



THE

VIETNAM VETERANS' NEWSLETTER

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

SUPPORTING ALL WHO SERVE & HAVE SERVED

DECEMBER 2023

Dear Santa,

DVA has let the number of veterans disability claims received, but not yet decided, accumulate to well over 60,000.

Veterans are having to wait for decisions, many of which are life changing, for something round a year. This is a ridiculously large number and a ridiculously long wait.

The Royal Commission has identified the long wait as a possible contribution to veterans suicide.

Would you please send your elves to sort the mess out?

Veteran's Mum

ALSO
INSIDE

- ROYAL COMMISSION ACCUSES DVA & DEFENCE OF NOT GIVING WHOLEHEARTED SUPPORT.
- HARMONISING- IS DVA FAIR DINKUM?
- VVFA HISTORY CONTINUES. And More

NEXT ISSUE
MARCH 24

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SERVICES

DVA - Military Compensation

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

Asbestos - Dust Disease Tribunal claims.

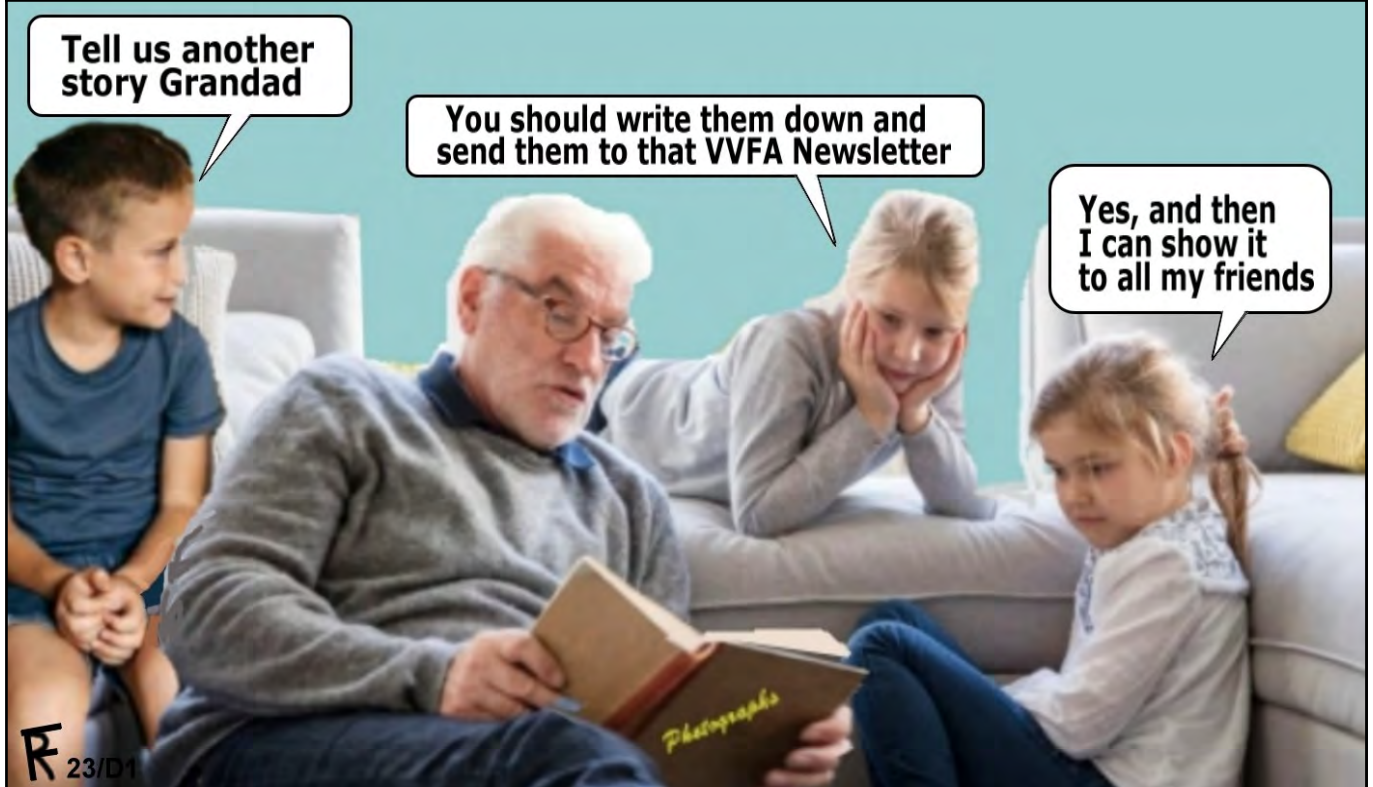
Industry super claims - income protection - TPD appeals,

Coroner's inquests

claims for Detriment Caused by Defective Administration - CDDA

Our Readers love Vietnam Veterans' Stories

Gleaned from letters diaries and memories



Welcome to new author **Ross Wood** with his story of the hazards of sleeping on the Vung Tau Ferry.

Don Greentree campaigned for a battle fought in Vietnam (and his unit's part in it) to be officially acknowledged.

Welcome to **Paul Davidson** who, having read Ian Granland's Canungra story in our last edition, tells of quite a different experience.

Then **David Calderwood** tells us of his adventurous and different R and C.

Regular author **John Ingram**, brings us episode 7 of the story of HMAS Sydney. ■



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
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MEMBERSHIP

**Belonging
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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. ■

John Schumann does new version of *I Was Only 19* with the band, The Waifs



On the 50th Anniversary of the end of the Vietnam war and the 40th Anniversary of the release of the Redgum version of *I Was Only 19*, John Schuman releases a new version with a band that is an institution in the music world, The Waifs.

It is of course a great song and this new version is up to the task of honouring it.

You can watch and listen to the new version on UTube:
Google: You Tube-John Schumann-I was only19-the Waifs.

It's certainly worth a listen (and watch).

If you would like to catch up on what Shooey is doing ,you can get to his web-site by Googling , Schumann.com.au and see page 28 this issue.



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Ridiculous waiting times persist

As at 30 September 2023, there were 75,516 claims received by DVA on which no decision had been made.

The processing time, depending on the type of claim, was a bit over or under a year.

CLOSE-OFF DATE FOR MARCH 24 ISSUE 1 FEBRUARY 2024

For items of publication contact
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75. Mortality Report Form
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80. Operation Life Advert
81. Last Post
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FREE!

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How could it come to this.

(it is reprehensible that government departments are not giving full cooperation to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide)



Defence and Veteran Suicide Royal Commissioner Nick Kaldas addresses the National Press Club on 13 September.
Photo: Screenshot.

In a speech to the National Press Club on Wednesday, 13 September, commission chair Nick Kaldas said:

"Despite the government establishing a royal commission and the legislature wanting certain issues investigated, obtaining critical information from Commonwealth bodies in a timely manner has been difficult"

"Our success will require government and its agencies, including the ADF, defence and DVA, to, once and for all, get

on-board and act."

That they have not fully got 'on-board' is reprehensible.

1600 servicemen and women have committed suicide between 1997 and 2020 or 20 times the number of service personnel killed on active duty.

The Royal Commission' chair, Nick Kaldas, further pointed out that the suicide rate for ex-serving men who served in the 'permanent' forces is 44 per cent higher than the general Australian male population., while for female veterans it is 107 per cent higher.

The tragedy is heightened when it is realised that, all things being equal, service personnel's



suicide rate should be lower than the general population because the selection procedure eliminates applicants showing any sign of mental instability.

This lack of urgency and tardiness is, of course, not new, especially in the workings of DVA, but that it would persist in the face of the tragic suicide figures is totally unacceptable.

The VVFA specially concurs with Nick Kaldas's criticism of DVA's 'adversarial culture,' which he says 'has left many veterans re-traumatized when forced to justify their claims for compensation'.

The VVFA joins with the Royal Commission commissioners in demanding that the laggard Department of Defence, DVA and the ADF to GET WITH IT. ■

By the way

Nick Kaldas's acknowledgement.

'Fifty years on from the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, I acknowledge the lasting legacy of our Vietnam veterans in being the first to raise awareness about mental health and PTSD.'

'Their experiences have helped shape modern society's understanding of these incredibly complex issues, which allows this Royal Commission to examine in depth the ongoing tragedy that is defence and veteran suicide.'

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

Careful Where You Sleep

On the Vung Tau Ferry

Ross Wood's selection of a place to sleep could have been better.



I returned to Australia on H.M.A.S. Sydney, sailing into Sydney Harbour on Friday 12 May 1967. That was a welcome return but the journey has left me with a frightening memory. Not so much of what happened, more what could have happened.

On the first two nights out of Vung Tau, sailing in the South China Sea, groups of us slept in the sponsons (platforms extending out from the side of the ship) until about 3am when pelting rain sent us inside.

My sleeping place was a small metal-box-type-thing immediately to the rear of the sponson, which was firmly attached to both the sponson and the hull, but was directly over the sea. Nothing between this box-thing and the ocean.

When I first tried it, it felt firm enough, so I curled up in that sleeping-bag-thing the Navy gave us and was comfortable enough.

On the third morning out at sea, a Naval Officer in his white uniform was roaming around the ship with a large steel spike belting things.

When he got to where I had spent the last two nights, I watched him belt this steel spike onto the base of where I had been sleeping. To my immediate horror he was able with very little effort to force his steel spike straight through. There was then a bloody big hole directly under my sleeping spot. It turned out this officer was on some kind of regular round, searching for rust in what we were later informed was this old rust bucket of a ship.

He immediately declared my small metal box out of bounds. Looking at me he ordered 'Don't under any circumstances get in it'.

I felt lucky that the floor of this box had not rotted away while I was sleeping on it resulting in me falling into the ocean and my absence not being discovered till next morning.

That is the nightmare from my trip in H.M.A.S. Sydney, that can still visit my dreams.

Ross Wood
ex-5 R.A.R. ■



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Will the recommendations of the Suicide Royal Commission end up disappearing without trace?

(like so many other reports and recommendations)

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide has uncovered a disturbing lack of response by governments to previous reports and enquiries relevant to Defence and Veteran suicide.

The Royal Commission has found:

'We note the considerable number of previous reports delivered and inquiries conducted since 2000 that are relevant to the topics of suicide and suicidality among serving and ex-serving ADF members. We have identified over 50 previous reports, and more than 750 recommendations. While we acknowledge that many of these reports and inquiries were about discrete topics, we have been dismayed to come to understand the limited ways that Australian Governments have responded to these previous inquiries and reports.'

It is reassuring to have our own frustrating

experience over the years recognised by this Royal Commission.

We must ensure that the final recommendations of this Royal Commission (to be published next year), are not delayed by being made the subject of some time wasting further enquiry or lost in some bureaucratic wasteland.

The Royal Commission too is well aware of these possibilities. To guarantee its recommendations do not conveniently disappear, the Royal Commission wants:

"We commissioners believe an enduring, powerful, independent body is necessary to hold government, the ADF, defence, DVA and other relevant agencies, as well as state and territory governments, to account, to make sure that they prioritise the major, long-term, complex reforms that are needed,"

"This body must not only be independent, it must have the



confidence of serving and ex-serving ADF members and seek direct and significant input from them.

"It must be an oversight body but not one that usurps the leadership of the DVA or ADF, nor one that absolves that leadership of its primary responsibility for veterans' wellbeing.

"And it must have sufficient powers to deal with the issues it faces."

The government has tentatively agreed to establish such a body but we note with some alarm that no allowance was made for it in the last Federal budget.

We shall be looking for it in the next. ■



Recognition for our work by retiring DVA Commissioner And good news on travel concessions

For many years now, our VVFA, Australia wide, has helped veterans submit some 2,500 invalidity claims a year. Each such claim must be counted as only one, even though many have included more than one medical condition. (Unfortunately, some ex-service organisations have, until recently, against DVA policy, been basing their statistics on the total of conditions.)

The Federation's services have also included outreach tours to country areas where the expertise needed has not been available.

All over Australia, our welfare officers have been busy.

We also continue our 40 year history of campaigning for improvements in the Repatriation system (such as our successful campaign, with Blue Ryan of the TPI Federation, to fairly index the TPI pension).

The outgoing Repatriation Commissioner, Don Spinks AM has awarded us a Certificate of Appreciation for the work we do and have done.

These accomplishments did not come from nowhere.

The struggle to have Vietnam veterans' issues taken seriously began in the late 70s and early 80s.

Those struggles are now the subject of research and recording by Kel Robinson who kindly allows us to publish his papers as he is working.

Thank you Kel.

Some good news.

Many of us will have been frustrated by the differences between States in granting travel concessions to veterans. The differences have complicated interstate travel.

Recently, the matter was discussed at a meeting of Federal and State Veterans Affairs ministers. Here is an announcement by the Federal Minister.

'Ministers discussed opportunities for national harmonisation and mutual recognition of relevant identification documents, such as concession cards. Ministers agreed to work collaboratively towards this goal. ■



Australian Government

The Repatriation Commission

Certificate of Appreciation

PRESENTED TO

Vietnam Veterans' Federation of Australia

IN RECOGNITION OF

Your organization's valued support to
Veterans' and their families.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'DSL' followed by a period.

Don Spinks AM
Repatriation
Commissioner
Repatriation
Commission

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

Don Greentree's role in The Ambush at Tua Thic

A battle Australia refused to recognise

My story begins on 29th May 1969 when I was back at the Fire Support Base (FSB).

The mortar crew consisting of four men including myself was hastily packed onto a mortar carrier and we found ourselves detached to 2 Troop, B Squadron, 3 Cavalry Regiment as part of OPERATION GARY OWEN in Area of Operations (AO) FROG led by Captain Tom Arrowsmith.

We set off at a great rate of speed heading to a destination unknown to us. Nor did we have an inkling of the trouble we were heading into.

Including our mortar track we had a total of 13 vehicles. I suppose if you were worrying about what may lie ahead, this was not a good sign.

Somewhere along the way we had acquired a number of infantry men from the 2nd D & E (Defence and Employment) Platoon, seven of whom were to stay with us.

On arrival at what we then knew to be the Viet Cong (VC)-friendly village of Thua Tich, or rather the stone or cement pillars gateway that was all that remained, Captain Arrowsmith split the

group up, sending nine of the 13 carriers further north along the track in case of an attack from that direction.

This led the remaining four carriers, including the mortar track, to hide behind some very sparse scrub. The mortar track having the heaviest fire power and needing clear air around us to be able to fire, was given the prime position. As the photographs (see later) will clearly show, my carrier was almost completely in the open facing south along the track.

As we were setting up our arcs of fire, the seven men from the 2nd D & E platoon passed through us to set up an early warning post some 500 metres south along the track. This meant that our arcs of fire had to be easily recognised in the dark so that we would not be lobbing mortar bombs on to them (I did note too that they did not look the type that would be happy with that happening).

Along side us, separated by a few metres, was Captain Arrowsmith's command vehicle. Beside him on a bit of an angle was another fighting track, then to the rear was an engineers



Here is an official photograph taken as the resupply chopper came in. A close examination will reveal that the mortar track was in prime position facing the oncoming enemy.

track.

(I note here that the battle report infers that my mortar track took very little part in the battle. As my story and photographs will show, this was wrong.)

Our little group set up its defences as best we could given the sparse amount of cover we had with a bank of 12 claymores directly in front of Captain Arrowsmith. The signal for 'all hell to break loose' was when, and if, he pressed the tit.

We then sat down to eat a cold meal of what ever rations we had brought with us and with night starting to fall, we, the mortar crew, planned with the crew of our carrier exactly what we were to do if the claymores were fired.

As the mortar crew cannot see over the sides of the carrier it was decided that I would

stand and give fire directions as needed.

Let me first say here that the road was only about 20 feet in front of us.

A moonless night descended rather quickly as we stood-to in our various positions. All was still as though the whole country-side had stopped breathing.

I was looking South along the track that was a possible enemy approach. From my position I had a perfect uninterrupted view of not only the road but the entire grass area to our front where every tree and shrub had been removed for about 200 metres before the jungle commenced.

2000hrs came. Nothing. We thought we were in for a quiet night when, at 2030hrs, we heard the click of the radio and then the

(Continued on page 16)



Myself sitting behind the 50cal of the mortar track

whispered message that a large group of heavily armed North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and Viet Cong (VC) were heading our way. Their assessment was a group of a minimum of 200.

Peering through the darkness with only the light of the stars, I saw three scouts coming along the road. They seemed to be doing a good job which worried me greatly. Behind them I could see the main body come four abreast and I quickly counted 125. I turned to look at Arrowsmith's vehicle and there were about 50 enemy now in the killing field.

The tit was pressed and all hell broke loose. Luckily for us most of the enemy turned

and ran for the safety of the jungle two hundred metres away— if they had turned in at us we would have been in big strife.

We heard the boss calling for illumination so within seconds the whole area was lit up bright as day.

From there the mortar went into virtual self control and we were firing rounds no charge , straight up and down, as well as ranging out over what was now a very large battle field. Every so often we would throw up a star shell to keep the area illuminated.

(I note here that the battle report claimed hand held flares were responsible for illuminating

the battle area. Some illumination was undoubtedly provided in this way, but it would simply not have made sense not to use mortar star shell that provided illumination 500 times greater than hand held flares.)

I saw sights that I will never forget as I looked out over the battle field. I saw one person crawling away dragging their intestines behind them until another round of fire ended their misery. I saw a figure stand and aim his weapon before he disappeared in a blaze of explosive light, hit directly by a mortar bomb. I saw bodies doing strange movements as 50cal rounds tore into them.

