



THE VIETNAM VETERANS' NEWSLETTER

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

JULY 2026

The Battle of Long Tan 18 August 1966

17 RAR members KIA and one APC Squadron member died of wounds (list inside)
60 Years On

We Remember Them



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- BATTLE OF LONG TAN REVISITED
- BRAVERY RECOGNIZED—GARRY CHAD
- DR BRIAN O'TOOLE SUBMISSION ON VETERAN SUICIDE
- KEL ROBERTSON ON OUR HISTORY CONTINUED

• AND MORE

Next issue
December
2026

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



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

SERVICES

DVA - Military Compensation

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

Asbestos - Dust Disease Tribunal claims.

Industry super claims - income protection - TPD appeals,

Coroner's inquests

claims for Detriment Caused by Defective Administration - CDDA

TIPS ON BEGINNING YOUR STORY

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

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

Create a loose outline to structure your story.

Revise and re-write as you improve the narrative.

And, lastly, don't forget to send your story to us, including photos, preferably scanned in .jpg format. Not copied. if you have them.



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

Welcome back to **Kel Robinson** who continues with the history of the early days of the Vietnam Veterans movement, and supporters of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association. Welcome, also to **Dr Brian O'Toole** with his platform of recommendations to DVA and it's new planned serviceability. Lastly, Padre Gary Stone reports on the death of Major (Rtd) John White DSC MID.

Keep those stories coming in..



VIETNAM VETERANS' FEDERATION of AUSTRALIA Inc.

Incorporating

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

Vietnam Veterans Federation Queensland Branch Inc.

Veteran Support Centre NQ Inc - Townsville

Vietnam Veterans & Veterans Federation ACT Inc.

Vietnam Veterans Federation Victorian Branch Inc.

Vietnam Veterans Federation South Australian Branch Inc.

Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia WA Branch.

Vietnam Veterans Federation Reps.

National President	William Roberts OAM
NSW State President	William Roberts OAM
Qld State President	Michael Caldwell
FNQ President	Jason Ballard
ACT State President	Ward Gainey
Vic State President	John Arnold OAM
SA State president	Mal Thiele OAM JP
WA State President	Milton Kirk JP
Research Officer	Graham Walker AM

MEMBERSHIP

**Belonging
Advocacy
Success**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We thank you for your kind support. ■



Sergeant Garry Chad MG, a Vietnam War hero honoured after 55 years.

Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, personally presented Sergeant Garry John Chad with the Medal for Gallantry (MG), one of Australia's highest military decorations.

On 29 July 1971, in Long Khanh Province, Vietnam, Sergeant Chad showed courage that words can barely capture. When 7 Platoon, C Company, 4 RAR came under ferocious fire from a heavily defended enemy bunker system, he moved forward, towards the danger, taking control of pinned-down soldiers. Wounded during the fight, he continued directing fire with devastating accuracy, eliminating the enemy's command group, machine gun and RPG capacity. He was the last man to withdraw, his actions enabling his platoon to retreat with only light casualties.

He was originally awarded a Mention In Despatches (MID) in July 1972, for his efforts

His citation says it best: "His selfless actions in the face of danger exemplified the highest tradition of the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force."

From The Government Gazette 14 February 2026.

Gallantry Decorations – March 2026

The Governor-General is pleased to announce the following Gallantry Decorations:

MEDAL FOR GALLANTRY (MG)

Sergeant Garry John CHAD MG

For acts of gallantry in action in hazardous circumstances with 7 Platoon, 4th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment in Long Khanh Province in Vietnam on 29 July 1971.

Well deserved and shame about the wait.





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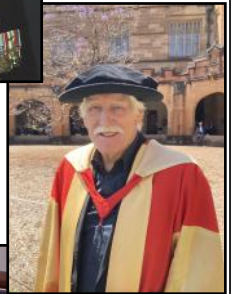


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VETERAN'S ACT, Alleged war-crimes trials,
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Department of Veterans' Affairs

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NEWSLETTERS ITEMS FOR PUBLICATION ARE REQUIRED DURING FIRST WEEK OF MONTH PRIOR TO DISTRIBUTION. APRIL ISSUE CLOSING MARCH, JULY ISSUE CLOSING JUNE, DECEMBER ISSUE CLOSING NOVEMBER.

ADVERTISING CLOSING 2 WEEKS EARLIER THAN ARTICLES.

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COVER IMAGING BY EDITOR BOB

EMAIL COMMENT TO bobf@vrfagranville.org



Historical Record *60 years On*

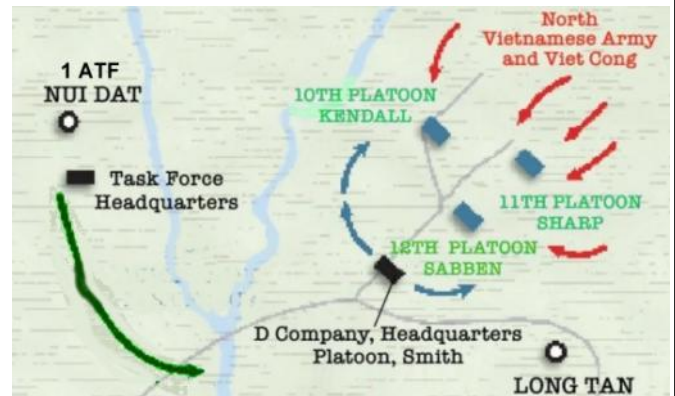
The Battle of Long Tan, 18th August 1966.

Australian soldiers fought in scores of fierce actions during the almost 12 years of war in South Vietnam. Few were as intense or dramatic as the action in the Long Tan rubber plantation on 18 August 1966. An isolated infantry company of 108 men, including 3 New Zealand Artillery forward observers from 161 Field Battery, cut off and outnumbered by at least ten to one, withstood massed Viet Cong attacks for three hours. They suffered the heaviest Australian casualties in a single engagement in Vietnam, but prevailed against the odds. Their valiant stand became a defining action of the war.

Overview

Australian radio signalers had tracked 275 *Viet Cong Regiment* transmissions as they moved west to a position just north of the old *Long Tan* village site, but earlier patrols by the Australians had failed to locate the *Viet Cong* unit. On the morning of 18th August 1966, *B Company, 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment* (6 RAR) departed *Nui Dat* to locate the firing points, of the previous days bombardment, and the direction of the *Viet Cong* withdrawal. A number of weapon pits were subsequently found, as were the positions of the mortars and RCLs.

At around midday *D Company 6RAR* took over from *B Company* and began an active pursuit of a *Viet Cong* squad that had withdrawn in the late afternoon. One of *D Company's* platoons was then engaged by small-arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire.. Numbering only 108 men, *D Company* was facing a much larger force. Pinned down, they called for artillery support as a monsoon rain began, reducing visibility.



Heavy fighting ensued as the attacking battalions of the *Viet Cong 275th Regiment* attempted to encircle and destroy the Australians. After several hours *D Company* was nearly out of ammunition, when 2 'Hueys' from No. 9 Squadron RAAF arrived overhead to resupply them. Heavily outnumbered but supported by very close, accurate, artillery fire, *D Company* held off a regimental assault before a relief force of APCs from 3 Troop 1 APC Squadron, carrying Infantry from *A Company 6RAR* fought their way through as darkness fell and forced the *Viet Cong* to withdraw just as they appeared to be preparing for a final assault. Withdrawing to establish a landing zone to evacuate their casualties, the Australians formed a defensive position overnight.

The analysis

The Australian forces returned to the battle site, in strength, the next day, and located a large number of *Viet Cong* dead. Although believing they had suffered a major defeat, as the scale of the *Viet Cong's* losses were revealed, the Australians realised they had actually won a major victory. *D Company 6RAR* lost 17 killed, and 1 more Australian from 1 APC Squadron passed away nine days later from wounds received at the battle, and 24 were wounded.



The *Viet Cong* lost at least 245 dead, with blood trails left as dead and wounded were carried away by the enemy. A decisive Australian victory, *Long Tan* proved a major local setback for the *Viet Cong*, indefinitely forestalling any further movement against *Nui Dat*. Although there were other large-scale encounters in later years, *1 ATF* was not fundamentally challenged again. The battle established the task force's dominance over the province, and allowed it to pursue operations to restore government authority.

A *Presidential Unit Citation*, from the *USA*, was awarded to the men of *D Company 6RAR*. In the following years, several soldiers were awarded gallantry medals for their actions during the battle, after long and arduous debates with different governments.

The courage

What should not be forgotten is the continual close in and accurate bombardment of the enemy, throughout the battle, by *American*, *New Zealand* and *Australian Artillery*, nor the heroism of the *RAAF* crew that flew in the ammunition re-supply in weather that would normally have grounded them.

Honours and awards given for valour after the battle, include awards given later after many years of campaigning by Major Harry Smith, in particular.

Some with Mentioned in Dispatches awards were upgraded afterwards, and superseded by the higher distinction. However, the list is as per the current Nominal Roll information available at time of transcribing— 23 May 2026.

The list is as per the Australian Order of Precedence for Honours and Awards available from government websites.

Major Harry Smith SG MC 6 RAR,
 Brigadier O 'David' Jackson DSO Commander 1 ATF
 Lieutenant Colonel Colin Townsend DSO CO 6 RAR
 Captain Maurice 'Morrie' Stanley MBE (NZ)
 2nd Lieutenant Peter Schuman MC 3 SAS
 2nd Lieutenant Dennis Rainer MC MID 5 RAR,
 Lieutenant Francis Roberts MG MID 1 APC Sqn,
 2nd Lieutenant Geoffrey Kendall MG MID 6 RAR
 2nd Lieutenant David Sabben MG MID 6 RAR,
 WO2 John Kirby DCM 6 RAR,
 Corporal John Carter DCM 1 APC Sqn
 Sergeant Robert Buick MM 6 RAR,
 Corporal Robert Rutherford MM 6 RAR,
 Lance Corporal Ronald Eglinton MM 6 RAR
 Corporal Phillip Dobson MID 6 RAR,
 Private William Akell MID 6 RAR,
 Warrant Officer 2 Jack Roughley MID 6 RAR
 Corporal William Moore 6 RAR MID
 Sergeant George Chevalley BEM 6 RAR.

The fallen

2Lt GC Sharp, L/Cpl J Jewry,
 Pte RA Aldersea, Pte GA Drabble,
 Pte EF Grant, Pte KH Gant, Pte VR Grice,
 Pte JM Houston, Pte PA Large,
 Pte AF McCormack, Pte DJ McCormack,
 Pte WD Mitchell, Pte DJ Salveron,
 Pte DJ Thomas, Pte FB Topp,
 Pte MR Wales, Pte CJ Whiston.
 Cpl PE Clements 1APC Sqn died 27 August 1966.

Lest we forget



NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President's Report VVFA/VVPPAA – July 2026

As you would all be aware the new Veterans' 'Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025', came into effect on 1 July 2026. This represents a major change to the Repatriation System in the way Veterans' and their families entitlements, Advocacy, Welfare and Wellbeing are managed.

The need for a single Act was brought about because many ESOs and Advocates felt that it would be less complicated and time consuming to process and consider claims under the one Act. The proposal to this effect was also considered by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide and became one of the major recommendations of that Commission in its final report.

To consider this proposal, discussions were held with ESOs/stakeholders with submissions sought. Follow-up consultations with them and their Advocates, over the past few years, a new Act to harmonise the three previous Acts under the Repatriation System, was considered. Many Senior Advocates and others with relevant experiences and knowledge of the Repatriation System and Advocacy training were involved in the preparation of the requirements of the proposed new Act and to ensure that no veterans or their families would be worse off with and following its implementation.

Prior to the presentation of the draft of the proposed new Act, further consultations were had with Advocates/Stakeholders to consider any amendments that were considered relevant and necessary and to make those amendments that were considered appropriate.

The final draft was presented to the Stakeholders and Advocates and was largely accepted by the majority of Stakeholders/ESOs/Advocates. After all, this is what the majority of those who provide Advocacy, Welfare and Wellbeing support and assistance, had sought.

As with any new system/procedures, there will always be 'teething' problems, and no doubt many Advocates will detect glaring omissions and other issues that may not have been considered previously, or may be of grave concern to clients with mental health issues or suicidal ideology. In these instances Advocates should urgently bring these concerns to the attention of the ESO/Establishment that they are assigned to or call/email the Secretary DVA or Deputy Commissioner of the relevant State.

As mentioned previously the implementation of the new Act is a major change to how Advocacy and related activities will be performed by our Advocates and also, how claims are considered by DVA Delegates. All of this will no doubt cause

much frustration and angst among some Advocates and clients until things settle down (hopefully). For your own health and piece of mind I would ask you to remain calm and tolerant during these unfortunate and trying circumstances, easier said than done, I guess.

I would like to remind Federation Advocate members residing in New South Wales and wishing to raise concerns/Issues following the implementation of the new Act to call (02) 9682-1788 or Email the 'secretary@vfvfagranville.org', our Office is open between 9.30am to 3.30pm, Monday-Friday. For other States you will need to check their Office hours, or you can call or send an email to the NSW State Office if you so desire.

You are also reminded that all the changes and recommendations emanating from the Royal Commission and other Inquiries over the past years relating to Veterans' entitlements under the Repatriation System, particularly suicides in the Defence Force, Advocacy, Welfare and Wellbeing of Veterans and their families, and a number of other significant issues, that have been discussed with ESOs/Stakeholders and have been subsequently implemented or being considered for implementation. Including the minutes of the Ex-Services Organisation Round Table (ESORT) Forum, whose members consist of 'Representatives' from quite a number of the larger ESOs who have and continue to convey to the Government/DVA their member's concerns and issues through ESORT. The information, recommendations and minutes from the RC and Forums are available on the DVA Website and have been in recent years for ESO members and other Veterans to view. I would encourage Federation members and Advocates to continue to refer to the Website as appropriate. That's what it's there for.

Alleged War-Crimes trials:

Recently I sent out an Email to all Federation members, and a copy to the Repatriation Commissioner, concerning Victoria Cross recipient Corporal Ben Roberts-Smith's very public arrest for alleged War Crimes. As I mentioned in a similar and previous email to Federation members several years ago - although at that time Ben Robert-Smith VC was not mentioned specifically - we as a Federation should refrain from making any official comments on this matter as he is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven otherwise through a properly convened Court of Law and I reiterate that view. This has become a very Political issue and I am aware there are very strong feelings and differences of opinion from both Veterans and the public alike, but we nevertheless must allow the justice system to proceed without interference. That's what most of us would expect.

ESORT (Ex-Service Organisations Round Table) Forum versus Proposed Establishment of National Peak Body For Ex-Service Organisations

As most of our members would know the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia (VVFA) has been a member of 'ESORT' (Ex-Services Organisation Round Table) Forum for several decades, together with a considerable number of other large and well-established ESOs. The purpose of establishing ESORT was to have a Forum of ESOs who's elected Representatives are able to strongly convey and express their members' concerns/issues to Government/DVA on a variety of Repatriation matters that included entitlements, Advocacy welfare, wellbeing and Defence Force suicide prevention, to name but a few.

(Continued on page 10)

ESORT has been quite successful in the implementation of new entitlements or involved in having changes/amendments made to those entitlement/procedures that adversely affected Veterans and their families.

Whilst ESORT was considered by some as not being the 'perfect' Forum for Veterans - and there will always be those who are not happy about anything because they had not got what they wanted – the Forum has been largely successful in the face of some Government restrictions. The majority of the members of ESORT are happy with how the Forum operates and managed and working towards the betterment of Veterans generally. As the VVFA Representative on ESORT, I am aware that the majority of ESORT members are of the strong view that the ESORT forum has, over the past decades, and continues to be, a very relevant and effective Forum to express concerns and to seek the needs of Veterans and their families. Members believe that the Forum is definitely "Fit for Purpose" and certainly meets the criteria of a "Peak Body", why change?

The VVFA will be holding its National Executive AGM Conference at Belconnen in Canberra on 25 June 2026 and the representative from the proposed National Peak Body, Mr Nick Booth, has been invited by the Federation to speak about the proposal and to listen to the Federation's views and concerns – we are "Not Happy Jan" with the proposal and, I understand, so are a number of other ESOs including VVAA. Should be an interesting meeting. I have already written to the Repatriation Commissioner expressing our views and concerns on the proposal which we will reiterate at the conference.

Establishment of 'The Institute of Veterans' Advocacy (IVA)'

This Institute was recently established under the Chairmanship of Michael Von Berg, and the Chief Executive Officer is Alana Scheiffers and Canberra-based Director, Lucinda Casey.

Lucinda will be giving the VVFA National Executive AGM Conference being held in Canberra on 25 June 2026, a presentation of the role and other activities of IVA. This is probably one of the smarter moves of DVA.

New South Wales State Branch (Granville) VPPAA NSW

Continues to provide professional and timely Advocacy, Welfare and Wellbeing assistance to all Veterans seeking help with their disability and other claims, as do all our NSW sub-branches who are also involved in other social activities that enhances the welfare and wellbeing of our vulnerable Veterans. We are very appreciative of what they all do for Veterans and their families when one considers their elderly circumstances.

VPPAA was recently able employ three additional paid advocates due to the generous donations of the NSW RSL through its sub-branches. One of those employed was a former volunteer, Tony Latimore, who was a volunteer with us for more than twenty years. These new paid Advocates will allow the VPPAA to continue its Advocacy and other assistance to vulnerable veterans and their families in a very professional and timely way, as it has for many decades.

The high standard of the assistance provided by our Advocates and volume of claims lodged from the Granville Office remains at a premium and recognised as such by some of the other ESOs and DVA.

Through the commitment and enthusiasm of one of our senior Advocates, Denis Hanmer and his helpers (Advocates) the Association has been able to continue with its 'Outreach Programs' to the military bases at the northern end of Australia. The costs associated with the Outreach Program/s are met from funds donated by an RSL Branches in Queensland and Darwin, for which we are grateful.

Overall, the assistance that VVFA/VVPPAA provide to our vulnerable Veterans and their families 'Nationally' remains at a high standard and one that all our Advocates should be extremely proud of.

Well done to all who have and continue to assist veterans in various ways, both as a volunteer or paid staff.

William (Bill) Roberts OAM
National President – VVFA
President - VVPPAA

24/7 CRISIS SUPPORT

OPEN ARMS
 Veterans & Families Counselling

1800 011046

VETERANS AND FAMILIES
COUNSELLING



1800 628 036

MENTAL HEALTH ALL-HOURS
SUPPORT LINE



13 11 14

LIFELINE AUSTRALIA

1800RESPECT

1800 737 732

NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT,
DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE
COUNSELLING SERVICE

FROM THE SECRETARY



CONGRATULATIONS TO WINNERS OF NSW 2025/26 RAFFLE



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 on Wednesday, 27th May 2026. The Lucky winners are:

1. \$2000 R Prentice Fullerton Cove NSW
2. \$1000 D Sparkes Mildura Vic
3. \$ 600 D McCann Berowra Heights NSW
4. \$ 400 B Mitchell Mewowie NSW

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

DONATIONS

Once again, we say **THANK YOU** to our many members who have made a financial donation to their State Branch.

The donations will greatly assist us to continue our Pension, Advocacy and Welfare work and OutReach Programs and assist our service and ex-service comrades who have suffered through the years. We have achieved much in this regard, yet there is still much to do. Our continuation of this work is only possible through generosity such as demonstrated below.

All donations are gratefully received, and combined, are of enormous assistance to us. However, they are too numerous to list individually. Periodically though, 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:

\$2,500	Anonymous
\$1,000	Brian West
	Amelia Jenkins, Jules Hall
\$500	Anonymous, Snow Dodd
\$400	Geoffrey Cole
\$300	Alec Ceccato
\$250	Derek Sims

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 support our cause. In particular, we acknowledge those RSL sub-branches that have generously supported the Association through the RSL NSW's Veteran's Support Fund.

We also acknowledge the donations and grants received from:

Ashfield Bowling Club
Club Blacktown
City of Fairfield RSL Club
Campsie-Chester Hill RSL Club

Ron O'Connor
Secretary—VVFA / VVPPAA NSW



2027 Scholarships

**Tertiary scholarships for children and grandchildren of
Australian ex-serving veterans**

\$4000-\$6000 a year, for 3 years

Eligibility Criteria for all scholarships

- Australian residency or citizenship
- child or grandchild of an Australian ex-serving veteran
- full time tertiary student in 2027

*Additional eligibility requirements for specific
scholarships can be found on our website*

Applications open 18th August - 31st October 2026

Apply online at avcat.org.au

“They would have been like that anyway” (The scientist who put that slur to bed once and for all)

IN October 1981 an enquiry into the Agent Orange issue was begun by the Senate Standing Committee on Science and the Environment.

Evidence was given at one of its hearings by Dr Sol Rose.

Dr Sol Rose had been, until late 1981, Director of DVA Medical Services in Victoria responsible for the training and oversight of medical officers who dealt with compensation applications by veterans claiming their disabilities and illnesses were war-caused.

