



THE VIETNAM VETERANS' NEWSLETTER

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

SUPPORTING ALL WHO SERVE & HAVE SERVED

JULY 2022



ROYAL COMMISSION: '... are you saying that there are resourcing limitations preventing you from doing everything you would wish to do on mental health support and suicide prevention?'

HEAD (Secretary) of DVA: 'Yes, I am.'

- Revelations from the Royal Commission
- What we can expect from new Federal Labor Government



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SERVICES

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Asbestos - Dust Disease Tribunal claims.

Industry super claims - income protection - TPD appeals,

Coroner's inquests

claims for Detriment Caused by Defective Administration - CDDA

Our Readers love Vietnam Veterans' Stories

Gleaned from letters diaries and memories

Have you got more
stories, pop, like
those other guys?

Yes, reckon
I might have



In this edition:

Graham Foley gifts us a Vietnam Veterans Day poem.

We welcome back author **Ian Granland**, with his story of 'being volunteered' for an unusual job..

John Ingram gives us Part 3 of the story of the ship many of us remember, HMAS Sydney.

Frequent contributor **Al Wood** tells us about his 2008 visit to New Zealand to attend their Welcome Home Parade.

Veteran historian **Greg Lockhart**, in a major piece, recalls his part in the last Australian unit to leave Vietnam.

We love your stories. Keep them rolling in.

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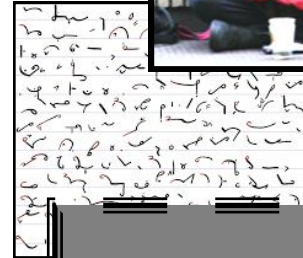
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Dark revelations



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All Vietnam Veteran National Servicemen with Qualifying Service now eligible for Gold Card

In December 1971 the last of 1st Australian Task Force left Vietnam.

That's 50 years ago.

What that means is that National Service Vietnam veterans would be at least 70 years old (with rare exceptions).

That means that National Service Vietnam veterans with qualifying service (with rare exceptions) are now entitled to the Gold Card (with or without war caused illness or injury).

If you know a Nasho who served in the Vietnam war who has not applied for a Gold Card, please advise him he is eligible. ■



VIETNAM VETERANS' FEDERATION of AUSTRALIA Inc.

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

Vietnam Veterans Federation Queensland Branch Inc.

Vietnam Veterans & Veterans Federation ACT Inc.

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WHAT WE DO

We have over forty years' experience assisting with claims in all of the Military Compensation schemes, by our fully qualified, compassionate, highly skilled, Compensation Advocates, Pension and Wellbeing Officers.

We continually strive for the rights of veterans and their families, whenever changes to the laws that govern and recognise their service threatens to diminish just and fair compensation for those that are sent to fight Australia's' wars.

We achieve our aims by continued vigilance of government proposals that affect the Acts of parliaments protecting veterans rights and entitlements. By assuring that DVA uphold and enable due process of claims to the letter of those laws. By lobbying government and ministers where the laws could be improved for the benefit of veterans and their families.

We fully support and faithfully attend the Ex-Service Organisations Round Table, (ESORT), group discussions with the government and DVA. As well as maintain a close liaison with other Ex-service organisations.

Our successes have been many, and clarified in our following pages of News, Current Issues and Historical records. Our legacy and continued efforts needs to be handed on to the next generation of youthful supporters willing to take up the challenge as our volunteers become frail and unable to take up the vigil.

We do not charge any fee nor expect recompence for any of our services, and rely upon grants, donations, gifts and bequests, along with a small income from the sale of Raffle tickets and merchandise, for paid Advocates, volunteer amenities, at our many offices throughout Australia.

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**And the winners
are...SEE PAGE**

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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.

What the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide has been digging up

Does DVA's huge backlog of disability claims increase the risk of veterans' suicide?

If there was any doubt, that doubt was extinguished at the Royal Commission hearing on Thursday, 14 April 2022.

The Head (Secretary) of DVA, Ms Liz Cosson*, was being questioned.

Counsel assisting the commission, Peter Gray QC, asked: "In your opinion, are delays in claims processing at DVA capable of raising the risks that veterans making those claims could take their own lives?"

Ms Cosson replied, "I believe that the claims backlog could be a contributing factor, absolutely,"

*(Ms Liz Cosson, AM CSC Major General retired, Secretary Department of Veterans Affairs)



We ask:.....Why is the backlog so important.

A.....The backlog is important because the bigger the backlog the longer veterans have to wait for the processing of their disability claims.

Q....What is wrong with long waiting times for a decision on disability claims?

A.....The awaited decisions could be life changing for often anxious, sick and troubled veterans. Long waiting times will increase the claimants' levels of anxiety. Such increased levels of anxiety increase the risk of suicide.

We ask....So What are the waiting times?

A.....DVA admits to processing times having blown out to an average of 200 days for non-urgent claims. But the average figure does not tell the whole story. DVA admits to a significant number of disability claims taking over 300 days to process. Claims under the MRCA and DRCA schemes can take two years.

What can be said is that these times are increasing which is increasing the risk of suicide.

We ask....How long have these delays been going on ?

A.....Periods of dangerous delays have been occurring from time to time for decades but most recently the VVFA began expressing concern in 2015.

The Royal Commission has dug up claims-on-hand figures for recent years showing alarming progressive increases. Those figures are:

- On 30 June 2019 DVA had **25,496** disability claims-on-hand.
- On 30 June 2021 DVA had **56,663** disability claims-on-hand.
- In April 2022 DVA had **60,000** disability claims-on-hand.
- In June 2022, despite the additional staff being allocated to the task, the claims on hand remained at about 60,000.

It is also disturbing to note that while the claims backlog was increasing, DVA staff were being reduced. In 2015, it had a workforce of 1,935 but that dropped to 1,615 by 2020.

In other words, while the backlog was

(Continued on page 8)

escalating, thus putting more veterans at risk of suicide, the staff to process the backlog of veterans' claims was reducing.

So much for government's claim to respect veterans' service.

We Condemn...Hiding the inconvenient truth

Q...How do we find out how many disability claims are in hand and what are the waiting times?

A...We can't, because, in recent years, DVA's annual report only tells us whether the number of claims-in-hand has increased or decreased since the last annual report. The actual number and waiting times, which is what we want to know, is omitted.

It is hard not to conclude that this is a bureaucratic tactic to hide an inconvenient truth.

The Royal Commission identified and commented on this dodgy behaviour. It strongly suggested to the DVA Head that the actual backlog figure and waiting times be included in annual reports.

And why is this statistic announced only once a year in DVA's annual report or when the figure is forced out of them at Senate Estimate Hearings. Why won't DVA give out the figure monthly when we know they continually monitor the figure internally.

The answer may be that they are acutely embarrassed by their tawdry performance and wish to hide it from veterans.

DVA must face its failure, come clean, and work hard to regain veterans' trust.

Belatedly forced into action

By 2021 the backlog and waiting times were getting so bad that no excuses could hide the need for urgent action. In a belated attempt to stem the rising number of claims-on-hand and consequently reduce those dangerously long waiting times, the May 2021 Federal Budget provided 274 extra staff to DVA to helping reduce the claims on hand.

But this seemingly impressive number doesn't seem to mean much. DVA, a year after those 274 staff were authorised, haven't even

recruited all of them, let alone trained them to make them productive.

It is not surprising then that in April 2022, a year after the government provided those extra 274 staff, DVA's claims on hand had risen from 56,663 to 60,000.

The May 2022 Federal budget provided an additional 90 staff to work on claims to start in July 2022. But when that recruitment will be completed and the extra staff become productive is anybody's guess.

There is another problem with staffing.

Because the government has put a cap on the number of proper public servants DVA can recruit, the number actually required must be made up from recruits on two year contracts and some casuals from labour hire companies. Those on contracts and those from labour hire recruits are, for a number of reasons, less satisfactory staff. Presently proper, permanent public servants make up some 50% of the total rather than the 80% judged by DVA to be optimal.

It seems the only reason for this unsatisfactory staffing arrangement is to allow the government to quote a misleadingly low number in the public service; this for political purposes.

So much for government honesty and concern that the system serves veterans as efficiently as possible.

It is hoped the new government raises DVA's cap on proper public servants.

So why did the backlog get away from DVA?

Because DVA did not listen to our warnings that deploying individual troops 4,5,6 and more times to the Middle East, often without the recommended gap between deployments, would inevitably result in a tsunami of mental health problems.

(It was not a particularly clever prediction; it was one even the drover's dog could have made.)

We ask...So when will this toxic backlog be eliminated?

DVA Head, Ms Cosson, predicts the backlog will

The May 2021 Federal budget provided 274 more staff to claims processing but the backlog has continued to rise.

Perhaps...



be eliminated by late 2024 (perhaps even a bit earlier).

The question is, of course, why must it take so long.

Taking at least two years seems snail's pace.

We ask...So what else is causing such dangerous delays?

One obstacle to faster processing of disability claims is that veterans are covered by three distinct compensation schemes. Some veterans' come under more than one of these schemes.

In 2019 a Productivity Commission report identified having the three separate acts as an obstacle to the efficient working of disability claims processing. Harmonisation was

recommended.

The DVA Head agreed. She told the Royal Commission that the complexity caused by there being three separate compensation acts contributes to the increases in the backlog.

The Royal Commission pointed out that while the Productivity Commission report was released in June 2019, DVA did not seek ex-service organisations' feedback till December 2020 and that it was not till May 2021 that the government announced that a roadmap to harmonising the three pieces of legislation would be developed.

We are now in mid 2022, and there seems little progress has been made on that roadmap.

(Continued on page 10)



Covid may have slowed the process but even so, considering that the lack of harmonisation is a contribution to increasing the risk of suicide, more progress would be expected.

Q....Is it reasonable that three years after the need to harmonise the three acts was officially recognised, nothing has changed?

A....No, it is not.

We ask...Are there delays to other suicide prevention projects

There were revealing exchanges between the Royal Commission and the Head of DVA on 14 April 2022.

Royal Commission: `..you've said the [Repatriation] system has evolved in such a way that it is considered not fit for contemporary needs of veterans...You remember writing that?

DVA Head. Yes.

Royal Commission: `Firstly, you say that "it is considered not fit". Do you consider it not

fit for the contemporary needs of veterans?

DVA Head: `I do consider it is not fit, correct.'

Another exchange:

Royal Commission: `... are you saying that there are resourcing limitations preventing you from doing everything you would wish to do on mental health support and suicide prevention?'

DVA Head: `Yes, I am.'

We conclude...It makes one wonder whether all the accolades the government has heaped upon veterans have been genuinely felt or just empty words spoken for electoral show.

An interim report from the Royal Commission is due in August 2022.

It should be interesting reading.■

The Minefield

Another extract from the book

The lifting of the minefield

‘Not far from this point, a second bunker was found beneath a tomb-stone outside the minefield a few days after the minesweeper and bulldozers were eventually extricated from the mud—by a daisy chain of tanks. This second bunker, which was pointed out by a defector from D445 Battalion, was found to contain 95 M26 grenades with M5 pressure release switches. Possibly, ordnance from this store was used to booby trap the bogged machines around the first bunker.

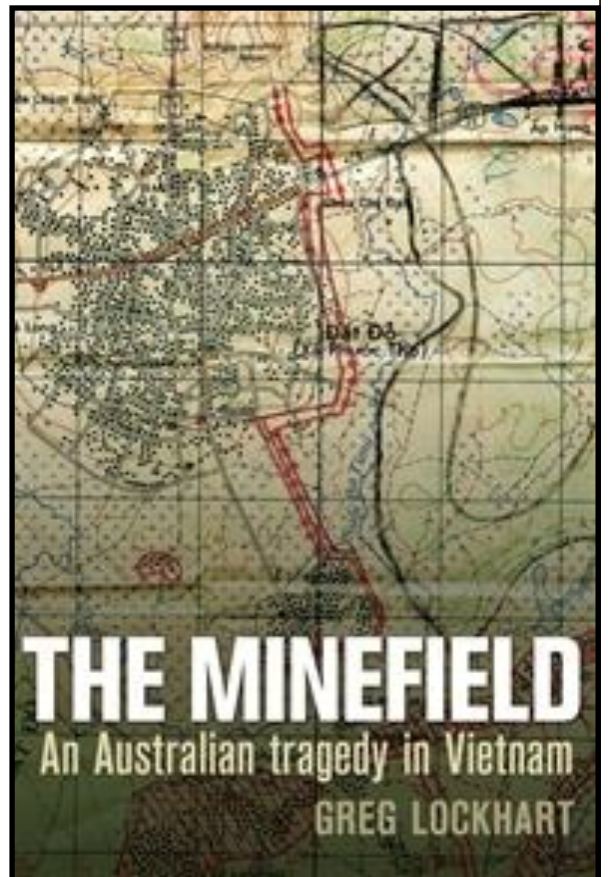
Something as certain as the enemy activity in the minefield was the relentless effort necessary to maintain the clearing operation. During [the mine clearing operation] work went on around the field from dawn to dusk. When the clearing teams returned to Nui Dat after dark, the fitters worked through the night to have the vehicles and equipment ready to return to the field at first light.’

Dr Greg Lockhart is a Vietnam veteran, having served with AATTV.

He is an eminent historian whose work has been widely acknowledged.

His writing of this excellent book came from the VVFA’s concern that it knew very little about the Minefield when dealing with veterans damaged by their contact with it.

He is the VVFA’s honorary historian. ■



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FOREVER AND A DAY

By Graeme Foley, 3 RAR First Tour, for Vietnam Veterans Day

Despite the times of laughter.
In the boozier and the Lines
When we (sometimes) flouted rules
Chanting at Chicken-man's gripes and whines

We all grew sort of older than we should have ever been
Especially when we milled at Luscombe Pad with a red-dust sheen
To be coated again by chopper dust on our greens and ever tightening miens
While we crouch in expectations heading out for combat somewhere in "The Green"

Where tenseness permeated from each pore
Until some smart aleck yelled above the chopper vibe about the lost 'Fucarewee' tribe
And belly giggles shook webbing
As choppers landed; and we all clambered quick inside

To head for places that many could barely say
And from where some would not return
Forever and a Day!
As others lived on with their moods scarred... Forever and a Day

About mates taken well before their time
Mates! Who would colour long homeland dreams
As ageless heroes taken in their prime
In places quite obscene

And when finally returned home and demobbed back to 'normal life'
For many that too was filled with times of strife
With the alien nature of the place
With old girlfriends now some strangers wife!

With the national response to service changed
Making many feel dislocated; savagely misunderstood
Pressing tormenting times upon them
Despite having served as best they could

But in time the nation did swing round; began to come to its senses
As again hands held hands: and there was a breaking down of fences
While Reveille played with optimism across all past offences
And thoughts swirled with 'lost' mates in the sobering silence: no need NOW for defences!

Vietnam Veterans Day



The famous 'Image of a Dead Man'
by Vietnam veteran artist Ray Beattie



What should the election of the new Labor government mean for veterans?

Here are its promises

Disability Claims Delays

It is pleasing to see the new government is focused on cutting those dangerous waiting times for disability claims to be processed. They plan to do this by speeding up the processing with an extra 500 staff.

Just as important will be the elimination of the cap on the hiring of proper public servants which has meant them having to hire a very large number of Labour Hire Company temporaries.

This will allow, over time, more permanent, better trained, better motivated staff who will speed up processing.

It is a relief that the stupid restriction of the cap will no longer impede claims processing.

Increasing the TPI pension (payment)

The new government 'will introduce a \$1,000 permanent increase in the annual rate of the TPI Payment from 1 January 2023'.

That is an increase of only \$38.46 a fortnight, much less than justified. But it is certainly a step in the right direction.

It is gratefully received.

Veterans Homelessness Plan

It is shocking that one in 10 people sleeping rough in NSW is a veteran. Around 5,800 ex-servicemen and women have been homeless in a 12-month period, far more than previously estimated. RSL Queensland has seen a 26 per cent increase in demand for their veteran homelessness program year on year and RSL NSW has also reported a 25 per cent increase in the number of veterans seeking housing support. Carry On Victoria, which provides crisis accommodation for veterans sleeping rough, estimates 7,500 veterans are homeless in Victoria.

It is certainly time for a serious remedy.

The new government will invest \$30 million



Veteran homelessness.
The statistics are shocking.

The new government has made a start but much more needs to be done.

over five years to build housing and fund specialist services for veterans who are experiencing homelessness or are at-risk of homelessness.

A good start.

Defence and Veteran Family Engagement and Support Strategy

The new government 'will develop a national family engagement and support strategy, which will provide a blueprint for engagement by Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) with military families and identify improvements to family support.

It is much needed.

Veteran Hubs

Veteran hubs provide a space for a number of veterans' services and advocacy organisations to co-exist and provide holistic wrap-around support to current and ex-serving personnel and their families.

The new government will develop 10 veteran hubs across Australia in South West Perth, Northern Adelaide, the North Brisbane-Moreton Bay region, Ipswich, Queanbeyan, the Hawkesbury region, the Hunter, the Tweed and North Coast region, Surf Coast and Geelong region, and Tasmania.

A potentially good development.

Veterans Employment Program

The new government will help veterans into good

quality jobs by doing more to boost recognition of their skills and experience, and provide support for further education and training for veterans wanting to move into the civilian workforce.

A good move.

Boosting Defence Home Ownership

The new government will improve access to home ownership for defence personnel earlier in their Defence careers and allow veterans to access the scheme any time after they have completed their service.

Disaster Relief Australia (previously called Rubicon Australia)

This excellent organisation gathers veterans, often those suffering from the trauma of war, into well organised and supplied squads who help recovery from disasters such as floods, bush-fires and drought.

This is a much appreciated public service as well as benefiting the veterans.

Such government support is helping suffering veterans recover self-pride and improve their health.

A good move.

We shall be watching with gratitude as these promises are honoured

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

The Vietnam war adventures of a reluctant shorthand writer

By

Ian Granland

In 1970 I was working at 104 Signal Squadron as a GD/Hygiene man.

Sometime in May 1970 a circular came round from Task Force Headquarters. It said that the Brigadier in charge of the Task Force wanted a shorthand writer and was making inquiries with all units to ascertain if anyone had shorthand skills. I said nothing.

However, I later joked with some of my colleagues that in fact I was a shorthand writer, learning the task as a police cadet. At my prime I could write 100 words per minute – which was not that fast comparing me with my cotemporaries of the time. Ironically, I never used this skill whilst in the police force.

"Tell someone, you'll get the job" they urged me. I had always remembered the old adage to never volunteer in the army, so I didn't. However, my colleagues did and soon after that Second Lieutenant Bevan Turner approached me to ask if it was true. I told him it was and he nominated me to the Brigadier's office as someone who could do the job.

I remonstrated with Lt Turner that it had been 4 years since I had taken shorthand and my proficiency rate was way down on what it was then. Nevertheless, the fact that I could and probably too because no-one else in the 5000 strong Task Force volunteered, I got an audience with Brigadier Bill Henderson. Prior to our

meeting I began practicing that lost art but struggled to get over about 40 wpm or so. What, I thought, had I got myself into?

"Come in soldier" was his greeting. I entered his office and saluted. *"So, you are a shorthand writer, are you?"* he asked.

