

VETERANS RETREATS OF WA INC

MEENTHEENA

Address: 515 Rowley Road, Forrestdale WA 6112..
Website: www.vrwa-meentheena.org
Incorporated in Western Australia: 9th June 2010
Cert. of Inc.: A1014796U

Email: veteransretreats.wa.inc@gmail.com

ABN: 56922714007

Meentheena Newsletter January 2022



Welcome to 2022 and our March newsy letter.

We expect to keep our members up to date with regular newsletters letting you know the progress of the Association. If members have any interesting news or articles to share, please send to the Office of VRWA veteransretreats.wa.inc@gmail.com

Please make sure that your contact details are correct. It would be appreciated by me if you let me know that you have received our newsletters.

If you know of anyone who has changed addresses, could you kindly ask them to contact me at The Office of VRWA.

Very Important (The Treasurer is watching).

The new committee had their 2nd meeting on 18/1/22 and is functioning very well. We are very excited to tell you that there are works in progress for the cooler months & that we are moving forward positively. We ask you to support us in our future endeavours by renewing your membership subscription if you haven't already.

Membership subs were due on 1st January for the 2022 year. A big thank you to all the members who have renewed their membership this year. Your continued support is very much valued and appreciated.

Membership fees (\$25) per annum.

There is NO NEED FOR EXISTING MEMBERS TO FILL OUT A NEW FORM when renewing your membership for 2022.

You can direct credit using internet banking to our bank account making sure you put your name on the bank transfer:

Australian Military Bank BSB: 642170 A/C: 100269533.

Otherwise, payment can be made via a cheque to '***Veterans Retreat***'

Please forward your cheque to:

The Office of VRWA

515 Rowley Road

Forrestdale WA 6112

Please ensure a return name and address is on the reverse side of the envelope.

One of our members (Julie), suggested that we put a phone number of a committee member who can be contacted about membership. My Phone Number (Barb Whyte) is 0438 692 187

If members don't do internet banking like Dale & Julie, it's better to send a cheque for renewal rather than bank the renewal, at another bank because the bank charges Meentheena \$6.50 service fee. The other banks have stopped putting depositor's names on the transfer & VRWA doesn't know who has renewed!

Please note that email is our preferred method of communication.

If your details have changed, please notify us so we can keep your records up to date and keep you in the loop. Thank you to the members who have done this.

If there is a spouse/partner or friend wishing to join, a membership form will need to be completed. It can be sent via post to the office address (as above) or via email to:

veteransretreats.wa.inc@gmail.com

The new membership form can be downloaded from the website:

Our website has been updated and is up and running with a link to our Facebook page. Thanks to Brodie Banks (our web master), Les McGoldrick and Jarrad Tierney. Go to www.vrwa-meentheena.org or Google: Veterans Retreat Meentheena, Then click on Meentheena.

We look forward to this year enjoying and promoting the retreat.

As most of our members know Meentheena is a retreat where anyone can go for peace and tranquillity. It's relaxing and calming atmosphere influences general wellbeing & mental health for our veterans who suffer with PTSD. Our aim has always been to create a comfortable place catering for the needs of our members.

We also would like to thank all businesses and donors for the ongoing support throughout the year. Without this support, the facilities at camp could not happen.

It is important that the retreat keeps going not only for us older Vets, but as a retreat for ALL members of all the forces: Army, Navy, Airforce, Police, Fire, SES, Ambulance etc. We would love to see some younger veterans come on board in all areas of the running of the Retreat. Please promote when and where you can.

Well February came & went! My time flies when you throw a clock out of the window!

Rain, Rain Didn't Go Away



The Marble Bar area has had a huge amount of rainfall since the end of January & during February. After heavy rain late Jan & early Feb, Yandi Coogina Creek flooded. This creek is east on the way into Marble Bar. A truck was washed off the floodway and bogged on the edge.

Photo is of Our creek coming into the camp.

More rain arrived, Rippon Hills Road was closed and the Nullagine River swiftly flowed past our camp sites of The Paperbarks and Tranquillity Pool. It's very lucky that our Eco Loo was up at the main campsite and wasn't flushed down the river again like last year!!

