

RICOCCHET



Monthly newsletter of VVAA Sunshine Coast Sub-Branch Inc. JUNE 2025

First Nasho intake 60 years ago

Sixty years ago this month, the first intake of 20-year-old men was called up for two years of National Service with the Australian Army.

“This (new) scheme was a compulsory service in the Australian Army for 20-year-old males, integrated into regular Army units. The scheme was implemented in response to concerns about Australia's defence manpower and the growing involvement in the Vietnam War,” according to the DVA Anzac Portal.



MARCHING IN ... the first intake of Nashos on 30 June 1965, with 63,000 all up over the next eight years.

“Regular recruiting for the Army was insufficient, so the Australian Government introduced the National Service Act 1964 when men aged 20 were selected by a birthday ballot for the Army.

“A year before the ballot, teenagers could choose to do their national service by enlisting in the CMF. Some 35,000 chose this option.”

A compulsory military training for young Australians had operated in Australia from 1951 to 1959, the third such scheme.

That scheme included the Air Force and Navy but the new scheme applied only to the Army, with around 63,000 called up between 30 June 1965 and 7 December 1972.

The initial service period of two years was reduced to 18 months in 1971. Around 15,300 served in the Vietnam War, with 200 killed and 1279 wounded.

(Overall ‘battle casualties’ totalled 414 killed and 2348 wounded; a total of 521 Australians died in the war – Australian Army (496); RAAF (17); RAN (8), including three Australian servicemen who were declared “missing in action”. (Source: Australian War Memorial awm.gov.au)

‘Nashos’ did 10 weeks of initial training in one of three training battalions: 1st Recruit Training Battalion (1RTB) at Kapooka, 2RTB at Puckapunyal, or 3TB at Singleton.

Most national servicemen were allotted to the Infantry, enabling the Army to increase the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) to nine Battalions.

About 1800 graduated as second lieutenants from the Officer Training Unit at Scheyville, NSW (These included air cadets who joined the Army to become pilots and RAAF airfield defence officers). — **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 INCLUDING LATEST OFFICE NEWS

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SUB-BRANCH Inc.**

PATRON: Laurie Drinkwater (pictured)

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Located at the rear of the Library Complex Administration Building (upstairs), Cnr Sixth Avenue and Beach Parade, Cotton Tree.

Phone 54794552 E-mail: secretaryvvaasc@gmail.com

OPENING HOURS: *Currently the office at the Drop-In Centre is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday ONLY from 0900 to 1200 (9am– noon).*

MEETINGS: *Third Tuesday of the month: Comm Meeting, General Meeting — times, check office for details.*

ACCESS: *Due to privacy and security issues, entry is no longer available via the back door, but only through the front door. However, if you need to use the lift in the main library building, you have to advise the office on phone 54794552 to arrange office entry.*

POSH MEETINGS: *Partners Offering Support and Hope meet Friday 1- 4pm in the meeting room beside the Drop in Centre. Coffee/tea/chat.*

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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.

DISCLAIMER: The committee of Vietnam Veteran Association of Australia Sunshine Coast Sub-Branch Inc. and its individual members take no responsibility for errors, omissions or inaccuracies in this newsletter, nor accept liability for any loss or damage suffered directly or indirectly from the use of information contained in this newsletter, and do not warrant that opinions published in this newsletter are necessarily the opinions held by the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, this Sub-branch or the Sub-branch Committee, including individual members.

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

• from Page 1

Federal Cabinet had decided to introduce a compulsory selective National Service scheme on 5 November 1964. In announcing this decision to Parliament, Prime Minister Robert Menzies referred to 'aggressive Communism' developments in Asia, such as 'recent Indonesian policies and actions' and a 'deterioration in our strategic position', as being influential in the decision.

Nashos marched in 60 years ago

The National Service Act 1964, was passed on 24 November, and the Defence Act was amended in May 1965 to provide that conscripts could be obliged to serve overseas, and in March 1966, Prime Minister Holt announced that National Servicemen would be sent to Vietnam to fight in units of the Australian Regular Army.

