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RICOCHET



Monthly newsletter of VVAA Sunshine Coast Sub-Branch Inc. FEBRUARY 2023

BEGINNING OF THE END

This year marks the 50th anniversary of then Governor-General Sir Paul Hasluck proclaiming an end to Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War on 11 January 2023.

Australia's participation in the war was formally declared at an end when the Governor-General issued a proclamation on 11 January 1973. The only combat troops remaining in Vietnam were a platoon guarding the Australian embassy in Saigon (withdrawn in June 1973).

Throughout this commemorative year, Department of Veterans Affairs says it will raise awareness to specifically recognise and honour the service and sacrifice of Vietnam veterans and their families.

DVA says specific events will include:

- Anzac Day Schools' Awards – in 2023 the awards will focus on the service of Australians in the Vietnam War
- history and education resources for schools across Australia
- education materials about the Vietnam War included in the national Anzac Day mail-out to schools, ex-service organisations and community groups
- documentary series on Australians in Vietnam to be screened on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and
- Saluting Their Service grants to assist with honouring the service and sacrifice of Australia's service personnel and preserve our wartime heritage, including projects and activities marking the 50th anniversary and the service of Vietnam veterans.



These activities will lead into a national commemorative service on Vietnam Veterans' Day, 18 August, recognising the service of all Australians in the Vietnam War and honouring the sacrifices that they and their families made.

The service will be held at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial on Anzac Parade in Canberra.

Recapping events leading to the end of the war for Australia, by late 1970 Australia had begun to wind down its military effort in Vietnam; 8RAR departed in November (and was not replaced) but, to make up for the decrease in troop numbers, the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV) strength was increased and its efforts became concentrated in Phuoc Tuy province.

— continued Page 3.



OUR MISSION: To assist ALL veterans and their dependents in all matters relating to their health, welfare and well-being.

Our website: www.vietnamvetssc.org.au

Email: secretaryvvaasc@gmail.com **Editor:** ricocheteditor@gmail.com

General information Page 2.

Veterans & Families Counselling

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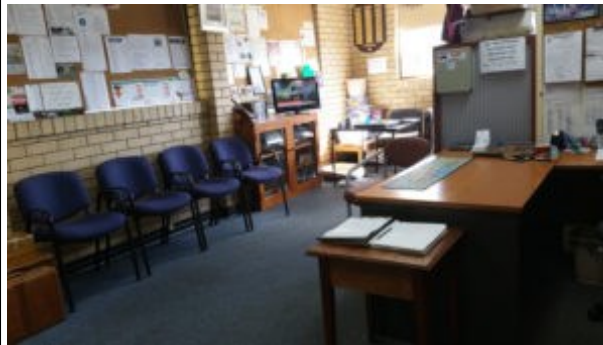
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This service provides counselling and support to all veterans of overseas conflicts. The families of Vietnam Veterans are also able to receive counselling through us. Group programmes include the Lifestyle Management Program (5 days live-in with partner) and the Heart Safe Program (12 month gym). Other therapeutic/educational groups are being planned for the Sunshine Coast.

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OUR MISSION: To assist all veterans and their dependents in all matters relating to their health, welfare and well-being.



Centenary for Surf Club

The veteran community has had a strong relationship with Mooloolaba Surf Life Saving Club which celebrated its centenary recently. In recent years particularly, veterans from Vietnam War and ADF operations since have had strong connections with the club on a regular, even daily basis and through events such as Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, monthly Rifleman's Lunch and weekly breakfast. Vietnam veterans involved as Bronze life-savers or radio operators include Ian Atkinson, Ricky Brittain, Kev Lynch, Ian Warburton, Johnno Johnston, Geoff Jewell, Len Thompson, Barry Vassella, Laurie Drinkwater, Les D'Alton, Ted Robinson, John Hickey, the late Lew Pattle (see Page 8) and many. Activities on the celebration day included re-enactments, helicopter rescue display, belt rescue, tug-o-war, pillow fights, sack races and a pipe band. PICTURED (clockwise from top left): chopper rescue demonstration; Vietnam veterans Ian Warburton, leading the march past; Ian Atkinson (with 'photographer' Chantelle Minter); and John Hickey (still going strong). VVAASC honorary member Hayden Kenny is a club legend.



An end to Vietnam involvement ...

- from page 1.

The withdrawal of troops and all air units continued throughout 1971 – the last battalion left Nui Dat on 7 November, while a handful of advisers belonging to the Team remained in Vietnam the following year.

In December 1972 they became the last Australian troops to come home, with their unit having seen continuous service in South Vietnam for more than 10 years.

In early 1975 the communists launched a major offensive in the north of South Vietnam, resulting in the fall of Saigon on 30 April. During April a RAAF detachment of 7–8 Hercules transports flew humanitarian missions to aid civilian refugees displaced by the fighting and carried out the evacuation of Vietnamese orphans (Operation Babylift), before finally taking out embassy staff on 25 April.

From the time of the arrival of the first members of the Team in 1962 more than 60,000 Australians, including ground troops and air force and navy personnel, served in Vietnam; 523 died as a result of the war and almost 2400 were wounded.

PICTURED front page: This iconic Michael Coleridge image is etched on the Vietnam Forces National Memorial in Canberra and shows 7RAR Diggers about to head back to Nui Dat.

