



Robyn Collins
General Manager



DefenceCare has continued to focus on providing support for our clients and their families. We have also regularly visited several military bases within NSW, to support and assist those who need our help.

The Invictus Games were held in London, from 9 to 14 September and marked the beginning of a programme to support accessibility of adaptive sport and further employment opportunities for transitioning servicemen and women leaving the Armed Forces. The Australian team of 21 veterans and 15 members of the Australian Defence Force were proudly sponsored by RSL Australia and claimed a total of 21 medals.

The calls for help to DefenceCare, in particular for financial assistance, still continue to grow. For the month of August:

- DefenceCare received 199 calls for help, bringing the total for the calendar year to 3016;
- Of the calls for assistance, 82 were for help with DVA entitlements and claims; 19 were calls about appeals to the VRB; 35 were calls for counselling, financial help and other community support; and 63 were for a number of other matters and assistance;
- A total of 41 new claims were submitted to the DVA and 32 claims were finalised; and
- Community support active clients totalled 242.

PEOPLE WE HAVE HELPED

...an ex-serving veteran battling to transition to civilian life

Agnes enlisted with the Army at the age of 23 serving with the Royal Australian Corp of Transport for six years. During her service she was deployed to East Timor

and the Middle East.

After basic training she was posted to the 3rd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR). During her first year she suffered an injury during a training exercise. She went through months of rehabilitation as well as surgery, and a year later deployed to East Timor.

During her posting to the 3rd Combat Service Support Battalion (3CSSB), Agnes suffered several injuries. However she was determined to make a speedy recovery and return to work. She was selected to deploy again, this time to the Middle East. After returning from eight months overseas she decided that it was time for the next chapter in her life and discharged in 2013.

When Agnes sought help from DefenceCare for her claim, she realised that she was having difficulty transitioning back to civilian life. It took her longer than expected to find work, she was feeling stressed, helpless and frustrated and had lost her sense of belonging. She also found it difficult to reconnect with friends and family and it was a struggle to keep positive. With support from her partner and family, Agnes is now coping better and readjusting to civilian life.

“Thanks to DefenceCare, I was able to receive financial assistance for much needed medical treatments and travelled to London to participate in the Invictus Games.

“I am extremely appreciative for all her help and guidance from my Entitlements Adviser, as well as her persistence. She has gone above and beyond and I found it extremely easy to confide in her as she made me feel comfortable and I felt like she genuinely wanted to help.”

...a veteran with physical and mental



injuries discharging after 32 years

Dean was raised on a property in western NSW. Originally he was a brick layer and plumber’s labourer; Dean didn’t consider his job steady, due to the reliance on weather conditions and work availability. A newspaper advertisement inviting people to join the Navy was found by his mum, and looked to be a great way to start a career. Dean went to Brisbane to join up and never looked back.

Dean met his wife Yvonne in 1989, and then had to leave her behind with their three children for seven to nine months at a time, which was very hard. He was deployed with Coalition Training Force (CTF) 158. It was a very challenging posting. The Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel (SIEV) 36 incident will always haunt Dean. It changed his life forever.

Dean was medically discharged recently, after 32 years of service with the Royal Australian Navy. He spent 22 of these years of his time in service out at sea, experiencing many countries and cultures. Dean’s promotion to Chief Petty Officer was a career milestone, a pinnacle in his branch and a rank to be proud of.

“DefenceCare as a whole have been outstanding with my case, my advocate has been so helpful and knows my case so well. Without DefenceCare I would have struggled to get my claims sorted as the past 12 months has been very taxing on my mental and physical health.

“I would like to say thankyou to everyone who has had a hand in processing the decision making and support for my case I recommend you guys to every one of my fellow servicemen if they have issues or need guidance.”

CARERS’ FORUM UPDATE

Recently, RSL NSW (through



DefenceCare) joined with DVA to hear from carers of veterans: parents and partners who are the primary carer for a veteran who has physical injuries and/or mental health illnesses as a result of their service.

Some of the key issues raised at the forum included the following:

- A lack of information for carers about the veteran’s condition, how to best manage their condition at home and the services available to support them and the veteran;
- Difficulties in relationships with the veteran and the need for mental health supports such as counselling, peer support and workshops;
- For parents who are carers, concerns over who will take care of the veteran when they are no longer able to do so;
- For families with children, the need for support and recognition of the children’s needs;
- Relief from the constancy of caring and the feelings of isolation, exhaustion and chronic sorrow; and
- Health support for the carer as they can also suffer trauma and have symptoms that mirror those of the veteran.

PROPOSED PENSION AND WELFARE OFFICERS FORUM

We have investigated a number of options without success for a Pension and Welfare Officer forum. We are in the final stages of testing a Facebook option that is a closed, private group and appears to have the necessary functionality. We are

currently doing some final testing and hope it will prove to be a useful online communication tool.

DEFENCECARE AMBASSADOR ERIN MOLAN

DefenceCare is proud to have Erin Molan (sports reporter and presenter for the Nine Network) as an Ambassador. She provides a strong female identity whose intrinsic link with the Australian Defence Force community, gives her deeper understanding of DefenceCare and the services we provide to the ADF community.

“Growing up with a Dad in the army was an amazing experience but I was one of the lucky ones. Things can go horribly wrong and this is why it is so important to have an organisation like Defence Care. I’m honoured to represent and support this incredible organisation and the wonderful work it does.”

CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

Navy Health, a supporter of DefenceCare, offers a wide range of health covers to follow you and your family through all of life’s stages and is available for all serving and ex-serving Navy, Army and Air Force personnel. Hospital cover options include Premium Hospital and Healthy Hospital 200 and 500, providing members with up to 100 per cent hospital cover at over 490 private hospitals, day hospital facilities and recognised public hospitals throughout Australia.

There are also plenty of options for extras

cover to meet your needs and requirements with a range of insurance cover for dental, optical, physiotherapy, hearing aids, home nursing, medically prescribed appliances, orthotics and orthopaedic appliances and more. You could obtain unlimited general dental, \$2000 on major dental, \$1300 on hearing aids, \$1000 on home nursing, \$800 on physiotherapy plus much more each financial year.

All extras and hospital covers also include full ambulance cover. For all enquiries, please call Navy Health on 1300 306 289 or email query@navyhealth.com.au.

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER UPDATES

***Their Story* - book**

Their Story is intended to show a very personal experience of World War I and to bring to life the memories of those sons, husbands and fathers, who died in their tens of thousands and who today, despite having their names engraved on monuments, remain largely unknown.

Copies of the book can be purchased online at <http://my.bookpal.com.au/Bookstore/b/10741-> . “Their Story” are donating 5% of the sale price of each copy to DefenceCare.

***Think Of Bert* - Opera**

Think of Bert is a short story by Australian author Margaret Trist that has been adapted as a one act opera by composer/soprano Majella O’Shea. Directed by acclaimed Australian director Stephen Wallace, at 1pm November 29 at Paddington Uniting

Church, Sydney. All profits are being contributed to DefenceCare. Tickets can be purchased on the door or online at oztix.com.au or on 1300 762 545. For more info go to weaversandshakers.com.

OUT AND ABOUT WITH DEFENCECARE

26 September 77 SQN - RAAF

Williamstown Family Day

18 October Singleton Infantry Museum Open Day

19 October Holsworthy Family Picnic Day

COMING EVENTS

Centenary Celebration World War One – November 8 Ingleburn RSL

Family Carol Service – 6 December Holsworthy

RECIPROCAL TOUR REPORT

The first rehearsal held on Sunday August 31 at Seven Hills RSL Youth Club hall was very productive. Management and youth club members got to know one another and worked on their given talents in order to put together a concert while touring New Zealand. Also the group were measured for their uniforms. The youth club members travelling are 23 girls and 2 boys.

We are looking forward to the weekend camp at Glenfield, which is a chance for the group to spend some quality time together in preparation for their two weeks away.

On a sad note we learn of the passing of Mike George. Mike was very involved with the Dubbo RSL Youth Club and over the years organised many visits to Dubbo for both the New Zealand youth club visitors and our own youth club members. It was always a good time with visits to the zoo and surrounding places of interest, not forgetting the legendary BBQ's held

at Mike and Janelle's home the night before we returned to Sydney. Mike also toured New Zealand firstly as Assistant Manager in 1997 and then as Manager in 1999. He served a term as Chairman of Youth Council and again was there to help out wherever possible. To Janelle and her family we send our sincere condolences. Mike will be missed. VALE.

Also we would like to say a big thankyou to Ross Baker; although a very busy person he was always at the end of the phone to help in any way he could. Whenever possible Ross would attend our functions always with a big smile, and hope he will continue to attend our functions in the future. We wish him every success in his new position.

We wish everyone a safe, happy and peaceful holiday and look forward to 2015 and being involved in special events of the 100th anniversary of Gallipoli.

Esther Kitching OAM JP



It has been a very busy few months attending the office going to luncheons and conferences. June Campbell was kind enough to invite me to her Conference in September, but we were sorry June could not be with us as she wasn't very well.

June also organised the TV to attend and the papers – all the hard work you have done is much appreciated.

Emily Herden invited me to attend her very interesting conference; it was a privilege to present a Life membership badge and certificate to Terry Filmer, who was one of our Councillors, and also to present certificates to Uralla Auxiliary members. Emily also organised to have the papers there. Well done, Emily!

Deputy State President Pauline James attended the conferences at Byron Bay, Dubbo, Uralla and Maitland and took

Deputy President CCWA and Quilt co-ordinator Pauline James receives a cheque for \$1000 for 20 books of tickets in the draw for the Lest We Forget Quilt from Ingleburn sub-Branch Treasurer John Beer and President Ray James, with the Ingleburn Women's Auxiliary President Christine Frame in attendance at their September monthly meeting. Christine also presented a cheque for \$2500 for 50 books on behalf of the Women's Auxiliary.



along the Lest We Forget Quilt. It has been a marvellous project and the tickets having been selling wonderfully. It was to be drawn after we go to print, on November 1.

The Metropolitan Conference was scheduled for Thursday October 30 at Burwood RSL Club at 10.00 am.

We do not have a State Secretary as yet but hopefully it should not be too long.

I am very pleased to say we have a new Women's Auxiliary, Balmain/Rozelle. We would like a few more Auxiliaries to form. We have quite a few new members this year.

Our gratitude to all Women's Auxiliaries and sub-Branches who have sold tickets in the Lest We Forget Quilt.

Clara Elliott, State President

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www.strokefoundation.com.au

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