



THE VIETNAM VETERANS' NEWSLETTER

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA
SUPPORTING ALL WHO SERVE & HAVE SERVED

JULY 2025



... And one too many trips away, with the ocean all around
I couldn't get my bearings, and our marriage ran aground
When the words had all been spoken, there was nothing
left to say.
So i'm standing here in the morning light with this
fishing net
in the rain.

JOHN SCHUMANN'S LATEST VETERANS' SONG

"FISHING NET IN THE RAIN"

INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE

- NATIONAL PRESIDENT ON INDEXATION
- NEW VIDEO ON THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN A MUST SEE
- EDITORIAL ON THAT BACKLOG
- KEL ROBERTSON'S HISTORY OF THE VVAA CONTINUES
- VETERANS STORIES

Next issue
December

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Established in 2001, our team of lawyers provide clients with high levels of personal service and professional representation in a range of legal and commercial matters.



'KCI's experience and expertise has led to them being a respected voice in Military and Commonwealth compensation, advocating for Veterans and families for 27 years'

SERVICES

DVA - Military Compensation

Commonwealth Superannuation (MSBS, DFRDB and Retrospective medical discharge claims)

Asbestos - Dust Disease Tribunal claims.

Industry super claims - income protection - TPD appeals,

Coroner's inquests

claims for Detriment Caused by Defective Administration - CDDA

TIPS ON BEGINNING YOUR STORY

To begin a memoir, start by brainstorming significant experiences and themes you want to explore, and tell readers about.

Consider pivotal moments, vivid memories, and meaningful events that shaped your journey through life.

Create a loose outline to structure your story.

Revise and re-write as you improve the narrative.

And, lastly, don't forget to send your story to us, including photos if you have them.



Meanwhile we welcome the authors who have contributed to this edition.

John Rogers, VVPPAA NSW Vice President, enters with his short history of the RAAF in Vietnam. **Ted Davies** joins us again this issue with his last instalment of 'Memories of a Nasho'. Welcome back to **John Ingram** with episode 12 of the story of the 'Vung Tau Ferry', HMAS Sydney, and **Kel Robinson** continues with the history of the early days of the Vietnam Veterans movement, and supporters of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association.

Keep those stories coming in..

Things have slowed a bit lately and we hope to find contributors for our December 2025 issue rolling in. Remember I will need all articles to me by the first week of November.

Write in or send to the Editor VVFA Newsletter, PO Box 170 Granville NSW 2142.

Or email your story in Word format as an attachment to bobf@vvfagranville.org.



VIETNAM VETERANS' FEDERATION of AUSTRALIA Inc.

Incorporating

**Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers and
Peacemakers Association of Australia (NSW
Branch) Inc.**

**Vietnam Veterans Federation Queensland Branch
Inc.**

Veteran Support Centre NQ Inc - Townsville

**Vietnam Veterans & Veterans Federation ACT
Inc.**

**Vietnam Veterans Federation Victorian Branch
Inc.**

**Vietnam Veterans Federation South Australian
Branch Inc.**

**Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia WA
Branch.**

Vietnam Veterans Federation Committee:

National President	William Roberts OAM
NSW State President	William Roberts OAM
Qld State President	Peter Handy
FNQ President	Barry Martin OAM
ACT State President	Ward Gainey
Vic State President	John Arnold OAM
SA State president	Mal Thiele OAM JP
WA State President	Milton Kirk JP
Research Officer	Graham Walker AM

MEMBERSHIP

**Belonging
Advocacy
Success**

*Membership is due on 1 January each year.
(July 1 for Queensland members)*

Membership to our organisation empowers a team to achieve much within the veteran community, by assisting veterans with claims and applications on a wide spectrum of government provided avenues of compensation and benefits across 3 Acts of parliament.

Each as an individual is ineffective when lobbying governments for change, or to amend an injustice. Together as an organisation, with a strong membership we are able to, and have done, improve pathways for better treatment of veterans.

We survive as an organisation on the strength of our membership, and even if you have won the battle with Veterans Affairs (DVA), there is always the risk of changes in Government policy which may erode benefits and pensions or changes to eligibility entitlements.

We encourage membership from all who support our objectives, veterans, service and ex-service members, as well as war-widows and their families. You don't have to be a member or ex-member of the Australian Defence Forces (ADF). In most instances, anyone may join our organisation, with few exceptions, so why not enquire today.

It is through our membership subscriptions, fund raising activities and many kind donations from our members, and general public, that we are able to continue supporting our fellow Veterans and Service members in need, and meet our increasing welfare and pension workload.

Should you be able to help with a donation, or leave a bequest in your Will, it would be extremely beneficial and greatly appreciated.

We thank you for your kind support. ■

Is this the best youtube account of the Battle of Long Tan from the soldiers' point of view? (It probably is)



Dave Sabben and Adrian Roberts

Find it on Youtube.

Google: <https://www.youtube.com/>

Then insert: **The Battle of Long Tan, Vietnam 1966, as told by two combat commanders who fought the battle**

Here's the story of the Battle of Long Tan told by Dave Sabben and Adrian Roberts, two of the commanders who were on the ground fighting.

Most youtube accounts of the battle are softened for a civilian audience. This interview makes no such compromises. It tells the story as though veteran to veteran.

If you want to understand this iconic battle better, watch **The Battle of Long Tan, Vietnam 1966, as told by two combat commanders who fought the battle** on youtube.

Produced by documentary maker Bill Brown.

Highly recommended.



NEWS HEADLINES

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ANOTHER GREAT SONG. *FISHING NET IN THE
RAIN.*** **Page 10**

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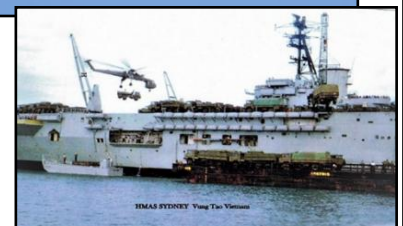
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**John Schumann
& The Vagabond Crew**





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**FUTURE NEWSLETTERS
OR WEBSITE ADDITIONS
for items of publication contact
editor@vvfagranville.org or
bobf@vvfagranville.org**

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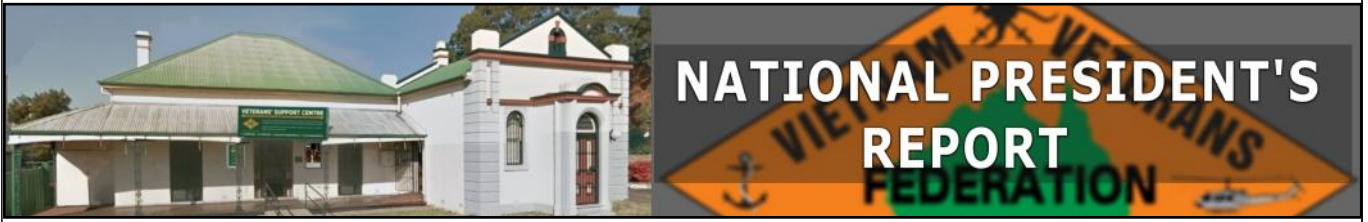


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NB: Crossword error in last issue. Clue 22 down should be Unit. Answer 'Flat'. Apologies for those stumped, by my error.

APOLOGY

**TO R43141 C J RYAN HMAS PERTH
REPORTED IN THE LAST POST OF
OUR APRIL ISSUE, FROM ADVICE
WE RECEIVED VIA DVA,
IS ALIVE AND WELL.
OUR SINCEREST APOLOGIES TO
COLIN AND HIS FAMILY.**



Understanding Indexation

(the head hurts)

Your Service and other veterans' pensions increase twice a year in line with increases in the cost of living and the average wage.

The Bureau of Statistics calculates how much cost of living has increased (CPI Index) and how much the average wage has increased. The Service Pension is increased using the greater of these two increases.

This process is known as 'indexation'.

Along with the Service Pension you get the Supplement. The Pension Supplement is an extra payment, paid on a fortnightly basis, to help with utility, phone, internet and medicine costs.

But here's the rub. Whilst the Service and other veterans' pensions are indexed to cost of living and wages, the Supplement is indexed only to increases in the cost of living.

This has not mattered in recent years because the cost of living has been increasing faster than wages. But that seems now to be reversing. It looks like increases in wages are overtaking increases in cost of living.

In years past, before the Covid event, wages increased by something like 4% annually while the cost of living increased by only about 2% annually. That may well be coming the norm again.

So we will see the Supplement increasing at a slower rate than the pensions they are attached to.

In other words, the Supplement will lose real value compared with the pension.

This simply does not make sense.

The Supplement should be indexed in the same way as the pension it accompanies.

Bill Roberts OAM, National President, VVFA)

Coordinated Veterans' Care (CVC) Program Evaluation Final report

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) engaged Abt Associates, in June 2023, to undertake an evaluation of the Coordinated Veterans' Care (CVC) Program. The evaluation was commissioned as part of a 2020-21 Budget measure which expanded access to the CVC Program for White Card holders with an accepted mental health condition.

The final report was recently published on the DVA website and may be of interest to our members. Findings from the evaluation will inform future improvements to primary care coordination arrangements for veterans. The report will also be provided to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet for further consideration in the context of the Government's response to Recommendation 72 of the Royal Consideration into Defence and Veteran Suicide Final Report.

The report is available for download at: <https://www.dva.gov.au/documents-and-publications/cvc-program-evaluation-final-report>, and is 84 pages in full.

Purpose of the Report

The Coordinated Veterans' Care (CVC) Program Evaluation Final Report assesses the effectiveness of the program in enhancing the health and wellbeing of Australian veterans. The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) commissioned the evaluation to determine how well the program supports veterans with chronic conditions through coordinated care, self-management, and health literacy improvements. The report also examines the impact of expanding eligibility criteria in 2020-21 to include White Card holders with accepted mental health conditions.

Key Recommendations

1. Improve Patient-Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) and Experience Measures (PREMs)
 - ◊ Enhance tracking of veterans' health improvements and satisfaction.
2. Refine Chronic Disease and Wellbeing Markers
 - ◊ Ensure comprehensive care by incorporating broader measures beyond clinical outcomes.
3. Redesign Program to Align with Changing Needs
 - ◊ Consider modifications to better suit evolving primary care policies and shifting veteran demographics.
4. Continue Program Refinement Based on Stakeholder Feedback
 - ◊ Incorporate insights from healthcare providers, veterans, and ex-service organizations.
5. Assess Cost Efficiency and Sustainability
 - ◊ Explore funding adjustments to optimize long-term financial viability.

These recommendations aim to ensure veterans receive proactive, coordinated care that adapts to their changing healthcare needs. We will continue to monitor DVA for any adoption of the recommendations and report outcomes as they come to fruition.



SPECIAL NOTICE

PAYMENTS TO VVPPAA NSW

DUE TO COMMONWEALTH BANK'S RECENT DECISION TO CHARGE ALL CHEQUE DEPOSITS A FEE OF \$5.00 PER CHEQUE, WE ARE FORCED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE GRANVILLE HEAD OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATION WILL NO LONGER ACCEPT CHEQUES OR MONEY ORDERS FOR PAYMENTS

EFFECTIVE 31ST JULY 2025.

OUR SUB-BRANCHES THROUGHOUT NSW WILL MAKE AND ADVISE THEIR OWN PROCESS METHODS AND WE REQUEST YOU CONTACT YOUR LOCAL SUB-BRANCH TO CONFIRM THEIR PREFERRED PAYMENT METHODS.

IF YOU HAVE WRITTEN A CHEQUE MADE OUT TO THE VIETNAM VETERANS' PEACEKEEPERS & PEACEMAKERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (NSW BRANCH) INC., (VVPA NSW INC.), AND FORWARDED TO THE GRANVILLE OFFICE, WE WILL PROCESS THE PAYMENT/S UNTIL THE END OF JULY 2025.

ALL PAYMENTS INCLUDING THOSE FOR MEMBERSHIP FEES, CAPITATION FEES – from Sub-Branche - , DONATIONS, RAFFLE TICKETS AND MERCHANDISE ORDERS MAY BE PAID BY DIRECT DEBIT TRANSFERS, MASTERCARD OR VISA CREDIT CARDS ONLY. ALL SUCH METHODS ARE AVAILABLE AND MAY BE ARRANGED BY CONTACTING THE GRANVILLE OFFICE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTION.

**PHONE: 02 9682 1788 BUSINESS HOURS MONDAY TO THURSDAY 10 AM - 3 PM.
EMAIL: accounts@vvfagranville.org**

TO IDENTIFY CORRECT PAYMENT DETAILS WE NEED TO ENSURE THE AMOUNTS PAID INCLUDE YOUR FULL NAME AND POSTCODE OR SERVICE NUMBER IF AVAILABLE. IF PAYING BY DIRECT TRANSFER WE WILL REQUIRE A COPY OF RECEIPT VIA EMAIL OR POSTED.

IT IS MOST UNWISE TO POST LEGAL TENDER (CASH) TO ANYONE, PARTICULARLY OUR OFFICE, IN THE CURRENT CLIMATE PREVAILING IN OUR COMMUNITIES TODAY. HOWEVER, IF THIS IS YOUR CHOICE THEN BE AWARE WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE OR ACCOUNTABLE FOR ANY LOSSES INCURRED.

SHOULD YOU REQUIRE FURTHER INFORMATION OR TO ARRANGE MONEY TRANSFERS PLEASE CONTACT THE GRANVILLE OFFICE OR YOUR LOCAL FINANCE INSTITUTE.

**THE TREASURER
VVPPAA NSW**

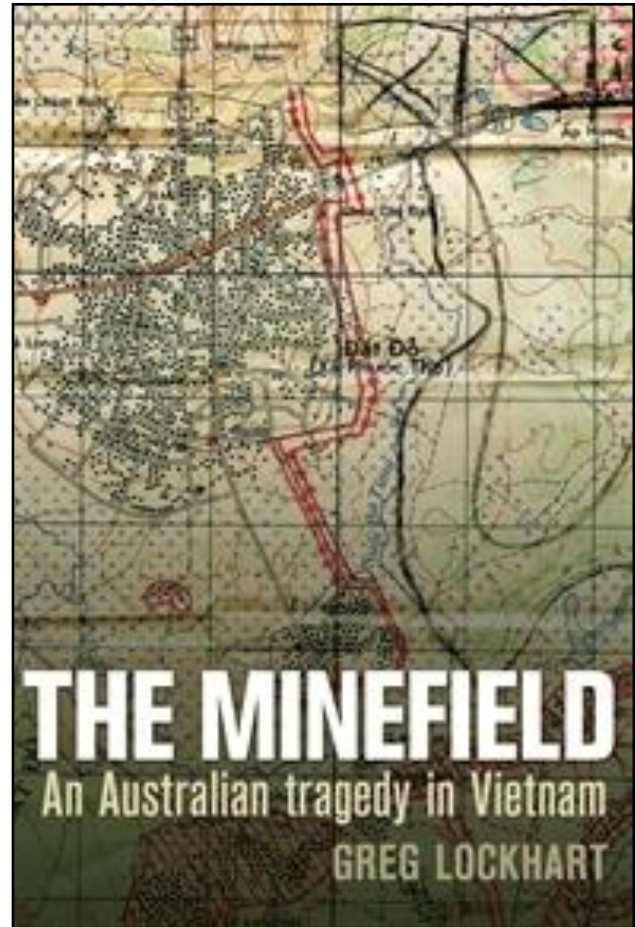
How could this disaster have happened?

Extract

Captain Paul Jones served in the Artillery Tactical Headquarters at Nui Dat in 1967:

‘By August-September 1967 there was a general concern around the HQ that mines were being lifted from the minefield. My understanding also was that Brigadier Graham shared the concern that mines were being lifted. I recall being asked to include likely approaches to the minefield in the Regiment’s H&I program.’

A week or so before Graham relinquished command of 19 October, he told a journalist: ‘Charlie may take some time to admit it, but he is virtually finished in Phuoc Tuy Province. He has lost the people and resources, and without these he cannot live.’ The 1ATF H&I program powerful verification that these were anxiety driven last words. Despite the confident tone of his remarks, he knew what was happening in the minefield.’



To get your copy simply ring the NSW Branch Granville Office on 02 9682 1788 or order on-line at www.vvfagranville.org.



John Schumann comes up with another great song.

Fishing Net in the Rain

He describes the song as showing the human face of the Royal Commission into veteran suicide.

Here is the song's press release.....

In 1982-3 John Schumann wrote and sang the Vietnam veterans' anthem, "I Was Only 19". Ostensibly, it was the story of Mick, Frankie and all the members of 3 Platoon, A Company, 6 RAR, but it was a song that spoke to every Vietnam veteran. 19's opening chords and emotive lyrics have the same impact today as they did when the song was released.

Now, 42 years on, Schumann speaks again about the human cost of war and military service. In the aftermath of the Royal Commission into Veteran Suicide, he found another story that needed to be told. When a devastated mother testified about the loss of her son, Schumann once again took one young man's experience to speak to a much wider issue.

Fishing Net in the Rain was written by Schumann (lyrics) in collaboration his friend & manager, Ivan Tanner (music). It tells the story one of the young sailors sent out by the Australian Government to "stop the boats".

"While the song was inspired by David Finney, it's really important to note that this song is about – and for – the thousands of current and former members of the ADF who have taken their own lives after serving Australia. And, perhaps more importantly, it's

for their families," said Schumann.

A well-known advocate for veterans and their families, Schumann put words to Ivan Tanner's music to "bolt a human face" on to the recommendations of the Royal Commission. John Schumann knows a little bit about mental health and suicide. He spent 10 years giving mental health presentations in remote mining sites and construction camps in Western Australia and South Australia.

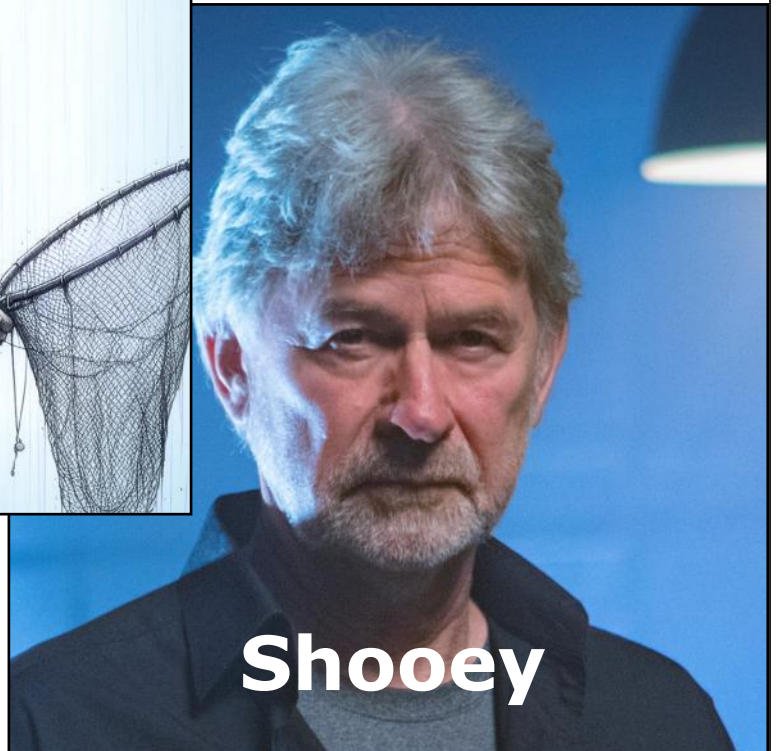
"Suicide is an immensely difficult and delicate topic. I'm no psychiatrist or psychologist but I know from my clinician friends that people don't want to end their lives. They just want the pain to stop," said Schumann.

Schumann understands that his name was put forward to be a Commissioner by a couple of politicians and some veterans' organisations, but his nomination was rejected by the then Prime Minister, Scott Morrison. Nonetheless, he followed the Commission with the idea of writing a song to shine a light on the tragedies.

In search of an entry point, John tracked down Julie-Ann Finney who, like Schumann, lives in Adelaide. She was one of the parents who campaigned for a Royal Commission, but would



“Otherwise, the tragedy of veterans taking their own lives will go on and on. And these people will have died in vain,” said John Schumann.



Shooey

she talk to him and share David’s and her story?

“Julie-Ann knew of “19”, I guess but after David died, she was going through his Spotify playlist and there I was - at the top of the list apparently,” said Schumann. Julie-Ann shared David’s diaries, notes, Facebook posts and blogs with John.

John said, “At one point, David was writing about his endless engagement with doctors and psychologists. He wrote in a Facebook post; ‘Sometimes I feel like I’m catching all the answers, sometimes it’s like holding a fishing net in the rain’.

“David’s story is just one of thousands. But all Australians need to confront these stories and then demand that our political leaders continue to move forward on implementing the Royal Commission’s recommendations.

“The run-up to the election is the perfect time to get politicians to commit to the recommendations in the spirit that they were written - rather than wordsmithed to death by bureaucrats in an attempt to make the implementations cheap and easy.”