"Well sir, I used to be able to write shorthand, and I suppose I still can (not wanting to put myself down) but I'm nowhere near the speed I used to write."

"That's OK, I want you to write some for me and see how you go. I'll dictate a few passages from this book and you write them down. Do you have a note pad?"

When I said I didn't, he left the room returning a short time later with a pen and spiral notebook. I didn't have the heart to tell him that serious shorthand writers only use pencils!!!

Well off he went, going 13 to the dozen and I was left trying to catch up. *"Are you getting all this?"* He asked. *"Most of it sir"*. *"Good"*, then he continued.

After about 5 minutes he had dictated a few pages and my shorthand/longhand notes took up several pages in the notebook.

"Now go back to your unit soldier, transcribe what you have and bring it back to me".

I trundled off across the road to where our unit was located. I asked if I could use the Orderly Room typewriter and started to decipher what I had written.



Ian Granland

I guess I got 90% of it right so just made up the rest. I knew he wouldn't read it all.

I took it back all typed up and ship shape. He began to read it, then dismissed me with a *"Good. That's very good, I'll call you when I need you."*

So I saluted and went back to my duties cleaning dunnies, forgetting all about it.

On 20 July a platoon of infantry reinforcements attached to 1ARU were taken some distance outside the wire to give them experience in night time activities and possible involvement in what they could expect in a real live contact situation with the enemy.

During the evening the person in charge

called in artillery fire from the New Zealand 161 Artillery Battery based in Nui Dat to provide a demonstration of how to use artillery and what the sensation was like when ordinance was being used.

Unfortunately, 'someone' botched the map ref. co-ordinates and the shells landed amongst the platoon, killing 2 and wounding several others. One of my good friends with whom I had spent 3 years in the police cadets, Jimmy Walker, was one of those wounded. Luckily his injuries were superficial, apart from some temporary deafness and he was subsequently posted to Headquarters, 1ATF as a barman rather than being returned to Australia. He did not want to be sent home. Several others were medevaced back to Australia. At this stage I did not know that Jimmy was involved, let alone in Vietnam.

As a result of this terrible incident, the army held a preliminary hearing into the event the following month. I was called to take shorthand at the enquiry where evidence was given by the witnesses and those involved. This initial inquiry was presided over by an army captain only.

This was a huge task for me. I was not prepared nor was I trained to do this type of work. I spoke to Lt Turner telling him that I could not possibly take shorthand notes and then transcribe for days on end. I did suggest though that I was a reasonably proficient touch typist and could type

(Continued on page 18)

the depositions of the hearing almost as fast as they talked, so maybe if I did that, then my notes given to another typist who could possibly retype them without error.

Luckily Lt Turner had a small portable typewriter which made the job all that much easier. The captain in charge agreed to the arrangements and for the next three days I sat as the deposition taker in this pre-formal hearing.

On the first day Jim Walker walked into the room. "Jimmy, what are you doing here" I exclaimed. Then he explained that he was one of the group of soldiers that were injured.

Of course this work was a big change from what I was normally doing of a day – I even had to wear a shirt!!! I took the evidence from those involved, the lieutenant in charge of the platoon, some of the survivors, including Jim Walker, the NCO who received the radio instructions and co-ordinates and the soldier who plotted the co-ordinates.

I quickly gained the opinion that there could have been manipulation of the facts, particularly concerning the young NZ gunner who was very nervous and under extreme pressure during the hearing. It was clear to me that he was not in a good state and provided a very poor recount of the situation and his part in it. I am not attributing any blame to anyone here.

After it was over, I was thanked and never heard any more of it. I have no idea if charges were proceeded with against anyone nor if anyone was found guilty.

Later in my life, Jim Walker, who returned to the police force after his two years national service, moved to the Central Coast of NSW where, even though he was a graded rugby league player, I persuaded him to play Aussie Rules Football with my local club.

Jim eventually became a detective sergeant and later worked as an instructor in the detective course in Sydney.

Jim and his wife Merle, were extremely decent people who, besides their own children adopted several to whom they were exceedingly



Jim Walker

committed. You could not find a more decent bloke than Jim nor a more devoted and dedicated couple.

In due course, Jim undertook a university course and subsequently resigned from the police force to become a successful solicitor at Woy Woy, NSW. Unfortunately he died as a result of contracting leukaemia in December 2000. Apparently, a number of his colleagues with whom he worked at 1 Aust Task Force Headquarters at Nui Dat during that time, also succumbed to cancer in their forties and fifties.

Makes you think doesn't it? Was it the water? Was it something else? Why them and not us? ■

Ian H Granland OAM JP

Book Review

Keep the Spirit of ANZAC alive

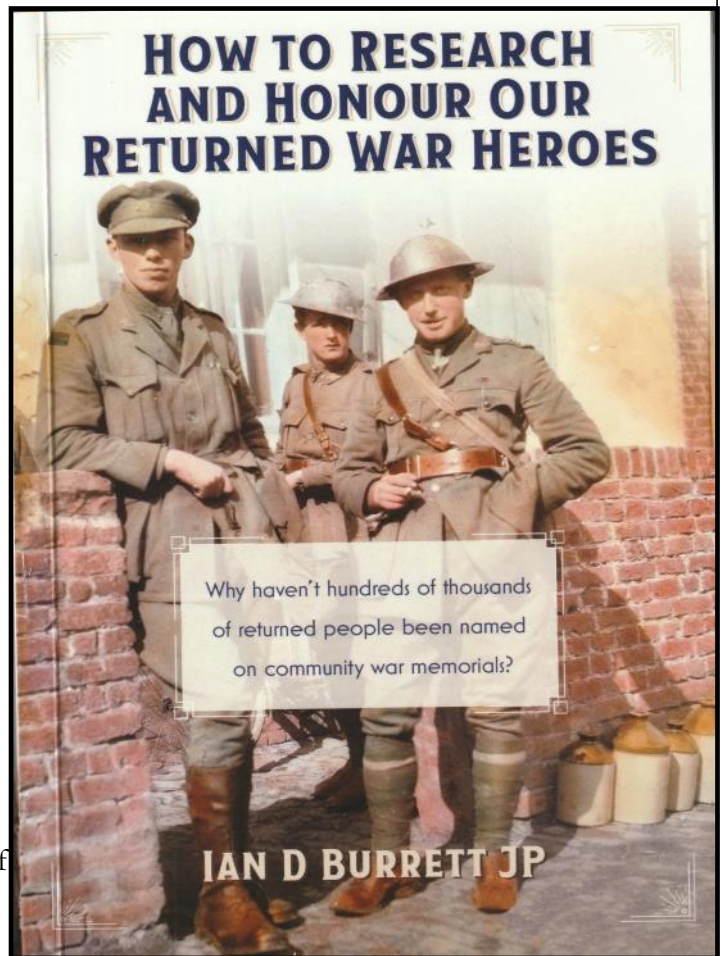
Ian Burrett JP tells us why all returned sailors, soldiers and aviators should be commemorated on community war memorials and how to achieve it.

Ian Burrett argues convincingly that the service of all returned veterans from all wars deserves to be acknowledged on community war memorials. Those lists of names should include those who died and those who made it home.

Ian tells us in his book that: 'The main reason why our returned heroes have not also been named on community war memorials is that neither the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Australian War Memorial, RSL Australia or anyone else has published guidelines to assist communities with this task.'

This book does exactly that, successfully giving step by step actions to assist communities and individuals researching for names, then explains how to go about getting those names included on community memorials.'

The book also gives an insight into what veterans have gone through. It lists web-sites on which the names of service people can be found and how to navigate those web-sites. It tells us how to find medals entitlements and how to



purchase replicas. How to update memorials is also canvassed.

It includes, too, an intriguing chapter on the RSL. Quite an insight.

It is the only book of its kind we have come across.

The book costs \$39.99, plus \$10 postage but the cost of postage for a second and third book in the same order is progressively less.

An order can be placed through Ian's web-site: buzz1@southernphone.com.au. If you state you learned about the book through this review \$15 will be donated to the VVFA.

Or the book can be purchased through VVFA Granville headquarters at: vvfanatsec@vvfa.org.au. A similar donation will be made to VVFA. ■

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Straight talk from DVA Head, Ms Liz Cosson

(Ms Liz Cosson, AM CSC Major General retired)



VVFA headquarters, Granville

The revelations from the questioning of some witnesses at the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide are truly remarkable.

This is specially so from the evidence given by Ms Liz Cosson*, Head (Secretary) of DVA. Her evidence was heard on 14 February 2022.

Ms Cosson was surprisingly frank in her answers.

We are not used to this. Bureaucrats often provide 'Yes Minister' answers to inconvenient questions; answers that obscure rather than illuminate.

Perhaps giving such clear and unambiguous answers results from Liz Cosson's military background as well as her genuine concern for veterans' welfare and her undoubted integrity and honesty.

Whatever the reasons, we have learned from the DVA Head in straight-forward language, that the government has not provided enough resources for the department to do all it could to prevent veteran suicide and that the Department of Veterans Affairs is not fit for purpose.

Thank you Liz.

(see article *What the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide has been digging up* in this edition)

On another matter, the incoming government will increase the TPI pension (now called a 'payment') by \$38.46 a fortnight (over and above the usual cost of living catch-ups).

This is not a world shattering improvement but a welcome improvement nevertheless. Indeed we are grateful for it.

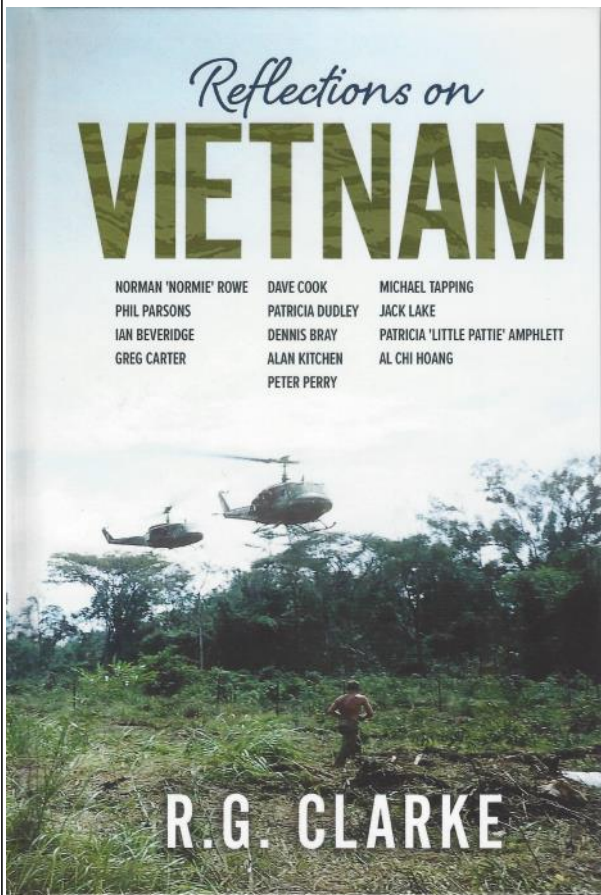
The TPI Federation has been gallantly campaigning for some years for restructuring of the TPI pension which would result in a substantial increase.

But after succeeding in having two government reviews established on the TPI pension's adequacy (a remarkable achievement itself), the restructuring and subsequent substantial increase the TPI Federation sought have not been achieved.

It may be time to rethink our approach to seeking a more generous TPI pension. It may be time to critically look at the TPI Federation's proposal, identify its strengths and weaknesses and discuss new approaches.

This we propose to do in the December 2022 edition of this magazine. ■

Book Review



MoshPit Publishing

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978-1-922542-03-8 (ebook-mobi)

Copyright © R.G. Clarke 2021

RRP (Hardback) \$51.95 (Amazon)

(Kindle) \$11.99 (Amazon)

My advice: Shop around on line but secure free delivery. Try also, Dymocks and TheMoshShop, which has free shipping included.

Over 300 pages and 100 images, many then and now photos of the storytellers themselves.

A very well compiled collection of memories from Vietnam Veterans, including Normie Rowe AM. Our very own veterans supporter and entertainer 'Little Pattie', (Patricia Amphlett), and, a heartwarming insight from an ARVN (Vietnamese) veteran, Al Chi Hoang, a Second Lieutenant with the 1/48th battalion 71-75.

With a foreword by Dr Brendan Nelson worth the read on its own merit. The book is compelling reading from the thirteen who bare their torments, along with the good times, in a compilation that is very rewarding and insightful for the reader.

There is no censoring or a feeling of time constraint between each one telling it like it was for them, and the author taking the time to draw out everything he could from the interviews. And like R G Clarke says himself, "The language used in this book is representative of another time in Australian history. Its inclusion in this work is for historical accuracy and insights as to the storytellers personal views at the time the events described occurred."

A very well crafted collection of stories from a diverse group of veterans, entertainers and 'Skippy' crew. I can only recommend the work as a great Fathers Day gift, or buy several and pass them around for your Christmas surprise.

Review by BF—Editor.

NEW SOUTH WALES PRESIDENT'S REPORT



NSW BRANCH AGM

The NSW Branch AGM was conducted on Wednesday 11 May 2022 at the Granville office of our Veterans Support Centre. Reports tabled included the President's Report plus welfare, membership and financial reports all of which indicated that the aims of the Association are continuing to be met. We are all indebted to our team of dedicated staff (mainly volunteers) who achieve these great results. Elections for our NSW Branch Committee are held biennially and are next due in 2023.

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2022

We hope that our function on 18 August will go ahead as planned this year, after our 2 year hiatus through the COVID pandemic.

Planning is underway with an announcement as advertised on page 45, and will once again be hosted by Bankstown Sports Club. Hope to see you all there.

DVA CLAIMS

Whilst the number of veterans approaching our Granville Veterans Support Centre with claims on DVA has decreased somewhat over the past year our claims Advocates continue to be very busy indeed. The major frustration with DVA is the time it takes to allocate a delegate to the claim and to have that claim processed. One of the worse of these delayed cases was recently brought to my attention. The claim was lodged in 2018 and was only allocated to a DVA delegate in May 2022. The DVA has some 60,000 cases in this back-log and has attempted to employ 400 new staff but has only managed to employ about 274. You will continue to be up-dated on this sorry state of affairs through this Newsletter.

50 YEARS SINCE WE WITHDREW FROM SOUTH VIETNAM

During the period of "Vietnamisation" of the war allied forces commenced their active withdrawal from South Vietnam. The last Australian combat personnel departed Nui Dat for Vung Tau on 7 November 1971 in readiness to return home. This unit was the majority of 4RAR/NZ Battalion with the AATTIV the last to leave in December 1972 approx. 14 days after the election of the Whitlam Government. The Australian Embassy Guard in Saigon remained until May 1973. Our Association came into existence about seven years later due to inaction by the then existing ESO's in catering to the needs of those who served in the longest war of the 20th century. We continue to fight for you and for those who came after us to ensure that they were not treated as Vietnam Veterans were when they returned home.

FEDERAL ELECTION – 2022

The recent Federal Election has resulted in the appointment of a new Minister for Veteran's Affairs. We have written to Matt Keogh MP to congratulate him on his appointment to the position and stating that we wish to establish a good working relationship him. The Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP has been appointed Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

ANNUAL RAFFLE

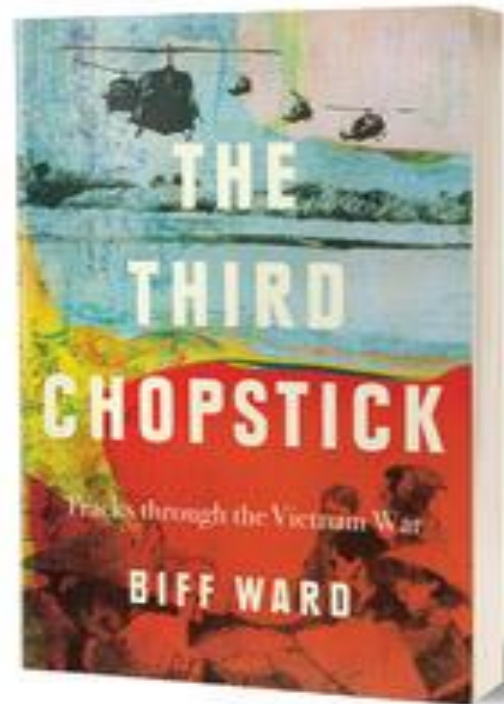
The NSW Branch annual raffle was drawn recently with observers in attendance. The four lucky winners are announced later in our Secretary's column on page 29..

Keep safe and well,

Frank Cole

Book Review

A Quite Extraordinary Book



Biff Ward was an active anti-Vietnam war protestor. Like many of her protesting comrades, she just could not imagine what the war was like for those who fought it.

So she decided to find out.

At a conference on the Vietnam War in Sydney, attended by all sides of the issue, Biff Ward confessed her interest and was invited to visit our Granville headquarters. This took her on a journey on which, with humility and respect, she entered the world of Vietnam veterans.

Subsequently, over some years, she spent a lot of time there, talking to veterans and absorbing the atmosphere. In that process, she became impressed by the self-help the VVFA organisation provides.

She asked for and was granted interviews with many Vietnam veterans. One of these veterans was the remarkable Ray Fulton who, based at the Granville office, did so much good work for veterans' welfare.

Biff tells of her long association with Ray — the traumatised war veteran and the anti-war protestor— and shows the respect they developed for one another.

It is quite unusual in these days of rigidly held partisan positions on many social and

political issues to find those who want to bridge the gap. Biff Ward is such a person.

Biff's views on the war will not, of course, please a some veteran readers. But for her, the war and those who fought it have always been separate.

In her quest to understand the war, Biff travelled to Vietnam and became as intrigued by the country as she was by the war and its veterans. She then organised tour groups which visited many war sites, including Nui Dat and other parts of Phuoc Tuy Province.

She tells too of her meetings with those who we fought against.

It is an absorbing read.

The book can be purchased **on-line** from the Mosh Shop, Booktopia and Apple Books, etc.

It can be purchased **directly** from the National Library Bookshop, Dymocks Canberra, Moruya Books and some outlets in Adelaide.

The book is highly recommended. ■



From the dusty archives, researcher and author Kel Robertson, brings us stories of the early days of the Vietnam veteran movement. In Part 3 are the stories of the veterans who first blew the whistle.



VVAA HISTORY DRAFTS – STEPS TOWARDS THE FOUNDING OF A NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF VIETNAM VETERANS

Previously: Part 1 of this series attempted to account for the unprecedented interest of Justice Paul Toose in the possible effect of defoliants on Vietnam veterans at the 1972 beginning of his Independent Inquiry into Repatriation. Part 2, as a way of exploring the RSL's attitudes to Vietnam veterans during and immediately after the war, speculated on the reasons why, in 1972, the RSL might have been expected to embrace or reject Vietnam veterans who believed their illnesses to be the result of chemical exposure.

A sequence of events in December 1979 and January/February 1980 that resulted in something resembling a national association of Australian Vietnam veterans has been given little attention by historians. That these events have not been closely examined is not surprising, as they are less important in veterans' and historians' eyes than other matters to do with (or resulting from) the emergence of an organisation that looked to be "national".

