

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH ENEWS



January 2023



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2023. I hope you all had a chance to enjoy Christmas and the New Year festivities with family and friends, and that you are looking forward to a more normal year than we've had recently, with as much good health and peace as we can each muster.

Thanks again to all of you who contributed to the various activities we conducted last year, whether you did do so actively or merely by offering your support and encouragement to our volunteers and staff who continue to produce some excellent outcomes for our members and other clients.

With the new working year already moving at a fairly hectic pace, I refer you to the various notices in this newsletter. The first of these is the OGM scheduled for next Tuesday and the second is a Warning Order for the celebration of the Eddison Day Club's 19th birthday on the 3rd of March. This lunch will be combined with what would have been the February OGM Dinner.

Please note the changing of the guard at DVA, with Liz Cosson retiring on 23 January at the end of her tenure. Having formally thanked her both generally and specifically for her interest in and support for our Sub-Branch, she quickly acknowledged the work we do for veterans in the ACT and thanked our members who provide that support. I look forward to meeting her successor, Ms Alison Frame, in due course.

Particularly as the Welfare Team is collating the feedback from the Christmas card deliveries, I remind all of you that help is but a phone call away. Please call us if you or any of your family or friends are struggling with anything, including the threat of isolation. While we can't work miracles, we we'll do what we can to help and advise you.

Similarly, I look forward to welcoming our volunteers as they 'return to work' and to finding some reinforcements for our respective teams.

In closing, I offer my best wishes to all for a happy and healthy new year, especially to Les Cook (100), Bill Smith (90) and Anthony John (60) who have each already had significant birthdays this year.

Jim Gilchrist

President

REMINDER !

SUB-BRANCH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (OGM) 31 JANUARY 2023

Dear members,

A reminder that the next Sub-Branch OGM will be held at 1400 hours on Tuesday 31 January 2023 in the RSL Sub-Branch office in Holder.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Regards,

Greg



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The Reinvigoration of the Eddison Day Club

The Eddison Day Club is one of over 70 Day Clubs that were initially formed in 1977 on the initiative of the Department of Veterans' Affairs as a way of having veterans, their partners and other older members of the general community to meet others to share ideas, do light exercise, be educated and informed, have morning tea, a light lunch before returning home. Our Club met for the first time on 6th February 2004 at the Canberra Irish Club in Weston. Our Club was promoted to the Board of the Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch by Mr Ian Gollings who was the initial coordinator. There has been a succession of coordinators over the years as well as other volunteers who were once able to coordinate raffles, arrange transport for those who can no longer drive, leading exercise, prepare quizzes etc.

The Eddison Day Club has been fortunate to be able to have available a multitude of guest speakers, entertainers and musicians come to our club. Previously we were able to attract between 40 and 55 persons each week This had to cease on 8th March 2020 due to COVID-19 which forced the Canberra Irish Club to close until being able to open once again in July of that year. Further lockdowns occurred in the latter months. During 2021 and 2022, there were many attempts to restart the attendance at the day Club, but have so far failed to regain the attendance required to attract both members and guest speakers or entertainers.

To this end the Board of the Woden Valley Sub-Branch and others have agreed to combine the usual Ordinary General Meeting Dinner planned for late February and the 19th Birthday of the Eddison Day Club. The kitchen of the Canberra Irish Club is currently undergoing renovations and is not expected to open again until late January or early February.

Plans are well advanced for a lunch on 3rd March 2023, where members of the Eddison Day Club and Sub-Branch members will hold a combined lunch. The cost of this lunch is expected to be no more than \$20.00 per head. There will be a two-course meal as well as some light entertainment and a raffle. The main purpose is to talk and have fun.

Following the meal, we intend to gauge the interest of those attending in having the Eddison Day Club meeting on a regular basis – maybe not meeting initially each week, and maybe not on a Friday as was usual in previous years. New members will be required from all.

The Eddison Day Club is a vital activity of the Woden Valley Sub-Branch and is the only one in the Canberra district. Due to COVID-19 and the aging of veterans, out of the 70 Day Clubs in 2020, only 40 have survived. The Day Clubs are an outlet for our older, and sometimes isolated members of the community to get together.

One thing under consideration is to have residents of local Aged Care Facilities attend the Day Club. The facilities will provide transport and support workers. Our volunteer base has been vastly depleted over the last few years. We will need to recruit some new volunteers to assist with several positions to have the Day Club proceed efficiently.

Please save the date of 3rd March 2023 to attend the luncheon of the combined membership of the Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch and the 19th Birthday of the Eddison Day Club. The luncheon will be 1200 for 1230 at the Canberra Irish Club.