After some very hectic nerve shattering hours, well, only a bit more than 10 minutes really, the call came through to cease fire.

The sound of silence was deafening after the storm of noise from the last ten minutes. A quick round up of any injured was done and it turned out we had only one injury which, I understand, was a wound to the heel of a driver.

In the quiet of the aftermath we could hear the calling out of the enemy wounded and then, shortly after, the calling would stop.

We were so far out that we were beyond the range of artillery assistance so I believe that Captain Arrowsmith, at 2130hrs, was informed by Task Force HQ that a Spooky gunship aircraft was coming to our aid.

We had four men mark our perimeter by laying on their backs with a red filter on the torch pointing upwards. Next minute there was a noise like ripping cloth as bullets from spooky literally tore the jungle to shreds no more than a few feet out from us. Added to this was our mortar tube continuing sporadic fire which helped prevent, I believe, an enemy counter attack.

(Here again, I take exception to the battle report that stated twenty 81mm rounds were fired at the onset of the battle and a further ten 81mm High Explosive (HE) rounds fired as interdiction rounds throughout the rest of the night. In fact, we fired the first and last shot of the battle and fired over 60 rounds. Also, as far as I am aware, an

81mm mortar has never before been used in a killing group of an ambush. Yet not once does the battle report give any recognition to the mortar tube and crew.)

Shown two pages back is an official photograph taken as the resupply chopper came in. A close examination will reveal that the mortar track was in prime position facing the oncoming enemy.

We were on full stand too all night as we knew that only a short distance away was the remainder of the enemy force far outnumbering us. I honestly believe that if it had not been for Spooky and our mortar tube the enemy would have retaliated, and we would not have stood a chance.

Come first light we could hear the roar of the other APCs swooping down from the north and watched as they made a sweep out through the grass-lands. At the same time, the early warning team came in through the mortar position looking absolutely exhausted but you could see that if needed these seven men would be more than ready to fight to the end.

Conferences were called but being a lowly private I was not included in any part of these.

During this time a chopper landed with top brass, intelligence officers etc and the army photographer for the photo op.

An official photograph (one page back) shows myself sitting behind the 50cal of the mortar track cleaning my SLR at the same time. Pictured in the background is the chopper that brought in resups, the grass area all around is the battle ground and further off you can see the jungle starting again. I will say here that the mortar track had not moved since being positioned the evening prior to the battle, so it can again clearly be seen that we were in the prime position and definitely not in the rear position.

After one of these conferences with the team leaders etc, I saw Jimmy Riddle, who was in charge of the seven man 2nd D & E Platoon, go up to his men, have a bit of a talk and then go back to Captain Arrowsmith where a slightly heated

(Continued on page 18)



Captain Arrowsmith during dash to Xuyen Moc

discussion took place, I have no first hand knowledge of what that was about.

Just after that the order was given that all the bodies of the enemy dead were to be buried near the village gate pillars.

[Editors' note: Don has provided photos showing a number of bodies of dead enemy which we have chosen not to reproduce.]

It was understandably decided not to stick around this enemy infested area. So a mad dash for the village of Xuyen Moc began (see photo above) with the mortar track being positioned towards the rear of the column. One of the tracks got tangled in barbed wire and had to stop to clear it. We stayed with that vehicle due to the fact that we had the heaviest fire power of all, and as soon as the wire was cleared we took off faster than the

flying nun to meet up with the rest of the troop.

During that wild ride we had been hit twice with another five bodies being counted .

After returning home, I had nothing more to do with Thua Tich for a number of years until I happened to see a book in a department store with my photograph on the cover. Naturally I purchased the book, read it, noted all the discrepancies and attempted to set things right. This is when the s..t fight started.

I attempted to get in touch with the other members of the mortar team that were with me at Thua Tich but instead of them replying I received emails from DVA, from my old battalion and from Department of Defence telling me not to try and contact them as they wanted nothing to do with me.

This was like a red rag to a bull. So I spent a number of years writing to every member of parliament that I thought could help, even to my battalion mortar platoon pointing out that this should be on our battle honours as a mortar had never before been used in an ambush killing ground as well as the fact that it had played such a central role.

I received a reply saying that, as we were detached to 2 Cav, it had nothing to do with the battalion. They had even sent my letter to the battalion association and I received a rather curt message from them that it was obvious that I was trying to drum up some sort of glory for myself and to drop it.

I then contacted another person who had also been at the battle for advice. He was also trying to get recognition for his group.

Then it became apparent that even whether the battle itself ever took place was a matter of contention.

But between the two of us, over a 12 month period, we discovered that a couple a awards had been handed out for the action (so some authority must have accepted that it did happen—it was a confusing situation).

Eventually after many letters back and forth with undeniable proof of our claim, we were able to communicate with the head of the Australian War Memorial (AWM) Dr Brendon Nelson. Letters of fact that we had been sending had, Dr Nelson confirmed, not been passed on to him.

In short he then initiated an investigation into the battle at Thua Tich, found that what we were presenting to him was factual and instigated the insertion of a diorama of the Battle of Thua Tich into the war memorial's Vietnam war section.

This no doubt forced the military to reluctantly admit that such an action had taken place.

I put forward this contention: That 19 Australian soldiers taking on in excess of 200 enemy, with no artillery support, and beating them, should be a battle remembered, not denied just to suit the military higher ups.

Actions that took place were not decisions made by the rank and file yet it is the rank and file yet again being shafted.

I have given here in this story my memories, which are as clear to me today as they were all those years ago. Many of the people I contacted—parliamentarians, journalists, shock jocks—all said the same. 'No one cares any more, it was so long ago'.

Well, I remember and I care.

This was one of the biggest battles that Australians had in Vietnam when taking into account our numbers and the vastly superior numbers of the enemy.

Because of the incorrect official report, those of us who fought the battle were denied our rightful recognition.

The mortar crew, I truly believe, played a major part of stopping the enemy from regrouping and overrunning us. Yet we were shafted badly in the battle report which wrongly stated that we were placed in the rear and took no important part in the battle. This wrong statement was made, even when photographic evidence showed that we were in the prime position directly facing the enemy and that our ranging across the battle field would have made it look as if there were two mortar tubes in action. Add to this us having fired in excess of 60 rounds during the battle and sporadic fire all night and the injustice of the official claim becomes clear.

Recognition, denied elsewhere, was eventually given by Dr Brendon Nelson of the Australian War Museum who confirmed that the battle at Thua Tich was one of the most significant battles that Australian troops fought in Vietnam due to the number of Australian troops facing the vastly superior NVA and VC forces. Yet, even to this day, there have been no commendations, no word of well done, just a very reluctant acceptance that a battle took place at Thua Tich.

Don Greentree.■

THANKS FRANK

President of our NSW Branch, Frank Cole, retires after many years helping veterans and their families.

We will miss him.



Extract from an address by National President Bill Roberts OAM, 11/10/23.

As many of you here today will recall Frank joined the NSW State branch at Granville as a volunteer in 2003, after having been in the workforce for 42 years but forced to leave due to his service related disabilities and illnesses, (like many of us here today).

He was adamant that his service related medical problems would not prevent him from doing something useful with his life following his medical retirement, and wisely, I believe, he chose to perform voluntary work with one of the best ESOs in Australia to assist his fellow veterans and their families.

He brought with him management and administrative skills and experience that would later be beneficial to the overall running of the organisation at Granville and the handling of disputes and problem solving within the NSW State branch.

Frank's initial activity with the Branch at Granville in 2003 was that of Membership

Officer. He also assisted the State Secretary with some functions.

In 2004 he was elected as a member of the State Branch Committee where he was actively involved, contributing positively to much of its decision making processes.

In 2007 Frank was elected as the Honorary Secretary, a position he held until 2015. During this period he earned the respect and confidence of not only the members of the State Branch headquarters, but also those of our Sub-Branches, for the professionalism and administrative abilities he displayed.

In January 2015 Frank was elected as the President of the State Branch following the sudden death of Tim McCombe OAM, a position Frank has held since then.

Frank, I personally, and no doubt the rest of us here, will genuinely miss your guidance and leadership and your great personality. Thank you for your commitment to the branch members and families for the past twenty years – Well done that man. ■

Please support this important study.
It will undoubtedly help the future care of
our children and grandchildren as well as
the children of the veterans of other wars.

Bill Roberts OAM, National President, VVFA



Volunteers wanted.

Children of veterans are an overlooked group in Australian research and the long-term effects of growing up with a parent who has seen active service are not well understood.

I am the daughter of a Vietnam Veteran, a mental health accredited social worker and a PhD Candidate with Charles Sturt University. I am researching the impact that having a Vietnam Veteran father has on wellbeing in adulthood. I hope that this research will help to improve support services to children and families of all service personnel.

I am looking for volunteers who are children of Vietnam veterans to be interviewed about their experiences across their lifespan.

Criteria: Your father must have deployed to Vietnam with the Australian Army as part of his operational service, and you must have lived most of your childhood in the same home as him.

Please note, I am not funded by or associated with any government organisation and this research project has been approved following a rigorous application process by Charles Sturt University and the Human Research Ethics Committee (Ethics approval number: H23571).

Contact: Alarna Vrieling at avrieling@csu.edu.au or 0400 739 946

How will the 'harmonising of the three compensation schemes' affect Vietnam veterans

'What the hell does all that mean', you may well ask.

Well, here's a go at an explanation.

Presently, there are three veterans' disability compensation schemes. They have been established at different times for different purposes.

But when a veteran wants to lodge a disability claim, the first thing the Pension Officer must do is identify under which scheme the claim belongs.

This causes a delay for obvious reasons but particularly because a veteran's claim may fall under more than one scheme.

When DVA receives the claim from the Pension Officer, there is a similar delay.

Over three years ago, the Productivity Commission recommended the three schemes be harmonised into one. For years before that, the VVFA and other ex-service organisations were making the same recommendation.

Even after the Productivity Commission's recommendation, DVA just dawdled on; nothing much happened.

It has been the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide which has put a rocket up DVA and spurred them into action.

How will this effect Vietnam veterans?

The answer is, 'not a lot', because if you are receiving compensation under an existing scheme that will remain unchanged.

But in a year or two, after the harmonised scheme is in place, any new claim will be judged under the new scheme..

New Vietnam veterans' claims may be for Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA) (a TPI like payment for those ineligible for a TPI because of their age) or they may be for upgrades to existing General Rate pensions.

And here's the rub. DVA refuses to guarantee that outcomes of such claims under the



harmonised scheme will leave the claimant no worse off than under the old arrangements.

Indeed, the harmonised scheme could leave new Vietnam veteran claimants worse off than had they been claiming before the change.

That, surely, is unfair, unnecessary and, indeed, sheer bastardry.

And what of the advice being given by veterans?

There is a committee of highly experienced ESO representatives giving advice to DVA.

In the best DVA tradition however, DVA will not tell those committee members what it is

recommending to government; so they don't know whether their advice has been heeded, and are not given the chance to question those DVA recommendations.

In other words, it is a sham consultation.

But the existence of the veterans' advisory committee may allow the Minister when making his 'harmonisation' announcement to say something to effect that 'there has been wide and lengthy consultation with the veteran community', falsely suggesting veterans' approval.

Sadly, we've seen it all before. ■

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

Another (but different) Canungra Story (a tribute to the clip-board)

by Paul Davidson

Having just read Ian Granland's experience at Canungra, I must report mine was completely different. Ian was in the same initial Police Training Class 111 and there were a few others in that class who were conscripted and served in Vietnam, namely Peter Poulton one of the organisers of the Welcome Home Parade, Greg Masters 7 RAR and others.

I was based at 3 Cav Holsworthy and some of us were sent to Canungra with the 1st Armoured Regiment from Puckapunyal. We were picked up by a bus with them, no pushing the bus (as in Ian's story) but the driver would not stop so anyone needing to relieve themselves had to stand at the open door on the move.

We were assigned four-man tents you could just stand up in and commenced training doing contact drills.

I was carrying the M60 in a creek bed when a contact drill started. As instructed I ran up to the high ground and was running along the top when the ground disappeared and I ended up upside down in a tree. One thing in my favour, I did not let go of the M60.

Next thing the instructor was yelling to me to get up to the high ground. I told him I had been.

It turned out another classmate from the Police, Greg Masters was playing the enemy.

The next day I jumped off a rock and rolled my ankle spraining it. After seeing the medic I was

sent to the cook house to work. So while the others were running around, jumping off towers and crawling through the mud I was peeling spuds and keeping the coffers full of water.

I thought this was pretty cushy except for this Warrant Officer from the Armoured Regiment who did his course carrying round a clipboard giving me a task every time he walked past, especially if I was sitting down having a smoke. It didn't matter if I had just peeled 10 tons of spuds.

One time he got me to rake even lines around the tents like a Japanese Garden. Another time the fire buckets which were on poles outside each tent had to be emptied, cleaned and filled up with fresh water. I was only a trooper so I thought he must know fresh water puts out fires better than stale water. I was jack of this.

One of my jobs was to keep the coffers in the cook house topped up with water. I got two buckets half filled with water (*I never wanted to lift too much*) then every time I saw him coming I got up and pretended to be topping up the coffers. I never got another job from him.

Speaking of Jack, he was a 40-year-old Corporal in the same tent as me and pleaded to let him know how I was managing to get out of the training as it was killing him. I could only tell him it had taken me years to figure it out. So my ankle got better and back out I went and I got to do a few things and pass chucking a grenade into a



supposed bunker.

Then, you wouldn't believe it, I jumped off another rock landing on my good ankle and sprained it so no more humping a pack for me (*I did suffer from numerous sprained ankles when growing up*)

Ian spoke of the exercise of crawling along with the Vickers Machine Guns firing over their heads. When our lot had to do it I was with the guns, I think they had three of them, however, they were fixed so they could not be depressed. I was assisting in feeding the belt, it appeared the rounds were going into the men on the ground and there was panic. But it was just the burning tracer falling out of the back of the round which gave the impression it was the round hitting the ground. You just can't rely on WW2 ammo. Same went with the WW2 underwear issued at Kapooka.

So it was time for the bush exercise to take place I was given the task of operating a rear link radio on top of a mountain and told to go to the Q Store and get some rations.

The QM behaved as though he was paying for them himself. I was given a blanket and some 24-hour rations packs. I thought bugger him so I kept a conversation going during which time I asked him if I could take an empty ration tin to put my blanket in so it never got wet. When I got

the OK I inadvertently picked up a full can of rations packs and was on my way.

I was driven by truck to where the radio was and a tent had been erected, so whilst the others humped packs and down mountains I lay in the sun reading books and enjoying plenty of coffee and food.

I did manage to pass the course as nobody failed on a Unit Course, so that was my slog at Canungra.

I did have fun coming back on the bus and telling my mates how hard I had done it.

I did learn one important lesson. The power of the Clip Board, when I was back at my Squadron I acquired a clipboard and wrote a lot of numbers on it. When not doing exercises or training we were given silly tasks to keep us busy. I used to go to the barracks and have a nap in someone's room and if a Sergeant or Officer came around to catch anyone skiving off I would jump up and when asked what I was doing I would claim I was counting fire extinguishers or similar for the Q Store and get told to carry on, which I did by laying down again.

Paul Davison ■

FROM THE EDITORS DESK

RSL Apology to Vietnam Veterans

Many Vietnam veterans, although not all by any means, felt a lack of respect from the RSL after the war.

Some were confronted by RSL members accusing them of not being in a real war and that they had no reason to exhibit war related illnesses.

And there is no doubt the RSL failed to support Vietnam veterans in their campaign to have Agent Orange and other chemical exposure recognised. Indeed the RSL supported the government against the Vietnam veterans' efforts even opposing the establishment of a Royal Commission to examine the issue.

So when NSW RSL President Ray James, on the eve of Vietnam Veterans Day marking the 50th Anniversary of the end of the war, offered an apology for these instances of rejection, it was well received.

However, it should be noted that Ray is himself a Vietnam veteran. It means he was offering an apology to himself. An apology has never come from the perpetrators of the offending behaviour.

DVA Backlog

There has not been much progress in reducing the backlog.

As at 30 October 2023 there were 75,937 veterans' disability claims received by DVA on which no decision has been made.

The time taken from the submission of a claim till a decision is made is a bit either side of a year depending of the type of claim.

That remains a huge number of unprocessed claims and an unreasonably long wait for decisions to be made.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide has identified these unreasonable waiting times as increasing the risk of veterans committing suicide.

It is true that DVA is trying hard to catch up, but the question remains how could they have allowed this situation to develop when a post Afghanistan war surge of claims was wholly predictable (and was predicted by the VVFA).

Suicide Royal Commission

The Royal Commission produced an interim report on 11 August 2022.

DVA published: *Update on Implementation of Interim Report of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide* on its web-site in June 2023.

There have been no further updates on the DVA web-site since then.

This is disappointing, and lends weight to Commissioner Nick Kaldas's complaint that the Royal Commission is not getting whole hearted support from DVA (see earlier article, 'How Could It Come To This').

This Royal Commission deals with life and death decisions of our veterans. DVA must take it seriously and keep us advised on its remedial actions.

DVA must do better.

Veterans' Stories

The Veterans' Stories we have been publishing are proving very popular. "It's history from the Diggers' point of view' is a remark we are hearing.