Although registration was compulsory a process of selection by ballot determined who would be called up. Two ballots were conducted each year. The ballots selected several dates in the selected period and all males with corresponding birthdays were called up for national service.

The ballot was conducted using a lottery barrel and marbles representing birthdays.

Generally, and from the top, the Army did not want National Servicemen, but once the government introduced the scheme it was accepted. They proved themselves and won respect, though subdued.

In *Vietnam: The Australian War*, Paul Ham quotes 'several battalion commanders': "They were the fittest and best-trained troops ever to leave Australia."

"The national servicemen in particu-

lar, observed Brig. (ret.) Colin Khan DSO AM, "despite the fact that he came from a generation considered by some to be long-haired dissenters, was the equal of any soldier to leave our shores."

Of course, all Diggers, Regular and Nasho, were praised for their Vietnam War contribution:

"The Australians were more patient than the Americans, better guerrilla fighters, better at ambushes. They liked to stay with us instead of calling in planes. We were more afraid of their style," said Trinh Duc, Xuan Loc, District Branch Party Secretariat, from *NAM, The Vietnam Experience, Vol 13, p59*.

"We were all over Vietnam and I talked to a lot of people ... the only ones who knew how to fight this thing are the Australians and the Viet Cong. I sent company commanders to train with the Australians ... so they could pick up the skills of those well trained and careful jungle fighters." – Lt.Col. David Hackworth (a highly decorated United States veteran of World War Two, Korea and Vietnam) in *About Face*.

— by Ricochet editor Kerry White (*National Service 1965-67, 1ARU and 5RAR, South Vietnam 1966.-67*)



PRIVATE Errol Noack, with B Company, 5RAR, was the first Nasho killed in Vietnam — on 24 May 1966. He was from Adelaide. — AWW photo.

Vietnam looking at buying US planes

Vietnam has reached an agreement with the United States to buy F-16 fighter jets (photo), a defence website said, citing industry representatives and a former U.S. government official.

Hanoi will acquire at least 24 of the Lockheed Martin single-engine fighters which, combined with other U.S. military ware, could add up to the biggest

ever defence deal between two countries. It is likely Hanoi will opt for the F-16 V model, which Lockheed calls the most advanced fourth-generation fighter, the site said.

The U.S. is also considering selling Lockheed Martin's Hercules C-130 military transport plane to Vietnam, according to Reuters news agency.

The U.S. lifted a longstanding arms embargo on its former enemy Vietnam in 2016.



In 2022, Hanoi said it was ready to reduce its heavy reliance on Russian arms, which accounted for around 80% of total weapons imports at the time.

A year later, during then-President Joe Biden's visit to Hanoi, Vietnam and the U.S. began talking in earnest about a major

deal.

It may have come to fruition this month, after Vietnam scrambled to cut its record trade surplus with the U.S. in the face of threatened 46% tariffs.

Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh said earlier in April that Vietnam would buy more American weapons as part of addressing the trade imbalance between the two countries.



VE DAY LONDON

ROYAL Air Force Red Arrows fly over the Mall and Buckingham Palace during the V-E Day 80th anniversary parade in London. — from The Telegraph, London.



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From the Secretary

Vietnam Veterans Day luncheon tickets are now available for purchase from the Drop-In Centre. Pricing and details about the service and luncheon are in the advertisement in this edition of Ricochet (Page15).

The other day I came across a number of 2012 Vietnam Veterans Day photos taken by our previous long-term office manager, Norm Cooper. Of the 35 photos, 25 contained images of deceased members. There were a few double-ups, but the photos were a sobering reminder that Vietnam veterans are not getting any younger.



Our oldest member, Chipps Ross in 2012. Note the number of beers Chipps ordered. They saved him making repeated trips to the bar.

According to official statistics, over 60,000 Australian military personnel (army, navy and air force) served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1973. It was estimated in August 2023 that there were 35,000 Vietnam Veterans still alive. That number would have dropped significantly during the past 21 months.