“We need to decide if ‘Lest We Forget’ are just words we say around Anzac Day or if they are a sacred promise that we, as a nation, keep in perpetuity regardless of cost and the passage of time.■

(And so say all of us.....Bill Roberts OAM, National President, VVFA)

And don’t forget to log onto Youtube to watch the fabulous video accompanying this great ne song from John Schumann and the vagabond crew.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tbdhm9-Jakg>

See Tour Dates over the page >>>>>>> (12)

John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew



Touring Dates

Saturday, August 16th, 2025

Hindmarsh, Australia

Two Up – 'Behind the Lines' and 'The Redgum Years' starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Monday, August 18th, 2025

Edithburgh, Australia

Behind the Lines starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Saturday, August 23rd, 2025

St Kilda, Australia

The Redgum Years starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Sunday, August 24th, 2025

St Kilda, Australia

The Redgum Years starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Thursday, October 16th, 2025

Camden, Australia

The Redgum Years starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Friday, October 17th, 2025

Marrickville, Australia

The Redgum Years starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Saturday, October 18th, 2025

Avoca Beach, Australia

The Redgum Years starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Sunday, October 19th, 2025

Lambton, Australia

The Redgum Years starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Thursday, October 23rd, 2025

Byron Bay, Australia

The Redgum Years starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Friday, October 24th, 2025

Brisbane, Australia

The Redgum Years starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew and Shane Nicholson

Saturday, October 25th, 2025

Noosa Heads, Australia

The Redgum Years starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew and Shane Nicholson

Saturday, November 22nd, 2025

Perth, Australia

The Redgum Years starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew



Once again, we say **THANK YOU** to our many members who have made a financial donation to their State Branch. Without these donations we would find it much more difficult to cater to the needs of our war veterans, service and ex-service persons generally.

Whilst all donations are gratefully received, and combined, are of enormous assistance to us, they are too numerous to list. However, periodically, we will publish a list of individual NSW Branch members who have donated amounts of \$200 or more.

Generous supporters of the NSW Branch since the last Journal are:

\$3,500	B Pickering
\$2,500	Anonymous
\$2,000	Anthony Randall
\$1,000	Anonymous
\$500	R Bateup, Geoffrey Jones, Elton Robinson, Graham Lee
\$250	Wesley Hindmarsh

Whilst the above refers to, mostly, individual donations only, we are also indebted to the many RSL sub-branches and other licensed clubs who generously contribute to our cause.

City of Bankstown RSL Sub-Branch

Hunters Hill RSL Sub-Branch

City of Fairfield RSL Club



NSW BRANCH 2025 AVCAT SCHOLARSHIP RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS

The NSW Branch congratulates the following members who were successful prize winners in this year's 2025 AVCAT Scholarship raffle draw.

The Raffle assists with the funding of scholarships for the children and/or grand-children of Vietnam Veterans, Peacekeepers and Peacemakers, who may be struggling with life's cost of living on their Repatriation Pensions and who do not have the spare financial resources to fully support the educational aspirations of their dependents, or are in necessitous circumstances to help these children through tertiary education.

The Raffle was drawn in the Veteran Support Centre Office, Granville, in the presence of Committee members on Wednesday, 28th May 2025. The Lucky winners are:

1st Prize: Donald Greentree Castle Hill NSW

2nd Prize: John Kelly Tinana QLD

3rd Prize: Michael Walker Forbes NSW

4th Prize: Christopher Hurley Silverwater NSW

We thank all our ticket buyers for their support of this most worthy, AVCAT Scholarship Program.

**Ron O'Connor JP
Hon. Secretary**

NEWS UPDATE

HERE WE CATCH UP ON NEWS FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES

RSL NSW AND THAT AGREEMENT

Following up on our article in the last Newsletter, about the RSL NSW Veterans' Support Fund (VSF). We are still in a negotiation phase, and although the RSL NSW has offered some lee way, we are yet to finalise any agreement, and as we go to print, we await a response to our request to them to meet with the Association in an effort to progress their proposal.

As reported in our last issue, based on the original proposal as offered by RSL NSW, to donate an amount of \$164,000 from the VSF, which is made up of monies collected from RSL NSW Sub-Branches who nominated this Association as the beneficiaries, we received a 27 page document in the form of a 'Partnership Agreement' to be signed off-on prior to any amounts being forwarded.

We could not, in all good faith, agree to some of the demands within the 'agreement', on behalf of the Association, and began a process of negotiating with RSL NSW, with several points of concern contained within the document. Some of our changes have been accepted by RSL NSW, however, there are still issues making it too demanding and onerous to accept and agree to.

We are hopeful that an agreement, satisfactory to both parties, should be reached soon, and both parties can deliver on mutual aspects to continue our endeavours to improve the wellbeing of all veterans and currently serving personnel in the ADF.

ABOUT OUR YEARLY RAFFLE

Ever wonder about our raffle and merchandise sales, and what happens to the funds we raise?

Our annual raffle and merchandise sales go a long way to enable the Association to continue with our Scholarships through AVCAT. To remind those of the scholarships VVPPAA NSW supports we advise that we fund 3 scholarships per year for 3 years, for an amount of \$4,000 per scholarship, or \$12,000 per year plus administration fees of around \$2,000 per year. The Scholarships are named in honour of individuals who made and make considerable contributions in the growth of the Association. Namely; The Phil Thompson OAM (Dcd), Tim McCombe OAM (Dcd), and Graham Walker AM Scholarships.

Your valued generosity in the purchase of raffle tickets and merchandise is to be admired and we hope you continue to support the welfare of the children and grandchildren of Veterans and Peacekeepers and Peacemakers who qualify for a scholarship through the AVCAT program. Last year you helped raise \$22.0000 after costs.

Refer to the AVCAT advert on page 16 of this issue for details of the next round of nominations, and how to apply.

The Association is forever thankful to those who have supported this worthy cause, and sincerely appreciate your continued support.



Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway



Honour Their Legacy. Preserve Their Memory.

We invite you to support the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway
a place of reflection dedicated to the courage and sacrifice of our veterans.

Your tax-deductible donation helps preserve this living memorial
and keeps their stories alive for future generations.

Donate now to ensure the values of Kokoda endure.

www.kokodawalkway.com.au/support-us

Thank you for your support.

admin@kokodawalkway.com.au | ☎ 9166 0890 (Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm)



Transitioning from the ADF

After years of service in the ADF, transitioning from full-time military to civilian life can present unique challenges for even the most accomplished veteran. Many Open Arms counsellors have a military background, and have also been trained to work with veterans, so they can help you make a successful transition into civilian life.

Common challenges
Some challenges faced
when transitioning to civilian life include:

- finding a new job outside defence
- integrating into a new community
- navigating a different medical system
- finding appropriate housing
- enrolling kids in a new school
- establishing a different family dynamic

Stepping Out

Stepping Out is Open Arms most popular workshop for those transitioning, to learn

- the experience of change as part of life
- the transition from the ADF to civilian life
- skills for planning ahead
- skills for staying motivated and adaptable
- expectations, attitudes and troubleshooting
- maintaining relationships and seeking support

AUSTRALIA'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE KOREAN WAR

We pause to reflect on the over 17,000 Australians who served during the Korean War, of which 340 were killed and over 1,216 wounded. A further 30 had become prisoners of war. This short essay does not include many of the actions by the RAN, RAAF and Army units, but honouring the brave men and women who fought in what became known by those who fought, 'The Forgotten War'. With 2025 marking the 75th Anniversary of the start Australia's involvement, we should reflect on those who made the supreme sacrifice in defence of democracy.

In the pre-dawn hours of 25 June 1950 the Korean People's Army (KPA) launched a massive offensive across the 38th Parallel into South Korea. They drove the Republic of South Korea's (ROK) forces down the peninsula, capturing the capital, Seoul, within a week. Within two days of the war's beginning, US navy and air force units were sent to aid South Korea. By the end of the month, US ground forces were deployed to the peninsula. The United Nations Security Council asked its members to assist in repelling the North Korean invasion.



HMAS SHOALHAVEN



HMAS BATAAN

Australia, with its commitment to the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan, had two readily deployable RAN vessels, HMAS Shoalhaven and HMAS Bataan, as well as No. 77 Squadron, RAAF. It wasn't until 26 July that 3RAR was committed to ground operations in Korea, by which time 77 Squadron RAAF had been in action supporting ground troops since July 1950.



RAAF 77 SQN METEOR F8

The Battle of Kapyong, where an Australian battalion and a Canadian battalion successfully defended their positions against a large Chinese force, is considered one of the most significant battles involving Australian troops in the Korean War. On 22 April, the Chinese launched their spring offensive, routing the South Korean 6th Division and driving them back down the Kapyong Valley.

The 27th Commonwealth Brigade advanced forward of the town of Kapyong. The 1st Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, and 3RAR dug in on the high ground on either side of a seven-kilometre wide valley. The following day, the Chinese were engaged by the Australians and Canadians as well as a troop of US Army Sherman tanks and New Zealand Artillery.



3 RAR ADVANCE ON KAPYONG

Two nights and days of close fighting followed and on the evening of 24 April the Australians were forced to withdraw from their positions and, with the support of the Canadians and New Zealand artillery, fought their way down a ridge, rejoining the majority of the brigade in the Kapyong valley. The Chinese were stopped in their tracks and Seoul was saved from being attacked once more. The men of 3RAR suffered heavy casualties, with 32 killed, 53 wounded, and three taken prisoner. 3 RAR received a United States Distinguished Unit Citation for their actions at Kapyong.

In October 1951 3 RAR, along with British and Canadian forces, as part of Operation Commando, a large UN offensive against a Chinese salient, 3RAR advanced north of the Imjin River, attacking two key high points: hills 317 and 355. After five days of heavy fighting the Chinese were forced to withdraw off both objectives, and on repulsing several counter-attacks the men of 3RAR were firmly in control of Hill 355, known as Maryang San. The Australians suffered 20 men killed and a further 89 wounded during the fighting.



CPL LEN WRIGHT LEADS 3RAR C COY

HMAS Sydney arrived in Korean waters in early October 1951, and began operations immediately. On board the carrier were three squadrons of the RAN Fleet Air Arm, Nos 805 and 808 squadrons, flying Hawker Sea Furies, and No. 817 Squadron, flying Fairey Firefly aircraft. The Sydney undertook numerous patrols in Korean waters during its deployment and its aircraft flew over 2,000 sorties, including ground attacks, artillery spotting, and escort missions. It incurred the loss of three crew and 13 aircraft. The Sydney returned to Australia in January 1952.

In April 1952, 1RAR arrived in Korea and joined 3RAR as part of the 28th Brigade. During its service, 1RAR took part in many patrols of no-man's land and several operations against Chinese positions. The Australians' reputation for patrolling and raiding from both the First and Second World Wars was further enhanced by the efforts of the men of 1RAR and 3RAR during 1952. 1RAR was replaced by 2RAR in April 1953 and quickly established itself as a formidable patrolling and raiding force.

The last three days of the Korean War saw the Chinese mount one last offensive on Australian and US Marine positions in the Samichon Valley. The Chinese attacked in waves with heavy artillery support. However, the combined arms of the US and Commonwealth forces halted the Chinese attacks with heavy losses. This final battle cost 2RAR six killed and 24 wounded. The Marines suffered 43 killed and 316 wounded.

On 19 July an agreement for an armistice between the UN and the Communists was reached. The date for the signing was set for the 27th of July. The armistice was signed at 10 am on 27 July 1953. Sporadic fighting continued throughout the day, but as evening fell the guns fell silent. The armistice came into effect at 10 pm, ending three years, one month, and two days of war in Korea.

The end came so suddenly that some soldiers took some convincing that the fighting was really over. The former belligerent nations each withdrew two kilometres in accordance with the armistice agreement, forming the Demilitarized Zone which still exists today. Australian Forces remained in Korea as part of the multi-national peacekeeping force until 1957.

Lest we forget.

FROM THE EDITORS DESK

THAT DANGEROUS BACKLOG

If you go to the DVA website, Claim Processing Times, you will find the latest report on the backlog of veterans disability claims.

The backlog of veterans disability claims is, of course, the number of claims received by DVA but not yet finalised. That is, the number on which a determination has not yet been made.

You may also want to know how long claims are taking for receipt by DVA till determinations are made.

You might be interested in these statistics because waiting times for sick veterans have been unreasonably long posing a danger to some sick and troubled veterans.

Such is the importance of these statistics you will probably expect to find them at the beginning of DVA's report.

You will be disappointed.

You will find yourself swimming against a flood of irrelevant words and numbers, lame excuses and the attempted redefining of the word 'backlog'.

If you persist you will eventually succeed.

The report reveals seemingly reluctantly that;

As at 30 April 2025, DVA had 81,951 claims received but on which no decisions had been made ie the backlog.

And, waiting times remain unreasonably and dangerously long.

DVA defends itself, saying it is making progress and trying hard.

This may be so but the progress is snails' pace and the real damage was done in recent years when

Average number of calendar days	
Type of claim	between lodgement and the claim being decided
MRCA Initial Liability	303
DRCA Initial Liability	501
VEA Disability Compensation Payment	557
MRCA Permanent Impairment	230
DRCA Permanent Impairment	341
MRCA and DRCA Incapacity Payments	81
War widow(er)'s pension	118

VVFA was warning DVA in vain that the backlog was getting out of hand.

As younger veterans begin to age, history tells us that more and more will continue to bring claims to DVA because of their war caused torment, trauma, and disabilities. So it is likely the backlog will continue to climb. But there is a solution, which may be the only way to reduce the backlog and waiting times.

That solution is to cull the older claims,

unassessed and yet to be finalised, and rule them complete in favour of the claimants. Do this until the backlog is brought to a manageable number in the hundreds rather than multi-thousands. Then start again not letting the backlog get out of control again.

Here's a more detailed plan.

We could arrive at a set of values for immediate actioning, that would have the desired effect of clearing the backlog, in a reasonable time, and free up more assessors to attend to more recent claims:

- Claims made prior to June 2020 assessed as complete and the claimants application ruled in favour of the claimants.
- Claims made from July 2021 to June 2023 with medico reports and imagery attached ruled in favour of the claimants.
- Claims made July 2021 to June 2023 without medico reports fast tracked for action within 90 days, or ruled in favour of the claimants.
- All claims made July 2023 to June 2024 be given a 90 day moratorium for completion and those with medico reports ruled in favour of the claimants. Those awaiting necessary reports and requiring further evidence be assessed and processed as a matter of

urgency, and allowed a further 90 day completion target, before ruling in favour of the claimants.

- All claims made since July 2024 to June 2025 be given 100 days maximum to clear those with required reports. Those claims made from July 2025 and current to have a 4 month turnaround maximum, excepting where collecting medical evidence requires more time.

Such measures if enacted quickly should provide an immediate impact on veterans wait times, prevent possible suicide, and alleviate family stress, by giving the veterans a more realistic time frame in which to prepare their future.

With the advent of a new Veterans Entitlement charter just around the corner, in July 2026, and a change in training protocol from the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ADTD) requirement, to include Continuing Professional Development (CPD), now might be our only chance to clear backlogs in a more just, fairer and satisfactory manner for veterans and their families.

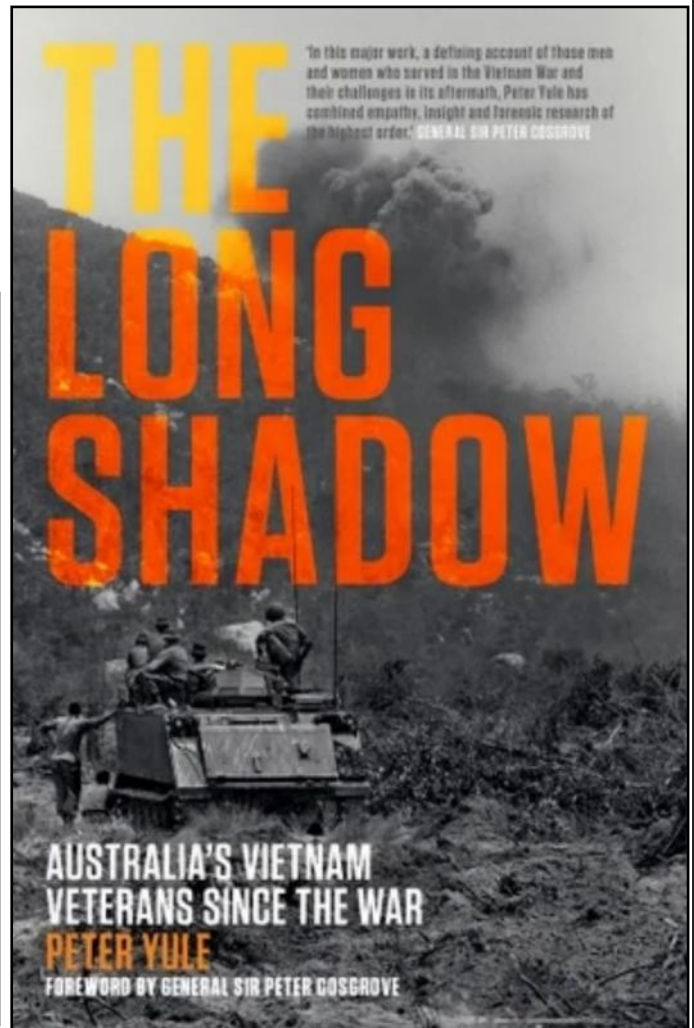
**WE DESERVE BETTER
ED.**



What happened to us in Vietnam and what's happened to us since we returned home?

Extract

In Professor Smith's eyes the credibility of the *Evatt Report* was established by the glowing endorsement it received from Sir Richard Doll, regarded as the world's leading epidemiologist since his work in the 1950s linking smoking with lung cancer. Doll's praise for Evatt's work, however, was given in 1985, and took no account of the later studies that increased the level of uncertainty surrounding possible links between herbicides and cancer. Further, Smith either did not know, or chose not to state, that Doll was being paid a retainer by Monsanto at the time he endorsed the *Evatt Report*.



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VIETNAM VETERANS DAY SERVICE AND FUNCTION**

**NSW STATE BRANCH & BANKSTOWN SPORTS CLUB ARE
COMBINING ONCE AGAIN TO HOST THE 2025 SYDNEY
VIETNAM VETERANS DAY COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE
AND CELEBRATION
TO BE HELD IN THE SPORTS CLUB GRAND BALLROOM
MONDAY 18 AUGUST 2025**

It is hoped that this major event will take place as planned and that we may all come together once more to share our memories and rekindle old mateships. The usual itinerary of service will take place as in previous years and we remind intending parties of the following format:

0900hrs Doors open. Meet & Greet at the Grand Ballroom entry hall.

Bar opens 0900hrs to 1015hrs (at the discretion of management) and closed for the Commemorative Service.

1000hrs Video Presentation: Healing and hardship: Oral Histories of Vietnam Nurses and Soldiers.

1030hrs Memorial Service with Guest Speaker John Gatfield OAM
(Service scheduled for approximately 40 to 45 minutes)

1150hrs Entrance to Grand Ballroom & function proper

1200hrs Entertainment will be provided by Bandit.

Admission: \$55.00 each. You may wish to book a table of 8-10 persons.

Accommodation at the Mercure Hotel, Bankstown, adjacent to the Sports Club is to be by private consultation, and the rates offered will be advised. Breakfast can be included in the room rate. Make sure you mention this Function when making your booking. Contact the Mercure Bankstown booking on (02) 8111 7100, or book on-line and quote this event.

Any further enquiries, and to book your table/ticket can be made by contacting the Granville office

Phone: 02 9682 1788. Email: accounts@vfvfgranville.org

Keep watching our NSW website for updates prior to the event. www.vfvfgranville.org.



(Got a lot of emails and phone calls about my Editorial in the last issue and my accompanying poem, like this one from previous NSW President Frank Cole.)

Just read the Newsletter which I received today. You, and others, have once again excelled with another great read.

You have expressed the thoughts of many with your moving article

"Only When I'm Dead ". You hit the nail on the head with that one.

You also continue to provide our members with something good to look forward to and many like myself read it from cover to cover.

(And this one from an MP who wants to remain anonymous, but often rallies for veterans.)

Dear Editor.

Read the Vietnam Veterans' Newsletter from cover to cover again. Liked the crossword albeit with an error I believe, at clue 22 down.

However what I am writing about is the wonderful piece about veterans' wives on page 8 and the poem on page 9, that really struck an accord with me and some of my colleagues.

Keep up the good fight, Bob.

MP (Anonymous)

(It is indeed an error in the crossword, and the clue should have been 'Unit' not Init, as noted among the indexes on page 5. Sorry readers.)

Editor,

Bob., Congratulations on another fine and informative publication. This one had a lot of reading and unusual stories which I found interesting.

Keep up the good work with Graham and I look forward to the next edition. I have added a short history of the RAAF in Vietnam for you to use if required.

Regards

John Rogers

(We included Johns story on page 46).

Hi Editor,

I write this email on two main topics that affect me the most. Health and Aged Care, and the expose' on the DVA delays and backlog.

I read most of the Newsletter in one sitting, then get back to veterans stories, the crossword, and those terrible jokes which keep me laughing, later, after I cool off from the hard issues.

What I find most irritating is the seemingly blind eye approach that DVA is oblivious to the dangers to veterans in delaying their claims for such long periods. What is the problem for a department supposedly put into place to assist veterans get fair and just compensation, for disabilities they receive when put in harms way by governments, willfully sending men and women off to fight their wars.

