



# AUSTRALIAN BRAVERY ASSOCIATION

## Newsletter 20

### July 2013

(Note: Hard copy was published and mailed out as "May 2013")

Supporting those who risk their life to save life, property or the environment.  
The official newsletter of the Australian Bravery Association

#### **NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT - John Thurgar**

It has been a busy time for the ABA NX since the AGM. The NX has met on several occasions so far this year and have a collective desire to take the association forward in a positive way. This report outlines the activities and issues the NX has been working on for the first half of 2013.

The Minutes of the marathon 6 hour 15 minute AGM have been transcribed and are being counter-checked for correctness against the tape recording of the meeting. The tape recording in parts is not clear due to speakers addressing the AGM from different parts of the room and at times multiple speakers. The Minutes extend to some 90 pages in length. Since inception of the ABA, the minutes have been distributed prior to the proceeding AGM. Given that they are so long and are based on a voice transcription, the NX will have to explore a new approach to get them to members. What form that will be will be disclosed in the next newsletter.

There were a number of issues raised at the AGM that the National Executive (NX) have taken on board and are working on. Matters being addressed by the NX include:

- a. Streamlining the NX. The Deputy National President is now the co-ordinator for the NVP's from the States to work through to the NX.
- b. Creation of an Honours and Awards ex-officio position within the NX (Jim Runham).
- c. Appointing a membership vetting officer (Vic Boreham).
- d. Developing in conjunction with DVA, a phone App, which allows persons suffering from PTSD to self-monitor how they 'are coping' (Mark Tregellis and Pam Davidson).
- e. Updating Membership records (Melanie Warburton).
- f. Locating the books of account, receipt books, bank statements etc (Hedonna Thurgar).
- g. Drafting amendments to the ABA Constitution for presentation to the membership to consider and vote upon.

However, the following matters have distracted us from taking the ABA fully forward in the way we would like to.

- a. The change of signatories to the ABA bank accounts has not happened due to James Long and Roy Ferguson not signing the necessary documentation and hindering the process. Keith Payne VC OAM did sign and the 4<sup>th</sup> signatory, Phil Spence is reportedly now living overseas and not contactable. The end result is that the NX does not have access to the ABA National Accounts, five months after the AGM. Unfortunately, it appears the matter may have to be remedied in the Supreme Court of the ACT, something that the NX has been keen to avoid.

- b. Disappointingly, it has become necessary for the NX to discipline two members, James Long and Roy Ferguson. After following due process as prescribed in the Constitution, both have been expelled from the ABA with effect 30 June 2013.
- c. With respect to matters affecting the relationship between the ABA and the Australian Bravery Foundation the issue is ongoing. The NX is considering a number of options and will report back to members shortly.

On a positive note, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the Australian Bravery Awards system will take place in 2015. The NX are beginning the planning of that momentous occasion by way of forward planning and making bookings at various venues in Canberra.

We are also looking forward to the Queensland Bravery Weekend at Currumbin on the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> of August. The focus of the weekend will be to enjoy each other's company and develop camaraderie amongst members and their friends and family. (There will not be a meeting held during the weekend). I encourage you all to attend one of the highlights of the ABA calendar.

All that said, I am buoyed by the continued enthusiasm and support from the NX and you, the members.

Without your continued support for each other there would be no ABA. This support and mutual respect for each other are cornerstones of the ABA. Please keep on helping each other and take the time to 'check to see' how a mate is travelling.

Regards to all - John

\* \* \* \* \*

**The Australian Bravery Association**  
**What are we about?**  
**By Andrew Kendall (Deputy Nat. President)**

In the short time that I have served as a webmaster developing the new ABA website and as the Deputy National President I have often asked myself the question, "What is the ABA really about?" Over time it has become clear to me, and as an association it is important that we grow and vigorously promote the aim of the association.

I was fortunate enough to represent the association at some investitures at Government House in Canberra earlier this year. There were awards being presented by the Governor General to Order of Australia recipients, to ADF officers and non-commissioned officers for distinguished service on military operations, to military and civilian personnel for conspicuous and meritorious service by and, lastly, to a small number people for bravery. It was an impressive list of achievements and acts done by an outstanding group of people. At the time I couldn't help but think, "Wow!", and wonder how an award for a 'brave' act done on the spur of the moment and over a relatively short period of time compares to a life-time or long period of dedication and service.

