



A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Hon Judith Collins, Minister of Veterans' Affairs

INSIDE

Expressions of Interest - 70th Anniversary of Battle of El Alamein

Eve wins top prize for her letters from Passchendaele

Aaron Hanley – Advisor Commemorations

Entitlements after Death

Burial in Services Cemeteries



VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL EVENT AT MANUKAU MEMORIAL GARDEN ON 21 AUGUST 2011. GEOFF DIXON (LEFT) AND GRAEME GOLDRING (RIGHT) WITH MINISTER OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS JUDITH COLLINS.

It's great to see an increasing number of veterans taking advantage of Case Management in the Community to meet with Veterans' Affairs New Zealand staff and discuss their needs and entitlements.

When I took over as Minister of Veterans' Affairs, one of the first issues raised with me was the need for VANZ to better engage with the veterans they serve.

Many veterans are fiercely independent. Often they don't reach out for help unless they absolutely have to. They also prefer to deal with people face-to-face.

Case Management in the Community saw VANZ staff head out into the communities where veterans live; enabling veterans to meet VANZ case managers and services staff.

The scheme has been a real success. A regular schedule of visits has been established to ensure that all areas of New Zealand are covered with case managers travelling

as far south as Invercargill, and as far north as Kaitiaki and Kerikeri.

For the year ending 30 June 2011, 1841 veterans had attended group meetings and 369 veterans had face to face meeting with case managers.

In recent months, the number of veterans attending Case Management in the Community meetings has steadily increased. In September alone, 268 veterans attended group meetings in Tairua, Coromandel, Gore and Invercargill and of those, 127 veterans had one on one meetings with case managers.

Feedback received from veterans has been extremely positive and Case Management in the Community continues to be an excellent way of ensuring veterans receive the services and allowances they are entitled to.

I invite all veterans to come along to a session near them.

MOVING HOUSE? CHANGING ADDRESS?

Have you moved or are you about to move? If so, please let VANZ know your new contact details so we can keep your details up to date. Please call us on freephone

0800 483 8372 if in New Zealand; 64 4 495 2070 if calling from overseas; or email us at veterans@xtra.co.nz to advise of any changes.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR VANZ NEWS ARE TO BE POSTED TO: THE EDITOR P.O. BOX 5146 WELLINGTON 6145 OR EMAILED TO: [VETERANS@XTRA.CO.NZ](mailto:veterans@xtra.co.nz)

DEATH OF A VETERAN AND ENTITLEMENTS AFTER DEATH

War Disablement Pension (WDP)

A WDP is only payable to a veteran. Once a veteran passes away VANZ must be notified as soon as possible, so that the WDP payments can be stopped. This is in order to prevent a large overpayment and a debt which will need to be recovered from the estate of the veteran.

War Funeral Grant (WFG)

If the death of a veteran is found to be caused directly due to their service, a War Funeral Grant will be paid.

A WFG may be paid in other circumstances; however, there needs to be a surviving spouse, partner or dependant child and eligibility criteria such as income and asset tests will need to be considered.

Veterans Pension (VP)

If the veteran is in receipt of a Veterans Pension, they or their partner may be entitled to a Lump Sum Payment. This is administered

by the Ministry of Social Development and the Veterans Pension Centre. For queries regarding this, please contact 0800 650 656 from within New Zealand.

Surviving Spouse Pension (SSP)

If a Veteran is on 70% or more WDP when they pass away and the Secretary for War Pensions is satisfied that they have a marriage like relationship, the surviving spouse or partner may be entitled to a Surviving Spouse Pension.

If the Veteran was not in receipt of at least 70% WDP at time of death, the surviving spouse/partner can submit additional medical evidence to be assessed to determine if the veteran may have been able to receive a WDP of at least 70%.

Relationships which have been in place for 1 year or less may not be granted a Surviving Spouse Pension.

If the spouse or partner enters into a new

relationship they must contact VANZ to discuss further entitlements.

Parents Allowance

A Parents Allowance may be paid to the surviving spouse or partner of a veteran who has at least one dependant child. If eligible, this may be paid until the child reaches age 16.

Child's Pension

Generally a Child's Pension is paid to the child or children of a deceased veteran. This is paid until the child or children turns 16. There are other special circumstances where a child's pension may be paid

With the exception of the War Funeral Grant, the Allowances and Pensions are paid on a fortnightly basis. These are tax free, and are adjusted with the CPI each year.

Veterans must have qualifying service in order to be eligible for this assistance.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST - 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF BATTLE OF EL ALAMEIN

In the previous issue of VANZ News, the Minister of Veterans' Affairs invited veterans who are looking to attend 70th Anniversary commemorations to make contact about what they would like to attend and what assistance they would like Government help with.

It is expected that there will be a lot of interest around the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein in October 2012, a battle that was a turning point in World War Two and one in which New Zealand troops played a critical role. Veterans' Affairs New Zealand is now seeking Expressions of Interest from veterans who may wish to attend the commemorations in 2012, either in New Zealand or overseas, to gauge the level of interest amongst the

veteran community.

Veterans who may be considering travelling to commemorative activities overseas should be aware that such journeys can be long, arduous and tiring with a significant amount of time spent sitting in aircraft. There will often be time zone changes, interrupted sleep and the keeping of unusual hours. Veterans need to consider their levels of fitness and whether or not they have any potential health problems which could be exacerbated as a result of such travel.

As with all overseas travel, it is important to note the travel advisories that are in place and updated regularly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, through the website www.safetravel.govt.nz.

These advisories are useful in identifying destinations that may be of risk to the traveller and the security environment is certainly one which is taken into consideration when planning attendance by veterans at overseas commemorations.