This was, in part, the evidence Dr Rose gave:

“I do not think that the nature of the war in Vietnam is any different or significant, because the service was not a long one in comparison to World War II; they were not debilitated anywhere near to the same as were the ...people coming back from long service in the tropics, particularly those from the New Guinea campaigns which were long and arduous.”

Dr Rose’s evidence showed an alarming lack of understanding of the stresses of guerrilla and mine warfare. Indeed, evidence given by Brigadier Rogers, Director of Army Medical Services, who had served in Vietnam, differed markedly. He said:

“I did a little calculation once of the amount of stress put on a Vietnam soldier in comparison to the World War II soldier. The infantry soldiers – the combat soldiers – faced many times more stress.”

Vietnam veterans were not interested in an argument about whose war was the most debilitating, but they were interested in Dr Rose’s misconception of the Vietnam War.

Dr Rose, as we have said, was responsible for the training and oversight of DVA’s Victorian medical officers. Had his misconception corrupted the Victorian medical officers’ understanding of the Vietnam war? Would this influence the way they viewed Vietnam veterans’ compensation claims? Was it confined to the Victorian DVA or was it a misunderstanding rife Australia wide?

Did this explain, the veterans wondered, the oft expressed view inside DVA and Defence that those Vietnam veterans claiming compensation would probably be suffering psychological illness, alcohol abuse etc whether they had gone to war or not?

And whilst the Vietnam veteran community knew from their own experience that veterans’ psychiatric problems and, for that matter, the psychiatric problems of their families, were related to the veterans’ war trauma, scientific proof was necessary to move bureaucratic stubborn prejudice.

Enter Dr Brian O’Toole.

Previously, Dr O’Toole was the Clinical Senior Lecturer in Psychiatric Epidemiology and the Director, Vietnam Veterans Family Health Study at the University of Sydney Brain & Mind Centre.

Dr O’Toole’s interest in the psychological consequences of fighting the Vietnam war began in the early 1980s.

Back then, he too was aware that it was not unusual for Vietnam veterans suffering psychiatric problems to be dismissed by the remark, ‘they would have been like that anyway’. He was aware that some elements of DVA and Defence were included amongst those harbouring this reservation.

Dr Brian O’Toole set out to scientifically test whether or not ‘they would have been like that anyway’.

In the process, he engineered studies to be published in international refereed scientific journals of the highest standard, thus ensuring them against government and bureaucratic dismissal and cover-up.

There follows an important document by Brian which we shall pass on to DVA and Defence and Veterans’ Service Commission (DVSC).

Call for Research After The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide

Dr Brian O'Toole
April 2026

A notice recently went out to the Faculty of Medicine & Health at Sydney University:

"In response to the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide the Australian Government has committed \$10 million through the NHMRC to support high-quality research into the health and wellbeing of serving and ex-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) members. This aims to generate high-quality evidence and develop practical implementable actions to improve mental and physical health and promote wellbeing among serving and ex-serving ADF members with consideration given to the impact on their support networks including family dependants and carers. The objectives of this are to facilitate research that:

Focuses on translation and implementation with actions and methods that can be adopted by mainstream community health services.

Targets prevention and early intervention strategies that improve long-term health outcomes and builds the evidence base for scalable and implementable programs and/or strategies that aim to improve holistic and functional outcomes throughout the patient journey.

Promotes collaborative and multidisciplinary research approaches that recognise the complex and intersecting physical and mental health needs of serving and ex-serving ADF members and ways to improve these through prevention and early intervention.

The expected outcomes of this are to:

Support the development and implementation of programs policies and activities that prevent suicidality suicidal distress and acute mental health crises among serving and ex-serving ADF members while optimising treatment and improving equitable access to care services.

Address the intersection of complex mental and physical health conditions and the needs of serving and ex-serving ADF members through collaborative and multidisciplinary approaches to care."

These are lofty and fine sentiments; I do hope they bear fulsome fruit. But now some lessons from the Australian Vietnam Veterans Health Study

(AVVHS) that I conducted over 25 years bear highlighting. This study was the first epidemiological cohort study of the health of any returned servicemen ever conducted in Australia – there was nothing after WW1, nothing after WW2, nothing after Korea, all wars that produced generations of ill effects of war service for both the veterans and their families.

Prior to beginning my study, the 'agent orange' scientific studies where I worked from 1981 to 1984 had established that the best method of data collection for scientific studies of health was clearly in-person interviews rather than telephone or mail-in surveys¹. Despite this, DVA persisted with a policy of mounting mail-in surveys and failed to learn from the research it had itself supported. It is to be hoped that the future research does not fall into the trap of mere surveys, that plagued the government/DVA attempt to look at the intergenerational effects of PTSD in veterans and their families. The quality control procedures that characterise NHMRC funded research should hopefully enhance confidence in the studies that are to come.

I began the AVVHS because I got angry: After the "Agent Orange" Royal Commission pronounced AO "Not Guilty" of causing health problems in veterans the Australian government declined to fund a proposed study of the health of the veterans. I felt that no bugger in the government was prepared to look a veteran in the face and ask about his health. After working in the "agent orange" health study group at the Commonwealth Institute of Health I became knowledgeable about

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the Army records, the scientific literature and the issues that confronted a proper epidemiological health study of the veterans. I was also hooked by Albie Morrison onto a committee to evaluate the new VVCS and in 1983 drafted the report that helped keep it open. There was a clear need. From there I served 18 years in the ministerial National Advisory Committee on the VVCS; as an independent member and a non-veteran I gained deep insights into the workings of DVA and veteran issues. I also made contacts with the veteran community and its leaders including Phil Thompson and Tim McCombe. If the government didn't want to do a study of veterans, I was perfectly placed and determined to do it myself.

To mount the study I sought help from the Australian Army which kindly gave me access to the list of all veterans posted to Vietnam 1962-1972. This allowed me to select a random sample of 1,000 veterans, selected from Regimental Service Numbers without regard to Nasho-Regular status, rank, corps, duration of service, number of tours, etc. It was a completely random sample, not self-selected or otherwise biased. They lived in all States and Territories across Australia, were traced, contacted, consented and interviewed wherever they chose. Funding was granted from the NHMRC to cover fieldwork costs. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) provided important assistance.

The first wave of the AVVHS assessed veterans right across Australia, using in-person interviews and standardised assessment and diagnostic instruments to determine the physical and mental health of Vietnam vets over two decades after their war service and compare this with the background Australian population. It was an independent study; in its first wave I was assisted by psychologist Dr David Grayson, himself a Vietnam veteran, Rick Marshall, then head of the VVCS, and psychiatrist Dr Raph Schureck from Sydney University, and counsellors from the VVCS and Australian Army Psychology Corps. The aim was to conduct a

scientifically acceptable study with papers to be published in peer-reviewed scientific journals across the world, not just in reports that would remain dusty and unread.

The first papers were published in 1996. Only 6 of 37 chronic disease physical health groups were not elevated compared to the population. Combat exposure was significantly related to reports of recent and chronic mental disorders, recent hernia and chronic ulcer, recent eczema and chronic rash, deafness, chronic infective and parasitic disease, chronic back disorders and symptoms. In the mental health domain, the results² demonstrated that, while 36.6% of veterans had no psychiatric diagnosis, mental health problems can persist more than 20 years after return from war service, particularly alcohol abuse or dependence and PTSD that was 20% prevalent; and combat exposure – but not just being deployed to a combat unit – was significantly related to depressive symptoms, anxiety, alcohol use disorder, and PTSD. Moreover, PTSD rather than combat exposure, was associated with a range of physical health outcomes³ – asthma, eczema, arthritis, musculoskeletal disorders and hypertension – which emphasises the risk of poorer physical health that can be associated with PTSD. Note, however, that about 80% of the veterans did not have a diagnosis of PTSD.

I received funding from NHMRC in 2006 to conduct a follow-up of the veteran cohort three decades after return⁴, with new investigators – psychiatrist Professor Stan Catts from the University of Queensland, Professor Jill Cockburn from Newcastle University - and new interviewers. This was also conducted with standardised interviews right across Australia. It revealed that the general health of the veterans remained significantly poorer than the background Australian population, particularly formal mental health diagnoses. Depression, particularly severe depression, anxiety, agoraphobia, and PTSD were all in excess of

population expectations, and PTSD was itself most strongly associated with other mental health diagnoses.

The second wave of the cohort study enabled me to examine the course of PTSD over three decades⁵ together with the smoking trajectory⁶ and the course of alcohol use disorders⁷. These showed that PTSD can wax and wane, can have a delayed onset, may remit but may also resurface; for some veterans it will be a chronic unremitting disorder. However, it may not be predictive of smoking or failure to quit smoking – combat stress itself seems to be implicated here rather than PTSD. On the other hand, it was clear that PTSD was strongly associated with alcohol problems over time, likely to be the result of self-medication for the PTSD symptoms.

Fieldwork data collection for these studies was funded by the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), but this body wasn't interested in funding a health study of the veterans' wives and partners. This fell to the Australian Rotary Health Research Foundation which kindly contributed funding to collect data on the partners' mental health.⁸ Due to the untimely death of Jill Cockburn, her colleague Dr Sue Outram from Newcastle University came on board to give a woman's perspective to the partners' study. The Australian Bureau of Statistics had by then conducted the first National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, that allowed me to compute the relative prevalence of mental disorders of veterans' partners compared with the Australian population. This showed that moderate and severe depression, particularly severe recurrent depression, were significantly elevated compared with the background Australian population, as were PTSD and generalised anxiety disorder. Further analysis also showed that veterans' panic disorder severely limited the likelihood of his partners' consultation with doctors, and that other veteran mental health diagnoses, particularly PTSD and recurrent severe depression, raised the risks of other mental health

conditions in their wives. This confirmed my major suspicion that there were significant palpable mental health consequences for veterans' spouses arising from veterans' war service.

Going further, I looked more closely at suicidality in both veterans and their spouses⁹. All aspects of suicidality – ideation, planning and attempt – were elevated compared with the background Australian population for both veterans and their partners. Both PTSD and depression, particularly severe depression, increased the risk of suicidality for veterans, and for their spouses, again confirming the potentially toxic effects of war service on veterans' immediate family and the potential lethality of PTSD. This was communicated to the Royal Commission.

NHMRC then finally granted funding for fieldwork data collection to add veteran's daughters and sons to the study, and interviews were conducted Australia-wide using the same methods as used for veterans and their partners. For this arm of the study we were joined by child psychologist Professor Mark Dadds from Sydney University. The results revealed two stark findings: first, PTSD in a veteran father increased the risk of PTSD in his offspring, particularly daughters¹⁰. While other research with traumatised individuals such as Holocaust survivors had previously reported this phenomenon, this was the first study to report intergenerational transmission of PTSD in combat veterans' families that was based on psychiatric diagnosis rather than self-report questionnaires and drew comment from eminent British researchers in the field.

Furthermore, comparing daughters' and sons' mental health with the background Australian population¹¹ showed that daughters and sons had higher prevalences of alcohol and other substance dependence, depression and anxiety, and PTSD, and the children's PTSD was associated with

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substance dependence, depression and suicidal ideation. There were strong associations between children's PTSD and comorbid conditions of substance use disorders, depression and anxiety. I concluded that there was strong evidence of higher rates of mental health problems in veterans' families, together with comorbidity with PTSD and the link between veterans' and children's PTSD, which suggest that the effects of war service trauma may continue into subsequent generations.

As part of the children's cohort, I was able to look at the children's view of the emotional family climate while they were growing up¹². In the veteran arms of the studies, veterans commonly recalled that they had been tough on their kids, one veteran saying: "I was a martinet while the kids were growing up". Outbursts of PTSD-related behaviour were sometimes reported, although there was no evidence of excessive domestic violence being perpetrated on the children; the negative emotional climate was more subtle than that. Nevertheless, it was clear that a negative emotional climate while the kids were growing up was associated with veterans' PTSD. In this analysis I found that attachment to the veteran father was not associated with sons' PTSD but was so for daughters. A negative attachment to the mother was associated with PTSD and depression for both sons and daughters, with positive and warm attachment associated with reduced PTSD diagnosis and its symptom clusters in the children¹³. A less positive family emotional environment was related to increased PTSD symptoms in daughters, while for sons a negative relationship style with their mother was related to increased frequency and severity of numbing/avoidance behaviours and hyperarousal symptoms. The findings suggest that sex-related differences in caregiver-child dyads may have a differential impact on PTSD symptom domains and may be one environmental mechanism by which trauma is transmitted across generations.

But, interestingly, in spite of the increased risk of a

negative emotional environment associated with PTSD, and the clear link between PTSD in a veteran and PTSD in his offspring, I found that a *positive* emotional climate could also occur in veterans' families while the children were growing up, and this in itself was *protective* against the intergenerational transmission of PTSD from veteran to offspring¹⁴.

The lessons from this odyssey (I travelled 350,000 km across Australia to conduct interviews) are manifold: don't just rely on questionnaires, they give poor quality data. PTSD is an insidious veteran problem, that is related to poorer veteran physical and mental health that can last for decades. PTSD and its comorbidities can have devastating effects on veterans' families, particularly the mental health of partners and children and particularly suicidality. Helping veterans to create a positive family emotional environment while suffering PTSD can itself protect against the potential for intergenerational transmission of PTSD. And children and partners can still love their suffering father in spite of his problems. These are the lessons to be understood going forward.

In America there is a greater effort from their Veterans Administration to support clinical and research work into veteran PTSD. Their National Center for PTSD houses and supports a large number of clinical researchers, and their website – which is accessible to anyone – gives the latest findings for assessment, care and treatment of PTSD. Australian DVA could learn a lot from the American effort – it even includes job ads for veterans – and goes way beyond merely assessing veterans for "war caused" health problems. Unlike DVA's Open Arms (previously VVCS) the American effort encourages VA-supported clinicians to engage in research into treatment possibilities, something that I well know in my current role as an Associate Editor of the Journal of Traumatic Stress that publishes cutting edge findings from PTSD clinical research.

I can only hope that the forthcoming NHMRC-supported studies can provide strong impetus for improving the outlook for future fighting forces, particularly in showing the way to supporting veterans' families in their war-caused difficulties. It's not compulsory to acquire PTSD in a war zone but, when it rears its head, those who bear the brunt of it need support and assistance from the time it surfaces, through to repatriation, military separation, and their and their families' post-war lives. PTSD can happen to anyone and people who acquire it in the course of serving their country ought to be bloody-well looked after.

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Further papers and references can be found in O'Toole B.I. "Studies in the Wake of Trauma". Doctor of Science thesis submitted to the University of Sydney, August 2023.

Dr Brian O'Toole May 2026.



VVAA HISTORY DRAFTS

Article 17

The Second Half of 1980: the Second Six Months of the Association's Existence

This article outlines and comments on events in the second half year of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association (afterwards to be the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, the predecessor of the Federation).

By mid-1980 it would have been easy to dismiss the Vietnam Veterans Action Association as a brave failure. The Association and its Parliamentary supporters had been unable to convince the Fraser Government that the Cabinet-approved investigation of chemical harms (the Institute Study) wasn't worth persisting with. It had also failed to convince the Government that the Association's preferred method of investigating those harms – a judicial inquiry – should be initiated.

It had failed to secure Government agreement to the amending of repatriation legislation so that wives and children believed to have been affected by wartime chemicals could lodge repatriation claims. It had further failed to secure funding from both the Federal and New South Wales governments for welfare activities and organisational costs. Still further, although significant preliminary work had been done by its lawyers to ensure Australian participation in the US class action and permit local litigation, the Brady and Fulton High Court negligence actions had yet to proceed beyond the initial filing of writs; a related Federal legal aid application lodged on 1 April had not (yet) been approved.

The Association had, more importantly, failed to (a) have DVA apply the "benefit of doubt" provisions in repatriation legislation to chemical harm claims and (b) have the Department agree that the many symptoms thought to be the result of chemical exposure were, in fact, a consequence of that exposure.

Moreover, the Association had failed to persuade the RSL National Executive that it should be supportive of both the Association's call for a judicial enquiry and the argument for chemical harms.

Relations with the Association's principal legal advisor, McMillan, would appear to have soured – something of significance because the Brisbane solicitor had been a frequent spokesman for the Association (on a range of matters beyond the legal) and because he was steering veterans' local and overseas compensation litigation.

On top of all that, the Association's membership was small, veterans in WA and Tasmania had not yet established VVAA branches, and the ACT Branch (with the potential to enrol numerous still-serving Vietnam veterans) looked to be moribund. As a consequence, the organisation's funding – without significant external help – was much less

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than that required for intended activities, including the welfare work to which increasing importance was attached by most branches.

Inter-Branch coordination, collaboration and communications were arguably poor and there had been, more understandably, little attention given to matters of national governance ie to the rules and processes by which the Association could function effectively.

For all that, much had been achieved.

Survival, by itself, was something to boast of, for without grim commitment on the part of early officials and the willingness of others to replace those who couldn't persist, the organisation could readily have foundered. More than that, though, McMinn had raised the public profile of the new Association, of Vietnam veterans and of those veterans' familial problems. He had drawn attention to the various ways in which the RSL (with its persistent call for veterans to rely on the repatriation system) had failed troubled Vietnam veterans. He had also assisted in exposing shortcomings in Ministerial handling of chemical-related issues by supporting Parliamentary targeting of relevant Ministers and engaging with the media. Association officials had accepted or sought the assistance of experts of various sorts and they had learned a good deal about engaging with politicians, dealing with the media and holding meetings – important forums for a range of reasons. All State branches provided assistance to veterans and families in crisis or in need of welfare assistance, albeit to different degrees and by differing mechanisms. And the New South Wales branch had started delivering talks in RSL and other clubs to explain



Holt McMinn



Bill McMillan

the Vietnam chemical problem, thereby (a) enhancing the Branch's own chemical knowledge; (b) increasing League members' support for Vietnam veterans; and (c) raising funds.

But no matter which way Holt McMinn weighed up the failings and achievements of the preceding months, he had good reason to feel apprehensive at the mid-year point, despite continuing in the National President's position after the (inaugural) May 1980 National Conference (hereafter referred to as a Congress). The Bruce Ruxton/Colin Hines brokered early June meeting with the RSL National Executive had yet to produce any benefit other than the peculiar Special

Committee (due to report to the league National Executive on 7 September). Phil Thompson and Gary Adams had indicated at the Association's Congress their preparedness to take on the running of the organisation and had almost certainly by this point indicated their disdain for McMinn.

John Evans, the scientific adviser, was said to have found McMinn's emotive comments to the media objectionable and probably blamed the National President (as well as the solicitor, McMillan) for not facilitating his travel to the US to interact with scientific experts involved in the class action; he may well have blamed McMinn, too, for not ensuring the class action's inclusion of harms associated with Agent Blue (a matter of undisputed science because of its arsenic derivation), Malathion and other chemicals. Even likelier, Evans would have contrasted the respect which Adams and Thompson accorded his scientific knowledge (relying on it for their chemical presentations) with McMinn's greater interest in a forum to

publicly explore chemical harms. McMillan, meanwhile, probably blamed McMinn for Association officials' restiveness about the US class action and for not, in particular, keeping the lawyer-replete Victorian Branch in line.

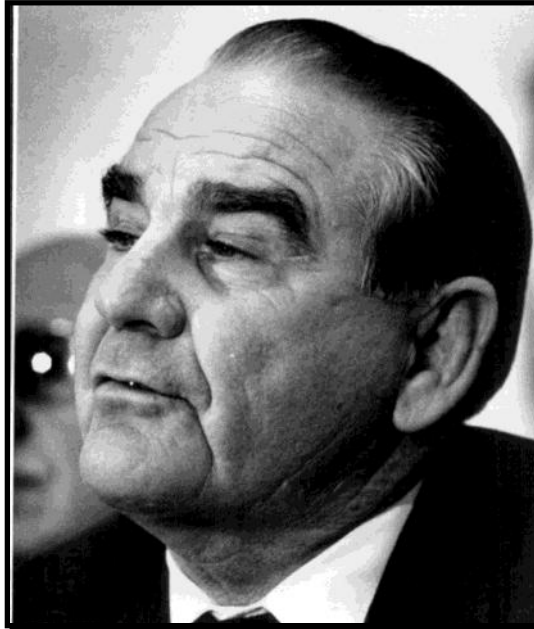
McMinn may also have had a suspicion that State branch dissatisfaction with the course of events – and not just with the failure to secure a judicial enquiry or funding for welfare activities – could too conveniently in future be blamed on the organisation's leader – its key link with Federal politicians.

However, the principal cause of apprehension for McMinn at the midyear point had to have been the matter of strategy.

What was the Association to do next ... when pressuring of the Government had not previously resulted in useful outcomes, and when the Association's main stage for that pressuring – the Parliament – was not to meet until the second half of August (at which time it would be focused on the Federal Budget)? With media attention in previous months increasingly centred on parliamentary events arising from the chemical issue, rather than on the impact of chemicals on veterans and their families, the strategy problem would be even more problematic if there was more parliamentary time off because of an early election. (Fraser had gone to the polls early in 1977 and was widely expected to do so, again, in 1980.)