Very special celebration 100th birthday of our member Les Cook. The birthday party was a special gathering of Les' family and friends. Rania Kalimeris on behalf of RSL WV Sub-Branch presented him a Certificate of Achievement. Also, an honorary lifetime membership to the Hellenic Club. Jennifer Hamer played a few songs on the bagpipes including Amazing Grace.



Photo above: Matt Anderson and Les Cook



Photo above: Jan Hamer.

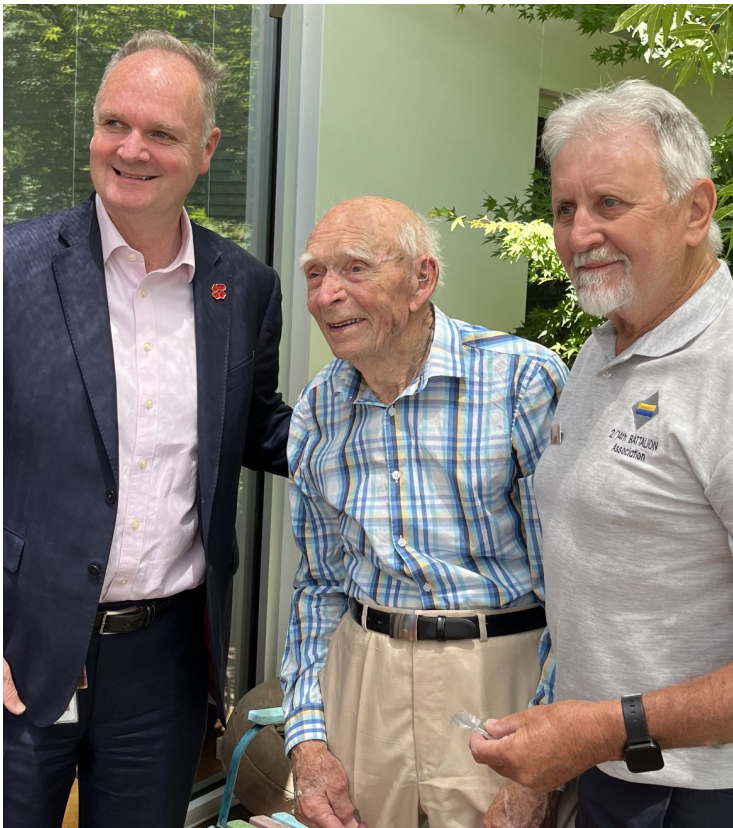


Photo above: Matt Anderson, Les Cook and Craig Iskov.



Photo above: Les Cook and Rania Kalimeris.

90th Birthday of our member Bill Smith.

Bill received order of O.B.N (Over Bloomin Ninety)



DVA Deputy Commissioner NSW/ACT Update

Happy New Year to you all, and **welcome to 2023!** I hope that you all had a relaxing and enjoyable time over the festive season, and spent time with family and friends.

You will have seen the [announcement](#) by the Prime Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, that Liz Cosson will conclude her tenure as Secretary, and that **Ms Alison Frame has been appointed as the new Secretary of DVA**, from 23 January 2023. I'm sure you will all join me in wishing Liz all the very best in the next chapter of her life, and acknowledge the incredible contribution she has made to our country through both military and public service.

2023 will see DVA's continued focus on **clearing the compensation claims backlog**. There was an incredible effort made across DVA in the second half of last year to recruit and train new claims delegates. While that will continue into 2023, we are already seeing the positive effects of that hard work, with the Liability backlog reducing month-on-month since its peak in July 2022. You can see the progress of the claims backlog published on [DVA's website](#).

Below is an update on some of the latest news from DVA:

[BEST Grants now open](#)

[DVA latest news](#)

[Update to Medical Cannabis Framework](#)

I look forward to seeing NSW and ACT Consultative forum members at the upcoming meetings in February:

- NSW forum on 8 February 2023 at 10am – in person. The theme for this forum is Transition.

ACT forum on 21 February 2023 at 10am – in person. The theme for this forum is Education & Training.

Warm regards,

Victoria

BEST Grants now open

The 2023-24 Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) grant opportunity opened on 17 January 2023 and **closes on 23 February 2023 at 9pm AEDT**.

The Australian Government has announced a total of up to \$4.551 million (GST exclusive) for the BEST Program for the 2023–24 financial year.

The BEST program is a demand driven, formula-driven grant. There is no criteria in the application for applicants to respond to or be assessed on. A demand driven process means that if the Ex Service Organisation (ESO) meets the eligibility criteria and minimum amount of work benchmark, DVA will apply the funding formula to their application and they will be offered a grant.

