one with case managers.

"New Zealand veterans can get support from us wherever they live in the world" said Bernadine Mackenzie, Head of Veterans' Affairs.

"We specifically held forums in Australia because we know that there is a large New Zealand veteran community there. We want to ensure they know about the support they can get from either – now and in the future" she said.

Robert Ross, a former engineer in the New Zealand Army, attended a forum in Perth along with his family.

"I totally encourage younger veterans to check their eligibility with VA, and come along to an event if they can. Registering today has been simple and easy!" he said.

Ian Healy, who served in Angola with the New Zealand Army and now lives in Western Australia, thought the forums were worthwhile attending.

"They help us vets to understand the support that they, and their family, can get from Veterans' Affairs and other organisations."

The Melbourne and Perth forums followed on from successful Veterans' Affairs events held in Brisbane and Sydney.

"The forums are a way of engaging with the wider veteran community. While we've been in Australia we've had a range veterans register with us – all three services, and whose experiences range from Vietnam to East Timor" said Sharon Cavanagh, Manager Veterans' Services.

"We want to see more kiwi veterans living overseas to register with us. It's about ensuring they, and their whānau, can get support when they need it" she said.



Veterans' Affairs front-line Veterans' Services team at Anzac House, along with RSA's Australia District Support Advisor Val Church, and local veteran connector Danny Allen.



Robert Ross, a former New Zealand Army engineer, and his daughter Annabelle.

OUR WORK



Veterans and their whānau at the end of one of the Perth forums, along with Veterans' Affairs staff and the RSA's Australia District Support Advisor.

“I totally encourage younger veterans to check their eligibility with VA, and come along to an event if they can. Registering today has been simple and easy!”

– Robert Ross,
Former New Zealand Army engineer



Ian Healy, Angola veteran.



Bernadine Mackenzie, Head of Veterans' Affairs.

Sharon's Corner



VA News sat down with Sharon Cavanagh, Manager of Veterans' Services, to talk about what has been happening at Veterans' Affairs over the last three months.

VA News: *Kia ora Sharon, what have you been up to since we last spoke?*

Sharon: I've been busy! A month after holding the Vietnam Veterans' Health and Wellbeing Expo in Auckland, the Veterans' Affairs team headed over to Australia for forums in Melbourne and Perth. We had really successful forums in Sydney and Brisbane last year and we wanted to continue our work in connecting with our Australian-based veterans.

The forums are a fantastic opportunity to meet with veterans and their whānau, and for them to learn more about the support available to them – even when living overseas.

My hat goes off to veteran connectors who helped us get the word out on the ground with the veteran community.

VA News: *What else have you been up to?*

Sharon: We've been running a small 'Transition Muster' pilot for members of the Defence Force at Linton, Trentham, and Burnham camps who are transitioning into civilian life. The pilot was successful in getting people registered with Veterans' Affairs, which means that they are in our system and can easily get support when they need it. We are now looking at not only running the programme permanently, but also rolling it out to all the camps and bases. We want to get as many veterans connected with Veterans' Affairs as possible.

VA News: *I hear progress has been made on re-introducing treatment cards?*


Sharon: Yes – no more temporary letters. We've heard loud and clear from our veterans how useful treatment cards are, and that the letters can easily get damaged.

Our team has been working hard to implement a new system to streamline the process and this will be up and running from July.

Veterans who already have a treatment card don't need to do anything – it is still valid – but veterans who were issued a paper treatment letter can get in touch with us to request a new treatment card.

VA News: *It sounds like you have been really busy! What else do you have planned for this year?*

Sharon: Starting in July we will have monthly case management clinics at Ranfurly House in Auckland. The clinics will be an opportunity for veterans to meet one-on-one with case managers, and to explore the support they need. Veterans, both current clients and those not yet on our books, are able to book in to see us – they just need to get in touch with our enquiry line. The first clinic will be on Tuesday 30 July.