Thanks must go to Limestone Station & Ian Armitt who rescued & repaired the upside down toilet, so that it could be used during 2021. **Photos of the Nullagine in flood** taken by Jarrad Tierney who was camp host at the time.



An important message from Jarrad. “Be careful of flood waters. They may look low and appear not to be flowing, but don’t be deceived by the outside appearance.

A very big thank you needs to go to Wendy McWhirter-Brooks, who is the Vice President of East Pilbara Shire. She has been helping with phone connections at the camp. The camp uses the Spinifex Ridge Mine tower which is privately owned. Yarrie Station was servicing the generator that runs the tower. Thanks to Wendy, Telstra is servicing the generator fortnightly.

Camp Hosts

Mark Newnham 1st March -31st March

Peter Whyte & Les McGoldrick 1st – middle of April

Peter & Lorraine Tuia middle of April – end of June

If you can help us with hosting after the above dates, it would really be appreciated. Contact Gary Fernihough, gary.fernihough@bigpond.com Ph. 0407776318

Camp Hosting

Now members, as you are starting to plan your travels, packing up your caravans, camper trailers, rowing your boats and riding your bicycles, don’t forget that you are always welcome at Meentheena.

When you camp host at Meentheena, there is free accommodation, but hosting is a responsibility as there are duties and procedures that need to be followed. Please contact Gary Fernihough by emailing him gary.fernihough@bigpond.com and booking your

preferred dates. We do suggest that a minimum of 2 weeks or more is required. Couples are very welcome.

As the camp has no rubbish service, we ask campers to take their rubbish with them when they leave. **NO** rubbish is allowed to be burnt on site.

Thank you to Ken Hunter who organised a donation of solar batteries.

A Story from last year.

SPECIAL DELIVERY – COUNTRY STYLE!

Oh no! The satellite TV box isn't working. This is serious.

The 2021 “Delayed Olympics” are taking place and some of our campers have been enjoying the broadcasts and sharing all the news. On a slightly more local front the AFL season is in full swing and as our campers come and go so do the allegiances to various teams and many “happy hours” are spent joshing and cheering during the games. Of course the soccer World Cup, rugby of all kinds and car racing are all popular. “The Bold and the Beautiful” are present both on the screen and in the chairs that filled our tiny “theatre”.

What to do? This is not my skill area. Look in the manual. Check connections. Push buttons. Success! Not for long. Gone again. New error message. Previous strategy fails. Campers with and without skills have a go. Box flatlines. Stress and disappointment flares among us all.

There's a local guy says someone. Local? We are at Meentheena! Yep. He's just in Port Hedland. There's a card around somewhere.

I make the necessary call, verify the box needs major surgery and an arrangement is made. He will be in the area in a couple of days. He will ring when he is leaving Marble Bar so we can meet him at the Nullagine turn off to trade our box for a new one. Just a small problem here as you are probably thinking. It takes quite a bit longer to get from Meentheena to the turn off than from Marble Bar. During a confirmation call from him I try for longer notice but he is happy with the arrangement.

On the appointed day the troopy is ready to go. Loaded with the old box, two enthusiastic men standing by, (both members, one of whom is also on our committee), the keys in the ignition. Inside knowledge says our saviour - this is really important stuff! – drives a powerful vehicle and doesn't have time to read speed limit signs. The call comes. Our boys hit the seats and take off in a shower of gravel and dust, sliding out onto the track. We wring our hands and hope they make it in time. A camper comes to express discontent about the

dust and the hoons. I explain the situation and he joins us for a coffee while we await the outcome.

The boys sit forward in their seats on high alert, urging the troopy over the kilometres to the rendezvous. The turn off is in sight. Not quite there they see a figure leap from the bushes and run to a vehicle. It waves its' arms wildly in some kind of semaphore before jumping into the vehicle and disappearing in a cloud of dust. Completely deflated the boys ask each other "Was that him?" "I don't know." "What was he doing in the bushes?" "I don't know." They wait a few minutes. It has to have been him. "I'm going to have a look around." The boys take a walk and a look around. There, sitting on the ground behind a bush is a Satellite TV box!