In veterans' eyes the founding events are less significant than the early work of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (however named in its early years) in agitating for a judicial inquiry into wartime chemical exposure, providing welfare and other services, pushing for better repatriation conditions, urging the provision of Government-funded counselling and encouraging community appreciation of the service of the Vietnam cohort.

In historians' eyes the sequence of founding steps is less important than events

leading up to and including the Agent Orange Royal Commission and is much less interesting that the underlying reasons for the VVAA's establishment: reasons reflecting veterans' perceptions of themselves and of their treatment by others. In other words, historians have been more interested in the "why" than the "what" and have, consequently, been keen to explore the psychological and other origins of the Association's early existence and behaviour. More particularly, they've been eager to assess the validity of feelings of alienation, maltreatment and betrayal that are seemingly more 'attractive' explanations for the existence of the Association than a straightforward desire on the part of involved veterans to do something about their post-war difficulties.

The earliest commentators on the Association's founding provide helpful background information on people and events without telling a complete and coherent story. John Dux and P J Young, the journalist authors of Agent Orange: The Bitter Harvest (1980) provide useful information - much of it not found elsewhere - but get a number of important matters wrong or miss significant events, probably because of the speed with which their book was written. Jock McCulloch, the academic author of The Politics of Agent Orange: The Australian Experience (1984), provides an even better account of the broader context in which the founding of the Association took place but, oddly,

(Continued on page 26)

fails to register the earliest events outside Victoria. He also downplays the role of the inaugural national president, Holt McMinn, even if rightly noting the important repeated engagement of veteran Bernie Szapiel with the media in 1979 (to draw attention to his and other veterans' health issues) and referring to the first multi-state meeting of veterans concerned about defoliant exposure (at the house of Bernie and Senia Szapiel in Melbourne on 4 January 1980).

Importantly, foundation events also predated the involvement of the Association's champion in the historical skirmishes of later decades: its long-time Research Officer, Graham Walker (who joined in the second half of 1981 and was quickly engaged in the practical work of Association, rather than in charting its short history).

Most significantly, perhaps, the events, themselves, were difficult, even by the mid- 80s, to piece together, as records of meetings and discussions weren't made (see below) or retained, as many key players were no longer involved in the Association, and as the remaining individuals tended to attach maximum significance to the events in which they participated in their own States. Indeed, in later years there would be a competition of sorts to claim key roles for States and individuals in the establishment of the Association.

It should also be recalled that initial office holders had more important things in mind than the keeping of records for the assistance of historians; they could have had no idea that they were establishing an organisation which would, in multiple guises, last for more than forty years and be of ongoing importance in veterans' affairs.

Patchy initial record keeping can also be explained by the fact that so many early figures had little experience of public organisations, had little or no knowledge of the mechanics of establishing and running such organisations, and were (with some notable exceptions) not well known for their penmanship. The fact that the very earliest leaders at national and state levels usually had work and family responsibilities is also material.

The absence of a formal foundation event (at which a national constitution, agreed processes for decision and policy making, and mechanisms for the election of office holders were ratified) also made the early history hard for commentators to trace.

A still popular but inaccurate view is that there was a gradual coming together of concerned veterans in most of the Australian states in the latter half of 1979 – a gradual accretion of resolve and commitment – which inevitably led to the founding of a national organisation.

It's true that before December

1979, some veterans had publicly expressed their concerns about the possible effects of war-time chemical exposure, beginning, it would seem, with Gary Adams' approach to the Sunday Telegraph newspaper in November 1978 and then with Bernie Szapiel's approach to the Melbourne Herald in March of 1979. However, there had been (a) no coming together of Vietnam veterans from various States (for chemical-related reasons) before early January 1980 and (b) no public call for an organisation to assist Vietnam veterans in obtaining compensation for chemical-related illnesses before 17 December 1979.

That public call for an organisation was made on the 17th of December 1979 by



Gary Adams
(November 1978)

Queensland veteran John Harper, who was reported in The Australian the next day as calling for the establishment of an organisation to assist ex-servicemen and their children to obtain compensation from the Australian and US Governments for the side effects of exposure to the defoliant Agent Orange.

Within a day Holt McMinn and Bernie Szapiel had responded to that call. On 20 December 1979, the Adelaide newspaper, The Advertiser, reported that the two men were, together, establishing “an Association of sufferers to put pressure on the Government to hold an enquiry, recognise the sickness and increase their war service pensions.” On the same day, The Age, in Melbourne, reported the intention of McMinn to set up an organisation of Vietnam veterans to rival the RSL.

Whether there had been inter-state contacts prior to these announcements is unclear (and will probably never be known).

The first report of related organisations being established appeared in The Australian on Boxing Day; an article focussing on NSW veteran Jim Wares (and on the veterans who’d contacted him in the week since a previous article in the same paper), included reference to meetings being planned for Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

In fact, the Sydney event took place a day later at the Castle Hill RSL Club and appears to have been the first minuted meeting to form an association (soon to be part of a national-like body) with the aim of, amongst other things,

seeking chemical exposure compensation for veterans, their wives and their children.

Dux and Young claimed that a very large meeting took place in Brisbane a few days later, on 30 December, but they are likely to be referring to the meeting at the Park Royal Motel which didn’t take place until 20 January 1980. (Their brief description of the 30 December meeting better fits the reported inaugural meeting of the Queensland

Branch on 20 January.) It is possible, though, that a smaller meeting was held on 30 December, as an interim committee was in place by the time of the 20 January gathering.

The previously referred to gathering of veterans from various states at the Szapiels’ house in Melbourne took place on 4 January, as did the establishment of a Victorian organisation.

Then followed a meeting in Melbourne on January 10 at which some State representatives consulted the influential Queensland solicitor, Bill McMillan, to decide on a legal strategy, principally in relation to steps already taken by

veterans in the US. It seems likely that it was this meeting at which the division of national positions, referred to by John Harper in Dux and Young, took place. Draft minutes of this meeting were distributed to attendees by McMillan the day after, but do not appear with the letter introducing them on the relevant VVAA file at the Australian War Memorial. However, a later update on events by the Queensland president, John Harper, probably from February 1980, listed attendees,



(Continued on page 28)

outlined the organisation’s aims and stated that this 10 January meeting was the one at which the national Association was formed.

Within a week an advertisement for three branches of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association – note the use of a single name to describe all three entities – was published in The Courier Mail and, presumably, in other newspapers. Holt McMinn was referred to as the National President, even though, for a few days after the 10 January meeting, he’d still been described as the Victorian VVVAA Convenor in newspaper reports.

If a public announcement of the intention to form a Vietnam veterans organisation is regarded as the key founding moment of the Association, the date of McMinn and Szapiel’s announcement of an intention to establish a rival to the RSL – 19 December 1979, reported on 20 December – could be deemed to be the Association’s birthday.

If greater honour attaches to the first formal gathering of interested veterans in a public place, the date of the meeting that took place in Castle Hill in Sydney – 27 December 1979, as evidenced by meeting minutes supplied by Gary and Sandra Adams – is the key one.

If the first physical gathering of veterans from various States is regarded as the key moment, then the date of the meeting at Bernie and Senia Szapiel’s house – 4 January 1980 – is the foundation date.

If formal agreement of the Victorian, New South Wales and Queensland organisations, such as they were, to act together under one name, and, perhaps, with self-appointed national

officers.- is seen as the crucial foundation act, then the date of the second, smaller Melbourne meeting – 10 January 1980 – will be the notable one. It is this date that the author currently regards as the true foundation date of the Association. ■



Inaugural national president, Holt McMinn OAM

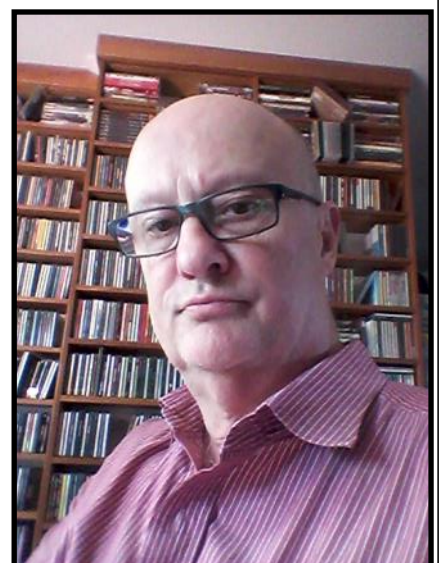
The next parts of this series will look at the establishment of State and Territory Branches of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association.

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.

Readers who have additional information about matters mentioned in this article 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 this article are urged to view the additional material and information on sources that is contained in the version available from Kel.

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FROM THE SECRETARY



NSW BRANCH NEWS

2022 AVCAT SCHOLARSHIP RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS

The NSW Branch congratulates the following members who were successful prize winners in this year's 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 on their Repatriation Pensions and do not have the spare financial resources, 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 present at the NSW Branch June 2022 Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 9th June 2021. The Lucky winners are:

- 1st Prize: Peter Rawling Freshwater NSW**
- 2nd Prize: Alix Turner Camden South NSW**
- 3rd Prize: Terry Bousfield Tanilba Bay NSW**
- 4th Prize: Ian Kibblewhite New Norfolk TAS**

We thank all our ticket buyers for their support of the AVCAT Scholarship program.

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS

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:

\$1,000	Amelia Jenkins	Anonymous
\$500	Peter Clisdell	Mr & Mrs Zarb
\$300	Frederick Moody	Anonymous
\$200	John Worrad	Albert Brown

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, including:

\$52,000	Bronte RSL Sub-Branch
\$5,000	Bankstown RSL sub-branch
\$5,000	Club Blacktown

We also thank the many Club Ltd boards and RSL Club Sub-branches who include us in their Club Grant schemes. They are as varied as the amounts, and include grants for our Outreach Programs, as well as Special Projects, and Commemorations and Conferences.

The assistance these funds provide allows us to secure our own funding for the general servicing for our many clients.

Thank you,
Ron O'Connor
Hon Secretary



Dear Bob (Editor),
 (Re Merv Smith's story April
 22 edition *The Adventures of an
 Ammo Tech.*)

After reading the story of
 Merv Smith, I spoke to you
 by phone indicating that I
 had a photo of the ammo
 dump explosion he describes.
 I served with 21 Engineer
 Support Troop 1 Field
 Squadron, 1968 – 1969.
 I did not take the enclosed
 photo, which was taken by
 someone in 21 Support
 Troop whom I can't recall,
 and believe many members
 of 21 Support Troop, like
 myself, received copies of the
 enclosed photos.



Hope you can use it in one of the Newsletters, to spark a few memories.
 Kind regards,
 Alan Moore

Dear Mr Freshfield OAM,

The idea for the book, ('Reflections on VIETNAM), was 'hatched' when my 18 year old son, Paul, attended the 1987 welcome Home Parade. He vowed at the time, "I am going to interview and put their stories in a book, as their stories would be lost, as was the soldier's stories of previous wars".

True to his word, many years later, he interviewed Vietnam Veterans, as he wanted their actual story and not as other books have done, a 'guesstimation' of sacrifices made.

The book was ready to be released for the 2021 Long Tan Anniversary, but COVID interfered.

My son wrote the book under a pseudonym for reasons he can explain.

(Contact phone number suppressed by the Editor)

Should you require further information do not hesitate to contact either of us.

(Contact phone number suppressed by the Editor)

HE.

(Please note that the Editor has withheld personal information from the original letter to deter unwarranted canvas calling. Should anyone wish to contact the writer, or the author of the book reviewed on page 21. Please contact the editor on 0421 690 959 weekdays 9-5. And leave a message if I don't pick up instantly. Email editor@vfvfagranville.org.

OUTREACH PROGRAM

Our Outreach Program also continues to be highly successful thanks to Dennis Hanmer OAM and colleagues who assist him such as Melonie Lloyd-Riley and Darryl Maher OAM. Their most recent trip was to Darwin where they conducted almost seventy interviews and submitted many DVA claims on behalf of their clients. Yet another successful trip for this program. This program is unique in that we are the only ESO to service those living and working in regional or remote areas.

We are also uniquely placed and one, if not the only Australia wide ESO Association, to be invited onto ADF base camps, such as SAS Base Perth WA, 2RAR Commando Barracks Holroyd, Sydney, Robertson Barracks and RAAF Base Darwin NT, Lavarack Barracks-Army and RAAF base Townsville, to name a few.

During the last twelve months we have attempted to continue this vital service under very difficult circumstances. Along with more than one major flood within months of each other, and the continuing pandemic. Dennis and the team have excelled themselves. Sometimes the arrangements can take up to two months to prepare, book accommodation, hire cars, and alert those veterans wishing to seek advice or make a claim application. Then only to turn around and reshuffle the whole trip around.

Through it all, we have prevailed, and Dennis and Melonie managed, between lockdowns, to get in two long awaited Outreach trips to Darwin, funded by Darwin and Fairfield RSL Club Grants. There was a half-delayed trip through northern NSW to places like Inverell and Tingha, when the floods washed out the first attempt. And, having just returned from completing the Northern region, Dennis is off again to Townsville in July.

Most of the NSW Country Outreach trips are sponsored by regional NSW RSL Sub-Branches, who in turn often contribute through donations to VVPPAA NSW as well.

We are also proud of our individual State Branches like Vietnam Veterans Federation of



Australia SA and Qld and Victorian Branches, who all carry out their own Outreach Programs, and include a variety of Zone representation in remote areas.

The Outreach Program, which began almost as soon as we opened our doors in the 70's, caters for veterans and their families who for whatever reason, are unable to source assistance locally, and require specific needs that only qualified Compensation and Wellbeing Advocates can provide. Remember, we assist all Veterans, service and ex-service personnel in all matters relative to Disability Claims, Pension applications, War widow claims, affected by VEA, MRCA DRCA Acts.

Let's not forget our local, Metro, region volunteers in each State, who also throw in a few extra trips visiting veterans in hospitals, nursing homes, private homes, and sometimes RSL's who have requested our assistance when their own systems fail them. Clocking up 1000's of kilometres each year.

Anyone wishing to avail themselves of the Outreach Program is asked to contact the Granville office and request that one of our Outreach Officers contact you directly, to be included in the next available program. Call 02 9682 1788.



From the Editors Desk

Back to basics 2

Basic to the Repatriation system is the work of Pension Officers and Appeals Advocates and much of their success has been that their training has been well designed and closely supervised.

Many ESOs have both employed and/or volunteer Advocates, many of whom are highly experienced (some over 20 years) in preparing disability claims and appeals. They have been very successful because they are highly skilled. Others who, after official initial training, have been mentored by these experienced practitioners and, as a result, have performed well.

Official training courses for Pension Officers and Advocates, until recently, were under the auspices of a body including DVA and ESO representatives.

But there has been a change.

Now DVA alone administers the official training programs; ESO representation has been shed. This has allowed DVA to insist that all Pension Officers and Advocates must pass their qualification programs, with prior experience and learning no longer accepted to exempt from having to pass certain courses. Many of the highly skilled Advocates, now in their 70s and 80s, will opt out of any training requirement and simply walk away from their vocation.

This will inevitably result in a loss of quality of disability claims reaching DVA, to the detriment of veteran claimants.

This is specially important because, at DVA Delegate level, (where decisions on the success or failure of claims are made) there are gross instances of mismanagement including inconsistent decisions across like claims, multiple

Delegates appointed to one multiclaim application, incorrect forms processing, and worst still, clients being contacted directly by Delegates while ignoring those clients' Advocates.

This latest bout of studies, research and reporting to the Royal Commission should also show that Delegates are referring claimants to DVA selected medical professionals, discarding reports from the claimants' treating medical professional. It is common sense that the treating medico would know much more about the veteran's condition than another medico who may see the veteran only once. Are Delegates simply rejecting treating medicos' report because the reports don't suit them?

And it's not only us who suspect hostility from DVA.

In June 2019, the then Minister for Veterans and Defence Personnel, Darren Chester, said in an interview;

"I believe in the past that the DVA has been guilty of being too adversarial in terms of whether it's protecting the public purse or putting veterans through a lot of hoops."

Such delegate behaviour flies in face of the laws and practice that exist to govern the rights of veterans, hard earned; including the rights to be treated with generosity and respect.

And now that DVA has sole control of the claims process, remedying these lapses is difficult.

So the Repatriation system suffers from an exit of excellent Pension Officers and lack of proper supervision of DVA Delegates.

Going backwards. ■

Anti-malarial medications health assessment program

Were you on **Mefloquine** (trade name Lariam®) or **Tafenoquine** (trade names Kozenis® and Kodatef®).

We [DVA] are working with Bupa Australia to provide health assessments for veterans who are concerned about potential health effects of the anti-malarial medications, Mefloquine (trade name Lariam®) or Tafenoquine (trade names Kozenis® and Kodatef®).

The program offers:

- One comprehensive health assessment to explore any symptoms at no cost.
- Selected GPs with training in anti-malarial medication and the mental and physical health issues of veterans concerned about these medications.
- Veterans will receive a personalised Health Support Recommendations Plan to outline further investigation, referrals and/or treatment with their own GP.

Register for a health assessment

During business hours, you can call 1800 MEFLOQUINE (1800 633 567) or call Bupa directly on 1800 612 798.

More details are available on www.dva.gov.au using the search term 'Mefloquine'. ■

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

Here we have Part 3 of the story of HMAS Sydney told by one of the crew, John Ingram

HMAS SYDNEY: the bloody “American War” 1966-67



(Another crew member, artist Dennis Trew, said he felt like the boatman of Greek mythology on the River Styx , ferrying the souls to the Underworld)

On one memorable occasion the four-star Commander of US Operations in Vietnam (1964-68) General W.C. Westmoreland, landed onboard in his flight of Iroquois “gunships” for discussions with our command team. This was a singular honour and Captain Synnot invited the general to stay for lunch. This went down extremely well with Westmoreland questioning where we’d sourced such fine steak (fillet nonetheless) and fresh, crisp salad vegetables. It was explained to the general, very proudly I might add, RAN ships didn’t stock “3-way beef” (variants of fatty minced meat) as was the case in the USN and all vegetables and fruits were fresh. Highly perishable items such as lettuce were individually wrapped in paper to extend their life. Hence, we could operate independently for up to 30 days without replenishment. The general was very impressed, especially with the steak, exclaiming it “was the finest of meals”.

I examined the general’s flight of 5 Huey “helos” while onboard noting the number and locations of bullet and shrapnel hits. How these “choppers” were deemed airworthy amazed me. To the Americans each hit was a “battle honour” to be borne with pride. In the ADF such damage would be repaired quickly, the asset tested for safety and airworthiness before being returned to fight another day. The comparison between the US and ADF forces was further highlighted by the fact we repatriated to Australia all damaged assets that couldn’t be repaired in Vietnam or Thailand, including damaged Caribou, APCs, trucks and so forth.

As the Deputy Supply Officer, I was also the “Naval Stores” Officer, responsible for the inventory management of 24,000 “line items” of spare parts and consumables stowed in 40 store-rooms and



**General Westmoreland onboard
SYDNEY 4 May 1966**



**Captain Synnot welcoming the
General onboard**

stowage's in the ship. In those pre-digital days this was a manual system and spares included everything from gear boxes and rotor blades for Wessex helicopters to toilet rolls. Lo behold if a ship ran out of loo paper!

