

VETERANS RETREATS OF WA INC

# MEENTHEENA

Address: 515 Rowley Road, Forrestdale WA 6112..  
Website: [www.vrwa-meentheena.org](http://www.vrwa-meentheena.org)  
Incorporated in Western Australia: 9<sup>th</sup> June 2010  
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## Meentheena Newsletter April 2022



Welcome to 2022 and our April 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](mailto:veteransretreats.wa.inc@gmail.com)

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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.**

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

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](mailto: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. **Meentheena Veterans Retreat of WA Inc.** Go to [www.vrwa-meentheena.org](http://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.

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.

### **Rain, Rain Didn't Go Away**

The Marble Bar area had a huge amount of rain at the end of January and in February. The Nullagine River flowed again this year.



**Our creek crossing into the camp after the heavy rain**



**Creek crossing after Mark repaired it**



Roads and grassed areas at the camp. Mark Newnham has been very busy repairing all the roads into and around the camp. **All photos this time sent by Mark.**

Mark has done a magnificent job as camp host. He has been weeding the camp area, maintaining the grassed areas, tidying up & cleaning the facilities. He pulled up the bore casing & got the bore running again as well as managing the battery bank for power.



Does anyone know who this old bloke is mowing the lawn outside the camp kitchen? His wife says he won't mow the lawn at home!

### **Camp Hosts**

Peter Whyte & Les McGoldrick 1<sup>st</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>April

Peter & Lorraine Tuia 10<sup>th</sup>April-10<sup>th</sup>May

Peter Whyte 9<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>May

Ian Armitt 14<sup>th</sup> May-4<sup>th</sup>June

Barry Wynne & Margaret Colley 4<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>June

Peter & Barb Whyte 29<sup>th</sup>June-31<sup>st</sup>July

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

### **A Story from 1932.**

#### **COUNTRY STYLE 4 HOOF RIDE OF 1000 KMS!**

A 9-year-old boy, Lennie Gwyther was the son of a World War 1 hero, Leo Tennyson Gwyther. Leo had chronic war injuries and had broken his leg on their farm in South Leongatha which is in south-eastern Victoria. While Leo was in hospital, Lennie completed the ploughing and saved the crops. Leo was very grateful, so he asked his son how he could reward him. Lennie had read about the Sydney Harbour Bridge. He really wanted to see it and be on the spot for it's opening. With his parents' approval, he set off on an epic journey of 1000kms to Sydney, riding his pony, Ginger Mick. Lennie had planned his route, stopping at towns such as Lakes Entrance, Cooma and Bowral. He followed bush tracks and barely formed dirt roads east to Cann River, then north to Canberra. The courageous pair survived a deranged tramp jumping out at them a few days into their ride, a bushfire near Traralgon, heavy rain and fogs.

Canberra was a very new town where sheep grazed in front of (now the Old ) Parliament House. Lennie shook Prime Minister Joseph Lyons' hand and had tea in the members' refreshment rooms, while Ginger Mick shared grass with the sheep.

When the pair arrived in Sydney's Martin Place, they were mobbed by the public and the press. Lennie met the lord mayor of Sydney at the Town Hall, visited Circular Quay, Bondi Beach and rode an elephant at Taronga Zoo.

On March 19, 1932, Lennie and Ginger Mick took part in the Sydney Harbour Bridge opening pageant, crossing the bridge among indigenous groups, war veterans, school children and bridge workers. He saluted the Governor General and the NSW premier.

On March 21, at a match at the Sydney Cricket Ground, Lennie met Donald Bradman, who gave him a signed cricket bat.

Lennie rode Ginger Mick home arriving on June 10, where a huge crowd turned out in the main street of Leongatha.

It was an amazing feat for a young boy and his pony!

Ginger Mick lived to the age of 27 years on the Gwyther farm. Lennie married, had a daughter, and settled in Melbourne. He worked as an experimental engineer at General Motors' Holden plant at Fisherman's Bend. He was a keen fisherman, astronomer, ice skater and sailor. At the time of his death aged 70 in 1992, he was building a yacht which he planned to sail to Tasmania and New Zealand.

## 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](mailto:Malbaz100@gmail.com) He is very willing to assist with consultation on any issues.

VRWA Meentheena will **not** be running a food stall at the Marble Bar Races this year.

However, if the races are cancelled again, there are other things to see and do in the area, such as visiting the beautiful Carrawine 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. There are other places to visit in the surrounding areas.

Best wishes to everyone

Barb Whyte