An attempted Association refocusing of media attention on veterans' difficulties – and on the need for the Federal Government to remedy them as best it could – wouldn't be the fresh angle the

media required ... and, anyway, sympathy for Vietnam veterans and media attention on their problems needed to be shared with the atomic veterans (who'd clearly been inspired to organise by the example of the Association) and, afterwards, with a new organisation for WWII veterans.



Sir William Keys

That McMinn and others saw his role as continuing to be Canberra-focused was borne out by the May 1980 Congress's agreement to his permanent move from outer Melbourne to the national capital; approval of this move was more or less an authorisation of his continued lobbying and pressuring, but it isn't clear whether long parliamentary breaks had been taken into account in collective thinking about future Association strategy.

The period from the 6 June RSL/Association meeting in Canberra (covered in an earlier

article) until mid-August when Parliament resumed for the Budget was one in which McMinn was presumably occupied with selling his home and business, and resettling his family in the ACT, although he did make time to attend an important legal meeting in Melbourne on 2 August.

He may well have regarded his role as so linked to the Parliament that he viewed the three month break as a time when little would be required of him and he could focus on moving house and recharging his batteries. (It needs to be recalled that he was not paid for his Association work and wasn't consequently obliged to find things to do to justify receipt of a salary).

Perhaps, too, he'd been encouraged to adopt a less independent and belligerent media persona after

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his 16 May call for William Keys' resignation over non-disclosure of significant chemical evidence. (It will be recalled that the resignation call had backfired, rallying ESOs' support for Keys.) Restraining McMinn would have made sense, too, while ever the RSL's Special Committee was considering next steps, and while ever the NSW Branch of the Association was (a) courting League sub-branches for funds and (b) hoping for a major injection of legal funds from their State Branch. Muzzling would certainly have been consistent with Gary Adams' disapproval of McMinn's "headline grabbing". Equally possible was instruction to McMinn to leave comment on scientific issues to Evans. The author sets little store, though, in the notion that McMinn was silent for the mid-year parliamentary break because he was easing himself out of the Association in preparation for surprising alternative employment (see below).

Perhaps if McMinn had been in better health, had been better advised, had enjoyed warmer relations with key people in branches outside Victoria and had seen himself less as a lobbyist (and more as an ESO head), he'd have used some of the three month Parliamentary break to begin rectifying at least the internal communication problem referred to earlier. He could have focussed on devising a means of communications with members, who had historically learned of his activities via newspaper reports.

There were opportunities aplenty, too, for an unmuzzled McMinn to keep the Association in media consumers' minds – an important ingredient in the pressuring of the Government – during the three month parliamentary break and after the Parliament resumed for the Budget

session. There were media reports and events on which Association comment would have been almost expected, and others requiring more ingenuity to connect to the organisation.

(For examples of these reports and events, see Appendix 2, attached to the version of this article with citations.) And issues McMinn could reasonably have commented upon continued to



Malcolm Frazer

arise in September. (See the list in the version of this article with citations, but note various matters associated with the RSL National Congress, including (a) League dissatisfaction with delays in the commencement of the Institute study; (b) acceptance of a US Court conclusion that dioxin was extremely dangerous (with no safe levels of exposure); (c) belated advice for veterans to consult their local solicitors about participation in the US Class action; (d) a decision to refer to "chemical sprays", rather than Agent Orange; (e) the National

Executive decision to dissolve the Special Committee formed in early June; and (f) a resolution to prohibit any element of the League from rendering financial assistance to the Association. This last move would long be remembered by Vietnam veterans as a hostile act, even though it was eventually revealed to have been misreported by the League; in fact, the ban only applied to legal funding – and should be more accurately recalled as another in the series of 1980 RSL blunders in relation to Vietnam veterans.

The reasons for McMinn's absence from the public stage regardless, that absence provided an opportunity for the NSW Branch to assume more of a leadership role. Officials or members commented on a National Country Party member's 245T-guzzling stunt, commented on allegations of a massacre at Binh Ba, discredited a

US study of male mice and birth defects, announced preparations for litigation on behalf of veteran Colin Simpson, and wrote to the Minister for Defence about various matters (including Association membership) effecting still-serving Vietnam veterans.

Most importantly of all, Thompson and Adams – at about the same time as they changed the Branch letterhead to portray NSW as a stand-alone organisation – acted in July to fill the national communications void... and thereby asserted New South Wales pre-eminence in an undeniable way. They organised the August publishing of what was ostensibly a NSW magazine: one that Adams wittily named “da brief” but was formally titled “Debrief”. The fact that early issues were short on contextualising content, confusingly laid out and inclusive of unattributed material (to name a few of their early shortcomings) was irrelevant; the publication went some way to meeting interested veterans’ demand for information outside mainstream media. The inclusion of reports from NSW officials and other branches demonstrated a preparedness to keep members in some measure informed.

Readers who noted the absence of information about the national President and the Victorian Branch in the three 1980 volumes, and registered the heightened NSW media profile in the third quarter of 1980, wouldn’t have been surprised to learn that Thompson telegraphed McMinn in early October to say that the New South Wales Branch was withdrawing its recognition of the national body and was “dissociating itself from any media releases executed by [McMinn]”.

No record survives of the NSW General Meeting at which a ‘no confidence’ motion ostensibly gave rise to the telegram, and the split wasn’t referred to (let alone explained) in the following issues of “Debrief” (from December onwards), even though the sundering was undeniably of national significance.

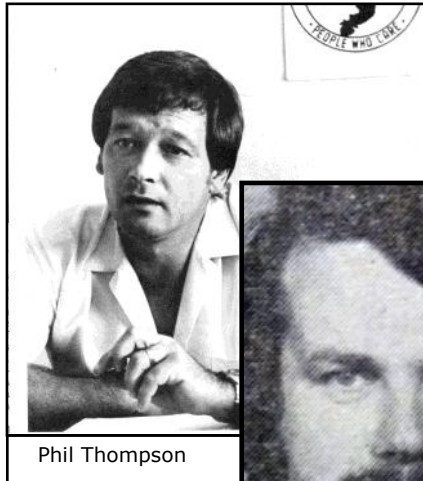
It’s important to note that by October 1980 the NSW Branch had the look of a self-reliant organisation, just as, it must be said, the Victorian Branch did and – to a lesser extent, noting its smaller membership – the SA Branch probably did. And McMinn’s long media silence, when it continued through the 4 short weeks of the August-September Budget session of the parliament, and then through the opening 2 weeks of the formal election period, doubtless provided excuse enough for a confident NSW Branch to sever its ties with him. The probable leaking of his fleeting interest in the RSL National Secretary vacancy – not followed up by the customary written application but unnecessarily included in RSL official meeting minutes – would not have improved his standing amongst Association officials already ill-disposed towards him. Further, the NSW view, expressed in June, that the judicial inquiry was irrelevant to veterans’ compensation future, made him largely redundant.

It’s unlikely that the content of the media release marking McMinn’s public return to the fray – dated 29 September 1980 and attempting to make Association support an election issue – was the cause of the split. This was so, even though Thompson’s telegram specifically dissociated the NSW Branch from any McMinn media releases ... and there’d only been one in the previous four months. That 29 September release had also been signed by all Branch Presidents, including Thompson – either to demonstrate solidarity or to comply with a policy of moderating McMinn’s pronouncements – and wasn’t especially incendiary by Association standards, anyway.

Although unlikely to encourage support for Coalition candidates, the 29 September media release had carefully avoided endorsing other parties by name; Liberal voting members of the Association – of whom McMinn was one – could hardly take offence at the document.

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It's possible, though that the NSW General Meeting was encouraged to take offence at something about the way in which the release had been launched. It had been promulgated at Parliament House at a press conference organised by an ALP MP, something which, even if the MP had not been present, could easily have been portrayed as an undesirably partisan act during an election period. (This possibility would have escaped the author's attention but for its mention in passing in Minister Adermann's response to the release the next day).



Phil Thompson

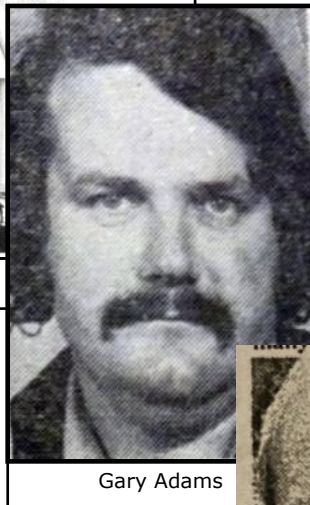
Precisely when John Evans put the view – recalled by Gary Adams – that he wouldn't continue as the organisation's scientific adviser if McMinn remained in office is unclear. It can't thus be said with any certainty that Evans' threat was a factor at this stage. By contrast, the view expressed in a NSW Branch document (referred to earlier) that the campaign for a judicial inquiry was no longer important (because there was sufficient scientific evidence to support the Association's case) had to have been significant, as it suggested that McMinn's efforts (and McMinn, himself) were irrelevant.

Logical preliminaries to the telegraphed New South Wales withdrawal of support in early October would have been the efforts (dates unclear) recalled by Gary Adams to have McMinn stand down. These included a telephone discussion between McMinn and Sandy Klose, a prominent figure in the SA Branch,

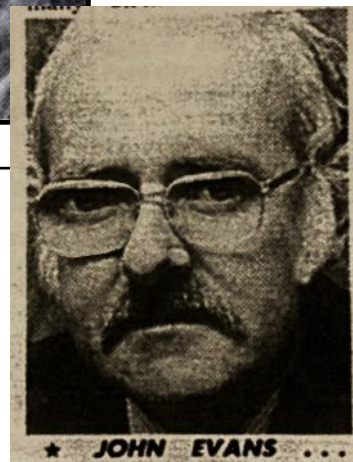
and an expedition by Adams and Thompson to Canberra to discuss McMinn's resignation face-to-face. However, it seems unlikely that these events would have happened on the days immediately before or immediately after the sending of the NSW telegram.

Backtracking just a little, when McMinn emerged from his quiet period in the last week of September, before the NSW Branch telegram was sent, he was armed with a plan for the election period which (a) had the hallmarks of careful preparation and (b) trod the fine line between endorsing (unspecified) candidates supportive of the Association's goals – mostly from the ALP and the Australian Democrats – and appearing supportive of non-Government parties – once again, the ALP and the Democrats. This plan – to

(a) poll election candidates about their support for the Association's goals and publicise the results, (b) hold public meetings where possible and (c) meet with the PM – was set out in a media release:



Gary Adams



the abovementioned one of 29 September, signed by all Branch Presidents.

The release proper, in just 2/3s of a page of pithy text, lamented DVA's failure to release the compilation of scientific reports which had been assembled in preceding months by Dr Keith Fleming (Senior DVA medical officer and Vietnam veteran), before airing most of the Association's other complaints. Three pages of supplementary info, a single page copy of the candidates' poll (questionnaire) and 4 pages of the Fleming

Report's table of contents – a taste of the contained material – completed the package.

Misleadingly, no mention was made of the fact that Fleming and John Evans had worked together on the compilation. The release also didn't explain why the alleged withholding of the report was considered so important by the Association viz that the Government appeared to be denying evidence of the harmfulness of chemical exposure considered persuasive by one of its most senior Medical officials. The package and strategy were nonetheless impressive, even if few of the threatened public meetings seem to have been held and even if the Prime Minister refused to meet with Association officials; such a meeting was never likely in the caretaker period. The presence of so many completed questionnaires on an Association file indicates that election candidates thought "justice for Vietnam veterans" (a phrase used in the release) was at least a potential election issue, and that completing the form was prudent.



The Association's claims re the Fleming Report were widely covered in the media (as was the hardly new claim that PM Fraser had been aware of chemical harms in his war-time capacities). DVA's continuing refusal to distribute the document to Medical Officers (to influence their decision making) become another long-recalled betrayal for Association members.

Minister Adermann responded with a news release the next day, on September 30, focussing on the compilation of scientific information, claiming it to be the work of Evans – tit for tat – and nominating a range of alleged problems with the contents. He also defended the Institute Study. A three page attachment set out in laborious

detail the steps in the compilation of the Fleming/Evans document. Perhaps the only interesting point to be extracted from Adermann's news release, other than reference to McMinn's earlier attempt to trade scientific documents for financial help for the Association, was that there had not been at any stage a handing over of documents.

McMinn's cover-up claims seemed to enjoy more media coverage than Minister Adermann's denials, but in the welter of electioneering reportage it's unlikely that the public paid much attention. They were probably bemused by the fuss around the so called 'Fleming Report' in the absence of a clear explanation of its potential importance.

In a 'never give in' effort, McMinn was to issue four other press releases before election day and the Fraser Government's return to office (with all the problems this continuance meant for Association strategizing). When the parliament sat again for two weeks in late November and early December, there were few opportunities for McMinn to advance the Association's cause.

Comment was made earlier in this article about NSW developments in the second half of the year. It only needs here to be added that Adams and Thompson made appearances on high profile television programs, delivered more talks in clubs and engaged in more innovative fundraising, in addition to seeing the success of "Debrief".

The Victorian Branch had settled into the Nicholas Building (after earlier collocation with the Melbourne solicitor David Teed), was on a sound financial footing (relying almost entirely on membership fees) and had consulted with members on directions for the organisation

(Continued on page 28)

(through a well-attended July workshop). It ran a counselling service (with four trained counsellors), along with a telephone support service, a repatriation advocacy service (initially with five trained advocates) and a crisis support service (with two professional welfare workers). A list of sympathetic GPs and specialists had been existed. A legal sub-committee (known as the LSC), consisting of three practicing solicitors and a repatriation expert, had carried out various investigations and prepared for incorporation; its other activities are mentioned later in this article. The Branch had written a second meaty circular letter to MPs and had also stepped up to perform National Secretary functions after the exit of NSW.

It seems that other States, leaving McMinn to work at the Federal level, continued to develop their administrative, educative and welfare activities, and forged alliances with local health professionals. In some states sub-branches developed around provincial and rural representatives; in Queensland the Branch had become two, owing to problems of distance.

“Debrief” reports indicate that the SA and NT were both functioning well, even if unable to fund the range and scale of activities performed by Victoria and NSW.

The major development in Association activities at the State/Branch level in the second half of 1980 was without doubt a focus in Victoria and NSW on legal matters. This increased focus was less a result of a need for assistance with day-to-day civil law problems – with tenancy, family law and debt-related matters readily handled by referral to community legal centres and friendly solicitors) – than of a need for assistance with major compensation cases and criminal matters where the relevant illnesses and alleged offences were thought to have resulted from wartime chemical exposure. In both of these scenarios, Association officials convinced of the likelihood of chemical harms could not sit on their hands.

In both scenarios court proceedings were potential tests cases.

Legal aid at this time, via State and Federal agencies, could, in theory, provide funding to assist veterans with the conduct of compensation and criminal matters to be adjudicated in court, but chemical science was in the hands of experts (like John Evans) and, to some extent, elected Association officials. There was a need for solicitors prepared to grapple with chemistry in order to handle summary (minor) offences and to brief barristers in indictable (major) offence proceedings. For major compensation cases there was a need for sympathetic solicitors to assemble documentation – client histories, medical reports, expert medical and scientific opinions etc – in order to, again, brief barristers.

Waiting for the testing of scientific evidence in Bill McMillan’s High Court matters – the Brady and Fulton cases – wasn’t an option because of procedural delays and the possibility that, for various reasons, the cases wouldn’t reach the hearing stage. (The Commonwealth’s difficulties in deciding how to respond to the Fulton writ, significantly retarding progress by McMillan – are outlined in Appendix 1, available from the author. The same Government appears not to have been aware in late 1980 of the Brady writ at all.) For State Branches, members’ proceedings which reached a hearing stage – and making of submissions, presenting of evidence by expert witnesses and weighing up of that evidence by judicial officers – could be a small-scale, interim replacement for the judicial inquiry not granted, the US class action yet to move beyond legal preliminaries and the High Court actions delayed by Commonwealth indecision and legal processes.

But it needs to be reiterated that the focus on legal matters was a result of the Association officials’ desire to look after veterans in trouble – to play a part in organising representation of veterans by sympathetic, competent professionals, and to monitor events, instead of

just referring the member and letting processes run their course.

Finally, the focus on legal matters was also a result of the willingness of lawyers (as with other professionals in the Association's early years) to assist veterans and to see if paid work might grow out of honorary or poorly remunerated services.

The exploration of legal opportunities was inevitable in Victoria where a number of Association members had both legal qualifications and the good sense to not become too involved in McMillan's class action activities. The Legal Services Subcommittee (LSC) they formed had, in the second half of the year, prepared for national and Victorian incorporation: an initiative postponed at McMinn's request in case New South Wales rejoined the organisation. It suggested a change to legislation to shorten the period before a Repatriation Board could hear matters and it prepared challenges to the disadvantageous DFRDB treatment of veterans forcibly discharged as medically unfit (class C veterans, not in receipt of an invalidity pension). It provided advice on a range of matters to McMinn and the Victorian branch, and was likely to have been involved in the successful 'herbicide exposure' defence of a Vietnam veteran charged with a swag of driving offences. The LSC supported the advocacy team. It was also the likely facilitator of preparations for litigation on behalf of veteran Graeme Zander, utilising the legal ingenuity of Gerard Nash to have a prerogative writ force a Repatriation Board to make a decision. (Despite the RSL's ban on legal help, this facilitation included a request to William Keys to indemnify Zander for defendants' costs if the case was lost). Geoff Tobin and perhaps other LSC members were evidently responsible for the 49 questions about national legal matters that McMinn put to Bill McMillan in November.

In NSW, Retired Squadron Leader John Heyting, a mature-aged law graduate, seems to have done some work for the Association before a Sydney solicitor, Kai Kalda, was retained by the New South Wales Branch as its legal adviser (with Heyting joining her) in mid-August.

Kalda's proposed duties are unclear – her retainer letter isn't in the relevant collections – but it appears she was instructed to mount a major negligence case against the Australian government. Surviving documents reveal that the case was to be on behalf of malignant lymphoma victim Colin Simpson.

Kalda wasn't about to play a subordinate role to Bill McMillan (who'd hoped to oversight a coordinated approach to local litigation). After 'territory marking' exchanges between the two lawyers Kalda appeared to largely ignore McMillan, without objections from the NSW Branch.

Kalda, Heyting, Thompson, Adams and another barrister all attended the chambers of Tom Hughes QC, ex-Federal Attorney-General and star of the Sydney bar, on 9 September. Hughes promptly agreed to represent an unspecified veteran in a common law damages action on extraordinarily generous terms. An application was made by Kalda for legal aid, and barrister Julian Van Aalst was formally asked to prepare a submission to Hughes. A letter was written to RSL NSW State President Colin Hines seeking \$60,000 (which would also seem to have included NSW Branch running costs other than wages), and letters were written to veterans asking for supporting statements regarding chemical exposure.

(Ironically, the provision of chemical information by Adams and John Evans to Kalda to assist in the Simpson matter appears to have provided useful income for the Branch, even though it had, itself, orchestrated the engagement by Simpson of Kalda.)

(Continued on page 30)

Otherwise, Kalda represented two veterans referred by the Association in criminal matters – one case with a high media profile – and fielded enquiries made by solicitors acting independently for other veterans and their families in chemical matters. She reproached the RSL for incorrect legal advice, and doubled up on McMillan’s early request for the preservation of Defence records.

Despite all of this effort – and only a fraction of Kalda and Heyting’s activities are detailed above – things did not, from mid-October, go well in the Simpson case. A request for research assistance was denied by the Law Foundation of NSW on 13 October (and a second time on 21 November). Federal legal aid was denied on 15 October, pending the Fulton hearing in the High Court (and was denied a second time in late October), resulting in an application for NSW legal aid soon after. The New South Wales RSL funding request was rejected on 22 October, and a 5 September request of Minister Killen for a list of all Viet veterans was, in effect, rejected on 10 November. An expert medical report on Simpson on 1 December didn’t connect lymphomas to carcinogens, and on 19 December the veteran was informed that a Repatriation Board had rejected his malignant lymphoma claim. Finally, though, NSW legal aid was granted on 26 November for expenditure up to \$3,500 (admittedly, a sum well short of the \$60,000 requested of the NSW RSL). On the bright side, too, Gary Adams had, in September, encountered Brian Donnelan, a Government lawyer, who would be of great assistance to the Association in later years.

The NSW Branch could claim by year’s end to have received unpleasant lessons in the difficulties to be encountered in litigation without significant reserves of cash. It had, though, been energetically served by Kalda and Heyting, who would continue their efforts in the following year.

For veterans and Branches hoping for positive class action outcomes (after months in which there’d been confusing media reports, poor RSL legal advice and complex accounts of events from Bill McMillan), there was heartening news on the final day of the year.

Newspapers reported that, at last, the US suit could proceed. Probably no one was more pleased than McMillan, whose control of legal matters had been whittled away in the second half of the year, who’d given extensive evidence in a coronial investigation into a Darwin murder/suicide and whose attempts to progress (at least) the Fulton case had been retarded by legal bureaucracy.