So keep those stories rolling in.

Happy Christmas,
Editor ■

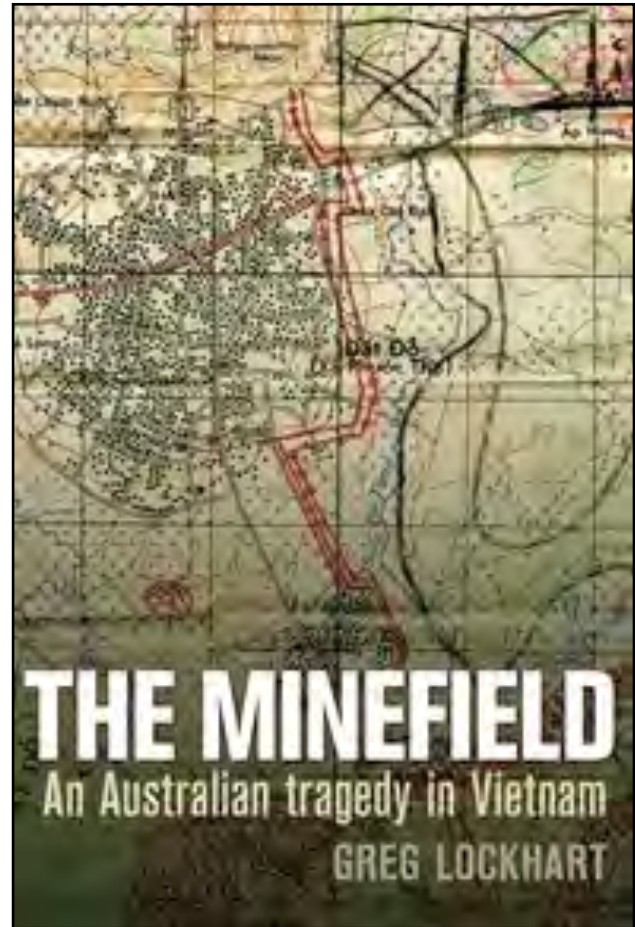
How could this disaster have happened?

Extract

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

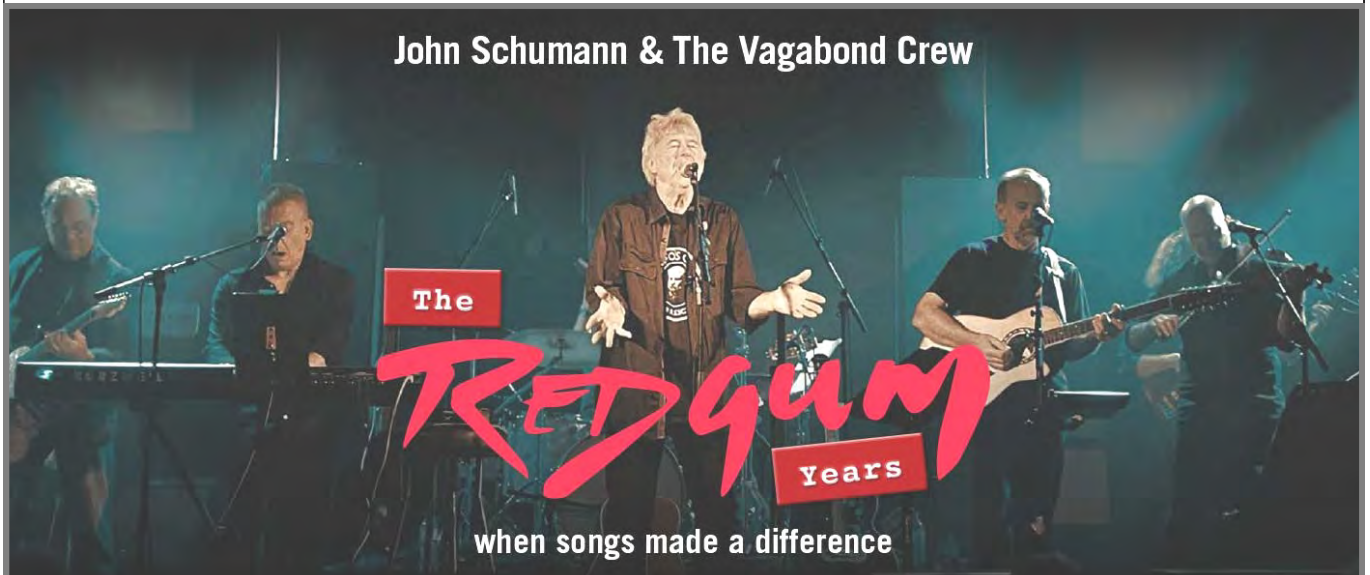
‘By August-September 1967 there was a general concern around the HQ that mines were being lifted from the minefield. My understanding also was that Brigadier Graham shared the concern that mines were being lifted. I recall being asked to include likely approaches to the minefield in the Regiment’s H&I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

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



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





Friday, December 15th, 2023

Goolwa

The Redgum Years Starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Saturday, December 16th, 2023

Goolwa

Backtracks - The Songs, The Stories, The Journey Starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Saturday, January 13th, 2024

Gulgong

Backtracks - The Songs, The Stories, The Journey Starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Thursday, February 15th, 2024

Wollongong

The Redgum Years Starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Friday, February 16th, 2024

Canberra

The Back Tracks Concert Starring John Schumann & The Vagabond Crew

Saturday, February 17th, 2024

Chatswood

The Redgum Years Staring John Schumann & the Vagabond Crew

Sunday, February 18th, 2024

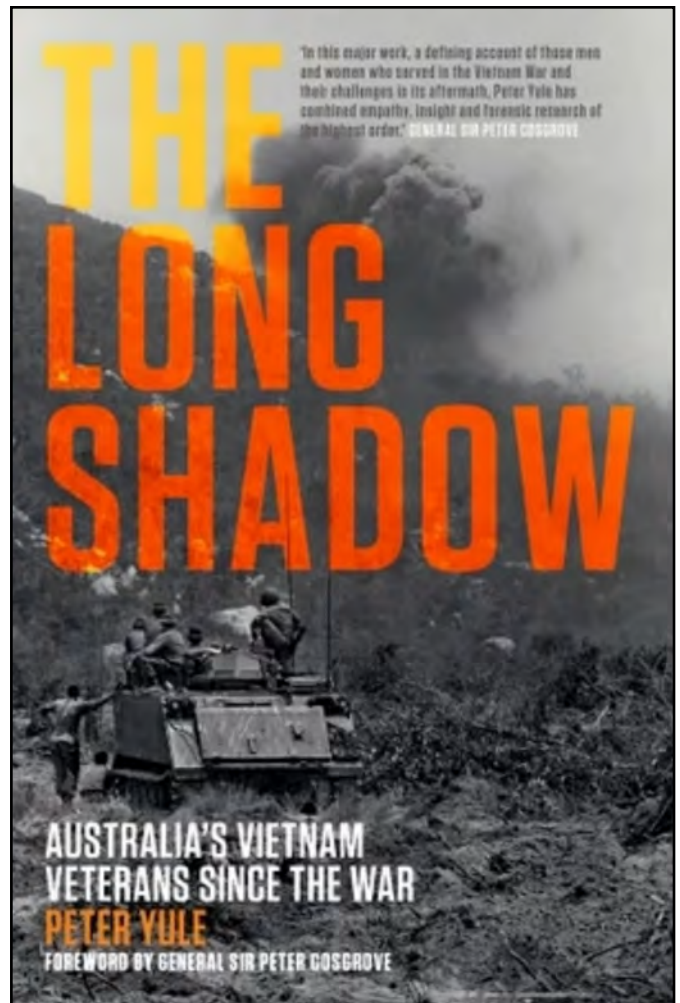
Lambton

The Redgum Years Staring John Schumann & the Vagabond Crew

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

Extract

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



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Good news for veterans of RIFLE COMPANY BUTTERWORTH

Recognition of Service



The Defence Honours Awards Appeals Tribunal hearing into the
Australian Army's Rifle Company Butterworth



Australian Government

Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal

Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans' Affairs
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

On 7 April 2022 your predecessor, the Hon Andrew Gee MP, directed the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal to inquire into and report on medallic recognition for service by members of the Australian Defence Force with Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB) during the period from 1970 to 1989.

The Tribunal's report of the inquiry is attached.

After detailed research far more extensive than that conducted on any prior occasion, whether by Defence or by independent reviews and inquiries, the Tribunal has concluded that RCB service was neither 'peacetime' (as currently, but not earlier, contended by Defence) nor 'warlike' (as claimed by RCB



The RCB was deployed to Butterworth Air Base to defend Australian and Malaysian aircraft, RAAF personnel and local employees.

veterans), but was actually 'non-warlike' by reference to Government policy first enunciated in 1993 and not since changed on any properly informed basis.

As such, RCB service is currently and appropriately recognised by the award of the Australian Service Medal 1945-1975 or the Australian Service Medal and does not meet the eligibility criteria for the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-1975 or the Australian Active Service Medal. But, as such, it should now be formally accepted as 'non-warlike service' under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* and receive more beneficial claims treatment than that currently afforded – this would be consistent with a 2007 Ministerial decision supported at that time by Defence but not then implemented by Defence on behalf of the then Minister as statutorily required.

While these are the key findings of the Tribunal inquiry, a number of other consequential or systemic recommendations are contained in the attached report.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Skehill Chair Rear Admiral Allan Du Toit AM RAN (Retd) Member Air
Commodore Anthony Grady AM (Retd) Member ■

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

You might be surprised what David got up to on his R & C

by Sig David Calderwood

(And of other events in his time as a Nasho)

I was a 20-year-old living in a small suburb of Bankstown called Birrong southwest of Sydney. In this area were mostly fibro houses and blue-collar workers.

I registered on the 31st of March 1968 for National Service. I was not expecting induction into the army as my first 14 years of life were not so healthy.

I was born with jaundice and adenoids problems. Both adenoids were removed and I was in and out of hospital for the first year of my life.

Being unable to keep anything down, my mother took me to a Tresillian Family Care Centre at Little Bay NSW. I think she hoped they would give guidance for my recovery. Otherwise I think she thought I would die.

For the next 14 years I had asthma, sinus, hay-fever, double pneumonia, tonsils, appendix, German measles, and shingles. A family doctor would come every day and give me a jab in the bum of penicillin. (In those days, house calls by doctors were common).

So even though my health improved somewhat after my 14th year and even though I

had taken up some sport and rode my bike, I was not expecting to pass the medical for National Service.

My medical assessment was in April 1968. When I arrived, I encountered some very weird 'goings-on'. About six blokes were waiting to be assessed. Four of the group seemed to be mates. Me and another bloke were the other two, just sitting quietly for our turns.

One of the four mates had came into the room huffing and puffing from running, hoping I suppose to raise his blood pressure and heartbeat. Another one had strong eyeglasses on with one mate joking, he didn't need glasses. Another one had a cast on his arm, hoping they would dismiss him straight away, and another dressed very poorly saying he had to work very hard to feed his family.

These were not your regular good citizen volunteers.

As well as my history of ill-health, I had flat feet like my father who missed the Second World War because of it. My father ended up working at the De Havilland Company helping to make Mosquito Planes during the war.



Save our Sons silent protest outside Addison Road Military Depot

Anyway, the first thing the doctor said to me was, 'take your shoes off and I'll take your height'. My height was 5 feet, four- and three-quarter inches while the reject height was 5 feet, two inches. As I was into sport the doctor ignored my flat feet.

He was ticking off a list of questions of medical things that I had filled out. He said to me, nobody should be still living with all your 'Yes' ticks. I think he was thinking I was telling him the untruths. A couple weeks later I received a letter asking me to visit my family doctor to confirm my asthma and sinus. My doctor indicated to me, he would write anything I would want on the form, but not wanting to live with a lie for the rest of my life, I asked him to write the truth that I don't have asthma as an adult and sinus problems only occasionally.

The next letter from the department said report to Marrickville Army Centre, which is in the inner west of Sydney, on the 2nd of October 1968, for the 14th intake of the two year National Service.

Being a typical miner and Labor voter, my dad really didn't like me being called up at all. He

tried to get me to think up excuses. But we had a good honest family life being taught to not cheat or lie about things. 'You take your medicine and get on with it'. So Dad was not really displeased, but sorry that I was going. He took a day off work to take me to the Induction Army Centre. This was the first time he ever took a day off work.

When we arrived all the protesters from 'Save our Sons' and 'Baby Killers' had gathered. A woman came towards me and waved this feather under my face. I didn't know what was going on and what to do. I was a bit anxious about getting through the gate, but she waved this thing at me and started yelling at me about white feathers, save our sons, baby killers and all this stuff. Dad just pushed her, and she nearly fell over. I've never seen him so aggressive like that before. He said, 'don't ever come and say that to my son.' I kissed him goodbye and went inside. I think, despite his misgivings, he was quietly proud that I was going in and doing my duty.

After the hassle from the 'Save our Sons' and 'Baby Killers' protesters we finally made it inside to the Induction Centre. No way I had any idea what was going to happen next. It was our

(Continued on page 34)



first experience, to be often repeated, of 'Hurry up and wait.'

We had to strip down to our undies for the old cough treatment, height, weight, photos, academic questions, and any relevant information team of doctors required.

Just before me, was this bloke dressed in a blue jumper, jeans, motorcycle boots, and long hair down passed his collar. He looked like he needed a good wash of course, and when he stripped, he didn't have any undies on, so they provided a towel. As he took his jumper off, he had a leather vest with the insignia and colours of the 'Hells Angels' bikers club. That put the wind up a few of the army officials and they treated him like royalty.

After a few hours of prodding and questioning, we were then loaded onto trucks and transferred to Singleton army camp for recruit training. As I mentioned, we were the 14th Intake National Service.

The Hells Angel bloke ended up in my quarters and we made him our captain to keep any slackers in our group on their toes and to make our soldiering smooth.

It was a very interesting 10 weeks of recruit training. First we were called to the barber to get our haircuts which was like a crew cut. We had to wear old used uniforms and surplus World War 2 and Korean War boots until we got our proper fitted uniforms and boots. We had lot of needles

and attended the dentist a few times. Lots of running, PT work, learning to shoot weapons (SLR) on the rifle range, tossing grenades, doing drill work, field craft, and long physical march/runs with webbing and rifle.

I wanted to give it my best shot as I wanted to prove to people that I wasn't that sickly kid anymore, although I struggled in some of the physical things. I'm only short and when you are running with big blokes, they take twice your step, so your legs must rotate twice as fast to keep up with them.

We even had to fight bush fires in the area and walk back through paddocks of farms to get back to camp as the trucks couldn't pick us up. We also had a soldier that nearly lost his finger on the ropes and measles ripped through some of our group. In the end we all survived and succeeded and became well trained soldiers for war or at least for "the powers that be".

Vietnam (We had a plan)

While in Vietnam, I had my R&R (Rest and Recuperation) in Hong Kong with a mate nickname Tree in October 1970.

I was due to go home on the 19th of November along with three mates, Tree, Kenny, and our cook Eber. But before that, the four of us went for several days on R&C (Rest and Convalescence) to Vung Tau together with a Sergeant and another Sig.

'We had a plan' what to do with our time while on R&C.

On the day we departed for our R&C, we got on the morning convoy from Nui Dat to Vung Tau where we were dropped off at the Peter Badcoe Club which was the R&C centre. After our arrival we checked in our SLR rifles to the Armoury. We then packed two army bags with extra greens and one set of civvie clothes for each of us. We then headed off to the RAAF Base.

During that year we got to know some of the RAAF blokes from the Gunship choppers who would often have lunch at our mess.



The next day we hopped on a truck with our two new mates and went to Bearcat.

(Honestly, I don't know why they wanted to eat our army food.) Because of our friendships with these RAAF blokes, many of the Sigs would occasionally take the last chopper of the afternoon down to Vungers, to have a few grogs at the RAAF base boozier, and then in the morning catch the first chopper back to Nui Dat. Easy!

That evening we had a great time. Kenny our organiser said tomorrow morning we will catch a Dakota or such plane to Saigon. Bright and early in the morning we checked in and jumped on a plane to Saigon. A three-star US general on the flight commented to us that he had a lot of respect for us Aussie soldiers. We said thanks but didn't mention that we were AWOL on our R&C.

Now you might ask why we were taking this journey. Well, Kenny had a mate Barry Coe who he knew in civvy street and was posted to 8 RAR. Barry was seriously wounded and was recovering at the Long Binh US Military hospital. (Barry was later awarded a MM-Military Medal. He should have been awarded with a bigger gong for his bravery). We all knew him from his visits to 104

Signal Sqn while he was back at the Dat. I was the one who broke the news to Kenny after I saw a Noticas (Notice of casualties) while I was on shift in the CommCen (Communication Centre).

After walking around downtown Saigon for a while and thinking should we go to the Australian Hotel Quarters. We decided not to as it was too much of a big risk of being caught, so we boarded a yank army bus to Long Binh.

On the bus journey we met a couple of yank soldiers and got talking. They said come to our quarters and we will set you all up, so we went with them. Long Binh, a sprawling large base where you could get lost easily.

Kenny went off to see his mate Barry while we had a few drinks and a quick nap. Our two new yank mates told us they were heading to the US FSB Bearcat in the morning to deliver equipment and asked us if we wanted to come. Why the hell not!!