ADF on Flood Assist



RAAF and other ADF personnel and equipment have been kept busy recently in Western Australia's Kimberley region in Exercise Flood Assist. Flight Lieutenant Sean Morell, an air traffic controller was operating out of mobile facilities (above) supporting flood relief efforts. Helicopters and aircraft were involved in the exercise. - by Lt Geoff Long RAN



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***Taken for
a ride ...***

HMAS Vampire, a decommissioned warship usually on display at the Australian National Maritime Museum, was moved by three tugboats through Sydney Harbour to Garden Island for conservation work recently. The vessel, which sits on the water while on display at the museum, will undergo \$3 million in repairs and be returned to the museum. Vampire had its keel laid in 1952.—ABC News



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Still searching 70 years on

The White Horse Hill battlefield is silent, yet decades on it remains contested and dangerous.

There are signs of recent activity, but now the ground is too frozen to dig. The Korean War battle site remains silent, waiting for the spring thaw and the chance for searchers to return to find more remains of the fallen.

In September 2018, North and South Korea signed a comprehensive military agreement, which included a plan to transform the demilitarised zone (DMZ) that separates the two Koreas into a “peace zone”.

This has allowed South Korea to search for human remains within the DMZ and carry out explosive-remnants-of-war disposal (*pictured*).

Australia deploys four members twice a year under Operation Linesmen, the ADF’s contribution to the inter-Korean peace process, deployed at the request of the United Nations Command (UNC) to support the work in the DMZ.

Australian contingent commander Flight Lieutenant Joon-Hee Wang, who speaks Korean, provided valuable assistance to the mission. She said Operation Linesmen was an important component for upholding the agreement



against a backdrop of military tensions between South and North Korea.

“White Horse Hill was the site of a bloody battle between the ROKA 9th Infantry Division and Chinese People’s Volunteer Army (PVA) 38th Corps, fought during October 1952,” she said.

“Possession of the hill changed hands 24 times and resulted in thousands of casualties due to an intensive bombardment campaign by ROKA, PVA and the United States Air Force. — *by Petty Officer Jason Wilson RAN.*

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Wide Bay exercise focuses on urban warfare

For newcomers to Queensland's Wide Bay-Burnett region, it may come as a surprise to feel small earth tremors or watch their windows shake from time to time.

Much like the Shoalwater Bay training area in central Queensland and the Kokoda Barracks in the upper Coomera River Valley, the Wide Bay-Burnett is home to Camp Kerr, a military training area spanning 22,000 hectares.

Getting past the security checkpoint and deep in the bushland, a flurry of activity is underway as soldiers in combat gear and armed with machine guns navigate through concrete buildings in an urban layout.

This is Exercise Diamond Strike, where the Australian Army's 7th Brigade is putting its skills and knowledge to the test.

Royal Australian Regiment 8th/9th Battalion operations officer Ryan Bell said the annual war fighting exercise replicated real-life combat scenarios.

"The objective of the exercise is to clear a threat force from the urban centre and secure it in preparation to hand over to a host nation," Major Bell said.

"Training in an environment like this allows us to create a full immersive environment where soldiers train at every level.

"From those at the forward edge of battle to those that are caregivers and our medical system that will evacuate the wounded and treat them at a safe location."

The soldiers used non-lethal, paint-based and blank rounds of ammunition.

From ABC Wide Bay / By Jake Kearnan, posted Saturday 12 November 2022

"They require teamwork and close communication to understand where everybody is and what the objectives are," Major Bell said.

"We're hoping that these soldiers will take away experience, resilience, and an understanding of what is required of them in the future."

The exercise started at Wellcamp in Toowoomba several weeks ago with air landings of battle group infantry from Brisbane, before moving to the Wide Bay for the joint land combat component, which finished this week.

The 8th/9th Battalion is a unit in the 7th Brigade.

Major Bell said the exercise was important to demonstrate the soldiers were "ready for any mission, anytime, anywhere".

Wide Bay historian and former member of D Company 9th Battalion, Lindsay Titmarsh, said he followed military exercises with great interest.

He remembered the first time he set foot on Camp Kerr decades ago.

"We went down there for the annual camp in early 1970 and when we got there — there wasn't much there," he said. "I can assure you all we had was a shed with a water tank just to supply water."



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Passing of a popular veteran, Lew Pattle

A Vietnam Veteran who was involved with establishing the monthly Riflemen's Lunch in the early 2000s passed away late last year.

Lew (Lewis) Pattle (2790902) finally lost his long-term health battles and passed away fittingly on Remembrance Day, 11 November. He was born in Wagga Wagga on 22 May 1948.

He served with 8 RAR in Vietnam from 19 November 1969 to 4 June 1970; he was wounded in the Long

Hais. Two brothers also served in Vietnam, one with RAR units and the other with the RAN.

He is survived by Trish, a son and daughter and five grandchildren. He and Trish met post-Vietnam. "There would not have been a day went by when he didn't think about it," she said.

He and a mate returned to their home town, Wagga Wagga, from Vietnam and went to the local RSL to celebrate – but were denied entry.

He made a career with AGC and Westpac before being diagnosed with brain cancer in 2003. They moved to Pelican Waters in 2006.

As well as being involved with Ian Atkinson in setting up the monthly lunch event, he was a great supporter of the weekly breakfasts – both held at Mooloolaba Surf Club.

He was also a keen patrol member of the club for many years and won an award for 100% patrol attendance in 2010.

Lew was always keen on all things military. On noticing his sleeping gear on a camping trip, a career veteran joked something like: "We spend a lot training them, but not much de-training them."

He was a popular veteran and mate of many. Lest We Forget. RIP Lew.

BELOW: Lew on parade, probably at the Welcome Home Parade in Sydney in 1987.