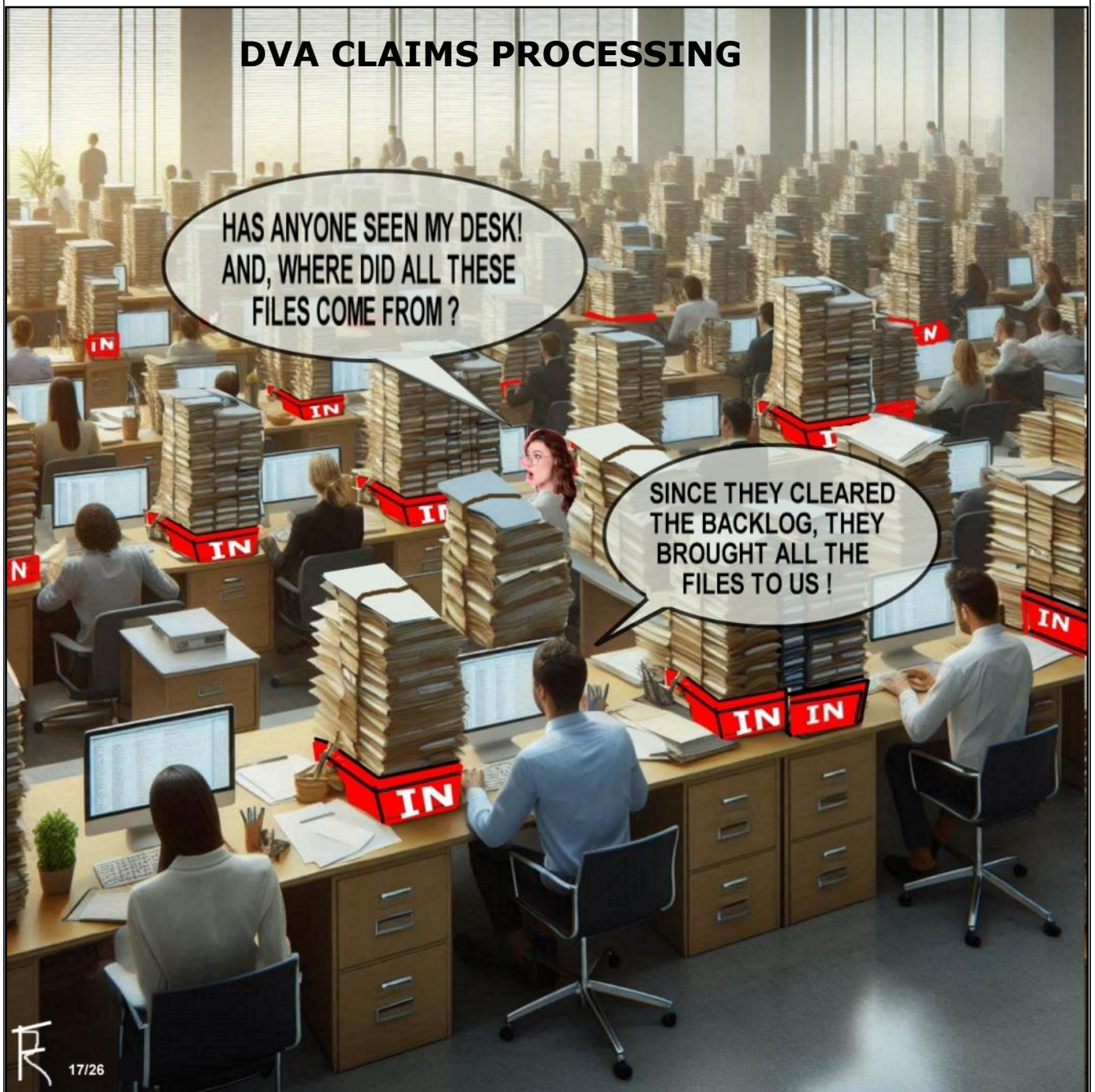
The next instalment in this series reviews developments in 1981.

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

The aim of “VVAA History Drafts” is to inform readers about progress made with the organisation’s history and encourage people with relevant additional information to assist in improving the text. Readers with extra information about the Association in the second half of 1980 can contact Kel at vvhistory99@gmail.com.

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THEY HAVE GONE AND DONE IT!

What appeared impossible when DVA claimed to have cleared the backlog identified by the Royal Commission - 41,799 claims - by the end of February 2024, and repeated promises to “improve claims processing timeframes.”

They have finally succeeded in creating a backlog of over **100,000** claims awaiting completion.

Allocating claims does not reduce the number of uncompleted claims.

The official figures as at 30 April 2026 reflected in the report overleaf, continue to indicate that in fact processing timeframes have increased across all claim types... Ed.

WE DESERVE BETTER

FROM THE EDITORS DESK

CURRENT CLAIMS ON HAND

Reported in our last issue total claims on hand was 93,657 at the end of 2025. As at the end of April 2026 that figure has climbed, again, to 99,517 claims in backlog. A growing concern, and at a rate that will see claims to be determined climb to more than 105,000 by the years end, if this trend continues.

Borne out by the table below, from information on DVA's own website, the time to complete claims across the board, in all claim types, except War widow(er)'s pensions have climbed alarmingly since the start of the year.

Average Calendar days		
Claim Type	TTTP 31/1/26	TTTP 31/4/26
MRCA IL	339	357
DRCA IL	450	530
VEA Disability Compensation Payment	457	566
MRCA PI	219	229
DRCA PI	400	411
MRCA and DRCA IP	90	92
War widow(er)'s pension	109	104

With 1st July fast approaching, and a new Vets Act to come into effect, how is the current backlog going to be completed ?

A totally unacceptable circumstance, and one in which all ESO's should be demanding answers.

RIGHT OF RETURN CARDS

Thousands of veterans rely on DVA's Booked Car with Driver service each year to get to, and from medical appointments. In 2025 alone, almost 30,000 veterans used the service, completing more than 650,000 journeys.

And there's a simple way to make your trip home quicker, without needing to call DVA again, with a Right of Return card. When you travel to your appointment using DVA arranged transport, your driver should give you a Right of Return card, which will have all the information you need to organise the journey back home.

So, instead of calling DVA to organise your trip home, you can call the transport provider directly using the number on the card.

Simply quote your DVA file number and pickup location, and a driver will be back to pick you up from the appointment.

If your driver doesn't offer you a Right of Return card, be sure to ask for one before you leave the vehicle.

Booking your trip to the appointment

There are a few ways to organise your initial journey:

- Use MyService (preferred for bookings more than 48 hours in advance), you can book appointments up to 3 months in the future
- Call 1800 550 455
- Ask a family member, friend, or health provider to book on your behalf

You can learn more about booking and using DVA arranged transport on the DVA website: How to book transport in MyService | Department of Veterans' Affairs



**NSW STATE BRANCH & BANKSTOWN SPORTS CLUB ARE
COMBINING ONCE AGAIN TO HOST THE 2026 SYDNEY
VIETNAM VETERANS DAY COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE AND
CELEBRATION**

**TO BE HELD IN THE SPORTS CLUB GRAND BALLROOM
TUESDAY 18 AUGUST 2026**

2026 COMMEMORATES THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF LONG TAN

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

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

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

1100hrs **Memorial Service with Emcee, Mr. John Gatfield OAM**

(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: **\$65.00 each. You may wish to book a table of 8-10 persons.**

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

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

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

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



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Veteran Gold and White Card getting a new look.

DVA cards are being refreshed with a new look, but cardholders' current entitlements, treatment liability and status remain unchanged.

The Veteran Gold Card provides eligible veterans, dependants and certain civilians with access to clinically required treatment for all medical conditions within Australia. Physical cards are issued where eligible, and a digital version is also available through MyService and the myGov app wallet.

Gold Cards have expiry dates but are generally replaced automatically. If a card is lost, stolen or damaged, members can request a replacement through MyService or by calling 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

Who may be eligible? Eligibility can include veterans with qualifying service, some veterans over 70 years of age, ex-prisoners of war, veterans with certain service backgrounds, recipients of a Service Pension who meet specific criteria, and eligible dependants such as war widows or widowers and wholly dependent partners or children.

Members are encouraged to check the DVA website for current information or seek assistance from a qualified advocate through an Ex-Service organisation branch or sub-branch, including VVFA offices throughout Australia.

Current TPI Gold card:



New look Gold card (Physical)



Current veteran White card:



New look White card (Physical)



Images not to actual size.



ADVOCACY GROWING CONCERNS

There is an ongoing concern among Advocates regarding the lack of consistency and transparency in DVA's handling of Medical Impairment Assessments (MIAs), and to propose a more coordinated and proactive organisational response.

As outlined in recent communications, DVA has again indicated that MIAs will no longer be provided directly to representatives. In practice, however, this approach appears to be applied inconsistently, with some CSOs continuing to provide the documentation while others do not. This inconsistency creates confusion, delays, and inequity for both advocates and veterans.

It is concerning that representatives are not being given access to documentation that DVA is requiring to progress claims. While we understand there may have been previous issues involving inappropriate handling by some advocates, DVA has already introduced safeguards by requiring MIAs to be submitted directly through medical practices via the DVA portal. In that context, withholding the documentation from representatives appears unnecessary and counterproductive.

CSOs have also advised that MIAs will be sent directly to a veteran's GP. However, there is often no visibility or confirmation of when this occurs. In some cases, veterans have attended GP appointments only to find that the paperwork had not yet been provided by DVA, resulting in wasted appointments, avoidable delays, and unnecessary inconvenience for all involved.

The lack of transparency also has practical consequences. There have been instances where paperwork has contained errors, including incorrect client details or references to additional conditions, and there have also been cases where wording within MIAs has not aligned with the GARP. Without visibility of what has been requested, our ability to properly support clients and ensure the

accuracy of their claims is significantly reduced.

From a legal and administrative perspective, this approach may also raise concerns regarding procedural fairness, particularly where representatives are denied the opportunity to review material that may influence decision-making. Restricting access to requested documentation may therefore fall short of expected standards of transparency and accountability.

Given these concerns, ESO's believe it is important that CSOs adopt a coordinated organisational position and seek formal clarification from DVA regarding its policy, the rationale for restricting access despite existing safeguards, and the steps it will take to ensure consistency, transparency, and accountability in the handling of MIAs.

This is happening in real time as we go to press. What steps should be taken to ensure this inconsistency does not continue with the new Veterans Act?

[This item was prepared from emails and letters received at our Granville office from concerned Advocates voicing their enquiry for consistent procedures from DVA CSO's.]

.... Ed.

Lot's of emails thanking me for including the DVA facts and info pages, as some expressed views that they don't always have internet access.

Anything to assist the unwary is always welcome feedback for our publication. Ed.

The following letter and attachment arrived from the VVFA SA Branch, and reprinted it in it's entirety here, as a courtesy to members wishing to use the facility, or indeed, apply to be a caretaker. [Ed]



**VIETNAM VETERANS' FEDERATION
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH INC.**

8th April 2026

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter is to inform you of a facility that your members/personnel could utilize if they wanted to.

The Vietnam Veterans Federation S.A. (VVFSA) have a bush Retreat at Alawoona in the Murray Mallee 34 kms from Loxton. This camp is named Camp Andrew Russell (CAR) after SGT Andrew "Drew" Russell the first Australian killed in action in Afghanistan. The retreat is a veteran support initiative and dedicated camping/retreat area designed for all war, peacekeeping veterans and first responders, along with their families. It was established by ex-service personnel to provide a supportive, affordable retreat in honour of "Drew" Russell. It provides a place of rest, remembrance and community for veterans, peacekeepers and first responders.

It is located on 20 acres of land donated by a local farmer just off the Karoonda Highway at Alawoona.

The facility is managed by VVFSA with fees at \$8 per night per person to help support the site.

This letter is to introduce Phil Scroop a VVFSA committee member who can answer any questions you might have about the camp.

Yours faithfully,

Mal Thiele OAM

President



Camp Andrew Russell

Camp Andrew Russell stands as a quiet, enduring tribute to Sergeant Andrew 'Drew' Russell! of the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR), who was killed in action in Afghanistan during Australia's first deployment to the country. At the time he was the only Australian casualty, and his loss was deeply felt not only by his family-Bob, Jan, his wife Kylie and daughter Leisa-but also by the broader veteran community.

Origins and Purpose

The idea for the camp emerged around 2002, borne from a desire within the veteran community to create a peaceful retreat where veterans and their families could reconnect with nature and find respite from the pressures of everyday life. Early attempts to secure land were unsuccessful, and the concept remained only an aspiration for a time.

Momentum returned in 2003 when Don Viney of "Vinedale" in Alawoona generously offered ten to fifteen acres of scrubland - raw, sandy, and overgrown - to the Vietnam Veterans

Federation (Veterans Off Road Group). This land would become the foundation of what is now Camp Andrew Russell.

Camp Andrew Russell -Caretaker / Manager Recruitment

Camp Andrew Russell (C.A.R.) is a wellness retreat dedicated to supporting veterans of all conflicts and first responders. Located at Alawoona, 32 km south of Loxton on the Karoonda Highway in South Australia, the camp offers a peaceful environment where guests can take time away from the pressures of everyday life.

Two years ago, C.A.R. underwent a major upgrade to improve comfort, accessibility, and capacity.



(Continued on page 38)

New facilities now include:

- Male female, and disability toilets and showers,
- Hot and cold water amenities
- A fully equipped camp kitchen
- A recreation building
- A maintenance workshop
- A Storage shed
- Eleven caravan sites
- A reliable water supply from a solar-powered bore

The Vietnam Veterans Federation SA is now seeking expressions of interest from suitable individuals to take on the role of **Caretaker/Manager** for periods of three months, or as negotiated within a twelve-month cycle.

Who We Are Looking For

- Applicants should, ideally, be:
- Ex-Military personnel
- First Responders – Police, Ambulance, Fire Services, etc.
- Of good honest character with appropriate references

Caretakers must provide their own accommodation (caravan or motorhome). A dedicated power point is available a washing machine is also included for the on-site manager.

Duties Include:

- **Cleaning and maintaining the toilets, showers, and camp kitchen**
- Keeping the grounds tidy
- Collecting firewood for winter use
- Welcoming guests and managing bookings
- Collecting donations (\$8 per person per night)
- Completing banking in Loxton
- Using a supplied credit card for camp-related commodities and fuel.

This position is voluntary, as both Camp Andrew Russell and the Vietnam Veterans

Federation operate on a not-for-profit basis.

However, the role offers a meaningful

opportunity to support fellow veterans and first responders while living in a peaceful rural setting.

How to Apply:

Please contact the Vietnam Veterans Federation South Australian Branch Inc

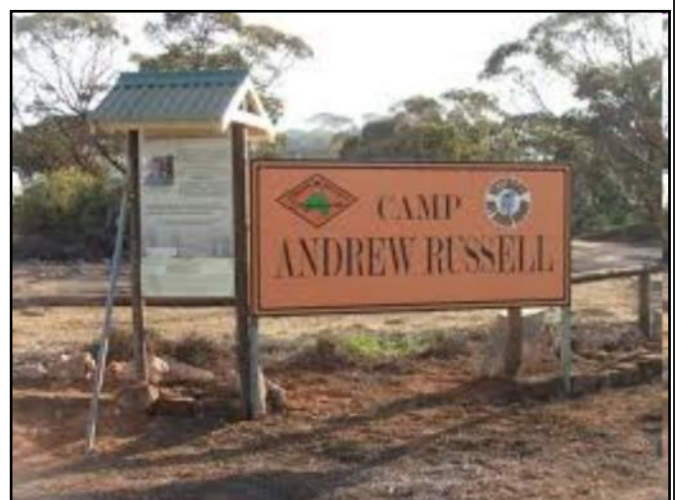
31 Norfolk Road, Marion, SA 5043

Phone: 08 8296 2411

Email: vvfsa@vvfsa.au

**PHIL SCROOP. COMMITTEE MEMBER
OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS
FEDERATION SA INC**

0418835516

DIALYSIS AT HOME

MORE TIME FOR LIFE

Bringing Dialysis Home:

A New Era of Care for Australia's Veterans

For many veterans living with kidney disease, dialysis treatment has traditionally meant frequent hospital visits, long travel times, and significant disruption to daily life. Now, a growing home-based healthcare initiative is changing that experience — bringing comfort, flexibility, and dignity back to those who have served.

Through services offered by Dialysis Australia, eligible veterans can now receive full dialysis treatment in the comfort and privacy of their own homes, supported by experienced nursing professionals every step of the way.

- Improving Quality of Life
- Veterans who transition to home dialysis frequently report meaningful improvements in daily living, including:
- Greater flexibility in scheduling treatment sessions
- Reduced travel and waiting times
- Increased independence and comfort
- More time spent with family and loved ones
- Reduced fatigue associated with hospital visits

For many, the shift represents more than a medical change — it restores a sense of normalcy and control.



"I think mentally I am much happier in my own environment. It's given me a lot more time with my partner Ann, with my dogs, in the garden, doing some cooking all those sort of things. It means I could live my life closer to what it would be if I wasn't on dialysis. And I just like having more time." – John

Supporting Independence and Wellbeing

Healthcare providers increasingly recognise that healing and wellbeing extend beyond hospital walls. By delivering dialysis at home, services are aligning medical care with what veteran's value most — independence, comfort, and time spent doing what matters.

For veterans and their families, home dialysis can also reduce caregiver strain while providing reassurance that professional support is always present.

"Being a DVA gold card holder means there is no cost at all. So, the financial aspects of the choices between hospital and home dialysis is immaterial really."



Learn More:

Veterans interested in exploring home dialysis options or confirming eligibility are encouraged to contact Dialysis Australia directly:

Phone: 1800 994 244

Website:

www.dialysisaustralia.com.au

Catch our advert on inside back cover

DVA RESPONDS

The following notes compiled by DVA—Katrina Jocumsen- were drafted in reply to questions raised in a recent VVPPAA NSW Sub-Branch conference in Mudgee during May 2026

We reprint Katrina’s response here in full, so that other VVFA Members can assimilate with their communities.

I am wiring as following the conference in Mudgee, I undertook to collate key questions raised, along with broader operational feedback, and provide these to the department. I apologise for the delay in getting this to you, but the responses are detailed below. I would be grateful if you could share them with those in attendance at the conference as appropriate.

Questions

1. Is the income support war widows pension indexed?

The War Widows pension is indexed biannually, in line with other Income Support payments, with payments increased on 20 March and 20 September each year. The most recent increase took effect from 20 March 2026, with the next increase set occur from 20 September 2026.

2. Is ADTP going to be removed when the new Act comes in?

The ATDP will not be discontinued from 1 July 2026 when the new Act is implemented. The content and training materials of the Course in Military Advocacy will be appropriately updated to reflect the legislation changes from 1 July 2026.

3. Will ADTP come under the Institute of Veteran Advocacy?

The ATDP has not been incorporated under the Institute of Veterans’ Advocacy (IVA). The IVA is an independent professional association for veterans’ advocates in Australia. It was established with Australian Government support as part of efforts to strengthen protections for veterans and improve professional oversight, ethical standards, and conduct in the veterans’ advocacy sector. It sets competency and training standards, implements a

formal code of conduct, and supervises advocates’ work. DVA continues to work with the IVA as the professional body for veterans’ advocates and encourages all professional advocates to register with the IVA.

4. Recommendation 95 of the Royal

Commission relates to the implementation and expansion of presumptive arrangements. The initial tranche of presumption taking effect from 1 July 2026 will include over 150 medical conditions. Will there be items that are presumptive, and what are those 150 conditions?

From 1 July 2026 the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA) and the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988 (DRCA) will close to new compensation and rehabilitation claims and all new claims will be determined under an improved Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA).

As part of these changes, the Repatriation Commission will be able to formally specify injuries and diseases that may be accepted on a ‘presumptive’ basis, that is, automatic unless proven otherwise, where they meet listed service requirements. This new head of liability is intended to reduce claim processing times and complexity, and provide veterans with earlier access to treatment and compensation. The initial tranche of presumptive conditions will broadly reflect a range of existing administrative and legislated arrangements for particular cohorts and/or types and lengths of service. While the specific criteria and service-requirement will vary, the initial tranche of presumption is expected to include over 150 medical conditions.

These will include:

- ◇ specified conditions for F-111 de-seal/reseal workers
- ◇ specified cancers for ADF firefighters
- ◇ specified conditions for ADF firefighters at Point Cook
- ◇ ‘decision-ready’ conditions currently contained in policy arrangements
- ◇ ‘deemed diseases’ currently under the DRCA.

The department is working to finalise the arrangements for presumptive conditions, as well as the associated onset and service requirements. Once finalised, and once the formal legislative instrument is approved by the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, the full list of the conditions and criteria will be published on the DVA website. Whether presumption will apply in any specific circumstances will depend on whether the veteran meets the relevant criteria for a particular condition. Further, where claims have previously been denied under the VEA or DRCA, a new claim under MRCA must be supported by additional evidence.