Two things that occurred during the function following the investitures gave me a clear answer. The first was a comment made to me by Mr Stephen Brady, Official Secretary to the Governor-General. He reflected that he found the bravery awards the most thought worthy. "Hearing what the award recipients did, you have to ask, would all people have done what they did in those circumstances?" The second thing that struck me was the story of the stress and hardship that one of the recipients has suffered and continues to suffer as a direct result of the incident he was involved in. This second observation is at the heart of what we are about. Clearly bravery recipients are special people and often they and their loved ones need support.

The ABA Constitution states that the aim of the association is to maximise the support available to those members in our community (and their families) who conduct themselves bravely to save life, property or the environment and thereby experience physical, emotional or other personal hardship.

Having worked closely with the current National Executive for this year, it gives me great comfort to

see and know that all members of the NX are working as a unified group to achieve this clear aim. They are all focused on giving support and service. This is reflected in the many investitures that they attend to meet and offer support to award recipients, the social gatherings that are organised which allow members and their families to gather to share experiences and friendship, and through the initiatives that the ABA is putting in place. Two of these initiatives, namely access to the PTSD Coach Australia App and the proposal by ABA Honorary Psychologist, Pamela Davidson, to launch the "That's not OK" campaign, are fundamental to helping those in need.

The last eighteen months have been difficult for the ABA. Perhaps at times some have lost sight of our aim, importantly, the support of our members. This has resulted in conflict.

Fortunately, those who serve on the current NX are committed to acting in a positive way to take the association forward with a clear understanding of what we are about, dedicated to serving our members to the best of our abilities.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **CORALEE LEVER VIC/TAS. REPORT 2013**

Thanks to members for attending the Mildura weekend in June 2012.

Our dinner cruise on the "Wentworth" was most enjoyable with local entertainers showing their wonderful country hospitality.

Alison from Discover Mildura, has been our tour guide for the past 5 years, and feels very much part of our A.B.A Family. Our tour in 2012 to Mungo National Park on the Monday was BRILLIANT, and was enjoyed by all so much so that Alison has put it on the list again this year at special prices as you will see on your invitations!

#### **November 2012 - Investitures at Government House in Melbourne.**

Always amazing - stories of courage and bravery that truly touch the heart and memories that are very close to home which never fails to bring a tear or two.

A proud moment when Sue & Vincent Leone and myself presented the Governor with the "BRAVE BOOK" after the investitures.

We also had precious time with some of the recipients who received bravery awards.

#### **2013**

Our A.B.A. is growing. One of our new members, John Burfitt and me have been fundraising in Mildura and handing out leaflets to let the public know what we are about. Thanks to John Thurgar and our local M.P. Peter Crisp, who will be printing them out for us. Thanks also to John Thurgar for assisting me write a sponsorship request to one of our Mildura banks. We hope this request will be successful.

My local butcher, Justine Tassone is a sponsor as well as the Mildura Rural City Council and of course Peter Crisp M.P. I also have the support of our Service Clubs and Newspapers who give such wonderful reports and not forgetting our local people who support the raffles I hold in my shop, and the goods that are donated to me by my suppliers.

**Vic/Tas Reunion 2013** was the most relaxing weekend with perfect weather (I did put my order in for that). It started with a warm welcome by the R.S.L. President, who feels very much part of the A.B.A. and then Saturday morning a tour of the Botanical Gardens with Alison & Phil Stone from Discover Mildura. A delicious luncheon was served by the volunteers. A two hour Murray cruise on the "Rothbury" followed and was most relaxing and enjoyed by all. Jim had a bit of a blow out with some Sneakers while on this tour, and ended up barefooted!! Sorry Jim! They looked good before you started out that morning!!!!

Saturday's dinner is still being talked about!! A beautiful meal was presented to the A.B.A Family by our well known Chef Ashley Allford at the Rendezvous. Our Guest Speaker, the Honourable Mr Ken Wright OAM. J.P. was presented with the Brave Book signed by all the recipients who were present that evening. It was truly a wonderful evening enjoyed by all.

Well I must say 'thank you' to the N.X. and all who were present at the Sunday B.B.Q who surprised me with a 70th Birthday Celebration complete with streamers, banners, balloons and two beautiful Birthday cakes. Gillian Lowther made and Deborah Lowther decorated one. (Bill and Gillian have not missed any of the Mildura reunions, truly dedicated members). A large Sponge cake, must have been local as it had Real Cream inside, and a beautiful gift presented to me from the N.X. I think Mel may have had a lot to do with this. Love you Mel. Thanks to the Thurgars for bursting into song over the phone, Mindy for the beautiful plant, Peter & Leonie Morrison and Families for the lovely flowers.