People don't purposely make claims willy-nilly and without due cause, unless they want to defraud governments. Veterans, in the main, have no reason to make unsubstantiated claims, so why they are repeatedly asked for several medical reports from medicos the veterans don't know, and have never been to for assessment. And, aren't the qualified advocates assisting veterans aware when someone is being untruthful.

And, aged care. It seems more and more that DVA is trying to reduce their budget by referring the sick and infirm veteran to other government departments responsible for civilian treatment. The excuse is sometimes said to be because other departments are more responsive to the frail and end-of-life respite care than DVA can achieve.

These other agencies often have little regard for veterans circumstances, even basing their fees on a veterans total income, including the compensation component for care assessments.

Oh I could go on, but all I can say is thank you guys for being there in defence of veterans.

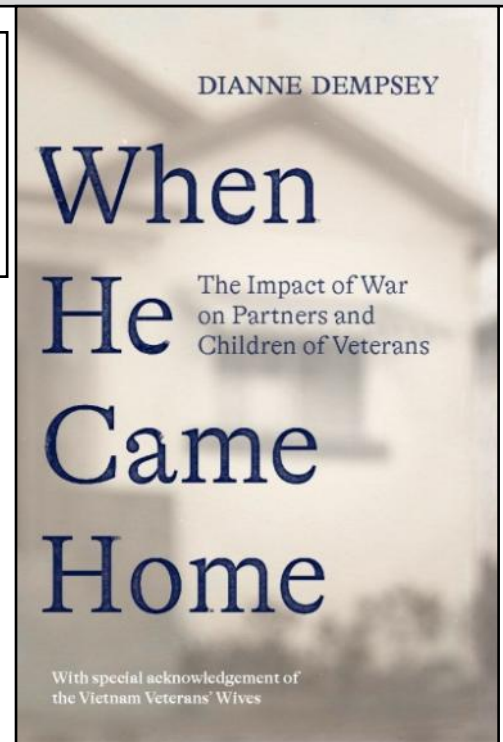
Joe. (Don't use my real name).

How did our families cope when we came home?

Worth reading to better understand what it was like for the wives and children.

Extract

Despite the counselling service two of my children don't talk to each other. I find it very sad. One daughter has changed her name. I believe she wants to divorce herself from our family but emotionally she finds that difficult. Her reflection on her childhood is biased towards the problems of her upbringing. She explains to me that we were lacking in empathy towards her. She said to me once — when you weren't around Dad was very hard on me. ■



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**Tertiary scholarships for children and grandchildren of
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Eligibility: Australian residency or citizenship, child or grandchild of an Australian ex-serving veteran, full-time tertiary student in 2026 enrolled in a minimum one-year course at uni, TAFE or an RTO and in receipt of, or eligible to receive, a means-tested Commonwealth educational benefit - Youth Allowance, ABSTUDY, or Veterans' Children Education Scheme (VCES) or Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act Education and Training Scheme (MRCAETS) in 2026.

We at Vietnam Veterans' , Peacekeepers' & Peacemakers' Association of Australia (NSW Branch) Inc., (VVPAA NSW), affiliated with the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia, has for many years, sponsored Scholarships for children or grandchildren of Vietnam Veterans and also Peacekeepers and Peacemakers who are deserving and in necessitous circumstances, to achieve a better level of education.

The Scholarship will help the recipients who may have otherwise been unable to achieve their educational goals. This is the least we can do for the children of the veterans who have proudly served their country.

Presently the Association sponsors three (3) Scholarships – Tim McCombe OAM Scholarship, Phil Thompson OAM Scholarship and Graham Walker AM Scholarship, which are administered by AVCAT.

Applications open Vietnam Veterans' Day

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VVAA HISTORY DRAFTS

Article 14

The First Half of the Association's Initial Year

Part B - Parliament, the Media, Legal Activities etc

This article is the second of three outlining and commenting on events in the initial six months of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association (afterwards to be the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia). It explains the importance of parliamentary support for the Association's agenda, examines the relationship between the early Association and the media, traces the origins of the call for a judicial inquiry and explores the Association's legal efforts before commenting on the coordination of Association activities, matters of strategy and funding.

The precise mechanics of Association parliamentary influence in the first half of 1980 are mostly unclear. However, mentions of the Association in questions and speeches by critics of the Government (and by Clyde Holding, in particular) point to liaison between those parliamentary critics and, variously, Association President Holt McMinn, Scientific Adviser John Evans and officials of at least the Victorian Branch. Parliamentary critics of the Government's handling of the Vietnam chemical issue who were not in frequent contact with Association figures in the first half-year had opportunities to meet with the organisation's representatives on at least two occasions at Parliament House and were doubtless encouraged to take up the cause by veteran constituents and local Association figures.

Factors other than the thrill of confrontation in the parliamentary chambers, made the wartime

chemical issue an attractive one for Opposition MPs and Senators to raise in an election year.

The feeling that Ministers were struggling to deal with an emotive, complex and occasionally technical issue – something best demonstrated by Defence Minister's Killen's mishandling of parliamentary questions about Agent Orange and affirmed by alleged Government unrest about ministerial performance on the chemical issue – was probably the most important of these factors. The fact that much of the media in this period took delight in the Government's difficulties with a wide range of issues, and happily publicised the worst Ministerial mis-steps (along with the roles of those revealing or precipitating them) would also have encouraged attacks in the parliament. Members and Senators attempting to expose ministerial and Government blunders knew, too, that their parliamentary efforts could yield a double dividend

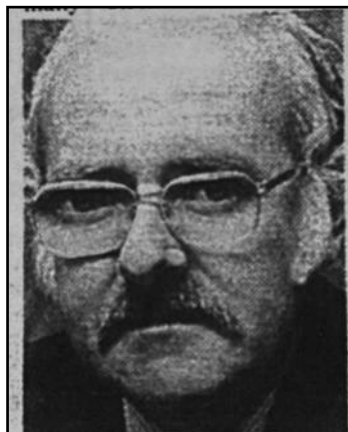


Holt McMinn
National President

because the media would follow through with discomfoting ministerial interviews and irritating news stories.

The Association's eagerness to keep the chemical matter before the public (and to help sympathetic

parliamentarians in their efforts to discredit related Government statements and actions) must also have encouraged Opposition figures to join the chemical fray in the first half of the year. And media stories about a wide range of chemical matters unrelated to either the Vietnam War or relevant events in the parliament would also have fostered coverage of the veteran aspect mostly playing out in the House of Representatives. In short, the broader chemical issue remained 'hot' for the first half of the year and interactions in the parliament over Vietnam War

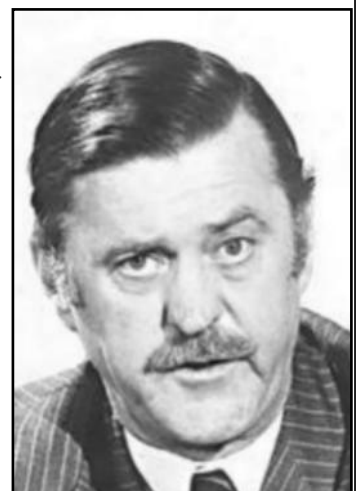


John Evans
Scientific advisor

chemical exposure probably stimulated the search for other chemical stories (in a vicious cycle of revelation, reproach and defensiveness).

The Association's efforts to support the pressure applied by Holding and others to Ministers and the Prime Minister in the House promised more, though, than additional publicity for the Vietnam and broader chemical controversies. Those Association efforts and the resultant attacks constituted the best of available strategies for influencing key Ministers and the Government (and were certainly a factor in the upscaling of

Government investigative efforts at the beginning of April). These efforts were important because, in the hierarchy of matters considered important by



Hon 'Jim' Killen Minister for
Defence



Hon Clyde Holding MP

parliamentarians themselves, performances in the chamber were ranked as more significant than any other. In 'the Canberra bubble' they were ranked as more significant even than ministers' performances on radio and television.

Consistent with this

view of the primacy of parliamentary performance, it was attacks on ministers and the PM over the Vietnam chemical issue – and especially those like Holding's, forcing the Government onto the back foot – that would exert more pressure to properly investigate and compensate harms than could be applied by external forces. As a consequence, the efforts by Holding and by the Association figures assisting him to change the Government's Vietnam chemical stance in the first half of 1980 were worth proceeding with, even if, as it turned out, they failed to result in significant change.

The Association and The Media

While Holding and others took the fight to the Government in the parliament, a small group of Association figures, added to pressure from outside.

John Evans, who as custodian of the Association's scientific knowledge had played an important function explaining the impact of chemicals in meetings with politicians and bureaucrats of various sorts, played an equally important part in the Association's media efforts. He didn't limit himself to a technical role, either, and was often interviewed by himself.

Meanwhile, Holt McMinn, whether in tandem with Evans or separately, pushed the Association agenda (rigorous investigation and appropriate compensation) in the media, outlining veterans' misfortunes, explaining what the



Bill McMillan

Association wanted the Federal Government to do and drawing attention to shortcomings in Government actions and pronouncements.

Bill McMillan, the Association's initial legal adviser, was also a willing media player: mostly by himself, and not restricting himself to strictly

legal issues. He featured in news stories with surprising frequency considering the restrictions on promotional activities by Australian solicitors in the early 1980s. McMillan would seem to have initiated stories to a greater extent than McMinn and Evans; in the absence of any early plan to guide the Association's persuasive efforts, the latter two would seem mostly have responded to media enquiries (and not initiated coverage).

In the early months of the year, **Bernie Szapiel** (Victoria), **Jim Wares** (NSW), **John Harper** (Queensland), **Wendy Rowney** (SA) and **Mike Boland** (ACT) were also frequently in news reports, encouraging attendance at Association meetings and in various ways furthering the cause of investigation and compensation. (These figures can be distinguished from the many veterans who helpfully assisted Association efforts by speaking to the media about their war and post-war experiences.)

It presumably took McMinn, as the most frequent spokesman in the first half of 1980, some time to understand how to get the best out of the media. Indeed, it is arguable that the sharp decline in media reports on Vietnam chemical matters in the final weeks of the half year was as much because of the Association's failure to appreciate the need for new story angles (to sustain media attention), as about other factors: especially the Parliament rising at the end of May.

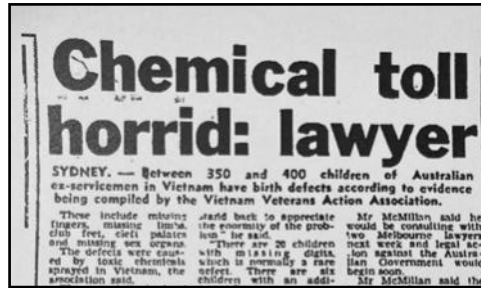
Association media releases and press conferences were evidently rare in the early months of the year. McMinn and Evans' willingness, though, to engage with reporters and provide interesting content – often, in McMinn's case, delivered with larrikin irreverence and ingenuity, and in Evans' case with an eye to disturbing scientific detail – meant that the Vietnam chemical issue had a profile which, buoyed by ongoing domestic and international chemical news stories, craved parliamentary attention for most of the half year.

In that period, Evans and McMinn, unlike in so many ways, often constituted a kind of double act: Evans, precise and unflappable, McMinn, more mercurial and prone to media-friendly outbursts – the former providing the scientific foundation for veterans' concerns (but not being afraid to dwell on the worst health outcomes) and the latter personalising veterans' problems and criticising unsatisfactory official responses. As will be revealed in a future article, Evans would, in time, play a role far beyond the "scientific" or "educative" in determining McMinn's fate as National President and thereby facilitating the presidency of **Phil Thompson**.

If the attacks on Ministers and the Government chronicled in the previous article in this series refute McMinn's and others' later claims that the Association was without friends in this period, coverage of these attacks by the media also discount the argument.

The Association and the Call for a Judicial Inquiry

For both sets of supporters – in the parliament and in the media – the Association's arguments in favour of a public (later judicial) inquiry (during



which exploration of the impact of Vietnam defoliants could be presided over by a judge) were more readily understood than the complexities of defoliant science. Where did the idea of a judicial inquiry spring from?

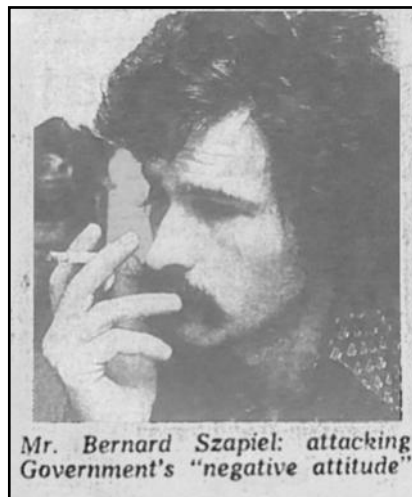
The December 1979 announcements by Bernie Szapiel and Holt McMinn that an association of Vietnam veterans was being formed had included, in the proposed organisation's goals, the requirement for the Government "to hold an inquiry", without specifying what type of inquiry was sought. Those announcements followed an observation by the RSL National President, William Keys, that there needed to be "a special examination of this chemical] problem conducted by the Veterans Affairs Department" and a peculiar report in The Australian that the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (a body charged with reviewing administrative decisions) was, following RSL pressure on the Government, to conduct an inquiry into Vietnam veterans' illnesses. The Szapiel and

McMinn announcements also followed a call by the ACT head of the Regular Defence Forces Association for "a full Federal inquiry".

Prominent NSW veteran Jim Wares, drawing attention to local veterans' health complaints and child deformities in The Australian on Boxing Day, foreshadowed a request for an investigation by a "CSIRO Committee drawing at least 30 per cent of its members

from independent medical practitioners from outside the Government".

The (less-specific) inquiry call was renewed by Szapiel and Wares in early January at the same time as veteran **Tim Fischer** (then a State MP) called for "an independent Australian study", and the Sunday arm of the Melbourne Age reported "calls from [mostly unnamed] medical experts and





Jim Wares

politicians for an independent Australian study of the defoliant.” Independence thus became an entrenched factor, and it was consequently no surprise that Minister Adermann’s 7 January 1980 announcement of an investigation (with details to be provided later) was of an independent study (see

previous article and references to “The Institute study”).

An RSL press release calling for a survey of Vietnam veterans, distributed on the day after the Minister’s study announcement, contained no reference to independent conduct (or the desirability of such conduct), either in relation to its own survey or the Government-proposed study. The RSL’s proposed survey (further commented upon in the next article in this series) was, as a preliminary activity, less in need of independent implementation and analysis than the study-proper, but the League’s failure to push for true independence of the Government exercise was a telling omission: the League evidently saw no problem in Government conduct of the major activity.

The Minister’s announcement of the Government study prompted Holt McMinn to urge



Hon Tim Fisher MP

wide terms of reference and (true) independence “under the auspices of a body like the Academy of Science and jointly chaired by a scientist and a non-scientist”. After a 12 January announcement by the Minister (which included information on the body to conduct the study) and comment by

the project head on proposed steps, McMinn was reported to be warily supportive. However, encouraged by newspaper descriptions of the study as “a Public Service inquiry”, he was soon refocused on ‘independence’, requiring “a purely independent body to run this inquiry”, before (a) describing the Government study as “an attempt to cover up ... [and] ... a cheap political ploy” and (b) stating, correctly, that it would “do little to establish a connection between the defoliant and medical claims”.

A Victorian Liberal back bench, Bill Burns, while welcoming the Government initiative, called soon after for “a thoroughly independent study” before proposing an investigation by a Joint Parliamentary Standing Committee, as people involved in the proposed study were “too tied in with government”.

Public doubts about the usefulness of the Government study continued. Mike Boland repeated McMinn’s claim about its limited utility; the chemical industry wanted major changes to the scope of the exercise; and the Australian Democrats indicated a lack of confidence by calling for a 10 year medical survey of veterans.

On 21 February, Clyde Holding criticised the Government for choosing a form of inquiry “which will exclude submissions from interested persons or organisations ... [and] ... which is under the control of the Minister”. He stated that Vietnam veterans wanted “an open judicial inquiry”. This mention of a judicial inquiry may have been just a casual re-phrasing of the Association’s requirement for a public inquiry, but an Association Press statement, probably issued on the next day, picked up on the precise term, referring to “an Independent Judicial Inquiry”. This brought to an end the Association’s quasi-search for the precise form of its preferred investigation.

Two weeks later, after a meeting of VVAA representatives with the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs in Canberra (discussed below) the specific requirement for a judicial inquiry again emerged. The VVAA attendees at the meeting had been

Chemicals probe fund 'big farce'

by STEVE O'BAUGH

ALLOCATING only \$2 million on an Agent Orange inquiry was "a king-sized farce."

If the Federal Government were serious in its promise to test Vietnam veterans, other ex-servicemen and all their families, it would cost more than \$50 million, the Vietnam Veterans Action Committee said yesterday.

A total 160,000 people will be tested for possible side-effect cases and to make comparisons.

"After a careful study of the facts, we have found it would be impossible for the Government to hold a serious and conclusive inquiry on such a paltry budget of \$2 million," said Mr Gary Hamilton, Victorian president of the VVAC.

The VVAC's attack on the Government followed release yesterday of five research studies in America which showed Agent Orange probably causes cancer in humans.

US House of Representatives members Thomas A. Daschle and David Bonior said the studies directly contradicted statements by the US Veterans Administration that there was no evidence linking the chemical with cancer in humans.

Mr Hamilton said the Australian Government's two-year study to determine whether any of the 40,000 Australian veterans had suffered disabilities after coming in contact with the defoliant in Vietnam was a "complete waste of time and money."



informed by the Minister that any changes they wanted made to the Government study needed to be put to DVA in writing; McMinn responded with a demand for a judicial inquiry.

McMinn and the relevant advisers might have been persuaded of the merits of a judicial inquiry by the conduct of notable late 1970s inquiries presided over by judges, the most notable of which was the NSW Royal Commission into Drug Trafficking (the Woodward Royal Commission, reporting, coincidentally, in late October 1979). However, the Fraser Government, wasn't the least averse to establishing Federal public inquiries, having appointed an astounding sixty-four of them between December 1975 and the end of 1979; these included various committees of review, committees of inquiry, plain reviews and Royal Commissions, to name just a few of the forms taken by these bodies. A good number were presided over by judges. The deliberations of some were well publicised but, most, owing to their obscure subject

matter, were only occasionally reported on. All provided the Association with a model of open scrutiny of a public problem. Perhaps the Toose Inquiry – commented upon in the very first article in this series, and a marathon example of the relevant activity – was also recalled by veterans and advisers.

More important, though, than speculation about who and where the idea of a judicial inquiry came from is what, procedurally, such an inquiry was thought to offer viz the previously referred to opportunity to proffer evidence on chemical matters, to contest contrary evidence, and to call and cross-examine witnesses ... all before an impartial judge.

The call for such an inquiry and the flip-side of that call – condemnation of the Government alternative – were, in the absence of Government acceptance of Association-supported science, an important element of the attacks by Holding and others on Minister Adernann. Persuasive rejection of the Association's call for a judicial inquiry was the task before the Government ... and took up much of the third (31 March 1980) Ministerial Statement by Adernann on the chemical matter in the House.

Legal Activities

Writing about Association-related legal issues is challenging because Bill McMillan, the Association's initial legal adviser, was involved from a very early point in a wide range of activities. These included ones of an organisational nature and those best described as 'influencing', in addition to the furtherance of negligence actions in Australia and the US – actions in which the Association had a vital interest but to which it could not be a formal party. There were soon, too, other Australian lawyers assisting the Association, mostly with US (class) action matters, in addition to the American lawyers, led by Victor Yannacone, steering that class action. Still other lawyers – usually solicitors – were also organised to assist in minor criminal matters as part of State Branch welfare work.



McMillan made mention of a four-pronged (all fronts) possible legal strategy in his initial correspondence to McMinn but his focus would seem thereafter to have been mostly divided between negligence actions at home and abroad, noting that preparatory work for

these proceedings – especially in making connections between harms and (breached) legal duties – was going to be of potential help in pressuring the Government and pursuing positive outcomes in other forums, including repatriation tribunals. Work on these negligence actions was undertaken at some risk to McMillan, particularly because of the expenses associated with participation in US events, but such was the legal model in place and such was his willingness to proceed.

McMillan's Australian negligence actions

MacMillan was to act for two veterans and their families in negligence suits against the Federal Government and chemical companies (with the Association having, in all likelihood, connected the veterans with McMillan in the first place). Legal action was formally initiated for both families in the first half of 1980. As will be discussed in later articles, Government records indicate that neither of these suits were to benefit the plaintiff families or, perhaps, McMillan. However, if there had been different outcomes for the plaintiffs, other veterans in similar circumstances would have been able to follow the same legal path.

Associated with these two actions were McMillan's efforts to have the Government waive the protection potentially afforded it by the statute of limitations (which prevented legal action from being commenced after the passing of specific time periods ... with the precise periods varying from state to state). McMillan also undertook work to determine whether the judgement in Parker v

Commonwealth, thought to prevent military negligence actions against the Commonwealth, was likely to see the two 1980 actions fail.

In the first half of 1980 McMillan repeatedly sought a waiver of the statute of limitations so that suits on behalf of various parties (including, perhaps, McMinn) wouldn't be halted. He filed the initial writ on behalf of veteran Richard Brady and his family on 3 April 1980, when worried that their right to sue would be extinguished. With waiver matters still unresolved in early June, a further writ was lodged in Brisbane, this time on behalf of veteran Ken Fulton and his family. By initiating proceedings before the statute of limitations was thought to take effect, the right to proceed against the Commonwealth and chemical companies (many more of which were listed in the first writ than the second) was believed to have been preserved in each instance. McMillan also held discussions with the chemical company defendants in the second case, in an effort to streamline proceedings.