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Before
After

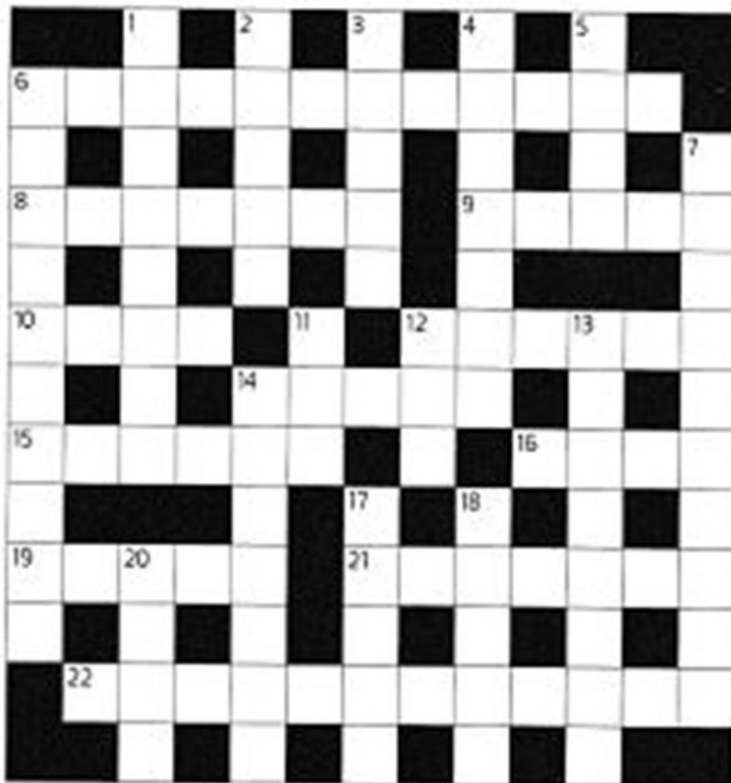


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JC's BEFUDDLEMENT PAGE



Across

- 6. Star of *Saturday Night Fever* (4.8)
- 8. Tool (7)
- 9. Drain (5)
- 10. Western defence organisation (4)
- 12. Intelligence (6)
- 14. Serious (5)
- 15. Madness (6)
- 16. Freshwater fish (4)
- 19. Incline (5)
- 21. A medium-sweet sherry
- 22. Horse race (12)

Down

- 1. Jeopardise (8)
- 2. Hoard secretly (5)
- 3. Steel rope (5)
- 4. Buccaneer (7)
- 5. Casserole (4)
- 6. Newspaperman (10)
- 7. Old record-player (10)
- 11. Lad (3)
- 12. Mary (3)
- 13. Log Diana (anag) (8)
- 14. Strew (8)
- 17. Merry (5)
- 18. Compel (5)
- 20. Poker stake (4)

February Conundrums

- 1. What is there one of in every corner and two of in every room?
- 2. What is stronger than steel but can't handle the sun?
- 3. What is it that no one wants, but no one wants to lose?
- 4. How do eight eights add up to one thousand?
- 5. I'm full of holes but strong as steel. What am I?
- 6. You are my brother, but I am not your brother. Who am I?
- 7. What bird do you associate with lifting weight?
- 8. Two men are in a desert. They both have backpacks on. One of the guys is dead. The guy who is alive has his backpack open and the guy who is dead has his backpack closed. What is in the dead man's backpack?

Aussie Trivia for February 2023

- 1. During which year of the 1980s was it first possible to spend a \$1 coin?
- 2. Which Australian City was the first to host a Summer Olympics?
- 3. Which Australian university became the first in Australia to admit women as student on equal terms back in 1881?
- 4. In 1968, which US fast-food chain became the first to open a branch in Australia?
- 5. Name the first horse to be a three-time winner of the Melbourne Cup?
- 6. Who was the first person to perform at the iconic Australia landmark, the Sydney Opera House, when he sang Ol Man River?
- 7. The first mobile phone went on sale in Australia for \$4,250 in the 1980s, which year?
- 8. Which sport was first played at Ballarat goldfields Australia in 1855? .
- 9. Who in 1984 became Australia's first female heart transplant recipient?
- 10. What was the name of the first full-length feature film made entirely in an Australian Aboriginal language, released in 2006?
- 11. Racehorse Delta Blues, winner of the Melbourne Cup in 2006, was from which country?
- 12. Charles Kingsford Smith made the first Tasman air flight in September 1928 when he flew 14 hours from Richmond Airport in Sydney to which New Zealand city?
- 13. On what occasion was Advance Australia Fair first played internationally as the national anthem?
- 14. A small town in which state was the first to ban plastic shopping bags in 2003?
- 15. What did the Australian treasury introduce in 1973?
- 16. The first Australian railway opened in 1854, in which state or territory? .
- 17. Where in 1823 was Australia's first Gold Rush?
- 18. Who became the first woman to sail solo and non-stop around the globe west to east in 189 days?
- 19. In 1960, scientist Frank Macfarlane Burnet became the first person to receive which award?
- 20. What was the name of Australia's and the world's first feature film?

• **ALL ANSWERS PAGE 16.**

Life includes time in Vietnam

A BENEFACTOR of our association, Peter Ginman has published his memoirs, *A Look Through My Window*.

He – and Anne – are benefactors by virtue of hosting the manufacturing of Diggers Hay Jewellery, as related in *Ricochet* in October.

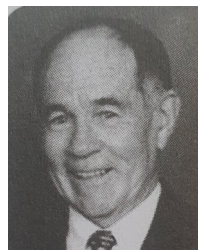
Peter was born in Lithgow NSW in 1932, joined the RAAF in 1949 and served in the Vietnam War as a Sergeant Electrical Fitter with 161 Independent Reconnaissance Flight from May to October 1967.