On one occasion we did back-to-back deployments of embarked battalions. To give the Navy civilian stores support organisation adequate time to meet our requirements all orders were signalled once we departed Vietnamese waters. The signal was **four metres in length and took all night to type and**

transmit. The Communications Officer was not amused. The support we received in Sydney during that frantic turnaround time was commendable. We sailed from Sydney operationally ready to return to South Vietnam.

I'd requested approval for several large storerooms sited below the waterline to be equipped with alarms should they flood. My request was denied. Ironically the absence of alarms was to have subsequent serious consequences. One Sunday afternoon, with SYDNEY alongside at Garden Island, one of these bulk storage spaces flooded whilst embarking fresh water into the ship's tanks. Unfortunately, the storeroom contained an entire semi-trailer load of packets of cereals which collapsed into one giant soggy mass.

This shovelled into dumped over the South Vietnam the conga-line of manhandling the scrubbing out the Days of needless had visions of well-creatures off the NSW as they on Kellogg's Flakes. However, flooding did not



On this next at sea and a routine

bulk medical store confirmed flooding was well underway as a result of a burst fire-main pump (salt water). The Damage Control Party lowered a pump into the space to commence the pump-out of the tens of thousands of litres of water involved. By now the water was three metres deep. Unfortunately, a drum of liquid detergent had not had the lid secured properly and the chemical negated the ability of the submersible pump to retain suction. This situation became quite comical as thousands of condoms in their little sealed packages floated to the surface together with the full gamut of expensive medical stores. Of course, it was once again a bucket brigade of men moving contaminated water, extracting solids and disposing of in the best ways possible.

The condoms weren't wasted. Hundreds were filled by the Meteorology sailor using compressed helium reserved for weather balloons. The inflated condoms were attached to fishing line and fed into the ship's wake. Each afternoon soldiers would lie on shock mats on the flight deck transom and shoot the condoms as they bounced around hundreds of metres astern.

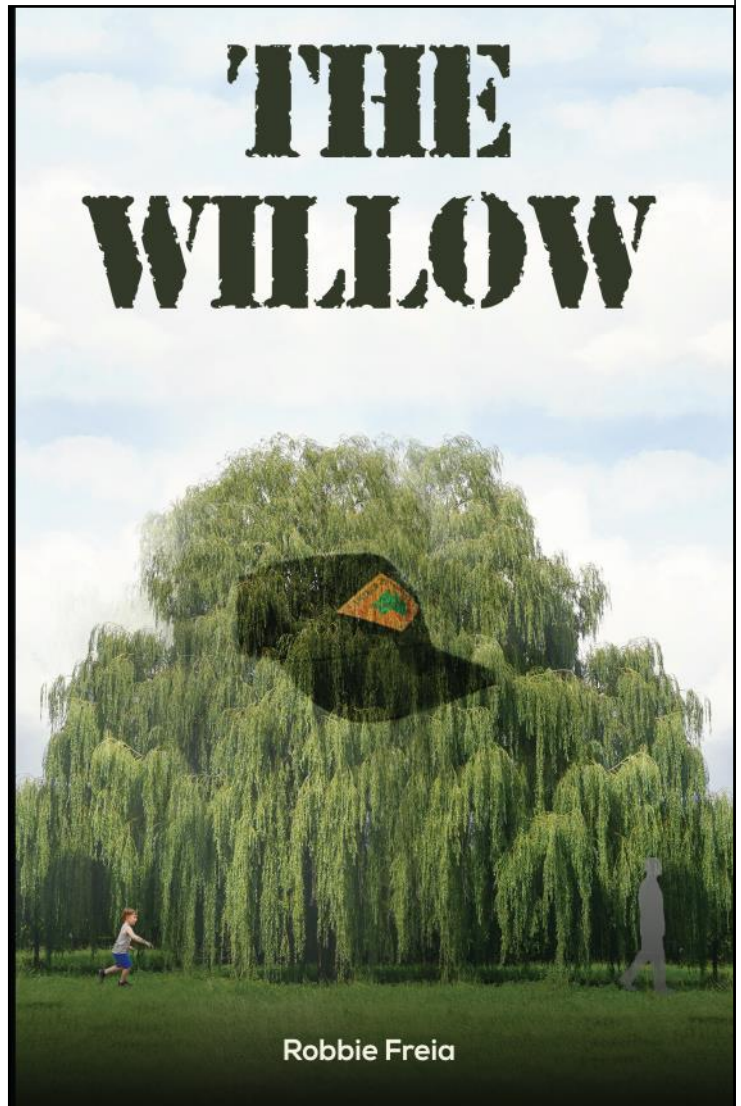
This practice was not restricted to condoms. There was a genuine need to reduce the ship's displacement as more Army equipment needed to be embarked. Even claw-footed enamelled baths from the officers' bathrooms were lowered over the side. Once at some distance, soldiers engaged with machine gun fire, not ceasing until these items of a bygone and more gentlemanly British era, had sunk without trace. ■

mush had to be garbage bins and side after sailing for next day. Hence a sailors waste and compartment. effort and cost. I fed marine North Coast of gorged themselves Weeties and Corn the issues of end there!

occasion we were inspection of the

The Willow
A new novel by
Robbie Freia

‘The Willow covers the period from the 1950s to the 2000s. It is a story of an “average” Australian, Joe, and his family. Joe lives his life in Western Australia and travels around that state. His journey highlights an evolving society and the impact of war, specifically on Australian Vietnam participants and their families.’



Joe is called up for National Service and ends up serving with an infantry battalion in Vietnam.

He is blown up on a booby trap and returns to Australia suffering trauma as well as physical wounds.

He has trouble fitting back into society.

The book does a good job of describing Joe’s disintegrating life. It follows the loss of his family and his travels trying to clear his confusion.

Joe’s main sadness is of his son’s rejection and the story follows his efforts to rekindle that relationship.

It is a story that many readers will recognise.

The author Robbie Freia is donating a percentage

of each book sale to the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia. Those payments have already begun.

The Willow is available at :

robbiefreiathewillow.com.au (signed by author);

Petersen’s Bookstore, Hastings;

Farrell’s Bookshop, Mornington;

Online via Austin Macauley, Barnes & Noble and Amazon.

More information about the book and its author are at: **robbiefreiathewillow.com.au** , and have a look at the video about *The Willow* on Utube: [youtube TrG3HM5Xpt8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrG3HM5Xpt8) ■

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories



Wellington. NZ (30 May to 01 June 2008)

By Al Wood

At my old unit reunion in Melbourne in January, (2008) I noted that there were not many of our old Kiwi comrades in attendance. I was told that there was to be some large reunion in New Zealand later in the year, and that was the reason. Swept along by the excitement of our own activities at the time, I thought no more about it until mid-May, when for some reason now forgotten, I noticed details of something called **TRIBUTE 08** on the 'www'. To be held in Wellington, New Zealand, over 3 days in late May early June, it was to be the first official "Welcome-Home, Government Apology for past neglect, Reunion, and Family Celebration", all rolled together.

When I noted that there were already near 2000 registrations logged, I thought to myself - "This is going to be bigger than Ben Hur". But it was going to cost me well in excess of \$1200 for just 3 days away, what with flights, hotel accommodation, event-registration, etc. That was a big ask. Because our tracker-teams of 4RAR some 50 years ago had worked so closely in with these great guys, I just knew that I'd regret it if I didn't attend. Our battalion operated there with several

'Kiwi' infantry companies attached, and were thus designated as the 'ANZAC' battalion. So with less than a fortnight remaining, I signed-up. I'm so glad I did.

Those two and a half days proved to be a very rewarding experience, at times for me emotional, always exciting, but all too brief.

Approximately 3,500 Kiwis (and all volunteers) served in Vietnam in total, losing 37, with nearly 200 wounded. In the 37 years since the end of that nightmare, a further 600 of these veterans have passed away. Those remaining endure all the same problems as the vets of Australia and the US, but from what I found in my short visit, they, until now, have been treated worse in terms of pension, than the vets of either of the other two countries mentioned. How is it that someone classed at 100%, 125%, and as much as 160% disability level, can still receive substantially less than an Australian TPI or equivalent rate of pension? I detected a significant degree of bitterness among some veterans there, happy to see the public recognition after so long, but sceptical that this acceptance would now be



turned into any significant improvement in their financial situation. Time can only tell....

As always though, these guys were full of warm welcome and Kiwi hospitality. They were way back then, and they haven't changed a bit! I found myself having to pay for just a single beer in 2 ½ days. I had to spread myself around a number of rifle company reunions, and all held fond and grateful memories, (some quite humorous), of our black Labrador dogs which our teams worked with. A Letter of Greeting from our President of the 4RAR Assoc. was read aloud at each of these reunions with much satisfaction and applause. I then had the dilemma of which unit to march with in the veteran's parade through the city streets of Wellington on the Saturday morning. Once again, I jumped from company to company, and always making busy with my camera.

In the Parliament grounds, after a *Whakanoa* ceremony to lift the *tapu* of war from veterans both living and dead, prayers and singing, (so much with a strong Maori influence); the then

NZ Prime Minister Helen Clark among others, delivered a speech from the parliamentary steps to the large crowd. Portraits of their Fallen 37 "warriors" were then carried up the steps in a solemn procession by relatives and friends, to be held in these "hallowed-halls" in a night-long vigil, complete with honour-guard. One of my most emotional moments was to briefly speak with the brother of L/Cpl. Don Bensemann as he held his brother's portrait before him. Don Bensemann was with "Victor 3" Coy. He was moving just ahead of me when he was killed on the early morning of Saturday 16 Nov. 1968, during an assault on a bunker system. "There but for the Grace of God"....." (see *VVF March 2019 edition*)

Between reunion opportunities, there was a "60's – '70's era" Saturday night concert lasting over 2 hours, and a Civic Reception and "Beating of Retreat", when "Freedom of the City" was bestowed on all the veterans, but with certain

(Continued on page 40)



Parade through the streets of Wellington



Families of the fallen



Shoulder to shoulder again

restrictions we were promptly informed, and with some audible degree of disappointment. On the Sunday morning under a threatening sky, (the final day), a commemoration, prayer service and wreath-laying were held at the National War Memorial. As I was the sole representative there of 4th Battalion RAR, I arranged to lay a wreath on behalf of our unit. It was an honour to be flanked

for this occasion by a representative from each of the four RNZIR rifle companies (V3;V6;W1;W2) who were attached to 4RAR during its two tours in Vietnam, and will long be remembered by me. A gesture also much appreciated by the Kiwi vets there.

One further incident happened to me on the Friday evening; small, but for me, significant,

which encapsulates what these “reunions” are, and should be, all about. As I sat on a bench close to the entrance to the main Tribute08 venue, (TSB Arena), an ex - M60 gunner approached with his wife and shared the bench with me while they ate some “takeaway”. I’d never met him before, but he was attached to our 4RAR in his own Kiwi company, and it’s quite possible we had even been on ops together 40 years before. Before long we were talking, and after some half an hour, with both his wife and I taking a relatively minor part in this conversation, he told me that this was the first time that he had ever “opened-up” to someone about “*his*” Vietnam. He said “it was easy to talk to a fellow vet. willing to lend-an-ear.” I really understood his language and have also experienced his “demons”.

This in itself made my coming to Tribute08 worth the time, effort, and expense, notwithstanding that my three night’s hotel accommodation was partly subsidised by the NZ Govt.

Also attending in Wellington, was the then current Australian Federal Govt. Minister for Veterans Affairs, (Alan Griffin), whom I crossed paths with at several functions there, and again, later at Wellington airport as we prepared to return home. He of course, was flying ‘up-front’ in our aircraft as a federal government minister would, and during the flight, a member of the cabin-staff came up to me and asked if I’d like to come forward to join Mr Griffin? Of course I agreed to this kind invitation, and partook of 1st Class service for the remainder of our flight.

So why do I place such importance on these events? To reunite with old mates, make new and lasting friendships, and to help each other get through our remaining years. For our time in Vietnam we all paid a heavy personal price, but have been repaid many times over, with things unique and beyond value. I’m very happy that I attended. The ANZAC spirit still lives on.

Written by Al Wood soon after returning home from New Zealand mid - 2008.

What it was *really* like



“ . . . and what will the enemy think of you . . . SHOOTING at them with a dirty rifle?”

Traditional army song

I’m sorry sergeant
 I haven’t had a shave
 I lost my razor blade
 My rifles dirty
 I’ve got no 4 by 2
 To pull my rifle through
 Oh sergeant dear.

When He Came Home

by Di Dempsey

(It's an important book as well as compelling reading)

Here is her address to a conference of psychiatrists

This is a modified version of the talk I gave to the *Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists'* (RANZCP) annual conference held in Sydney, May (2022).

The talk was based on my book *When He Came Home: The Impact of War on Partners and Children of Veterans*.

I was invited to speak by Dr Duncan Wallace, Consultant Psychiatrist, (ADF Centre for Mental Health) who favourably reviewed the book for *Australasian Psychiatry*

I introduced myself at the conference as a freelance journalist from Bendigo in central Victoria. I'm no psychiatrist and as I was talking to a room full of psychiatrists I emphasized that as a journalist I was however qualified to recognize an extraordinary story when I saw one.

Back in 2016 I was researching an article on the impact of PTSD on Vietnam Veterans for a feature on Vietnam Veterans Day. In the process I realized the consequences of PTSD for veterans' partners and the children were pretty awful. The families suffered terribly, and many still do. At the same time the veterans concluded that their wives were saints for living with them. This was a particular aspect of war that many people are not aware of; an untold, hidden part of our history. I knew there was another story here.

In the first part of the book I look at the history of the impact of war on veterans' families

as evidenced through academic research. There is very little material around with most people, such as Dr Judith Hermann, concluding that in terms of war trauma the military and government suffered from convenient episodes of amnesia.

I also searched through the lens of English literature. For example, the novelist Doris Lessing who won the Nobel Prize in 2007 was particularly perspicacious when she wrote of her parents,

"I think my father's rage at the trenches took me over, when I was young, and has never left me. Do children feel their parents 'emotions? Yes, we do, and it is a legacy I could have done without."

Alfred and Emily (2008)

Research based on contemporary instances of war trauma impacting families is much more plentiful and is included in the book, including the following conclusion.

"Research that has examined the effect of PTSD on intimate relationships reveals severe and pervasive negative effects on marital adjustment, general family functioning, and the mental health of partners. These negative effects result in such problems as compromised



Di Dempsey addressed the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists' (RANZCP) annual conference

parenting, family violence, divorce, sexual problems, aggression, and caregiver burden."

Australian families of the Military, Research and Support Foundation, Price and Stevens, 2016

Alongside the research about two thirds of the book consists of case studies and interviews. You can produce all the statistics in the world, but there is nothing more powerful than a story.

One of the Vietnam wives I interviewed lamented the lack of intimacy in her marriage.

"Don used to take on rescue horses. I remember a beautiful, half crazed stallion he once had. I remember standing in the kitchen one day watching him in the paddock with the stallion. He was with it for ages- had his face buried into its muzzle. I envied that horse."

Two important interviews were conducted with

Gwen Cherne and Julie Anne Finney. Gwen Cherne met her husband Peter Café in the Middle East. After her husband took his life she has worked in strategic government positions in order to improve the welfare of military families. Below is an extract of her story.

"When I went to Australia, I stopped doing my humanitarian work and concentrated on Pete, I tried to save him. I poured my love into him, but it wasn't enough."

The mother of David Finney who took his own life, Julie Anne Finney, has been instrumental in setting up the Royal Commission into Veteran Suicides.

"I opened the door and the policeman was standing hat in hand. I recall talking over him as he asked my name and I kept talking to delay whatever he had to say. You don't get to talk, you don't, I thought."

The following is from an interview with the son of

(Continued on page 44)

a Vietnam veteran

"The confrontations between dad and my brothers were massive. He would beat them with his fists. Dinner time was interesting when he would slam the plates up on the ceiling. Oh yes, they had food on them."

My conclusion (apart from the fact that war sucks).

1. Research papers backed by the interviews I conducted demonstrate that therapeutic treatments are more successful if the family of the hurting veteran is part of the healing process. The quotes below are taken from three interviews.

- "The main reason I encouraged him to go for the pension was that he would have to talk to a psychiatrist."
- "We came across a woman who was helping us who was the wife of a veteran. That was easier. Every now and then she would send him to feed the meter or move the car, so she could get more information from me."
- "When mental health practitioners allowed me into sessions it was invaluable. I was aware of the medication regimes, and the dynamics of his therapy program."

2. Services and support for transitioning soldiers and their families are inadequate.

"We need a Gold Card too. The services of Open Arms is not enough."

Heather Evans, president,
Partners of Veterans
Association.

Reviews

"This is confronting, important reading."

(Steven Carroll, *Saturday Age* Oct 16, 2021)

"This book reminded me I should not take no for an answer when asking my veteran patients to bring their partners for initial assessments and at key points in their treatment. Finally, it is an essential recommendation for the partners, and children, of our veteran patients."

(Dr Duncan Wallace,
Consultant Psychiatrist,
Contractor to ADF Defence
Force Centre for Mental
Health. *Australasian
Psychiatry*.)

"The lives of the veterans and their families have a ripple effect through the entire community. There are not many people in Australia who have not been affected by war at some point in time. This book needs to be read by us all including politicians and officers of DVA. I thank Dianne Dempsey for putting it together and the partners/spouses for their contributions."

(Dr Gail MacDonell *The
Vietnam Veterans'
Newsletter*)

*(When He Came Home is available from the publisher,
Arcadia, at <https://scholarly.info/>*

Tel: +61 3 9329 6963

Email: enquiry@scholarly.info

It is also available from Booktopia.com ■



**NSW STATE BRANCH HO & BANKSTOWN SPORTS CLUB
ARE COMBINING ONCE AGAIN TO HOST THE SYDNEY
VIETNAM VETERANS DAY
COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE AND CELEBRATION TO BE
HELD IN THE SPORTS CLUB GRAND BALLROOM
THURSDAY 18 AUGUST 2022**

The event organisers and Bankstown Sports Club administration wishes to confirm that this event is subject to all NSW government COVID-19 related restrictions and regulations that are or may be in place at the time of the planned event.

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 so long kept apart in extraordinary circumstances over the past few years. The usual itinerary of service will take place as before and we remind intending parties of the following:

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 service.

1030hrs Memorial Service with Padre – Chaplain, Captain Frank Wang

Guest Speaker: Air Vice Marshall Kym Osley AM CSC

(Service scheduled for approximately 40 to 45 minutes)

1150hrs Entrance to Grand Ballroom & function proper

1200hrs Entertainment will be provided by special guest artist/s with music of our genre

Admission: \$45.00 each

Accommodation with Travelodge adjacent to the Sports Club is to be by private consultation, and the rates offered are \$215.10 Standard, \$233.10 Executive, Rooms only. Breakfast at your own volition. Make sure you include this function when making your booking. Contact Travelodge Bankstown booking on 13 86 42.

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.

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

What was the last Australian army unit to leave Vietnam?

Embassy Guard: A Saigon Memoir,
December 1972-March 1973

Greg Lockhart - 2022

Let us say memory is like a Swiss cheese or, more aptly in this case, like the 50-year-old interior I have in mind of the Vinh Loi Hotel, which was the Australian Embassy Guard's barracks in old Saigon, riddled with empty corridors. Yet memory is not simply something we possess; it is also something we reconstruct.