The US Class Action

The class action work undertaken by McMillan in the first half of 1980, was aimed at assembling a group of veterans to be 'representative' participants in the US proceedings and at securing the relevant US court's approval for that participation. State Branches of the Association performed an important support role: disseminating information, encouraging participation and gathering the inevitable forms, all in the hope of compensation for their members and hope of a persuasive outcome for use in other investigation and compensation activities.

McMillan acted quickly to familiarise himself with relevant US events, to brief McMinn (and presumably others) and then to get forms to State Branches for completion by veterans. Using the collected information, he had, before the end February, drafted and lodged in New York a lengthy 'verified complaint' and a litigation docket. That docket listed (as members of the class of plaintiffs) 40 living Australian veterans, a deceased veteran and that veteran's widow... but also mentioned children

at risk and children in generations to come. He evidently established good relations with the Yannacone team while in the US and was assisted by (and in turn aided) the plaintiffs' consortium. In April he was back in the US, taking steps to establish the Australian veterans as a separate class before the court and to witness attempts (a) by the chemical company defendants to stymie the larger proceedings and (b) by the US Government to extricate itself from the case.

If the complexities of Australian litigation processes were such that Association officials, like most lay Australians in this period, were in no position to tell whether matters were being appropriately advanced in the two Australian negligence cases, things were worse with the (US) class action. There was no equivalent of the class action in Australian law at that time and the preliminary procedural matters which occupied McMillan at home and, especially in the US, must have seemed frustratingly mysterious (and unnecessarily slow) to the Association officials to whom he reported from time to time. McMillan's tendency while in the US to become involved in matters peripheral to the Australian element of the case – as was his right, providing the Australians weren't being billed for that work – probably

contributed to rising Association dissatisfaction with him, as did a perception that he was enjoying work in the US (and with the Americans) a little more than he should.

The Association officials' lack of control of class action matters, the delays in communications between Australia and the US, and the labyrinthine related litigation processes probably contributed to a deterioration of the relationship between McMillan and the Association in late May

and early June. The sizeable fee to be taken by the Americans in the event of a win and McMinn/Victorian Branch dissatisfaction with legal matters being run from afar (from Queensland) doubtless also played a part, as did the inability of John Evans to have input to the US case preparations (except in writing). Perhaps there was a feeling, as well, that McMillan – who had also been representing the Atomic Veterans' Association – was spreading himself too thin.

The alleged failure of the class action documentation to comprehend Agent Blue (a Vietnam herbicide containing arsenic) brought matters to a head. According to McMillan, a group of officials (McMinn, Adams and Branch Presidents), sent him a telex threatening to withdraw from the class action, unless Agent Blue was



Ken Fulton and family. 'The children have problems ranging from cerebral palsy and hole in the heart.'

Diggers sue US firms

WESTBURY, New York, Tuesday (AAP-AP). — A class-action lawsuit claiming that more than 600 Australian servicemen were harmed by exposure to the herbicide Agent Orange in Vietnam was filed yesterday in the Federal District Court.

Mr William McMillan, of Brisbane, who appeared for the claimants said about 200 of them were already taking part in a suit by about 600 American servicemen against six chemical companies which had made Agent Orange.

But Mr McMillan said he decided "it was necessary to file a separate class-action suit" because "the number of Australian servicemen affected . . . proved to be disproportionate to the others".

He said he had obtained information from the Australian Government that the use of Agent Orange had been concentrated in Phuoc Thuy province, where the Australian troops had been concentrated.

The suit named eight chemical companies as defendants. They are Dow Chemical Co, Monsanto Co, Hercules Inc, Thompson-Hayward Chemical Co, Shamrock Corp, William T. Thompson Inc, and Uniroyal Inc.

included. Association officials also seem to have refused his phone calls.

The ever-imperturbable McMillan, who'd dealt calmly with earlier annoyances, was clearly irritated by the Association's behaviour at this point. He persuasively refuted the assertions that Agent Blue had been omitted and provided a sensible way ahead for the aggrieved officials viz holding off on withdrawal until they'd received assurances from the US regarding the inclusion of Agent Blue. He even took steps to placate Evans. But at the mid-year point, Association confidence in him looked to be irreparable and continuing organisational support for the US proceedings seemed doubtful.

Coordination of Activities

Surviving materials don't reveal anything useful about the coordination of early Association activities. Indeed, it seems that in the absence of mechanisms for agreeing on policies and processes (aka a national constitution) and for coordinating activities, State Branches acted as independent entities. They mostly left Federal Government and parliamentary interactions to McMinn, and scientific commentary to Evans. The two things in the first half of 1980 that point to some measure of combined action (as distinct from collaboration on activities) were (a) the press release responding to Minister Adernann's 21 February statement (mentioned in the previous instalment in this series) and the mid-June telex sent by McMinn, Adams and Branch Presidents to McMillan threatening to withdraw from the class action.

As was noted in earlier articles, the technological advances that would make inter-state communication easier and cheaper in later decades didn't exist in the period covered here. Coordination and collaboration by phone would have been both ineffective and expensive (more about which below).

With air travel also being hugely expensive, face to face meetings were also impractical. There were meeting possibilities on the sidelines of other

planned gatherings, like the "national forum" announced by ACT Association Secretary, Mike Boland, in early February 1980, and a National General Meeting scheduled for 12 and 13 April, but there seem not be any records of these events taking place. Thus it was that, apart from any one-on-one phone conversations between Branch Presidents, or between individual Branch Presidents and McMinn, there weren't useful coordination opportunities – assuming the existence of any real willingness to cooperate – between the State visits made by McMinn in January/February 1980 and the national conference held in May 1980.

Minutes of that May conference, if they were written in Bill McMillan's (probable) absence, are not in any of the collections examined by the author and seem not to be in the possession of readers of earlier articles in this series. It isn't therefore clear what decisions were made about the ways in which things should proceed for the Association. Hints about the proceedings in documents about other matters do point, though, to attempts at the coordination of at least one set of common Branch activities viz the welfare ones. The appointment of a Victorian social welfare worker, Dirk Van Neuren, as National Welfare Co-ordinator points to a recognition that, in at least the provision of welfare services (if not the pursuit of related funding), collaboration was desired.

Strategy

The Association's strategy in this period embodied the scattergun approach, rather than simple opportunism, with efforts being made to persuade the Government of the soundness of Evan's science, to pressure the same Government into permitting a public (judicial) inquiry, and to have DVA adopt a more accommodating approach to claims, including possible amendment to repatriation legislation to cover wives and children. There was a complex, seemingly unstated logic in play, justifying action on multiple fronts.

If the Association's take on the science was accepted by the Government, then repatriation claiming outcomes could be different, as a wider

range of disabilities could be accepted as war-caused. After changes to repatriation legislation, wives and children could also be compensated. The judicial inquiry could, if the Government again accepted the science, still explore the harms and make recommendations about supplementary compensation etc, having taken evidence from the veterans and allowed them to cross-examine witnesses.

If, though, the favourable science hadn't been accepted by the Government by the time any judicial inquiry commenced its work, a proper hearing of the veterans scientific case would, it was thought, lead to acceptance of that science (with positive repatriation claiming and other compensation consequences).



Garry Hamilton

Interactions with parliamentarians and the media (and through both with the public), and engagement with the legal system at home and abroad, served various and multiple components of the larger above-outlined strategy.

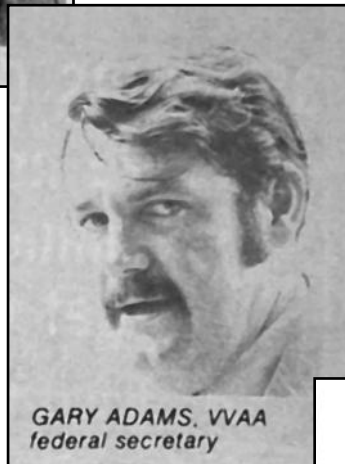
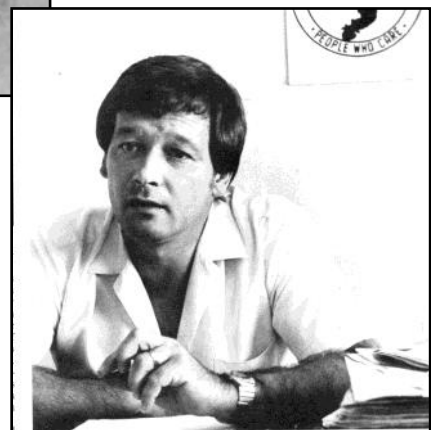
Funding

Funding had been a problem for the new Association from the outset, and individuals like McMinn and Evans, needing to travel in order to represent the new organisation, didn't need to be reminded by Bill McMillan in early February 1980 (see above) of the need for a reliable source of funds beyond the relatively small sums raised through membership fees (only required from veterans able to pay). The capacity of McMinn and other officials to engage, face-to-face, with politicians, senior public servants, the RSL National President and even Association State Branches was limited by money at hand, mostly their own.

Even where State branches conducted day-to-day welfare activities from office-bearers' homes, relying on volunteer professionals and/or lay assistants to contain costs, there was a need for funds to meet various expenses. In branches where officials gave up employment to perform association activities there was doubtless a greater need for financial support, even if only to cover costs incurred in the additional welfare and promotional activities permitted by full-time effort. It was the need to self-fund work on behalf of the Association, and the decisions to forego income in order to perform that work (or, more accurately, 'the lack of peer acknowledgement of the consequent personal financial costs') that would be a major cause of disappointment and bitterness among early Association officials in later years.

Attempts were made in the first half of 1980 to combat the Association's funding judicial inquiry (see previous article) included a requirement that the Association's participation be

appropriately funded by the Federal Government – action for which McMinn said there was "vast precedent". That funding request was rejected, along with the judicial inquiry to which it was attached.

GARY ADAMS, VVAA
federal secretary

Phil Thompson

Other requests for Government financial assistance were for grants for welfare activities (but almost certainly providing for other activities/ personnel). These requests included a McMinn application to Minister Adermann for a grant-in-aid in late March 1980 (supported by correspondence from the Victorian Association President, **Gary Hamilton**) and the more practical grant approaches by the NSW Branch's **Carla McCallum** to NSW Government entities – the first being via Premier Wran in April 1980. (Both the McMinn and McCallum attempts are covered in detail in an earlier instalment in this series.) None of these applications met with success, even if they played an important role in emphasising the importance the Association attached to veteran-conducted welfare activities.

The lack of cash not only stymied plans to upscale welfare services but must have signalled an end to other hopes eg for the part-payment of officials, the payment of honoraria to professional helpers and the acquisition of more suitable premises. The lack of funds almost certainly brought an unheralded end to a planned study tour of Vietnam and an associated fund-raising film.

Not all fund-raising efforts failed. Gary Adams, Secretary of the NSW Branch, who'd probably not improved the content of one of McCallum's grant applications, was especially adept at fundraising by direct approach to RSL Clubs and Sub-Branches. His admirable, unashamed soliciting for funds was combined with the educative work that he and Phil Thompson successfully did, commencing in the latter part of the period covered here. The sums raised, though helpful, can only have covered a few of the costs incurred by the two men in their various activities. Other branches of the Association employed the traditional money raising strategies of community organisations (as they would do for years to come) but subsisted in "smell of oily rag" fashion, apparently unable, even when willing, to finance activities beyond their own component of the organisation. ■

The next article in this series looks at the relevant activities of (and relations with) the RSL in the first half of 1980. It also attempts to piece together the story of early Branches of the Association in the same period.

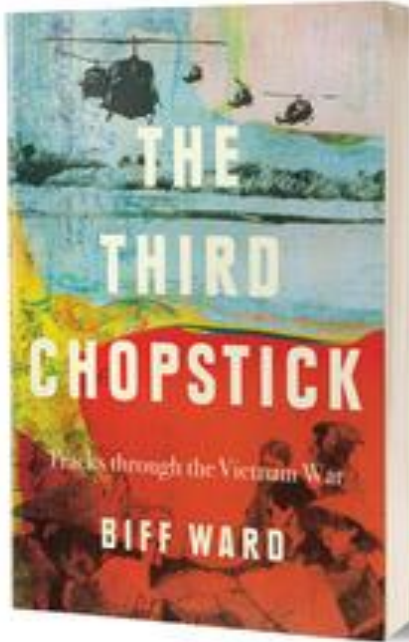
Kel Robertson is a Canberra writer. He is currently researching the history of the VVAA. The views expressed in this article are his and not those of the Federation.



The aim of "VVAA History Drafts" is to inform readers about progress made with the Association's history and encourage people who have relevant additional information to assist in improving the text. Readers with extra information or who would like a copy of the article with sources cited, can contact Kel at vvhistory99@gmail.com. Readers who wish to take issue with the content of the article are encouraged to view the extra material and notes on sources in the version available from Kel.

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Excerpt from: The Third Chopstick



Do you remember Ray Fulton?

He contributed so much to our Federation and to veterans' welfare in general.

This book, amongst other things, is about him.

If you remember Ray, we invite you to write a letter-to-the-editor with your memories.

As I drifted about [at the Granville office], I saw that the volunteer advisors each had their own style, just as Ray had told me in Darling Harbour. One was quiet, focused on pen to paper, another joked and spread his hands. It was triage work. They listened and decided what was needed: accommodation, money, food, medical help. Nearly always, they set the guy on the path to repatriation benefits, which meant supplying contacts for psychiatrists. As volunteers, they worked as much as they wished, every day or once a month.

It's part of our own therapy, they all told me. We've been there.

As they helped each other wind down a little, it granted them enough slack to be able to help the next guy wind down too.

One guy said to me, they wound us up with all that training, but they didn't wind us down. They were working out how to do that themselves. ■

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VIETNAM VETERANS STORIES

Memories of a Nasho - Part 4—The Final Chapters. Post Vietnam, the Downside and Upside

By Ted 'OKA' Davies OAM AFSM

THE DOWNSIDE

“F---- off and don’t tell anyone where you have been”. These were the final words of advice that I was given as my two years of National Service came to an end. It was the time of protest against the Vietnam war and it seemed so unjust to be treated this way for not only my time in the service of my country but also for mates who had made the ultimate sacrifice.

So, like many Vietnam Vets, I just went underground. I got on with life and returned to outback western NSW and became a station manager of a very large sheep station near Wilcannia. I met the love of my life, a Sydney nurse and we were married in late 1971. Two children, both boys came along in 1973 and 1974 followed by an only and favourite daughter in 1979.

I suffered from the Agent Orange rash for many years and had bouts of wartime nightmares and malarial type sweating. In the middle of the night, my wife would not only have to calm me down but also change my pyjamas and the completely soaked bedsheets. Eventually, following a collapse, I was flown out by the Flying Doctor Service and diagnosed with malaria. I received a special course of tablets and was finally cured of the condition.

I had virtually no contact with anything to do with Vietnam until the “Welcome Home” parade in 1987. It was only through another Veteran and the urging of my wife that I attended that most wonderful event. My wife says that we were like kids at a birthday party as we met one and then another and then still another of our Vietnam mates. There were tears of joy and hugs and backslapping as we met up. It seemed a great release of all the bottled-up feelings and thoughts that we had harboured over the years.



Welcome home parade Sydney October 1987

Finally, it seemed that we were being accepted as true wartime veterans. During the march through the city, crowds of people lined the streets and waved banners of welcome and thanks.



John Schumann at the concert in the Domain
Following the Welcome Home parade.

(Continued on page 38)

At the concert in the domain, it poured with rain, but no one moved because we did not want to break the magic spell of our reunion.

Following that wonderful and momentous event, I attended our 9 RAR reunions in Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane, Canberra and Maroochydore. I was also at the dedication of the Vietnam War Memorial in Canberra and will never forget the low overflight of a lone Huey helicopter as it flew along the march to the memorial. The deep whop, whop, whop of its rotor blades brought back such strong memories of our time in Vietnam. A similar thing occurred at our reunion in Perth. We were assembled at the war memorial up in King's Park overlooking the Swan River and the city. As the names of our war dead were being read out, three Caribou aircraft flew in-formation and low, right over the top of us assembled veterans.

It is my belief that those Vietnam veterans who have been involved in reunions and meets are in a better frame of mind and have handled life better than those who have remained underground. I have also been most fortunate to have a wonderful wife who has not only shared the better times but also supported me through the low periods of my life.

In the mid 1990's, I experienced my worst time when I started getting flashbacks of horrific wartime scenes of my time in Vietnam. I turned to Dr Bundaberg Rum to ease the pain and things spiralled down. Fortunately, my Vietnam mates helped me to register with DVA and I was called for a medical review. Following that review, I received a white card for PTSD, hearing loss and a couple of other matters. The greatest help that I received however, was being referred to a psychiatrist, Dr Jim Taylor. He helped wean me off Dr Bundaberg and get those terrible flashback images out of my memory in the back corners of my brain. I also had a paranoia of crowds and used to get panic attacks when in such a situation. Dr Taylor retired some years ago and referred me onto another Doctor who I still see a couple of times each year. My fear of crowds still remains.

In the mid 1990's, I experienced my worst time when I started getting flashbacks of horrific wartime scenes of my time in Vietnam. I turned to Dr Bundaberg Rum to ease the pain and things spiralled down.

However, I am able to manage my feelings reasonably well. My wife shared this very low period of my life. Whilst initially fearful of my sessions with Dr Taylor, she now agrees that it was the best thing to happen to me.

At a local Anzac Day commemoration, I was asked to be the guest speaker. I would like to quote two sections of my speech which you may find interesting and contra.

"I have to say, that like many before me, I found it all a great adventure. We were young and strong and fit with a whole lot of other young blokes. The girls were all beautiful and the music of the 1960's

was truly fabulous. It was a great time to be alive. We were jumping in and out of helicopters and flying in various other aircraft. We were training with and firing all sorts of machine guns and other weapons. We went on training exercises up in the remote Blue Mountains of NSW and in the McPherson Ranges along the NSW/QLD border above the Canungra Jungle Training Centre and in north QLD. We travelled in Armoured Personnel Carriers and worked

with huge Centurion tanks. Even going overseas to Vietnam seemed somehow exciting and exotic".

And another part of my speech –

"Finally, I would like to speak about those brave men and women who served. In my own case, 35 men from my unit, of the 523, were killed in action in Vietnam. 35 good men, boys really, who were not able to go on to marry their sweethearts and have children or experience the wonderful joy of grandchildren. The effect on their families is still being felt today over 50 years since they were killed. Many of the men in my unit were wounded in action and all were psychologically wounded in some form or other from the horrors they experienced.

Tragically, when we arrived home, our own society rejected us and labelled us baby killers and some even had red paint thrown over them. Many were further traumatised by this rejection and went underground and dropped out of the world”.

I have been so fortunate to have such a supportive wife. At times it must have been so unbearable for her when I pushed her away – “You don’t understand because you were not there”. She held me through my nightmares and comforted me when I was at my lowest. When I was attempting to upgrade my status level with DVA, she insisted on being with me at the interview. When I was being questioned about various conditions and answered that things were not too bad and that I was handling things reasonably well, her reaction to the interviewer was “That is NOT right, he is really struggling because I know, I have to care for him”. The pension officer immediately sat up and said to her – “Tell me more”.

It was really because of my wife that I finally received a DVA Gold Card in 2009 and all of my conditions were accepted as being caused by my service in Vietnam as an Infantry soldier/signaller. I have to sincerely thank Denis Hamner (OAM) from the Vietnam Veterans Federation at Granville for doing the hard yards and preparing all the paperwork for me. Without his help and my wife’s determination, I may have not achieved my upgraded status.

When I read and hear about how veterans of conflicts since Vietnam are still being treated by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, it makes me angry to know that so many of those veterans are being treated so badly. Tragically because of the long delays in having their cases being dealt with, so many veterans have taken their own life. It seems that the latest scam by the Department is to simply allocate the tens of thousands of claims that have been made and then release statements that the backlog of claims has been dramatically reduced. These veterans may have to wait a year or more for

their claim to be accepted. But, they need the help now – not in a year or two’s time. I hope and pray that the Department of Veterans’ Affairs can address all the claims by veterans in a timely manner.

Our politicians send off our servicemen and women into harm’s way with their hands on their hearts promising to look after them and their families if they are wounded or killed. Now, all we demand is that they honour that promise!!!

THE UPSIDE

“This man has leadership potential” were words written by my Infantry Corps training Platoon Commander. These words were quite uncanny because they proved to be a major factor which governed my life post National Service.

I have written in my previous chapter– the Downside” of the effects on my life caused by my service in Vietnam. However, it almost seems that I have lived another life in parallel with that downside.

When I read and hear about how veterans of conflicts since Vietnam are still being treated by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, it makes me angry to know that so many of those veterans are being treated so badly.

There is no doubt that my time in the army subtly developed various skills and in particular leadership skills. Leadership is not about being bossy or ordering people about or letting them know that you are in charge. It is basically about recognising the skills and talents of people in your team and then providing the conditions for those talents and skills to develop and blossom. It is about supporting the people in your team and not micro-managing them.