I am so thrilled that our new member Ian & Liz Carter enjoyed their first A.B.A experience. Since coming to Mildura Carolyn Laughton & Geoff Oakley have enjoyed the company of the A.B.A Family. Lyn Beavis has asked Melanie for a new member's application. All three have climbed a few mountains since coming to Mildura. Being able to talk to A.B.A members who understand has made a huge difference in their lives. (This has been so rewarding for me personally, Carolyn & Lyn were also victims of Port Arthur).

My heart goes out to Stuart & Deb, who had to leave early!

I have so many people to thank who joined with me in the success of this weekend - Jim Preston for all of his wonderful works of Art for the Raffle, & Hand painted works by Lyn Preston. (Jim is the best B.B.Q. Chef with the help of Darrell Tree). All the Kitchen helpers, I am glad you enjoy my kitchen as much as I do. Josie & Darrell and all, thanks for filling my home with fun & laughter! I hope I have not forgotten anyone. Lindeman's Winery for donating 3 boxes of beautiful Wines (everyone went home with a free bottle). Nephew, Craig Thornton who donated 2 very special bottles of champagne from Deakin Estate and Sally entertained us with the auction on Sunday.

**Raffle winners.** First prize a Cobb & Co Banjo Barometer Valued at \$269 Donated Lever's of Red Cliffs was won by Carol Schelick from S.A. Second Prize was won by Darrell Tree, Large Bear, valued at \$80 Donated by one of my Wholesalers. 3rd Prize Steak Knife set donated Lever's of Red Cliffs, won by local resident Thelma Martin.

I must say the A.B.A Raffle is very well supported by the local community. \$300 was raised in Red Cliffs.

Monday, Pam, Sally & myself experienced an amazing trip to the Mungo National Park with Discover Mildura, a trip not to be missed if you come down to Mildura. It was Pam & Sally's first trip to the Vic/Tas Reunion. I am sure they enjoyed the country hospitality.

Thank you to all who travelled long distances to experience my part of the world.

As N.V.P. Vic/Tas. I take great pride in the position I hold, and hopefully I have made a difference in someone's life by bringing the A.B.A Family together, sharing friendship, fellowship and support. I know I would not be the person I am today if it was not for my beautiful extended family, the A.B.A.

Coralee Lever N.V.P. Vic/Tas.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Words of Wisdom

By far the most dangerous foe we have to fight is apathy – indifference from whatever cause, not from a lack of knowledge, but from carelessness, from absorption in other pursuits, from a contempt bred of self-satisfaction.

Joseph Conrad

## South Australia & Northern Territory Report

We feel that the AGM held in February delivered an outcome that everybody wanted. It's a meeting that we hope never to have again, but when everything is settled and the association is as it should be we will be back to the original concept.

Both Gillian and I spent 4 days at Government house between the 15<sup>th</sup>- 18<sup>th</sup> April, we usually only go 1 day out of the 4, but this year we had thirteen recipients receive Medals and Commendations for Brave Conduct. We were able to spend time with each recipient, and are hoping that they will join us as members of the ABA. We are hoping that in a couple of months we can invite people to a BBQ, where they can get to know other recipients.

On ANZAC day we were invited to the Military Museum at Bublacowie on the Yorke Peninsular. Chris Soar is a member of the Bravery Association, and has established the Museum over the last 10 years, with his wife Enid, who unfortunately passed away a few years ago. Gillian and I laid a wreath on behalf of all bravery recipients. He was kind enough to allow us (ABA) to run a raffle over the time we were there. We had a great 3 days, and the raffle gave us \$190.00. The War Museum then presented the Australian Bravery Associations with a gift of \$310.00 to bring the total up to \$500.00. Over the next few days we will write a letter of appreciation expressing our thanks to Chris and his band of volunteers. It was also discussed that they would like to make a Garden of Remembrance for the ABA so that people would have a place to visit, and it would also bring more people to know of the association. There would be no cost to the association, but any suggestion will be more than welcome. If anyone had a thought, please e-mail me on [wglowther@yahoo.com.au](mailto:wglowther@yahoo.com.au) There would also be a mention of all civilians in SA and NT who lost their lives while committing an Act of Bravery.

Over the past 4 years Gillian has produced here own calendar, we would now like to do one for the Bravery Association as a fund raiser, we are hoping to get about 4 sponsors to help with the cost, and hope we can produce them to sell for about \$10.00 each.

John Thurgar has suggested that it is produced for 2015, as that is a significant anniversary. As it takes a fair while to get it collated and set up for the printer, I would like people to participate by sending us a photo wearing medals and a copy of your citation over the next couple of months, if you do not want to use your citation, then please put in your own words the circumstances in which you received your award, (about 300 words). Also give us your phone number in case we wish to query anything with you. Please don't hold back and leave it to others, we would rather have too many than not enough.

