

Friske, Ivan Gympie RSL, Story of

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IVAN'S GOOD WORK LEGACY

Story: Arthur Gorrie

AUSTRALIA now has two more bereaved families for people like Ivan Friske to help.

The Gympie RSL Sub-Branch president, Vietnam veteran and Legacy volunteer was yesterday recognised at the highest level for his work in the community, most importantly his efforts to help those left behind

by the many tragedies of war.

The friends of Brisbane-based sappers Jacob Moerland, 21 and Darren Smith, 25, whose bodies were repatriated from Afghanistan at the weekend, will gather today for a memorial service.

People like Mr Friske will be there to help the partners and children.

CONGRATULATIONS: Gympie RSL Sub-Branch president Ivan Friske with supporters following the announcement yesterday of his Order of Australia Medal in this year's Queen's Birthday awards.

MORE P. 3

Renee Pitcher



Ivan's Legacy work is rewarded

□ FROM P. 1

GYMPIE'S Ivan Friske yesterday was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his community work, especially with Legacy.

"We now have two more war widows," he observed sadly at his Southside home yesterday.

"I joined the RSL in 1989 and got on the committee about 15 years ago," he said.

"I joined the Vietnam Veterans in about 1990 and I've been on and off that committee ever since.

"I've been involved in Legacy for about 12 years.

"I'm involved with the Junior Rugby League, but you do that because of the kids.

"I've been involved for more than 20 years and on the committee for 18 years, as well as being part of the committee that looks after Albert Park."

But he sees his Legacy work as the most important.

"The main part of the job is to make sure they get their entitlements – the War Widow's Pension, income support and little

things.

"Their home might need attention so you try to steer them in the right direction and find someone who can help.

"One lady was having trouble switching phone companies, so you help them sort that out.

"We look after the children as well, helping with education up to 16 and beyond if they go to university.

"Australia now has two more war widows who deserve our support," he said.

Legacy was founded, he said, in 1923, "mainly by men who came back from World War I and who had promised

to help the families of their mates who were killed.

"After the Second World War it was the same thing. The Army and Veteran's Affairs help out a great deal."

But the award, he says, "won't make any difference to what I'm doing. I'm not sure who nominated me, but I'd like to thank them," he said, "along with all the people I've been able to help, if I have been able to, over the years."

"We now have two more war widows"



GRATEFUL: Ivan Friske OAM, received the news at home