In early December 1972, when my unit, the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTIV), heard that it was soon to be withdrawn, I was told that I would not be returning home with it. I would be going to Saigon to take command of the Australian Embassy Guard Platoon.

This did not displease me. I thought it would be interesting to be in Saigon and had a somewhat optimistic, open-ended feeling about unfinished business in Vietnam. Yet my optimism was not unbounded. The Guard was obviously the tail-end Charlie of the Australian Army's withdrawal from the country.

From 1970, the political-military retraction

of the U.S. involvement in the war, which I did not then imagine had been *forced*, led to the downsizing of First Australian Task Force (1ATF) from three to two battalions and its total withdrawal by December 1971. Only the small AATTIV advisory group, which I joined in September 1972, had remained. Then, in December 1972, that small group was finally extracted when the Whitlam Labor Government came to power.

What became The Embassy Guard and Escort Platoon would remain in Saigon, until it was phased out between March and June 1973.

Whatever way I looked forward to being in Saigon, my move to the city did not get off to an entirely happy start. This was when, on the morning of 16 December 1972, I was one of the last 30 AATTIV members to march on and off the unit's last parade.

Military parades are about presences, and



from our perspective, you could say we were *all* present that day, counted, the last ones standing. The earliest members of the Team had been sent to Vietnam in 1962, making it the first Australian unit in the war. Almost 1000 men had followed. Thirty-three were killed and 122 reported wounded. Altogether, the unit's tradition included winning all four of the Australian army's VCs in Vietnam, before we were 'the last ones out' – except for the Embassy Guard, some would think.

In any case, my strongest memory of the parade is of us wearing freshly starched jungle greens. These added a dress dimension to the event, and I did think our gear merged well with the colour of the field.

Recently, however, John Whipp, a member of my Mobile Advisory Training Team (MAT), reminded me of something I'd forgotten – probably wanted to forget – about the parade that day. The thing was that we were marched onto the parade ground twice. Because, after marching on the first time, and waiting for a considerable while, we marched off when the embassy official who was supposed to review the parade did not appear.

Finally, a car drove up and we marched back on. Far from the distinguished figure we expected, however, a junior Secretary from the Embassy had arrived to review us. Perhaps he said something too. But in so far as I was concerned, his words collapsed into his perfunctory presence.

More positively, an American Officer prevented the unit's proud tradition from disappearing entirely into the void of official Australian indifference. The U.S. Advisory Team 89, to which we'd been attached for operations,

sent a representative, who pinned a US Commendation Medal on the chest of Warrant Officer Norman J. Bain.

So, it seems, my calling of the starched greens to mind has really been a trick of memory. It is an example of recall that worked to filter out of my mind the incongruity of our attempt to keep up the unit's appearances on an end-of-war parade that our American allies thankfully acknowledged but that the Australian authorities hardly wanted to own.

Still, there's a happy PR photo of me, with two members of my MAT Team taken immediately after the parade in front of a pallet packed with our gear and ready to load onto an aircraft.



I'm on the left shaking hands with Warrant Officer Brian Ranson, while Warrant Officer John Whipp looks on. Brian, who looks well in the photo, died not long after returning home. John, an Australian National Judo Champion, who soldiered on to retire as a Major, commanded the Unarmed Combat Training Unit in Townsville for nine years, and wound up with an AM and a CSM. He is still going strong.

Meanwhile there was a bitter-sweet coda to the indignity that the Australian Government and Saigon Embassy inflicted on that last Australian parade in Vietnam.

Once the other members of the Team had left me in Saigon and arrived at Richmond Air

(Continued on page 48)



Richmond, NSW. 18 December 1972.
Members of AATTV walking across the tarmac
on their withdrawal from Vietnam.
AWM collection

Base near Sydney, I've been told that the army sent someone to hand out leave passes but had made no official arrangements or provided funds to transport them home – to locations as far afield as the Mornington Peninsular or Perth. The *Official History* has published a glossy photo of the Team disembarking, still in smart greens, from the military aircraft at Richmond. But it neglects to tell us that the individuals were left to phone their families so that funds could be wired to the local Post Office before they were able to travel home.

The sweet part is that, on somehow hearing of this 'disgrace', a Melbourne businessman wrote to at least some of the returnees to thank them for their service with a cheque for \$20 enclosed. (John Whipp has told me he sent a copy of the letter he received to the Rocky Hill War Museum overlooking Goulburn.) Apparently, the letter and cheque were 'much appreciated.'

Sometime earlier, my mind draws a complete blank on what must have been our uneventful

drive in a small convoy to Saigon..

Then, something crystallises in the fog: a set of images and sensations from the bar on the top floor of the hotel in which we were billeted.

On entering the bar, I am aware once more of wearing jungle greens while passing a potted fern. A gust of air-conditioned relief comes over me. There are cold drinks and the rising din of animated conversations, out of which, mysteriously, not a real word comes back, just the indelible impression of a rowdy release of tension among people fresh from the field.

Then, vividly, I see a bottle of, perhaps, whisky in flight from some fist to where it smashed into the pyramid of cocktail glasses that, alas, the poor barman had arranged in front of the mirror on the wall behind the bar.

It must have been with sore heads that most of us were awoken by a greater explosion when, in the small hours, the whole building began to shudder and shake. I clearly remember the windows rattling in my room.

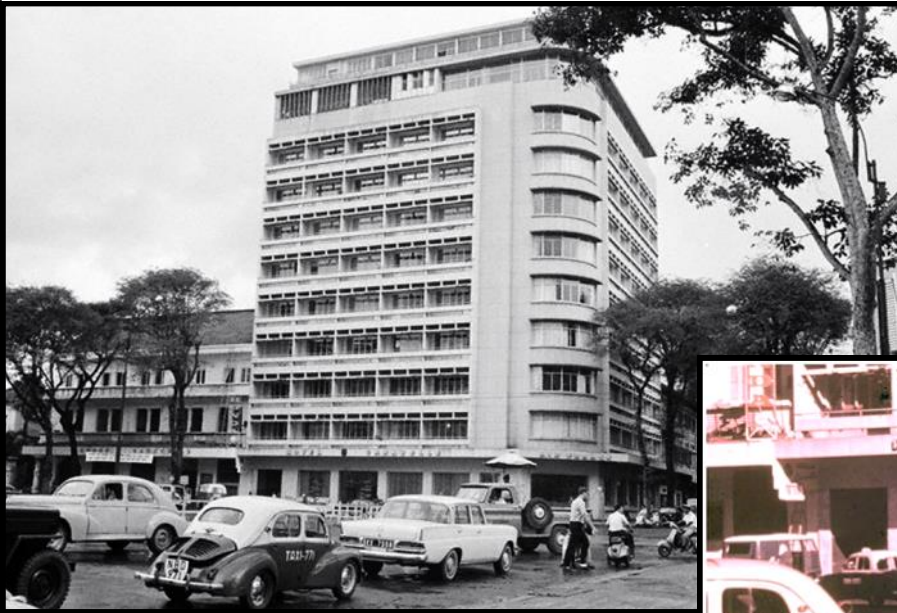
We collected on the roof, from where an amazing sight returns to the mind's eye: a tower of fire with a billowing white-grey nimbus lit up the night sky. A dull red glow. Enemy sappers had entered a large ARVN ammunition dump on the edge of the city – around Bien Hoa — and blown it sky high.

After that atomic-like plume, secondary explosions could be heard in the capital for several days.

At 5 pm on 17 December, the Australian flag was lowered for the last time at the Free World Military Assistance Forces building. On the morning of the 18th, the last component of the Team flew out for Australia, leaving me in the city.

If it wasn't while driving around in the Saigon traffic that day, it was soon after that I noticed a young woman wearing a white *ao dai* fall off her motor scooter. It wasn't a serious fall; the scooter slipped from under her, and she landed on her feet, righting her machine deftly amidst the swirling noises and fumes of the traffic.

Impressing her fall on my memory, however, her



The Caravelle Hotel.
The Australian embassy was on
the 7th floor



ashen face, made me aware of the drawn faces of most others in the street.

The Embassy occupied the seventh floor of the modern Caravelle Hotel, nine stories high, on Tu Do (Freedom) Street in downtown Saigon. From the window, one looked down across a side-street opposite to the Metropole Hotel, which was whitewashed and only three stories high, but still a romantic icon of old colonial Saigon, with its main entrance also on Tu Do.

At the very end of Australian involvement in the Vietnam War, the Embassy Guard and Escort Platoon was some 30 strong, the smallest unit possible to do much more than maintain itself in Saigon. Its address at the Vinh Loi Hotel was perhaps a fifteen minutes-drive from the Embassy. Dating from the French era, this was a modest three-or-four story building with used fittings and furniture, worn carpets, and a sandbagged guard-post at the entrance of a busy street.

I don't remember a duty statement in writing. But I would have discussed it with my immediate superior, the Military Attaché at the Embassy Colonel Arthur Rofe. The occurrence of one or two conversations with one Brigadier I. A. Geddes comes back vaguely, but not their timings or contents. Geddes was the Commander of the

Australian Army Assistance Group Vietnam (AAAG), which was disbanded on 17 December, as the Embassy Guard and Escort Platoon was simultaneously formed.

My first task was to organise food and other supplies for the unit. Australian soldiers might eat at local restaurants, but the official provision of Asian food for them would have been unthinkable. Neither would it have been easy to obtain familiar Australian food in the city. Good bread and condensed, but not fresh milk was available. Dairy products, including butter and cheese pilfered from the American supply system were in limited supply on the black market. The same items may have been on sale at *Foremost*, the modern shop near the Cathedral, which sold quite convincing chemical ice-cream.

Something that surprised me a little was the provenance of the frozen meat and vegetables, which were the main items on the menu. I had assumed that, since our predecessors in the AAAG had been the beneficiaries of the American supply chain, we would also be. I found, however, that

(Continued on page 50)

the task of feeding the guard involved me in communications through the British Embassy with British authorities, who would supply us from Singapore.

And the soldiering?

Soldiers are people paid to serve constituted authority and to fight for it, if necessary. Guard duties are central to what soldiers do.

Guarding is interrelated with parading. Both activities involve bearing lethal arms – though not loaded in ceremonial situations, and never with a round in the chamber – 'one up the spout'. Armed guards then stand and wait conspicuously, while their watches are interspersed with displays of mechanical movement, drill and marching.

The most glamorous guards, Praetorian Guards, who were the bodyguards (and intelligence agents) of Roman Emperors, the Horse, Foot, Coldstream, Swiss, Republican, National, Red, and Coast Guards of more recent times have all been about protecting authority with an economy or *shows* of force – on parades as well as guards. These *shows* of force work to transmit a complex sense of the authority's power to reassure friends and menace foes, both potential and real. Or, guards convey an impression of the necessary force to go on, and defeat emergent enemies, domestic or foreign, if required.

Guarding is for that reason a form of the masterful inaction that some great strategists would say war is ideally *all* about; standing and waiting to dissuade potential trouble.

When civilians approach a guard post on a building or a barracks, they tend to suspend civilian behaviours because they are approaching *power*. Given a guard's own drilled submission to *power*, the *authority*, one also thinks of Milton's profound line on accepting what he understood to be his God-given blindness: 'They also serve who only stand and wait'.

So, we served, I'm sure, in a limbo at the end of a long history of withdrawal. The constituted authority in Canberra we barely

represented in Saigon was exceedingly remote and withdrawn from a war that we may have sensed it never understood.

We served without military back up. It turned out we didn't need it; but one never knew when we might. The Paris Peace Accords were finally concluded on 27 January 1973 and, in so far as I thought about it, it left me in a state of what might be described as unanchored indifference. With all the fighting that occurred as both sides jockeyed for position before the Accords, it was hard to believe that the war had ended there.

Since I was subject later to the great shock of Saigon falling on 29 April 1975, one's memory of the atmosphere leading up to that event cannot be trusted entirely. Still, my present awareness of that time before the fall, which would be conventionally described as memory, is that we felt suspended in a hybrid state of peace and war.

Given our official title, it is ironic that we did not actually guard 'the Embassy'. There was, in fact, nowhere to mount a guard on the seventh floor of the Vietnamese hotel. Vague anecdotes about Embassy security may have reached me, but that would have been all.

Very recently, work by historian Blair Tiede mentions a 'reported threat' to the Ambassador in 1963, and a 'fifth floor bomb attack' in 1964. At some point, the Commonwealth Police did a security survey and apparently advised on the need for some 'small automatic arms' and an 'ammunition cabinet'. A Vietnamese policeman also seems to have been posted on the landing between the lifts and the door. Still, in 1973, I recall nothing of these measures and no urgency about the need for protection at the Embassy either.

My impression is that there was an armed guard wearing a slouch hat and light summer dress on the Ambassador's Residence in Pasteur Street. That is also the impression of one or two others who were at the Embassy at the time, and with whom I am miraculously still in touch. We might

also have had some presence at the Consulate, which contained a modern apartment block for embassy staff as well as consular offices in Phu Khach Quan Street. There was the guard I mentioned at the sandbagged door of our own hotel.

The 'Escort' part of the platoon provided drivers and protection for Embassy officials and others moving in vehicles around the city, often to and from the airport. And I remember such an escort returning to the hotel one day, because something about the way the two men in it performed a routine drill to clear their weapons stuck in my mind.

The drill is second nature to soldiers standing down from duty with loaded weapons, still without 'one up the spout' and the safety catch 'on'. It is also one that I have seen, heard, and done myself any number of times. On this occasion, however, the soldiers were a bit tired and ruffled on coming off duty, and the proficiency with which they still performed the drill on the threshold of the cramped civilian foyer may have heightened my impression of their and, indeed, our visitant status. The metallic 'clicks' of the drill seem to have locked their execution of it in the vault.

The weapon was the lightweight 7.9 pounds, semi-automatic, 5.56 mm calibre, Armalite M16 A1 rifle with a 20-inch barrel, a 30-round magazine, and a range of 3,600 metres. The drill was: remove the magazine while pointing its barrel in a safe direction, pull back the breech block, look in the chamber to ensure there isn't 'one up the spout', and, finally, let the breech block snap back into the breach.

Silence! My memory snaps back too.



Still, there is an impulse to recount. Born of reason, and forgotten relationships and events, it seems to me that pinpoints of light dance in the darkness and grow into circles.

For whatever reason, some thoughts line up confidently. The Guard Sergeant efficiently managed the duty rosters and the men. My domain incorporated general oversight, with routine weapons and room inspections along those empty grey corridors.

A clear vision of a diplomatic cocktail party comes back from a twilight balcony. It overlooked a vast expanse of Saigon shanties, and stays with me, as a reminder that, among other things, I was expected to appear at an occasional Embassy function.

The many times I would have been at the Embassy come back in a short blur, from which a few impressions take shape. They locate me in the office of the Military Attaché Colonel R.L. Burnard, who arrived in mid-January to replace Rofe, or in a room or corridor looking out the windows. Or in someone's apartment at the consulate, where the music and words of Carly Simon's 'Your So Vain' still come through clear as a bell from US Armed Forces Radio.

Generally, though, it is the atmospherics that tend to hang over me from that time. As with every routine business, I also know that intangible issues were in the air.

A hotel is not really a barracks. Vinh Loi had no parade ground, and soldiers expect parades. If you could have removed the front of the hotel and seen what was going on in cross-section, you would have observed individuals walking or taking the shaky lifts up-and-down between levels, peering into corners, looking into mirrors, and continuing along the levels like canaries in a cage.

Temporary release from the caged tedium occurred. There was leave from the sandbagged entrance of the building into the contested, but still functioning cosmopolitan city.

Golden Oaks, some Tamarinds, and many

(Continued on page 52)

other tall trees, offer shade from Saigon's sun. One remembers flashes of the Saigon River; bicycle repair shops; eating stalls; barbers working on the sidewalks under the trees.



I have indicated connections with people at the consulate, and it may have had a canteen. Through the Embassy and its functions, I met people in the city, especially a Buddhist family that had migrated from the north in 1954, and with whom I sometimes had lunch on Sundays.

The lid on everything was the Saigon curfew; probably at 8 pm before the early 1973 Peace Accords and 12 midnight, thereafter.

From around Christmas 1972 – it might have been New Year – conversations over quantities of gin and tonic with two American Special Forces officers come back 50 years from a dim-lit, airconditioned bar. I can hear the voices; again, though, they don't carry the words; just a strong idea stories set in Africa about what we'd now describe as CIA covert assassinations and regime change programs; stuff that pinned my ears back.

Such was the kind of narrative in which a guard commander lived; one of wall-to-wall deceptions that constituted the cultural bubble in which we, along with most people in Saigon, were only dimly aware of floating.

I've suggested 'intangible issues'. Each week at the Vinh Loi our medic, a corporal who did an admirable job, briefed me on our health and

hygiene, with an emphasis sometimes on the 'state of mind' of the men. I don't think I always quite knew what to do about what he told me, although a vague awareness remains with me of one or two personal conversations with soldiers.

It seems inevitable in retrospect that stuff would happen. One day, a guard posted at the hotel entrance had to be stopped from taking aim with his rifle over the sandbags and traversing it as



people walked across the front of our building on the other side of the street. Another time, a terrible racket broke out: some soldiers were throwing hotel furniture from the third or fourth floor of the building from where it was sent crashing into the street. Alcohol did not seem to be a factor in either case.

What happened about the first incident is lost in the mists of time. An 'orderly-room' followed the second one with charges of 'conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline.' The charges were heard at the Embassy by the Military Attaché and, after being escorted to the airport, one-or-two soldiers were returned to Australia.

Memory is as much about the future as it is about the past and present.

Early in the New Year, I may have met Phan Nhat Nam at the Embassy. Phan Nhat Nam was the ARVN officer, whose intense war writing impressed me. The title of one of his books *Dua*

lung noi chet, which I would read with excruciating slowness years later, may be translated, *Half-way to death*.

But maybe I never met him; maybe I'm projecting my later mindfulness of his writing onto the intense Vietnamese Airborne Captain I really met there one day. That officer had apparently been on CIA covert operations, the sort of thing it wasn't good form to ask about.

At some point, I bought two paintings by Saigon artists, which I still have. One, signed and dated Nguyen Huynh, 1972, was a subtle abstraction that hovers on the point of invisibility, although I did not then appreciate it was influenced by the Swiss-German expressionist artist Paul Klee (1879-1940). The other painting, by Thai Tuan, 1967, was a clever, minimalist work of three lines and four blocks of colour – light blue for the sky, black to fill-in a mountain range, a faintly blackened pale white for the large swathe of sand, and deeper blue for the sea – depicting a beachscape at Da Nang.

My understanding of the war was being subtly blocked in. As the US marines waded ashore at Da Nang in 1965, perhaps at that beach, one had to make some connection between the art and the nature of the conflict. I thought that then; but had no serious explanation of that link for decades to come.

What I didn't know and certainly did not appreciate was that the US National Security Council decision 5429/2 of 1954 had bankrolled the entire state and army of the Republic of Vietnam. Not liking the country that it saw in the south after the epochal Viet Minh victory at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu in March 1954, the NSC decided in August to put up a new one.

And that was pretty much the key to the Saigon culture: America owned it – but not entirely.