We are now looking forward to our yearly visit to Mildura, where we know that we will all have a wonderful time, and look forward to seeing you all there.

Bill Lowther,  
National VP SA & NT

\* \* \* \* \*

## NSW REPORT

My wife and I attended the NSW Bravery Award Investitures at Government House in Sydney in the first week of May. Her Excellency, Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of NSW, was very welcoming as were all the staff.

To listen to the stories and speak to the recipients is a very humbling experience and seeing the pride they have in receiving their Awards and the support of their families was wonderful.

I have had some enquiries from members about arranging get togethers in NSW and would welcome any suggestions. I am looking forward to catching up in the near future.

Brian Harland  
NSW Vice President

## MERCHANDISE

Don't forget we have a large range of merchandise for purchase and further advertise the ABA.

**All Orders to: Secretary, Melanie Warburton, 16 Embling Street, Wanniasa ACT 2903**

Tie Bars/lapel pins/cuff links and brooch	\$10	Book donation kits	\$8
Men's embroidered shirts and ties	\$50	Ladies embroidered shirts	\$50
Embroidered baseball style caps	\$20	Name Badges	\$20

### **+ \$5 postage for above mail orders**

Mark Whittaker's book - '**BRAVE**' \$34.99 + 10.50 postage  
Recounting the rescue stories of many of our ABA members



\* \* \* \* \*

## Qld Report May 2013

Greetings to all members new and old, in this new year which is shaping up to be most positive and proactive. The unsettled environment of the past year in the ABA has been remedied by your input at the AGM in Canberra, and the new National Executive (NX) is working hard to bring accountability and reconciliation to return your organisation to one of ethical corporate governance and member consultation.

Many of you will know that I have recently completed a university degree of Master of Business Administration. The recent problems our ABA has experienced encouraged me to take on further studies in the fields of Human Resource Management and Corporate Governance. These studies confirm the need of any organisation to constantly review if it is meeting the needs of its stakeholders, and in our example, our important members. Each year, there is a lot of activity in our regional branches of which most of the members will be unaware. Each of our National Vice Presidents (NVP) provide members new and old, with a sympathetic ear to listen, a strong shoulder to lean on and a unique understanding of the challenges of life after rescue. It is important that the members are aware of the contribution of their NVP and that they do so much more than frocking up to government house for champagne and canapés at the bravery investitures. In alignment with established corporate governance practices, I have compiled a Job Description outlining responsibilities and expected commitment of unpaid hours of work for those accepting a nomination for NVP. For example, the Queensland branch last year entailed over 230 hours of volunteer work, which is a significant undertaking, including such tasks as,

- ◆ Member recruitment and support to
- ◆ Promote and process membership applications,
- ◆ Support new recipients, and maintain vigilance in identifying members who you feel may need extra support
- ◆ Management of the state bravery award recipients data base
- ◆ Creation, maintenance and submission to audit of accurate financial records
- ◆ Access and establish business relationship with local accountancy firm who agrees to conduct an annual audit of financial records at no charge to the ABA.
- ◆ Access and establish business relationship with local council, state and federal representatives to gain assistance with printing and postage of event invitations
- ◆ Creation and presentation of regional activity reports on request from the NX
- ◆ Compile reports on the activities of ABA activities and initiatives state wide
- ◆ Identify press and promotional opportunities of bravery and rescue events
- ◆ Support the NX in matters of strategic development, members support and fund raising – and the list goes on.

Even higher numbers of volunteer hours were given by our National Secretary Melanie Warburton, National President John Thurgar, Deputy National President (past) Pamela Davidson, and other members of the NX, who continue to give their time most generously to support our members. For the purpose of clarification, of the expectation of other roles on the NX, Volunteer Job Descriptions have been prepared for the roles of National Treasurer and National Secretary. It has been proven in the past that these jobs are too big for one person to do effectively and so urge anyone considering accepting one of these positions in the future, to study the Volunteer Job Descriptions (on the ABA website) before committing to take on a position on the NX.

On a lighter note, I am happy to report that the Qld branch fundraising activities in 2012 raised \$2905 and thanks go to Gordon Walker, Victor Boscoe CV and Keith Payne VC (for the donations they sourced) and the members who attended our Qld bravery weekend. This brings the total tally of funds raised, since I took on this role in 2004, to over \$13,000. Earnings for 2012 total \$2905.74 after income of \$7955.44 and expenditure of \$5049.70. It is encouraging to see both our membership and fundraising activities steadily growing.