5. What is being covered in the First Nations Veteran Strategy?

The department is developing a First Nations Veterans Strategy 2026-2030 (the Strategy). The previous DVA Indigenous Veterans Strategy 2020-2025 expired in December 2025. The Strategy will align with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement) which aims to address systemic inequalities and improve life outcomes for First Nations peoples through collaborative efforts between governments and First Nations communities. The Strategy represents DVA’s commitment to implement the National Agreement Priority Reforms, with a particular focus on Priority Reform 3 (i.e. transforming government organisations). The Strategy is being informed by a comprehensive engagement process with internal and external stakeholders across Australia, including consultation with the First Nations veteran community. These consultations are underway and are seeking feedback on the proposed vision, goals and objectives to ensure they reflect key priority areas over the life of the Strategy. The department is working closely with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Veterans’ Association (ATSIVA) and has established a First Nations Community Partnership to guide work, including consultation and engagement, on the Strategy. The formal name

of the Strategy will be determined following consultation with ATSIVA and other First Nations representatives. Ex-Service Organisations (ESOs) are welcome to provide feedback or suggestions via email to

FIRSTNATIONS.STRATEGY@dva.gov.au. The Strategy is expected to be released in July 2026.

6. The Gold Card letter for recipients over 70 should explain the eligibility process for their war widow and clarify that automatic coverage does not apply .

A Gold Card is not automatically transferred to a surviving partner following the death of a veteran. Eligibility for a War Widows(er)’s Pension and associated entitlements, including access to a Gold Card, is determined through a separate claim and assessment process. As such, the grant of a Gold Card under the over 70 provision does not include any automatic entitlement for a surviving partner. Information to assist veterans and their families in planning for future circumstances, including bereavement and potential supports available to widows or widowers, is currently provided in the Planning Ahead booklet. This resource outlines the assistance and services that may be available and the steps that can be taken when preparing for or coping with bereavement. The Planning Ahead kit can be found on the DVA website - Planning ahead kit | Department of Veterans' Affairs . We acknowledge the feedback regarding the wording of the Gold Card letter and will consider whether additional information or clearer references to existing resources could be incorporated as part of future updates to the correspondence.

7. Change phone call displays from private to showing caller ID, add an option for DVA to send a text message to inform people who is calling and update the hold music to something new.

While there is a technical limitation of the existing system, there are some business areas across the department that do send an SMS to the client prior to calling them. We acknowledge that the music played while clients wait to speak with an officer can attract mixed feedback.

(Continued on page 42)

The music considers the wide range of DVA clients to ensure the selection is acceptable, inoffensive, and suitable for the majority of its clients. In late 2024, consultation was undertaken with selected veteran groups to identify preferred options from the music available at the time. All that said, the department is working to transition to a modern telephony platform in the coming months. This platform is expected to provide additional capabilities, that will better support both the department and its clients.

Feedback

The following feedback has also been shared with the appropriate Assistant Secretaries within the department. I will also keep a register of this feedback and continue to advocate within the department on these points.

Claims and MyOrg

- If a veteran gets a 28-day letter but their appointment is set for six months later, advocates should be notified right away that the period for submitting information will be extended.
- Before reaching out to an advocate, check if a report has already been submitted to avoid unnecessary contact.
- There are long wait times when calling delegates.
- Delegates should include their phone numbers in their email signatures.
- Delegates are encouraged to send a summary email after phone calls to keep a record of conversations.
- There continues to be difficulties understanding certain DVA staff members during phone conversations. On some occasions, I have requested communication via email to avoid misunderstandings or inadvertently causing distress.
- Frequently, I receive missed calls from private numbers with no voicemail, followed by emails stating multiple contact attempts. In reality, only one call was missed and no message was left. I consistently return calls within 24 hours, often within the hour, but as with all professionals, I am sometimes engaged on other calls when these attempts occur.
- Submitting claims through the online portal is straightforward. However, there is a need for visibility of all documents submitted to ensure transparency and facilitate follow-up.
- Recent communications from DVA indicate that they will contact the client's general practitioner to request a report within five business days, suggesting clients book a long consultation. However, this process is not always effective; there have been instances where clients had to cancel appointments due to not receiving the necessary TRN (Treatment Referral Number). It is recommended that advocates be included in all correspondence, including TRNs, to ensure timely and coordinated care.
- When clients receive requests for information, I routinely advise them and, if necessary, print the relevant forms for their doctors. However, there are frequent cases where doctors are unaware that these forms exist or need to be completed, indicating a gap in communication between DVA and medical practitioners.
- There is a concern regarding DVA's insistence on the use of mlcoa for medical assessments. This practice may restrict clients from consulting their preferred medical practitioners, potentially impacting their care and autonomy.
- Clients have reported being denied access to telehealth for completing certain forms. Not all veterans are able to travel to the required

distances to see their doctors, making telehealth an essential option that should be available.

- Questions have been raised about the role and registration of paid and untrained advocates. There is concern that these advocates may be prevented from submitting claims, and uncertainty surrounds the Advocates Register. One reported case involved a client whose partner withdrew \$15,000 from their joint account to have claims submitted, only for the claims to be returned by DVA. Clients are also being asked to sign contracts, adding to confusion and concern.
- It is not happening as often, but we still get emails with references and no names.
- The delegate contacted me to advise that the client's diagnosis form was showing on MyOrg but not on her system, why would this be happening?
- The 28day reminder, this causes clients a great deal of stress, most clients cannot get into a doctor in the that time frame, so when they do get there they more often than not get told too much to do in one appointment come back again.
- Submitting claims through the online portal is straightforward. However, there is a need for visibility of all documents submitted to ensure transparency and facilitate follow-up.
- There is not enough ongoing gardening support for maintenance after the initial intervention.
- DVA does not provide meal delivery services, which increases the risk of malnutrition. My Aged Care does offer meal services, but the wait times are too long and can negatively impact health.
- Service delivery is fragmented, with veterans having to deal with both DVA and My Aged Care, leading to multiple assessments, more paperwork, and confusion. The number of service providers available to help DVA clients is also decreasing.
- The processing timeframe for war widows is particularly challenging, as many are grieving and face lengthy waits—often exceeding a year—before their cases are resolved.
- Merge all personal services under DVA for Gold Card holders, including those currently offered through My Aged Care.
- Use a single assessment and care plan for each person.
- Expand DVA services to include accompanied shopping, ongoing gardening, and meal delivery programs.
- Make accountability clearer and streamline administration to avoid duplication.

BEST Grants

BEST funding should include outreach funding for regional travel to support veterans.

Aged Care & Support Services

- Shopping services currently lack social engagement, which increases the risk of social isolation.

Regards

Katrina

Katrina Jocumsen MAHRI

Deputy Commissioner NSW & ACT

Department of Veterans' Affairs

NEWS**UPDATE****HERE WE CATCH UP ON NEWS FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES****THE STORY OF US****KEL ROBERTSON—PART D**

Typically, this item continues to be well received by our readers, and continues in this issue.

AVCAT

This year will see the introduction of a new scholarship to our contribution for the children and grandchildren of Vietnam Veterans. It will be included for the scholarship selection process beginning on 18th August 2026, and closing October 31 2026.

It will be known as the BILL ROBERTS OAM Scholarship, in recognition of Bill's great contribution to the Veteran community since 1995.

As well, we have increased our contribution to \$5000 from 2027 as well.

HMAS SYDNEY

Last issue saw the final instalment of John Ingrams wonderful expose on the Vung Tau Ferry, and it drew several responses from old crew members, all appreciative of the story being included.

THE DVA BACKLOG

The continued increases in the backlog over recent year, never shows signs of abating, and is again at issue inside this issue, if only a brief comment on the incapacity for DVA to belay the problem.

ADVOCATES CIORNER

Dennis Hanmer OAM brought us a kletter from a very appreciative client on our success with the clients claim. It was typical of the many letters and emails our Advocates receive from time to time.

Unfortunately, due to a downturn and lack of further input on this topic, we must adjourn the column until further comment and relative matter is received.

FACTS OF INTEREST

The article about the Veteran Gold Card and our repeated information on related facts, drew some attention to veterans that did not understand the differences between an age (70) granted Gold Card, and one issued due to disabilities DVA recognised responsibility for due to the Veterans inability to be employed in normal circumstances.

The relationship to aftercare for their spouses and access a War Widow(er)'s pension, upon a veterans death still is not understood by many, and we should continue to labour the point at every opportunity.

THE LAST POST

Many have queried certain aspects of how we report the death of a veteran in our issues. Firstly, we accordingly and unequivocally send our sincerest condolences to all, so affected.

Our listing includes the rank of the veteran at the time of his service, and not upon retirement. This allows many of that veterans comrades to recognise the passing veteran as one of their own, and pay such respects as they see fit.

We only include Vietnam Veterans in the listings unless there is reason to include person/s who have undertaken to support our association by volunteering with exceptional service..

Lastly, we receive notices from the veterans family, general public, and some RSL sub-branches. However, the bulk of the listing comes from records provided by DVA.

We endeavour to supply accurate dates every time, but sometimes we will receive incorrect information for which we unreservedly apologise.

Anyone wishing to catch up on previous issues are able to download a full coloured pdf file from our websites:

www.vvfa.org.au or www.vvfagranville.org



The Eighth Battalion Royal Australian Regiment Association 2027 National Reunion



TWEED HEADS 26 - 28 February 2027

**Those who served with 8RAR in Australia, Malaysia and
Vietnam are invited to their National Reunion commencing
26 February 2027.**

Families of members are welcome.

**The reunion will be held at Twin Towns Service Club
Tweed Heads NSW**

Program: (all times to be confirmed)

Friday 26 February

1400 Registration followed by Meet and Greet

Saturday 27 February

0900 Bus trip to Jungle Warfare Centre Canungra. This will involve a guided tour of the Canungra JWC followed by lunch. Departing Twin Towns 0900 returning appr 1400. On return from JWC Canungra Company get togethers will be held. Sunday 28 February

0830. AGM 8RAR Association 0830.

1000. Long Hai Day Memorial Service 1200. Long Hai Day Luncheon.

A range of accommodation is available in the area including the Sebel and Mantra Hotels attached to the Services Club

For more information and a registration pack, please contact Kym McDougall

Secretary 8RAR Assn (Qld) kymmcdougall@icloud.com

<https://8rarassociation.org/>

SEE OUR FULL LIST OF REUNIONS FROM PAGE 60

DID YOU KNOW ?**FACTS OF INTEREST****WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE VETERAN AND FAMILY WELLBEING AGENCY**

As reported by DVA 25 May 2026

180 participants attended an online Community Town Hall that provided veterans and the families of veterans with an update about the Veteran and Family Wellbeing Agency (the Agency).

The Agency is being established in response to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide and is intended to improve navigation, coordination and connection across the wellbeing system. The Agency will commence operations from 1 July 2026.

From day one, veterans and the families of veterans will be able to access support through a new website, service directory and helpline, with three levels of support planned: self-navigation, guided navigation and more tailored coordination for people with more complex needs. The Agency will provide support for people transitioning out of Defence, with a strong focus on prevention and early intervention, making it easier for serving ADF members, veterans and families to find trusted information, practical help and to access support when needed.

During the Town Hall it was emphasised that the Agency will not replace existing DVA services such as providing access to treatment, compensation, rehabilitation, or income support, and it is not intended to duplicate specialist services or act as an emergency response service but will direct people to urgent support if it is needed. Instead, the Agency will provide a simpler front door to support wellbeing by helping to connect people to the right services, at the right time.

In the first 12 months of operation, the Agency will focus on expanding wellbeing resources, building out the service directory, refining referral pathways and strengthening links with other Commonwealth and state and territory

entities, Veterans and Families' Hubs and other community support.

A highlight of the Town Hall was the high level of engagement from participants. We are still reviewing the questions received and will share a summary of questions and answers on the DVA website soon. More updates about the Agency will be provided ahead of its July launch, including another online Town Hall in June.

More information is available on the DVA website New wellbeing agency to open 1 July 2026

Department of Veterans' Affairs

DON'T BE LEFT WITH THE BILL FOR AN UNSOLICITED MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

As reported by DVA 20 May 2026

DVA will only pay for medical assessments when they've been formally requested and approved by DVA. Approval is confirmed through a Transaction Reference Number (TRN), which is issued to an appropriate provider before an appointment can take place.

Medical assessments and subsequent reports arranged without a TRN are not approved by DVA. We refer to these as unsolicited medical assessments and/or reports. Expenses related to these remain the responsibility of the veteran. You can still arrange an assessment without a TRN, however it will not be covered by DVA unless it has been requested and approved.

Medical assessments require a TRN and are not part of the Medical Expenses Privately Incurred (MEPI) arrangement. Under MEPI, medical expenses can only be reimbursed for treatment.

If you are considering lodging a claim, to help your claim progress smoothly, all relevant medical evidence should be submitted when you lodge your claim, or as early as possible during the claim process. This helps DVA understand what

information is already available and whether any further assessments are needed. All evidence submitted to support a claim will be considered as part of the claim investigation.

If you are unsure whether your assessment has been approved or whether additional information is required, please contact the Claims Support Officer (CSO) or the Delegate who is managing your claim. This is an essential step before booking an appointment with your GP if you don't want to be left with the bill for an unsolicited medical assessment

DVA sends the medical assessment forms and the TRN, used for invoicing, directly to the veteran's treating medical practitioner. When this happens, notification is provided to the veteran and the nominated representative where required. DVA will only pay invoices for additional assessments that have been requested and approved by DVA before the appointment and where all other requirements have been met.

DVA is aware there is some misinformation circulating about when DVA will cover the cost of medical assessments. Be cautious of advice or offers suggesting your assessment will be paid for without prior approval, as this is not the case.

More information is available on the DVA website, visit ; What to expect after you have submitted a compensation claim | Department of Veterans' Affairs

The VETS Act Reminder.

What will change?

The VETS Act closes the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA) and Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988 (DRCA) to new claims from 1 July 2026.

From this date, all compensation and rehabilitation claims will be determined under a single ongoing Act – the improved Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA).

THREE NEW PRODUCTS ADDED TO OUR MERCHANDISE LISTS.

NEW AUTUMN BROCHURE NOW AVAILABLE FROM HO GRANVILLE OFFICE

SEE PAGES 70-73 OF THIS ISSUE



NSW BRANCH FRIDGE MAGNETS

96 x 210mm

\$8.00 each

ORDER #1124

ORDER # 1131
Heart Stress
Key Ring
\$10 Incl PH



REDESIGNED STICKER

ORDER # 1506

STICKER SIZE 93 x 205mm
(AFTER REMOVAL FROM BACKING)

\$7.00 EACH



Superannuation is one of the biggest financial assets most Australians will ever have. Yet many people don't realise how much the fees inside their super fund influence their long-term balance and how these impact how long their money lasts once they retire.

Even small fee differences can compound over decades. Understanding what you're paying, and whether you're receiving value, is essential.

What Super Fees Cover

Most funds charge a mix of:

- Administration fees
- Investment and performance fees
- Advice fees (if applicable)
- Insurance premiums

Individually these may seem minor, but over 30 years they can materially reduce your retirement savings. A small fee difference today becomes a big dollar difference later. The 0.6% fee leaves you about \$183,000 better off over 30 years on a \$500,000 balance. That's the power of compounding working against you when fees are higher.

Annual Investment Fee	Difference vs 0.6%
0.6% p.a.	No difference
1.0% p.a.	- \$183,000

Superannuation Fees: Why They Matter and Why Regular Reviews Make a Real Difference

Why Reviewing Your Super Matters

1. **Fees and fund structures change** - What was competitive years ago may not be today.
2. **Higher fees aren't always bad, but they must be justified** - You should only pay for value, not unnecessary cost.
3. **Your investment mix may no longer suit your goals** - Many people remain in outdated or default options that don't match their risk profile.
4. **Insurance inside super can quietly erode your balance** - A review ensures your cover is appropriate and cost-effective.

Why Fees Matter Even More in the Allocated Pension Phase

In retirement, fees don't just affect your balance they affect your lifestyle. Once you move into an allocated pension, the impact of fees becomes sharper:

- You're no longer contributing, so every dollar lost to fees directly reduces how long your pension lasts.
- Fees reduce the capital available to generate returns, which matters more when you're drawing income.
- Minimum drawdown rules mean high fees can accelerate depletion during market downturns.
- Earnings are tax-free, so fees become one of the few remaining drags on performance.

How Financial Advice Adds Value

A professional review goes beyond comparing fees. Advisers help ensure your super and pension accounts are structured to support your long-term goals by:

- analysing fees and modelling their long-term impact
- aligning your investment strategy with your risk profile and retirement timeline
- identifying consolidation opportunities to reduce duplicated fees
- keeping your strategy aligned with changing legislation
- reviewing insurance and removing unnecessary erosion
- ensuring you receive the maximum DVA benefits available based on your financial position

The Outcome: Clarity, Confidence, and a Stronger Retirement

A regular review ensures your super and pension accounts remain competitive, cost-effective, and aligned with your goals, giving you greater confidence and helping your money last longer.

Complimentary Superannuation Review

If you'd like more clarity around your fees, investment options, or whether your current fund still suits your needs, I'm always happy to provide a no-cost review. It's simply an opportunity to get a clear, unbiased understanding of where you stand so you can make decisions with confidence and peace of mind.

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) 8365 8333
paulm@psk.com.au

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 **OUR MAIN
OFFICE NUMBER
HAS CHANGED
TO
(02) 8365 8333**

**HELPING YOU CREATE
SAFETY, SECURITY AND
COMFORT
AROUND YOUR
FINANCES**

The Dogs of War

For centuries now, the battlefields they roam
Fighting the enemy and never alone.

They served their country in war and peace
Through the valleys of death to say the least.

“Manic” was one of those dogs of war
With his handler, Jason, they would be battle raw.
Day after day he showed his skills
Trained by his handler through many drills.

After months of training his time had come
Service to his country was there to be done.
The journey to war commenced without delay
Time for his training to be on display.

As a team together in war torn places
They encountered danger on a continuous basis.
Operations in the desert under a scorching sun
Or trekking in the mountains had to be done.

With trust and understanding on display
Seeking out the enemy day after day.
Op after op with courage abound
Working with troops on the ground.

Weeks and months now in a war zone
Manic and his handler were a long way from home.
Operations continued and were never ending
In the villages and towns always defending.

Battle weary and wounds abound
Manic lay exhausted on the ground.
Duty first he gets up again

Ongoing patrols with more brave men.

The time had come for Manic’s handler to be home
His tour complete but he is not alone.
Manic is there by his side
The team together for the final ride.

Enjoy your life you dog of war
No more trauma from what you saw.
At home with Jason, family and friends
Their bond of friendship will never end.

Two brave heroes from a protracted war
Thanks for your service from us all.

“A dog’s loyalty is never in question.”

By Paul Zaat ©



“Manic” Inaugural Australian Animal Distinguished Service Award 2025

We pay a special tribute to Manic and place it on page 75 of this issue, most fittingly beside the list of those recent passed, included in our Last Post pages.

A very special dog of war, a very special much loved family pet following retirement. The accolades of so many who knew him personally. Those who learned of him with the inaugural award for Distinguished Service, will ensure a lasting remembrance for a very brave dog.

As declared aptly in Paul Zaat’s poetry l(eft)

10th Intake National Service Reunion (1967 to 1969).

Who: 10TH Intake (all those called-up early October 1967) plus wives and partners.
Visits from family and friends encouraged.
NB. Overseas service not a prerequisite.

Where: **Sawtell Beach Holiday Park** (10kms south of Coffs Harbour NSW).
5 Lyons Road Sawtell NSW 2452

Reservations: 02 6648 4485 or 1800 200 555. Suggest you book early and quote booking number 124448 to secure a 10% discount. Mention Army Reunion or 10th Intake.

Email: sbhp@chcc.nsw.gov.au (www.coffsholidays.com.au).

When: Most folk have booked from Monday 19th October to Monday 2 November 2026 inclusive.

Activities: Daily Happy Hour at 1600. Fun board & card games. Brief Memorial Service (22nd October) in old Camp Kitchen followed by smoko and group photograph. Fantastic RSL & Bowling Club dinners. Trivia Sessions. Social tennis, barefoot bowls, disc bowls, swimming (pool or surf), golf and croquet. Fishing. Bush/beach walks. All events optional.

Notes: Returnable pamphlets available for the Memorial Service.
Casual dress.

No entrance or registration fees. All BYO.

A whiteboard will be available in the Old Camp Kitchen updated daily.

There will be an excursion and lunch at a secret spot.

Secret women's business at a designated venue.

Plenty of shopping and coffee outings.

Compulsory singalong led by a sweet 1968/69 Vietnam entertainer.

Please share and tell your old army mates.

Richard Barry OAM.

richyvon47@hotmail.com

Moral Courage Moral injury and the Legacy of Major John White DSC.



(Then)- Captain John White DSC MID
AATTV Vietnam 1968—69

On 16 February 2026, Retired Major John White, DSC, passed peacefully from this life to the next. John was a giant of a man in so many ways, and in this article I want to honour his moral courage, his moral injury and healing, his life of service to humanity, and his legacy to our veteran community.

John was a 1963 graduate of the Royal Military College, who as a young captain in 1968 was sent to Vietnam with the Australian Army Training Team (AATTV) to command a mobile Strikeforce of “Nung” mercenaries fighting the North Vietnamese during the Tet offensive.