Before all operations in Vietnam, we received a briefing. Each man knew his own role and what was required of him. He also knew what each man in his section’s role was, so that if that man was killed or wounded, another could step in and fill that role. The briefing was and is a very important part of any task and was part of my learning process.

(Continued on page 40)

The first opportunity for those skills that were developed by my time in the army came about during the massive bushfires that occurred in the western division of NSW in the summer of 1974/75. There was no leadership in the field and in frustration, a group of us farmers agreed that something needed to be done. They urged me to take on the position of Bushfire Brigade Captain because, "You have been in the army and know how to organise things". And, that is where it all started. I did take on the position of Brigade Captain and was able to successfully conduct bushfire fighting operations. Because of that success, I was appointed by the NSW Government as an "Emergency Fire Controller" in charge of a series of very large bushfires. Following another very bad series of bushfires during the summer of 1976/77, I was appointed as a Group Captain in charge of firefighting operations in the largest Shire in NSW, an area the size of Tasmania.

Over the period of my time in the far west, I was called on to manage and control hundreds of bushfires with about a quarter of them being major operations. These major bushfires can be hundreds of kilometres in circumference. They require very extensive management and logistics in manpower, earthmoving equipment, fuel and food resupply, mechanical and tyre repair and safe operations. Because of my experience in bushfire control and logistics, I was invited to become a member of the Bushfire Council of NSW and was elected as Chairman of the Technical Sub-Committee. In 2008, I was awarded the Australian Fire Services Medal in recognition of my services.



TOP: These AFSM recipients received their awards from the Commissioner at a ceremony at Government House in late September 2008. (Left to right): Edward Davies, William Dunn, Ron Jollow, Steven Yorke, Commissioner Fitzsimmons, George Alexander, Mark Swayn, Dennis Saunders.

As Bushfire Brigade Captain, I had established not only Bushfire Brigade units in the pastoral areas of my Shire of Central Darling but also a town brigade in Wilcannia. In 1982, there was a tragic road accident on the Barrier Highway in our area. People were trapped in vehicles and some actually died because there was no rescue squad with suitable equipment to release them. The local Police Sergeant approached me to establish a rescue squad in Wilcannia. After calling a town meeting and further investigation, I was able to establish a State Emergency Services road rescue unit and thus began my involvement with the NSW State Emergency Services. They provided a basic road rescue kit and trailer. I joined the SES and was appointed as a squad captain. The SES also provided training in not only road rescue, but also over a period, in navigation, flood-boat operations, rescue from heights and depths, chainsaw operations and training.

Whilst road rescue was the main operational task for my SES unit, we had a number of successful search operations for lost persons including two very young children that had wandered away and were out overnight. We also had mine rescue training at White Cliffs and for a natural gas pipeline explosion. Over the years, my unit attended a large number of road accidents which often involved not only freeing trapped and injured persons but also in recovering the bodies of those killed in the accident.

My leadership skills in the State Emergency Services were recognised and I was appointed as Local Controller for the Shire of Central Darling. In the late 1990's, I was awarded the NSW State Emergency Services medal by the Minister for Emergency Services.

In 1982, I was approached by a number of people to stand as a candidate for our local Council elections and agreed to do so. Following the ballot, I was elected as a Councillor in A Riding which took in my property and the towns of Wilcannia and White Cliffs. Our Shire of Central Darling only had 3,400 residents in the entire Shire. We had an area of some 51,000 sq kms and there were three major towns of Wilcannia, Ivanhoe and Menindee, the village of White Cliffs and two hamlets Tilpa and Darnick.

Our rate-base only contributed a small amount but, we had contracts with the NSW and Federal

Governments which enabled us to maintain a workforce in each of our major communities.

I was on the Council for sixteen years over four terms. In my third term as Councillor, I was elected to be Deputy Shire President and in my final term, I was elected Shire President which is equivalent of Mayor.

There were other appointments over the years because of my leadership skills. I was appointed by the NSW Government to a number of posts. I was a member of the Wild Dog Destruction Board which operates and maintains the wild dog border fence between NSW and South Australia and NSW and Queensland. I was on that board for 21 years. I was appointed by the NSW Government as a Land Board member. The Land Board is like a Court that hears and makes determinations on matters to do with local land disputes and boundary issues as well as advising Council on land use matters. I was on that board for over 20 years.

I was elected President of our local NSW Farmers Association and its predecessor the Livestock and Grain Producers Association. There were other groups that I was associated with including being Secretary of the Wilcannia RSL Sub-Branch for 35 years and a further number of years, Secretary of the Narromine RSL Sub-Branch.

However, perhaps one of my prouder associations was with my local aboriginal community. As landholders, my wife and I made available our property for visits by them in various ways. We had an aboriginal sacred site on our property and were able to negotiate access to that site by local aboriginal people. We gave free access to aboriginal work parties cutting and gathering firewood for the older members of our community. We encouraged and fostered Boys camps where aboriginal elder men would bring out boys to pass on their cultural stories and values. We were able to supply freshwater and bushtucker on a suitable site along the river. We also conducted Girls camps for the older aboriginal women to bring out and teach young girls about female matters and values.

As a Shire Councillor, I was always proud of the fact that our Shire employed a good number of aboriginal people. However, it was as Shire President that I discovered that many of our aboriginal employees were struggling with literacy.

Realising the problem, I was able to arrange literacy classes to be done in Shire time and also arranged for medical and dental checks too. The results were very pleasing with a lift in satisfaction amongst our employees.

In 2004, I received the Anzac of the Year award for services to the community. The award consists of a large heavy pure copper medallion featuring John Simson and his donkey on the front side and is engraved with my name on the reverse side. After the Combat badge and the return from Active Service badge, this is the award that I treasure most. A maximum of only one award per State can be made each year and in 2004 only four awards for the whole of Australia were made. My nomination was made by the State Emergency Services Commissioner, Brigadier Phillip McManara and seconded by my Vietnam Company Commander, Brigadier Laurie Lewis.

In 2005, at the urging of some fellow veterans, I joined Legacy and became a Legatee. I became quite actively involved when a very young mother's husband passed away from a condition exasperated by his service in the Solomon Island Peace Keeping Force. She had two children aged two and five years. I was her Legatee and my wife and I were able to assist her in attending a number of Legacy camps. Our branch was able to assist this young mother establish a new life although there were many difficulties along the way. Her children are now 17 and 14 years old and happily she married a widower with three boys of his own.

In 2010, I received an Order of Australia medal also for services to the community in recognition of my involvement in all of the various groups and organisations over the years.

I am sure that the organisational and leadership skills that I absorbed whilst serving in the army and particularly in Vietnam had a major influence on my life. In a remote community like Wilcannia, those skills became a major asset to that community and the people of the far west.

Ted Davies OAM AFSM.



TAX AND YOUR ON-LINE SIDE HUSTLE

With money becoming tighter as inflation rises, many people are looking to make some extra income from a 'side hustle'.

As we move towards a cashless society and transact more online, it's becoming easier for the ATO to follow the money trail. Whether you rent your caravan on Camplify, or even if you simply sell household items on Gumtree, the tax man will be paying attention.

Not all online income needs to be declared, but it's important to understand the difference between an online hobby and a business. Otherwise, you could find yourself with an unexpected tax bill.

Business or a hobby?

Even with a well-paying day job, many people have an online side hustle for fun or to earn extra cash.

Whether your online activity is just a hobby or a business makes a big difference.

Income earned from hobby activities is non-assessable for tax purposes, while income from a business is assessable and must be declared in your tax return. This could include revenue from an eBay shop, rental income through platforms such as Stayz, and fees from work sourced from Airtasker.

There is no legislative definition of 'carrying on a business', but the ATO provides a series of questions to help you decide. For example:

- Do you have an online 'shop' and pay fees?
- Is your main intention to make a profit?

- Do you make regular sales?
- Do you manage your online sales activities as if they are a business?
- Do you advertise your online space?
- Do you keep records and have a business plan?

Every 'yes' means you are more likely to be carrying on a business.

Side businesses and tax

Where your side activities are a business, you must declare all your secondary income, regardless of how much or how little you make each year.

If your side hustle is considered a business for tax purposes, it means your business-related costs are tax-deductible and you may be able to access the various business tax concessions on offer.

For side businesses where your annual turnover exceeds \$75,000, you need to register for GST. This tax needs to be added to all your taxable sales and paid to the ATO every quarter.

With online activities that remain a hobby the income is non-assessable and you do not have compliance obligations, but you can't claim a deduction for your costs.

ATO surveillance and data-matching

Although some taxpayers think their online hustle will go unnoticed, the ATO has vast data-matching powers to help it identify any unreported income – wherever it is earned.

In recent years the tax regulator has made it clear online-generated revenue is an important target for its non-compliance surveillance activities.

The ATO receives and collates information from a wide range of third-party sources, including banks, payment systems and online selling platform providers such as eBay, Amazon Commercial Services, Airbnb and Uber.

The ATO also has the power to collect information for its data-matching projects to address concerns about specific industries, issues or tax risks, and one of its 'special purpose acquisition data' programs covers online selling.

Under its online selling data-matching program, the ATO tracks the activity of registered online sellers and obtains details of businesses with annual trading activity in goods and services of \$12,000 or more.

Get professional assistance

If your side hustle is successful and becomes more than a spare time activity, it makes sense to talk to an accounting professional. They can help you decide whether your activities will be considered a hobby or a business.

A business must substantiate any tax deductions it claims, so you need to keep detailed records of all your business-related activities and ensure you lodge your business activity statements (BAS) and tax returns.

We can also help you work through your tax obligations such as applying for an ABN, registering for GST, and establishing a proper recordkeeping system for your income and expenses. You may also need help with preparing and lodging your quarterly BAS.

To discuss further or to arrange a time to review your current financial position please contact:

Paul Messerschmidt of PSK Financial Services Group Pty Ltd trading as PSK Private Wealth ABN 24 134 987 205 is an Authorised Representative of PSK Advisory Services Pty Ltd - AFSL 234656. Any advice included in this document has been prepared without taking into account your objectives, financial situation or needs. Before acting on the advice, you should consider whether it's appropriate to you, in light of your objectives, financial situation or needs.

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**HELPING YOU CREATE
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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE RAAF IN VIETNAM

BY John Rogers OAM JP

The involvement by the RAAF in Vietnam started with arrival of the training team when Dakota aircraft from Butterworth Malaysia provided a resupply service to the members of the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam not only in Saigon but at more remote airstrips where the team were operating with native troops.



DC-3 Dakota

In August 1964 three aircraft on their delivery flights from De-Haviland Canada were diverted from Malaysia to Vung Tau in South Vietnam where they commenced operations the next day. They were known as Wallaby Airlines not because of the red kangaroo on the aircraft but rather the squadron call sign of "Wallaby". Another aircraft was added, and this became RAAF Transport Flight Vietnam. Later another three aircraft were sent to Vietnam and the transport flight became 35 SQN.

The Caribou was a short take-off and landing aircraft which could utilize the dirt and basic surfaced airstrips throughout the area of operations. The Caribou operated with a crew of four being 2 pilots, a loadmaster and assistant loadmaster carrying anything that would fit into the cargo bay.

There were 3 aircraft lost during the deployment with no major casualties.



DHC-4 Caribou

Mail, ammunition, passengers, fuel, timber and even live animals were transported in the caribous. The Caribous were the first in and last out leaving Vietnam in February 1972.



UH-1 Iroquois

With the increase in ground troops and the formation of the task force in 1966 the RAAF decided to deploy 9 Squadron, flying UH1 Iroquois helicopters. After some disagreement with army about being too far away from the task force the helicopters were co-located with the Caribous at

Vung Tau. The need to service aircraft during night-time under lights did not go down well with the army brass as a blackout situation was in place at Nui Dat. Iroquois helicopters played a major role in the battle of Long Tan when two aircraft flew through heavy rain with landing lights blazing to resupply D coy 6RAR with ammunition. The Iroquois left Vietnam with the task force in December 1971.

On 19 April 1967, the RAAF stationed a squadron of English Electric Canberra Bombers at



'Canberra' bomber

Phan Rang on the central coastal area of Vietnam. The Canberra was developed during the 1950s as a high-altitude precision bomber but adapted to the role of a low level or medium level bomber with ease when flown by the Australian crews of 2 Squadron. 2 Sqn were credited with 5% of the total bombing effort during its stay and 16% of the bomb damage. The sqn was awarded the Presidential Citation by both the USA and the Government of South Vietnam. There were two aircraft lost with two aircrew being killed. Magpie 91 (magpie being the callsign of 2SQN) was lost during operations on 3 November 1970 and not found until February 2009. The pilot and navigator Michael Herbert and Robert Carver were recovered, and finally brought back to Australia thus completing the recovery of all our fighting force. The second aircraft was shot down by a missile and

the crew successfully parachuted out and were recovered by helicopter very quickly. 2SQN departed Vietnam 4 June 1971 thus being last in and first out of Vietnam.

The story of the RAAF in the Vietnam war is not readily known as it did not make the headlines with big battles against the enemy or capture weapons or prisoners or other newsworthy stories. The RAAF was an all-volunteer force, professional and got on with the job in a quiet and efficient manner.

The RAAF was back in action in Vietnam again in April 1975 recovering the embassy staff, refugees, and babies from the orphanages to be flown back to Malaysia. The last flight out of Tan Son Nute was to pick up the RAAF guard who had to be left behind as previous aircraft were full. The mission was flown by a C130 and at considerable risk as enemy forces had at that time surrounded Saigon. RAAF squadrons had a higher serviceability rate than any other service in Vietnam and the methods of delivering stores was eventually copied by others as it proved the safest and most proficient. I was a member of that force between 1967 and 1968 where the effort to control the land was at its highest. The RAAF assisted the task force whenever requested and can include all the major actions including Long Tan and Balmoral/Coral as battle honours.

John Rogers OAM JP

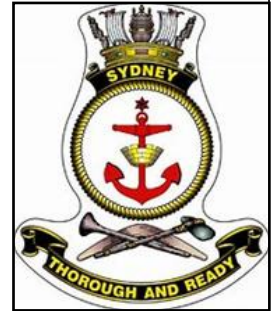


C-130 Hercules

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

HMAS SYDNEY:



The bloody “American War” 1966-67

Part 12 of the story of HMAS Sydney, told by one of the crew, John Ingram., including the catch cry “*All the way with LBJ*” began to wane as anti-nuclear protests gained momentum.

Up until the TET (Viet New Year) Offensive in February, 1968, Australians were, in general, supportive of our nation’s involvement to contain what was known as the “domino” theory of progressive collapse of Asian democracies to communist regimes. President Johnson and his military chiefs had tried to convince Allied forces the war was proceeding well etc while the steady build-up of forces and combat continued. However, “embedded” war correspondents were telling a very different story illustrated so convincingly on the TV news, day in/day out.

The catchcry “All the way with LBJ” began to have a hollow core as the global peace movement, conceived in the Anti-Nuclear War movement, gathered strength. The “Flower power” movement soon crossed the Pacific and anti-war rallies became common in such hot beds of discontent as university campuses, even at the gates of military bases including Garden Island and Cowper Wharf Road. When SYDNEY was alongside in her home port her presence was marked by unruly demonstrations, often restricting movement of naval personnel and vehicles. We were instructed not to wear uniform ashore lest we be sworn at or abused, even spat upon. The Navy urged us to delist home phone numbers from directories to avoid intimidating phone calls.

In war awful things happen; one incident in particular I witnessed was especially violent. SYDNEY was moored off Vung Tau on a typically hot, steamy day. I was on the flight deck taking in a few gulps of fresh air when a vintage USN “Fram 2” destroyer steamed by on picket duties. Her turrets were rotating as she closed in on a fishing boat maybe 15 metres in length. I could see small children playing midships on the nondescript vessel as it motored along seemingly and innocently going about its business. When around a mile distant the destroyer pulled away from the track of the fishing boat and at some 200 metres fired a shell into the wooden boat blowing it to smithereens. It seemed a senseless act of destruction. I’ve no idea whether the occupants were removed from their floating home beforehand. It was definitely not the way to win the hearts and minds of people. Violence begets violence and so the cycle continues. I often recall that cruel incident. An orange and black fireball, then flotsam on the murky waters.

Now for matters of a lighter nature involving money. Very significant amounts of Australian and select foreign currencies were carried to pay sailors and soldiers their salaries and allowances and reimburse for expenses incurred. Cash was also required to pay traders while a huge, arcane

(Continued on page 47)

“chequebook” measuring some 600mm by 300mm was carried to pay the really big bills overseas. This heavily scrolled “Bills of Exchange” written in a flowery language were a leftover from the Victorian era and designed to impress the unfortunate and confused recipient “the Bearer, on behalf of Her Britannic Majesty and the Government of Australia, promises to pay

I tried to use one once to pay a trader for fresh provisions delivered ship-side. The Trader took one look at this monstrous cheque, had absolutely no idea what to do with it, then suggested he reduce the debt to the Australian government to a level within my authority to pay. This saving involved thousands of dollars at what was roughly a 50% discount. We all dined well on fresh tropical fruits and vegetables for the next 21 days! However, revenge for him was sweet in that his produce hadn't been treated for cockroach infestation. Upon the ship's return to Sydney, we had to have the entire ship fumigated to kill the pests.

Following an armed robbery involving a cash delivery to warships at Cockatoo Island we in the SYDNEY were directed to ensure our money safes were securely mounted. We had two, one being of bank vault size and possibly weighing two tonnes abutting the Captain's Day cabin. It contained bulk bank notes and was only accessed weekly whereas the “ready use” safe was opened many times daily and commonly contained up to \$250,000. It was located in the Accounts Office. I arranged for a Shipwright to check the installation and within a matter of minutes he, with a single spanner, had removed the entire safe from the steel bulkhead. This safe had been positioned there 20 years previous with the nuts to the four bolts protruding into an insecure space. The safe, along with its significant monetary contents, could've been removed from the ship by two men with evil intent. It was an amazing design oversight.

On one return passage from South Vietnam to

Sydney I had in my official possession used Australian bank notes and coins worth in excess of one million pounds. This very significant sum was being repatriated from Singapore and Malaysia where it had accumulated in branches of the Commonwealth Bank. For security reasons only three persons on board new of this repatriation of currency concurrent with the changeover to decimal currency in February 1966. At the time that was a lot of dosh and I was relieved to hand over to Bank officials on arrival in Sydney.

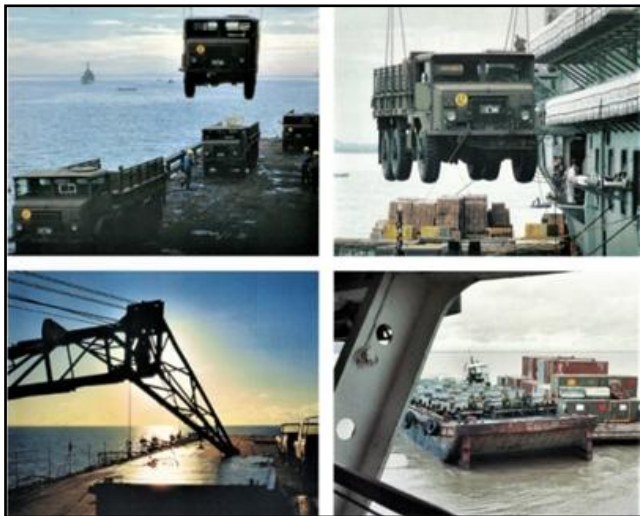
Also embarked was 5 RAR plus all of their equipment after completing a one-year tour of duty. These 600 men had to be paid their accrued pay in cash before arrival in Sydney. This required \$1,000,000 to be embarked via a clandestine operation. When the SYDNEY was off Moreton Bay a Wessex “chopper” was despatched pre-dawn to Eagle Farm Airport in Brisbane. Not even the three-man crew knew the nature of the operation such was the secrecy involved. In a James Bond-like adventure the aircrew were told they'd be met by a civilian with his personal trunk and to return to the SYDNEY pronto. I greeted the Treasury official on the windy flight deck and the Wessex was “struck down” below by lift into “C” hangar.

In the meantime, I'd taken the somewhat over-awed Treasury civilian to the wardroom for breakfast. On completion he enquired where was his trunk? In the early morning excitement, we'd forgotten about his “personal trunk”. No, it was not in the chopper, nor could we find it in the packed hangar spaces. Nor could we make an announcement over the ship's broadcast. Imagine his relief when we sited the trunk abandoned on the flight deck aft with its contents safely intact! It was then placed under armed guard in the Accounts Office until distributed by Army personnel to their grateful recipients the following day.

Earlier I made mention of the Cargo Plan. No SYDNEY officers had experience with the

preparation of such a plan. The RAN had access to a number of qualified merchant marine officers and these proved invaluable. The ones we had in my time 1965-67 were members of the Reserve Executive branch, held Bridge Watchkeeping Certificates and therefore qualified to exercise command both in harbour and at sea.

One such officer, British born, was the "Cargo Officer" and proved to be an interesting character. A raconteur and "actor" he could tell tales rivalling those of Lawrence of Arabia. On our second deployment he managed to fly by QANTAS to Saigon joining the ship off Vung Tau. Officers were mustered in the Wardroom Mess to be briefed by him on the dis-embarkation plan for which he was responsible. In swaggered our Cargo Officer dressed in US combat fatigues with a revolver and ammunition belt slung around his middling girth. Not a straight face as we viewed this comical "Walter Mitty-like" war hero.