Kenny came back and said Barry was doing OK. The next day we hopped on a truck with our two new mates and went to Bearcat. It was a bit different to Long Binh and maybe smaller than

(Continued on page 36)

Bearcat Base



Nui Dat.

The talk was American comedian Bob Hope was doing a show that night, so we thought we better not attend as it was too much of a risk by being a long way from Vung Tau where we should have been. All we did for the evening, was have a few beers, and bunk down with our yank mates.

But time was marching on and we needed to get back to Vungers, so our American friends dropped us off outside Bearcat at a dangerous and frightening intersection with one road heading towards Vung Tau. Our anxiety was extremely high, wondering how we can get back to Vungers.

A South Korean truck stopped and asked if we wanted a lift, but we declined as their truck

was near full and hardly any room for the four of us. We waited about an hour or so when a truck came along with two black American soldiers. They offered us a ride to Vung Tau and without any hesitation we climbed aboard.

The trip was without any worries as we passed through little Hamlets, villages, blown-up bridges and at times suspicious looking groups of people. The two Americans in the front had Afro haircuts with bush hats on and they were smoking rolled up cigarettes with a strange smell. We think it was dope, anyway we arrived back safely at the American PX (Postal Exchange) store, where we bought some cheap bourbon and moved over to the RAAF base to celebrate

We had achieved our 'We had a plan' R&C



Peter Badcoe Club, R and C Centre, Vung Tau

without being caught. The next morning, we rolled up to the R&C centre, checked out our SLR rifles and joined the convoy back to the Dat.

We kept our little adventurous trip to ourselves until we got home. Eber (our cook) has passed on but Kenny, Tree and I always talk about it at our reunions, and on ANZAC days.

I met some top blokes who've been close friends for all these years. When you go to war you really get to know people, you live with them in a tent for twelve months. Great experience and I really have got some good results from it. Did things in the army that I most probably would never do.

Dad used to tell all his mates down at the Bowling Club all the time that Dave's been to Vietnam. I would go down and have dinner with him and his mates sometimes and they'd all be shaking my hand. Dad was very proud.

Post My Military Service

I was discharged from the army on the 1st of January 1971 and the next day I married Raema on the 2nd of January. We went on our honeymoon to Norfolk Island and when I returned, I went back to work with the Taxation Department in Sydney, my previous job before I entered the Army. I built a house at Emu Plains and moved into the house in July 1973 and in August 1974, I joined the Penrith City Council. I had my first child Richard born in 1977 and my second child Saranne in 1979.

My wife Raema got sick in 1997 and passed away in June 1998. I took leave in 1997/98 to look after her. I resigned from my job with the Council in September 1998 and became a fully TPI pensioner. In 2004 I met my second wife Gwen. I moved in with her in 2005 and married in 2017.

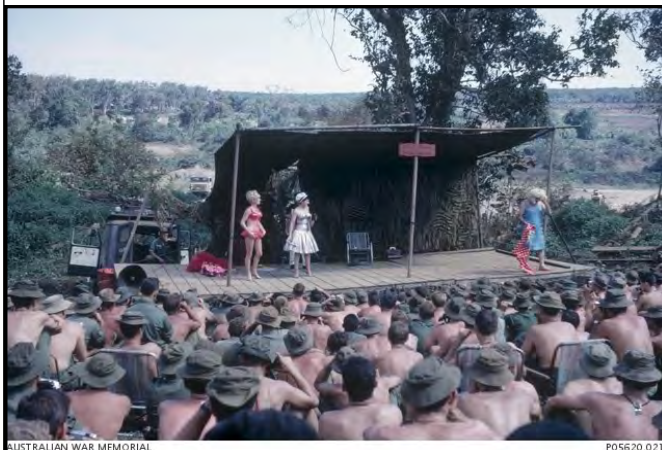
David John Calderwood (Aka Buddha) 2791162
Royal Australian Corps of Signals. Operator
Keyboard.
Vietnam 3rd Dec 1969 to 19th Nov 1970. ■



Dear Editor,

I read with interest, as usual, the July 2023 THE VIETNAM VETERANS' NEWSLETTER. As usual there is plenty of interest in what I feel is the very best of the ex-service publications in Australia. However, there is an article that particularly caught my attention.

The article on Page 65 by my mate Bill Roberts OAM JP, AUSTRALIAN ENTERTAINERS IN SOUTH VIETNAM (A memoriam to the late Lorrae Desmond AM MBE) in compliment with the very good tribute by Sylvia Raye starting on Page 76.



Australian entertainers put on a show at 1 ATF base camp at Nui dat. On the left of the stage is Pat Kennedy.

(photo courtesy of AWM)

I saw Lorrae Desmond with ABC Band in the 1967 Concert in the natural Amphitheatre on the eastern side of Nui Dat hill, and it was a pretty wild, highly entertaining affair.

What I am writing about is with the Australian lady entertainers that went to entertain the troops in Vietnam, is that my cousin **Pat (Wordsworth) Kennedy**, who went under the name of **Big Pretzel**, never seems to get a

mention when the Australian Lady entertainers are mentioned. **Pat** was the first of the lady entertainers to go to Vietnam, entertaining the 1 R.A.R. Battlegroup at Bien Hoa on 19 January 1967. There are plenty of photographs of her at that concert in the AWM PHOTO DATA Collection. She also returned to Vietnam in 1968.

Yours Faithfully
Ross Wood
ex-5 R.A.R.

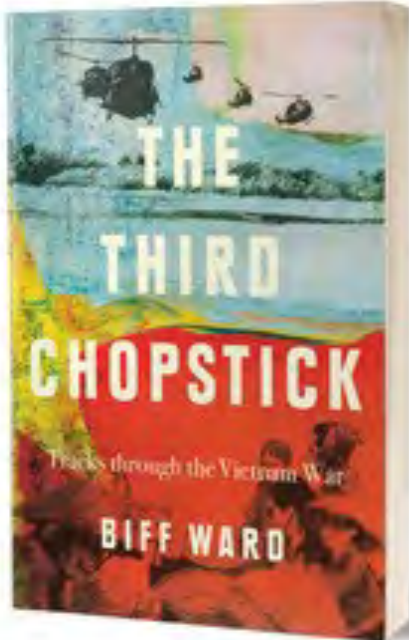
[Editors Note:]

Between 1967 and 1971, some 50 of troupes of entertainers left Australia for Vietnam. Some, like Lucky Starr, the first to tour, paid his own way, sparking an effort to get touring groups sanctioned and protected.

*On 20th July 1969 Cathy Wayne Catherine Anne Warnes (7 December 1949 – 20 July 1969), professionally **Cathy Wayne**, was an Australian singer and dancer, who was killed during a tour of Vietnam at a United States Marine Base where she was hosting a music concert to entertain the troops during the Vietnam War. Wayne had just finished a song at a Non-commissioned officer's club near Da Nang in South Vietnam when she was hit by a bullet fired from a .22 pistol, fitted with a silencer. Wayne was the first Australian woman killed during the Vietnam War.*

The next day the news of the world was focused on Neil Armstrongs walk on the moon, and Cathy's death went almost forgotten. No-one was found guilty of the killing.

Do you remember Ray Fulton?



Do you remember Ray Fulton?

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

This book, amongst other things, is about him.

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

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

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

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

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

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

02 9682 1788

or order on-line at

www.vvfagranville.org



2024 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE NOW DUE!!

It is that time again when annual membership renewals are due.

Members of our various State Branches and sub branches should receive membership renewal notices from their respective organisations.

NSW membership subscription renewal forms for 2024 have already been sent out to NSW Branch members under separate cover by the Granville office. In the event you do not receive a form in the mail you can use the Membership Renewal form included in this Newsletter or the one available on our web site at www.vvfagranville.org

To renew your membership, just complete the membership form you receive and return it to your State Branch, Sub Branch or, for NSW Branch members, to the Granville office. Please check the Membership Application form to ensure your details are correct and amend any incorrect details so we can update our records.

Once again, all members of the NSW Branch, who renew by 30 January 2023, will have the chance to enter into the draw to win 1 of 3, \$100.00 gift vouchers from Bunnings Hardware.

In addition, NSW Branch Members who renew by as early as 31 December 2023, will also have the opportunity to go into

the draw for a \$250.00 gift voucher.

So, NSW Branch members, get your application in quickly to Granville to ensure you don't miss out on both these great opportunities. Cheques and money orders from NSW Branch members can be made payable to **VVPPAA NSW**.

Your financial support in the past has been most appreciative and we hope you will continue to support the Association and therefore assist our fellow Veterans and Service members in need.

It is through our membership subscriptions, fund raising activities and the many kind donations we receive from members that we are able to meet our increasing welfare/pension workload. Should you be able to help with a donation in this regard it would be greatly appreciated.

We look forward to receiving your renewal for 2024 and thank you for your on-going support and patronage of the Federation.

Ron O'Connor JP
Hon. Secretary
VVFA



A MESSAGE FROM THE NSW BRANCH

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

Without these donations we would find it much more difficult to cater to the needs of our war veterans, service and ex-service persons generally. Whilst all donations are gratefully received, and combined are of enormous assistance to us, they are too numerous to list. However, periodically, we will publish a list of individual NSW Branch members who have donated amounts of \$200 or more.

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

\$1,000	Gordon Davison, Anthony Mills, Anonymous (2)
\$500	Anonymous (2)
\$350	Xuan Hy Trinh
\$300	Geoffrey Graham
\$200	Peter Miller, Anonymous

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

City of Bankstown RSL Sub-Branch
City of Blacktown RSL Sub-Branch
Bega RSL Sub-Branch
ARVN Association

Thank you very much for your kind support.

Vietnam Veteran's Day acknowledgements:

We would also like to thank the following Clubs, Businesses and individuals who generously donated prizes towards our 2023 Vietnam Veterans' Day raffle.

The raffle was a great success and all profits from it will be used to assist current and former ADF personnel and their families in time of need.

Bunnings Rydalmere
Bunnings Cross Roads
Bunnings Minchinbury
Ashfield RSL Club
Bankstown RSL Sub-Branch
Bankstown Sports Club
Canterbury-Hurlstone Park RSL
City of Fairfield RSL Club
Hornsby RSL Club
Cabra-Vale Diggers
Dooleys Catholic Club Lidcombe
Ingleburn RSL Club
Wenty Leagues Club
Merrylands RSL Club

Thank you to all who gave so generously, and any we have failed to list here, we humbly apologise, and will indeed ensure you are so noted in our next issue , March 2024.

This being my final chance to comment, I will just say what a pleasure it has been working alongside my colleague, and NSW President, **Frank Cole**.

I wish Frank and Sue all the very best in the next phase of their lives, relaxing and healthy.

I am sure, speaking on behalf of the rest of the volunteers at Granville, that you will be sorely missed, but know just how much you and Sue deserve a peaceful retirement, and we all wish you both every happiness.

Ron O'Connor JP
Secretary
VVPAA NSW.

For decades the benefits of the chemical revolution were accepted without question. Now man is seeing the other side of the bargain — a legacy of poisonous waste, pollution and sickness.

JENNIFER BYRNE reports from San Francisco.

THE PACT WITH HELL

FROM 1945, the chemicals have come to claim their side of a bargain. Now man is seeing the other side of the bargain — a legacy of poisonous waste, pollution and sickness.

They are the poisonous chemicals that have come to claim their side of a bargain. Now man is seeing the other side of the bargain — a legacy of poisonous waste, pollution and sickness.

The pact with hell is a legacy of poisonous waste, pollution and sickness. It is a pact that has been made with the devil, and the devil is now claiming his side of the bargain.

The pact with hell is a legacy of poisonous waste, pollution and sickness. It is a pact that has been made with the devil, and the devil is now claiming his side of the bargain.

The pact with hell is a legacy of poisonous waste, pollution and sickness. It is a pact that has been made with the devil, and the devil is now claiming his side of the bargain.

ROW OVER VIET. DEFOLIANT

Mr. Kevin Rowney with his wife, Wendy, baby son, Michael, and daughter, Karen, yesterday.

SA mother says Agent Orange caused deformity

An Adelaide woman is trying to contact people in SA who believe their children may have been affected by Agent Orange, a herbicide used in Vietnam during the war.

Ms. Wendy Rowney, 34, of Wilton, SA, said "The Agent Orange" had caused an eye deformity in her son, Michael, and a leg deformity in her daughter, Karen.

Ms. Rowney said it would prove for a Federal Government investigation into the long-term health effects of Agent Orange.

The Adelaide Veterans Association said it would represent the families of war veterans who feared they might be suffering health problems caused by Agent Orange, a herbicide used in Vietnam during the war.

Ms. Rowney said it would prove for a Federal Government investigation into the long-term health effects of Agent Orange.

Features extra

THE VICTIMS

The war they can't forget

The 28 men pictured have a common enemy. They don't know its name. Neither do scientists. Nor bureaucrats. But it exists, and it's ugly. It can trigger lowering, irrational rages or cause grown men to cry helplessly for hours, or attack their bodies with weeping sores that itch furiously. The men who share this enemy share at least one other thing: a small slice of their life spent at war in Asia, Europe, or elsewhere.

How they are suffering...

tail of his own statistical research. Of the 538 veterans exposed to Agent Orange and listed by its doctors, 33 had suffered permanent children and many had serious health problems.

Due to the limited data available when the report was prepared, Dr. Keri today says that Agent Orange is a "probable" cause of the health problems.

WAA HISTORY DRAFTS - Article 10

The Early Action Association —

Context Is Everything

This instalment is one of three looking at the reasons why active supporters of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association committed to the new organisation in very late 1979 and early 1980. It looks at pointers to the harmful consequences of war-time chemical exposure.

“One of the most important aspects of the study of history is to understand the context in which a given set of events occurred. “– Jeffrey Grey, in Zombie Myths of Australian Military History.

Earlier articles in this series have detailed how veterans in most Australian states and territories moved to establish organisations that were, in effect, branches of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association. (Newsletter readers who’d like to see any of these accounts can contact the author via the email address at the end of this article.)

Following **John Harper**’s call for an organisation to lobby for compensation for illnesses and child deformities, and **Bernie Szapiel and Holt McMinn**’s announcement that they were forming an organisation to secure both an inquiry and compensation, someone in most State and Territory capital cities acted as a point of contact for other concerned veterans and their wives. Typically, an informal gathering or two took place before a more formal public meeting at which office bearers and functions were decided upon.

It is clear that newspapers, read by very

large numbers of Australians in the late 1970s and early 1980s, played an important role in publicising most of the early efforts to organise. Articles about Vietnam veterans’ health problems and about the abnormalities and illnesses of their children attracted the attention of other veterans and their wives. Those articles often included the contact details of key individuals (or information enabling them to be easily contacted) and detailed veterans’ efforts to organise, both locally and elsewhere. A promotional advertisement placed by the Action Association in major newspapers in mid-January 1980 provided information to individuals unaware of developments. In addition, other media publicised health concerns and broadcast interviews with concerned ex-servicemen. Word of mouth in the form of telephone contacts further assisted veterans to gather.

As has been shown in previous articles, the

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organisational responses at the beginning were not all the same. Vietnam veterans in Western Australian opted to form a special sub-branch of the RSL. Northern Territory veterans formed an organisation that was both an Action Association Branch and part of the RSL (without being a sub-branch). Tasmanians opted to wait and see, content to persist with their South-East Asian Veterans Association until the new mainland group had demonstrated staying power (and until Vietnam veterans' issues looked to be of a distinct sort). The earliest ACT organisation adopted the Action Association brand but may not have participated in collective deliberations until later in 1980. NSW, Vic, SA and QLD formed groups that were part of a national alliance under the Action Association umbrella, although there is only slim evidence of coordinated effort by members of that coalition in early 1980, after Melbourne meetings of representatives from different States took place on 2 January and 10 January. The absence of arrangements for the alignment of Branch activities and of easy means of multi-branch communication – phone calls were expensive and there was no internet – were to be problematic for years thereafter.

Interesting though the initial organising steps of veterans in 1980 are – particularly, in the way outcomes differed from place to place – it is the reasons behind the actions of the different players in this period that are more intriguing and, in some ways, even more complex.

The reason most commonly provided by Association officials in the 1980s and beyond for the existence of the Association (and by implication for the foundation actions of key Association figures) was that the RSL didn't care about the post-war problems of Vietnam veterans. More particularly, it was claimed that the League hadn't, at this early juncture, acted on concerns about chemical exposure and hadn't supported veterans' call for an investigation into (or compensation for) ill-health thought to have been caused by wartime chemical exposure. This position is consistent with early statements by

Szapiel and McMinn. Arising from it is the view that the RSL's inaction more or less forced Szapiel and McMinn to announce the formation of a Vietnam veteran-specific organisation, thereby providing the impetus for the founding of branches in other States.

The view that the RSL wasn't at all supportive in the period between March 1979 and the end of Feb 1980 isn't entirely true but even if it was, and the occasionally supportive statements from the RSL National President are ignored, a lack of care on the League's part doesn't explain why key figures in this very early period, other than Szapiel and McMinn, acted to support the fledgeling Association. It doesn't explain why, in the first few months, other veterans and their wives became active supporters i.e., were doing more than attending a foundation meeting and paying a membership fee. After all, key figures could well have responded to the prevailing circumstances in other ways.