The culture's foundations are hard to deny. The CIA and its covert operations, including the murderous Phoenix Program, blew up the bubble of economic and political corruption that floated the capital, the country, and the war. To

keep the bubble in the air, US forces then proceeded in Macbeth-like progressions from one act of destruction to another.

But if the culture was trapped in the American holocaust, it was not without its own aspiration. The innocent endeavour of those paintings peeps through. Saigon intellectuals one met through Embassy interactions dreamt of a brave, new, free world for their people. The culture they strove to create was Western-oriented, eclectic, and free-floating. Thus doomed by its American derivation in Vietnam, The culture's sincere side remains an enduring tragedy for me.

The culture at the Caravelle was trapped in the American holocaust without fully realising it too. In so far as the private views of our diplomats came through the ether in the Embassy to me, they were usually, although not inevitably upbeat and optimistic. Officially, despite the reports of fighting in the provinces, they tended to take the line that the 1973 Paris Peace Accords were on track. What else could they have done?



Signing the Peace Accords.

By Knudsen, Robert L. (Robert LeRoy), 1929-1989

As the Embassy took an expansive view of the security situation, it encouraged people to get out and about. Diplomats began travelling to the provinces. I know one took a trip to Nha Trang. One weekend, I also travelled with official permission some 240 kilometres from Saigon to the southern highland town of Dalat with its cool

(Continued on page 54)

climate, pine forests, rapid streams, and lake.



My journey along a winding road up the mountains to the town was, for some reason, doubled with dim awareness that bad things had happened along it. Maybe I'd read something in a book. Maybe I was reading with a military eye the capacious S bends along the route. Maybe, both.

Whatever way, I'd learn later that, indeed, the road had been the site of rather routine roadblocks and ambushes going back to the 1940s. In 1946, the French colonial community was shaken by what might have indeed been the first sizeable Viet Minh attack during the war, an ambush of a French convoy on one of those bends, which killed over 40 people.

I stayed in a traditional cottage on the edge of a pine forest with a brazier in the middle of the floor. Standing on the shore of the lake at Dalat, the former hunting lodge of the last Vietnamese Emperor Bao Dai had been converted into a spacious, seemingly unoccupied hotel.

Back in Saigon, other things continued to break the silent suspense of the hung war. For some time, Colonel Burnard had been making efforts to buy or barter a large truck for the guard. It would help to move people, stores, and, possibly, although I have little recollection of it, furniture around Embassy residences. Eventually, we acquired the vehicle and carefully parked it in the street with its nose a short distance from the guard post at the entrance to the hotel. Heavy chains secured with padlocks were wrapped around the steering column and wheel.

Then, alas, one day, our proud possession disappeared in plain sight. The guard did not have his eyes on the truck at the right time. To get into the cabin, pick the padlocks, remove the chains,

and start the engine with no key and a guard anywhere in view was, in any case, a most skilful heist.

Not a warlike act, but one of brazen hostility in a crowded street, it was one of those things that was not supposed to happen – we planned to stop it but couldn't. Then, with the same startling suddenness, other things we hadn't planned for also happened.

One day, a defector spiked some interest when he turned up at the Vinh Loi.

After the signing of the Paris Accords, an International Control Commission, comprised of military observers from Canada, Indonesia, Poland, and Hungary had been in the country to monitor the peace. Among these, the only ones



Members of the United Nation's International Commission of Control and Supervision tasked with monitoring the peace.

that remain in my mind's eye are the figures of some Indonesian officers, strolling around Saigon wearing green berets, motley fatigues, and black shiny boots. It struck me how tall they were. Yet I also have clear recall of being *briefed* on the defection of one of the Hungarian observers. I was out, when he'd walked up to the guard at the entrance of the Vinh Loi and, on asking for political asylum in Australia, caused a small commotion.

The Guard Sergeant rang Colonel Burnard who was having lunch at the house of a member of the Embassy staff. The defector was interviewed and kept at the Embassy for a few

days, until he was escorted to the airport and flown to Australia.

Life went on – its routines broken by incidents I have long since forgotten. One I've never forgotten, however, occurred during a Sunday lunch with the Vietnamese friends I mentioned. They were Buddhists, who had come south from Hanoi to escape Ho Chi Minh's Communist takeover there in 1954.

As usual, the cooking didn't fail on me; the people were warm and interesting; I played Chinese Chess. And in the middle of a game that day, there was another case of windows rattling, this time gently. We all felt the faint rumble of war somewhere in the distance – perhaps artillery fire. Then, someone made a joke, which eluded me until its clever associations were stripped away in an explanation of its gallows humour. The quip turned out to be about taking cyanide after lunch.

Some things strike you more strongly than others and so stand in for them. As I think of that incident now, it stands out in what's left of my memory, because it so aptly anticipated the family's final catastrophe: the fall of Saigon.

Not long after that lunch, I was told that there was a posting order for me to go to Papua New Guinea. I'd been there before in the Pacific Islands Regiment and, this time, the Headquarters wanted me back.

It wasn't clear to me at the time but, the Guard was wound down from the end of March – coinciding presumably with the withdrawal of the last US combat troops from Vietnam on the 29th of that month. I neither anticipated nor saw that winddown happening when I flew out of Saigon around the same time. This was on the same flight as the Ambassador, Mr Malcolm Morris, who I have some idea, perhaps incorrectly, was on his way to Germany. We sat across the aisle from each other and chatted briefly before the plane took off.

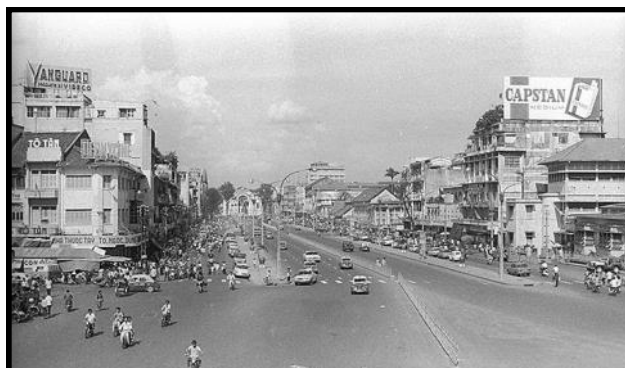
Yet as our futures lie much in our pasts, unexpected things come back. In the late 1980s, for instance, I met Mr Morris once again at a

university history conference on the Vietnam War ...

And in fact, it seems to me now that the ominous open-endedness of those times stands and waits in an eternal present down the barrel of a gun. ■

Scenes of Saigon from the late 1960s and early 1970s

Courtesy of: Saigoneer.com





INVITATION

**TOTALLY AND PERMANENTLY INCAPACITATED (TPI'S)
& SPECIAL RATE (SRD) VETERANS**

THE BLACKTOWN & DISTRICT TPI SOCIAL & WELFARE CLUB'S MEMBERS

INVITE TPI's/SPECIAL RATE (SRD) TO COME AND EXPERIENCE OUR CLUB,
THE CLUB MEETS AT 1:00 PM THE FIRST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH AT CLUB
BLACKTOWN (Formally the RSL Club) 40 Second Ave Blacktown

THIS INVITATION STANDS FOR OUR GENERAL MEETINGS

Prior to the monthly General Meeting's, members and wives/carers meet in the Villaggio Restaurant & Bar.
(About 11:45am)

Meetings are held in a room set aside on the day.

Post meeting members are treated to cold or hot drinks, comradeship and socializing in the Villaggio
Restaurant & Bar.

If attending a meeting contact Ian Brady ibrady@bigpond.net.au to arrange a member to meet & greet you
or just "walk in"

The Club is the most active TPI Social & Welfare Club in the state, with a different activity each month
which could be a meet at a point of interest/event or a day Coach Trip.

Social events are subsidized

The purpose of this invitation is to encourage TPI's to join our club and participate.

You are encouraged to join the TPI Association of NSW to give it strength in numbers when dealing with
Government.

CLUB BLACKTOWN

Family Friendly

Newly renovated Level 1, with Both indoor and Outdoor Play areas to keep the Kids entertained.

Parents can relax and enjoy Cocktails from the Greens Bar and Delicious Mediterranean Style Food From Villaggio restaurant.

40 SECOND AVENUE, BLACKTOWN NSW 2148 | 02 9933 7600

CENTRAL COAST SUB-BRANCH EX-PRESIDENT HONOURED IN QUEENS BIRTHDAY HONOURS (JUNE) 2022

The President of our Central Coast Sub-Branch from 2016 to 2019, and as we know him, Dr Stephen Karsai JP, has been honoured with an OAM in the Queens Birthday honours awards, in June 2022. Shortly before this wondrous prestigious award, we at Granville Head office, got wind that Stephen was retiring his positions at the Central Coast office and would be returning to Victoria, his old hometown.

Stephen served with the Australian Defence Force from 1970 to 1990. He served in Vietnam as a trooper with C Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment from 2 June 1971 to 30 September 1971. He was recalled to active duty for Operation Safe Haven – Refugee Assistance from Kosovo and East Timor. Until recently he was the Senior Vice President of the Central Coast sub-branch of the VVPPAA NSW, where amongst other roles, was a Pension Advocate.

In May, VVPPAA NSW Head Office personnel were invited to a farewell party for Stephen, and the Committee suggested a plaque be readied in appreciation of his services to local veterans. Being what lead times are, we got to work on it promptly, and placed an order for one, to be ready for 5 June. The plaque was presented to ‘Steve’ by VVFA National President, and NSW State Senior Vice President, Bill Roberts OAM JP, at the farewell luncheon.



The plaque reads “..... in appreciation of your long term volunteer contribution to” ... the Association, “Dr Stephen Karsai JP”. Sadly the plaque was engraved just before Steve received the OAM so we had no time to add it. . We hope Stephen will forgive us for the omission.

The full gazetted citation for Stephen’s OAM appeared on 13 June 2022 reads as follows:

MEDAL (OAM) OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA IN THE GENERAL DIVISION

Mr Stephen Stan KARSAL, Woy Woy NSW 2256

For service to veterans through a range of roles.

Central Coast Sub-Branch, Vietnam Veterans' Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association of Australia
President, 2016-2019.

Senior Case Officer, since 2011.

Ex-Service Welfare Other

- Board Director, Active Vets Australia, since 2019.
 - Pensions Officer, Greensborough Sub-Branch, Returned and Services League of Australia, 2004-2011.
 - Pensions Officer, Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital Veterans Centre, 2001-2011.
 - Veterans Consultative Committee, Brisbane Waters Private Hospital, 5 years.
 - Veterans Consultative Committee, Gosford Private Hospital, 5 years.
 - Former Member, Diamond Valley Vietnam Veterans Sub-Branch, Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia.
- Australian Air League
- Author, Series of four educational books on Space Flight, Basic Photography and Flag Party/Drill Competition, for use throughout the Australian Air League, 1983-1985.
 - Member, 1964-1983.



**VIETNAM VETERANS', PEACEKEEPERS & PEACEMAKERS
ASSOCIATION of AUSTRALIA (NSW BRANCH) Inc.
VPPAA NSW Inc.**
Affiliated with the VIETNAM VETERANS' FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA Inc.

1 JAN - 31 DEC

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

SURNAME		FIRST NAME		SECOND NAME	
STREET ADDRESS					
SUBURB/TOWN		STATE		POST CODE	
HOME PHONE		MOBILE PHONE		OTHER PHONE	
EMAIL ADDRESS (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)					
SERVICE NO.		SERVICE UNIT		AREA OF OPS, O'SEAS SERVICE	
NEXT OF KIN		RELATIONSHIP		CONTACT PHONE (NOK)	

ORDER & PAYMENT SECTION			
ITEM	PRICE	QUANTITY/YEARS	TOTALs
MEMBERSHIPs	\$30.00 PER YEAR		\$
RAFFLE TICKETs	\$ 2.00 EACH		\$
DONATION	ENTER AMOUNT AT TOTAL		\$
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE			\$

MERCHANDISE ITEMS, PRICING AND ORDER FORM ARE AVAILABLE ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE YOU MAY SELECT YOUR ITEMS AND ATTACH THE ORDER FORM WITH THIS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM AND POST TOGETHER.

REMEMBER, YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND MERCHANDISE ORDERS CAN BE DONE OVER THE PHONE TO THE GRANVILLE OFFICE MONDAY TO FRIDAYS, BETWEEN 9:30 AM AND 3:00 PM. O2 9682 1788

PREFERRED PAYMENT METHOD (Tick one only) CASH CHEQUE MONEY ORDER CREDIT CARD

CHEQUES AND MONEY ORDERS MADE PAYABLE TO: VPPAA NSW

CREDIT CARD DETAILS (Mastercard or VISA only)

CARD HOLDER NAME (PRINT)		CREDIT CARD NUMBER			
EXPIRY DATE (MM/YY)	CONFIRM AMOUNT	SIGNATURE			
/	\$				

OFFICE USE ONLY			
MEMBERSHIP RECEIPT DATE		DONATION RECEIPT DATE	
MEMBERSHIP RECEIPT NO		DONATION RECEIPT NO	
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER		COMPLETED BY (INITIALS)	
COMPLETED BY (INITIALS)		BANK SHEET ENTRY BY	



15th NATIONAL DIGGER'S BOWLS CARNIVAL 2022

ATTENTION: ALL CURRENT DEFENCE FORCE & EX - SERVICEMEN/WOMEN

\$10,000 PRIZE MONEY

- WHERE:** DUBBO. NSW. 2830.
- VENUES:** MACQUARIE BOWLING CLUB &
CLUB DUBBO BOWLING CLUB (WEST DUBBO)
- DATES:** TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY
13th, 14th & 15th September, 2022.
- FORMAT:** TRIPLES— NOMINATED TEAMS (3 BOWLS)
5 GAMES OF 15 ENDS EACH TEAM, PLUS
PRELIMINARY FINAL OVER 2 DAYS
PLUS FINALS & CONSOLATION ON FINAL DAY
- COST:** \$60 EACH PLAYER—TOTAL
INCLUDES LUNCH EACH DAY
- PROCEEDS:** ALL PROCEEDS TO 'STARLIGHT FOUNDATION'
CHILDREN'S CHARITY

ONLY SINGLE ENTRIES & THREE/FOUR PLAYER TEAMS WILL BE ACCEPTED

PROOF OF DEFENCE FORCE SERVICE REQUIRED
NOMINATIONS CLOSE ON 9th SEPTEMBER, 2022.

Enquiries:

Macquarie B/C - 02 6882 1019
www.manager@macquarieclub.com.au
Eric Chamberlain - 0411 054 832

Club Dubbo B/C - 02 6884 3000
www.bowlsmgr@clubdubbo.com.au
Email: ericchamberlain@optusnet.com.au

PSK FINANCIAL SERVICES ARTICLE

Opportunity for retirees post 1 July 2022

Building on last quarters' article, in this article I'd like to discuss how the upcoming 1 July 2022 changes to contribution eligibility offer additional opportunities for retirees to structure their retirement income tax effectively.

Contribution eligibility re-cap

Prior to 30 June 2022, to be eligible to contribute to superannuation you must be under age 67 or be age 67 – 75 (the contribution must be made within 28 days of the end of the month in which you turned 75) *and* have met the Work Test or the Work Test Exemption.

- To meet the Work Test, you must have been gainfully employed for at least 40 hours during a 30 consecutive day period *before* you make the contribution.

The once-only Work Test Exemption allows a 12-month contribution period from the end of the financial year in which you last met the work test, provided your total super balance at the previous 30 June was less than \$300,000.

The fantastic news for those aged 67 – 75 is that from 1 July 2022 the above tests only apply where you are making personal contributions and claiming a tax deduction under the Concessional Contributions Cap.

If you're aged under 75 on 1 July 2022 and making Non-Concessional Contributions your work status does not matter.

However, if you're age 75 on or after 1 July then your superannuation fund can only accept Mandated Employer Contributions and Downsizer Contributions.

These changes coming into effect from 1 July 2022, provide increased opportunity for "recontribution strategies".

The re-contribution strategy involves withdrawing some or all of the superannuation interest and recontributing the amount as a non-concessional contribution. The amount withdrawn from superannuation is paid to the individual in accordance with proportioning rules, which is in proportion to existing taxable and tax-free components. When re-contributed to superannuation, the amount is allocated to the tax-free component of superannuation interest.

As such, the strategy may potentially convert some or all of the taxable component into a tax-free component. Ultimately, this may result in reduced tax payable if superannuation death benefits are paid to non-tax dependent beneficiaries (eg adult non-dependent children).

Case Study

John, age 70, has \$500,000 in superannuation. The amount consists of 70% taxable (\$350,000) and 30% tax-free (\$150,000) components. John retired 3 years ago and hasn't been able to make personal superannuation contributions since, due to not being able to meet the work test. He is single, with no financial dependents. John has made a superannuation death benefit nomination to his non-dependent son, Matthew. If Stephen was to pass away, Matthew would receive the superannuation death benefit payment as a lump sum. When the lump sum is paid, the tax-free component of \$150,000 would be paid to Matthew free of tax. However, he would pay 17% (\$59,500) in tax and Medicare levy combined on the amount of \$350,000 paid from the taxable component. If John implements a cash out re-contribution strategy of \$330,000, he could potentially reduce Matthew's tax liability from \$59,500 to \$20,230 – **a tax saving of \$39,270.**

When the lump sum of \$330,000 is withdrawn from John's superannuation, the amount will be paid in the same proportion as current components, that being 70% from the taxable

component and 30% from the tax-free component. When the same amount is contributed back to John's superannuation, it will be added to the tax-free component. By implementing the strategy, John will be able to reduce the taxable component and increase the tax-free component of his superannuation interest as in the table below.

It's important to note that there are many factors that need to be considered before implementing the above strategy and advice should be sought from a qualified Financial Adviser before proceeding.

John	Taxable Component	Tax-Free Component	Tax payable upon John's death (incl Medicare Levy)
Superannuation balance	\$350,000 (70%)	\$150,000 (30%)	<u>\$59,500</u> (\$350,000 @ 17%)
Super balance	\$500,000		
Lump sum withdrawal of \$330,000 paid in 70/30 proportion (post 1 July 2022)	\$231,000 (70% of \$330,000)	\$99,000 (30% of \$330,000)	
<i>Total withdrawn</i>	<i>\$330,000</i>		
Tax components after the withdrawal	\$119,000 (\$350,000 less \$231,000)	\$51,000 (\$150,000 less \$99,000)	
Super balance after the withdrawal	\$170,000		
Re-contribution of \$330,000	\$0	\$330,000	
<i>Total re-contributed</i>	<i>\$330,000</i>		
Super balance after the re-contribution	\$119,000 (23.8%)	\$381,000 (76.2%)	<u>\$20,230</u> (\$119,000 @ 17%)
Super balance	\$500,000		

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

**Paul Messerschmidt (Partner) MFinPlan
PSK Private Wealth
0414 811 777
02 9895 8800
paulm@psk.com.au**

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Health & Wellbeing Update

(Summarised and June events redacted –ED)

FREE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Suicide Intervention & Mental Health Literacy Workshops

Open Arms has partnered with RSL Australia to offer free mental health and suicide awareness training to family members, carers, friends, co-workers or others with links to the veteran community. We are looking for ex-service organisations to help identify people who would not usually qualify for free training and to create opportunities in your local area for the SafeTalk, ASIST or Mental Health First Aid training. If your organisation would like to get involved, or to find out more, contact Open Arms.