John fought many battles in Vietnam but the one he was most significantly known for is leadership in the Battle of Ngok Tavak (recorded in detail by fellow AATTV veteran Bruce Davies MBE

in his book by the same name). Near the Laotian border west of Da Nang, John was ordered to lead a blocking force of approximately 180 troops, comprising Nungs, a platoon of US marines, two Australian Warrant Officers and an 8-man US Green Beret “A” team.

They occupied a former French earthen “fort” approximately 5 km south-west of a US Marine regimental position at Kham Duc, to stall the advance of the North Vietnamese Second Division. Australian tactics would have seen this screening force draw back to the main US regimental position once the enemy arrived in force, but John received US orders to stand and fight until reinforced.

During 12 hours of intense close combat, John’s position was overrun by a North Vietnamese battalion. John gallantly exposed himself many

times , calling in airstrikes and artillery, and arranging counterattacks, plugging gaps , redistributing ammo and offering encouragement. Despite suffering 70 killed and more than 70 wounded, he was repeatedly denied permission to withdraw. John managed to have the enemy agree to a brief ceasefire to enable them both to evacuate their wounded, after which the battle was re-engaged.

Surrounded by an NVA regiment , with then only 37 men fit to fight on the position, John again asked for permission to withdraw and again was denied it. Of his own initiative, he then called napalm strikes all around his position and advanced West through the flames and managed to get all but one of his troops onto rescue helicopters from an improvised landing zone, deeper in enemy territory. John was the last man to board the final chopper. This completely confounded the enemy, who had been waiting for him in a battalion-sized ambush on the route back to his home base to the East!

Returning to the US regimental base, he was castigated by the US marine commander for leaving his post, despite at the same time, finding out that no reinforcements were ever planned to be sent to relieve him. He and his men had been abandoned. His level of stress and distress was through the roof .

From the testimony of those who survived, his immediate Australian superiors recommended him for a gallantry award, but this was denied by the overall Australian commander in Vietnam, who reprimanded him for disobeying higher orders in leaving the position. John was relocated to a different part of Vietnam where he continued fighting, but he became disillusioned by the strategy and conduct of the war, and , subsequently declared that he felt he was fighting for the wrong side. He came to believe that we and the Americans should not have been involved in Vietnam at all.

Whilst he had entered RMC to be a long-term career soldier, he lost trust in his superiors and government and felt both betrayed and unjustly accused. He left the Army not long after these experiences, with a heavy burden of both post-traumatic stress from intense combat and moral injury from shame and abandonment. Not anyone at the time, including our medical profession had serious insight into what these conditions were, or

how to heal them.

John has shared that there followed many years of mal-adaptive behaviour on his part, including suicidal ideation. He was distressed by the impact that his behaviour was having upon his family but didn't know how to address it. He was greatly supported by his wife and his brother, and RMC classmates who fought a 7 year campaign of appeal, after appeal, to eventually see his moral and physical courage recognised by the award of a Distinguished Service Cross for his actions, which he only received in 2019.

He had been burdened by shame and guilt that he was not able to recover the bodies of his soldiers that were killed, especially including 14 Marines, and when it became possible for Australians to return to Vietnam after the war, he took the initiative to go back there and arrange a search for their bodies, and after location and exhumation, he went with them back to the United States where their remains were interred, and he explained the circumstances of their death to their loved ones. His compassion in doing this, very much initiated the healing of his moral injury.

Following the award of his DSC, his story was related to our Veterans Care Association, and we invited him to participate in one of our programs at St Georges , Rainbow Bay on the Gold Coast. While John, by then, had been receiving treatment for PTS, he had been unaware of the emerging scholarship on Moral Injury and its treatment protocols, and embraced and endorsed them joyfully.

While many people are aware now of PTS, few are aware of the concept of Moral Injury -the debilitating cumulative emotional impact of betrayal , shame, isolation and guilt, on a person's soul. I certainly was aware from interviewing over 30,000 veterans over the past 31 years in ministry, where the most common presentation in traumatised veterans is Moral Injury (MI). Both MI and PTS lead to anxiety and depression, but while PTS is primarily treated by medication and cognitive behaviour therapy, MI requires acceptance, embracing and authentication by a "tribe", and most vitally – forgiveness. Forgiveness of self ; offering forgiveness; and being forgiven. Letting go of past resentments and being re-

(Continued on page 54)

affirmed of our goodness are powerful healing therapies, best facilitated by our peers and trusted carers in group/tribal setting.

Paradoxically, we experience MI because of our high ethical and value stances are attacked by the unethical behaviour of others towards us, or by our own moral failings. Sociopaths and narcissists may display no shame or guilt in dealing harshly with us, enraging our sense of what is right and just. One-on-one therapy sessions might be insufficient to heal our wounded souls, but the affirmation and embrace of our tribe most certainly can. And where we might have been in the wrong, compassionate restorative justice action, through helping and caring for others, can be a powerful healing medium.

John assisted us in person, or by video sharing of his story and insights throughout the last 5 years of his life, and will continue to do so in our future programs. When we became aware of John's failing bodily health towards the end of 2025, I asked John to write a legacy article for veterans on our programs. It is in fact his "Last Testament", and I share excerpts of it below:

[John] People sometimes ask me, "How did you do it?"

I won't pretend it was easy — life isn't. But there were steps that made it possible. I share them with you in the hope they might make things a little easier for you too.

First: forgive yourself.

Forgive yourself for what you've done. For who you became in order to survive. For who you will never be again.

And forgive the people around you - the ones who don't fully understand, but are trying in their own imperfect ways.

Forgiveness isn't about excusing anything. It's about laying down a burden that's crushing you from the inside.

Second: find the courage to change.

Change is not weakness.

Being willing to look honestly at yourself, to ask for help, to do the hard work — that takes

enormous strength. The bravest thing I ever did was admit I couldn't do it alone.

Third: deal with your anger.

Anger is understandable — but if left unchecked, it will cost you everything.

You've already taken a powerful step by being here. Learn what triggers your anger. Learn how it shows up. Use the tools offered to you. And if medical help or intervention is needed, take it. Pride will not protect you — but help will. When people see real change, they begin to trust you again with their hearts.

Fourth: practise kindness and gratitude.

Pay attention to the people who are still standing beside you. They've stayed for a reason. Let them know they matter. Gratitude reconnects us to life when trauma has pulled us away from it.

Fifth: allow yourself to be loving — and lovable.

Trauma convinces us we are unworthy of love. That is a lie.

Share your positive emotions, even when it feels uncomfortable. The people who love you are there — don't keep them at arm's length.

I opened up, with great difficulty. My second wife became my third wife and we are still together after 35 years — off and on. I couldn't have done it without her.

Remember: it's okay to laugh.

Humour has saved my life more than once. Take the humour that bonded you with your mates and bring it into your civilian world. Laughter doesn't disrespect your pain — it gives you breathing space from it.

Finally: think about your legacy.

I am now nearing the end of my life and preparing to take the final step in my life's great adventure. I encourage you to consider how you wish to be remembered—not only as a soldier, but

as a human being.

You shape that legacy every day through the choices you make, especially the small ones that often go unnoticed.

Despite my own trauma, one of my sons has chosen to pursue a military career. He is inspired by legacy and deeply committed to honouring the military's enduring promise to serve.

Closing reflection

You are not weak. You are not broken beyond repair. And your story is not over.

If an old veteran like me can move from surviving to truly living, then there is hope — real hope — for you too. Take the next step. Then the next. You don't have to do it all today. Just don't give up on yourself.

Your life matters.” [John]

Thank you John for your service and sacrifice. You are a legacy to us .

And for those reading this who realise that you are experiencing moral injury, know that healing is at hand if you would trust us to embrace you and your story, and may you know the best in life is yet to come
Your Padre, Gary Stone.



Major (Retired) John White DSC
with wife, Debbie, at the DSC
Investiture ceremony 2019.

OVERVIEW: HEADQUARTERS 1ST AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE.

The 1st Australian Task Force, whose headquarters is referred to as HQ1ATF played its role in the Vietnam War between April 1966 and November 1971.

Established as a brigade-sized formation to replace the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR) which had been in Vietnam since 1965, its main base was at Nui Dat in Phuoc Tuy Province, with a separate logistical support group based in Vung Tau.

HQ1ATF was responsible for commanding Australian and New Zealand forces in the area, including infantry battalions, artillery and armoured units, and was involved in numerous operations and significant battles.

The operational corps of HQ1ATF were as follows:

- Headquarters Company
- Defence & Employment Platoon (Infantry)
- Headquarters Staff
- 1st Australian Reinforcement Unit
- Headquarters Platoon
- 1st Transport Platoon
- Detachment 198 Works Section (RAE)
- 1st Australian Light Aid Detachment (RAEME)
- 1st Australian Provost Detachment
- Detachment 1st Division Intelligence Section
- Detachment 1st Topographical Survey Troop

HQ1ATF's primary mission was to secure Phuoc Tuy Province, a task that involved both combat operations and civil affairs activities and to operate in conjunction with US and other allied forces.

Headquarters Company's function in Nui Dat was to provide administrative and logistical support staff ranging from intelligence personnel right through to paymaster, just to name two categories.

Defence & Employment (D&E) Platoon, in the early days of the Task Force, were employed as working parties in building the facilities required by HQ1ATF – when D&E was not out on patrol. The Platoon also had a key role in the defence of Headquarters, 1ATF should the Task Force Base at Nui Dat come under fire.

D&E Platoon was involved in many key battles of the war, including the Battle of Long Tan in 1966, Operation Bribie in 1967, Operation Coburg, Operation Coral and Operation Balmoral in 1968 along with Operation Overlord and the Battle of Long Khanh in June 1971. Seven Veterans lost their lives at Courtenay Hill on the morning of 12 June 1971.

D&E Platoon was the longest continually serving Infantry Platoon in South Vietnam, being continually reinforced through the 1st ARU, and was only removed from the Order of Battle when HQ1ATF withdrew from Nui Dat to Vung Tau in late 1971.

www.hq1at.org

See our 2026 reunion notice opposite



HEADQUARTERS 1ST AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE SOUTH VIETNAM 1966 - 1972

60th ANNIVERSARY HQ1ATF ASS. REUNION PACIFIC PALMS, NSW: 16 November to 20 November 2026 Tiona Holiday Park (THP)

4451 The Lakes Way, Tiona, NSW 2428

Phone: 02 6554 0291 Email: stay@tiona.com.au Web: www.tiona.com.au

The 2026 HQ1ATF Association reunion will be held at Tiona Holiday Park, 16 – 20 November and will remember 60 years since we first marched into Nui Dat in April 1966. This five day event is an important part of the Association's efforts in the healing process which is achieved through the continual networking of members, and also importantly, their partners and carers. With objectives to improve health and well-being and to reduce social isolation, the reunion plays a significant role. There will be ample time for members and families to spend time together over the period of the reunion.

The Commemorative Dinner will be held on Tuesday 17 November 2026 at the Palms Pavilion at TIONA. The dinner will be preceded by a Dedication Service on the lawns facing Lake Wallis. The service will commence at 5.45 PM.

On Wednesday 18 November the group will enjoy a coach tour to the surrounding country side with lunch at the Farmers Wife Gin Distillery.

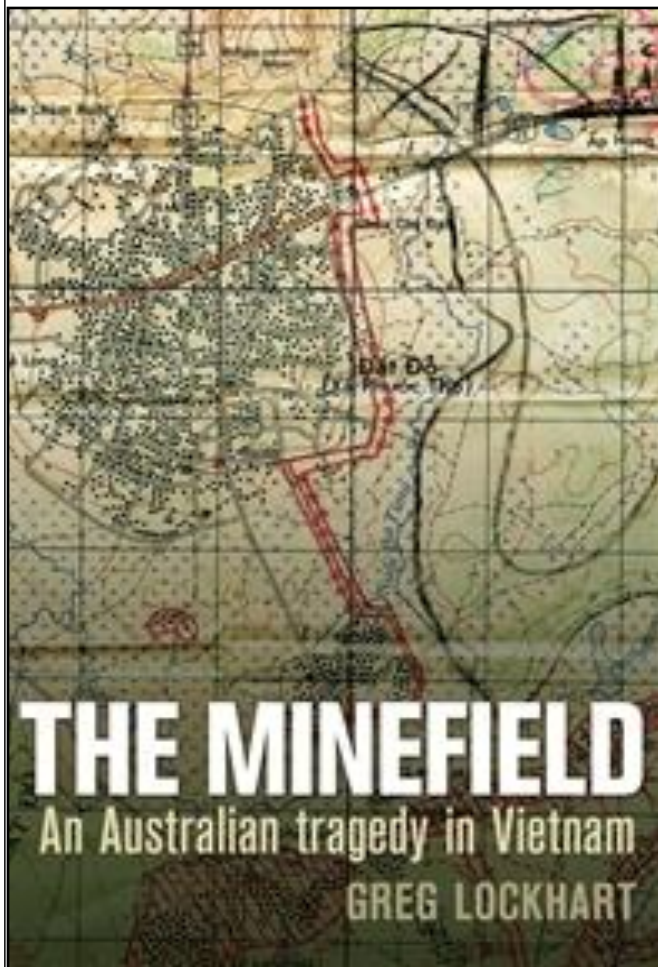
The informal farewell dinner will be held at the RECKY Pacific Palms Recreation Club on Thursday 19 November.

For details contact: John Verhelst: 0437212121 or jeverhelst@gmail.com www.hq1atf.org



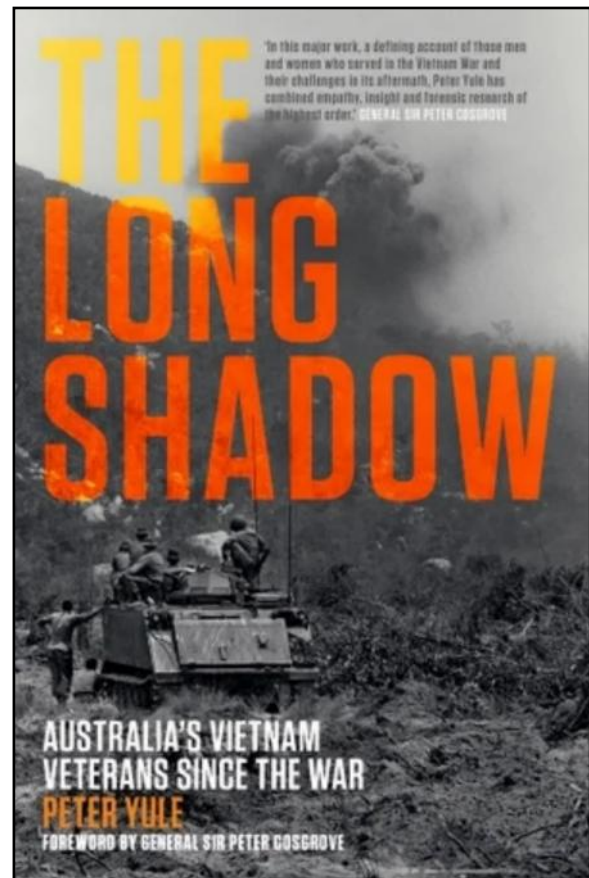
RECOMMENDED READING

How could this disaster have happened?

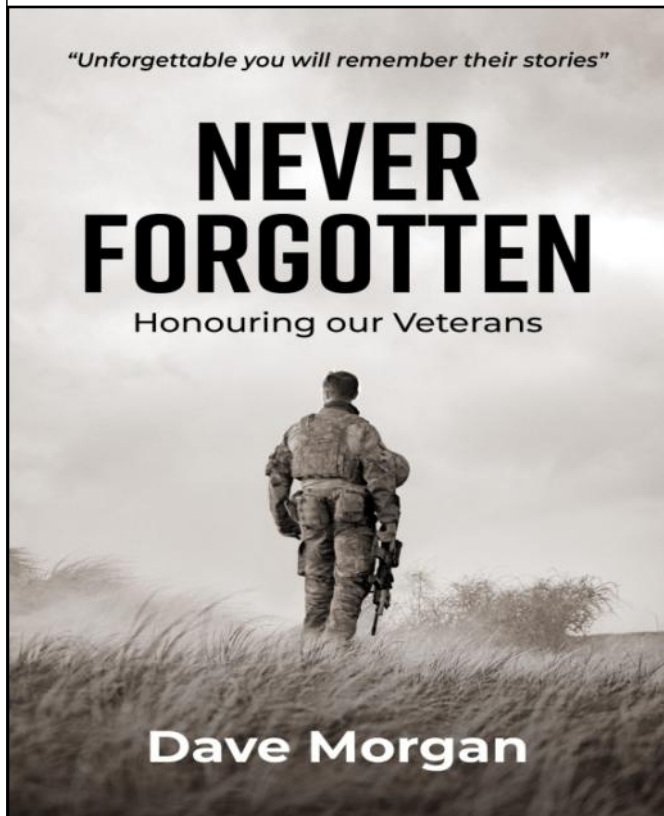


To get your copy simply ring the NSW Branch Granville Office on 02 9682 1788 or order on-line at www.vvfagranville.org.

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



To get your copy simply ring the NSW Branch Granville Office on 02 9682 1788 or contact on-line at www.vvfagranville.org
Price on application
Plus postage



Never Forgotten Honouring Our Veterans

Author: Dave Morgan

ISBN: 9781923144613

\$32.99

from Big Sky Publishing

Available on-line through Big Sky Publishing

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

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

Also available at:

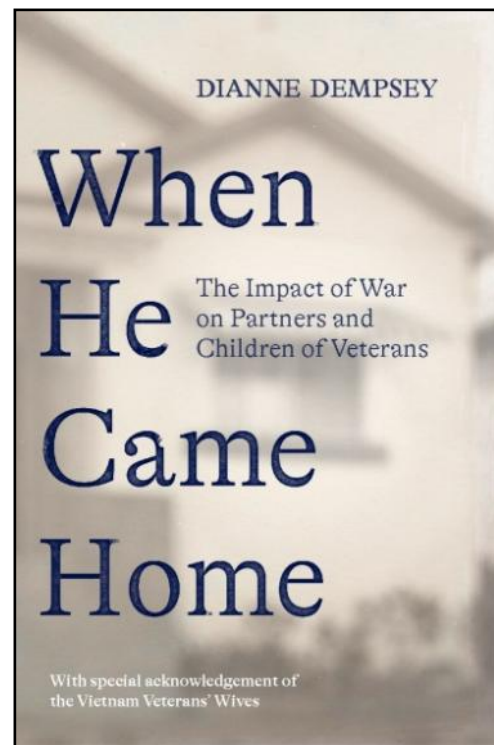
Amazon.com.au \$22.00 (23 Feb 2025)

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

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

How did our families cope when we came home?

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



AVAILABLE FROM

Australian Scholarly Publishing
Booktopia

Angus and Robertson

Boomerang Books

Book Depository

AUD\$29.95 (varies between on-line
booksellers)

ISBN 9781922454669

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Publisher: Arcadia

Also available as an E-book through
Google Play

For enquiries:

Tel: +61 3 9329 6963

Email: enquiry@scholarly.info :

Reunions & Notices

'A' Battery Association Inc.

"WARNING ORDER 2026!"

155th Birthday & Reunion

Date: 31 Jul 2026

31 July - 1 August 2026.

Celebrating the 155th Birthday of both the Royal Australian Artillery and 'A' Battery, culminating with a formal cocktail party at the Brisbane Tattersall's Club on 01 August 2026. Location: Brisbane, QLD

Contact details

Name: 'A' Battery Association

Incorporated

Phone: 0411 166 904

Email: abtyassn@abtyassn.org.au

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

B. Company 2 RARNZ 70-71

Date: 16 Aug 2026

Reunion details

16 - 21 August 2026.

Location: Maroochydore

Contact details

Name: Michael Gay

Phone: 0439 031 285

Email: gaymick@bigpond.com.au

Taskforce Veteran

60th Anniversary Battle of Long Tan—Scheyville

Date: 18 August 2026

Location: Scheyville Officer Training Unit, Scheyville.

Luncheon including entertainment by John Schumann's Redgum

Contact: Paul Irving

Email: paul.kaaren@gmail.com

NSW BRANCH

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Bankstown Sports Club

Date: 18 August 2026

60th Anniversary For

The battle of Long Tan

Service 10:AM

Grand Ballroom foyer

Join us for an afternoon of camaraderie and renew old friendships

Further details are on page 33 of this publication

Details: 02 9682 1788

HMAS Leeuwin 1st Intake (1960) Reunion

Date: 5 Oct 2026

Reunion details

Location: Fremantle, WA

5 - 9 October 2026. Due to the age of us still around, and sadly the loss of a great number of our intake, this could be the last of our official get togethers. We hope to make this reunion one to remember with as many 1st JR's and their partners attending as possible.

Contact details

Name: Don Barker

Phone: 0437 500 528

Email: evdonb@bigpond.com

Airman Aircrew Reunion

Date: 23 Oct 2026

23 - 24 October 2026. RAAF Airman Aircrew and Associates are invited. It's a great opportunity to catch up with those whom you haven't seen for many years. Check out the website for more details.