We look forward to seeing more of you at this year's event which will be held on August 3 & 4 at Currumbin on the Gold Coast in the winter sunshine. Last year's bravery weekend included a free family picnic with face painting and games, and also some activities for the kiddies. ☺ It was a big success and we look forward to more fun this year. Congratulations to Melanie and Pamela who organised our happy functions at the Canberra rally where we got to meet the winner of the Geoffrey Boyce Brave Youth of the Year Award recipient Daniel Grulke and his proud grandfather Albert – seen loitering with repeat offender Jock Wust SC.



Daniels citation reads *On 27 March, 2012, At 5.00pm a girl intent on suicide started to walk along the railway tracks towards an incoming train to Beaconsfield Station. The driver of the train started to break heavily whilst sounding the horn about 150m from the girl. People started to yell at her to get off the tracks to no avail. When the train was about 25 m away, Mr Grulke jumped from the platform onto the railway tracks and managed to push the girl out of the path of the oncoming train and into the grass on the side of the tracks. The train then stopped*

*and slowly pulled into the station and Mr Grulke walked the girl to the other end of the platform... What a champ!*

Our ABA Facebook page has been very active this year with news items, inspirational stories and video clips of the deeds of members, and others who have stepped up to help those in need. This makes for interesting reading and I encourage you to join our group, be inspired by the items it contains, and add any which may appear in your local media.

The May investitures in Qld will feature ABA members from the Runham Family and their team of rescuers afloat in the Lockyer Valley floods of 2012. I have the pleasure of meeting and greeting our newest bravery award recipients on May 18<sup>th</sup>, so don't forget to watch the news that night (in Qld) to see our newbies at Government house.

Thanks again to Alan and Brenda Cochrane for producing this newsletter, Andrew Kendall and Mark Tregallis for their work on our web page, John & Hedonna Thurgar for their 24/7 commitment to our ABA and the support and attention to detail of my fellow National Vice Presidents. Special mention goes to John Bluey O'Gorman BM who brought clarity and wisdom to our AGM, giving the members a great outcome and a return to true north – with a few bad jokes thrown in to keep us smiling. I thank you once again for the privilege of representing the ABA in Queensland.

See you in August for more fun in the winter sun – *All the best – Sally G.*

## VIC BOREHAM NVP (WA)

Hello to all Members of the ABA (WA) Branch and to those of you in other states who will also be reading this along with the reports from the other State NVPs.

As you are aware, the year did not start on the best of footing with the problems that were carried over from 2012. I am so very happy to inform you that at the Annual General Meeting held in Canberra February of this year, a new National Executive Committee was elected. This Committee is your Committee, which represents each Member of the ABA. It intends to get the Association back on track, regaining the focus on the harmony and close friendships which have formed over the years. The harmony, friendship & mutual support have always been there, but seem to have been pushed to the background overlooked and in favour of "administration" & perhaps "empire building," by a very small minority.

Our outlook has changed quite dramatically. Your National Executive has been quite busy, (well our new National President, National Treasurer and our re-elected National Secretary anyway), revisiting areas where we can improve our service to you, our Members. We have had a few link ups by Skype & by phone hookup, in order to discuss the future direction of the ABA.

I won't pretend that everything is all smiles & sunshine yet, because there are still a few important issues that do need addressing. We are currently assessing the options available to us. Please believe me though, when I say that positive changes have been made, with more being in the pipeline. Our National President's report will explain a great more than I have here.

On a personal basis I have not been as active as I would have liked. I've had a few personal health issues, one of which was being a passenger on a Transperth bus on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. The bus was going too fast and the driver had to brake very hard to avoid hitting the car in front. I was seated in the "priority seniors" aisle seat facing the bus front, and catapulted from that seat into the firewall in front of the driver, on the floor next to access steps - a distance of about 10 feet (3 metres). I don't remember anything from the time my behind left the seat, to waking up with people around me expressing their concern for my welfare. A fair bit of bruising, abrasions and ongoing frequent physiotherapy etc.

On a very positive note, Lyn & I had the pleasure of being accompanied by Tim Britten CV, and his beautiful wife Shannon, to the investitures at Government House in April. Both the Governor & his wife expressed a very sincere interest in chatting with Tim & Shannon. In fact one of the Governor's aides intervened reminding the Governor that he had others to meet also. The recipients who Tim introduced himself to, were impressed and appreciative of his open friendliness & genuine

interest in their various awards. I know that I derived a great deal of pleasure having Tim & Shannon present.