Craning & barging operation were performed day & night in all weather & tidal conditions in the fast-flowing waters despite threats of land-based mortar & swimmer/saboteur attacks by VC & NVA forces operating nearby.

To add insult to injury his plan didn't go well as the US military and their civil

contractors were late in arrival with their "choppers", lighters and barges. One massive contract lighter was eventually positioned alongside by two tugs complete with a large front-end loader at one corner. Before it could be secured in the middle of the platform the lighter tipped causing the loader to settle on the very muddy harbour bed (from which it was eventually recovered).

Never camera shy and keen to publicise "his" war, our intrepid Cargo Officer sought aviation wrecks on the basis such items would prove valuable training aids at the Naval Air Station, HMAS ALBATROSS. The US Military had no shortage of wrecks and were willing to oblige. We embarked the bullet riddled carcass of a Huey-1B, which eventually found its way to the AWM in Canberra. But only after our "war hero" was photographed by the national media sitting at the shattered controls after our return to Sydney.



Operational Logistics Vung Tau. A barge alongside the SYDNEY. VERNON STURDEE and escort "lying" off.

(Continued on page 49)



Unloading by helo & LSTs VERNON STURDEE & HARRY CHAUVAL Light observation helo at Station 1 while troops on forward lift await collection by CH-47 Chinook for flight to Nui Dat

Many ships in the RAN in the 1960s had RN (Royal Navy) officers in their complements either on loan or exchange. We wore identical uniforms, served the same monarch and followed the same rules, disciplines and customs. In the SYDNEY we had RN personnel including our Gunnery Officer and the Captain's Secretary. But then the legal fraternity in Canberra started asking questions, induced by the fact Britain was a signatory to the five-nation council established by the UN to negotiate a peaceful resolution to the Vietnam War. Clearly it was not a "good look" having Britons engaged in hostilities in Vietnam. That meant RN officers were no longer posted to RAN ships deployed to Vietnam.

It was also deemed necessary to change the RAN ensign. In October 1967 the British White Ensign, so proudly flown by RAN ships since 1911, was replaced by the Australian White Ensign which

incorporates the Southern Cross. A minor but visually significant matter.

Much has been said since the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War in relation to 'public perception' and how veterans were treated upon our return home. There's no simple, "one size fits all" answer of course. As a nation we were "war weary" and tired of the media coverage of the incessant battles, casualties and destruction. The fact we'd been on the losing side meant politicians were only too eager to wash their hands of the whole, sad saga. National Service was "on the nose" and quickly abandoned so the Army could return to an "all-volunteer" service.

One of the few organisations which actually formally acknowledged our involvement in Vietnam was the City of Sydney which arranged for a march by returning Defence Force personnel through city streets, including the salute to dignitaries assembled on the steps of the Town Hall. I had the privilege of leading the SYDNEY contingent: a distinct honour.

Within the ADF senior management structure there was conflict and inconsistency. I cite some examples of mal-administration which caused all kinds of issues.

- In the case of "honours and awards" naval personnel who'd served in the SYDNEY and her escorts were denied the Active Service Medal (Vietnam clasp), as well as any medal/s specifically related to service ashore in Vietnam or in designated waters (known commonly as the "Gun Line"). Even the City of Sydney acknowledged this gross anomaly and had minted a ribbon and medal which, of course, was not officially sanctioned by the Defence Department. Years later and after much public agitation the ADF, DVA and the government agreed to the award of the Vietnam Logistic Support Medal which was little more than a compromise, a grudging public recognition of our service. Decades

later and after further political arm-bending, we were awarded the Active Service Medal (Vietnam clasp) to complement the Vietnam Logistics and Support Medal. By then so many rightful recipients were either dead or so angry at the Government and ADF they refused to wear them.

- Another anomaly which applied right up until the First Iraq war, I believe, involved “pay and conditions of service”. In both the Malaysian Confrontation and Vietnam War RAN personnel weren’t eligible for any tax relief for prolonged periods overseas on “operational” service, when deployed to the Strategic Reserve or ANZUK forces for peace-keeping duties. In fact, when in harbour such as Hong Kong, Penang or Subic Bay during operational, official or recreational visits sailors were paid 50 cents per day allowance extra as “In Port Allowance”. This meant sailors were paid marginally more to be in a safe harbour than in a combat zone! Try explaining that logic to entitled sailors, yet that was an example of the remuneration nonsense that applied at the time. 55 years after the formation of the RAN in 1911 the Navy was still operating under a “pay bible” titled “Interim” Pay Instructions or IPIs for short.
- What lay behind this Government inaction and delay was the potential cost to the “public purse”. By denying naval personnel their rightful recognition would preclude medical coverage for illnesses attributed to or aggravated by “operational” or “warlike” service. The big unknown was the future impact of serious and/or potential terminal illnesses caused by “Agent Orange” and asbestos, the dreaded mesothelioma. Hence DVA fought for decades, not for the naval veteran, but to deny or delay treatment and disability support, whenever and wherever

possible.

In my case as a serving officer, I held a mistaken belief DVA was there to support the veteran with any health issues service caused or aggravated. I was soon to learn, along with all other entitled veterans, we had two opponents, one in Vietnam and the other, DVA.

I served under two exceptional commanding officers in the SYDNEY, namely Captain Tony Synnot (1965-66), later to become Admiral Sir Anthony Monckton Synnot KBE AO Chief of the Defence Force and his successor, Captain Eric John Peel DSC, in 1967. I especially appreciated their “inner peace” as leaders, the diction and clarity of their voices, irrespective of whether discussing a matter with you as an individual or addressing the entire ship’s company. Their very presence commanded respect; both made you feel giving your best willingly was the natural course of action.

I cite two examples:

Following SYDNEY’s mooring off Vung Tau on Captain Synnot’s first deployment he was briefed by the OIC of a small US Marine Corps Armed Junk squadron of locally requisitioned fishing boats tasked to provide harbour protection. I was called to the Bridge and out of earshot of other personnel introduced by the Captain to the Marine lieutenant. Captain Synnot advised I’d be the “liaison” officer to work with this USMC unit to enhance the safety of SYDNEY and escorts whenever in harbour. I had no idea what this role entailed or when my already extensive departmental and watchkeeping duties would permit. I could sense with so much happening elsewhere in and around the ship the captain just wanted me to show initiative and not delay him any longer. His concluding words were that discretion and secrecy were expected and this “conversation” had not occurred. In other words, I was on my own. Just

(Continued on page 51)

get on with it!

That “initiative” required developing a working “relationship” with this unit, their then primitive riverine patrol craft and personnel. Whenever an opportunity arose, I’d take ashore with me fresh loaves of bread and bread rolls stuffed into a carry-all bag along with 6-12 bottles of VB beer (at my expense I hasten to add). These items were universally popular with both the USMC officers who commanded these small craft and their North Vietnamese crew members. Each time in harbour I’d re-acquaint with these personnel and do at least one day or night patrol (4-6 hours) in the open bay and into streams and rivulets. My RAN tropical uniforms of white shorts and shirt were totally inappropriate, so I’d need to change into US combat fatigues with black beret. Had I been captured explaining this clobber may well have been difficult but for me white uniform was a target all too tempting for sniper fire.



Fellow USMC & SVN officers following a night patrol



North Viet sailor removing Foster’s bottle cap with teeth

Each vessel was of timber and the engine a Chrysler diesel fitted midships around which was a deck-house in which the crew would sleep and eat. They wore the traditional “black pyjamas”. To demonstrate loyalty to the South regime each had tattooed over their hearts “Hate Communists”. This meant if caught by either the NVA or VC their heart would be gauged out while alive. These men, six to each boat, would man the 50-mm single canon in the bows and the 20 mm in the stern. There was no shielding or protection, just the wooden hull. Later in the war, purpose-built patrol craft were supplied but not in my time. Each vessel was skippered by a junior USMC officer and communication was maintained by a basic portable radio, rarely used as communications were known to be intercepted by the enemy. In the photo above a sailor is seen removing one of these portable radios lest it be stolen from the boat and used by the VC/NVA.

At night, irrespective of whether in harbour or on patrol, “off duty” Viet sailors would sleep in a lump in the deckhouse, lying across one another. This alarmed me initially as it appeared to my Western mind to have sexual connotations. Then it dawned, it was simply their way of keeping warm. Well, partly true: the real reason I soon learned was if one was disturbed for some reason, all immediately attended to their duties.

Beer was the international currency: Vietnamese love their beer. But one had to exercise caution and impose a limit of one 375ml bottle to two men on completion of a patrol. Warm beer, tired bodies and the need to maintain alertness were not compatible. I retain visions of these young men removing the metal cap with their teeth. The warm beer would have them chattering and laughing and releasing pent-up tensions.

One dawn we investigated a water front village near Vung Tau following reports of gunfire and

explosions overnight. We cautiously approached in the still air and eerie silence; wisps of smoke filtering through the vegetation. No dogs barking, no roosters crowing or kids playing at the water's edge. The crew, with both cannons manned, were visibly agitated, sensing an ambush. As we neared the shoreline the ash of several burnt-out dwellings came into view; a dead animal in the muddy embankment: no sign whatsoever of any inhabitants. Had they fled, what had transpired? Should we go ashore and investigate?

Curiosity needs to be measured. The sailors were keen to assist these village people; fellow Catholics who'd fled the Communist North. I felt a great deal of relief when the skipper decided it was too dangerous to land: wire booby traps would've been laid he surmised and, in any case, there was no sign of human life. Later we learned not a single villager or animal had survived the brutal attack, attributed to local VC supporters. All had been shot or hacked to death and efforts made to incinerate evidence.

It appeared to me to be a localised dispute that had got out of hand as neighbouring villagers resented the resettlement of Catholic northerners on their traditional land. Nevertheless, it was a chilling reminder Australia had also invaded their country as part of the Allied Anti-Communist cause.



USMC armed "fishing" boat returning from night patrol



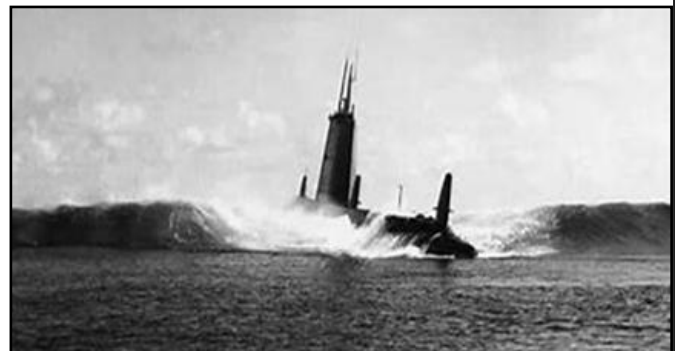
With SVN Navy & USMC officers enjoying a well-earned liquid breakfast after a shower and changing into fresh clean day wear. Conditions onboard were very basic in 1966-67.



**IN OUR NEXT ISSUE WE
CONTINUE WITH JOHN'S OTHER
"CO-LATERAL DUTY" (AMERICAN
TERMINOLOGY) WHILE IN VUNG
TAU HARBOUR,**

AND,

**THE SUDDEN CHANGE IN
PLANS TO AID A STRICKEN
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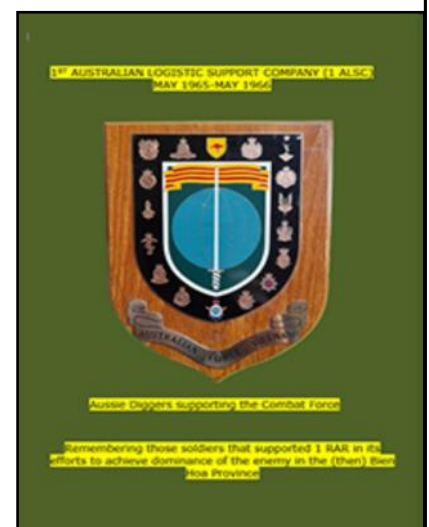
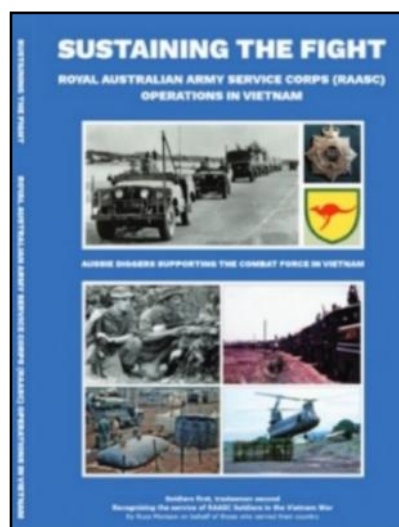
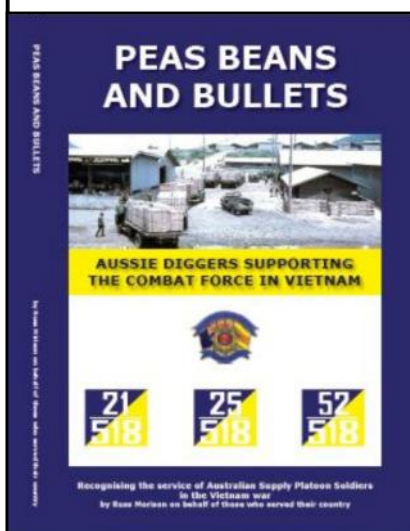
BOOK 3 - 1st Australian Logistic Support Company (1ALSC) Bien Hoa 1965-66 Supporting the Combat Force by Russ Morison

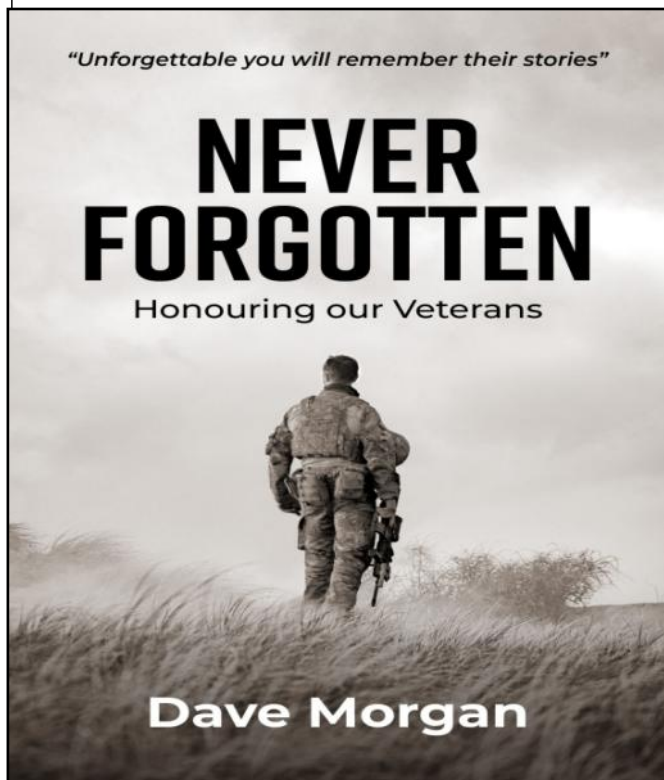
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Australian veterans' tales: Untold stories of
Australia's forgotten soldiers.

Vietnam Veteran Dave Morgan explores the often-overlooked sacrifices of Australian military personnel. Inspired by his own experiences, Dave embarks on a journey to capture the diverse narrative spanning generations and conflicts, from Vietnam to Somalia and Afghanistan.

Through meticulous research and armchair conversations, he uncovers untold stories, from talented athletes like Ian Anderson to pioneering female veterans like Stephanie Shipman. The book weaves together tales of camaraderie and resilience, from heartwarming reunions to the loss of friends like Robert Wilson.

These accounts offer a mosaic of bravery and resilience and through these stories, readers gain a deeper understanding of the profound impact of military service on individuals and communities, highlighting the importance of preserving these invaluable narratives.

Never Forgotten serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by those who serve, ensuring their voices resonate for future generations.

Available on-line through Big Sky Publishing

<https://www.bigskypublishing.com.au>

All proceeds from this book will be donated to Legacy Australia.

Also available at:

Amazon.com.au \$22.00 (23 Feb 2025)

Booktopia.com.au \$30.25 (23 Feb 2025)

Limited Big W stores \$22.00 (23 Feb 2025)

Dave Morgan.

Reunions & Notices

RAAF Equipment Musterings

Date: 5 Jul 2025

Any Equipment related Mustering or current Logistics related Mustering personnel both ex and current are invited to attend our biannual reunion. If you're planning on coming, can you please email me with your details.

Reunion details

Location: CSI Ipswich, QLD

Contact details

Name: Greg Lyons (Jacko)

Phone: 0413 700 298

Email: gregjackolyons@gmail.com

Officer Training Unit, Scheyville Class 1/65 Diamond Jubilee Reunion

Date: 14 Jul 2025

14 - 18 July 2025. The focus will be on Wednesday 16th, the anniversary of our arrival at OTU Scheyville in 1965. This day will include a commemorative service, graduate lunch and gala dinner. Please contact either Laurie (below) or David Beasley, 0409 441 123, dugara@bigpond.net.au

Reunion details

Location: Maroochydore, QLD

Contact details

Name: Laurie Muller

Phone: 0418 788 493

Email: lcmuller@bigpond.net.au

Vietnam Veterans Day

Date: 18 Aug 2025

Location: Bankstown Sports Club

See advert this issue, Page 21.

B Sqn 3 Cav Reunion

Date: 29 Aug 2025

29-31 August 2025. For those who served in B Sqn 3 Cav Regt Lavarack Barracks Townsville between the unit's return from Vietnam 1972, until the amalgamation and became B Sqn 3/4 Cav. in 1980. Marcus Tilbrook is the contact person - marcus@tilbrook.xyz

Reunion details

Location: Darwin, NT

Contact details

Name: Bill Kearney

Phone: 0419 756 740

Email: blackhatbill@gmail.com

RAAF Surface Finisher (SURFIN) Reunion

Date: 12 Sep 2025

12-14 September 2025. Laughter and a good time guaranteed.

Reunion details

Location: Ipswich, QLD

Contact details

Name: Garth Steinhardt

Phone: 0487 195 418

Email: ghstein@tpg.com.au

RAN Destroyer Escort Personnel

Date: 16 Oct 2025

15-16 October 2025. The reunion is for all personnel who served in any of the six Destroyer Escorts. All De Reunion Facebook page.

Reunion details

Location: Frankston Arts Centre, VIC

Contact details

Name: Rory Munn

Phone: 0414 897 484

Email: alldereunion@gmail.com

RAAF Ground Equipment Maintenance Association (GEMA)

Date: 17 Oct 2025

An open invitation is extended to ALL ex-RAAF members, regardless of mustering, who have served/currently serving at a GEMS or a MEOMS unit. Laughter and a good time guaranteed.

Reunion details

Location: Perth, WA

Contact details

Name: Ralph Feige

Phone: 0422 355 682

Email: ralphfeige@gmail.com

Tamworth Aircrew Reunion

Date: 17 Oct 2025

17-19 October 2025. Annual North by Northwest Aircrew Reunion. 17th - meet and greet at the Tamworth Hotel; Reunion details

Location: Tamworth, NSW

Contact details

Name: Dennis 'Rhino' Hume

Phone:

Email: humanhovell@icloud.com

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/NNWAircrewReunion/>

Headquarters & Headquarters Company 1st Australian Logistic Support Group (1 ALSG) ex Vietnam

Date: 24 Oct 2025

24 - 28 October. Please contact Tony or Trevor for more details. Trevor Sargent, 0400 803 554 or

t.sarge47@gmail.com.

Reunion details

Location: Busselton, WA

Contact details

Name: Tony Brown

Phone: 0428 852 736

Email: tony11raye13@gmail.com

3RAR Back to Woodside Reunion

Date: 24 Oct 2025

We are bringing together members, family and friends of the 3rd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment 'Old Faithful'. There will be a meet & greet on Friday 24th, dinner on Saturday 25th and lunch on Sunday 26th. To register your interest and for further details, visit the website.

Reunion details

Location: Adelaide Hills Convention Centre, Hahndorf Discovery Park, SA

Contact details

Name: Ken Nash

Phone: 0437 335 438

Email: nashywoof3@gmail.com

Website: www.3rarback2woodside.com

Submarines Association Australia Reunion - SUBCON2025

Date: 24 Oct 2025

24-26 October 2025. Annual reunion for all submariners and partners. Fri - meet and greet; Sat - dinner dance; Sun - AGM and visit to vintage train museum.

Reunion details

Location: Sage Hotel, Wollongong, NSW

Contact details

Name: Geoff Anderson

Phone: 0413 980 091

Email: nswsubcon.25@gmail.com

Website: [https://](https://www.submarinesaustralia.com)

www.submarinesaustralia.com

8th RAN Electronic Warfare Branch

Date: 24 Oct 2025

The reunion for Branch personnel (Gollies) of all ranks will start at the Casino for a Meet & Greet on Friday the 24th. A registration form will be promulgated. Please visit the FB website for details and updates.