It is very clear that Szapiel acted out of longstanding desperation at the repatriation system's failure to deal with his medical problems. He was dissatisfied, too, with the actions (such as they were) of the RSL National President, William Keys, after Keys' March 1979 admission that the League had been aware of a possible chemical/illness link "for some years". McMinn shared Szapiel's frustration. Other early active members may also have committed to the Association out of frustration and on impulse. Desperation, driven by the persistent nature of illnesses, by dissatisfaction with the repatriation system, by inexplicable miscarriages, and by child illnesses and deformities (complemented in some instances by post-war 're-adjustment' problems), doubtless caused some individuals and families to attach themselves to the new State organisations. But there exists a range of other plausible motivations for commitment beyond simple membership.

For historians keen to understand the motives of the earliest active members of the new organisation, the challenge is not just with locating and talking to surviving members of the cohort

Inquiry call by veterans' body

MELBOURNE: A group calling itself the Vietnam Veterans Action Association formed plans to force the Federal Government to launch an inquiry into the long-term medical effects of a chemical defoliant used in the Vietnam war.

The group's president, Mr Bernard Szapiel, said the movement had begun because of the Returned Services League's "inactivity" over the "defoliant, called Agent Orange.

A similar group had been set up in

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Holt McMinn and his daughter Melanie.

but with the fact that memories of particular periods in time are notoriously difficult to pinpoint. In addition, veterans' recollections of early 1980 are inevitably shaped by events from later in the decade. For example, active members' recollections of the RSL in the establishment period are inevitably shaped by later perceptions of the League.

Because of this melding of recollections from different times, and the shaping power of later events, there can only be speculation about the motives of the earliest active members based on the few relevant public pronouncements from late 1979/early 1980 and based on careful examination of the context of unfolding events.

It's conceivable, of course, that some of the active early proponents of the Action Association gave their support simply because the organisation

was one principally of (and for) those who had served in Vietnam or because they saw themselves as having few other channels for pursuing the rectification of their grievances; they doubtless saw the focus of the Association as one more closely aligned to their needs than that of alternative ex-service organisations. Similarly, it is possible that there were active early figures who aided the cause out of sympathy for the circumstances of more troubled veterans and their families despite scepticism about chemical harms and doubts about the likelihood of appropriate compensation.

It seems more likely, though, that where a decision was made in early 1980 to become an active member of the Action Association, it was a multi-part one, whether consciously 'stepped through' or not.

Underpinning active commitment in the earliest months of 1980 was a likely belief that chemical exposure was (or at least could be) the cause of health problems in veterans or their families or of health problems yet to surface for them, such that there should be an official investigation and compensation.

Further underpinning active support for the new organisation was a probable belief in the merits of organising or of collective effort. This belief was likely to be complemented by a view that collective pressure would need to be applied to the Federal Government in order to have it properly investigate chemical harms and compensate those affected.

These positions were logically supplemented by a further view: that a Vietnam veteran-specific organisation was necessary to achieve the stated goals or would be a useful adjunct to existing organisations in securing an appropriate response from the Federal Government. (It's here where a lack of faith in the RSL most came into play. The relevant rationale was that, if the nation's major ex-service organisation was, at best, a half-hearted supporter, Vietnam veterans would need to independently agitate for an investigation and consequent

(Continued on page 46)

compensation.)

Finally, individuals probably needed to feel that something useful could result from their participation in the Action Association. The positive outcomes hoped for may have been ones for themselves and their family members or ones of a more altruistic nature. They could be as personal as the satisfaction to be derived from choosing action over passivity or as general as the hoped-for gaining of compensation for veterans, their wives and affected children.

Before exploring each of the mentioned factors, though, it needs to be acknowledged that soon after the foundation period there would be a wide range of potential reasons why individuals would become active supporters. Branches in later times would need committed members to assist with a myriad of new activities and to deal with the grave problems besetting the most troubled subset of veterans. There were many ways in which individuals averse to committee work could still be useful eg in counselling, the provision of other welfare services, the performance of representative and ceremonial functions, the delivery of education sessions, the supply of repatriation claim assistance, the provision of Association administrative support, the running of social events, and the conducting of fundraising activities.

There were also veterans and family members in later periods who, once assisted by the Association, were keen to 'give back' by getting involved. There were others, too, who after being assisted by the Vietnam Veterans' Counselling Service (VVCS), wanted to repay the organisation widely regarded as responsible for the Service's founding.

Pointers in early 1980 to chemical exposure as (at least) a possible cause of existent veterans' health problems or of problems to come.

In later years, when there was support in the scientific and medical communities for the idea that chemical exposure in the course of Vietnam service was harmful, and when that support was reported to veterans, it would be, in a sense, easier

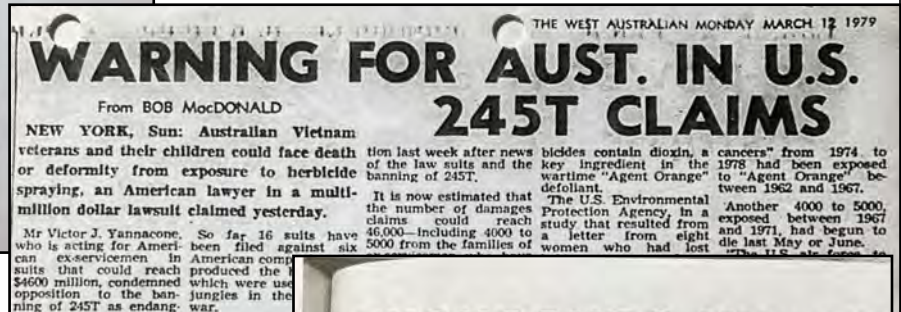
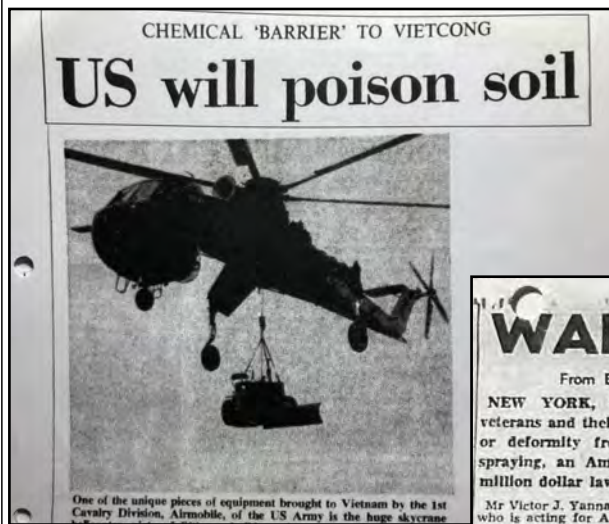
for those veterans to believe that the Vietnam-relevant chemicals were dangerous. In the early months of 1980, however, there was no widely publicised scientific analysis of the impact of chemical exposure *specifically on Vietnam veterans* on which to rely.

In order to reach a conclusion in the establishment period that exposure had been or was likely to be harmful, veterans and their families could have drawn on a very wide range of pointers. Some of these pointers would be at best 'indicative', 'circumstantial' or of the 'weight of opinion' variety. Together, though, and in concert with the public support of influential individuals and organisations, they were to be extraordinarily persuasive.

Veterans' recollections of nausea and other conditions at the time of direct exposure to chemicals (or when they were in chemical-affected areas) constituted a significant pointer to harm when such exposure was later publicised or discussed. The development of rashes soon after exposure was an especially potent symptom, as defoliant-caused chloracne (like skin conditions associated with the tropical climate) were extraordinarily persistent.

Reports in the establishment period of Australian involvement in wartime chemical or other crop/jungle spraying, even when disputed, seemed to give credence to chemical concerns, even without commentary on the dangers of the most likely chemical sprays. Australian servicemen would, by implication, have handled the sprayed substances, and any Australian spraying was likely to have been in areas occupied by Australian troops. These concerns were inevitably heightened when service in already defoliated areas, as distinct from direct contact, was concluded to be harmful. Reports on perimeter and other hand-spraying by Australian servicemen using chemicals with allegedly nasty side-effects would have added to suspicions, as would the early expansion of the list of dangerous chemicals to include insecticides.

The recollections of veterans who, during



the war, had been told to take precautions and wear protective clothing when applying chemicals would also have been pointers to harm in late 1979 and early 1980 when these memories were the subject of chat and reportage. If the chemicals weren't harmful, the thinking went, why were precautions necessary?

When subsequently recalled, the well-publicised 1970 US decision to phase out defoliant use in Vietnam (following restricted use in the US) would further have prompted suspicions of human harm and thus harm to servicemen. During the establishment period, reports on scientists' wartime concerns about human exposure to chemical agents – mostly derived from experiments with rats and mice – were also noted in newspaper articles. They would also have prompted suspicions about lingering harms.

Media reports on chemical harms to the Vietnamese may also have prompted apprehension, even though these reports were rarely detailed, were unaccompanied by the later photographic evidence of deformities (however caused), were reliant on information provided by Vietnamese officials and were sometimes accompanied by reminders that there were no supporting studies or reliable statistics. Caution naturally greeted poisoning allegations by the former enemy, especially when reparation claims were in the offing and when politicians giving credence to the allegations in the Federal



Parliament were mostly from the Labor Party (and thus viewed as opposed to the war). A few articles about chemical harms to Vietnamese appeared in the establishment period. By contrast, there were numerous letters to newspapers in the establishment period expressing concern for the Vietnamese, often noting that they hadn't been mentioned in stories about chemical harm to veterans. Editorials also reminded readers of the likely effect on the Vietnamese of the large quantities and heavy concentrations of chemicals used during the war.

Adding weight to suspicions about the impact of chemical exposure was reportage during and before the establishment period on various matters specific to US Vietnam veterans. These included chemical illness and/or child deformity

(Continued on page 48)

claims by those veterans, illness and deformity statistics, the death of allegedly exposed veterans, the activities of US 'victims' organisations, the commencement of legal proceedings against the manufacturers of wartime defoliants and admissions by those manufacturers that the defoliants, as used in Vietnam, were dangerous. A story in the establishment period with a headline heralding payment of two defoliant claims by the US Veterans Administration seemed at first glance to indicate that the US Government had acknowledged significant chemical harms. However, the report was actually about chloracne, which had been acknowledged as war-caused in Australia, albeit by being lumped together with other skin conditions.

There had also been post-war reports in which individuals involved in the US push for compensation warned Australian servicemen of the effects of chemical exposure and urged them to take action. Other stories on the extent of US forces' defoliant exposure seemed to make Australian exposure more likely and seemed, too, to confirm the extraordinary toxicity of dioxin (the 'contaminant' produced in the manufacturing of 2,4,5-T). President Carter's order, in the establishment period, to investigate the health effects of Vietnam defoliants, was also reported in Australian newspapers. (The matter of the US influence on Australian actions will be returned to in a later instalment.)

The support of other ESOs in late 1979/early 1980 for the investigation of chemical harms and compensation of those effected, including compensation of wives and children (not covered by repatriation legislation) would also have been persuasive, noting that even the Federal Executive of the RSL was conditionally supportive of investigations and compensation early in the establishment period. The most important backing, though, came from the ACT President of the Regular Defence Force Welfare Association, **Brian Fegan**, whose call for an inquiry pre-dated the call by Szapiel and McMinin by a day. **Graham Bell**, of the Korea and South East Asia Forces

Association (and later President of the Queensland Branch of the VVAA), called in mid-January for complete medical checks of all Korea and Vietnam servicemen, thereby signalling that his organisation also took the prospect of chemical harm seriously. In Tasmania a statement by **Rod Murphy**, an office holder with the South-East Asia Veterans Association, also indicated that his organisation was concerned about the consequences of exposure.

The publicised admission by the Pentagon in mid-December 1979 that there had been as many as 30 defoliant missions over Phuoc Tuy province and that a sixth of the province had been sprayed with Agent Orange, would hardly have quelled fears.

Reporting of the attention given to the Vietnam chemical issue by Australian politicians in the establishment period would also have indicated that claims about the dangerous consequences of exposure were not far-fetched. The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Evan Adermann, responded in a range of public ways to the issues raised by veterans, and the chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Science and the Environment (later to conduct an inquiry into chemical exposure) expressed public concern about reports of veterans' ill-health. Labor MP Doug Everingham, a medical practitioner and former Minister for Health, reminded the Government of its obligations under repatriation legislation and said that the connection between certain conditions and defoliant exposure "seemed obvious". In the period before the Parliament reconvened for the year, other members and senators were reported as making comments supportive of veterans, advising them on appropriate action, endorsing the investigation of harms or supporting compensation for children. At the end of January, a Liberal backbencher even signalled his intention to introduce a private member's bill to temporarily ban 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D, pending the outcomes of the Government's (Sydney University) defoliant study. On the Parliament resuming on 19 February there was a great deal activity around the Vietnam

chemical exposure issue but most of it seemed not to translate into media coverage and would consequently have been little known to veterans.

Historical parliamentary attention to the Vietnam chemical issue may also have been influential if it was recalled in late December 1979/early 1980. Few war-time questions in the Federal Parliament about chemical warfare were about defoliant harms, and the few defoliant exchanges or statements that were about harms to humans almost exclusively concerned the consequences of crop destruction for the Vietnamese, the results of rubber plantation destruction for Cambodians or, in just a few cases, possible birth defects among the Vietnamese. No one in the Parliament would seem to have been concerned during the war about defoliant-related harms to Australian servicemen.

Post-war parliamentary mentions were more likely to be recalled in early 1980, if known of. Questions like those asked by the late John Kerin, the Labor Member for Werriwa, in November of 1978 – ones specifically about veterans and Agent Orange – while not widely publicised, would certainly have been registered by some of Kerin's military and ex-military constituents in and around the Holsworthy army base. The few other parliamentary expressions of concern for veterans because of their exposure to defoliants were less likely to be known about outside the Parliament. However, the consequences of a May 1979 enquiry from a Liberal backbencher about the actions that should be taken by veterans believing themselves to be suffering from chemical exposure were publicised; they may have prompted veterans' concerns, especially as the Minister for Veterans Affairs thought no special action necessary beyond lodgement of a repatriation claim. If nothing else, these mentions, when known of, would have given apprehensions some credibility, at least among veterans less aware of the political and point-scoring dimensions of parliamentary action.

The reported willingness of lawyers to aid the early components of the Action Association

Sydney Morning Herald | Saturday, January 05, 1980

Govt asks Agent Orange victims to make claims

CANBERRA. — The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Mr Adermann, urges Australian ex-servicemen who believe they have suffered from exposure to the chemical defoliant Agent Orange in Vietnam to contact his department.

Agent Orange is a herbicide containing dioxin, one of the most powerful poisons known, in the carrier ingredients 2-4-5T and 2-4-D.

Mr Adermann said he would like to see "less talk and more action by veterans in pursuing their well-known rights."

The department was being informed by US authorities of their efforts to uncover links between the herbicide and disorders.

So far no evidence had been uncovered linking human disorders with exposure to Agent Orange, other than Chloracne.

was also a pointer to the substance in chemical allegations. The relevant reasoning in early 1980 would have been simple: that neither the American attorneys leading the US class action, nor the Brisbane solicitor representing most Australian Vietnam veterans in that action would be devoting large amounts of time and effort to an uncertain cause. A news story in mid-February 1980 reporting that the American legal team was acting on a contingency (no win, no fee) basis, probably strengthened this thinking. This was so, despite the revelation that the Brisbane solicitor would be entitled to appropriate fees, regardless of the class action outcome: a typical Australian fee arrangement for the time. The additional involvement of a Melbourne solicitor, David Teed, in the class action and other matters might, through word of mouth, have made Victorian veterans more apprehensive about chemical harm allegations. The involvement of WA solicitors in the class action was either not a matter of public knowledge in the establishment period or was, like the WA RSL's financial support for WA veterans' involvement in the US proceedings, not considered newsworthy elsewhere.

Peculiar reports, early in the establishment period, that the Administrative Appeals Tribunal would conduct an inquiry into Vietnam chemical harms also invested the issue with substance. Even

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Figure on Australian defoliants

MELBOURNE: Australia used 19 million gallons (86 million litres) of defoliants in Vietnam, a leading organic chemist said in Melbourne on Saturday night.

Mr John Evans, guest lecturer in history and the philosophy of science at Melbourne University, said the defoliants comprised four main groups: Agent Orange, Agent Purple, Agent White and Agent Blue.

Speaking after addressing a meeting of Vietnam Veterans, Mr Evans said, "These figures have been produced by the American Academy of Science".

the widely reported February 1972 interest of Justice Toose in possible defoliant-cancer connections for Vietnam veterans (described in the earliest article in this series) would also, if recalled, have lent heft to the chemical issue.

The extravagant language used in media stories in the establishment period left no doubt as to the dangerous consequences of wartime chemical exposure, referring to dioxin, the by-product of 2,4,5-T, as not just 'deadly' and 'toxic' but as 'the most poisonous man-made substance known' and "one of the most deadly chemicals known to man" etc. These descriptions, even without information on the extraordinary strength of the defoliants used in Vietnam, would understandably have heightened and validated chemical concerns. It would have seemed impossible for such a (reputedly) dangerous chemical, when applied in such extraordinary quantities, to not be injurious. (The relevant media stories included ones about birth deformities in veterans' children and about a high incidence of abnormalities, in addition to information on the harms incurred by veterans, themselves.)