After discharge in 1969, he had several positions before becoming employed by the Golden Casket Lotteries Commission from which he retired in 1993.

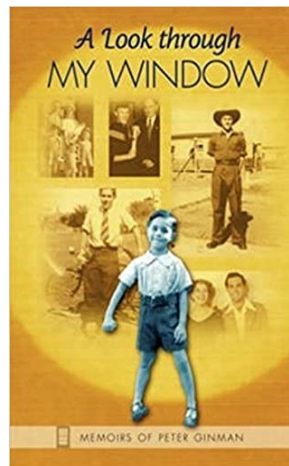
The book begins with a review by Peter Nolan, Squadron Leader (Ret) RAAF, who writes that it not 'just another life story', but "a well-written account of a man from a typically impoverished 1030s background whose boyhood dream was to be part of the new and exciting world of aviation".

"That dream was realised when, still a boy, he joined one of the early post-war intakes of RAAF electrical tradesmen," he writes. "He graduates as an electrical fitter. Serving for the next twenty years in war and peace throughout Australia as well as in Malaysia and South Vietnam."

The book is published by Temple House Pty Ltd t/a as Sid Harta Publishers. ISBN 978-1-921206-53-5. It is available online.



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Chips again ...

OUR senior member Chips aka Bryan Ross is in the news again. After he hosted his own “wake” in November, he has now turned up in a photo from his time in South Vietnam. The caption reads that he became a platoon sergeant and served 25 years.



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AT WORK AND PLAY

IT WAS a busy year again for a relatively few volunteers like those at a barbecue hosted by Cotton Tree Meats (from left) Bob Johnson, Mick Howe, John Cunnington and John Huxham. It was not all work for Mr Cunnington, turning up again at the Caloundra RSL for the sub branch Christmas party.



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When you're laughing, the whole world laughs with you

The following has been written by the late Douglas Adams of *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* fame.

Australia is a very confusing place, taking up a large amount of the bottom half of the planet. It is recognisable from orbit because of many unusual features, including what at first looks like an enormous bite taken out of its southern edge; a wall of sheer cliffs which plunge into the girding sea. Geologists assure us that this is simply an accident of geomorphology, but they still call it the "Great Australian Bight", proving that not only are they covering up a more frightening theory but they can't spell either.

The first of the confusing things about Australia is the status of the place. Where other landmasses and sovereign lands are classified as continent, island or country, Australia is considered all three. Typically, it is unique in this.

The second confusing thing about Australia is the animals. They can be divided into three categories: Poisonous, Odd, and Sheep. It is true that of the 10 most poisonous arachnids on the planet, Australia has nine of them. Any visitors should be careful to check inside boots (before putting them on), under toilet seats (before sitting down) and generally everywhere else. A stick is very useful for this task.

The last confusing thing about Australia is the inhabitants.

A short history: Sometime around 40,000 years ago some people arrived in boats from the north. They ate all the available food, and a lot of them died. The ones who survived learned respect for the balance of nature, man's proper place in the scheme of things, and spiders. They settled in and spent a lot of the intervening time making up strange stories. They also discovered a stick that kept coming back.

Then, around 200 years ago, Europeans arrived in boats from the north.

More accurately, European convicts were sent, with a few deranged people in charge. They tried to plant their crops in autumn (failing to take account of the reversal of the seasons), ate all their food, and a lot of them died.

About then the sheep arrived and have been treasured ever since. It is interesting to note here that the Europeans always consider themselves vastly superior to any other race they encounter, since they can lie, cheat, steal and litigate (marks of a civilised culture they say), whereas all the Aboriginals can do is happily survive being left in the middle of a vast red-hot desert – equipped with a stick.

Eventually, the new lot of people stopped being Europeans on 'extended holiday' and became Australians. The changes are subtle, but deep, caused by the mind-stretching expanses of nothingness and eerie quiet, where a person can sit perfectly still and look deep inside them-

selves to the core of their essence, their reasons for being, and the necessity of checking inside their boots every morning for fatal surprises. They also picked up the most finely tuned sense of irony in the world, and the Aboriginal gift for making up stories. Be warned.

There is also the matter of the beaches. Australian beaches are simply the nicest and best in the world, although anyone actually venturing into the sea will have to contend with sharks, stinging jellyfish, stonefish (a fish which sits on the bottom of the sea, pretends to be a rock and has venomous barbs sticking out of its back that will kill just from the pain) and surfboarders. However, watching a beach sunset is worth the risk.

As a result of all this hardship, dirt, thirst and wombats, you would expect Australians to be a sour lot. Instead, they are genial, jolly, cheerful and always willing to share a kind word with a stranger. Faced with insurmountable odds and impossible problems, they smile disarmingly and look for a stick. Major engineering feats have been performed with sheets of corrugated iron, string and mud.

They call the land "Oz" or "Godzone" (a verbal contraction of "God's Own Country"). The irritating thing about this is ... they may be right.

Tips to surviving in Australia:

Don't ever put your hand down a hole for any reason ... whatsoever.

The beer is stronger than you think, regardless of how strong you think it is.

Always carry a stick.

Air-conditioning is imperative.

Do not attempt to use Australian slang unless you are a trained linguist and extremely good in a fist fight.

Wear thick socks.

Take good maps. If you leave the urban areas, carry several litres of water with you at all times, or you will die. And don't forget a stick.

