

NSW State report for National Congress 2013.

NSW President Report 2013

I would like to start this report by thanking my executive for all the hard work they have put in to getting some great results for the State Branch this year, special thanks must go to Len and Ken for their tireless efforts in helping the Vietnamese Community of Australia and the ARVN NSW Inc. in their fund raising endeavours on our behalf, we (State Branch) came out on top with an incredible amount of money to go towards our Welfare Fund, as I have previously reported the effort and generosity put in by the VCA was greatly appreciated. Our Sub-Branches , St Marys, Ryde City and Macarthur were very involved in this effort as well by members turning up at functions arranged by the fund raisers.

In the latter part of the year Greg Cant, Ken Foster and myself went to a briefing by Invitation with Southern Pacific Private (SPP) which is a Treatment Centre specialising in the integrated Medical, Psychiatric and Psychotherapeutic treatment of addictions and mood disorders. This Centre is a Private Hospital as well as a research facility, the presentation was enlightening in the fact there is such a wide range of disorders being treated at the same time by qualified health professionals. Not only does the centre treat all aspects of PTSD, they have a specialised Family Program as Mental Illnesses and addictions impact the whole family. Without going into everything we learned from these professionals , we were very happy to join them (SPP) in creating a Memorandum of Agreement between them and the VVAA NSW in bringing immediate help to those veterans in most need (Vietnam Veterans, Veterans from all theatres of action, and most important at this stage, Post 75 Veterans).

The general consensus from our Sub-Branches seems to be a move away from the Pensions area and more into the Welfare section, although a couple of the Sub-Branches have reported an increase in Pension applications and these are still coming through from Viet Vets as well as younger Veterans, there is a general call that all of our Pensions and Welfare Officers are TIP trained and Qualified so as to be continually covered by VITA, our State Advocate has assured me he has approached the powers that be in TIP to try and create more Refresher courses.

Education Trips continue to do excellent work in visiting schools in the Central Tablelands, with Vice President Len Schulz, lovely wife Wendy and our intrepid State Treasurer Tony Walker, visiting Orange Christian School , the interest shown by approx 40 year 10 students was quite gratifying makes the effort worthwhile. St Marys Choir took part in the Penrith/ Nepean Valley Relay for Life , in support of the Cancer Council (not sure if Greg is one of the singers) , a wonderful effort was by all those who took part in the Relay but in excess of \$400,000 was raised and making this the highest fund raising relay in NSW.

Its great to see South West NSW and Wagga Sub-Branch doing so well and their Retreat is still a pretty good attraction – to Quote “ the Murraguldrie retreat has been going very well with an increase of travelling Veterans, service personal from the Kapooka Army Base and RAAF cadets utilising this facility. We have been encouraged by the number of travelling veterans that have

revisited the retreat and with the number of enquiries that we have received would indicate a busy Spring-Summer time at the retreat “. Quite a few of our Nomads from the Hunter area have visited Murraguldrrie in their travels and as I have said before cannot say enough good things about it. Keep up the good work ladies and gents, what you are doing is obviously working.

National Congress in on in a couple of weeks up on the Gold Coast, will be good to catch up on all the news and such from the other States. Next big thing for our State is the Vietnam Veterans Day Commemorations at the Cenotaph , ably organized by VP Len Schulz and Events Coordinator Carol Ward, also have contacted a gentleman named Steve Austin (Director of Training) who is with the Digger Dogs Programme and has welcomed our involvement in this Program, Len has come up with a couple of great ideas as to how we can help this group (Digger Dogs is the training of companion dogs to help with those younger Vets suffering with PTSD etc), we will certainly know more when they have their meetings and then let us know how we can help them, I think this is a very worthwhile idea and will pass on any information I get to all states, it is one way all states can help our younger veterans.

All the very best

Regards

David McCann

President VVAA NSW