Still more important in forming a view about the dangerous nature of the chemicals used



Spraying at Yarram

in Vietnam was the post-war publicising of concerns about the civilian use of the same defoliants within Australia. Allegations about still births, miscarriages and birth defects as a result of exposure to 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D in the town of Yarram in Victoria prompted stories in the media throughout 1978, with public interest fuelled by (in almost exhausting date order) a long-delayed, fast initial inquiry that found no problem, the establishment of a second inquiry, a preliminary 'no problem' finding by the second inquiry, a temporary part-ban on the herbicides, a reopened investigation by the (Federal) National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), a finding by the NHMRC that the herbicides posed no risk, an announcement by the Victorian Health Minister that the Victorian inquiry had reached the same conclusion, accusations that the Minister had pre-empted the Victorian outcome, the lifting of the temporary Victorian ban, and the eventual release of the Victorian inquiry report (yet again absolving the herbicides). Following these events was reporting on a new cluster of deformities, this time in Sale. In response, the Victorian Premier, Mr Hamer, asked for a review of the last inquiry report, resulting in experts again rejecting any link between birth defects and the two herbicides. The Victorian Health Minister nonetheless announced that herbicide bans were under consideration only to rule them out a week later.

The wide-ranging, steady stream of newspaper articles, letters and editorials about

herbicide-related matters which had appeared during the Victorian and Research Council investigations had continued into early 1979 without eliciting further action from the Victorian Government. The inquiry report was still being considered by the Government when, in early March 1979, an emergency ban was imposed on the use of 2,4,5-T in the US as a result of miscarriages after forest spraying in Oregon. Any hope on the part of conservative politicians and pesticide proponents that defoliant concerns would fade from public view as the year progressed was thereby dashed.

In 1978 there had also been stories about links between fatal birth defects and 2,4,5-T in the Cairns region of Queensland. The State Health Department had conducted an inquiry and the Health Minister had stated there was no cause for concern about the use of 2,4,5-T. There had been even more dramatic allegations in mid-1978 about the cancer deaths of 15 Warriewood (NSW) tomato farmers, said to have been caused by exposure to sprays.

Media coverage of the various 1978 allegations (backed up by stories about effected individuals), of the handling of those allegations by Governments (in ways which failed to allay public concern), and of many related issues, would have been readily recalled by veterans when the Vietnam War dimension to the defoliant issue came to the fore, nationally, at the end of 1979. However, newspaper coverage of Australian reactions to the US ban on 2,4,5-T in March 1979 would have been even fresher in veterans' memories in the establishment period. That coverage was made especially memorable by connections dramatically forged between the banned defoliant and Australian Vietnam veterans by the US Class action lawyer, Victor Yannacone. Yannacone was reported to have said that "Australian Vietnam veterans and their children could face death or deformity from exposure to herbicides", that deformity patterns had appeared among the children of US veterans and that between four and five thousand of those veterans

had died of "particularly virulent cancers" between 1974 and 1978.

The Australian coverage of the US ban would have been memorable, too, because of the RSL National President's 12 March 1979 statement that he had been aware of the possible illness link for some years (presumably because of Justice Toose's 1972 question about it) but that there had not been strong enough evidence to warrant earlier action by the League. Also memorable would have been the RSL's statement that it would support the repatriation case of an Australian veteran who suspected that his health problems had been caused by defoliants. That veteran was Bernie Szapiel, and a newspaper interview with him was the first step in a public journey that would culminate in the December 1979 announcement that a Vietnam veterans' organisation was being formed.

Together, the Yannacone, Szapiel and RSL news stories, arising from the ongoing domestic defoliant controversy (and given late-stage impetus by the US 2,4,5-T ban) gave the Vietnam veterans' chemical exposure issue an unprecedented media prominence and a clear Australian dimension. March 1979 was thus the important turning point in the exposure story. From this time, it would have been hard for veterans encountering material in the media about domestic defoliant concerns not to wonder about their own circumstances.

The US ban prompted further Australian action. The Federal Health Minister sought details of the US ban, and the Victorian Health Minister advised against the use of the herbicide, before imposing another temporary ban. The National Health and Medical Research Council soon after announced that it was unimpressed by the basis for the US decision, prompting media and public disquiet which continued beyond May (when Bernie Szapiel and others revealed to "The Age" that they were preparing compensation claims for herbicide related ill-health) and June (when the

(Continued on page 52)

Research Council “rejected new evidence which linked 2,4,5-T with miscarriages, spontaneous abortions and foetal abnormalities”). The controversy then continued in a lower-profile way, except in the reliably sensational pages of the “Melbourne Truth”, until the end of the year, with the by-now-customary stories about defoliant decisions by Governments at home and abroad, with other claims of domestic defoliant harms, and with letters to newspaper editors etc but with the important addition of reports on US veterans’ actions/defoliant concerns.

New developments in the Cairns controversy in the establishment period would have caused veterans to recall the earlier chemical rows. These early 1980 events can be readily summarised: in mid-January the Queensland Health Minister ordered a new investigation into the previously alleged connection between birth defects and defoliants only to have his decision overturned by Premier Bjelke-Petersen. Bjelke-Petersen ensured further attention for the issue by asserting that Cairns birth defects were caused by aborigines’ venereal disease. To make matters even worse, the Premier and the Health Minister told the media that the quashed re-investigation might yet happen but then announced closer monitoring of births on the heels of a request by the Cairns branch of the Australian Medical Association for an inquiry by medical scientists.

Governments’ mishandling of the controversies (soon to be duplicated in the Fraser Government’s mishandling of the Vietnam chemical issue) fed into ideas of science as being ‘out of control’, a notion returned to later in this series. The mishandling also fuelled perceptions of Governments as unwilling to protect their employees and citizens, (noting that the relevant Governments in Australia were mostly State ones. Mishandling further encouraged suspensions of coverups to protect powerful vested interests e.g., to prevent politicians and bureaucrats from being held to account for bad decisions about access to the relevant substances, to protect the economic interests of manufacturers and farmers/

commercial users, and to ensure that manufacturers and commercial users were not subject to litigation. At best, the incidents encouraged the view that Governments were careless regulators. These themes would all feed directly into the early VVAA defoliant narrative and will be returned to later in this series.

Pre-December 1979 media reports connecting civilian use of defoliants and birth deformities and then mentioning the use of the same defoliants in Vietnam – stories which stopped short of directly connecting deformities with war service – would doubtless have seemed indicative of harms when recalled in the establishment period. Similarly, veterans in the establishment period recalling earlier media reports which claimed with greater certainty that Australian veterans were affected by chemicals (or were likely to have been affected) would have regarded these reports as early pointers to the harmful effects of the Vietnam chemicals. Stories referring to the persistence of the defoliant caused skin condition chloracne (even when other nasty rashes were not distinguished from it) were seen as clear evidence of defoliant harms, as well as a counter to the wartime claim that the defoliants weren’t injurious to humans. Stories about skin conditions would also have prompted the question: “what other side effects of exposure are there?”

Stories which appeared in the early pages of the “Melbourne Truth” in the late 1970s – when journalist Adrian Tame refused to let go of the domestic herbicide story – warrant special mention as pointers to harms for at least some Victorian veterans. Some of the related headlines were, in the best “Truth” tradition, unforgettable. That the stories were often accompanied by photographs of mammiferous, partly-clad young women – then known as ‘page three girls’ – may also have ensured the attention of veterans ... or not. The same visual stimuli may have caused veterans to see Tame’s grim, wide-ranging article on 2,4,5-T, “Spraying To Kill”, in the January 1980 edition of “Australian Penthouse”.



Other stories in the establishment period about commencing, completed or unfunded studies of domestic herbicide use could all have contributed to a sense that there was something to be worried about in wartime exposure. A mid-January 1980 story revealed the findings of a study linking birth defects in NSW to national fluctuations in the use of 2,4,5-T. Also reported at this time was the commencement of a NSW Health Commission study of the effects of 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D (including their impact on families of Vietnam veterans). Another story soon afterwards reported a Brisbane researcher as saying that four annual requests for funding to study Queensland pesticide and herbicide levels had failed, despite Queenslanders having the highest pesticide levels in Australia, and despite sprays in the State containing at least eight chemicals which had been banned in the US. A late January 1980 story relying on the work of a different researcher confirmed that the incidence of Cairns defects was higher than in a Sydney study.

Publicising of veterans' fears in late 1979/early 1980 unsurprisingly prompted non-veterans with exposure-like health conditions or children with defects to tell their stories to the media. Some of these non-veterans had jobs which involved the handling and application of defoliants, including work for forestry organisations and local councils. Their health problems and deaths seemed to confirm veterans' chemical harm claims, even if the concentration of dioxin in domestic 2,4,5-T



was said to be tiny compared to the concentration in the wartime product.

A similar indirect suspicion-heightening function (with veteran exposure stories prompting others' concerns to be revealed, and those new concerns seeming to validate the original veterans' worries) was performed by stories about the levels of chemicals in foods as various as fruit and ice cream. In the establishment period a story appeared, commenting on insecticide levels in breast milk; the levels, themselves, were less dangerous than they had previously been, but the chemicals' presence was more widespread.

In the same circular way, the chemical worries of non-veterans who'd been in Vietnam during the war would have validated the original concerns. **Bruce Munday**, a civilian surgical team member in Vietnam, provided a comprehensive list of those non-civilians in letters to various newspapers in mid-January 1980. He noted that Australian Army nurses had not been included in stories about exposed veterans and included Vietnamese living in Australia in his civilian list. Although that list was not restricted to people living in Australia, it did not mention the Vietnamese population still in Vietnam (about whom other letter writers in the establishment period had expressed poison concerns). The greater the number of potential chemical victims (or groups of victims), the more valid veterans' apprehensions seemed to be.

(Continued on page 54)

The next instalment in this series concludes the survey of pointers to Vietnam chemical harms which existed in late 1979 and early 1980 when branches of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association were being established.

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

The aim of "VVAA History Drafts" is to inform readers about progress made with the Association's history and encourage people who have relevant extra information to contact the writer. Readers with additional information can contact Kel at vvhistory99@gmail.com. A copy of this article with sources cited is available from Kel. Readers taking issue with the content of this article or who would like copies of articles about founding events in places other than NSW are encouraged to contact Kel.

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30 12 SUNDAY TELEGRAPH, JANUARY 13, 1980

THE Sunday Telegraph SAYS

Time to peel the Orange

So the Federal Government has finally moved to set up an inquiry into claims by a host of Vietnam veterans that they were injured, and their children born deformed, by the defoliant Agent Orange.

Simple justice demanded such an inquiry. But it probably would not have been held if it had not been for the investigations into the issue by this newspaper and *The Australian*.

That reflects little credit on a Government with any pretension to a social conscience.

The Repatriation Minister, Mr Adernann, has argued that until recently not many claims had been made by ex-soldiers.

Such an explanation cuts no ice. At best, it reveals a questionable modus operandum: do nothing until you have to.

In the United States an official inquiry has been underway for three years.

Why, then, did not our Government take its cue and seek out the truth about the young men it sent to Vietnam to fight alongside our American ally?

Agent Orange contains the poison dioxin – one of the nastiest substances mankind has concocted.

Its effects are open to debate, especially on its genetic consequences.

However the inquiry goes, Mr Adernann will then have a real decision to make. His recent track record provides no indication that he will make the best one.

Edible exercise

To contemplate a bunch of bureaucrats being set loose to make free-market forces more

What's In your garage?



Kel Robertson, who is writing about the origins of the Vietnam veterans' movement in Australia, is anxious to see any Vietnam Veterans Action Association or VVAA documents you may have from the period between Dec 1979 and June 1981.

He has early copies of Debrief but is keen to see:

- Minutes of the May 1980 National Congress of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association (venue probably Canberra) and related correspondence;
- Minutes of the March/April 1981 Sydney multi-state meeting convened by the NSW Branch of the VVAA (and related correspondence); and minutes of the May 1981 VVAA National Congress in Canberra and related correspondence.

If you have these or any other documents from the Dec 79 to mid-1981 period, Kel is keen to hear from you. Please email him at yvhistory99@gmail.com



Vietnam veteran teachers names needed

NSW teachers have Honour Boards like the one above honouring the service of teachers in World War I, World War II and subsequent wars, but 50 years after the end of the war, the names of very few Vietnam veterans are recorded.

The NSW Department of Education wishes to remedy this neglect by developing an Honour Board to recognise the service of their employees who saw active service in the Vietnam War.

So names for the Honour Board are being sought.

Are you a Vietnam veteran who has been a teacher or do you know anyone who was a teacher who served in Vietnam?

If so, please contact Ken Stevenson at kenstevo@me.com

The new Honour Board will be dedicated in a ceremony starting at 9.30am on 14 December 2023 at 105 Phillip St, Parramatta.

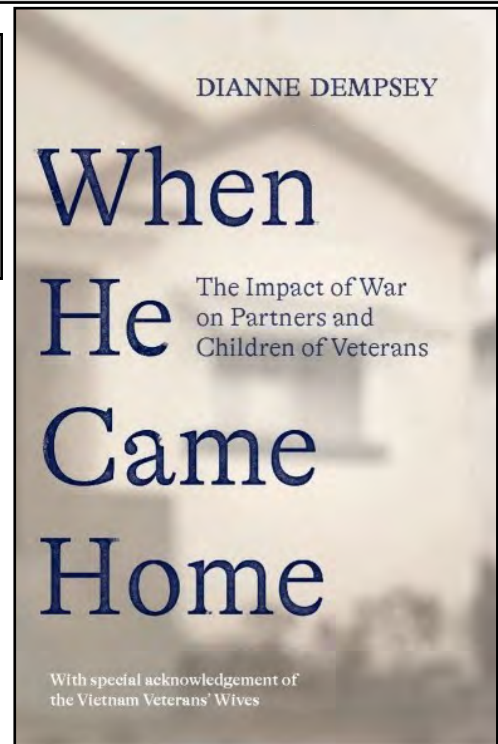
All are invited. ■

How did our families cope when we came home?

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

Extract

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



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Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

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

Here we have Part 7 of the story of
HMAS Sydney told by one of the
crew, John Ingram



(Part 7 tells of the dodgy state of escort ships and the targeting of
HMAS Sydney by anti-Vietnam war protestors)



HMAS DUCHESS made her debut round trip to Vung Tau essentially trailing one shaft.

The Navy was so short of escort ships as a result of dockyard industrial action the Fleet Commander was forced to make unpalatable decisions to ensure some form of protection for the SYDNEY. In one deployment the Daring class destroyer DUCHESS (D154), then on loan from the RN as a replacement for the VOYAGER, had a defective seal on one of her two thrust blocks. To repair would necessitate docking. Instead, she accompanied us to Vietnam and back functioning on one shaft only. The other shaft was in theory “available”, but only when manoeuvring or in an emergency

situation, due to the loss of lubricating oil and resulting overheating issues.



The former Battle class destroyer ANZAC, converted to a training ship, yet deployed as an escort for the SYDNEY

In another instance the training destroyer ANZAC (D59) was deployed as SYDNEY's sole escort despite the fact her weapons' systems largely deactivated or of limited value. Her remaining (4.5" twin mount) "A" turret was operable, manually only, as the gun direction system was disabled. Ordering a veteran training ship to a war zone with scores of young men onboard, knowing of her inability to fight to protect herself and others, was to me inherently daft. The Argentine Navy did this in 1982 during the Falklands Conflict with their training ship, the General BELGRANO, incurring the most tragic consequences including the loss of several hundred young lives.



HMAS TORRENS on fast approach to refuel

By 1972 the situation had not improved. I was then serving in the newly commissioned destroyer escort HMAS TORRENS and we were committed as Australia's sole naval contribution to the 5-nation peace-keeping treaty known as ANZUK.

TORRENS was briefly removed from the ANZUK alliance obligation in February and March of that year and ordered to escort SYDNEY while in Vietnamese "operational" waters. On completion TORRENS resumed her ANZUK Treaty role.

(Continued on page 60)



Police move people protesting against the visit of US President Lyndon B. Johnson in Liverpool Street, Sydney on October 22, 1966.

(Sun Herald)

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

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

PORKY'S PEOPLE

An Illustrated History of the Seventh Battalion

The Royal Australian Regiment

First Tour of Duty

South Vietnam 1967-68

ISBN: 978-098751113-3

Compiled, written, and typeset by Karl Metcalf



**Hard cover - Weight: 3kg - Size: A4 -
Pages: 763 numbered - Depth: 50mm
Published & distributed by the**

7RAR Association

\$200.00

postage included

to order

email Anthony Keech

porky_seven@bigpond.com

About Porky's People

This book tells the history of the Seventh Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (7 RAR) during its first tour in South Vietnam. The book primarily uses images to tell this story, whether they be photographs, artwork, maps, or newspaper cuttings. As the title of the book states, it is about Porky's People and the priority for selection of images has been the people who served in or supported the battalion.

The book is set out generally in chronological order so that the reader can easily follow the sequence of events. The scope of the book covers the period from the raising of the battalion through to the time it returned to Australia and the immediate aftermath.

Each operation has its own chapter with an accompanying map. A short introduction to each operation is provided — sufficient for the reader to understand what the operation was about and the key events. For some operations there are a large number of photographs, and these chapters are necessarily much longer than other operations that have few, if any, photographs.

Newspaper articles have been selected on the basis that they directly describe 7 RAR activities or people, or they provide relevant background information.

This illustrated history captures the essence of that deployment through a unique composition of narratives, reports, records, maps, newspaper clippings, personal reflections and photos. Karl's work is a tribute to all of Porky's People but, in particular, to those of 7 RAR who gave their all in the war."