Even in the most embellished stories told by Australians, there is always a core of truth that it is unwise to ignore.

How to identify Australians:

They pronounce Melbourne as "Mel-bin".

They think it makes perfect sense to decorate highways with large fibreglass bananas, prawns and sheep.

They think "Woolloomooloo" is a perfectly reasonable name for a place, that "Wagga Wagga" can be abbreviated to "Wagga", but "Woy Woy" can't be called "Woy".

Their hamburgers will contain beetroot. Apparently it's a must-have.

They don't think it's summer until the steering wheel is too hot to handle ... and they all carry a stick.



**BIG Sheep
at Goulburn.**

February Timeline

1 February 1968: A major Viet Cong attack in the Battle of Ba Ria is defeated with heavy casualties inflicted as part of the North Vietnam-led Tet Offensive.

1 February 2003: Sixteen minutes before it was scheduled to land, the Space Shuttle Columbia broke apart in flight over west Texas, killing all seven crew members. The accident may have resulted from damage caused during lift-off.

3 February 1967: Ronald Ryan hanged in Melbourne after being found guilty of murder. He was the last person to be executed in Australia.

4 February 1856: Secret ballot introduced and all adult men given the vote with passing into law of universal male suffrage in South Australia and the secret ballot in Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. Other Australian states soon followed and the 'Australian ballot' became an international precedent affecting political reform in Britain and the United States in the 1870s and 1880s.

6 February 1851: 'Black Thursday', European settlers in Victoria faced their first catastrophic bushfires, which burnt a quarter of the colony. It was the hottest day the

European settlers could remember at 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43.3 degrees Celsius) in the shade. Remarkably, there were only 12 known deaths – owing no doubt to the relatively small population in 1851.

6 February 1952: King George VI died and his daughter Princess Elizabeth became Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Her actual coronation took place on June 2, 1953. She died on 8 September 2022.

14 February 1954: The Australian Flags Act came into effect, creating the Australia national flag which was the result of a competi-

tion in which 33,000 took part.

14 February 1966: Australians woke to a brand-new currency. The decision to change from the Australian pound (with its awkward shillings and pence) to a decimal currency – the Australian dollar – was a pragmatic, economic one. Yet decimalisation became an opportunity for Australia to assert itself as an increasingly self-assured and forward-thinking country (photo: \$1 note). - continued next page.



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February Timeline

15 February 1942: The fall of Singapore to the Japanese (photo). More than 15,000 Australian soldiers were captured; more than 7000 would die as prisoners of war. Controversially, the commander of Australian forces on the island, Major General Gordon Bennett, escaped the island with two staff officers on the night of the surrender.

21 February 1907: The first surf lifesaving club was founded at Bondi and several others were established soon after. Surf lifesaving clubs soon spread around the country and the surf lifesavers themselves became an Australian icon. Since 1907, it is estimated that lifesav-



ers have rescued more than 800,000 people.

23–24 February, 1966: In South Vietnam, 1 RAR is involved in the Battle of Suoi Bong Trang while providing protection to US engineers building a tactically important road in the vicinity of Tan Binh, in central Binh Duong Province.

26 February 1848: The Communist Manifesto pamphlet was published by two young socialists, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. It advocated the abolition of all private property and a system in which workers own all means of production, land, factories and machinery.

27 February 1902: Just before the end of the Boer War, lieutenants Harry 'Breaker' Morant and Peter Handcock were executed by firing squad for murdering 12 Boer prisoners of war. That they committed the crimes is beyond doubt, but the controversy surrounding their trial and execution led to Morant being considered a folk hero by the Australian public.

Sources include:

<https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/defining-moments-timeline>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_history_of_Australia_during_the_Vietnam_War

<https://www.historyplace.com/specials/calendar>



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As many of you know, I not only have the privilege of being the Honorary Chaplain to this wonderful Association, but I also have been given the honorary position of Chaplain with other ESOs, the chief of which is with the Headquarters 1 Australian Task Force (Vietnam) Association and DE Platoon, which was extended to me by the President of that group, John Verhelst, after their visit to Caloundra RSL in 2016.

COVID stalled the 2020 reunion due to be held in Canberra. After four false starts to hold that reunion, John Verhelst and his committee finally managed to get it underway in November last year. What an occasion he made of it.

This reunion remembered the nine personnel of DE Platoon who were travelling to re-supply ammunition to the troops involved in the Battle of Long Khanh, which I wrote about in the August 2022 edition of 'Ricochet', when a Viet Cong mortar struck the APC and all nine plus the APC crew were killed.

Three of the Long Khanh widows laid wreaths to honour their loved ones, while the reunion members laid the other six wreaths. The service was held at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Anzac Avenue, and I had the privilege of officiating.

John must have connections in high places, for we began the afternoon celebrations with afternoon tea in Duntroon House where the Governor-General, His Excellency, General David Hurley, AC DSC FTSE, shook hands with every Vietnam Veteran in attendance.

From Duntroon House, two coaches took us to the Vietnam Memorial where John had organised a fly past by a Canberra Bomber similar to the ones 2 Squadron flew in Vietnam out of Phan Rang from 1967 to 1971. This Canberra bomber was an ex-British war

Fireside with the Padre



horse which had been restored by the Temora Air Museum and is the only Canberra still flying in Australia today.

I spoke about the wonderful day we enjoyed at our last Vietnam Veterans gathering in Maroochydore and the part played by Danh Thai and Diamond and other Veterans from ARVN and their ladies.