If you would like to register your interest in attending 70th Anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein commemorations in 2012, contact:

Aaron Hanley
Adviser Commemorations
Veterans' Affairs New Zealand
PO Box 5146
WELLINGTON 6145
Freephone: 0800 483 8372
Email: veterans@xtra.co.nz



BURIAL IN SERVICES CEMETERIES WITHIN NEW ZEALAND

In recent weeks, Veterans' Affairs New Zealand has received a number of enquiries regarding eligibility for burial in our Services Cemeteries, of which there are 183 throughout New Zealand.

The underlying principle of burial in a Services Cemetery is that the service person must have served in a war or an emergency that has been gazetted by the Minister of Veterans' Affairs under Section 15 (2) of the Burial and Cremations Act 1964.

For post World War II service eligibility for burial is restricted to operational service in theatres where New Zealand service personnel have served. This includes Korea, Malaya, Vietnam, as well as specific peacekeeping missions in Africa, the former Yugoslavia, East Timor, Afghanistan and the Middle East.

Ex-service personnel who served in New Zealand, in the Regular Forces, the Territorial Forces or under the Compulsory Military Training and National Services scheme

and who were not deployed into a specified operational area, are not eligible for interment in Services Cemeteries.

Merchant seamen who joined the Merchant Navy after the end of World War II are also not eligible for interment in a Services Cemetery.

Allied Forces

The same Service criteria applies in respect of Allied Forces. To that end, former British Forces personnel who served with the British Army on the Rhine (BAOR) after 1948, and had no operational service, are not eligible for burial in New Zealand Services Cemeteries. The same holds for former British Service personnel who had service during the Palestine campaign, the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya and the Suez crisis only.

Similarly, members of the Dutch Armed Forces who served in Indonesia immediately after World War II are not eligible.

If you have any queries about eligibility for burial in a Services Cemetery, additional information can be obtained by ringing Veterans' Affairs New Zealand on freephone 0800 483 8372, emailing us at veterans@xtra.co.nz or by referring to the Veterans' Affairs New Zealand website (www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz)

Memorials

The military character of the cemeteries is reflected in the uniformity and standardisation of the memorials. To make sure that the standard is maintained, and that the price charged is fair, Veterans' Affairs New Zealand looks after the ordering, manufacture and installation of memorials into our Services Cemeteries. Privately made memorials are not allowed to be placed in a Services Cemetery as this violates the principles of the Services Cemetery, which are:

- each of the dead would be commemorated individually by name;
- the memorials would be permanent and uniform; and
- there should be no distinction made on account of military or civil rank, race or creed.

EVE WINS TOP PRIZE FOR HER LETTERS FROM PASSCHENDAELE



A collection of letters from a soldier at Passchendaele to his family has won Whangaparaoa College student, Eve Bain, 17, first prize in the inaugural Battle of Passchendaele Multi-Media Competition.

Eve was presented with a \$2,000 grant towards her tertiary study by the Minister of Veterans' Affairs Hon Judith Collins at a function marking the 94th anniversary of the

Battle of Passchendaele, at the Auckland War Memorial Museum on 12 October.

The competition, *Why don't we remember the Battle of Passchendaele*, is sponsored by the Minister of Veterans' Affairs and coordinated by Veterans' Affairs New Zealand. It will be an annual event for Year 13 students. Entries could take the form of an artistic representation, essay, diary, letters, music,

poetry, short film or web feature.

The competition aims to commemorate the Battle of Passchendaele which was fought in Belgium as part of the Allied offensive on the Western Front in 1917.

On 12 October 1917 New Zealand suffered its greatest loss of life in a single day in New Zealand military history.

"The battle, in which 2700 New Zealanders were listed as killed, wounded or missing in just two hours, was a monumental loss to this country. This competition aims to ensure that we never forget the sacrifice these soldiers made on that terrible day," Ms Collins said.

"Eve's entry, *For the Cause of the Empire*, is a powerful tribute to those that sacrificed their lives during the battle," she said.

Eve said she wanted to show the human side of the battle with her entry. "I wanted to provide a holistic approach showing all different sides and the ongoing nature of the effects of war."

Eve will use her prize money towards her tertiary study at Victoria University next year where she plans to study law and political science.

AARON HANLEY – ADVISOR COMMEMORATIONS



Based at the Veterans' Affairs Hamilton office, Aaron Hanley is VANZ's Advisor, Commemorations. His role involves assisting in organising commemorative events and reunions, and facilitating veteran attendance at activities such as the national Battle of Crete commemorations, held in Wellington in May 2011. Aaron also administers the Minister of Veterans' Affairs Commemorations Discretionary Fund. The Discretionary Fund provides a one-off grant for eligible veterans who wish to revisit the battlefields on which they fought, with the intention that they may achieve a sense of reconciliation with their experience.

Aaron says he gets a lot of satisfaction from assisting veterans to obtain the grants which allow them (either individually or in groups), to make peace with the past and balance their future. "I like being able to give something

back to the veterans. Many carry a long term burden as a result of their Service, so it's great to be able to proactively help them revisit their battle sites and achieve a sense of closure." Aaron says.

Aaron says a highlight of his time working at VANZ was accompanying the official NZ Contingent to 2009 ANZAC commemorations at Gallipoli. In previous years he had attended local national services, however to have the opportunity and privilege of attending the Dawn Service at Gallipoli itself with thousands of others proved an unforgettable experience. He said the lack of sleep and cold temperatures on the night of the 24 April gave him a real appreciation of the plight of those who fought there, and put "exhausting" into perspective especially since he was not in fear of losing his life and knew his family could expect him home.