John Paget
7RAR 20 Apr 1967-26 Apr 1968



Energy Rebate to provide bill relief

The Commonwealth, state and territory governments are working together to provide targeted and temporary electricity bill relief to eligible households.

You can get bill relief if you are the primary electricity account holder or, for some energy providers, another named account holder on your electricity account. You must also hold a Pensioner Concession Card, a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card or a **Veteran Gold Card**.

Your household can only get one bill relief rebate, even if there is more than one eligible person living there. You can only get this bill relief for your principal place of residence. How much you get depends on where you live, with between \$175 and \$500 available to targeted households and \$325 to \$650 available to small businesses.

If you are eligible, are not named on the bill and you pay for electricity, contact your electricity provider to discuss your options.

If you live in Queensland or Western Australia, you do not need to take any action because these state governments are including this energy bill relief in their state rebate programs, which are being given to all households.

If you currently receive energy concessions, in most cases the electricity provider will automatically apply the bill relief to your electricity account and you do not need to do anything. This will reduce the amount you owe on your next bill. How and when this happens depends on where you live as each state and territory may do things a little differently.

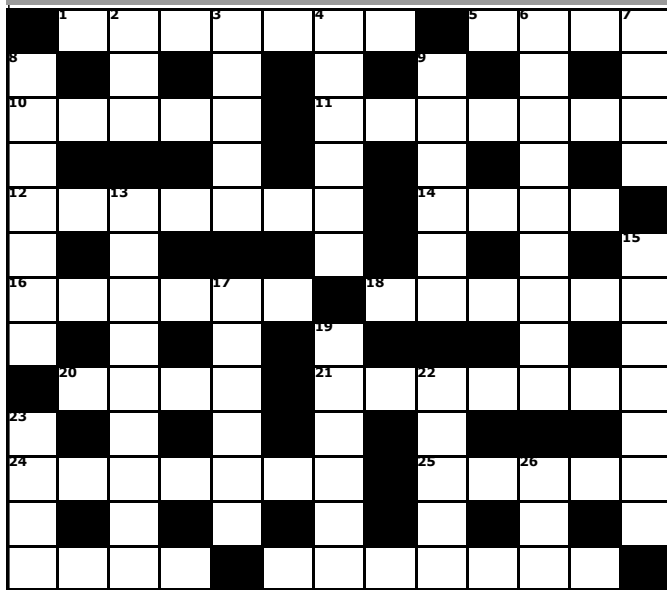
If you don't receive energy concessions, please go to energy.gov.au/bill-relief to find a link to your state or territory with instructions about what to do. This could be to contact your energy provider or your state/territory government with your concession card type and the DVA file number on it. Give them consent to check your card online for payment of the rebate.

If you get your electricity from your strata or landlord in a caravan park, apartment building, retirement home or village and your household is eligible for the bill relief, you will not automatically receive the rebate. However, you will be able to access a direct payment through your state or territory government.

Please check www.energy.gov.au/bill-relief for the latest information."

The rebate can be obtained by going through MyGov (if you have it) or by calling your energy provider in your State or Territory. There are different payment methods for this rebate for each State and Territory. ■

CROSSWORD CORNER



ACROSS

1. Named letters in word
5. Catch sight of
10. Phones up
11. Travel
12. Dry mouth
14. Side of river
16. Within
18. River animal
20. Headwear
21. Counselling
24. Warm reception
25. Symbolic
27. Manner
28. Hallway

DOWN

2. Cooking utensil
3. Mislays
4. Likes
6. Pocket blade
7. Playthings
8. Nutrient
9. Meek
13. Loaded software
15. Sensible
17. Dance clubs
19. Photo maker
22. Elects
23. Crossed pool
26. Beer holder

Solution next issue.

JULY 2023 SOLUTION

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

THE UNKNOWN COMIC

To all of you who collect these Newsletters. You've got issues.

A lawyer runs a stop sign and gets pulled over by the cops. He thinks he's smarter being a big shot lawyer from Canberra and is better educated than a cop from Braidwood. The officer asks for his license, and the lawyer asks, "What for?" The cop responds, "You didn't come to a complete stop at the stop sign." The lawyer says, "I slowed down and no one was coming." "You still didn't come to a complete stop. License please," says the cop impatiently. The lawyer says, "If you can show me the legal difference between slow down and stop, I'll give you my license and you can give me the ticket. If not, you let me go and don't give me the ticket." The officer agrees and asks the lawyer to get out of his car. The lawyer steps out and the cop takes out his baton and starts beating the lawyer with it, and says, "Do you want me to stop or just slow down?"

Did you hear about the guy who drank invisible ink? He's at the hospital waiting to be seen.

A woman came into a clinic where she was seen by a younger doctor. After about four minutes in the examination room, she burst out screaming as she ran down the hall. One of the more experienced physicians, stopped her and asked what the problem was, and she told him her story. After the older doctor settled her down in another room he marched down the hallway back to where the young doctor was writing on his clipboard.

"What the hell is the matter with you?!!" he demanded "That elderly woman is 76 years old, has six grown children and thirteen grandchildren, and you told her she was pregnant?" The younger doctor continued writing and without looking up said: Does she still have the hiccups?"

It was only when I bought a motorbike that I found out that adrenaline is brown.

PSK FINANCIAL SERVICES ARTICLE

Investment scams peak in Australia – How can you spot one?

October is cyber security awareness month and a good reminder to look at what you could be doing to protect your personal information and your money.

Losses to scams have skyrocketed in recent years, with combined losses reported to different Australian government agencies up a whopping 80% over a 12-month period.

What's more, investment scams were identified as the most commonly reported type of scam, which is why it's important to stay alert and protect what's yours*.

What is a scam?

A scam is where someone tricks you into handing over your money or personal details. They often appear real, catch you by surprise, and pressure you to act right away.

What sets an investment scam apart is it generally aims to convince people that an investment is real, that the returns are high, and risks are low. This can be very appealing if it sounds legit.

What scams cost Australians the most?

Over \$3 billion in total losses were reported to government agencies in 2022.

Investment scams made up half of all scam-related financial losses and collectively cost us about \$1.5 billion*.

What are the common types of investment scams?

A few of the more common scams to look out for include:

Super scams – these offer to help you withdraw your super money early or move it into a self-managed super fund, but you never see the money.

Crypto scams – these may invite you to invest in fake cryptocurrency exchanges, websites or

apps. They may also involve making payments with cryptocurrencies, like bitcoin or ether, which aren't easily recovered as they can be hard to track.

Ponzi schemes – these pay existing investors with funds collected from new investors but there's no real investment.

Imposter bonds – these provide real looking websites almost identical to well-known financial services companies, offering favourable fake bonds or term deposits.

Fake initial public offerings – these are timed with legitimate company listings and impersonate companies raising capital and offering shares to the public for the first time.

How do scammers contact you?

The top five contact methods scammers use to target people, and how much Australians have reported losing through each channel are listed below.

Text message - \$28 million

Phone - \$141 million

Email - \$77 million

Internet - \$74 million

Social networking and online forums - \$80 million.

While text messages topped the list for contact preference, Australians reported losing substantially more money to phone and social media scams*.

Who's most likely to be scammed?

Older Australians are the most at risk with those aged 65 or over losing more money than any other age group, followed by those aged 55 to 64.

No age group in Australia is immune though, with those under age 18 also reporting hundreds of thousands of dollars lost over a 12-

month period*.

How can you spot a scam?

Scams can happen to anyone, and they work because the stories scammers come up with to steal your money and personal information are often very believable.

Scammers are also smart and take advantage of new technology, products, services, and major names and events to convince you that their scam is real.

Here are some red flags to look out for:

You're told you'll make or save money, or offered a deal that sounds too good to be true (they often are!).

You're promised guaranteed, quick and easy investment returns.

There are no risks or low risks as you can get out at any time or be refunded.

They pressure you to act fast, so you don't have time to think things through.

They ask you to pay in unusual ways like through cryptocurrencies.

They contact you from overseas, so they're harder to prosecute and track down.

They ask for insurance or taxes before they give your money back to get more out of you.

They use social media to create fake news stories sometimes with well-known personalities.

What can you do to protect yourself?

As a general rule, our key government agencies promote a three-step approach* to stay safe:

Stop

If you're ever unsure, don't give your money or personal information to anyone. Scammers often pretend they're from organisations you know and trust like your bank or the ATO to get you to verify who you are and give away your details.

Think

Ask yourself if the text, email or call could be a fake before you click on or agree to anything. Scammers will send you links to fake websites or attachments that have viruses which will steal your money and personal info. If you're ever unsure, don't respond and contact the organisation or person you think you're talking to, using details from official websites.

Protect

If something doesn't feel right, act immediately. Change your passwords and contact your providers as soon as you notice anything unusual.

How can you report a scam?

You can get assistance by contacting Australia and New Zealand's national identity and cyber support service IDCARE. They can help you make a plan to limit the damage, and support you through the process. You can also report anything suspicious to Scamwatch.

If you want some other pointers for boosting your cyber security, the Australian Cyber Security Centre has the following tips this cyber security awareness month:

Update your devices (and regularly).

Turn on multi-factor authentication (which adds an extra layer of security to prove your identity).

Back up important files.

Use passphrases and password managers.

* Targeting scams: report of the ACCC on scams activity 2022 (published April 2023)

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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FRANK'S SURPRISE



L. Sue Allen—(Quilts Of Honour, Australia)- presents
(Rtd) NSW President, Frank Cole,
with his quilt, 23 October 2023.

No-one was more surprised than when our recently retired - 11 October 2023 - NSW President, **Frank Cole**, was presented with a Quilt from Quilts of Honour Australia Inc., at the Club Blacktown AGM on 23 October 2023.

“To my utter amazement Stan and Sue Allen NSW Co-ordinators from Quilts of Valour Australia Inc. presented me with one of their magnificent quilts. What an honour and a privilege!”
Said Frank.

L-R: Chairman Club Blacktown, Tony Williams, QOV Australia Stan Allen, Frank, and Club Director Robert Heinrich.





8th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (8 RAR)

LONG HAI MEMORIAL SERVICE, SYDNEY

WEDNESDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2024

EPPING CLUB's MEMORIAL, BORONIA PARK,

10:30 am

Presented by 8 RAR Association NSW Branch.

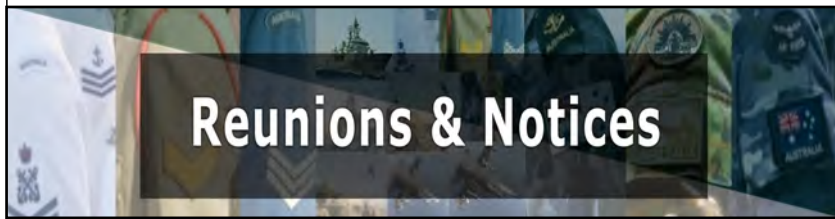
At this years' Service the Branch will dedicate a plaque at the Cenotaph in honour of Private Harry Winston White, Service Number 216009, who was Killed in Action in Vietnam on the 16th May 1968, aged 23 years.

Harry served in Vietnam with 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, from 5 June 1965 – 3 June 1966 and again with 1 RAR from 18 March 1968 until his death in May 1968,

Harry White was educated at the Epping Boys High School before commencing his military service and is one of four Epping Boys High School to be killed in Vietnam. Plaques are already dedicated to Dennis Hampton Bracewell 6 RAR, Alan William Ahearn 8 RAR and Bernard Anthony Garland RAA.

We welcome former members of 1 RAR to join with 8 RAR Association in remembering Harry and the 18 soldiers from 8 RAR who paid the supreme sacrifice.

Please advise of your attendance to the NSW Branch President Mick Carter OAM on 0432 500 632 or cartercm@optusnet.com.au



HMAS Nirimba, January 1972 MOBI reunion

Date: 19-21 January 2024.

Location: Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron, QLD

Members of the last MOBI intake, and their partners, are invited to attend. Accommodation available at the nearby Manly Marina Cove Motel.

Contact details

Name: Ron Bullock

Phone: 0418 367 320

Email: rbullock7@bigpond.com

HMAS Leeuwin April 1968 23rd Intake reunion

Date: 26 Feb 2024

Location: Victor Harbor, SA
26 February - 1 March 2024. All members and their partners are encouraged to attend. Divisional staff and Instructors who were involved with this Intake are also welcome.

Reunion details

Contact details

Name: Charlie Cifala

Phone: 0457 634 486

Email: cjcifala@yahoo.com.au

RAN 27th Stevenson Division 1969 55th Anniversary.

Date: 1 Apr 2024

Location: Glenelg, SA

As time is marching on without some of us, we would love to see any JR's who may not have been contacted to date.

Contact: Jurgen 'Yogi' Andt

Phone: 0409 699 053

Email: js.andt@bigpond.com

RAAF Apprentices 1974 - 28 Scorpions

Date: 25 Apr 2024

Location: Wagga Wagga, NSW
Planning is in progress for our intake's 50th anniversary event in 2024. All 28 Scorpions and their partners are welcome. Exact date and details to follow.

Expressions of interest through Facebook - 28 Scorpions or email.

Contact details

Name: Chris Nielsen

Phone: 0403 943 029

chris.nielsen@live.com.au

60 Year Reunion 19th VM Army Apprentices

Date: 23-26 April.

Location: Possibly the Sunshine Coast, QLD

All intakes welcome. Those interested, please call Pete Culnane on 0439 726 100 or Peter Leslie (below). Looking for contact details for Gavin

Bicknell, Johnny Broomfield, Lloyd Ellem, Lionel Houston and Frank Mazurek.

Contact details

Name: Peter Leslie

Phone: 0413 620 945

Email: pete128@outlook.com

All RAAF Apprentice intakes 1948 - 1993

Date: 25 Apr 2024

22-28 April (Anzac week). All

Location: Wagga Wagga, NSW

members and partners are encouraged to attend the 76th Anniversary. Contact Martin Holland on 0499 229 911 or mholand@electriciansplus.com.au

Contact details

Name: Terry Gould

Phone: 0419 146 688

terrygould66@outlook.com

https://

www.raafapprentices.com.au

Australian Army Aviation Unit

Date: 26 Apr 2024

Location: Brisbane (venue TBA)
QLD

The biggest reunion since the invention of the helicopter. Any Corps, any Service. If you worked at one of our Units, you're invited. Visit the website to register your interest.

Contact details

Name: Kerry Ellem

aaavn.reunion.2024@gmail.com

https://www.aaavn-reunion.org/

HMAS Nirimba reunion

Date: 13 May 2024

Location: Hunter Valley, NSW

13-17 May 2024. The January and July Intakes of 1964 are holding a 60th reunion - Meet & Greet and Formal Dinner.

Accommodation available at the venue, Mercure Hunter Valley Gardens. If you would like to attend with your partner, please contact the below.

glenfriedrich924@gmail.com or

kchay@bigpond.net.au

Contact details

Glen Friedrich or Keith Chay

0407 917 827 or 0447 169 610

Australian Army Training Team – Iraq (AATT-I)

Date: 24 May 2024

Location: Kedron-Wavell Services Club (KWSC), Brisbane, QLD
24-26 May 2024. A

Commemorative Dinner will be held on Saturday 25th to recognise the 20th Anniversary of the deployment to Iraq of the first Iraqi Army Training Team. On Sunday 26th, there will be a Memorial Service at the KWSC. Full details are available on the AATT-I Facebook page. The Memorial Service will be open to the public.

Contact details

Name: Rocky McKelvie

Phone: 0419 679 378

Email:

secretaryaatti@optusnet.com.au

Website: Facebook: AATTI

Association Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/armytrainingteamsaustralia/>

RAAF Comms Reunion

Date: 25 May 2024

2pm - 9pm. All Comms Location: Brisbane, QLD

Musterings (both ex and serving, plus partners) are invited to attend our yearly Djinnang Association reunion. If you are interested, please head to our website for all relevant information. Please add your name to the list if you are attending, so we can organise finger food.

Contact details

Name: Gail McDermott (Secretary – Djinnang Association)

Website: <https://djinnang.com/>

21ST UNOPAA reunion

Date: 27 May 2024

27-31 May 2024.

Location: Darwin, NT Branch of the The United Nations and Overseas Policing Assn of Australia is hosting a reunion for all serving or retired State/Territory and Federal Police, including partners, who have served in any of the UN or other Peacekeeping Missions since 1964. There is no requirement to be a member of the association. East Timor members especially welcome.

Reunion details

Contact details

Name: Allan Mitchell

Phone: 0417 804 546

darwinreunion2024@gmail.com

9th Intake HMAS Leeuwin 60 Year reunion

Date: 4 Jul 2024

Location: Ballina, NSW

If you are interested or know of anyone who was in the 9th Intake, please contact me. Reunion will be held from 4 - 7 July 2024.

Contact details

Name: Allan James Watt

Phone: 0402 749 582

Email: jakknco@bigpond.net.au

B Company 2RAR Veterans, 2nd tour 1970-71

Date: 16 Aug 2024

Location: Rainbow Bay, Gold Coast, QLD

16-21 August 2024. All veterans and partners of Bravo Company are invited to attend.

Contact details

Name: Philip Burke

Phone: 0412 739 435

Email: reunion24@familia.com.au

Headquarters 1st Australian Task Force and D&E Platoon

Date: 21 Nov 2024

Location: Adelaide, SA

Dedication Service at the Pathway of Honour, (Adelaide War Memorial) where our own Memorial will be unveiled.