That night I showed photos taken on the day of the ladies' banner which thanked the Vietnam Veterans and their wreaths of the two Nation's flags made from flowers. Many veterans spoke with me how much that their thanks were also felt by them in Canberra.

At the end of the gathering, John Verhelst invited me to Adelaide in 2024 to attend the next HQ 1 ATF and DE Platoon reunion. I am sure it was the words and thoughts of Diamond's lady friends whose thanks to Vietnam Veterans touched the hearts of all who attended.

I would like to take them to Adelaide next year, to share their appreciation to the next HQ 1 ATF reunion as they did to us in Maroochydore on these past several occasions. I should start a 'Go-fund-me' page to cover their air fares.

Every blessing for 2023,

Arthur Fry
Honorary Chaplain

Answers from page 9



TRIVIA

- 1984, May 14 to be exact!
- Melbourne hosted Summer Olympics in 1956.
- The University of Adelaide was second in the world to admit female students on equal terms in 1881.
- KFC was the first US fast-food chain to open in Australia — at Guildford, western Sydney.
- Makybe Diva won the Melbourne Cup in three consecutive races in 2003, 2004 and 2005.
- Paul Robeson sang to workers on the construction from the foundations of the Concert Hall.
- 1987, Telecom (Telstra's previous name bought the 1G phone to market) in 1987.
- Australian Rules Football better known as AFL
- Fiona Coote, aged 14 years, in April 1984.
- Ten Canoes, set in Arnhem Land.
- Delta Blues was the first Japanese horse to win the Melbourne Cup.
- Kingsford Smith flew from Richmond in Sydney's west to Christchurch.

13. Los Angeles Olympics 1984 – Advance Australia Fair, national anthem of Australia, adopted on April 19, 1984.

14. Tasmania (Coles Bay) In 2003, the Tasmanian town of Coles Bay was the first location in Australia to ban plastic bags.

15. They introduced the \$50 note in 1973. The \$100 note a year later.

16. Victoria. On 12 September 1854, the Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company opened Australia's first steam railway line in Melbourne

17. Bathurst was the first place in Australia to be officially recognised for a gold find on 15 February 1823.

18. Kay Cottee became the first woman to sail solo and nonstop around the world in June 1988.

19. In 1960 Macfarlane Burnet, became the first Australian of the Year.

20. The world's first feature-length film, *The Story of the Kelly Gang*, was released in 1906

CROSSWORD

Across: 6. John Travolta, 8. Utensil, 9. Sewer, 10.

NATO, 12. Wisdom, 14. Sober, 15. Lunacy, 16. Carp, 19. Slant. 21. Oloroso, 22. Steeplechase.

Down: 1. Threaten, 2.

Stash, 3. Cable, 4. Corsair, 5. Stew, 6. Journalist, 7. Gramophone, 11. Boy, 12. Wed, 13. Diagonal, 14. Scatter, 17. Jolly, 18. Force, 20. Ante.

CONUNDRUM

1. The letter O. 2. Ice.

3. A lawsuit.

4. $888 + 88 + 8 + 8 + 8 = 1000$.

5. A chain. 6. I am your sister. 7. A crane.

8. A parachute

Butterworth unit seeking recognition

From Channel Nine's A Current Affair – By Simon Bouda

"It's not right that the government can send their troops into harm's way and then deny that they did it," RCB (Rifle Company Butterworth) vet Ray Fulcher told me.

In 1979, Fulcher was a 21-year-old private who'd landed at Butterworth Air Base in Malaysia. He saw it as a war zone. "We were given a briefing, a briefing on the enemy," Fulcher said.

"The fact that the enemy now had mortars, which they hadn't had previously ... represented a much more serious threat to the base."

Australia had committed air support as the Malaysian Government fought communist insurgents. Aussie troops were deployed in what successive governments have claimed – and maintained – were training exercises.

"How can they say that things didn't happen over the peri-



od of time 1971 to 1989 – 18, 20 years," Bob Taylor, a cook at Butterworth, told me. "Those people that are denying things now were not there.

"We went over there and we were told we were going over there on war service – deemed war service – and that's what they're now refuting."

Rifle Company Butterworth fought in a war that Australia virtually denied even existed. Now, 30 years on, they're fighting another battle – this time for simple recognition.

Protecting our aircraft and the RAAF personnel on the base was a priority for Rifle Company Butterworth.

"A section of the company was on the Quick Reaction Force, which was a moment's notice, always fully armed, and at a moment's notice ready to move to counter any penetration or attack on the base or to defend the vital points," Fulcher recalled.

"Full load of weapons and ammunition, machine guns, rifles. The Quick Reaction Force was your immediate response to stop and contain the force, the enemy force, and then to counterattack it, to drive it off the base, capture them or kill them."

Fulcher, now a qualified solicitor, is spearheading a campaign to have Rifle Company Butterworth veterans recognised for their war service. "They just ignore it, or they deny it. They refuse to talk to us," he told me.

Graeme Mickelberg (who lives on the Sunshine Coast) retired from the ADF as a lieutenant colonel. "I spent probably 47 years of my life in the army," he said.

In 1975 he was a platoon commander at Butterworth. "When we arrived we received very detailed briefings on the nature of the threat," he clearly remembered.

- continued next page

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- from previous page

I asked him what the rules of engagement were. "We had well defined rules of engagement that said we could use lethal force, we had weapons, we had live ammunition," Mickelberg explained.

"I was commanding 36 men. I think I have a moral obligation to ensure that their service is recognised."

Last month (November) the theatre of war moved to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal where the diggers are fighting to have their service reclassified.

According to the vets, secret documents obtained under Freedom of Information clearly show they were on a war footing and faced constant threat.