Reunion details

Location: Wrest Point Casino, TAS

Contact details

Name: Richard Waldie

Phone: 0418 693 288

Email: rgwaldie@tpg.com.au

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gollies/>

Air Defenders Malaysia Reunion

Date: 10 Nov 2025

Reunion during the week of Remembrance Day 2025 to mark:

- * The 60th Anniversary of the introduction of National Service in 1965
- * The raising of 110 LAA Battery at Woodside in 1965

Reunion details

Location: Adelaide, SA

Contact details

Name: Bob McEvoy

Phone: 0412 310 947

Email: bottleart19@gmail.com

Air Defenders Malaysia Reunion

Date: 10 Nov 2025

Reunion during the week of Remembrance Day 2025 to mark:

- * The 60th Anniversary of the introduction of National Service in 1965
- * The raising of 110 LAA Battery at Woodside in 1965

* Many National Servicemen celebrating their 80th Birthday in 2025.

Reunion details

Location: Adelaide, SA

Contact details

Name: Bob McEvoy

Phone: 0412 310 947

Email: bottleart19@gmail.com

2025 JR Reunion - NAVY - (Tingira Boys)

Date: 10 Nov 2025

10-14 November 2025. Hosted by the Tingira Australia Association.

Reunion details

Location: Fremantle, WA

Contact details

Name: Mark Lee

Phone: 0417 223 040

Email: tsec@tingira.org.au

Website: www.tingira.org.au

HQ1ATF Association

Date: 17 Nov 2025

17 - 21 November 2025. The welcome dinner will be held on Monday 17 November.

Commemorative dinner on the 20th at the Gateway Motel restaurant.

Dinner will be preceded by a 5 pm public Dedication Service at the RSL Memorial.

Reunion details

Location: Painters Island Holiday Park, Wangaratta, VIC

Contact details

Name: John Verhelst

Phone: 0437 212 121

Email: john@jhconsult.com.au

Website: www.hq1atf.org

106 Field Workshop reunion

Date: 1 Dec 2025

Celebrating 56 years since commencement of up-armouring of M113 that saved many lives. The function also incorporates the 83rd birthday of RAEME and Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk.

Contact Milton (below) or Elmer 'Fud' Varga fuddvarga@netscape.net

Reunion details

Location: Moody's Function Room, Royal Hotel, 26 Emily St, Seymour, VIC

Contact details

Name: Milton Pearson

Phone: 0488 050 261

Email: csml1066869@gmail.com

Officer Cadet School Portsea - Graduating Class December 1975

Date: 7 Dec 2025

7 - 9 December 2025. If you wish to attend the Dec 75 Class 50th Reunion and are not already receiving reunion emails, please make contact.

Reunion details

Location: Canberra, ACT

Contact details

Name: Bruce Scott

Phone: 0481 055 953

Email: brucescott@tmrc.com.au

WANTED KNOWN:

'A' Battery Association Inc.

"WARNING ORDER 2026!"

155th Birthday & Reunion

Date: 31 Jul 2026

31 July - 1 August 2026. Celebrating the 155th Birthday of both the Royal Australian Artillery and 'A' Battery, culminating with a formal cocktail party at the Brisbane Tattersall's Club on 01 August 2026. Register your interest in attending and to be placed on the event mailing list, by sending an email to the association. Official attendance registration and payment requirements will be promulgated NLT 31 July 2025. More information on this event can be found on the association's website, under "Upcoming Activities". "Once 'A' Gunner, always 'A' Gunner!" Once in 'A' Battery, always in 'A' Battery!" Email the below or management@abtyassn.org.au

Reunion details

Location: Brisbane, QLD

Contact details

Name: 'A' Battery Association Incorporated

Phone: 0411 166 904

Email: abtyassn@abtyassn.org.au

Website: https://www.australianartilleryassociation.org/a_bty_association/index.html



"Someday we'll be laughin' at this cockup at some flamin' reunion!"

VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

FULL STATE AND SUB-BRANCH LISTING

NATIONAL HEAD OFFICE (VETERANS SUPPORT CENTRE)

VVFA Inc National President: **William (Bill) Roberts OAM** Email: billr@vxfagranville.org
 PO Box 170, (8 Mary St.) National Secretary: **Ron O'Connor JP** Email: secretary@vxfagranville.org Granville,
 NSW 2142 Tel: 02 9682 1788 Fax: 02 9682 6134 Web: <http://www.vvfa.org.au>

NEW SOUTH WALES

VETERANS SUPPORT CENTRE

VVPPAA NSW Inc.
 8 Mary St PO Box 170
 Granville NSW 2142
 Ph: (02) 9682 1788
 Fax: (02) 9682 6134
www.vvxfagranville.org
secretary@vxfagranville.org
 President: **Bill Roberts OAM**
 Secretary: **Ron O'Connor JP**
 Hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1600

CENTRAL COAST

PO Box 505 Ettalong 2257
 Ph: (02) 4344 4760
 Fax: (02) 4344 5467
centralcoastveterans@bigpond.com
 President: **Alan Ball**
 Secretary: **Eric Daniel**
 Hours: Mon, Wed 0930-1330

CENTRAL WEST

7 March St
 Orange NSW 2800
 President: **Lindsay Wright**
 (02) 6362 5959
 Secretary: **Warren Willis**
 Mob 0447 066 996
warren.willis@bigpond.com

CLARENCE VALLEY

PO Box 137
 Grafton 2460
 Ph: (02) 6649 4186
 President: **Ron Shoebridge**
 Secretary: **Lorraine Burt OAM**
newsouthwalespva@gmail.com
 Hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1700

EUROBODALLA

28 Emmott St.
 Moruya 2537
 Ph: (02) 4474 2362
 President: **Russell Graham**
 Mob 0418 721 745
 Secretary: **Helen Kop**
 Mob 0419 201 788
helen_kop@bigpond.com

GREAT LAKES

Unit 3, 80-82 Kularoo Drive
 Forster, 2428
 Office: 0480 283 744
vvaglforster@gmail.com
 President: **Derek Hinde**
 Secretary: **Paul Dawson**
 0413 886 265
 Hours: Mon & Thur 1000-1300

HASTINGS MANNING MACLEAY

PO Box 5330
 Port Macquarie 2444
 Office at Wauchope RSL Sub-Branch
 Office Ph: (02) 6581 5230
 Advocate only: 0493 717 807
Vets614@gmail.com
 President: **Bill Wagner**
 Secretary: **Jill Opie**
 Hours: 1000-1330 Tue, Wed, Thu.

ILLAWARRA

Legacy House 96 Market St
 Wollongong NSW 2500
 Ph: (02) 4228 6774
vvaaill@aapt.net.au
 President: **Robert Cohen**
 Secretary: **Pam Bowmaker OAM JP**
 Hours: Tue, Fri 9:30-12:30

MUDGEES & DISTRICTS

Inglis St, Railway Station
 PO Box 511 Mudgee NSW 2850
 Ph: (02) 6372 7740
secretary@vxfamudgee.org
 President: **Ken Atkinson**
 Mob 0428 246 147
 Secretary: TBA
 Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed 9:30-3:30

NEWCASTLE & HUNTER

17 Tyrrell St., PO Box 288
 Wallsend 2287
 Ph: (02) 4951 2666
nclvets@bigpond.net.au
 President: **Michael Frost**
 Secretary: **Dave Hansen**
 Hours: Mon, Thu 0900-1300

RIVERINA

PO Box 7120
 Wagga Wagga NSW 2650
 President: **John Ploenges**
 Ph. (02) 6922 9766
 Secretary: **Ralph J Todd**
 Mb: 0457 258 891
ralphtodd@bigpond.com

SHOALHAVEN

PO Box 3229
 North Nowra NSW 2541
 President: **Clyde Poulton**
 Mob 0412 642 848
 Secretary: **Carl Robinson**
shoalhaven.vietvets1@gmail.com

SOUTH WEST SLOPES

VIETNAM VETERANS INC.

3 Thomas Street
 June 2663
jc18746@bigpond.com
 Ph: (02) 6924 1924
 Mob 0408 296 765
 President: **John Curtis**
 Secretary: **Barbara Curtis**

TAYLORS ARM

798 North Bank Rd
 Taylors Arm 2447
 President: **TBA**
 Ph: 02 6564 2153
 Secretary: **Stephen Spear**
 Mob 0439 642 181
cvpb16@hotmail.com

WENTWORTH-COOMEALLA

Ramon Deed Veterans Retreat

PO Box 397
 Dareton NSW 2717
 Ph: 03 5027 4447
rdveteransretreat@iinet.net.au
 President: **Michael Chopping**
 Mob 0481 306 854
 Secretary: **Geoff Forde**
 Mob 0419 114853

VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

FULL STATE AND SUB-BRANCH LISTING

VVPPAA (NSW BRANCH)**ZONE REPS****FAR SOUTH COAST****Gary Berman**

Bega RSL SB

Ph: 6493 0449

Mob 0409 888 248

gandsberman@bigpond.com

VICTORIA**VVF Victorian Branch Inc**

ALL MAIL TO: P.O. Box 167

Newcomb Vic 3219

13 Tyson Loop

Charlemont Vic 3217

President: **John Arnold OAM**

johnrayarnold@gmail.com

Secretary: **Iris Cargill JP**

Mob 0488 053 973

ritscargill@yahoo.com

Mon - Wed 0900 -1400

VIC SUB – BRANCHES**Hamilton: Bill Garrett**

0438 722 144

Grampians: Ron Jensen

0409 023 487

Respite Housing For Veterans in need

Bowder Veterans Housing

160 Coppards Rd Whittington 3219.

Mob: 0488 053 973

ACT STATE BRANCH**VV&VF ACT Inc**

9 Burkitt Street, Page. 2614

Veterans Support Centre Belconnen

Ph: 02 6255 1599

office@vscact.org.au

www.vvfact.org.au

President: **Ward Gainey JP**Secretary: **Leanne Connor****QUEENSLAND****VVF Queensland Branch Inc.**

18 Leagues Club Drive

PO Box 2817

Nerang Business Centre

Nerang Qld 4211

Ph: 07 5578 2233

Fax: 07 5578 2822

State President: **Peter Handy JP**

Mob 0448 195 020

president@vvfqlld.com

State Sec/Treas: **Peter Cameron OAM**

Mob 0408 276 044

treasurer@vvfqlld.com

www.vvfqlld.com

VVF Brisbane/Gold Coast of Australia**Regional Sub-Branch Inc.**

18 Leagues Club Drive

PO Box 368

Nerang Qld 4211

Ph: 07 5502 2836

admin@vietnamveterans.net.au

President: **Andy Bryson**

Mob 0424 476 027

Secretary/Treasurer: **Peter Cameron OAM**

Mob 0408 276 044

TOWNSVILLE**Veteran Support Centre NQ Inc****TOWNSVILLE**

PO Box 280, Garbutt East

JC Butler Bldg.

1 Charters Towers Rd

Townsville, 4814

Ph: 07 4772 4655

secretary@vsctsv.org.au

President: **Barry Martin OAM**Secretary: **Alison Abby****SOUTH AUSTRALIA****VVF South Australia****Branch Inc.**

The Yerbury Centre

Unit 1, 31-39 Norfolk Rd

Marion SA 5043

Ph: 08 8296 2411

Mon – Thur 1000 – 1500hrs

vvfsa@tpg.com.au

http://vvfsa.org.au

President: **Mal Thiele OAM JP**Secretary: **Don Cochrane****SA ZONE REPS****BROKEN HILL****Des Kennedy**

M: 0412 458 054

MILITARY MUSEUM**BUBLACOWIE**Welfare Officer: **Chris Soar**

Mobs 0448 994 561/0428 377 287

Ph: 08 8853 4379

REPS**ALICE SPRINGS AREA****Alan Wilkes****KATHERINE AREA****Scott Landers****WESTERN AUSTRALIA****VVFA WA Branch**

30 Cornish Ave

Woodvale WA 6026

President: **Milton Kirk JP**

Ph 08 9409 6682

vvfawabranch@gmail.com

TASMANIA AND NORTHERN TERRITORY MEMBERS WANTING ADVOCACY SERVICES ARE ASKED TO CONTACT THE OUTREACH PROGRAM CO-ORDINATOR AT GRANVILLE

Mr. Dennis Hanmer OAM on 02 9682 1788

Currently in the ADF, Transitioning, a younger Veteran?

We invite you to join our association and become a member.

Simply select your preferred Branch or Sub-Branch from the list above, complete the form on page 29, and mail it, or email a copy, to the address indicated.

REUNION: 17-21 November 2025**HEADQUARTERS 1st AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE AND D&E Platoon*****Painters Island Holiday Park, Wangaratta, VIC***

Painters Island Holiday Park, Pinkerton Cres. Wangaratta, Vic 36775245. Phone: 03 5721 3380

Email: stay@paintersislandcaravanpark.com.au Web: www.paintersislandcaravanpark.com.au

Formerly held each two years, from 2024, HQ1ATF Association reunions will be held every November and 2025 will remember 54 years since we closed the gates of Nui Dat. This four day event is an important part of the Association's efforts in the healing process which is achieved through the continual networking of members and also importantly their partners and carers. With objectives to improve health and well-being and to reduce social isolation, the biennial reunion plays a significant role.

There will be ample time for members and families to spend time together over the four days of the reunion. On Wednesday 19 November a tour of the region, including the King Valley, will be undertaken, with a visit to the Ned Kelly Museum, followed by lunch at the Gracebrook Winery.

The Commemorative Dinner will be held on Thursday 20 November 2025 at the Gateway Motel Restaurant in Wangaratta. The dinner will be preceded by a Dedication Service at the Wangaratta Memorial, (outdoors). The service, at 5 PM, will be open to the public.

To obtain our special rates when making reservations at the Painters Island Holiday Park (PIHP), please quote "Vietnam Veterans Reunion November 2025".

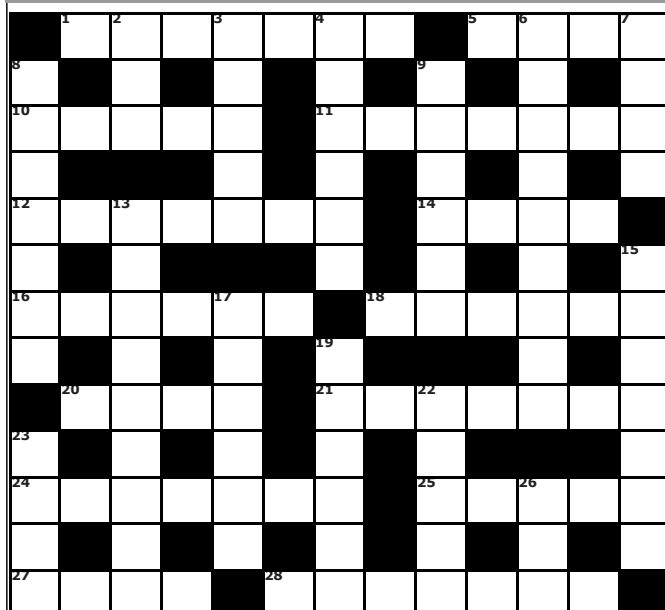
Should the villa's be full at Painters Island, try ADVANCE MOTEL, one Km up the road.

Mention *Vietnam Veteran's Group* for your special \$150 per night per room rate.

For full details, reunion prices, itinerary and registration form, contact:
John Verhelst: 0437212121 or jeverhelst@gmail.com www.hq1atf.org



CROSSWORD CORNER



ACROSS

1. Brings in
5. Russian ruler
10. Bird of prey
11. Less older
12. Gangster
14. Jump
16. Light source
18. Live in
20. Continent
21. Link with
24. Find size
25. Lucid
27. Fastened
28. Type of polish

DOWN

2. Coffee vessel
3. Musical drama
4. Endeavouring
6. Autograph
7. Unusual
8. Army Navy etc.
9. Communal
13. Rural painting
15. Puzzle
17. Consortium
19. Plan, plot
22. Smooches
23. Leave out
26. Period, age

APRIL 2025 SOLUTION

S	C	I	S	S	O	R	S		G	R	A	B
P		N		U		E		C		E		E
L	E	V	E	R		C	E	R	E	A	L	S
I		A		E		I		E		C		I
T	I	D	Y		A	T	T	A	C	H	E	D
		E		A		E		T				E
S	A	D	D	L	E		V	E	R	S	E	S
T				A		B		S		E		
R	E	T	U	R	N	E	D		S	C	A	R
I		E		M		T		F		T		E
P	E	R	F	E	C	T		L	A	I	R	S
E		M		D		E		A		O		T
D	I	S	H		W	R	I	T	I	N	G	S

THE UNKNOWN COMIC

A police officer in a small town stopped a motorist who was speeding down Main Street. "But officer," the man began, "I can explain." "Just be quiet," snapped the officer. "I'm going to let you cool your heels in jail until the chief gets back..." "But officer, I just wanted to say...." "And I said to keep quiet! You're going to jail!" A few hours later the officer looked in on his prisoner and said, "Lucky for you that the chief is at his daughter's wedding. He'll be in a good mood when he gets back." "Don't count on it," answered the fellow in the cell. "I'm the groom."

A Methodist Preacher was completing a temperance sermon: with great expression he said, "If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river." With even greater emphasis he said, "And if I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river." And then finally, he said, "And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river." He sat down, and motioned to the organist. The song leader then stood very cautiously and announced with a smile, "For our closing song, let us sing Hymn # 723: 'Shall We Gather at the River.'"

Three dead bodies turn up at the mortuary, all with very big smiles on their faces. The coroner calls the police to tell them what has happened. "First body: Frenchman, 60, died of heart failure while making love to his mistress. Hence the enormous smile, Inspector", says the Coroner. "Second body: Scotsman, 25, won a thousand pounds on the lottery, spent it all on whisky. Died of alcohol poisoning, hence the smile." The Inspector asked, "What of the third body?" "Ah," says the coroner, "this is the most unusual one. Has-been rock star 30, struck by lightning." "Why is he smiling then?" inquires the Inspector. "Thought he was having his picture taken."

What do you call people who sleep in their socks? Tiny.

I've taken steps to avoid escalators.

Our name has changed but we will continue to provide professional, military aware, support to all current and former serving ADF personnel and their family members.



Free and confidential counselling to support your mental health and wellbeing is available 24/7. We also run group programs and suicide prevention training.

JUST CALL 1800 011 046

If overseas call +61 8 8241 4546

Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service

FORMERLY KNOWN AS



**Call
24/7**

A service founded by Vietnam veterans

THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SENT ALMOST 60,000 OF US TO FIGHT IN VIETNAM

WE LOST 523 KILLED AND ANOTHER 2,400 WOUNDED IN 11 YEARS OF FIGHTING

BEST ESTIMATES ARE THAT AT LEAST 24,477 HAVE PASSED AWAY BETWEEN 1973 AND 2023

THAT IS A RATE OF 490 VETERANS PER YEAR

DVA ESIMATES THAT THERE ARE ABOUT 35,000 VIETNAM VETERANS REMAINING IN AUSTRALIA

Current male life expectancy in Australia is 83.3 years given that the average Vietnam Veteran is now aged 75 - 80 there is every chance that in another 10 years there will be very few of us left.

YOUNGER VETERANS NEED TO HEED OUR CALL NOW. VIETNAM VETERANS TOOK UP THE BATTLE TO GAIN OUR RIGHTS TO VETERANS ENTITLEMENTS

OUR QUALIFIED COMPENSATION ADVOCATES AND WELLBEING OFFICERS ARE ABLE TO PASS ON ALMOST 40 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE DEALING WITH DVA

IN 2 SHORT YEARS THE NEW GOVERNANCE OF VETERANS CARE AND ENTITLEMENTS WILL BE CHANGING.

FOR BETTER OR WORSE, YOUNGER VETERANS WILL NEED TO STEP UP AND TAKE THE BATON TO HELP THEIR FELLOW DIGGERS.

SHOW THEM YOU CARE. SHOW THEM VETERANS MATTER



JOIN NOW TO REAP THE BENEFITS OF EXPERIENCE WHILE YOU STILL CAN!



**VIETNAM VETERANS' PEACEKEEPERS & PEACEMAKERS
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (NSW BRANCH) Inc.**
Affiliated with the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia Inc.

1ST JANUARY – 31ST DECEMBER**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM**

SURNAME	FIRST NAME	SECOND NAME
STREET ADDRESS		
SUBURB/TOWN		STATE POST CODE
LANDLINE	MOBILE	OTHER PHONE
EMAIL ADDRESS	(PRINT CLEARLY)	
SERVICE NUMBER	UNIT	O'SEAS SERVICE (OPTIONAL)
NEXT OF KIN	RELATIONSHIP	CONTACT NUMBER

ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
MEMBERSHIPS SUBS	(YEARS)	@\$30.00 PER YEAR	\$
DONATION	(AMOUNT ONLY)		\$
RAFFLE TICKET/s		@\$2.00 EACH	\$
MERCHANDISE			
			\$
			\$
			\$
Stock item number and prices are available on line and from merchandise lists at branches and as listed in this issue		TOTAL AMOUNT DUE	\$

PREFERRED PAYMENT METHOD (Tick one only) CASH _____ CREDIT CARD _____ DIRECT DEBIT _____

CREDIT CARD DETAILS (Mastercard or VISA only)

CARD HOLDER NAME (PRINT)

CREDIT CARD NUMBER

--	--	--	--	--

EXPIRY DATE	TRANSACTION AMOUNT	SIGNATURE
	\$	

We no longer accept cheques or money orders. Email or post proof of payment only for Direct Debit
Credit Card payments may be phoned in to (02) 9682 1788 Mon-Thu 10am – 3pm.

