

VANZ News



A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

TO COMMEMORATE THE 95TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GALLIPOLI LANDINGS TWO VERY DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE WILL COME TOGETHER TO REMEMBER THIS EVENT THAT DID MORE THAN ANY OTHER TO DEFINE THE ANZAC CHARACTER. ONE GROUP ARE VETERANS, THAT RANGE IN AGE FROM THEIR 20S TO THEIR 80S, WHO HAVE SERVED NEW ZEALAND IN VARIOUS CONFLICTS AND PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS OVERSEAS.

The other will be young people – most around 17. They are in their last year of high school.

The veterans, some selected by ballot and others members of the serving personnel accompanying the contingent, and students, selected as a result of a multi-media competition – 42 in total – will be part of the official New Zealand contingent at this year's Anzac commemorations. They will be joined by three representatives of the Cadet Force and the National Bank RSA Cyril Bassett VC Speech Competition winner and the National President of the RNZRSA.

As the 95th anniversary of the Gallipoli Landings, the commemorations at Anzac Cove will be a significant event shared by a large number of New Zealanders.

Both the veterans and the students have a special stake in the commemorations.

Each of the veterans chosen by ballot has a family connection to the Gallipoli campaign. To visit Gallipoli will be to set foot on the soil on which their forebears lived and fought.

The students, from schools around the country, were winners of a contest organised by VANZ. They were invited to prepare a project on the impact Gallipoli had on New Zealand society. The entries were of

a very high standard.

These young people represent the next generation of New Zealanders who will carry forward the story of Gallipoli and the memory of the ANZACs.

By visiting Gallipoli, they will gain a greater understanding of the role of the conflict in our history, the fighting spirit of the ANZACs and the terrible cost of war.

Gallipoli has also come to symbolise New Zealand's emerging nationhood. Even today, the events on that far-off stretch of coastline provide a common historical reference point for all New Zealanders.

The ANZACs displayed the qualities that all of us as New Zealanders aspire to – courage, humility, humanity, compassion and the willingness to stand and fight for what we believe in and to defend our way of life.

Their stories help us understand who



we are and where we came from, and provide lessons from the past that help us build a better and more peaceful future.

Almost a century after the first ANZACs set foot on the shores of Anzac Cove, the conflict still has the power to bring all New Zealanders - young and old, military and civilian - together.

TRAVEL CONCESSIONS

The travel concession regulations have been amended. Veterans' Affairs New Zealand will be writing to everyone who is entitled to a travel concession advising when the changes come into force and how the changes will affect them.

Please do not write to Veterans' Affairs New Zealand at this time. Any queries you may have once you receive your letter, should be advised in the first instance to the Enquiry Line on freephone 0800 483 8372.

INSIDE

Case Management on the West Coast

Ministers Reading at 95th anniversary of Gallipoli

The Decision Making Process for War Disablement Pensions

Ministerial International Forum

Frequently asked questions

War pensions and allowances increase

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR VANZ NEWS ARE TO BE POSTED TO: THE EDITOR P.O BOX 5146 WELLINGTON 6145 OR EMAILED TO: VETERANS@XTRA.CO.NZ



JULIE ADAMS *Case Manager profile*

Julie Adams has been a case manager in the Wellington case management team at VANZ for two years. Before that she was a case manager at Work and Income. Julie has also worked as a diversional therapist.

Julie's father served in the UK Forces in World War Two and was at El Alamein.

Her work as a case manager has given her a better understanding of what her father went through, and the issues he faced when he returned home.

Julie is also an amateur military historian

and enjoys the stories veterans tell her about their experiences. They give a human face to the history she has read about.

Julie shoots for a hobby and has had some interesting conversations with the veterans she deals with about different types of weapons.

Being a case manager is a diverse job and Julie deals with a variety of people with a range of issues. She says she enjoys being able to help them with their problems and being able to make a difference to people's lives.

CASE MANAGEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY ON THE WEST COAST

By Julie Adams

I've been asked to write a few brief words about the Case Management in the Community visit to the West Coast before Christmas.

It was a 0430 start to catch the flight from Wellington to Christchurch with my Team Leader, Wendy.

After changing planes in Christchurch we landed in a rainy Hokitika for our first meeting at the local RSA where we were warmly welcomed by Lyall Delore. We each gave an outline of our roles within the organisation and answered some general questions. After lunch we drove to the Greymouth RSA where

we had some individual meetings scheduled. Again, a very warm welcome, this time from Rick Cairney.

We stayed in Greymouth with an early start for the scenic drive to our last meeting in Westport where we were met by Peter Rowsell, the Welfare Officer. Meetings were held followed by two home visits in the area. One of the home visits was to a veteran case managed by me who it was a real pleasure to meet.

Wendy and I had two very long days but it was well worth it. The veterans we met were very welcoming and seemed to really appreciate the opportunity to meet with us face to face.