I asked Fulcher if he believed it was a "warlike" situation. "Absolutely and that's what all the evidence shows," Fulcher said. "To be 'warlike' it was written (that) what was required was that you face a risk of harm from hostile forces, or dissident elements and that's clear... that's what we faced."

Graham Mickelberg (pictured) has absolutely no doubt. "There was always the presence of a threat," he maintained.

"I say that because of the nature of the orders that we received from our own chain of command."

An aerial photograph obtained by the RCB veterans indicates the threat posed – attacks were possible day and night.

The image is part of a mountain of submissions now being considered by the Tribunal to determine if the RCB service should be reclassified from peacetime to warlike.

Fulcher and Mickelberg believe the refusal to appropriately recognise their service goes to the political climate at the

Recognition for Butterworth

time.

"In my view it was politically expedient," Mickelberg said. Gough Whitlam had just been elected as prime minister on a promise to withdraw all troops from Southeast Asia.

"So the defence committee came up with the idea that we could send a company of troops from Australia on rotation and we could, in their words – not mine – put it out publicly as being for training purposes," Fulcher added.

Mickelberg agreed: "It's absolute rubbish to suggest that and the people who are suggesting this, particularly the uniform people within defence, know that."

The tribunal is expected to hand down its findings in the new year (2023).

"It's about recognition that we did a service for our country and want to be recognised for it," Fulcher added.

But for many from Rifle Company Butterworth any decision will come too late.

"It's also important for the widows and the children of those veterans who have passed to know that their father, brother, son's service has been recognised," Mickelberg said.

A military man through and through, retired Lieutenant Colonel Mickelberg is determined to right the wrongs.

"It's not good enough for us to stand up on ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day and say how important veterans are," he said. "We need to walk the talk, as well as talk it."

For this band of brothers, getting together for the occasional beer is the chance to share a few memories, often in sombre silence, standing as one.

"They try to say that it didn't happen. (It's) b-----t," Taylor said as he cradled his schooner.



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CHRISTMAS Greetings received by email from former secretary Mal Sayers: Hi All, I and the Puppies hope you have a great Xmas and New Year! Stay safe and well. Best Regards Mal.

Roll of Honour – Vietnam, February 1962-75

February 1966

Andrews, John Harker (211090), 40, AATTV (att. RAI), Sgt (Temp. WO2), Albany Creek Crematorium, Brisbane.

Belleville, Graham Rhodes (54956), 32, AATTV (att. RAI), Lt (Temp. Capt.), Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

Grills, Edward Anthony (215418), 20, 1RAR, Pte, Stroud Cemetery, NSW.

MacDonald, James Alexander (53283), 27, RAE (att. AATTV), Sgt (Temp. WO2), Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

Seipel, Raymond Douglas (15985), 24, 1RAR, Cpl, Mount Thompson Crematorium, Brisbane.

Suter, Thomas (17665), 20, 1RAR, LCpl, Garden of Remembrance, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

February 1967

Arnold, Peter John (2781363), 21, 6RAR, Pte, Inverell Cemetery, NSW.

Birchell, Michael James (2781899), 21, 6RAR, Pte, Evergreen Memorial Park, Tamworth, NSW.

Bourne, Donald Mackenzie (23916), 35, 5RAR, Maj., Woden Cemetery, Phillip, Canberra.

Carruthers, John (36911), 28, 5RAR, Lt (provisional), Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

Clark, Donald Murray (5713804), 21, 5RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Perth War Cemetery and Annex, WA.

Cliff, Richard William (1411047), 21, 1FIdRegt, Gnr, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Bridgeman Downs, Brisbane.

Green, George Bruce (2782127), 21, 5RAR, LCpl, Pinegrove Memorial Park Cemetery and Crematorium, Sydney.

Hanley, Maxwell Powell (43593), 31, AUSINT, Cpl (Temp. WO2), Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Kelly, Barry Walter (6410158), 22, 6RAR, Pte, Cornelian Bay Public Cemetery, Hobart.

Kirby, John William (27758), 31, 6RAR, Sgt (Temp. WO2), Mount Thompson Crematorium, Brisbane.

Milligan, Robert Bruce (29635), 30, 5RAR, Lt (Temp. Capt.), Macquarie Park Cemetery and Crematorium, Sydney.

Mitchinson, Kevin Leslie (4717751), 21, 3Cav.Regt, LCpl, Garden of Remembrance, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Pomroy, Victor Ian (3786644), 21, 3Cav.Regt, Trp, Springvale Crematorium, Melbourne.

Poole, Michael Damien (342916), 20, 5RAR, Pte (Spec. List Bandsmen), Dromana Cemetery, Mornington Peninsula, Vic.

Powter, Douglas Roy J (2782783), 21, 6RAR, Pte, Parkes General Cemetery, NSW.

Rich, Adrian William (38728), 21, 6RAR, Pte, Hazelwood Cemetery, Vic.

Riley, Wayne Maurice (5411599), 19, 6RAR, Pte, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

Rooney, Kerry Michael (15561), 24, 6RAR, LCpl, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Bridgeman Downs, Brisbane.

Sandow, Richard Wayne (43496), 20, 5RAR, Pte, Albany Creek Crematorium, Brisbane.

Waters, Brian David (5713981), 22, 6RAR, Pte, Tambellup Cemetery, WA.

Webster, David Raleigh (5713986), 21, 6RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Perth War Cemetery and Annex, Perth.

