

*To all those who contributed to the Welfare success of Michael James Cook.*

*You will remember perhaps that 12 months ago we received a request for help from Alan McRoberts carer/companion for Michael James Cook a 40 year old veteran who served with (D Coy 1 RAR on operations in Somalia. Michael joined D Coy as a reinforcement from 2/4 RAR. Michael was housed in an Aged Care facility in Brisbane being placed in a Dementia facility but in reality his problem was that he suffered from Huntington's Disease. 12 months ago Kedron-Wavell received a request from Alan and Michael for help. Please read the attachment for the final result of this long 12 month project.*

*Greg Russell  
Kedron-Wavell sub branch RSL*

Michael Cook a 40 year old Veteran served with (D Coy 1 RAR on operations in Somalia. Michael joined D Coy as a reinforcement from 2/4 RAR. Michael was housed in an Aged Care facility in Brisbane being placed in a Dementia facility but in reality his major problem was that he suffered from Huntington's Disease. 12 months ago Kedron Wavell Sub Branch RSL received a request from Alan McRoberts the carer for Michael Cook for help.

Alan McRoberts was quite anxious for a last ditch chance to try to help Michael, a veteran who had fallen through the cracks of society.

We identified that there were a number of issues that Michael needed help with urgently:-

- 1. To have dental work attended to on Michael's teeth as they were giving him pain.**
- 2. A requirement for a special purposely built wheelchair, as Michael's height is 6'6" and he kept slipping down from the seat of a normal size wheel chair.**
- 3. He was accommodated in an unsuitable aged care facility as a dementia patient, and that needed to be changed and new accommodation be found.**
- 4. An application to the Department of Veterans Affairs made for service related disability in keeping with Michael's entitlements.**
- 5. Help and financial support to Michael's 16 year old daughter Tiani who was completing her Grade 12 schooling was required.**

We asked for information as to Michael's service via internet from RAR Veterans whom might have served with Michael and have reported that the response was over whelming.

Major Mark Russell coordinated a response from RAR Veterans, Current serving Veterans and Ex-Service Members who contributed both information and financially to Michael's dilemma.

**We are delighted to report that:-**

1. Financial help meant that the rotten teeth were fixed promptly thus alleviating Michael's pain.
2. His wheel chair was funded by a Somalia Mate who said it was a pay back for the terrible hair cut that Michael gave him in Somalia, resulting in reprimands from various quarters.
3. Michael's accommodation has been fixed and he now lives in a magnificent house in Brisbane and lives a "Life without Barriers or Restrictions", something he deserves for the rest of his life. We thank RSL Care for the effort and time spent trying to find a solution to Michael's accommodation needs so to thanks Sam, Ted and Ross.
4. Malcolm Wheat and the Vietnam Veterans Federation gave a donation to ensure Tiani, Michael's daughter, was well equipped with her school books for 2009, thanks Mal. Kedron Wavell Sub Branch RSL ensured that funding for school excursions and music fees were paid.
5. DVA approved a Gold Card for all Michael's medical needs and a Disability Pension as at 15 January 2010.

These achievements were possible because Ant Blumer, Justin Haddock, and the many other Somalia veterans and their wives, so generously made telephone calls and provided financial and other support of Michael.

We thank 1 RAR Association for also providing Michael with financial support and a cap and shirt, the 'big blue one' to wear at KW RSL's Anzac Day Service in 2009.

Thanks to Ted Chitham and the RAR Association for your financial and other support.

The Adult Guardian, Karen Rush was untiring in her support, help and care for Michael during this time, and continues to fully support Michael's needs, our thanks

Ben Hobden from the Public Trustee of Queensland provided support in Michael's financial matters also needs our thanks.

Bill Rolfe the Repatriation Commissioner and Alison Stanley his Deputy Commissioner in the Queensland Department of Veterans Affairs are acknowledged for their visits to Michael, support, and advice.

Vince Pennisi Honorary Solicitor for Kedron Wavell Sub Branch RSL, at Chermside, donated his services, advice and recommendations as to legal matters with the setting up of special accounts in trust for Michael's donations.

With all these issues now resolved after a long 12 month project to help Michael Cook, we, the members of the Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch RSL would sincerely like to thank all those individuals, wives, current serving members, ex-serving personnel, Veterans, Ex-Service Organizations, all others who made donations, enquiries, contributed and gave well received advice and to anyone we have inadvertently forgotten, please accept our grateful thanks.

Thank you Alan McRoberts, Michael's elderly carer/companion who struggled and battled and never gave up and eventually found someone who could support him with Michael's needs.

Louise, Stef and Tiani for your magnificent support of Michael during this time of need and at last they know that he is now being looked after and receiving the care he deserves.

Some of the donated funds held by Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch RSL have been used to set up a funeral account for Michael with the balance to be used to look after Michael's private requirements.

Thank you to all, and especially to the network of veterans who helped with all requirements, distribution of information when it was urgently needed. It does show that we, as a combined and united group, can achieve great things for veterans no matter what difficulties arise if we stick together and unite. For this we are truly thankful.

Any further enquiries with regard to Michael's welfare can be made to the contact given below.

With sincere thanks to all,

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