For our part, we thoroughly enjoyed meeting them and their west coast humour was great. The west coast is a truly beautiful part of the country which I'd never been to before and even the weather was kind. Well, most of the time.



Minister's Reading at Commemoration of the 95th Anniversary of the Gallipoli Landings

LT COL WILLIAM MALONE'S LAST LETTER TO HIS WIFE

Quinn's Post – 8.10 pm 5.8.15

My sweetheart

In less than 2 Hours we move off to a valley, where we will be up all night and tomorrow in readiness for a big attack which will start tomorrow night. Everything promises well and victory should rest with us. God grant it so and that our casualties will not be too heavy I expect to go thro' all right but dear wife if anything untoward happens to me you must not grieve too much – there are our dear children to be brought up. You know how I love and have loved you, and we have had many years of great happiness together.

If at any time in the past I seemed absorbed in 'affairs' it was that I might make proper provision for you and the children. That was due from me. It is true that perhaps I overdid it somewhat. I believe now that I did, but did not see it at the time. I regret very much now that it was so and that I lost more happiness than I need have done. You must forgive me. Forgive also anything unkindly or hard that I may have done or said in the past.

I have made a will and it is at the office at Stratford. I think it was justly drawn. Anyway I intended it so to be. I hope and think that the provision for you and the children will keep you and them in ease and comfort. I

know that you will never forget me or let the dear children do so.

I am prepared for death and hope that God will have forgiven me all my sins.

My desire for life so that I may see and be with you again could not be greater, but I have only done what every man was bound to do in our country's need. It has been a great consolation to me that you approved my action. The sacrifice was really yours. May you be consoled and rewarded by our dear Lord.

Your loving husband

William G. Malone

THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS FOR WAR DISABLEMENT PENSIONS

The War Disablement Pension is a compensatory payment made to veterans for the impact of any disability which is found to be related to their service. It is a lifetime payment and is not taxable.

The award of a War Disablement Pension also confers entitlement to funding for treatment of the accepted disability, including the provision of aids and appliances.

The decision making process for War Disablement Pension sits under the War Pensions Group within VANZ.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND DECISION PROCESS:

The War Disablement Pension decision making is specified in the War Pensions Act 1954. and consists of two independent functions the :

- War Pensions Claims Panels; and
- National Review Officers

WHO IS ON THE WAR PENSIONS CLAIMS PANEL

The War Pensions Claims Panels (Claims Panels) are made up of an employee of VANZ and a nominated member of the RNZRSA appointed by the Secretary for War Pensions. Different War Pensions Claims Panels meet each week to consider claims.

WHAT DO THE WAR PENSIONS CLAIMS PANELS DO :

When a claim is received by the War Pensions Claims Panel (Claims Panel) the first decision that needs to be made is whether the claimant has eligible Service. If the claimant does not have eligible Service the claim is declined.

Then the Claims Panel need to decide whether the claimant currently has the condition being claimed for. The War Pensions Act 1954 requires that the condition being claimed is a condition the claimant currently suffers from. If the claimant does not currently have the condition the claim is declined.

The Claims Panel then consider the evidence provided with the claim so that they can make a decision as to whether the condition being claimed is service related. The evidence must be reasonable and have some probative value. That means that the evidence must be a believable and demonstrate a plausible

reason why the condition and any resulting disability is related to service.

In addition to the medical evidence and any other documents provided, the Claims Panel also look at Service documents and consider the role undertaken by the claimant when they were in Service and the environment they served in. If the Claims Panel requires more information to help them make a decision they are able to seek other evidence as appropriate.

Every decision of a claims panel must be unanimous. If there is no unanimity between the claims panel members on any claim each member is required to make a written record of their opinion and the reasons for the opinion and forward them to the National Review Officer for a decision.

If the evidence can be substantiated then it is presumed that the condition being claimed is possibly or probably attributable to or aggravated by Service, unless there is sufficient evidence to show that the condition was due entirely to other causes. When the claim is accepted a disability is awarded and a percentage given using the American Medical Association's 'Guide to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment'.

The decisions of the Claims Panel are normally provided to the veteran within 10 working days of the decision being made by the Claims Panel.

HOW CAN YOU HELP US ENSURE APPLICATIONS ARE PROCESSED PROMPTLY

Currently many applications are being returned to veterans because they have not been fully completed. This delays the process of referring the application to the Claims Panel. You can help us by answering all the questions in the application form signing it in the required areas and ensuring all supporting documentation is attached. Information on its completion can also be obtained from a Case Manager at VANZ.

NATIONAL REVIEW OFFICER

The National Review Officer (NRO) is an employee of VANZ. The role of the NRO is to undertake an independent review of a claim when a veteran is not happy with the decision made by the Claims Panel. The powers of the NRO are set out in Section 15 D of the War Pensions Act 1954. The NRO acts independently of the Claims Panel.