Email: accounts@vvfagranville.org Post: VVPPAA NSW PO Box170 Granville NSW 2142

OFFICE USE ONLY

MEMBERSHIP RECEIPT DATE:	DONATION RECEIPT DATE:
MEMBERSHIP RECEIPT N^o :	DONATION RECEIPT N^o :
MEMBERSHIP CARD NUMBER:	COMPLETED & ISSUED BY (PRINT):
COMPLETED & ISSUED BY (PRINT):	BANK SHEET ENTRY BY (PRINT):

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

SURNAME

FIRST NAME

SECOND NAME

--	--	--

OLD DETAILS [*PRINT CLEARLY*]

OLD ADDRESS

--

SUBURB/TOWN

STATE

POST CODE

--	--	--

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

OTHER PHONE

--	--	--

NEW DETAILS [*PRINT CLEARLY*]

NEW ADDRESS

--

SUBURB/TOWN

STATE

POST CODE

--	--	--

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

OTHER PHONE

--	--	--

EMAIL ADDRESS [*PRINT CLEARLY*]

--

YOUR SIGNATURE

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

Complete all sections and post to:

The Secretary
 VVPPAA NSW
 PO Box 170
 Granville
 NSW 2142

OFFICE USE ONLY**MEMBERSHIP REGISTRY****DETAILS CHANGED****DATE:** ____/____/____**INITIALS:** _____

VETERANS MORTALITY REPORT

As you are aware, Vietnam Veterans are dying at a rate higher than while on Active Service. This situation is perhaps a natural phenomenon compared to non-serving members of the public, who might die of an illness which is equally distributed through the population of the same age group.

Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers & Peacemakers Association of Australia (NSW Branch) Inc has for many years maintained records of the deaths of Vietnam Veterans and the cause of death if known. This has proved invaluable regarding the health standards of Vietnam Veterans when compared to the general public. We seek your assistance in reporting the death of Vietnam Veterans, past or recent, to allow the Federation to expand and preserve its record base.

Kindly circulate a copy of this page through your RSL Club, Unit or Corps reunions and meetings and raise it as an issue. The information gained from these reports will greatly assist all Vietnam Veterans and their families regarding future claims for benefits.

Please print clearly

VETERANS DETAILS

SURNAME

FIRST NAME

SERVICE NUMBER

--	--	--

SVN UNIT/S

TOUR DATES

--	--

CAUSE OF DEATH (If known)

--

SR Service Related

UNK Unknown

S Suicide

O Other)

DATE OF DEATH (If known)

LOCATION AT TIME OF DEATH

	(TOWN)	(STATE)
--	--------	---------

YOUR NAME

--

SUBURB/TOWN

STATE

POST CODE

--	--	--

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

SIGNATURE

--	--	--

RETURN FORM TO: The Welfare Officer

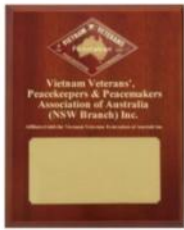
VVPPAA NSW Branch
PO Box 170
Granville NSW 2142

Phone: 02 9682 1788
Fax : 02 9682 6134
Email: secretary@vvfagranville.org

MERCHANDISE LIST

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE		ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
1101	NSW PLAQUE	50.00		1404	LAPEL PIN RAR	8.00
1103	NSW BADGE	10.00		1405	LAPEL PIN RAAF	8.00
1105	NSW STICKER	6.00		1406	LAPEL PIN CROSS	8.00
1107	RED PEN VVFA	8.00		1411	LAPEL PIN FAMILY	7.00
1108	NSW STUBBY HOLDER	8.00		1500	STICKER TWIN SET REG	7.00
1109	STUBBY HOLDER TRICOLOR	10.00		1501	STICKER REGULAR	7.00
1111	VVFA GREEN CAP	22.00		1507	STICKER TWIN SET NASHO	7.00
1112	VVFA BLUE CAP	22.00		1502	STICKER NASHO	7.00
1113	VVFA WHITE CAP	22.00		1503	STICKER DAMN PROUD	8.00
1114	VVFA BLACK CAP	22.00		1504	STICKER LOVE or LEAVE	5.00
1120	Mr GADGET	8.00		1506	STICKER SUPPORT	7.00
1121	NOTEBOOK/PEN	8.00		1508	STICKER SUPPORT NAVY	7.00
1122	COOLER TOTE	14.00		1509	STICKER NAVY VET	7.00
1125	KEYRING NAVY	8.00		1510	STICKER SUPPORT ARMY	7.00
1126	KEYRING ARMY	8.00		1511	STICKER ARMY VET	7.00
1127	KEYRING RAR	10.00		1512	STICKER SUPPORT RAAF	7.00
1128	KEYRING RAAF	8.00		1513	STICKER RAAF VET	7.00
1129	KEYRING VVFA	9.00		1514	STICKER AFGHAN VET	5.00
1130	LANYARD	10.00		1515	STICKER IRAQ VET	5.00
1201	THE MINEFIELD	45.00		1516	STICKER SOMALIA VET	5.00
1308	BUCKLE RAAMC	35.00		1517	STICKER TIMOR VET	5.00
1309	BUCKLE RAASC	35.00		BOOKS	ON SALE ON LINE OR AT THE OFFICE	CHECK STOCKS
1312	BUCKLE RAAOC	35.00		3440	HOW TO RESEARCH AND HONOUR RETURNED	39.00
1401	LAPEL PIN RAN	5.00		3442	THE THIRD CHOPSTICK	35.00
1402	LAPEL PIN ENS	5.00		3445	THE LONG SHADOW (check)	60.00
1403	LAPEL PIN ARMY	8.00				

MERCHANDISE IMAGES



1101



1103



1105



1107



1108



1109



1111



1112



1113



1114



1120



1121



1122



1125



1126



1127



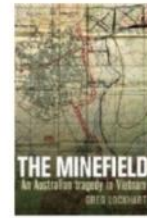
1128



1129



1130



1201



1308



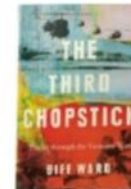
1309



1312



3440



3442



1401



1402



1403



1404



1405



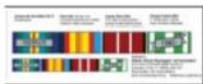
1406



1411



3445



1500



1501



1507



1502



1503



1504



1506



1508



1509



1510



1511



1512



1513



1514



1515



1516



1517

MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM

PLEASE CHECK STOCK AVAILABILITY BEFORE PLACING ORDER

NAME:				
ADDRESS:				
TOWN:		STATE:		PC:
PHONE:		ALT PHONE:		
EMAIL:				
ITEM N ^o .	DESCRIPTION	PRICE ea	QTY	TOTAL
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
XXXXXX	POSTAGE & HANDLING	\$		\$
XXXXXX	RAFFLE TICKET/S	\$ 2.00		\$
XXXXXX	DONATION AMOUNT	XXXXXX	XXXX	\$
XXXXXX	TOTAL ORDER VALUE	XXXXXX	XXXX	\$
DELIVERY ADDRESS:				
(IF DIFFERENT TO ABOVE)				
PAYMENT METHOD		NO CHQUES OR MONEY ORDERS		
M/CARD VISA DIRECT DEBIT		ACCEPTED		
(Cross out payment type that does not apply)				
NAME ON CARD:				
CARD NUMBER:				
EXPIRY DATE:	/	APPROVED AMOUNT: \$		
SIGNATURE & DATE:				

MERCHANDISE SPECIALS June-Dec 2025

ONLY WHILE STOCKS LAST

ALSO AVAILABLE ON LINE

<http://www.vvfagranville.org> and select "SHOP" button

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE AU\$
3301	BUCKLE VETERAN	15.00
3133	KRING ARMY AVI	6.00
3134	KRING RAE	6.00
3140	KRING RAAC	6.00
3402	PIN MAP REGULAR	6.00
3403	PIN MAP NASHO	6.00
3404	PIN GRANPA/ VIETNAM	6.00
3406	PIN VIETNAM VET (check)	6.00
3407	PIN SLOUCH BRNZ	6.00
3408	PIN SLOUCH COL	6.00
3409	PIN Chopper	6.00
3412	PIN 'Vietnam' Chopper	6.00
3414	PIN AVF 62-73	6.00
3415	PIN RAA	6.00
3416	PIN RAE	6.00
3420	CAP (black) 62-75 V	22.00
3500	RED PEN TORCH SET	10.00
3501	PIN GOLD ROO	10.00
3502	PIN SPIRI OF MATESHIP	10.00
3503	PIN AUSTRALIA FOREVER	10.00

NEVER TO BE REPEATED. ONCE STOCKS HAVE GONE THEY'RE GONE! CALL THE OFFICE TO ESTABLISH YOUR DEAL. AND PRICING.

On line 'shop' or use the form opposite and mail to Admin at Granville.

Postage will be on a per order basis at cost.



3301

3133

3140



3402

3403

3404

3406



3407

3408

3409

3412



3414

3415

3420



3500



3501

3502

3503

DID YOU KNOW ?**FACTS OF INTEREST****YOUR MEDICO AND THE GOLD CARD**

Recently, there have been media reports regarding General Practitioners and Medical Specialists rejecting the Gold Card for treatment, or charging a Gap Fee.

If a doctor accepts the Gold Card they cannot then charge a Gap Fee. If a doctor states up front before accepting the Gold Card that there is a Gap Fee payment, please advise the doctor you are notifying DVA, who will discuss the matter with the doctor in question. DVA may then refer you to treating specialists that will treat you under their system.

There has been a lot of confusion lately over the 12 visits to specialty treatment. There is a 12 visit or 12 months, whichever comes first before you have to report back to your Doctor, whereby he/she can prescribe another 12 visits.

VETERANS AND COMPENSATION ADVOCATES TIPS

- If a veteran has a Defence Service Home Loan, and dies before it is paid out, the loan is not automatically paid out. In some cases the loan may not even continue for the benefit of the partner. Please check with Defence Service Homes on Freecall 1800 722 000 to clarify your position.
- If on a DVA pension and travelling overseas it is necessary to notify the Department in plenty of time prior to departure. If you have a treatment card (white or gold) you also need to ascertain the treatments for which you will be covered, and how to access them.
- If a partner of a veteran who receives the Special Rate becomes widowed before they are 56, they will not be eligible for the Income Support Supplement. They may become eligible on their 56th birthday.

All veterans still in the paid workforce should be encouraged to contact a qualified compensation advocate prior to accepting any inducement to finish work, regardless of how generous it may seem, or what your health status appears at the time.

AVOID PUBLIC WIFI WHEREVER POSSIBLE

Public WiFi usually isn't as secure as a private network. If you do need to use it:

- Avoid online banking or shopping
- Never save passwords or leave your accounts logged in
- Switch off your device's ability to auto-connect to public WiFi
- Stay aware of your surroundings.

Please consider leaving a bequest in your will

Every Veteran deserves a lifestyle and better treatment than is currently available.
Every Veteran should be able to successfully attain their rights to pensions and just compensation.

Yet we still receive veterans unaware of their rights, what they may be entitled to, and where and how to apply or enter a claim.

Through your Will, you have the power to help us achieve our goals. Help surviving veterans, and those that follow them, to receive their true entitlements.

Through your Will you have the power to make a difference. Any gift you bequest to our Association, no matter how large or small, will assist a fellow veteran.

You don't need to be wealthy or have tens of thousands of dollars to make a difference to the lives of veterans and those who follow us. Many people leave amounts both large and small through their wills to our association.

Combined each amount assists our association to carry on the vital support network we provide to the veteran community.

Operation Life



Register Now!!

CALL 1800 011 046

OPEN
Veterans & Families
Counselling
ARMS

Operation Life workshops emphasis is on suicide prevention – they aim to help members of the services and veteran community to recognise someone who might be thinking of suicide, and link them with appropriate assistance. There are 3 types of workshops

- Suicide alertness for everyone (Safetalk) ½ day presentation
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) 2 day skills course ASIST Tune Up ½ day refresher workshop

Workshops are open to anyone concerned about veterans, their family, friends and mates in the service and veteran community. Welfare, Compensation Advocates and other helpers from ESO's are welcome and encouraged to attend.

FORMERLY

Veterans and Veterans Families
Counselling Service





Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
R94338	AS	WG	VAN DER WEL	HMAS VENDETTA/JEPARIT	0CT24	3/1/48
R63827	LEM	RGS	CHRISTIE	HMAS SYDNEY/MELBOURNE PERTH	28/3/25	13/11/47
R62854	EMP	IM	GALLOWAY	HMAS MELBOURNE (2) BRISBANE	REV*	16/12/44
R52459	LEM	AR	BURGESS	HMAS MELBOURNE (2)	“	24/9/39
R53307	PO AC	LR	LSRFER	HMAS MELBOURNE	“	12/11/39
R43046	ERA2	R	MCNEILL	HMAS SYDNEY (10)	“	11/6/48
R62202	RO	CJ	LANE	HMAS SYDNEY (4)	“	13/5/46
R64768	OS	BJ	JANCZEWSKI	HMAS SYDNEY (2)	“	19/3/48
R104058	OS	PJ	WOODS	HMAS SYDNEY (2)	“	17/4/52
O2248	MS	GS	BESOMO	HMAS SYDNEY (2)	“	27/8/48
R109527	S	SE	BUTLER	HMAS SYDNEY	“	24/1/55
R104269	S	EJ	VENUS	HMAS HOBART	“	31/5/49
R65460	EMP	PH	BARNES	HMAS HOBART	“	1/9/48
R66812	OS	PR	SMITH	HMAS ANZAC	“	23/1/50
R57585	LS	RJ	MATSON	HMAS VAMPIRE	“	4/11/43
R55211	CEWR	DR	HEGARTY	HMAS PARRAMATTA PERTH (2)	“	7/5/39
O399	LC	GW	FURLONG	HMAS PERTH	“	1/1/36
R103711	AS	TJ	CLARK	HMAS PERTH	“	5/8/53
R110577	OS	SD	GWYNNE	HMAS SWAN (2)	“	20/1/54
R55158	AMAE	I	WASKIW	RAN HELI-FLGHT VIETNAM	7/9/24	17/1/42
R63043	LAMW	P	RUHL	RAN HELI-FLGHT VIETNAM	26/2/24	21/9/46
			* AS REPORTED	IN REVEILLE JUNE 25 NO	DOD	



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
3173096	CAPT	DG	BENT	AATTV	REV*	28/10/44
2784737	CPL	RA	CROSS	AATTV	“	21/1/46
243394	CPL	N	LOJKIN	161 RECCE FLIGHT	REV*	9/2/48
1736391	CPL	KA	CATTELL	AFV DET 1DIV INTEL	REV*	22/3/46
235113	MAJ	CF	DODDS	HQ AFV (ARMY)	27/2/25	10/12/35
2785165	CPL	MG	WOODS	DET 5TH ASCO	JAN 25	28/8/45
214622	SGT	JE	MULLIGAN	DET30 TERMSQN / HQAFV	REV*	19/11/39
2793652	PTE	M	TURNER	1ARU / HQ 1 ATF	“	26/3/49
235282	LT	RL	DENNER	25/52 SUPPLY PL RAASC	23/11/24	4/9/44
2786271	SPR	DR	MCCALLUM	1ST IELD SQN	19/1/25	19/12/45
342537	WO2	PG	SCOTT	32 SMALL SHIPS (4)	27/4/25	14/12/35
216760	CPL	PJ	DUFF	709SIG TROOP / 110 SIG SQN	REV*	5/10/44
43631	SIG	BE	LANE	103 SIG SQN	“	16/2/39
235222	CAPT	DA	SPENCER	103 SIG SQN	“	26/9/41
4720935	SIG	RG	COOKSLEY	104 SIG SQN	31/10/24	9/9/48
3796756	LCPL	C	ADAMS	17 CONST SQN	13/4/25	13/5/47
2781576	SPR	GM	SCOTT	17 CONST SQN	REV*	20/2/46
2783694	CMAN	PD	INGREY	17 CONST SQN WSHOP	4/12/24	20/2/45
215845	CMAN	JG	TAYLOR	17 CONST SQN WSHOP	REV*	26/8/46
243115	CAPT	RF	LUDLOW	106 FLD WSHOP	“	29/6/42
216051	BMDR	GG	CAVE	1 FLD REGT	“	23/6/46
2782218	GNR	LA	KING	1 FLD REGT	“	30/5/45
5716751	LBMDR	HC	PRAGER	1FD / 4 FLD REGT's	“	21/7/48
2794713	GNR	R	DETTMER	12 FLD REGT	1/6/25	25/7/49
2787366	GNR	GR	GREEN	12 FLD REGT	9/5/25	11/3/47
2789198	GNR	GJ	COLLINS	12 FLD REGT	REV*	22/3/47
3789125	TRPR	PR	DROOP	1ARU / ASQN 3 CAV REGT	REV*	



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
214208	PTE	SM	FINNELLEY	1 RAR	23/1/25	16/11/43
215933	PTE	BJ	SMITH	1 RAR	23/1/25	17/8/45
215785	PTE	WJ	KUCZYNSKI	1 RAR	UNK	7/9/45
2787488	PTE	MG	MASHMAN	1ARU / 2 RAR / 1 RAR	REV*	22/8/46
220276	CPL	JS	CHAPMAN	1ARU / 7 RAR/ 2 RAR	3/4/25	13/8/51
14350	CAPT	TE	DINNEEN	2 RAR / HQ 1ATF	4/5/25	23/1/40
2785630	PTE	RTF	WICKES	2 RAR	31/5/24	15/4/46
2781388	PTE	ND	BAILEY	1ARU / 6 RAR / 2 RAR	REV*	6/2/45
2184157	PTE	RL	WILSON	1ARU / 3 RAR	“	29/1/46
17721	PTE	PA	BUYKX	4 RAR	“	20/10/37
2790742	PTE	J	ASHTON	1 ARU / 5 RAR	“	20/1/48
214799	PTE	WG	HOLLANDS	5 RAR	“	30/1/43
2781496	PTE	MR	HUNTER	5 RAR	“	1/5/45
2238468	SGT	DK	SULLIVAN	5 RAR	“	21/9/44
1730784	PTE	MC	BOUTTELL	6 RAR	“	6/4/45
312727	PTE	DJ	ATTWOOD	7 RAR	18/12/24	30/1/49
16055	PTE	DG	SEMPLE	1 RAR / 8 RAR	27/5/25	3/2/44
15505	CPL	MA	BLACK	6 RAR / 8 RAR	13/5/25	3/6/41
3795146	LCPL	HD	BLANDTHORN	8 RAR	18/3/25	25/5/46
2790985	PTE	JE	HODGSON	8 RAR	25/3/25	17/4/48
6709426	PTE	BL	BURTON	8 RAR	20/5/25	12/12/48
4720765	PTE	GJ	HARRIS	8 RAR	25/12/24	18/8/48
2789512	PTE	JS	HARPER	8 RAR	24/4/25	15/12/47
2786647	LCPL	BV	GRAHAM	9 RAR	UNK	26/12/45
2789258	PTE	TW	MOORE	9 RAR	REV*	22/10/46



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
O213658	SQNLDR	CW	SPITZKOWSKY	BSQN UBON (2)	REV*	9/3/36
033862	PO	JW	NEIGHBOUR	BSQN UBON	“	24/8/31
A222903	LA	DW	RILEY	BSQN UBON/37 SQN	31/3/25	24/8/46
A22480	LA	RJJ	STEWART	36 SQN	18/3/25	1/7/49
A112659	LA	JM	BARBOUR	2 SQN	REV*	6/6/45
A219025	SGT	RA	OLIVER	9 SQN	14/1/25	11/2/39
A45893	CPL	T	BAUMBACK	9 SQN	4/3/25	29/8/41
A224174	ACMAN	CJ	BRYANT	9 SQN	REV*	5/7/47
A218242	CPL	CE	MERCER	9 SQN DET A / 9 SQN	16/11/24	27/3/41
ASSOCIATION			LONG TERM	VOLUNTER/MEMBER		
R54991	LS	WJ	WARD	FESR (NAVY)	1/2/25	UNK

Loving Lord, bless them forever in Your eternal peace.
Let the sounds of strife, the cries of battle, the wounds of war
be calmed for all eternity in Your loving and endless grace.
Let these great warriors find rest at last,
Ever reminded that we who are left behind
Cherish their spirit, honor their commitment, send them our love,
and will never forget the service that they gave.

PLEASE NOTE

We make every endeavour to ensure the accuracy of all names published in “The Last Post”. If any omission or error has been made we apologise unreservedly...please contact the editor if you feel an error has been made. bobjf@vifagranville.org, or at the office on 02 9682 1788

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

The following businesses are offering discounts to members of The Vietnam Veterans Federation.

MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICES

CARNEEDS Pty Ltd

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Prptr: Robert Stenta
Ph: 9519 1441

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& competitive prices on tyres and batteries.**

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Federation Members.

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0419 417 206

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advertisers here are still
operating. And providing
discounts for veterans.**

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office on 02 9682 1788 or
via email to
bobf@vfvfgranville.org**

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jaypeachey@hotmail.com

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OPEN SAT FROM: 9.30am- 3.30pm

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M 0414 811 777 T (02) 9895 8800 E paulm@psk.com.au

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