Next year will be the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. (That gives some indication of the age of our Patron, Laurie Drinkwater). Vietnam Veterans Day is a day of commemorating the service of all military personnel who served in the Vietnam war. It is a special time to remember those who lost their lives, those who were wounded and those who suffered, for all sorts of reasons, upon their return to Australia.

It is also a day to renew old friendships that were cemented by a special bond that, it is fair to say, is often only understood by veterans. We might be separated by distance and life's complexities, but catching up with old mates, shaking hands, reminiscing and having a drink together is great medicine.

For example, last month I attended the 80th birthday of a mate (name withheld for my protection) with whom I was conscripted in 1967. I told

the audience the story (slightly embellished) of how this infantry bloke received a two-week sand-bagging punishment for a minor indiscretion.

It meant he was confined to the Task Force Base, could not go on operations to look for bad guys, could not trudge through the bush, could not eat rations, could not sleep on the ground in a shell scrape, and could not enjoy the afternoon downpours and the feasting mosquitoes.

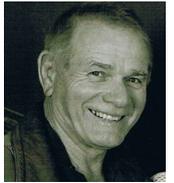
Instead, he was forced to fill a few sandbags during the day, eat steak in the evening, consume beer at the canteen, watch an occasional movie and sleep in a bed (covered by a mosquito net). Overtly, this humble chap stoically accepted his punishment, while covertly, he could not believe his luck. Military justice can be an enigma at times.

Hopefully, there will be a large turnout in August, so grab your lunch tickets, book a table and enjoy reminiscing with some great mates.

Regards

John Cunnington

Secretary



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MEMORIES OF LAST HERC'S OUT OF WAR

ONLY three RAAF aircraft were in Vietnam on Anzac Day 1975, just days before the fall of Saigon. Hercules flown by Flight Lieutenant Sam (Dave) Nicholls and Flight Lieutenant Brent Espeland departed Tan Son Nhut, leaving only the backup aircraft piloted by then Flying Officer Jack Fanderlinden to pick up the stragglers (he is pictured at a recent reunion with Hugh Holt).

Stragglers included embassy staff who'd missed the earlier flights, Vietnamese war orphans and their nurses, South Vietnamese allies, nuns from a nearby order ... and four Airfield Defence Guards armed only with pistols.

One of the ADGs, then-corporal Ian 'Spike' Dainer, recalled there were also a number of "nuns with hairy legs ... one even had a moustache" among the crowd trying to board that last plane. Much of the "baggage" had to be discarded.—from ADF.



Hotel still standing



MEMBER Terry Dwan took this photo recently of the "Canberra Hotel" in Saigon where many Aussies stayed during the war. He says it probably rates a "negative" one-star.



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MORE from Anzac Day: Daryl Turner (above) in the Maroochydore parade; at Tewantin (right); Les D'Alton, Buddy Furman and Barry Vassela (below) at Maroochy RSL; and (below) Gordon Hurford (left) and Ian Atkinson, who served in the same company in Vietnam: Gordon as a platoon commander and Ian as a section commander in another platoon. Both are career soldiers — Gordon, a Nasho Lieutenant retired as a Colonel and Ian as a Warrant Officer.

More from the 'one day of the year'



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Final hours of the war

IN THE final hours of the Vietnam War in Saigon 50 years ago (clockwise from top left) evacuation from the US Embassy, people trying to escape via Chinook, evacuation from CIA HQ, lining up to get abroad a chopper, and likewise (left) .— Getty Images.



Naval Association of Australia Maroochy Waters Sub Section

Once Navy - Always Navy, is the proud motto that underpins the fellowship spirit embodied in the Australian Naval Association's principles and in this same spirit, the Maroochy Waters Sub Section, extends its warm invitation to former personnel of the: RAN, RN, RNZN and the MERCHANT NAVY, to join our enthusiastic members for pleasant fellowship.

We are an accredited Not for Profit organisation committed to the support of worthwhile veteran and community welfare programmes.

If you have served in any of the above listed units, you and your family are welcome to join the comradeship of fellow, like-minded people, at our monthly social meetings at the RSL Branch office on Memorial Ave Maroochy, opposite the RSL Club.