Reunion details

Location: C.ex Coffs Club, Coffs Harbour, NSW

Contact details

Name: Allan 'Al' Harris

Phone: 0412 608 817

Website: http://www.airmanaircrew.com.au/html/functions/reunions/airman_aircrew/2026/general_information.html

Headquarter & Headquarter company 1st Australia Logistic support group

Date: 14 Oct 2026

14 -19 October 2026. This is for veterans who served in 1 ALSG (headquarter company and friends)

Reunion details

Location: Albury/Wodonga, VIC

Contact details

Name: Tony Brown

Phone: 0428 852 736

Email: tony11raye13@gmail.com

SEEKING

MCMILLAN JOHN

60th ANNIVERSARY HQ1ATF ASSOCIATION REUNION

Date: 16 Nov 2026

16 - 20 November 2026. Contact John for all information.

Reunion details

Location: Tiona Holiday Park, Pacific Palms

Contact details

Name: John Verhelst

Phone:

Email: jeverhelst@gmail.com

Website: www.hq1atf.org

Chris Joannides is seeking

2792737 John McMillan

86 Transport Platoon RAASC

1970 -1971.

Anyone knowing of Johns' whereabouts is asked to contact Chris direct via email to

Christo@gmail.com

LAST TIME OFFERED

PETER HENNESSY &

IAN COMPTON

"Dobbo" is seeking two mates from the 2nd Intake. We believe Peter Hennessy was from Port Macquarie and served with 5 RAR. Ian Compton may have come from Granville.

Anyone who knows of both or either is asked to contact:

'Dobbo' via email to:

wgdobson@bigpond.com

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

LAST TIME OFFERED

PAUL BRANDT

Trying to get into contact with ex-serviceman Paul 'pour habit' Brandt.

We are due for a few beers. Retired 2023. Last known whereabouts: 5th Engineer Support Regiment.

Contact details

Name: Wazza

Phone: 0490028064

Seeking any information re the following who served with 131 Div Loc Bty RAA in SVN

Edward Bruce Cooper b.1950; Frederick Brian Markwick b.1948; Terry Leslie Welsh b.1949; Robert Andrew Bruce b.1945; Eric Raymond Thompson b.1948; John Creighton Martin b. 1941; 131 Locators Association Inc. - Member.

Contact: Name: Peter

Phone: 0409 697 865

WANTED KNOWN

Did you serve in Saigon, Vung tau or Nui Dat?

I am putting together my fourth book (rough title) "Proud to be a Pogo-Aussie Diggers Supporting the Combat Force" and I would like to hear your stories.

Contact: Russ Morison

Phone: 0408 947 935

Email: dabblers3@gmail.com

LAST TIME OFFERED



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

VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

FULL STATE AND SUB-BRANCH LISTING

NATIONAL HEAD OFFICE (VETERANS SUPPORT CENTRE)

VVFA Inc National President: **William (Bill) Roberts OAM** Email: billr@vdfagranville.org
 PO Box 170, (8 Mary St.) National Secretary: **Ron O'Connor JP** Email: secretary@vdfagranville.org Granville,
 NSW 2142 Tel: 02 9682 1788 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
www.vvdfagranville.org
secretary@vdfagranville.org
 President: Bill Roberts OAM
 Secretary: Ron O'Connor JP
 Hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1600

CENTRAL COAST

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

CENTRAL WEST

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

CLARENCE VALLEY

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

EUROBODALLA

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

GREAT LAKES

Unit 2, 60 Kenrose St
 Forster, 2428
 Office: contact Secretary.
vvaglforster@gmail.com
 President: Derek Hinde
 Secretary: Paul Dawson
 Mob: 0413 886 265
 Hours: Thu 1130 - 1300

HASTINGS MANNING MACLEAY

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

MUDGEES & DISTRICTS

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

NEWCASTLE & HUNTER

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

RIVERINA

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

SHOALHAVEN

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

SOUTH WEST SLOPES

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

TAYLORS ARM

798 North Bank Rd
Taylors Arm 2447
President: **William Ward**
Mob 0409 834 930
Secretary: **Stephen Spear**
Mob 0439 642 181
Email: taylorsarmvppa@gmail.com

WENTWORTH-COOMEALLA

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

OTHER STATES

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
Mob 0407 126 270
Secretary: TBA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

VVFA WA Branch
30 Cornish Ave
Woodvale WA 6026
Ph 08 9409
6682vvfawabranch@gmail.com
President: Milton Kirk JP

QUEENSLAND VVF QUEENSLAND BRANCH INC.

18 Leagues Club Drive
PO Box 2817
Nerang Business Centre
Nerang Qld 4211
Ph: 07 5578 2233
State President: Michael Caldwell
Mob 0490 554 578
president@vvfqld.com
State Sec/Treas: Peter Cameron OAM (Mil)
Mob 0408 276 044
treasurer@vvfqld.com
www.vvfqld.com
Mon-Thur 0800 – 1500

VVF BRISBANE/GOLD COAST OF AUSTRALIA REGIONAL SUB- BRANCH INC.

18 Leagues Club Drive
PO Box 368
Nerang Qld 4211
Ph: 07 5502 2836
admin@vietnamveterans.net.au
President: Andy Bryson
Mob 0424 476 027
Secretary/Treasurer: Peter Cameron OAM
Mob 0408 276 044

TOWNSVILLE VETERAN SUPPORT CENTRE NQ INC

Townsville
PO Box 280, Garbutt East
JC Butler Bldg
1 Charters Towers Rd
Townsville, 4814
Ph: 07 4772 4655
secretary@vsvtsv.org.au
President: Jason Ballard
Secretary: Alison Abby

SOUTH AUSTRALIA VVF SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH INC.

The Yerbury Centre
Unit 1, 31-39 Norfolk Rd
Marion SA 5043
Ph: 08 8296 2411
Mon – Thur 1000 – 1500hrs
vvfsa@vvfsa.au
<http://vvfsa.org.au>
President: Mal Thiele OAM JP
Secretary: Don Cochrane

SA ZONE REP

BROKEN HILL

Des Kennedy
Mob: 0412 458 054

MILITARY MUSEUM

BUBLACOWIE

Welfare Officer: Chris Soar
Mobs 0448 994 561/0428 377 287
Ph: 08 8853 4379

BUSH RETREAT

Camp Andrew Russell Bush Retreat
Alawoona SA
Caretaker Mob 0405 974 592
Email: vvfsa@vvfsa.org.au

VICTORIA

VVF Victorian Branch Inc

ALL MAIL TO: P.O. Box 167
Newcomb Vic 3219
13 Tyson Loop
Charlemont Vic 3217
President: John Arnold OAM
Johnrayarnold44@gmail.com
Secretary: Iris Cargill JP
Mob 0488 053 973
ritscargill@yahoo.com
Mon - Wed 0900 -1400
VIC SUB – BRANCHES
Hamilton: Bill Garrett 0438 722 144
Grampians: Ron Jensen 0409 023 487
Respite Housing For Veterans in need
Bowder Veterans Housing
160 Coppards Rd Whittington 3219.
0488 053 973

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

Mr. Dennis Hanmer OAM on 02 9682 1788

Currently in the ADF, Transitioning, a younger Veteran?

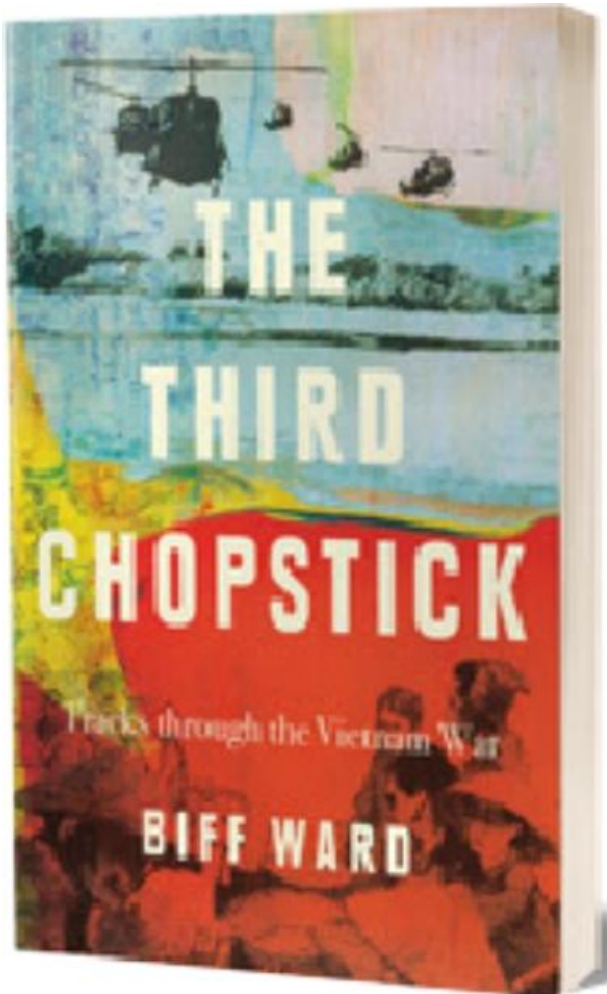
We invite you to join our association and become a member.

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

Do you remember Ray Fulton?

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

This book, amongst other things, is about him.



To get your copy simply ring the NSW Branch Granville Office on

02 9682 1788 or order on-line at
www.vvfagranville.org

Other recommended reading see page 60

TWO NEW BOOKS FROM RUSS MORISON

PROUD TO BE A POGO

By Russ Morison

This book is about Vietnam Veterans, the forgotten ones, the story of the quiet, unsung heroes of the Vietnam war, that left behind family, home and a population

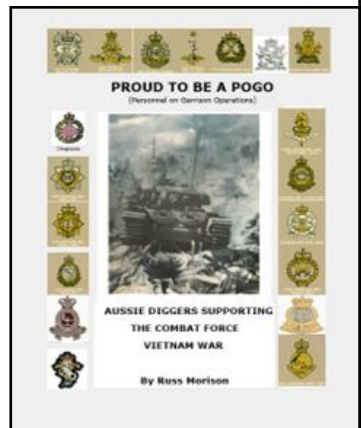
who were not all behind them, to help bring about peace in that troubled land called Vietnam.

They didn't all "hit the two way firing range" but they effectively supported those that did. They were the "Personnel on Garrison Operations" or POGOs as they were affectionately called. This is their story.

Pages: 260

Cost \$38 plus satchel postage \$16

To buy:
dabblers3@gmail.com or
 0408 947 935



2 TRANSPORT PLATOON RAASC

By Russ Morison

This book is about Military Truckies of the

Vietnam era, and in particular the history of 2 Transport Platoon RAASC.

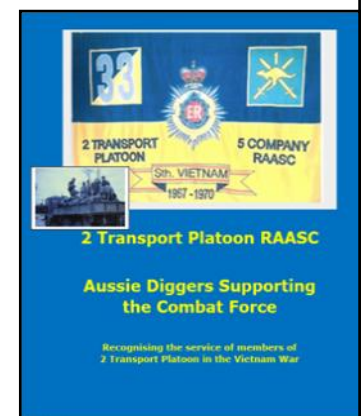
The platoon is one of five RAASC Platoons that served our combat forces, supplying and delivering the material that enabled our forces to establish a firm foothold in enemy territory who once prospered in Phuoc Tuy Province.

Their story has finally been told here.

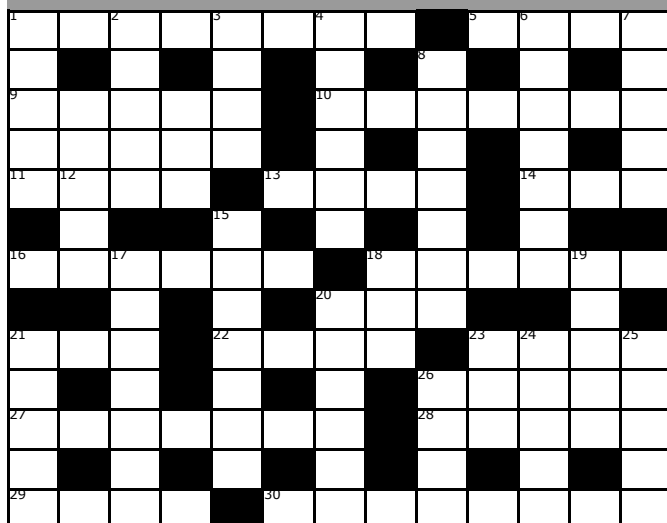
Pages: 260

Cost \$38 plus satchel postage \$16

To buy: dabblers3@gmail.com or 0408 947 935



CROSSWORD CORNER

**Across**

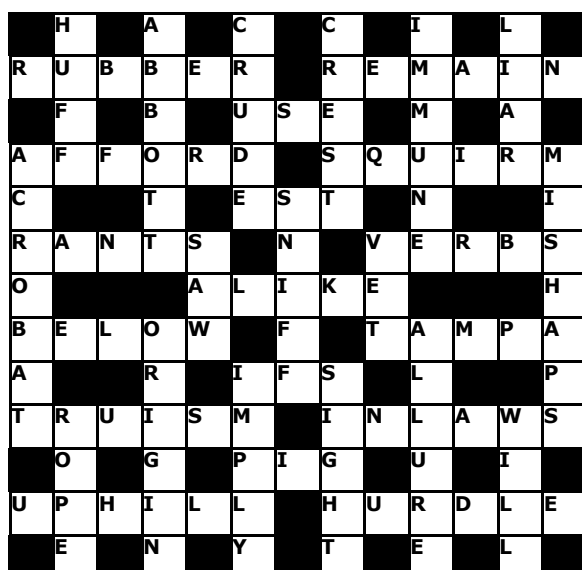
1. Explain verbally
5. Viking, The Red
9. Blood vessels
10. Altered
11. Actors parti
13. Warm up
14. Ignited
16. Bits of wood
18. Scary movie
21. Used to be
22. Fibs
23. Decorates cake
27. More profound
28. Competitor
29. Obligation
30. Calculated width

Down

1. Scuba user
2. Unmoving
3. Go up
4. Pail
6. Consistent
7. New recruit
8. Warn
12. Not in
15. Able
17. Examine
19. Mineral deposit
20. Insect
21. Walked in water
24. Canopy
25. Raw vegetable mix
26. Provides weapons

Solution next issue

APRIL 2026 SOLUTION



THE UNKNOWN COMIC

My wife found all my hidden letters and realised I'd been cheating. Now she refuses to play scrabble with me anymore.

Learning how to pick locks has really opened a lot of doors for me.

God said unto the heavens 'Let there be light', and there was light.
Bored with the effort, he said 'Let's call it a day'.

A sad-faced guy walked into a florist shop early one morning. The clerk was ready to take his order for a funeral piece, based on the look on the guys face, but soon realised his assumption was wrong as the guy asked for a basket of flowers sent to his wife for their anniversary.
"And what day will that be?" the clerk asked.
Glumly he replied, "Yesterday."

A man is going skydiving for the first time. After listening to the instructor for what seems like days, he is ready to go. The man goes up in the airplane and waits to get to the proper altitude. Excited, he jumps out of the airplane. After a bit, he pulls the ripcord. Nothing happens. He tries again. Still nothing. He starts to panic, but remembers his back-up chute. He pulls that cord. Nothing happens. He frantically begins pulling both cords, but to no avail.

Suddenly, he looks down and he can't believe his eyes. Another man is in the air with him, but this guy is going up! Just as the other guy passes by, the skydiver, by this time scared out of his wits, yells, "Hey, do you know anything about skydiving?" The other guy yells back, "No! Do you know anything about gas stoves?"

I work at a bicycle factory and everyone knows me as the Spokesperson

I don't argue, I just explain why I'm right.

If you tell yourself you drink too much do you realise you are about to take advice from a drunk.

MERCHANDISE SELL OFF

ROCK BOTTOM PRICES, SOME AT OR NEAR COST, ALL MUST BE SOLD BEFORE END OF YEAR.

GO TO OUR ONLINE SHOP AT www.vvfagranville.org AND SELECT THE RED "SHOP" BUTTON.

OR USE THE ORDER FORM ON PAGE 72 AND MAIL TO THE GRANVILLE OFFICE.

OR PHONE THE OFFICE DIRECT TO ORDER AND PAY VIA CREDIT CARD.

NORMAL PAYMENT METHODS AS PER GUIDELINES ON THE WEBSITE, AND THE ORDER FORM.

ITEM#	DESCRIPTION		QTY		PRICE ea
1301	BUCKLE RAN		1		\$25.00
1302	BUCKLE RIBBON		1		\$30.00
1306	BUCKLE RAAC		3		\$27.00
1307	BUCKLE RAAF		6		\$27.00
1308	BUCKLE RAAMC		6		\$27.00
1309	BUCKLE RAASC		1		\$27.00
1311	BUCKLE RAS		3		\$25.00
1312	BUCKLE RAAOC		3		\$27.00
1505	STICKER PROUDLY		8		\$3.00
3133	KEY RING ARMY AV		4		\$3.00
3141	KEY RING RAEME		1		\$3.00
3409	PIN CHOPPR GREEN		7		\$3.00



ALL MAIL TO:
ADMIN MGR
PO BOX 170
GRANVILLE NSW 2142

ALL ENQUIRIES AND PHONE ORDERS:
02 9682 1788
EMAIL TO:
accounts@vvfagranville.org



VIETNAM VETERANS' PEACEKEEPERS & PEACEMAKERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (NSW BRANCH) Inc.

Affiliated with the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia Inc.

Website: : www.vvfagranville.org

01/01—31/12 Yearly

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

SURNAME		FIRST NAME		SECOND NAME	
STREET ADDRESS					
SUBURB/TOWN		STATE		POST CODE	
HOME PHONE		MOBILE PHONE		OTHER PHONE	
EMAIL ADDRESS [PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY IN THE BOX BELOW]					
SERVICE NUMBER		SERVICE UNIT		O'SEAS AREA OF OPERATIONAL SERVICE	
				[If applicable – optional]	
NEXT OF KIN		RELATIONSHIP		CONTACT PHONE [NOK]	
ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE		TOTAL	
MEMBERSHIPS SUBS	(YEARS)	@ \$30.00 PER YEAR		\$	
DONATION	(AMOUNT ONLY)			\$	
RAFFLE TICKET/s		@ \$2.00 EACH		\$	
MERCHANDISE				\$	
				\$	
				\$	
Stock item number and prices are available on line and from merchandise lists at branches.		And, inside your Newsletter.		TOTAL AMOUNT DUE	
				\$	
SELECT YOUR PAYMENT METHOD (Tick one only) CASH _____ CHq _____ CREDIT CARD _____ DIRECT DEBIT _____ CREDIT CARD DETAILS (Mastercard or VISA only)					
CARD HOLDER NAME (PRINT)			CREDIT CARD NUMBER		
EXPIRY DATE		TRANSACTION AMOUNT		SIGNATURE	
___/___/___		\$			
CHEQUES FROM MAJOR BANKS ONLY WILL BE ACCEPTED. CBA, WESTPAC/St George, NAB, ANZ. PHONE FOR BANK TRANSFER PAYMENTS. INCLUDE NAME AS REFERENCE. CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS MAY BE PHONED IN TO (02) 9682 1788 MON-THU 10AM – 3PM. Email: accounts@vvfagranville.org Post: VVPPAA NSW PO Box170 Granville NSW 2142					
OFFICE USE ONLY					
MEMBERSHIP RECEIPT DATE:			DONATION RECEIPT DATE:		
MEMBERSHIP RECEIPT N ^o :			DONATION RECEIPT N ^o :		
MEMBERSHIP CARD NUMBER:			COMPLETED & ISSUED BY (PRINT):		
COMPLETED & ISSUED BY (PRINT):			BANK SHEET ENTRY BY (PRINT):		

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

SURNAME

FIRST NAME

SECOND NAME

--	--	--

OLD DETAILS [*PRINT CLEARLY*]

OLD ADDRESS

--

SUBURB/TOWN

STATE

POST CODE

--	--	--

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

OTHER PHONE

--	--	--

NEW DETAILS [*PRINT CLEARLY*]

NEW ADDRESS

--

SUBURB/TOWN

STATE

POST CODE

--	--	--

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

OTHER PHONE

--	--	--

EMAIL ADDRESS [*PRINT CLEARLY*]

--

YOUR SIGNATURE

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

Complete all sections and post to:

The Secretary
 VVPPAA NSW
 PO Box 170
 Granville
 NSW 2142

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

VETERANS MORTALITY REPORT

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

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

--	--	--

SVN UNIT/S

TOUR DATES

--	--

CAUSE OF DEATH (If known)

--

SR Service Related

UNK Unknown

S Suicide

O Other)

DATE OF DEATH (If known)