Changing tack a bit, I would like to ask if one of our Members would be willing to accept the position of Social Organiser for WA members of the ABA? I am finding that I do need assistance in some areas....this being one that I believe to be extremely important. It is the conduit by which people get to know each other, with lasting friendships being the resulting benefit. In fact on a National basis, we who have known each other for a number of years, and those who have only recently met, regard ourselves as one big, unique family.

Again changing tack, I do need to report on the Bravery Memorial Garden and its progress, or lack thereof. I have been disappointed to say the least, with the lack of courtesy shown by a number of large companies and businesses that I have approached for sponsorship/assistance. I fully understand and appreciate the reasoning behind a rejection from a company, as many are already committed to quietly funding/sponsoring/assisting other charities & community organisations.

I have approached Satterley & Co who showed me the courtesy of inviting me to an interview, before apologetically rejecting my request. Cockburn Cement Co were courteous & receptive. Their representative advised me to reapply in August, because their allocations for 2013 had already been finalised. The National Australia Bank did not respond to the 2 letters and enclosures which I forwarded to them. My phone calls to them indicated a complete lack of interest in what I was asking.....whether my correspondence had been received or not.

I sent personally addressed envelopes (addressed as advised by company reps) to Messrs Andrew Forrest & Kerry Stokes & received no response. I rang each company a couple of times, to confirm one way or another, whether my correspondence & enclosures had been received. No one knew. I went through the mailing process again with a similar lack of response. As mentioned above, I can accept rejection, what I dislike intensely, is the absence of the courtesy to at least acknowledge the receipt of a communication.

I have a number of other companies from which I intend to request assistance. Cockburn Council has generously promised a significant amount. If I can get a couple more with fairly reasonably sized donations, I can then submit an application to Lotterwest with a request for a dollar for dollar match. Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible, so if anyone is aware of people who would support a cause that they consider worthy, and who may be interested in the Bravery Memorial Garden project, please ask that they contact me, or if preferred, I can certainly get in touch with them.

My very best wishes & cheers to all - Vic



***VALE***

We take this opportunity to pay our respects to members who have passed away recently.

Robbie Robinson DCM BEM JP

James Rogers-Rudnik CV OAM GMC ICC

***Pamela Davidson***

**Honorary Psychologist Australian Bravery Association**

**Clinical Practicing Psychologist**

**Rooms: 12 Parkhurst Avenue Herston Qld 4006**

**Ph: 07 3852 4157 Mb: 0422 238 641**

The National Executive has invited me to comment on the Defence Department APP called PTSD COACH AUSTRALIA.

I have been using this now in my private practice encouraging clients to access this free APP for some time and can recommend it as a very useful tool, even though it has some limitations being designed for the military. However the APP has a pathway for family and friends of military personal as well, and this is the pathway I recommend our civilian members can use if they wish to have a helpful range of tools to use 24/7. This APP in no way takes the place of medical and psychological help and support which is always recommended if people find it hard to function in any aspect of their life. Members can always contact me if they wish to discuss this further or for a recommendation for accessing support. If you wish to check out the APP then put the title as above in your search engine for tablet or phone that uses APPS. Follow the prompts.

Recently our Queensland VP Sally Gregory invited people to talk about (post) their story on the ABA Facebook page (Australian Bravery Association). Well something amazing got started and within 24 hours, so many people had posted something about their story (including myself). Some of these accounts were as short as one line and others were a paragraph. Most of them revealed how they really felt about their experience and just how much they were inspired by other's stories.

It just made me realize all over again how important our organization is and has the potential to be for so many people not just the brave souls who have written about their experience but also for their families and friends who have also been touched by these experiences. It is compelling reading and some have commented on the posts, that reading these has given them goose bumps.

If anyone out there has trouble talking about their experience and deep down would like to, I urge you to read these accounts and if you feel like adding your own post then have a go, I guarantee the experience of sharing it with others that truly understand, will lighten your load.

I'd like to finish by commenting on the divisions that have hurt the Association over the last 18 months. To those of you still feeling hurt, I'd like to suggest that you focus on the good that the majority of active members provide, for the organization both in the past and currently. There are members on your NX that are now organising events for you to attend for comradeship while those and others also attend investiture ceremonies and other official functions in your state. Rest assured your NX are working tirelessly to bring the Association back under the control of the NX you elected at the 2013 AGM. For any enquiries you may have, National President, John Thurgar will be more than happy to bring you up to date if you want further information. John can be contacted on mobile - 0423 254 361.