Book in ASAP! OpenArms.Coord@dva.gov.au

PLANNING AHEAD KIT

The Planning Ahead Kit is now available online. These handy booklets contain information sheets and checklists to assist with preparing for and coping with life changes, such as moving into aged care.

INSURANCE FOR AUSTRALIA'S VETERAN AND DEFENCE COMMUNITY

Natural disasters can affect anyone, including members of the defence community, veterans and their families. You don't have to fight this battle alone. Watch here

(Linked to: [Insurance for Australia's Defence and Veteran community | Defence Service Homes \(dsh.gov.au\)](https://www.dsh.gov.au))

DVA HEART HEALTH PROGRAM

FREE DVA Heart Health Program – individual and group program opportunities.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) is offering a 52-week program designed to improve physical health and wellbeing for returned veterans, peacekeepers and those covered under the ADF firefighter scheme. It is available to individual veterans, as well as groups.

TO APPLY OR FIND OUT MORE

If you would like to discuss these program opportunities or apply to participate, you can visit the Heart Health website on <http://www.veteranshearthealth.com.au/>

Alternatively, you contact Corporate Health Management on **1300 246 262** or email: hearthealth@chm.com.au

Group Heart Health Program- New Program Opportunity

If you are living or working in the *Nowra* and *Vincentia* area or surrounding area we currently have a number of veterans who have registered their interest in this new group program opportunity and are looking for a few more eligible veterans to register. If you would like to improve your general fitness, your knowledge on health and wellbeing and your social connections with other likeminded veterans. **Register** your interest or checking eligibility by visiting <http://www.veteranshearthealth.com.au/eligibility> and follow the steps.

Alternatively, call the program team on **1300 246 262**.

ANTI-MALARIAL MEDICATIONS HEALTH ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The Program is open to any veteran who has concerns having taken these anti-malarial medications and offers a comprehensive health assessment to investigate any reported symptoms. Interested veterans can access the program at no cost. For more information please see the DVA website or call 1800 MEFLO-QUINE (1800 633 567). *(See article on page 33 of this issue - ED)*

DVA- NON-LIABILITY REHABILITATION

This is a Pilot program launched on 01 January 2022 that will run for 2 years. The intention of the program is to provide clients who do not have any accepted conditions access to time-limited rehab. The client must have ADF service from, 01 Dec 1988 and this support would usually be for 3 – 6 months. For further information and clarification please contact the Rehabilitation Team at NLR@dva.gov.au

DATES OF COMMUNITY SIGNIFICANCE

We encourage organisations to recognise some dates of community significance that reflect your veteran community, this could be through your regular communication channels, or by creating events.

1ST -31ST July - **Dry July**

Dry July is a national fundraiser, run by Dry July Foundation that encourages people to go alcohol-free in July and raise funds for people affected by cancer.

Having a month off alcohol also has great health benefits and encourages awareness of a healthy attitude to alcohol consumption. The challenge is a perfect fit for workplaces or social groups.

3rd -10th July - **NAIDOC Week**

NAIDOC stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. NAIDOC Week is usually held in the first full week of July. It is a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Indigenous Australians make to our country and our society.

10th -16th July - **National Diabetes Awareness Week**

DANII Foundation is calling on all Australians to support the NATIONAL DIABETES AWARENESS WEEK campaign and help to raise awareness of diabetes nationally during 10th to 16th July 2022. Awareness of Diabetes is a National Public Health issue and much still needs to be done, collectively and individually, for better prevention, diagnosis and management of the condition.

Sunday 24th July - **Stress Down Day**

Stress Down Day is a fundraising event to help cover the cost of running Lifeline's 24 hour telephone counselling line - 13 11 14. Workplaces participate by enjoying a day of stress reducing activities, including wearing casual dress to work, in exchange for a donation to the cause.

Kind Regards

NSW & ACT Community Support Advisory Team

Community Support Advisor NSW & ACT

Mental and Social Health Programs

Department of Veterans' Affairs

CSA.NSW.ACT@dva.gov.au

DVA General Enquiries 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)



AUSTRALIAN VETERANS'
CHILDREN ASSISTANCE TRUST

AVCAT

SCHOLARSHIPS



Transforming lives through education

Applications open 18 August, and close midnight 31 October 2022.

AVCAT Scholarships, including the Long Tan Bursary, are for the children and grandchildren of Australian ex-serving veterans. Scholarships provide \$4000–\$6000 per year, for three years, to full-time students at uni, TAFE or a registered training organisation.



‘My AVCAT Scholarship gave me confidence that I still draw on. It’s something that cannot be taken away.’

– AVCAT Scholar

Scholarship Eligibility

Eligibility criteria includes Australian residency, child or grandchild of Australian ex-serving veteran, full-time tertiary student in 2023 at uni, TAFE or a RTO for minimum one-year course, in receipt of or eligible to receive Centrelink payments including Youth Allowance, ABSTUDY, Austudy or an accepted means-tested Commonwealth government payment.

Apply online at avcat.org.au



Follow the Sapper

1 Field Squadron Group RAE Queensland Incorporated

**2022 Reunion and
Memorial Bridge Dedication**

10th 11th 12th 13th November 2022

Venue: Western Districts Rugby Football Club., 65 Sylvan Road. Toowong. Qld.
4068.

This year we are having a special event with the dedication of a Memorial Bailey Bridge being built in Anzac Park Toowong.

The Bridge will be a Memorial to all Sappers who served in World War 1. The Memorial will be dedicated on Friday 11th November at 1400 hours followed by a reception

Format for the reunion will be meet and greet on Thursday 10th, Remembrance Day service with Toowong RSL on Friday 11th followed by Bridge Dedication. On Saturday 12th will be the AGM at 0930 hours with our Flag Service at 1400 hours followed by dinner at 1830 hours.

Contact; Tony Andrews 0417579218
email; antony.andrews@bigpond.com

or

Jim Weston 0419260463
email; james.weston5@icloud.com

Website; www.1fieldsappers.org

REUNIONS & NOTICES

August 2022

Army Aussie Red Hat Chapter

Date: 6 Aug 2022

Army Aerial Delivery veteran community, families and friends are invited to attend the first ever 'Aussie Red Hat Chapter Annual Reunion'. Visit the website for tickets.

Reunion details

Location: Penrith Panthers Leagues Club, NSW

Contact details

Name: Anthony Eddie

Phone: 0401 417 497

Email: vicepres@adaa.net.au

Website: <https://www.trybooking.com/BXTNT>

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

VVPPAA NSW

18 AUGUST 2022

SEE PAGE 45

Naval Stores Reunion

26-27 August 2022.

A reunion of Naval Stores and MLSC members of all ranks.

Date: 26 Aug 2022

Reunion details

Location: Sydney CBD, NSW

Contact details

Name: Alan Cady-Ellis (Cady)

Phone: 0407 436 498

Email:

temporaryloan@gmail.com

21EST Reunion

Date: 29 Aug 2022

We invite all 21EST and 17Const Elec troop veterans, partners and mates to our reunion from 29th Aug to 3rd Sept 2022. For further details contact the below.

Reunion details

Location: Forster/Tuncurry, NSW

Contact details

Name: Phil Hincks

Phone: 0414 761 032

Email: 21estcommittee@gmail.com

October 2022

Navy Cooks, Chefs & Stewards, Centenary 2022

Date: 7 Oct 2022

7-9 October 2022. Former, serving and Reserves are invited to attend the reunion. For all details and registration, please email David (below) or ex WOSTWD Dave Stevenson

(djstevenson7@bigpond.com).

Reunion details

Location: Melbourne, VIC

Contact details

Name: ex CPOCK David Speed

Dwyer

Email: davidgdwyer@hotmail.com

B Company 3RAR (ex-Vietnam)

1967-68 Reunion

Date: 14 Oct 2022

Next reunion to be held from Friday 14th to Sunday 16th October 2022

For registration details, please contact Bill.

Reunion details

Location: Tweed Heads / Coolangatta, NSW

Contact details

Name: Bill Roffey

Phone: 0412 305 734

Email: billroffey@bigpond.com

Website: Facebook - B Company 3RAR (ex Vietnam) 1967-68

RAAF Airman Aircrew

Association 25th Anniversary

Date: 21 Oct 2022

To register, visit the website.

Reunion details

Location: Caloundra, QLD

Contact details

Name: Grendell "Skip" Antony

Email: theantonyms@optusnet.com.au

Website: <http://airmanaircrew.com.au>

1 Fd Sqn Wksp SVN 66/71

Date: 20 Oct 2022

Wksp 2022 reunion Part 2, for those who could not make it in March, and for those who want to back up! Held over three days, Thursday 20 to Saturday 22 October 2022. This coincides with the week the Wksp left Nui Dat for good! Wksp members and those associated with the Wksp regardless of Corp are invited to attend.

Reunion details

Location: Wodonga, VIC

Contact details

Name: Mick Leonard

Phone: 0260 592 771

Email: mick.jude@bigpond.com

21Construction Squadron

Reunion RAE

Date: 22 Oct 2022

Proposed reunion for all past and present members of the Squadron and their partners. Please contact Bill or Audrey, toyota_page@bigpond.com for more information.

Reunion details

Location: Seymour, VIC

Contact details

Name: Bill Thornley

Phone: 0438 140 759

Email: we.2.bez@bigpond.com

November 2022

55th Birthday Reunion of 9RAR (67/73)

Date: 10 Nov 2022

10-14 November 2022. All those who served in the Battalion are invited to attend. Please ensure your postal/email address is up to date with your state secretary.

Reunion details

Location: Sunshine Coast Qld

Contact details

Name: Kevin Lynch

Email: kevannlynch@hotmail.com

HQ1ATF Association

Date: 18 Nov 2022
18-21 November 2022. For detailed itinerary, contact John.

Reunion details

Location: Capital Country Holiday Park, ACT
Contact details
Name: John Verhelst
Email: jeverhelst@gmail.com

5 Field Ambulance RAAMC Association

Date: 26 Nov 2022
The Association will hold their annual 'mixed' reunion luncheon 11.45am to 3pm, at the Parramatta RSL Club at 2 Macquarie Street Please RSVP by 23rd November 2022.

Reunion details

Location: Parramatta, NSW
Contact details
Name: Alan Curry OAM - Hon Sect 5 Field Ambulance Association
Phone: 0427 824 646

(Summary) 2023 TO DATE

HMAS Nirimba 2nd Sailstruc Apprentice Intake –

50 Year Reunion

Date: 10 Feb 2023
Reunion details
Location: Gold Coast, QLD
Contact details
Name: Allan Dow
Email: Allan_dow@bigpond.com

HMAS Sydney IV Commissioning Crew 40 Year Reunion

Date: 17 Feb 2023
Reunion details
Location: Hobart, TAS
Contact details
Name: Derek Lecroft
Phone: 0409 632 961
Email: gimakide@bigpond.com.au
Website: https://www.facebook.com/groups/344780545578473

Headquarters & Headquarters Company 1st Australian Logistic support group (1 ALSG)

Date: 20 Mar 2023
For more details and accommodation, contact Tony.

Reunion details

Location: Broken Hill, NSW
Contact details
Name: Anthony (Tony) Brown
Email: tr4950@optusnet.com.au

RAADC 80th Shin Dig

Date: 22 Apr 2023
Open to all past, present, family and associated friends of our outstanding Corps.

Reunion details

Location: The Portsea Camp, VIC
Contact details
Name: Sonia Thompson
Email: sonithompson1@gmail.com

8RAR Association Inc Reunion - Melbourne

ANZAC Day period 2023.
Accommodation and an itinerary has been arranged with local tours including a visit to the Vietnam Veterans Museum Phillip Island.

For further information you are urged to contact your State Reunion Representatives as listed below:-

Qld: Klaus (Tank) Scheuermann ph: 0409513214
NSW: Kevin Sullivan ph: 0416262924
Vic: Paul Gallahger ph: 0402275135
Tas: David Brookes ph: 0400518924
South Australia/NT: Ted Forward ph: 042134991
Western Australia: Dennis Lines, (no ph#) <linesdennis8@gmail.com> or,

Tom Lyons National Asst Sec ph: 0406660442.

1 RTB Kapooka - B COY 11+12 PL - 10 year reunion

Date: 13 May 2023
Reunion details
Location: Townsville, QLD
Contact details
Name: Rosie + Goody
Phone: 0455 531 599

We advise that anyone wishing to attend any of the advertised reunions listed should first contact the event organiser at the contacts given.



“One day we’ll all be laughin’ at this cockup over a beer at some flamin’ reunion”.

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



1300 924 522

Our programs

Alcohol Drugs Eating disorders
Anxiety Depression Bipolar disorder
Borderline personality disorder
Schizophrenia and psychosis

Veterans services

Wesley Hospital Ashfield and Wesley Hospital Kogarah provide compassionate care for those in need of psychiatric help. The goal of the hospitals is to provide positive outcomes, not only for our **patients** with a mental illness but also for their **family and carers**. As centres of excellence within Wesley Mission our Wesley Hospitals have been providing professional and compassionate care for over 60 years.

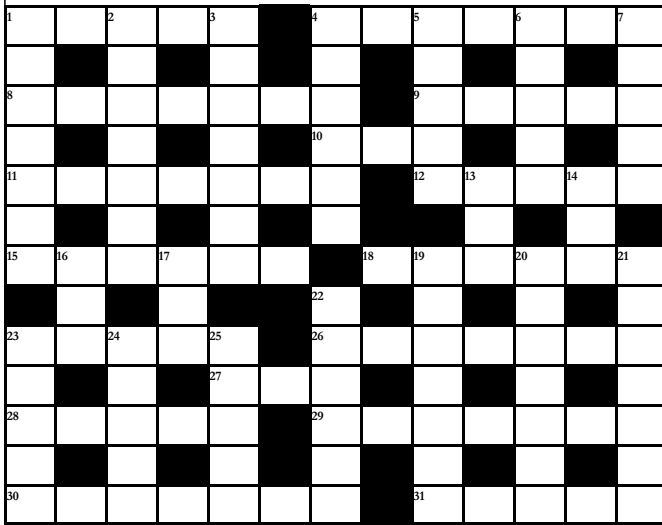
Wesley Hospital Ashfield and Wesley Hospital Kogarah are private psychiatric hospitals which offer both **in-patient** and **day patient** services. Our treatment programs combine medication, therapy and include life skills and support networks to ensure recovery is effective, ongoing and enriching.

91 Milton Street,
Ashfield NSW 2131

&

7 Blake Street,
Kogarah NSW 2217

CROSSWORD CORNER



DOWN

- 1. Moral story
- 4. Newsletter item
- 8. Contemplate
- 9. Fibbing
- 10. Sick
- 11. Marble likeness
- 12. Form
- 15. Cloud burst
- 18. Patted
- 23. Remains
- 26. Timeless auto
- 27. Vehicle
- 28. Punctuation mark
- 29. Country
- 30. Unhappiest
- 31. River grasses

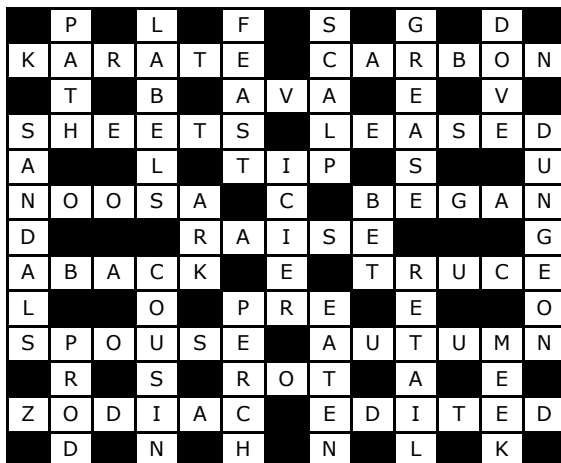
ACROSS

- 1. Dense woods
- 2. American Bison
- 3. Carry out
- 4. Painter
- 5. Narrates
- 6. Country
- 7. Bird
- 13. -, Skip, Jump
- 14. Meat filled dish
- 16. Very warm
- 17. How come?
- 19. Non-pro
- 20. Aisle
- 21. years
- 22. Written for play
- 23. Foot covers
- 24. Pointed at
- 25. Frighten

Solution

Next Issue

APRIL 2022 SOLUTION



THE UNKNOWN COMIC

A priest is driving along a country road when a policeman pulls him over. He immediately smells alcohol on the priest's breath and notices an empty wine bottle in the car. He says: "Have you been drinking?"

"Just water," says the priest. The cop replies: "Then why do I smell wine?" The priest looks at the bottle and says: "Good Lord! He's done it again!"

He was struggling to find a parking space, at the local shops, in the rain, and said to himself. "Lord, I can't stand this. If you open up a space nearby for me, I swear, I'll give up the grog and go to church every Sunday." Suddenly, the clouds parted and the sun shone down on an empty parking spot. Without missing a beat he said out loud, "Never mind, I found one!"

My mate was having dinner with Sven Carlsen (world chess champion) and there was a check tablecloth. It took Sven two hours to pass my mate the salt.

Cemeteries worry me. I mean they put up them high walls and gates around them. I'm sure none of us outside want to get in. And, I'm even surer, the ones in there can't get out, can they?

Mrs. Thurston-Smythe was making final arrangements for an elaborate reception. "Jeeves," she said to her veteran butler, "for the first half-hour I want you to stand at the drawing-room door and call the guests' names as they arrive." Old Jeeves' face lit up. "Thank you, ma'am," he replied. "I've been wanting to do that to some of your friends for the last 20 years."

Mr. and Mrs. Shaw were on safari in Africa, walking through the jungle. Suddenly a huge lion sprang out of the bushes and seized Mrs. Shaw, dragging her off. "Shoot!" she screamed to her husband. "Shoot!" "I can't!" he shouted back. "I've run out of film!"

Despite the high cost of living, it remains popular.

It's ironic that the colors red, white, and blue stand for freedom until they are flashing behind you.