LOCATION AT TIME OF DEATH

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

YOUR NAME

--

SUBURB/TOWN

STATE

POST CODE

--	--	--

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

SIGNATURE

--	--	--

RETURN FORM TO: The Welfare Officer

VVPPAA NSW Branch
PO Box 170
Granville NSW 2142

Phone: 02 9682 1788

Email: secretary@vvfagranville.org

MERCHANDISE LIST

STOCKS AS AVAILABLE ANY REORDER MAY DELAY DELIVERY

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE		ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
1101	NSW PLAQUE	50.00		3445	LONG SHADOW	POA
1103	NSW BADGE	10.00		1401	LAPEL PIN RAN	5.00
1105	NSW STICKER	6.00		1402	LAPEL PIN ENS	5.00
1107	RED PEN VVFA	8.00		1403	LAPEL PIN ARMY	8.00
1108	NSW STUBBY HOLDER	10.00		1404	LAPEL PIN RAR	8.00
1109	STUBBY HOLDER TRICOLOR	10.00		1405	LAPEL PIN RAAF	8.00
1111	VVFA GREEN CAP	22.00		1406	LAPEL PIN CROSS	8.00
1112	VVFA BLUE CAP	25.00		1411	LAPEL PIN FAMILY	7.00
1113	VVFA WHITE CAP	25.00		1500	STICKER TWIN SET REG	7.00
1114	VVFA BLACK CAP	25.00		1501	STICKER REGULAR	7.00
1115	CAP BLACK ^62-75'	25.00		1507	STICKER TWIN SET NASHO	7.00
1120	Mr. GADGET	8.00		1502	STICKER NASHO	7.00
1121	NOTEBOOK/PEN	8.00		1503	STICKER DAMN PROUD	8.00
1122	COOLER TOTE	14.00		1504	STICKER LOVE or LEAVE	5.00
1124	FRIDGE MAGNET	8.00		1506	STICKER SUPPORT	7.00
1125	KEYRING NAVY	8.00		1508	STICKER SUPPORT NAVY	7.00
1126	KEYRING ARMY	8.00		1509	STICKER NAVY VET	7.00
1127	KEYRING RAR	10.00		1510	STICKER SUPPORT ARMY	7.00
1128	KEYRING RAAF	8.00		1511	STICKER ARMY VET	7.00
1129	KEYRING VVFA	10.00		1512	STICKER SUPPORT RAAF	7.00
1130	LANYARD	10.00		1513	STICKER RAAF VET	7.00
1131	KEYRING HEART	10.00		1514	STICKER AFGHAN VET	5.00
1201	THE MINEFIELD	45.00		1515	STICKER IRAQ VET	5.00
3440	HOW TO RESEARCH	45.00		1516	STICKER SOMALIA VET	5.00
3442	THIRD CHOPSTICK	40.00		1517	STICKER TIMOR VET	5.00

MERCHANDISE IMAGES



1101



1103



1105



1107



1108



1109



1111



1112



1113



1114



1115



1120



1121



1122



1124



1125



1126



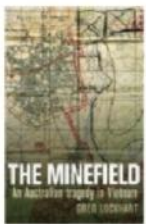
1127



1128



1129



1201



3440



3442



3445



1130



1131



1401



1402



1403



1404



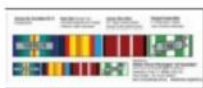
1405



1406



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1500



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1515



1516



1517

MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM**PLEASE CHECK STOCK AVAILABILITY BEFORE PLACING ORDER**

NAME:				
ADDRESS:				
TOWN:			STATE:	PC:
PHONE:		ALT PHONE:		
EMAIL:				
ITEM N ^o .	DESCRIPTION	PRICE ea	QTY	TOTAL
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
XXXXXX	POSTAGE & HANDLING	\$		\$
XXXXXX	RAFFLE TICKET/S	\$ 2.00		\$
XXXXXX	DONATION AMOUNT	XXXXXX	XXXX	\$
XXXXXX	TOTAL ORDER VALUE	XXXXXX	XXXX	\$
DELIVERY ADDRESS:				
(IF DIFFERENT TO ABOVE)				
PAYMENT METHOD M/CARD VISA DIRECT DEBIT Circle type that applies) CHEQUE PAYMENT ACCEPTED FROM MAJOR BANKS ONLY: CBA, ANZ, NAB, WESTPAC/ST GEORGE				
NAME ON CARD:				
CARD NUMBER:				
EXPIRY DATE:	/	APPROVED AMOUNT: \$		
SIGNATURE & DATE:				

MERCHANDISE SPECIALS JULY 2026

ONLY WHILE STOCKS LAST
ALSO AVAILABLE ON LINE

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

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE \$
3301	BUCKLE VETERAN	15.00
3133	KRING ARMY AVI	8.00
3140	KRING RAAC	8.00
3402	PIN MAP REGULAR	8.00
3403	PIN MAP NASHO	8.00
3405	PIN MAP GRANDAD	8.00
3406	PIN VIETNAM VET*	8.00
	*LIMITED STOCK 2 LEFT	
3407	PIN SLOUCH BRNZ	8.00
3408	PIN SLOUCH COL	8.00
3412	PIN VIETNAM CHOPPER	8.00
3414	PIN AVF 62-73	8.00
3415	PIN RAA	8.00
*	Always check specials stocks	*
3501	PIN GOLD KANGAROO	10.00
3502	PIN SPIRIT O MATESHIP	10.00
3503	PIN AUS. FOREVER	10.00

ONCE EACH 'SPECIAL' ITEM SELLS OUT IT WILL NOT BE RESTOCKED OR AVAILABLE , HOWEVER, POTENTIAL PURCHESERS MAY BE DIRECTED TO A SUPPLIER UPON ENQUIRY.



PURCHASES CAN BE MADE AT OUR ON-LINE SHOP AT www.vvfagranville.org. LOOK FOR "shop". OR BY POSTING THE ORDER FORM (LEFT) TO VVPPAA NSW PO BOX 170 GRANVILLE NSW 2142. OR BY EMAIL, OR PHONE THROUGH THE ORDER TO (02) 9682 1788 DURING BUSINESS HOURS 9:30AM TO 3:00PM WEEKDAYS.



Vale MANIC AADS

It is with the heaviest of hearts that we share the sudden passing of retired Combat Assault Dog, Manic, on Saturday, 16th May 2026.

To describe Manic as a Military Working Dog feels like an understatement; he possessed a presence that was deeply special, a soulfulness that was impossible to put into words unless you had the privilege of standing beside him. He touched the lives of everyone he met instantly.

Today, a guard of honour fit for a true veteran was held to guide Manic on his final journey. We were proud to have the Cronulla RSL Sub Branch represented by President Cory Rinaldi, Honorary Secretary Paul Zaat, and Office Manager Kristy Nichols. They were joined by acting CEO Brad Bishop, the Board of Directors and the Management staff.

The service was made even more poignant by the presence of the Police Dog Squad, the dedicated staff of VSOS, and the close family and friends of the Price family. Most movingly, Manic's best mate, Dragon, was there to stand by his side one last time.

To Jason and the Price family, words cannot express the depth of our sorrow. Though Manic may not have been an official member of our Sub Branch, in our eyes and in our hearts, he always was.

Rest easy, Manic. Your watch is over, and your legacy of service and loyalty will live on in all of us.

Farewell, brave boy. Lest we Forget.



FOR THE RECORD:

Manic was a celebrated Belgian Malinois and a decorated veteran of the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Known affectionately as "the \$8 dog," he was bought for that small sum from a pound and trained to be a highly specialized combat assault dog.

Military Career

Deployment: Served extensively with the 2nd Commando Regiment.

Active Service: Deployed to Iraq and the Middle East, conducting counter-terrorism and tactical assault operations.

Retirement: Officially retired in 2021 and lived in the Sutherland Shire, south of Sydney, with Jason and his family.

Honours: Australian Animal Distinguished Service Award 2025. (Inaugural award)

VALE

Brigadier (Rtd) Raymond Lewis Burnard AM (Mil Div) MID

20 January 1930 – 6 March 2026

There are some soldiers who stand out because of the important contribution they make over a long period of time
Ray Burnard was such a soldier.



Brigadier Raymond Burnard was born in the United Kingdom, migrated to Australia in 1948, and graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon.

In January 1953 he joined A Company, 3 Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR), as a platoon commander in Korea.

In May 1953, while checking a minefield in front of the battalion's position, he was seriously wounded in the neck by enemy fire. He was evacuated by stretcher party, taken to a Norwegian field hospital, and then to Japan to recover.

He returned voluntarily to Korea after the Armistice in August 1953 as Intelligence Officer of 3RAR.

After Korea he served for 34 years in the Army, including with the Citizens Military Forces (later the Army Reserve).

This service included him being an original member of the Special Air Service when it was formed in 1957.

Other service included Commander of the Australian Army Training in Vietnam followed by Military attaché in Saigon.

As a brigadier, he commanded 3 Brigade in Townsville and later the Command and Staff College at Fort Queenscliff.

For his war service he was Mentioned in Despatches and for his overall distinguished service he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (Military Division).

In retirement Ray remained active in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales.



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
NAVY						
R56547	EM	EF	SMITH	HMAS MELBOURNE	21/11/25	16/3/27
R54361	LM	R	HIMBURY	HMAS MELBOURNE (2)	7/2/26	19/9/38
R93412	NA	RJ	INGLEDEW	HMAS MELBOURNE	10/3/26	7/8/45
R52803	PO	JA	PUGH	HMAS MELBOURNE (2)	24/3/26	25/8/39
O42192	LT	WM	SHAW	HMAS MELBOURNE/SYDNEY(6)	25/3/26	2/1/43
R49320	PO	RD	LUXFORD	HMAS MELBOURNE (3)	16/4/26	21/12/34
R65256	EM	JN	RIDDOCK	HMAS DUCHESS/SYDNEY (4)	18/5/26	27/10/48
R54297	PO	AA	SCOTT	HMAS SYDNEY (11)	9/2/26	25/2/41
R42682	NS2	JH	HARMAN	HMAS SYDNEY (3)	7/2/26	8/7/46
R36311	NA	D	LAIRD	HMAS SYDNEY (4)	15/5/26	26/11/30
R65890	AS	BA	MCLENNAN	HMAS SYDNEY (5)	26/4/26	18/11/49
R96083	AS	RM	PERKINS	HMAS SYDNEY	18/4/26	14/5/51
R63920	EM	PM	WILLARD	HMAS SYDNEY / VAMPIRE (3)/ DUCHESS	4/5/26	29/7/47
R96512	RO2	SR	HAYWARD	HMAS DERWENT	26/2/26	27/6/51
R50011	AS	RJ	RICHEY	HMAS DERWENT/VAMPIRE	6/3/26	24/10/36
R52174	PO	RG	DAY	HMAS VENDETTA (2)	16/5/26	11/7/37
R95619	AS	DR	MCKAY	HMAS VENDETTA (2)	20/2/26	7/9/50
R59490	COOK	KP	EAGAN	HMAS VENDETTA (2)	18/4/26	10/11/43
R55023	COOK	LM	FULLERTON	HMAS PARRAMATTA	25/4/26	24/1/41
R59787	LEM	LC	GRAHAM	HMAS PARRAMATTA/PERTH (2)	10/3/26	20/7/41
O788	LTCOMM	RV	MORRITT	HMAS MELBOURNE/PERTH	3/5/26	19/12/33
R66598	RO	DN	NEWMAN	HMAS PERTH	26/2/26	24/8/48
R66773	EM	DJ	CONNOLLY	HMAS ANZAC/HOBART	14/2/26	9/7/49
R63982	AS	JJ	ILES	HMAS DUCHESS (2)/YARRA	6/3/26	7/6/47
R55253	LEM	KH	PETERSON	HMAS YARRA	22/4/26	11/9/41
O103229	LTCOMM	CG	BARTLETT	HMAS YARRA/BRISBANE	1/3/26	26/7/29
R95654	AS	RT	SKINNER	HMAS STUART / BRISBANE	7/5/26	25/9/50
O2176	LT	RM	JONES	HMAS MELBOURNE (3)/HFV	25/5/26	28/2/43
R52202	PO	AW	HOSWELL	HMAS MELBOURNE/725 SQN SYDNEY (3)	26/5/26	11/11/37



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
ARMY						
235022	COL	RL	BURNARD AM MID	OD HQ CANBERRA/ AATTV	6/3/26	20/1/30
53132	WO2	MB	WATERS	1 SAS SQN	4/5/26	10/8/38
2135053	CAPT	PJ	EDWARDS	HQ CANBERRA CMF/HQ RAASC	24/3/26	25/10/38
36077	CAPT	DA	GOUGH	VISIY / HQ 5COY RAASC	7/5/26	28/10/38
2783084	PTE	DJ	PAXTON	HQ 1 ALSG	4/4/26	15/6/45
16566	PTE	M	MOLONEY	ALSC	10/3/26	30/4/43
2793590	PTE	JM	MILLS	1ARU/8RAR/HQ 1 ALSG	5/2/26	17/4/49
218523	PTE	DR	MOSS	1ARU/4RAR/ATF/9RAR/AFV	28/2/26	28/2/44
17885	CPL	DJ	HARDMAN	1 RAR / AFV PROV UNIT	5/7/25	14/3/46
535510	PTE	JH	FLOYD	1 ARU / HQ 1 ATF	2/5/26	9/8/48
38114	SGT	RJ	JEFFREY	1 RAR/ /1 ARU / HQ 1 ATF	3/26	18/5/46
43462	LCPL	LF	BAILEY	HQ 1 ATF	7/5/26	13/12/46
2791963	PTE	JW	FENTON	1 ARU / 5 RAR / HQ AFV	22/3/26	1/5/48
2794225	PTE	PN	GALLAGHER	1 ARU/1ACAU/1ARU	15/2/26	17/4/47
2787807	PTE	PJ	WEBSTER	1 ARU	20/3/26	4/1/47
2788821	PTE	WH	MILLER	1 ARU	17/4/26	2/10/47
37500	SSGT	AY	BROWN	5 RAR/DET 1 FD HY COY	13/2/26	13/7/38
2783443	PTE	MJA	GREEN	87 TRANS PL RAASC	3/2/26	14/8/45
217176	PTE	BR	SHIPP	1 ARU/1 TRANPL RAASC	9/4/26	13/5/45
1731039	PTE	JT	RYAN	AFV DET 1DIV POST/ 1 TRANPL RAASC	6/4/26	14/5/45
3791025	PTE	BV	ABBOTT	1 FD HOSP	15/5/26	28/11/46
1731821	PTE	LD	MATTHEWS	1ATF DET 6ORD FP	1/5/26	16/8/45
3791273	CPL	DB	OSBORNE	2 COMP ORD / 2 AOD	28/2/26	21/10/46
1410373	SGT	RW	CHADBURN	2 COMP ORD	24/5/26	18/11/37
3411912	SGT	CJ	JURD	104 SIG SQN	23/3/26	2/9/35
2791235	LCPL	RM	MCINERNEY	104 SIG SQN	22/5/26	25/7/47
215174	SIG	JN	ATKIN	103 SIG SQN	18/3/26	25/2/46
4410671	LCPL	RJ	GREENWOOD	110 SIG SQN	21/2/26	19/7/46
216425	LCPL	KP	JOHNSON	104 / 110 SIG SQN	25/4/26	9/4/48
2784257	SIG	JR	MALIPHANT	110 SIG SQN	16/4/26	30/3/45



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
48616	SGT	DG	HOWELLS	32 SMALL SHIPS (5)	21/1/26	30/4/45
1734135	SPR	DH	KIPPEN	32 SMALL SHIPS (2)	7/2/26	23/2/46
3790082	CPL	C	BEDNARCZYK	DET30TERMSQN/11MCG	21/1/26	20/7/46
2789195	SPR	HJ	CIEZAK	17 CONST SQN/21EST	3/3/26	26/11/46
2781846	SPR	ND	CAMPBELL	17 CONST SQN	12/3/26	26/6/45
242848	CAPT	JC	FENTON	17 CONST SQN	22/3/26	14/12/48
38976	CFTM	RJ	WILLIAMS	17 CONST SQN	7/2/26	29/8/47
2412404	CPL	GE	MARQUETT	17 CONST SQN		
235156	CAPT	RW	STEWART	1 FD SQN	19/4/26	7/4/37
2790123	SPR	P	GRAY	1 FD SQN	1/5/26	6/1/47
2794955	SPR	BA	FENWICK	1 FD SQN	28/5/26	26/8/48
235156	CAPT	RW	STEWART	1 FD SQN	19/4/26	7/4/37
1410891	LCPL	BA	LAUDER	3 FD TRP / 1 FD SQN	27/4/26	1/6/45
2788858	GNR	GG	PILE	1 FD REGT	21/3/26	13/8/45
2782221	GNR	JW	KILBOURNE	1 FD REGT	25/4/26	8/3/45
1734700	GNR	DK	RICHARD- PRESTON	1 FD REGT	18/3/26	23/5/48
2251501	LBDR	KW	BOYCE	1 FD / 4 FD REGT	20/4/26	3/10/48
42327	SGT	RM	LYMBURN	4 FD REGT	31/5/26	4/7/38
2786937	CFTM	PJ	LACKEY	4 FD REGT / 12 FD REGT LAD	30/4/26	13/10/45
312677	CPL	EJ	WILLINGHAM	BSQN 3CAV REGT / HQ 1 ATF	23/5/26	16/2/49
42417	SGT	JJ	O'BRIEN	8FD AMB / 7 RAR (MED C)	17/3/26	26/3/42
54148	SGT	RJ	CLADINGBOEL	1 RAR	3/26	31/12/42
313808	PTE	PJR	LATHAM	1ARU/HQ1ALSG/7RAR/1ARU/2RAR	19/4/26	6/7/51
217078	PTE	NJ	MOONEY	1 ARU / 2 RAR	27/2/26	6/2/48
2788312	PTE	KS	GORDON	1 ARU / 3 RAR	8/3/26	1/5/46
1200755	CPL	PF	MAHER	3 RAR (2)	5/3/26	3/10/48
56050	LCPL	MJ	GREENWAY	3 RAR	12/2/26	18/5/47
2785793	PTE	D	GEORGE	3 RAR	24/4/26	12/3/47
2787558	PTE	J	RAMADON	1 ARU / 3 RAR / 4 RAR	5/2/26	23/5/46
2794188	PTE	GA	OWEN	4 RAR	17/5/26	28/2/48
2789389	PTE	DV	BENNETT	1 ARU / 5 RAR	19/3/26	21/9/45



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
4717580	PTE	PE	STEIN	5 RAR	19/1/26	13/1/45
214239	PTE	JF	LADMORE	5 RAR	12/2/26	10/7/44
38388	PTE	AG	HUNTER	5 RAR	25/4/26	7/2/47
2782401	PTE	PA	WHITELEY	1 ARU / 6 RAR	24/4/26	6/1/45
1730833	PTE	GH	LING	6 RAR	5/3/26	3/1/45
2781738	LCPL	CR	CROFT	6 RAR	29/4/26	1/2/45
216531	LCPL	VJ	KENNEDY	1 ARU / 5 RAR / 7 RAR	26/2/26	28/10/45
219124	LCPL	B	ALMOND	1 ARU / 5 RAR / 7 RAR	9/4/26	13/7/47
3797372	PTE	GH	JOHNSTONE	1 ARU / 7 RAR	5/4/26	22/2/49
2793296	PTE	WS	KENNEDY	7 RAR	22/1/26	16/4/48
214891	SGT	KP	CLAYDON	7 RAR	28/4/26	19/9/37
2792328	PTE	JW	BECUS	7 RAR	22/4/26	13/8/48
2790399	LCPL	PC	KEARNS	HQ 1ALSG / 1 ARU / 8 RAR	5/3/26	5/1/48
3796045	PTE	RC	WARE	1 ARU / 8 RAR	31/10/25	5/1/48
39127	CPL	R	RIBIC	8 RAR	2/8/25	13/1/48
219292	PTE	SJ	LLEWELLYN	8 RAR	26/2/26	7/5/49
1735281	PTE	PT	WILSON MID	8 RAR	8/6/26	9/11/48
212724	WO2	RL	JARVIS	9 RAR	12/4/26	28/12/34
2787223	LCPL	P	GERAGHTY	9 RAR	30/3/26	22/10/46
2788634	PTE	LC	BROWN	9 RAR	5/4/26	10/12/46
RAAF						
O219964	FLT	GG	COOPER DFC	HQAFV RAAF	17/5/26	21/1/38
A112836	LA	GD	NELSON	NO 2 SQN	3/7/25	7/6/46
A118815	LA	IE	BANNERMAN	NO1 OP SUPP UNIT	1/2/26	24/5/51
A216061	SGT	LJ	LEES	BASE SUPP FLT	9/5/26	18/2/37
A216468	CPL	BEW	BATES	BASE SQN UBON / 35 SQN	11/5/26	25/2/39

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

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

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

LAWNCARE

AR & J LAWNCARE

159 TWYNAM ST

TEMORA NSW 2666

JAY PEACHY

0400 049 123

jaypeachey@hotmail.com

ABN 84 281 794 277

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

ALL BATTERY SUPPLIERS DELETED

**AFTER APRIL ISSUE
WENT TO PRINT**

**APOLOGIES FOR
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**THIS COLUMN DELETED
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After careful consideration we have decided to delete this information from future publications.

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