Webster, James Clifton (5713751), 22, 5RAR, Pte, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

Wilsen, Robert Peter (4717841), 21, 3CavRegt, Trp, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

February 1968

Ayres, Marvin Walter (216920), 23, 7RAR, Pte, Rookwood Military Cemetery, Sydney.

Baines, George Terence (214230), 28, 1Sqn SAS, Sgt, Woronora Crematorium, Sutherland, Sydney.

Caston, Robert John (4719003), 21, 3RAR, Pte, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

De Vries Van Leeuwen, Thomas J. (4718756), 22, 3RAR, Pte, Mount Barker Cemetery, SA.

Doherty, John Alexander (3789770), 23, 3RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

Garrett, John Edgar (1200473), 20, 1FIdSqn, LCpl, East Ballina Cemetery, Ballina, NSW.

Godden, Guy Richard (6708763), 21, 3RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Carr Villa Cemetery, Launceston, Tas.

Grose, Thomas Joseph (61582), 20, 2RAR, Pte, Cornelian Bay Public Cemetery, Hobart.

Mathews, Geoffrey Francis (5714739), 21, 3RAR, Pte, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

McLachlan, Colin William (13053), 38, 1FIdSqn, Sgt, Canungra Cemetery, Qld.

McMillan, Ross Charles (2785033), 22, 7RAR, LCpl, Uralla Cemetery, NSW.

Menz, James Leslie (38838), 22, 1DivLocBtry, LBdr, Marysville Cemetery, Vic.

Parrello, Antonio (36337), 30, AATTV (att RAI), Sgt, Botany General Cemetery, Botany, Sydney.

Pattison, Allan Graham (44042), 19, 1FIdSqn, Spr, Kadina Cemetery, SA.

Perrin, Robert Graham (3789447), 22, 7RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

- continued next page

Roll of Honour – Vietnam, February 1962-75

Rogers, John (4718449), 22, 2RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Steen, David John (4719232), 21, 1FIdSqdn, Spr, Penola New Cemetery, SA.

Taylor, Leonard Alexander (3787987), 22, 3RAR, 2Lt, Box Hill Cemetery, Melbourne.

Vickers, Patrick John (O1622), 32, RAN HFV, LtCdr, Queensland Garden of Remembrance, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

Wilson, Kevin Ronald (3411951), 22, 2RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

February 1969

Archer, Gary Alex (2788583), 22, 9RAR, Pte, Sydney War Cemetery, Sydney.

Byrne, Robert Alan (2786525), 22, 4RAR, Pte, Northern Suburbs Crematorium, Chatswood, Sydney.

Chant, Peter Allan (44265), 239, 9RAR, LCpl, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

McConachy, Malcolm Ross (1201200), 21, 9RAR, LCpl, Belgian Gardens Cemetery, Townsville, Qld.

McGuire, Raymond Alfred (2787478), 23, 4RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

Petersen, Victor Neils (1733375), 23, 4RAR, Pte, Queensland Garden of Remembrance, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

February 1970

Baker, Douglas Alfred (43555), 27, 8RAR, Sgt, Happy Valley Cemetery, Happy Valley, SA.

Barrett, James Joseph (1200097), 24, 8RAR, LCpl (tempCpl), Mount Gravatt Lawn Cemetery, Brisbane.

Carlyle, Hugh (43941), 21, 3CavRegt, Trp, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Hoban, William Joseph (15400), 39, 8RAR, Sgt, Queensland Garden of Remembrance, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

Hubble, Rodney Noel (55566), 19, 1FIdSqdn, Spr, Perth War Cemetery and Annex, WA.

Jackson, Robert James (2783512), 25, 8RAR, Cpl, Greta Cemetery, NSW.

MacLennan, Larry James (3795935), 21, 8RAR, Pte, Keilor Cemetery, Melbourne.

Maza, Reginald Nelson (15142), 39, 32SmlShpSqdn, LCpl, Botany General Cemetery, Sydney.

Munday, Barry John (3795712), 22, 8RAR, Pte, Springvale Cemetery, Melbourne.

Pesonen, Timo Esko A (7154), 20, 8RAR, Pte, Queensland Garden of Remembrance, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

Richter, Philip Mackay (3796110), 21, 8RAR, Pte, Woden Cemetery, Phillip, Canberra.

Thompson, Barry John (2789920), 22, 5RAR, Pte, Gunning Cemetery, Gunning, NSW.

West, Garry Maxwell (61912), 19, 8RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Comelian Bay Public Cemetery, Hobart.

Whiston, Barry John (1202024), 23, 3CavRegt, LCpl, Mount Thompson Crematorium, Holland Park, Brisbane.

February 1971

Kowalski, Peter Francis (1735712), 23, 2RAR, Pte, Nudgee Cemetery, Brisbane.

Lyddieth, Trevor (26832), 38, RAASC (att AATTV), WO2, Northern Suburbs Crematorium, Chatswood, Sydney.

Lyon, Terance Edward (52503), 35, 2AOD, WO2, Springvale Cemetery, Springvale, Melbourne.

Patten, Raymond Brian (2141115), 20, 7RAR, Pte, Rookwood Necropolis, Rookwood, Sydney.

Ross, Grant Stuart (17101), 27, HQ AFV RAAOC, Capt., Queensland Garden of Remembrance, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

Talbot, Alan (3797623), 21, 7RAR, Pte, Fawkner Crematorium & Memorial Park, Melbourne.

• **Information and photos from Australian War Memorial, Roll of Honour; Department of Veterans Affairs; Virtual War Memorial, Australia; Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Wall of Faces; Find A Grave.**



VIETNAM War Memorial, Greta NSW.

‘At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them ...’