Good humour and smiles restored they head into town before returning to us bearing the trophy from their expedition. They are greeted like returning heroes and we all stand around to see the miracle of images return to our television and feel the stress flow out of our minds and bodies as it is replaced by gentle bickering about what to watch first.

(Thanks to **The Pay TV Guy, Port Hedland.** We are sincerely grateful for your help and I hope you will forgive us any poetic license in this snippet from life in the bush.)

Vehicle Maintenance

Anyone with mechanical experience is needed, as Barry Boyle has serviced the vehicles for the camp since the Association began. He is now physically unable to execute this work. If there is anyone who could take on this role, please offer your help and contact Barry. Malbaz100@gmail.com He is very willing to assist with consultation on any issues.

Marble Bar Races

The race meeting is always held on the 1st Saturday of July.

In past years, having a hamburger, bacon & egg burger and sausage sizzle food stall at the races (yum!) has been our major fund-raising event, except in 2020, & 2021 when the races were cancelled due to covid restrictions.

We are looking forward to the 2022 Marble Bar Races, but at the moment it's WAIT & SEE what happens in a few month's time. If anyone you know has catering skills, we will need someone who could prepare for the running of this stall. If anyone is at all interested, please communicate with the committee, so we can tell you what we have done in the past and work with you to achieve success in 2022.



It's a fantastic local event and you will be ensured of a great time.

However, if the races are cancelled again, there are other things to see and do in the area, such as visiting the beautiful Carawine Gorge.

It's a day trip from the camp, so requires you to take a picnic lunch. On the way, you could visit the old mine which is about 9 kms on the left on the dirt road to Telfer.

Upon asking at the camp, there are other places to visit.

Newsletter Funnies

I hope this poem has the same effect on you as it did on me. If so, then publishing it was worth the effort. This is a beautiful poem about growing older. **Walk With Me While I Age.**

Oh Dear? I forgot the words!!

European Crisis, by John Cleese

UK RAISES ALERT LEVEL – John Cleese

The English are feeling the pinch in relation to recent Russian threats and have therefore raised their security level from “Miffed” to “Peeved.” Soon, though, security levels may be raised yet again to “Irritated” or even “A Bit Cross.” The English have not been “A Bit Cross” since the blitz in 1940 when tea supplies nearly ran out. The Russians have been re-categorized from “Tiresome” to “A Bloody Nuisance.” The last time the British issued a “Bloody Nuisance” warning level was in 1588, when threatened by the Spanish Armada.

The Scots have raised their threat level from “Pissed Off” to “Let’s Get the Bastards.” They don’t have any other levels. This is the reason they have been used on the front line of the British army for the last 300 years.

The French government announced yesterday that it has raised its terror alert level from “Run” to “Hide.” The only two higher levels in France are “Collaborate” and “Surrender.” The rise was precipitated by a recent fire that destroyed France’s white flag factory, effectively paralyzing the country’s military capability.

Italy has increased the alert level from “Shout Loudly and Excitedly” to “Elaborate Military Posturing.” Two more levels remain: “Ineffective Combat Operations” and “Change Sides.”

The Germans have increased their alert state from “Disdainful Arrogance” to “Dress in Uniform and Sing Marching Songs.” They also have two higher levels: “Invade a Neighbour” and “Lose.”

Belgians, on the other hand, are all on holiday as usual; the only threat they are worried about is NATO pulling out of Brussels.

The Spanish are all excited to see their new submarines ready to deploy. These beautifully designed subs have glass bottoms so the new Spanish navy can get a really good look at the old Spanish navy.

Australia, meanwhile, has raised its security level from “No worries” to “She’ll be alright, Mate.” Two more escalation levels remain: “Crikey! I think we’ll need to cancel the barbie this weekend!” and “The barbie is cancelled.” So far, no situation has ever warranted use of the final escalation level.

John Cleese – British writer, actor and tall person

Best wishes to everyone

Barb Whyte