Cheers all

Pamela Davidson (Crawshaw)

## Notes from your Editors - Brenda & Alan Cochrane

It's been an 'interesting' year in the ABA but the underlying spirit has not essentially changed. The black tie dinner at Duntroon exceeded all expectations with superb food in an elegant setting (only rivalled by the elegance of our ladies) and topped off with an excellent guest speaker. The sterling silver cabinet held a fascinating display of Duntroon history and caught many an eye.

Some of you that know me are aware that I have had ongoing back problems (simple explanation for a *shot* back) which have been addressed by several stints under the knife in the Wesley hospital, Brisbane. On two occasions both Bren & I have been supported during these times firstly by Alicia and Bill Sorohan and recently by Pamela Davidson. The number of phone calls, letters and emails has been really gratifying to think that others are there with us in this journey and for that we thank you. We know that others in our organisation are also suffering with illness and tragedy and we hope that you also find support and friendship in the ABA family.

We were sorry to miss Coralee's Mildura event which once again we heard was an outstanding success. My surgeon was a little amused at my suggestion I wanted to head to Mildura with my newly implanted neuro (spinal cord) stimulator. Now, even six weeks since surgery I bow to better knowledge!!

Our 5 Cross of Valour members were each presented with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal earlier this year – pictured l-r Tim Brittain (WA), Victor Boscoe (Qld) Gov. General Quentin Bryce AC, Darrell Tree (SA) and Allan Sparkes (NSW). We have had the privilege of meeting these fine people over a period of years. Most recently in February, Darrell and Josey from SA and last year at the Military Museum in Maryborough, Queensland, Tim and Shannon from WA. What a great bunch! Congratulations!



(Information and photos supplied courtesy Jim Runham and also the Maryborough Military Museum.)

The fifth member of this group, Richard Joyes, was presented with his medal by Gov. General Quentin Bryce on her recent trip to Canada where he now resides with his family.

On a sad note, we send our condolences to Jock and Robyn Wust, our Bundaberg ABA members. They are grieving the loss of their son, John. Many of you would have met John in Canberra a few years ago when he accompanied Jock to the annual reunion. Whatever your persuasion, we ask you keep the Wust family in your heart, thoughts and prayers as they journey on in difficult times.



We recommend you check out our website and Facebook for inspiring stories and background news on your association - [www.forbravery.org.au](http://www.forbravery.org.au). No computer – not a problem! In most places your local library offers free computer use for residents and staff are most helpful if you are a novice. Feel free to email us if you have an article or news to share in the newsletter - [cochrane@forbravery.org.au](mailto:cochrane@forbravery.org.au)

You will notice that our cover sheet is dated "May" when it was expected this edition would be complete. In the interests of sustainability we have used these sheets for this July edition. We trust all is well in your camp and you continue to look out for your mates. Our best wishes – Brenda & Alan

**Patrons**

**Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia  
and His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce AM AE**

**Vice-Patron**

**Keith Payne VC OAM**

**Guardian of the Brave  
Mr Geoff Handbury AO**

**Australian Bravery Association National Executive**

**National President**

John Thurgar SC MBE OAM RFD

Email: john.thurgar@forbravery.org

**Deputy National President**

Andrew Kendall

Email: andrew.kendall@forbravery.org

**National Treasurer**

Hedonna Thurgar

Email: Hedonna.thurgar@forbravery.org

**National Secretary/ Membership  
Secretary**

Melanie Warburton

Email: melanie.warburton@forbravery.org

**National Vice President – ACT**

Mindy Sutherland

**National Vice President - NSW**

Brian Harland

Email: brian.harland@forbravery.org

**National Vice President – QLD**

Sally Gregory CBC

Email: sally.gregory@forbravery.org

**National Vice President – SA/NT**

Bill Lowther SC

Email: bill.lowther@forbravery.org

**National Vice President – VIC/TAS**

Coralee Lever

Email: coralee.lever@forbravery.org

**National Vice President – WA**

Vic Boreham CBC

Email: vic.boreham@forbravery.org

**PLEASE NOTE:**

All postal mail to our National Office            16 Embling Street, Wanniasa ACT 2903

All of your Executive can be accessed by email on the “forbravery” addresses above.

**Our Website address is**

[www.forbravery.org.au](http://www.forbravery.org.au)

**Web Masters:**

Andrew Kendall and Mark Tregallis

Items for the newsletter to

cochranes@forbravery.org.au

The newsletter is available on the website (password not required).

The above phone numbers have been omitted on the web.