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**

<p>OFFICE USE ONLY</p> <p>MEMBERSHIP REGISTRY DETAILS CHANGED</p> <p>DATE: ___ / ___ / ___</p> <p>INITIALS: _____</p>
--

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 it's 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
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

SVN UNIT/S	TOUR DATES
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

CAUSE OF DEATH (If known)

SR Service Related **UNK** Unknown **S** Suicide **O** Other)

DATE OF DEATH (If known)	LOCATION AT TIME OF DEATH	
<input type="text"/>	(TOWN) <input type="text"/>	(STATE) <input type="text"/>

YOUR NAME

SUBURB/TOWN	STATE	POST CODE
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

HOME PHONE	MOBILE PHONE	SIGNATURE
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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@vfvgranville.org

**VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA
FULL STATE AND SUB-BRANCH LISTING
NATIONAL HEAD OFFICE (VETERANS SUPPORT CENTRE)**

VVFA HQ National President: **William (Bill) Roberts OAM JP** Email: vvfanatpres@vvfa.org.au
 PO Box 170, (8 Mary St.) National Secretary: **Ron O'Connor JP** Email: vvfanatsec@vvfa.org.au
 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.vvfagranville.org
secretary@vvfagranville.org
 President: **Frank Cole**
 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 006 996
 Email: warren.willis@gmail.com

CLARENCE VALLEY

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

EUROBODALLA

28 Emmott St.
 Moruya 2537
 Ph: (02) 4474 2362
 Mob 0419 201 788
 President: **Russell Graham**
 Secretary: **Helen Kop**
euobodallavietnamveterans@yahoo.com.au

GREAT LAKES

Unit 3, 80-82 Kularoo Drive
 Forster, 2428
 Ph: 0480 283 744
vvaglforster@gmail.com
 President: **Graham Kelly**
 Secretary: **Paul Dawson**
Hours: Mon & Thur 1000-1300

**HASTINGS MANNING
MACLEAY**

PO Box 5330, 22/35 Merrigal Rd.,
 Port Macquarie 2444
 Office Ph: (02) 6581 5230
 Or (02) 6581 5509
 Fax: (02) 6581 5509
hmmvppaa@bigpond.com
 President: **Bill Wagner**
 Office Manager: **Lyn Hancock**
Hours: Mon-Fri 1000-1400

ILLAWARRA

Legacy House 96 Market St
 Wollongong NSW 2500
 Ph: (02) 4228 6774
vvaill@aapt.net.au
 President: **Ian Birch**
 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
 President: **Ken Atkinson**
vvfamudgee1@bigpond.com
 Mb: 0428 246 147
 Secretary: **Renee Lamshed**
 Ph: 0433 073 387
Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed 9:30-3:30

NEWCASTLE & HUNTER

15 Tyrell St., PO Box 288
 Wallsend 2287
 Ph: (02) 4951 2666
 Fax: (02) 4951 2633
nclvets@bigpond.net.au
 President: **(Acting) Paul Jones**
 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**
 Ph. 02 6926 6276
 Email: ralph todd@bigpond.com

SHOALHAVEN

PO Box 3229
 North Nowra NSW 2541
 President: **Clyde Poulton**
 (02) 4421 2644
 Secretary: **Carl Robinson**
shoalhaven.vietvets1@gmail.com

**SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS
BOWRAL MITTAGONG MOSS
VALE**

PO Box 900, Moss Vale NSW 2577
 President: **Phillip Moscatt**
 Mb: 0420 864 133
 Secretary: **Norman Austin**
 Mb: 0427 854 141
shvppa@gmail.com

**SOUTH WEST SLOPES
VIETNAM VETERANS INC.**

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

**WENTWORTH-COOMEALLA
Raymond Deed Veterans Retreat**

PO Box 397
 Dareton NSW 2717
 President: **Michael Chopping**
 Ph: 0481 306 854
 Secretary: **Sheryl Browning**
 Ph: 03 5027 4447
rdveteransretreat@iinet.net.au

**ZONE REPS
FAR SOUTH COAST**

Gary Berman
 Bega RSL SB
 Ph: 6493 0449
 Mob: 0409 888 248
gandsberman@bigpond.com

**VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA
FULL STATE AND SUB-BRANCH LISTING**

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**

Mbl: 0448 195 050

president@vfvqld.com

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

Mbl: 0408 276 044

treasurer@vfvqld.com

www.vfvqld.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**

Mbl: 0424 476 027

Sec/Treas **Peter Cameron OAM**

Mbl: 0408 276 044

TOWNSVILLE

Veteran Support Centre NQ Inc

TOWNSVILLE

PO Box 280, Hyde Park
JC Butler Bldg
1 Charters Towers Rd
Townsville, 4812
Ph: 07 4772 4655

vethelp@bigpond.com

President: **Barry Martin OAM**

Sec/Treas **Chris Mills OAM RFD**

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: **Carrissa Ibbott CSM**

VICTORIA

VVF Victorian Branch Inc

ALL MAIL TO: P.O. Box 167

Newcomb 3219

OFFICE: "The Annex" NO MAIL

PLEASE:

Barwon Health

Myer St, Geelong 3220

President: **John Arnold**

johnarnold@iinet.net.au

Secretary: **Iris Cargill JP**

Mb 0488 053 973

ritscargill@yahoo.com

Mon - Wed 0900 -1400

VIC SUB - BRANCHES

GRAMPIANS

Secretary: **Ron Jensen**

0409 023 487

***Respite Housing For Veterans in
need***

Bowder Veterans Housing
160 Coppards Rd Whittington 3219.
03 5248 0996

TASMANIA

VVPPF

Tasmania Branch Inc.

ALL PENSION ENQUIRIES

DENNIS HANMER OAM

NSW HO 02 9682 1788

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 JP**

Secretary: **Debbie Glastonbury**

SA ZONE REPS

BROKEN HILL

Des Kennedy

M: 0412 458 054

MILITARY MUSEUM

BUBLACOWIE

Welfare Officer: **Chris Soar**

0448 994 561/0428 377 287

Ph: 08 8853 4379

REPS

ALICE SPRINGS AREA

Alan Wilkes

KATHERINE AREA

Scott Landers

NORTHERN TERRITORY

*Contact SA Head office for Northern
Territory contact details.*

*Contact Gramville Office for future Darwin
Outreach Programs*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

VVFA WA Branch

30 Cornish Ave
Woodvale WA 6026

Ph 08 9409 6682

vvfawabranh@bigpond.com

President: **Milton Kirk JP**

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, contact the secretary, or send them an email asking about joining. Or if you wish to join the NSW Branch head office copy the form on page 58 and send it in via post, email, phone.

MERCHADISE FOR SALE

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	ITEM#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
1101	NSW PLAQUE	\$ 50.00	1401	LAPEL PIN RAN	\$ 5.00
1103	NSW BADGE	\$ 10.00	1402	LAPEL PIN ENSIGN	\$ 5.00
1104	NSW PATCH	\$ 14.00	1403	LAPEL PIN ARMY	\$ 8.00
1105	NSW STICKER	\$ 6.00	1404	LAPEL PIN RAR	\$ 8.00
1106	NSW PEN	\$ 7.00	1405	LAPEL PIN RAAF	\$ 8.00
1108	NSW STUBBY HOLDER	\$ 8.00	1406	LAPEL PIN CROSS	\$ 8.00
1109	STUBBY HOLDER TRICOLOR	\$ 10.00	1500	STICKER TWIN SET REG	\$ 7.00
1110	VVFA PAD/PEN	\$ 6.00	1501	STICKER REGULAR	\$ 7.00
1111	VVFA GREEN CAP	\$ 22.00	1502	STICKER NASHO	\$ 7.00
1112	VVFA BLUE CAP	\$ 22.00	1503	STICKER DAMN PROUD	\$ 5.00
1113	VVFA WHITE CAP	\$ 22.00	1504	STICKER LOVE or LEAVE	\$ 5.00
1114	VVFA BLACK CAP	\$ 22.00	1505	STICKER PROUDLY	\$ 5.00
1115	PLATE SURROUND LGE	\$ 12.50	1506	STICKER SUPPORT	\$ 7.00
1116	PLATE SURROUND SML	\$ 12.50	1507	STICKER TWIN SET NASHO	\$ 7.00
1117	VVFA PEN/TORCH SET	\$ 6.00	1508	STICKER SUPPORT NAVY	\$ 7.00
1124	KEYRING VVFA GADGET	\$ 6.00	1509	STICKER NAVY VETERAN	\$ 7.00
1125	KEYRING NAVY	\$ 8.00	1510	STICKER SUPPORT ARMY	\$ 7.00
1126	KEYRING ARMY	\$ 8.00	1511	STICKER ARMY VETERAN	\$ 7.00
1127	KEYRING RAR	\$ 10.00	1512	STICKER SUPPORT RAAF	\$ 7.00
1128	KEYRING AIRFORCE	\$ 8.00	1513	STICKER RAAF VETERAN	\$ 7.00
1129	KEYRING VVFA	\$ 9.00	1514	STICKER AFGHAN VETERAN	\$ 5.00
1130	LANYARD	\$ 10.00	1515	STICKER IRAQ VETERAN	\$ 5.00
1131	BANGLE	\$ 5.00	1516	STICKER SOMALIA VETERAN	\$ 5.00
1201	THE MINEFIELD BOOK	\$ 45.00	1517	STICKER TIMOR VETERAN	\$ 5.00
1301	BUCKLE RAN	\$ 35.00	1518	STICKER SUPPORT/THANK	\$ 5.00
1302	BUCKLE SERVICE RIBBON	\$ 35.00	<p>ALL ITEMS (ABOVE) ARE FOR SALE VIA OUR WEBSITE, (www.vvfragranville.org/ecommerce/index.php). AND AVAILABLE FROM OUR GRANVILLE OFFICE AND SOME SUB-BRANCHES. PHONE TO CHECK CURRENT STOCK AVAILABILITY. THE IMAGES OPPOSITE ARE COMPOSITE ONLY AND ACTUAL DESIGN MAY DIFFER ACCORDINGLY DEPENDING ON SUPPLY AVAILABILITY AT TIME OF ORDERING. THE WEBSITE ALSO HAS FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT OUR PRODUCTS AND WE ENCOURAGE VISITORS TO USE THIS FACILITY BEFORE CONTACTING THE OFFICE. All proceeds go toward our Scholarships for the children and grandchildren of veterans.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Use the order form on page 64 for mail orders.</p>		
1303	BUCKLE RAR	\$ 35.00			
1304	BUCKLE RAA	\$ 35.00			
1305	BUCKLE RAE	\$ 35.00			
1306	BUCKLE RAAC	\$ 35.00			
1307	BUCKLE RAAF	\$ 35.00			
1308	BUCKLE RAAMC	\$ 35.00			
1309	BUCKLE RAASC	\$ 35.00			
1310	BUCKLE RAEME	\$ 35.00			
1311	BUCKLE RAS	\$ 35.00			
1312	BUCKLE RAAOC	\$ 35.00			

Product images



ALL PROCEEDS FROM SALES OF MERCHANDISE BENEFIT THE CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDEN OF VETERANS



VVPPAA NSW MAIL ORDER FORM

TO: Admin Manager
PO Box 170
Granville NSW, 2142

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TOWN: STATE: PC:

PHONE: ALT PHONE:

EMAIL:

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE ea	QTY	\$TOTAL
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
XXXXXXXX	POSTAGE & HANDLING (Phone to confirm)	\$		\$
XXXXXXXX	RAFFLE TICKET/S	\$ 2.00		\$
XXXXXXXX	DONATION AMOUNT	XXXXXXXX	XXX	\$
XXXXXXXX	TOTAL ORDER VALUE	XXXXXXXX	XXX	\$

DELIVERY ADDRESS:

IF DIFFERENT TO ABOVE

PAYMENT METHOD MASTERCARD VISA (Cross out card type that does not apply)

NAME ON CARD:

CARD NUMBER:

EXPIRY DATE: / APPROVED AMOUNT: \$

SIGNATURE & DATE:

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

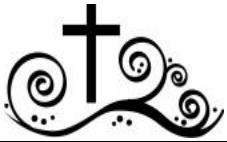
- Suicide alertness for everyone (Safetalk) ½ day presentation
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) 2 day skills course
- ASIST Tune Up ½ day refresher workshop

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.

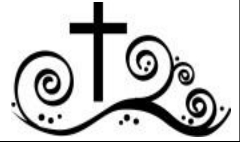
FORMERLY

Veterans and Veterans Families
Counselling Service





LAST POST



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
R94276	LSA	KJ	KENYON	HMAS SYDNEY/HOBART	16/6/21	28/11/47
R53625	PO	DA	KANE	HMAS SYDNEY/PERTH	5/22	14/8/36
R62968	LM	WJ	BULLOCH	HMAS BRISBANE (2)	6/7/21	22/5/43
3787901	PTE	DS	JOHNSTON	HQ 1ATF	4/9/21	12/3/45
218304	PTE	CP	BOWDEN	HQ 1ATF	2/3/22	26/1/48
235149	MAJ	PJ	CALVERT MID	1 FD REGT/ 161 RECCE FLT	6/5/22	24/2/36
61819	LCPL	RA	SAUNDERS	161 RECCE FLT	6/5/22	4/8/49
2787227	CPL	DB	BLATCH	2AOD/1 ORD FP	3/3/22	29/7/45
3411194	SGT	PJ	PORTA	2AOD	17/8/21	24/6/39
2782089	SPR	ME	ROSS	32 SMALL SHIP SQN	22/8/21	16/2/45
243245	CPL	JT	McGREGOR	32 SMALL SHIP SQN (4)	26/5/21	15/8/45
62016	SIG	GR	FYSH	104 SIG SQN (8RAR SPT)	UNK	7/1/44
2786480	SIG	KJ	SMITH	104 SIG SQN	27/3/22	22/5/46
3166787	BOM	HT	DUNKLEY	1 FD REGT	3/21	19/11/48
242606	CAPT	RF	BLAND	12 FD REGT LAD	17/10/21	30/7/34
2786411	SPR	NA	NICHOLSON	1 FD SQN	5/8/19	13/10/45
2796260	SPR	RW	HOLLIS	21 ENG SPT TROOP	UNK	11/2/50
7130	CPL	MC	MCFARLANE	8 FD AMB/A,B SQ 3 CAV RG	2021	1/11/44
2791238	CFTM	DJ	McLEAN	B SQN 3 CAV REGT LAD	10/5/22	18/12/45
2792261	TPR	PA	MAHONEY	A,C SQN 1 ARM REGT	2/4/22	26/8/48
2790568	CPL	JG	HOWES	1ARU/HQATF/HQAFV	2021	16/4/48



LAST POST



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
2411980	LCPL	AE	MIRANDA	1 RAR	14/5/22	8/4/43
215292	CPL	WR	SKEEN	1 RAR (2)	4/6/22	25/11/44
29832	CPL	PV	WATERS	1 RAR	6/4/22	31/8/39
2786957	PTE	EN	MINNER	1 RAR	22/8/21	12/8/45
217300	PTE	GE	MURRELL	1ARU/7 RAR/1 RAR	3/5/22	17/4/43
216793	CPL	DF	SYMINGTON	4 RAR (2)	16/2/22	7/10/48
1201055	CPL	DR	TURNBULL	3 RAR/4 RAR	15/5/22	8/8/46
4719556	PTE	I	ROBERTSON	1ARU/4 RAR	7/8/21	8/2/47
2786039	PTE	LG	THOMSON	1ARU/2 RAR/4 RAR	2/1/22	20/8/46
3793621	PTE	RG	WILLIAMS	1ARU/6 RAR	28/2/22	2/7/47
2782755	PTE	GR	NAPIER	6 RAR/1 ARCC	UNK	15/5/45
1734350	PTE	DA	STAFFORD	8 RAR	11/5/22	15/9/47
14958	LCPL	GA	BEAN	8 RAR	UNK	11/3/41
1734284	PTE	DL	JOHNSON	8 RAR	UNK	16/10/47
3787725	PTE	PJP	FALLON	8 RAR	UNK	26/3/45
216433	CPL	KL	EASON	1 RAR/6 RAR/9 RAR	28/9/21	17/5/33
A219151	CPL	BT	GRACIE DFM	RAAF FLTV/35 SQN	4/12/21	7/12/39
A216932	CPL	MR	ROSE CDS	RAAF FLTV/35/36 SQN	UNK	22/2/39
A225579	LA	EJ	HEALEY	1 OP SPT UNIT	UNK	20/3/53
A220725	CPL	M	PROVOST	BASE SPT FL	18/12/21	10/12/38
A25344	LA	CE	SPROUL	BASE SPT FL	UNK	24/5/26

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.

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

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

MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICES

CARNEEDS Pty Ltd
152 Parramatta Rd
STANMORE
Prptr: Robert Stenta
Ph: 9519 1441
10% discount
On mechanical repairs & competitive prices on tyres and batteries.
To all Vietnam Veterans Federation Members.

MALCOLM MOTORS
Automotive Service Specialist. All mechanical repairs & servicing.
15% Discount for members on services and repairs.
JOE CARE
603-605 Parramatta Rd
Leichhardt NSW
MTA Lic. # 42198

TRAILERS TOWBARS BULLBARS

Fastfit Bullbars & Towbars
Trailer sales and spares-side steps
Bike beacons-Custom work
65 St Hilliers Road
AUBURN
Ph: (02) 9749 1209
10% Discount on products

EXHAUST SYSTEMS

Menai Mufflers
Unit 4/788 Old Illawarra Rd
MENAI
Ph: (02) 9541 4720
20% Discount
Balmain Radiator Centre
Mark Borghonzian
22d Crystal St
ROZELLE
Ph: (02) 9818 4920Mbl: 0419 417 206
10% Discount

NEW CARS

carhelper.com.au
New car buyer's advocate
Buy a discounted new car over the phone and have it home-delivered
No salesmen, just independent advice from a Wheels magazine car reviewer
Contact James Whitbourn
Motoring journalist & new car buyer's advocate
james@carhelper.com.au
0403 892 897

Service cost of \$165 reduced to \$110 for members

MOTOR CYCLE ACCESSORIES

Motor Cycle Accessories Supermarket
Head Office.
321 Parramatta Rd
Auburn NSW
(02) 9648 1400
www.mcas.com.au
CITY: 9261 5182.
LIVERPOOL: 9601 8276.
CARINGBAH 9574 5100
PENRITH 4737 6100
10% Discount except helmets and tyres

NEW AD SOON

Know of a company that supports your local veterans with discounts.

Ads placed in this section are free
0421 690 959
For advice

BATTERIES

POWER PRODUCTS
For all your power needs

BATTERIES
SOLAR POWER
INVERTERS
GENERATORS

Motor Cycle battery specialists

Russell is offering 15% discount to VVF Members on Batteries . 5% on Solar products,

Inverters & Chargers 10%

3/3 Sovereign Pl

South Windsor

Ph: (02) 4577 7761

Fax: (02) 4577 7768

Ashfield Battery Centre
110 FREDERICK STREET

ASHFIELD, NSW, 2131

02 9798-6166

GEORGE KAWAUCHI (owner)

We sell:

CAR, TRUCK, MARINE, DEEP CYCLE, GOLF CART, MOBILITY, MOTOR CYCLE BATTERIES.

CHARGERS, SOLAR PANELS, BOOSTER CABLES, FUSES, GLOBES, INVERTERS, TERMINALS, BATTERY BOXES.

OPEN FROM: 9am - 5-30pm Mon-Fri

OPEN SAT FROM: 9.30am- 3.30pm

Closed Sundays and public holidays.

10% Discount to veterans

SMASH REPAIRS

Wreck-A-Mended

Smash Repairs

Unit 1, 20 Bosci Rd

Ingleburn NSW

02 9605 9008

Ask for Alan

Tell them you are a member and they will send us a donation

FLOOR COVERINGS

Waratah Floor Coverings

473 Burwood Rd

BELMORE

Ph: (02) 9759 6511

Ask for Special Rate

MOTELS

Golden Chain

Motor Inn Ltd

Ph: 1800 023 966

Must have Golden Chain Card. Its Free When You Call The Number Above And Ask

Present your Federation membership card and ask for a "Golden Link" card to be issued.

There is a **10% discount** on room rates **Australia wide**

TRAVEL TRANSFERS

GROUP TRANSFER

Airport or Cruise Terminals

All Tours, All Services

15% DISCOUNT FOR VETERANS

For Bookings call:

Michael Viet

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0404 754 899

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