 0800 483 8372

Operation Radian remembered

The 25th anniversary of the first deployment of Kiwi Company on Operation Radian, a joint task force under the UN to Bosnia, is to be held in September.

Operation Radian was the first major company deployment since the Vietnam conflict.

The anniversary commemoration will be an opportunity for both serving and former servicemen and women to reconnect with each other, and recognize the bond they share and the contribution they made.

The commemoration will also pay tribute to personnel who served in Bosnia and have since died. A parade will be held at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park.

Did you serve with Kiwi Company, and now live overseas?

If you served with Kiwi Company and now live overseas, and would like to attend the reunion in New Zealand, then Veterans' Affairs may be able to help.


New Zealand veterans' are able to receive funding to support the cost of travelling internationally for commemorations. For more information, and to apply, visit:

 www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/commemorative-travel




Reunion

SEP 14 Saturday 14 September 2019


 The Establishment, Wellington

Commemoration

SEP 15 Sunday 15 September 2019

 Pukeahu National War Memorial

You can find out more information on the reunion's private Facebook group.

 Kiwi Coy (Bosnia) 25th Anniversary Reunion




Vietnam Mentioned in Despatches

In the last edition of *VA News* we had an article on Mentioned in Despatches (MID).

As the result of an editorial decision, the article did not mention the names of the MID recipients. We unreservedly apologise for any offence or distress this may have caused. In this edition of *VA News*, we publish the full list of MID recipients.

Recipient	Unit
2Lt J. Balance, RNZAC	Att 3 Cav RAAC
Capt W.A. Blair, RNZIR	W3 Coy
Cpl H.M. Bristowe, RNZIR	V2 Coy
Pte G.J. Dalziel, RNZIR	V1 Coy
Pte R.D. Dargaville, RNZASC	V2 Coy
Pte W.G. Doherty, RNZIR	V4 Coy
Cpl D.M. Douglas, RNZIR	V1 Coy
Sgt G.C. Faulkner, RNZIR	V5 Coy
Sgt T.N. Flutey, RNZIR	W2 Coy
SSgt J.R. Hardie, RNZIR	W1 Coy
Capt D.R. Hughes, RNZA	161 Bty
Spr W. Kahika, RNZE	V3 Coy
Cpl R.TeR. Kingi, RNZIR	W2 Coy
Capt R.J. Martin, RNZA	161 Bty
Fl Lt R.J. Metcalfe, RNZAF	Att USAF
Lt A.R.F. MacKenzie, RNZIR	V5 Coy
LBdr D.T.A. Morrow, RNZA	161 Bty
Capt R.J.S. Munro, RNZSigs	Att Intell Cell HQ ATF
Capt K.P. Murphy, RNZA	161 Bty
Pte T. Parekura, RNZIR	V6 Coy
Sqn Ldr J.L.A. Pendreigh, RNZAF	Att 9 Sqn RAAF
Capt B.D. Sinclair, RNZIR	W1 Coy
Capt M.J. Steeds, RNZAC	161 Bty
LCpl W.C. Teller, RNZIR	W3 Coy
Maj E.J. Torrance, RNZIR	W3 Coy
LCpl W.G. Walker, RNZAC	161 Bty
Sgt J.R. Whitworth, RNZIR	V2 Coy
Cpl H.O. Wilson, RNZIR	V2 Coy
Fl Lt G.L. Wood, RNZAF	Att 9 Sqn RAAF
Sgt J.B. Yandall, RNZIR	W3 Coy

Full citations for each Mentioned in Despatches are available on the VietnamWar.govt.nz website.

 www.vietnamwar.govt.nz/resources/awards

Deployment review project

In the last week of July the Veterans' Support Amendment Bill was signed into law by the Governor-General. The bill corrected an issue in the 2014 legislation which meant Veterans' Affairs' deployment review project was unable to progress.

Now that legislation has been updated, Veterans' Affairs can continue its work to review historical deployments. Over a hundred deployments that have taken place since 1 April 1974 are being reviewed in six tranches.

