



December 2009

Welcome to the latest issue of e-News, keeping you up-to-date with news from the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

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Christmas and New Year arrangements

The Department of Veterans' Affairs, including all Veterans Affairs Network and Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) offices, will be closed from Friday, 25 December 2009 to Friday, 1 January 2010. All offices will reopen on Monday, 4 January 2010.

Under DVA's after-hours arrangements, many key services will still be available during this period. For more information or to download a copy of the DVA Christmas arrangements poster visit the [DVA website](#).

Please also note, DVA offices will be closed for Australia Day on Tuesday, 26 January 2010.

New Repatriation Health Cards in 2010

DVA will be rolling out new and improved Repatriation Health Cards to all existing cardholders commencing in March 2010.

The new cards will have enhanced security features including magnetic strip data, micro printing and a DVA registered hologram making unauthorised reproduction more difficult.

Importantly, DVA clients who reside overseas will have their card eligibility reinstated and Gold and White cards will now be issued to all eligible clients living overseas.

For more information visit the [DVA treatment cards website](#)

Australians diggers laid to rest in PNG

The remains of four Australians who fell during the Second World War were laid to rest at Bomana War Cemetery in PNG on 1 December.

The families of Lance Sergeant James Garrard Wheeler and Lieutenant Talbot Logan were present as the remains of their loved ones and two unknown Australian soldiers were buried with full military honours.

The soldiers' remains were recovered from battlefields around Buna, Sanananda and Popondetta. An Army investigation team positively identified two sets of remains, and those unidentified have been buried under a headstone marked "An Unknown Australian Soldier of the 1939-1945 War." In place of the personal inscription placed by families on the headstones of identified burials, the headstones of unknown burials contain the inscription "Known Unto God".

Images are available at www.defence.gov.au/media/download. For more information on Australian service in Papua New Guinea during the Second World War visit www.w2australia.gov.au/beachheads/.

Saluting Their Service grant recipients announced

Projects honouring Australia's wartime heritage recently received \$303,708 in funding approved by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, under the Australian Government's *Saluting Their Service* Commemorative grants program.

The funding will go towards 110 projects helping communities across the nation honour and commemorate our wartime history.

For more information visit the [DVA grants website online](#).

Overseas memorial database goes live

Planning trips to Australian memorials while overseas, including the Australian War Memorial in London and the 1943 Kokoda Track Memorial, is now much easier with the help of a new online resource.

The *Overseas Memorials Search* <http://memorials.dva.gov.au> includes details and photographs of more than 110 official and privately constructed overseas memorials which honour Australian service across the globe.

The database will continue to grow as data is collected. Those who have information about the location or details of overseas memorials are invited to contact the Department's Office of Australian War Graves at wargraves@dva.gov.au.

New DVA mailing address

DVA is moving to a new standard mailing address across the nation. All mail sent to DVA can now be addressed to GPO Box 9998, IN YOUR CAPITAL CITY.

This change will ensure a more efficient and effective mailing system for all. Mail sent to old post office addresses will still arrive safely.

Separate post office box addresses for individual [VAN](#) and [VVCS](#) offices, the [OAWG](#), [RMA](#), [VRB](#), [DSHI](#) and [DSHL](#) will remain unchanged. To access contact details for all DVA offices visit the [DVA website](#).

Upcoming Anniversaries

- 20 December – [Last Australian troops depart Gallipoli](#)
 - 11 January – [Declaration of cessation of Australian hostilities in Vietnam](#)
 - 28 January – [Beginning of Sandakan Death Marches](#)
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Publications

- VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service newsletter – [November 2009](#) (PDF 798 Kb)
 - [Beyond the Call](#) – stories from veterans and their families
 - [DVA Annual Report 2008–09](#)
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Media Releases

- [Department of Veterans' Affairs to continue as separate agency](#) (VA101 PDF 48Kb)
- [DVA arrangements during Christmas and New Year](#) (VA100 PDF 63 Kb)
- [\\$303,000 for projects to honour Australia's veterans](#) (VA099 PDF 90 Kb)
- [Search online for overseas Australian memorials](#) (VA098 PDF 48 Kb)
- [Joint media release - 2009 National History Challenge](#) (VA097 PDF 37Kb)
- [\\$5000 grant helps restore historic POW artwork](#) (VA096 PDF 44 Kb)

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