Contact details

Name: John Verhelst

Phone: 0437 212 121

Email: jeverhelst@gmail.com

Website: www.hq1atf.org

Remember, these reunions and notices are also available on our websites, so if you wish to report any error please contact editor@vfvfagranville.org



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

NEW SOUTH WALES VETERANS SUPPORT CENTRE

VVPPAA NSW Inc.
 8 Mary St PO Box 170
 Granville NSW 2142
 Ph: (02) 9682 1788
 Fax: (02) 9682 6134
www.vvxfagranville.org
secretary@vxfagranville.org
 President: **TBA**
 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**
 0447 066 996
warren.willis@bigpond.com

CLARENCE VALLEY

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

EUROBODALLA

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

GREAT LAKES

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

HASTINGS MANNING MACLEAY

PO Box 5330
 Port Macquarie 2444
 Office at RSL Wauchope Sub-Branch
 Office Ph: (02) 6581 5230
 Advocate only: (02) 6581 5509
hmmvvpaa@c2a.com.au
 President: **Bill Wagner**
 Office Manager: **Lyn Hancock**
Hours: 10 –13:30 Mon, Tues, Thur.

ILLAWARRA

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

MUDGEES & DISTRICTS

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

NEWCASTLE & HUNTER

17 Tyrell St., PO Box 288
 Wallsend 2287
 Ph: (02) 4951 2666
nclvets@bigpond.net.au
 President: **Ian Bell**
 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: 0437 258 891
 Email: ralphtodd@bigpond.com

SHOALHAVEN

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

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS BOWRAL MITTAGONG MOSS VALE

PO Box 900, Moss Vale NSW 2577
 President: **TBA**
 Secretary: **TBA**
shvvppa@gmail.com

SOUTH WEST SLOPES VIETNAM VETERANS INC.

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

TAYLORS ARM

798 North Bank Rd
 Taylors Arm 2447
 President: **George (Stuart) Johnson**
 Ph: 02 6564 2153
 Secretary: **Stephen Spear**
 Mb: 0439 642 181
 Email: cvpb16@hotmail.com

WENTWORTH-COOMEALLA

Raymond Deed Veterans Retreat
 PO Box 397
 Dareton NSW 2717
 President: **Michael Chopping**
 Ph: 0481 306 854
 Secretary: **Sheila Sanders**
 Ph: 03 5027 4447
rdveteransretreat@iinet.net.au

VVPPAA (NSW BRANCH) ZONE REPS

FAR SOUTH COAST

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

VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

FULL STATE AND SUB-BRANCH LISTING

QUEENSLAND**VVF Queensland Branch Inc.**

18 Leagues Club Drive

PO Box 2817

Nerang Business Centre

Nerang Qld 4211

Ph: 07 5578 2233

Fax: 07 5578 2822

State President: **Peter Handy JP**

Mbl: 0448 195 020

president@vvhqld.com

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

Mbl: 0408 276 044

treasurer@vvhqld.com

www.vvhqld.com

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

18 Leagues Club Drive

PO Box 368

Nerang Qld 4211

Ph: 07 5502 2836

admin@vietnamveterans.net.au

President: **Andy Bryson**

Mbl: 0424 476 027

Secretary/Treasurer: **Peter****Cameron OAM**

Mbl: 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

vethelp@bigpond.com

President: **Ian Bowron**Secretary: **Kayla Mastalerz****VICTORIA****VVF Victorian Branch Inc**

ALL MAIL TO: P.O. Box 167

Newcomb Vic. 3219

3 Hewat Drive

Highton Vic. 3216

President: **John Arnold OAM**

johnarnold@iinet.net.au

Secretary: **Iris Cargill JP**

Mb 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.

03 5248 0996

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

9 Burkitt Street, Page. 2614

Veterans Support Centre Belconnen

Ph: 02 6255 1599

office@vscact.org.au

www.vvfact.org.au

President: **Ward Gainey JP**Secretary: **Leanne Connor****TASMANIA****ALL PENSION ENQUIRIES TO****DENNIS HANMER OAM****NSW HO 02 9682 1788****WESTERN AUSTRALIA****VVFA WA Branch**

30 Cornish Ave

Woodvale WA 6026

Ph 08 9409 6682

vvfawabranh@gmail.com

President: **Milton Kirk JP****NORTHERN TERRITORY***Contact SA Head office for Northern Territory contact details.**Contact Granville Office for future Darwin Outreach Programs***SOUTH AUSTRALIA****VVF South Australia Branch Inc.**

The Yerbury Centre

Unit 1, 31-39 Norfolk Rd

Marion SA 5043

Ph: 08 8296 2411

Mon – Thur 1000 – 1500hrs

vvfsa@tpg.com.au

http://vvfsa.org.au

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

M: 0412 458 054

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

0448 994 561/0428 377 287

Ph: 08 8853 4379

SA REPS**ALICE SPRINGS AREA****Alan Wilkes****KATHERINE AREA****Scott Landers**

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.

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



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

JUST CALL 1800 011 046

If overseas call +61 8 8241 4546

Veterans and Veterans Families
Counselling Service

FORMERLY KNOWN AS



**Call
24/7**

A service founded by Vietnam veterans



1300 924 522

Wesley Hospital Ashfield and Wesley Hospital Kogarah provide compassionate care for those in need of psychiatric help. The goal of the hospitals is to provide positive outcomes, not only for our **patients** with a mental illness but also for their **family and carers**.

As centres of excellence within Wesley Mission our Wesley Hospitals have been providing professional and compassionate care for over 60 years.

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

Our programs

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

91 Milton Street,
Ashfield NSW 2131

&

7 Blake Street,
Kogarah NSW 2217



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

Affiliated with the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia Inc.

1 JAN—31 DEC

Website: www.vvfagranville.org

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]					
SERVICE NUMBER		SERVICE UNIT		O'SEAS AREA OF OPERATIONAL SERVICE	
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					
				\$	
				\$	
				\$	
				\$	
				\$	
Contact Granville for Stock item lists numbers and prices		TOTAL AMOUNT DUE		\$	
PREFERRED PAYMENT METHOD (Tick one only) CASH ___ CHEQUE ___ MONEY ORDER ___ CREDIT CARD ___					
CREDIT CARD DETAILS (Mastercard or VISA only)					
CARD HOLDER NAME [PRINT]			CREDITCARD NUMBER		
EXPIRY DATE		AMOUNT CONFIRMED		CARD HOLDER SIGNATURE	
(Mnth/Yr)	/	\$			
All cheques and money orders payable to VVPPAA NSW Branch Inc. Mail to PO Box 170 Granville, NSW 2142 Credit Card payments may be phoned in to (02) 9682 1788 Mon-Fri 9:30am – 3pm.					
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
VVPAA NSW
PO Box 170
Granville
NSW 2142

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

VETERANS MORTALITY REPORT

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

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

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

Please print clearly

VETERANS DETAILS

SURNAME

FIRST NAME

SERVICE NUMBER

--	--	--

SVN UNIT/S

TOUR DATES

--	--

CAUSE OF DEATH (If known)

--

SR Service Related

UNK Unknown

S Suicide

O Other)

DATE OF DEATH (If known)

LOCATION AT TIME OF DEATH

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

YOUR NAME

--

SUBURB/TOWN

STATE

POST CODE

--	--	--

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

SIGNATURE

--	--	--

RETURN FORM TO: The Welfare Officer

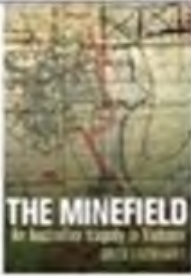
VVPPAA NSW Branch
PO Box 170
Granville NSW 2142

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

MERCHANDISE LIST

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE\$		ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE\$
1101	NSW PLAQUE	50.00		1403	LAPEL PIN ARMY	8.00
1103	NSW BADGE	10.00		1405	LAPEL PIN RAAF	8.00
1105	NSW STICKER	6.00		1406	LAPEL PIN CROSS	8.00
1106	NSW PEN	7.00		1500	STICKER TWIN SET REG	7.00
1107	RED PEN VVFA	8.00		1501	STICKER REGULAR	7.00
1108	NSW STUBBY HOLDER	8.00		1502	STICKER NASHO	7.00
1109	STUBBY HOLDER TRICOLOR	10.00		1503	STICKER DAMN PROUD	5.00
1111	VVFA GREEN CAP	22.00		1504	STICKER LOVE or LEAVE	5.00
1112	VVFA BLUE CAP	22.00		1505	STICKER PROUDLY	5.00
1113	VVFA WHITE CAP	22.00		1506	STICKER SUPPORT	7.00
1114	VVFA BLACK CAP	22.00		1507	STICKER TWIN SET NASHO	7.00
1116	PLATE SURROUND SML	12.50		1508	STICKER SUPPORT NAVY	7.00
1120	RED Mr GADGET	8.00		1509	STICKER NAVY VETERAN	7.00
1121	RED NOTEBOOK/PEN	8.00		1510	STICKER SUPPORT ARMY	7.00
1122	RED COOLER TOTE	14.00		1511	STICKER ARMY VETERAN	7.00
1125	KEYRING NAVY	8.00		1512	STICKER SUPPORT RAAF	7.00
1126	KEYRING ARMY	8.00		1513	STICKER RAAF VETERAN	7.00
1127	KEYRING RAR	10.00		1514	STICKER AFGHAN VETERAN	5.00
1128	KEYRING AIRFORCE	8.00		1515	STICKER IRAQ VETERAN	5.00
1129	KEYRING VVFA	9.00		1516	STICKER SOMALIA VETERAN	5.00
1130	LANYARD	10.00		1517	STICKER TIMOR VETERAN	5.00
1201	THE MINEFIELD BOOK	45.00		1518	STICKER SUPPORT/THANK	5.00
1308,9,12	ALL BUCKLES as shown	35.00		BOOKS	ON SALE ON LINE & AT THE	OFFICE
1401	LAPEL PIN RAN	5.00		3440	HOW TO RESEARCH AND HONOUR RETURNED	39.00
1402	LAPEL PIN ENSIGN	5.00		3442	THE THIRD CHOPSTICK	35.00

MERCHANDISE IMAGES

 1101	 1103	 1105	 1106	 1107	 1201		
 1108	 1109						
 1111	 1112	 1113	 1114		 1116		
 1120	 1121	 1122	 1125	 1126	 1127	 1128	
 1129	 1130	 1308	 1309		 1312		
 1401	 1402	 1403	 1405	 1406	 1411	 3440	 3442
 1500	 1501	 1507	 1502		 1503		
 1504	 1505	 1506	 1508		 1509		
 1510	 1511	 1512	 1513				
 1515	 1516	 1517	 1518				

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1120



1121



1122

\$25.00

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**ONLY WHILE STOCKS LAST
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ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE AU\$
3301	BUCKLE VETERAN	15.00
3302	BUCKLE VET RAR	15.00
3120	TIE BAR VV	8.00
3133	KRING ARMY AVI	6.00
3134	KRING RAE	6.00
3140	KRING RAAC	6.00
3141	KRING RAEME	6.00
3401	PIN RAR	6.00
2402	PIN MAP REGULAR	6.00
3404	PIN MAP VETERAN	6.00
3406	PIN VIETNAM VET	6.00
3407	PIN SLOUCH BRNZ	6.00
3408	PIN SLOUCH COL	6.00
3412	PIN 'Vietnam' Chopper	6.00
3420	CAP (black) 62-75 V	22.00
3500	PEN/TORCH GIFT SET BOXED	10.00



**GRAB 'EM WHILE THEY'RE HOT !!
ROSE GOLD DIAMOND GIFT SET & THANK YOU
BOX
ORDER # 3500 \$10.00 + PH.**

MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TOWN:

STATE:

PC:

PHONE:

ALT PHONE:

EMAIL:

ITEM N ^o .	DESCRIPTION	PRICE ea	QTY	TOTAL
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
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		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
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 (Cross out card type that does not apply)

NAME ON CARD:

CARD NUMBER:

EXPIRY DATE:

/

APPROVED AMOUNT: \$

SIGNATURE & DATE:

Please consider leaving a bequest in your will

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

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

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

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

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

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

Operation Life



Register Now!!

CALL **1800 011 046**



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

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

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

FORMERLY

Veterans and Veterans Families
Counselling Service





Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
R28249	PO	R	HOLT	HMAS SYDNEY /3	2/8/23	22/5/25
R56686	AS	GEG	HANSON	HMAS VENDETTA	3/7/23	11/9/41
R57684	AS	W	MIESZKUC	HMAS HOBART	1/8/23	20/11/42
23237	WO2	RF	WHALAN	AFV DET 1DIV INTEL	26/1/23	26/2/30
42524	CAPT	DN	MADDOCKS	67 GRND LIAISON SECT	30/4/23	22/10/37
22879	SSGT	RB	PETERSEN	2 AOD	18/6/23	28/2/29
4732	WO1	GE	SHANKLAND	2 AOD /2	9/7/23	30/8/26
174331	LCPL	KA	JARMAN	110 SIG SQN	19/9/23	26/7/45
44331	CPL	RJ	FREEMAN	32 SMALL SHIPS / 4	13/10/23	5/7/49
16183	WO2	LT	DENNIS	32 SMALL SHIPS / 2	6/8/23/	16/5/33
2785586	SPR	PF	WHITAKER	32 SMALL SHIPS / 3	6/8/23	5/1/46
2789616	SPR	BJ	MANSFIELD	17CONST SQN/ 32 SMSH 2	18/7/23	8/12/47
2787091	SPR	GE	WEISE	1ST FIELD SQN	30/3/23	21/10/46
3795458	SPR	PD	CORNISH	21 ENGR SPPT TRP	28/7/23	4/4/47
4720974	SPR	JS	HEBBARD	21 ENGR SPPT TRP	17/8/23	3/3/49
217926	LCPL	K	JAGO	17 CONST SQN	10/11/22	26/10/36
2794058	SPR	KJ	SMITH	17 CONST SQN	12/8/22	14/1/49
61584	SGT	WC	BARNARD	4TH FIELD REGT	16/8/23	19/7/45
2791357	GNR	KJ	TAYLOR	DET 131 LOC BAT	3/8/23	15/8/45



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
217143	PTE	DJ	BARNES	32 SMSH/ 1 RAR	10/7/23	17/9/45
2784878	CPL	JA	GOODWIN	1 RAR	13/10/23	18/3/45
15805	CPL	FJ	HOBBS	1 RAR	3/9/23	12/7/39
39406	PTE	DM	MACDONALD	1 RAR	30/8/23	11/3/48
43751	LT	DT	BARCLAY	3 RAR	2/10/21	19/10/41
2784885	PTE	M	PIPER	3 RAR	26/9/23	6/6/46
3790487	PTE	RA	PUDDY	4 RAR	15/6/23	9/8/45
212984	CPL	AG	EVANS	5 RAR	9/6/23	21/6/30
2788001	LCPL	TPP	PENDERGAST	5 RAR	29/3/23	24/1/47
2791975	PTE	JE	GLENNON	1 ARU/5RAR/8RAR	4/11/23	15/12/48
4720601	PTE	DG	MATTHEWS	8 RAR	1/8/23	24/4/46
213904	SGT	DA	BLUMER	9 RAR	2/6/23	10/7/36
254683	LCPL	AJ	WEBSTER	9 RAR	12/9/23	23/11/46



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
O215145	FLLT	IE	DEVEREUX	NO2 SQN	5/10/22	9/1/37
A315904	LAC	AC	BOYDEN	NO2 SQN	18/4/23	21/3/47
A44207	CPL	GA	GLASSON	N09 SQN	30/7/23	22/7/46
A24468	WO	MD	BATES	NO35 SQN	UNK	22/7/33
A19198	CPL	GT	BARNETT	NO35 SQN	26/8/22	16/11/36
A218336	CPL	T	BOUSFIELD	RAAF TRANS FLT V	23/9/23	23/8/39
A17439	LAC	GJ	BRYANT	BASE SUPPT FLT	UNK	1/8/46
A21329	FLTSGT	NJ	BATCHELDOR	N05 AF CONST SQN B	24/8/23	27/2 28
Friend/ volunteer						
		LC	WOOLLAM	MALAYSIA SERVICE	10/5/21	UNK

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

PLEASE NOTE

We make every endeavour to ensure the accuracy of all names published in "The Last Post". If any omission or error has been made we apologise unreservedly...please contact the editor if you feel an error has been made.

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

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& competitive prices on tyres and batteries.**

To all Vietnam Veterans
Federation Members.

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mechanical repairs & servicing.**

**15% Discount for members on
services and repairs.**

JOE CARE

603-605 Parramatta Rd
Leichhardt NSW
MTA Lic. # 42198

TRAILERS

TOWBARS BULLBARS

Fastfit Bullbars & Towbars

Trailer sales and spares-side steps
Bike beacons-Custom work

65 St Hilliers Road

AUBURN

Ph: (02) 9749 1209

10% Discount on products

EXHAUST SYSTEMS

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MENAI

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20% Discount

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22d Crystal St

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417 206

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Contact James Whitbourn
**Motoring journalist &
new car buyer's advocate**
james@carhelper.com.au
0403 892 897

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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

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Inverters & Chargers 10%

3/3 Sovereign Pl

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Fax: (02) 4577 7768

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ASHFIELD, NSW, 2131

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