“Supporting those who risk their life to save life, property or the environment”

## Your invitation to

### *The 2013 Queensland Bravery Weekend*

*At Currumbin on Queensland's Fabulous Gold Coast. August 3 & 4.*

Join us in welcoming the Bravery Award Recipients of 2013, families & friends into the ABA family.

#### **Event #1 – An evening of fine dining, good cheer and tall stories – the 2013 Dinner.**

Date/Time: Saturday August 3rd, 7.00pm.

Venue: 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Currumbin RSL Club, Gold Coast.

The evening will include an excellent “Surf and Turf” menu from their award winning chef, lucky door prize, raffle prizes, a silent auction, and many great stories (most of them true!)

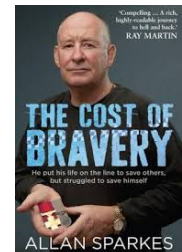
Cost: \$65 pp. Kids under 12 \$20. No Charge (dinner for one) for **2013** Bravery Award Recipients.

Your friends and family are most welcome too (\$65 pp.). Any donations of prizes for our fund raising raffles would be most appreciated - large or small.

Dress: Jacket and tie for gentlemen, cocktail dress for ladies with full size medals to be worn (if available).

Special guests for the evening will be: Mr. Allan Sparkes CV and Mr. and Mrs.

Keith Payne VC, OAM, DSC. We are delighted to announce that our guest speaker for the evening will be Mr. Allan Sparkes, CV who will share his experience in life after rescue, as featured in the new release “The Cost of Bravery” as featured on A Current Affair and 60 minutes.



**Program continues on next page ...**

#### **BOOKING FORM.**

Book a table of 8 to receive a free bottle of bubbly!

Bookings Close July 26th.

Book Now.

Name & post nominals (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: H: \_\_\_\_\_ M: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of guests attending Dinner – (\$65 pp.) \_\_\_\_\_ Kids – (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Names of guests (of recipient) attending @ \$65 pp. \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetarian? No problem. Please indicate number of vegetarian guests on this RSVP \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick here if you received your Bravery Award this year \_\_\_\_\_

Please find enclosed cheque or money order made payable to “S. Gregory, ABA” or EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) receipt (with your name and ABA Dinner in description). Total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

EFT account name – **S. Gregory ABA.** BSB: 637000. Account no: 713 646 288.

**Please post this completed booking form to:** Mrs. Sally Gregory, Australian Bravery Association,  
23 Vantage Point Drive, Burleigh Heads. Q. 4220

**Event #2 – Free family picnic.**

Date/Time: Sunday August 4<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 am.

Join Sal & Kev for a sausage sizzle on the south bank of beautiful Currumbin Creek at Winders Park, 120 Duringan St; Currumbin. Bring your kids to enjoy some fun in the sun with balloon twisting and games. Locals, please bring a plate and your picnic gear.

**General Information:**

The Currumbin RSL is located 10 minutes north of the Coolangatta Airport and 5 minutes south of the Estuary Motor Inn. Their courtesy bus runs on the hour and you can book your pick up or drop off by phoning 07 5534 7999.

Special accommodation deals are available for ABA guests at Sea Mist Palms, Palm Beach, 4 nights for only \$210. Call them to check for vacancies on (07) 5535 2955 & ask for Pam.

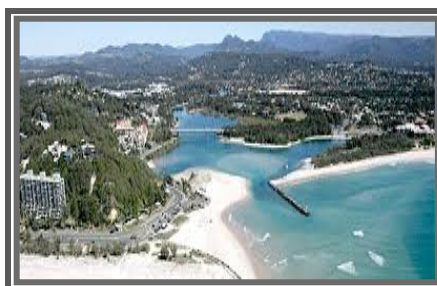
Information on more nearby accommodation is available at [www.goldcoastinformation.com.au](http://www.goldcoastinformation.com.au)

Members of the RACQ, NRMA and RACV are eligible to receive discounted tickets (pre purchased online at your auto club website) to the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary which is located only 5 minutes from CRSL and has wildlife delights for all ages including a cafe and souvenir shop.

You can find information on the ABA, our activities, membership categories, membership application, and some amazing bravery citations, happy snaps, newsletters and much more at [www.forbravery.org.au](http://www.forbravery.org.au) and you can find us on face book. Feel free to call me if you have any queries - 07 5576 0030 or 0418 664 141 or email me at [sally.gregory@forbravery.org.au](mailto:sally.gregory@forbravery.org.au)

We look forward to celebrating with you and your guests at this inspirational weekend. Your family and friends are welcome too. The Gold Coast is a fabulous spring play ground with so much to offer, you may need to stay a bit longer.

*All the best – Sally G*



\* \* \* \* \*