"Everyone who's been deployed in situations involving significant risk of harm should be able to get support from VA when they need it," Minister for Veterans Ron Mark said. "This project is helping make sure we're covering all the bases".

As part of the review, VA is seeking input from those who have served with New Zealand's armed forces. You can find it on the VA website:

 www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/deployment-review

Scheme 2 rates

From 1 July 2018 new rates – adjusted for Consumers Price Index (CPI) – will come into effect for some Scheme 2 entitlements. These changes do not affect the rates for entitlements published in the previous edition of *VA News*.

Entitlements with adjusted rates from 1 July 2019 are:

- Independence Allowance
- Lump Sum Compensation for Permanent Impairment
- Survivor's Grant
- Child Care payments for children of deceased veterans

The minimum payment rate for Weekly Compensation has also been adjusted.

You can view the new rates on our website:

 www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz

NEED TO TALK?



The 4-digit number is free to call or text, and will connect you to a trained counsellor. It's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Service and sacrifice at Cassino remembered

The last remaining member of 28 (Māori) Battalion B Company, 94-year-old Robert Gillies, attended the 75th anniversary of the Battles of Cassino in Italy on May 17.

The Battles of Cassino, in which the 2nd New Zealand Division participated in February and March 1944, were among the most gruelling of the Second World War. The division suffered more than 1600 casualties, including 343 deaths, and soldiers described fighting through a maze of rubble, in appalling weather, as “absolute hell”.

Mr Gillies lost friends in the battle. He remembers the comradeship, the loss, and the fear. “It’s always in your mind. It never leaves you,” he said.

He was joined by descendants of those who served in the 28 (Māori) Battalion. Lieutenant Zarra Houpapa carried the 28 (Māori) Battalion banner in memory of both the Battalion and her grandfather, Tako Henare Houpapa, who fought at Cassino.

Warrant Officer Class 1 Tama Andrew led the New Zealand Defence Force Māori Cultural Group at the commemorations. He learned as a child that his grandfather, Lance Corporal Te Tuhera “James” Ruawai, fought in the war as part of the 28 (Māori) Battalion.

The 75th anniversary of the battles was marked with services at the Cassino War Cemetery and the railway station, concluding with a rare non-denominational service at the Abbey of Montecassino.

New Zealand Defence Force contingent commander Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Childs said the only way to remain faithful to the memory of those who fought in Cassino and other Second World War battles was to unite and to value justice, freedom, and peace.

“Our responsibility to them and to each other, as members of the Defence Force and as members of our communities, is to make the most of the freedom they had the courage to defend. Find a place in your hearts for them as you go about your lives” he said.





Normandy Landings commemorated

Normandy veterans Roy Brookes, Maurice Mayston, and Phillip Stewart attended the National Commemoration marking the 75th Anniversary of the Normandy Landings at Pukeahu National War Memorial on June 6. They were joined by members of the New Zealand Defence Force, Veterans' Affairs, the RNZRSA, and members of the Diplomatic Corps.

On 6 June 1944, 153,000 Allied troops landed on the beaches of Normandy in Northern France. It was the largest combined naval, air, and land operation in history and marked the beginning of a sustained campaign that would ultimately help end the Second World War in Europe.

Nearly 11,000 New Zealanders who served in the Royal Air Force, the Royal Navy, and the Merchant Navy played a crucial role in the Normandy Landings and the campaign for Western Europe from 1944 to 1945.

The Commemorative Address was delivered by the Honourable Ron Mark, Minister of Defence and Minister for Veterans, with Air Marshal Kevin Short, Chief of Defence Force, delivering the reading.

From top: Hon Ron Mark and Christine Tracey with veteran Maurice Mayston; Veteran Roy Brookes with Hon Ron Mark; Minister for Veterans Hon Ron Mark, Christine Tracey, Chief of Defence Force Air Marshal Kevin Short, and Mrs Sheryll Short at the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior.