The program is intended to assist the veteran and defence communities by providing support and resources to ESO practitioners for compensation and/or wellbeing advocacy. It assists ESOs by providing a contribution to the work of these practitioners. It does not fully fund an organisation.

Applicants can view and apply for the grant opportunity on GrantConnect: [Current Grant Opportunity View - GO5988: GrantConnect \(grants.gov.au\)](#).

The main changes for the 2023-24 BEST funding round are:

- That all advocates must now be ATDP qualified. The workload for Training and Information Program (TIP) Trained advocates can no longer be considered for funding.
- That the workload for advocates under training is now to be attributed to the mentor. This clarifies who claims workload as previously the trainee and mentor may have both claimed this work. Also as advocates must be ATDP qualified, this solution results in the work still being able to be attributed to ESOs and encourages trainees to complete their accreditation.
- A clearer definition of the Wellbeing Support Officer role compared to Wellbeing Advocacy.

Changes to the category for eligible equipment and administrative expenses to include training that directly supports advocacy.

The changes to the funding formula based on the work types for this round are:

- Service Pension that was a workload rating of 3, is no longer considered a compensation work type in the formula calculation and is to be removed. This work type can be claimed under wellbeing support.
- an increase to the workload rating for MRCA claims (from 3 to 4)
- an increase to the workload rating for Multi-Act claims (from 4 to 5)

Agreements are expected to be sent to organisations in June 2023 and payments made in July 2023.

[DVA latest news](#)

See DVA's website for [latest news](#), providing up to date updates on recent events and changes. This includes:

- Announcement of SE Queensland Veterans' and Families' Hub
- 50th anniversary of the proclamation to end Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War
- Supporting veterans to downsize their homes
- Learn about the role of the Veteran Support Officer
- Introduction of the Workforce Incentive
- Increase to TPI payments

[Update to DVA medical cannabis framework](#)

DVA has conducted a review of the Medicinal Cannabis Framework (the Framework) and modified it to better meet the current and future requirements of DVA clients. The updated Framework has been approved by the Repatriation Commission and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission.

From 16 January 2023, the updated Framework will allow medical practitioners and specialists to seek approval of funding of medicinal cannabis over the phone, without the need for assessment from a non-GP specialist in many circumstances. This will streamline access to funded medicinal cannabis for eligible DVA clients.

While each application will continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis, DVA has developed a new tier-based approvals approach, which considers the active ingredients, dosage and regulatory factors. This will streamline the application process and reduce administrative timeframes for medical practitioners and eligible DVA clients.

DVA will still require the medical practitioner to report why medicinal cannabis is clinically indicated, and confirm the potential for an adverse event or contraindication for the person has been assessed. DVA acknowledges that a number of DVA clients have sought access to medicinal cannabis for the treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental health conditions. DVA has a duty of care to veterans and their families to fund treatments that are proven to be effective, safe and comply with legislation.

There is currently insufficient evidence for the use of medicinal cannabis for the treatment of mental health conditions, including PTSD, with low to very low certainty evidence for its effectiveness. In addition, there is evidence that use of medicinal cannabis for some people with mental health conditions could be harmful. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) advises that medicinal cannabis is not appropriate for people with a previous history of psychosis, or concurrent active mood or anxiety disorder. DVA continues to actively monitor research in this space to ensure decisions about funding medicinal cannabis are informed by the latest clinical evidence to ensure the best possible outcomes for veterans.

DVA's Framework is consistent with the opinion of Australian professional medical bodies, and is aligned with current clinical evidence. The updated Framework provides greater flexibility to enable DVA to adapt to fund medicinal cannabis use for the treatment of more health conditions in the future, as clinical evidence emerges.

Further information is available on DVA's website: [Medical Cannabis](#)



Suspicious emails and text messages offering refund payments through myGov have been identified as a scam.

These suspicious emails and text messages supply a clickable link requesting data via an email or SMS, such as login details followed by full name, address, phone number, credit card information and CVV number details.

Services Australia and myGov have advised they will never send an email or text message asking for a username, password, myGov PIN, secret questions and answers or personal details.

They recommend myGov only be accessed by typing in the website address yourself.

To learn more about identifying and avoiding scams, visit <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/examples-scams...>

Scam alert!

Warning about myGov scam





COFFEE CATCH UP EVERY FRIDAY 10-12



Members and guests are welcome to join us for a chat and enjoy freshly brewed coffee & cake with former service mates. Every Friday from 10 to 12 in The Corey Room, Level 2A, of the Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley Street, Holder.

Please note that the Eddison Day Club is currently meeting on only a very casual basis for lunch at midday Fridays.



Contact Us

Give us a call for more information or access to our services

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