WAR PENSION APPEAL BOARD

The War Pension Appeal Board is an independent body whose members are appointed by the Minister. There are no more than 4 members of the Appeal Board two of whom are medical practitioners, one of those is nominated by the RNZRSA.

VANZ provides secretarial support to the Appeal Board.

MINISTERIAL INTERNATIONAL FORUM

In February Veterans' Affairs Minister Judith Collins hosted Veterans' Affairs Ministers from Australia and Canada and a representative of the United States Secretary for Veterans Affairs for discussions in Wellington. The theme of the discussion was legislative reform, and the keynote address was made by the Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Palmer, President of the Law Commission. The visiting Ministers each made presentations that covered



recent improvements and initiatives around veterans' issues in their countries. The Ministers resolved to continue co-operation between the countries.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Here are some answers to questions VANZ is often asked by veterans:

IF I DIE BEFORE MY WIFE, DOES SHE GET MY PENSION? WHAT OTHER ENTITLEMENTS ARE THERE FOR HER?

The War Disablement Pension is a pension for veterans only. When the veteran passes away, the entitlement ends.

The surviving spouse, civil union partner or de facto partner, who was in a relationship with the veteran at the time of the veteran's death, may be eligible for a Surviving Spouse pension if:

- the death of the late veteran is deemed to be attributable to his or her service as a member of the Forces; or
- the veteran was in receipt of a permanent War Disablement Pension of 70% or more at the time of death; or
- it is deemed that the veteran could have received a permanent pension of 70% or more had he or she not died.

If VANZ was providing home help to the veteran before they die then VANZ may be able to continue to cover these costs for 6 months following the death of the veteran. This should be discussed with the veteran's case manager.

VANZ may also be able to assist with funeral costs for the veteran, if the veteran's death was due to service or, if the veteran was receiving, or could have been receiving 70% permanent pension at the time of death.

If the veteran has no entitlement to a funeral grant under these categories then they may be entitled to a funeral grant if they died in indigent circumstances. This means that at the time of death the veteran had limited income. In order to pay a funeral grant under this category, assets and income need to be assessed.

CAN I BE BURIED WITH MY HUSBAND IN THE SERVICES CEMETERY?

Yes

CAN YOU SEND ME MY SERVICE RECORDS?

Service records can be requested directly from New Zealand Defence Force Archives. These are issued free of charge if they are your own records. To obtain your service records write to: NZDF Archives, Personnel Enquiries, Trentham Military Camp, Private Bag 905, Upper Hutt, or fax 04 527 5275. All requests must be in writing. Please include the full name that you served under, your service number if you have it, which service you were with and dates you were enlisted. Or complete the online form on the NZDF website www.nzdf.mil.nz, then go into personnel records/NZDF Archives.

WILL YOU PAY FOR MY HEARING AID BATTERIES?

If you have hearing aids provided by VANZ, you will automatically be paid a weekly battery allowance as part of your War Disablement Pension.

I NEED TO SEE A PODIATRIST BUT IT ISN'T ON MY TREATMENT CARD - CAN YOU HELP?

If you need to see a Podiatrist, please tell your case manager. They will advise whether or not VANZ can assist with the cost.

I HAVE SKIN CANCER AS AN ACCEPTED CONDITION AND NEED TO SEE A SKIN SPECIALIST - DO I NEED PRIOR APPROVAL?

If you need treatment for an accepted condition and the treatment is likely to cost less than \$2,500 you do not need prior approval.

If the treatment is likely to cost more than \$2,500, or if you will be placed under general anaesthetic for the treatment you need prior approval. Please contact your case manager. They will be able to give approval, or advise if further information is required.

I'M MOVING TO AUSTRALIA - WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF MY AFFAIRS THERE?

VANZ will continue to pay your War Disablement Pension. You can continue to work through your VANZ case manager or work through the Australian Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). DVA liaises with New Zealand veterans who live in Australia on VANZ behalf.

Before you leave we recommend that you contact International Services at MSD to discuss what happens to your Veterans Pension, NZ Super or other entitlements.

WAR PENSIONS AND ALLOWANCES INCREASE

All War Pensions and Allowances available to Veterans increased from 1 April 2010 as part of the annual cost of living adjustment.

The increase of 1.96 per cent equates to the increase in the cost of living for the year to December 2009, as measured by the Consumers Price Index (CPI). It recognises

that the increased cost of living for veterans is a concern.

"Veterans who rely on their pension and allowances to help fund healthcare and other necessities shouldn't be disadvantaged by the increased cost of living," Minister of Veterans Affairs Judith Collins said.

Examples of the increases are:

- A veteran on a 100 per cent War Disablement Pension will now receive a tax free payment of \$191.86 per week.
- A Surviving Spouse's Pension will increase to \$141.52 per week, tax free.