Enjoy, also, the quiet ambience of our museum of naval memorabilia containing a wealth of original artefacts, uniforms and models of naval ships used in conflict, all representing a worthy reminder of the contribution by the men and women in their military role of the Australian and Allied Navies through the years.

For further information on becoming a member of our association, with a proud naval heritage, please contact the Maroochy Waters Sub Section, Naval Association of Australia:

Bill Hayward, President, 0411 024 985, bloggshayward@yahoo.com
Michael Wilson, Secretary, 0457 852 122, michaelwilson1@bigpond.com



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All is quiet in the Padre's camp – for once! A time to reflect, you say. Hardly, a time to look to the future and see what I have on my plate in the coming months, more like it.

We have Vietnam Veterans' Day coming up in August. This year, I am having a bit of a change. My wife and youngest daughter are heading off to America on 12 August for our eldest American granddaughter's graduation from college.

On VV Day, I am officiating at the Caloundra RSL, one of the three ESO's where I hold the position of Honorary Chaplain. But I am not leaving the VVAASC without a Padre in my absence.

I have arranged for my friend and former Army Chaplain, Max Wheat, to stand in for me. Although it is not without precedence, for Max tells me that when he was a pastor here in Caloundra, he also took the Long Tan Day service at the cenotaph.

Max and I also stood outside the Goodna RSL one Vietnam Veterans Day when we shared the Chaplaincy. At that time. He officiated. If I remember correctly, that was the time that a Huey flew over at the appropriate time and brought back many memories for all on parade.

Then the next big event for me is for Annette to drive me to Wangaratta in Victoria for the annual reunion of the other unit which claims me as their Chaplain: Headquarters, Number One, Australian Task Force Vietnam Association, which picked me up when they held their reunion in Caloundra in 2016. They made me an honorary 'Red Rat,' and adopted me into their clan ever since, by the good

Fireside with the Padre



graces of their President, John Verhelst.

We aim to travel back via Canberra to visit my former RAAF colleagues, now all retired there, having taken jobs in Canberra after saying goodbye to lengthy careers in the RAAF. As my dear one must do all the driving these days, we will be taking our time to make the journey down and back in hops of five-hour duration.

Lastly, I will be chasing up my lost super, which is a task in stupidity and being shelved off, sideways, and a search for my medical records, also from 21 years ago, which is also proving to be an exercise in futility. It seems nobody keeps records from 20 years ago, but it keeps me busy when I am not involved in any of my three Chaplaincies.

I trust that by now, you will have all bought Dave Morgan's book, 'Never Forgotten' about the lives of 33 ex-service men and women. It is a good read, and profits all go to Legacy. Both Dave and I were legacy wards as children, and it is good to see that we remember what Legacy did for us back then.

Until next month, may God bless all veterans and their families.

Arthur Fry

Honorary Chaplain

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VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA SUNSHINE COAST SUB-BRANCH, MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING, 20 MAY 2025

Meeting opened: 1105hrs. Ode recited by Mick Howe. Attendance 14. Apologies: 4.

Prior to the reading of the previous general meeting minutes Peter Tsakissiris (Maroochy RSL President) presented to Mick Howe from the Beaudesert RSL Sub-Branch a framed map of Vietnam during the Vietnam War. It will be displayed in the Maroochy RSL Sub-Branch in the proposed area the Sunshine Coast Vietnam Veterans will be moving into.

Previous General Meeting Minutes: Mick Howe read the minutes from the April General Meeting. No further business arising.

Inwards Correspondence and Outwards Correspondence: John Cunningham advised that emails had been received and replied to from Sunshine Coast Council re: usage of the Meeting Room in the Library Admin building. Emails from and to Bundaberg Legacy and Goulburn Mulwaree Council re: Diggers Hat Jewellery orders; and Vietnam Veteran's Day. Emails re: shirt orders and miscellaneous "Heads up". Moved John Cunningham, seconded Kerry White. Carried. No further business arising.

Treasurer Report: in the absence of Deb Day, Mick Howe gave the report. The Treasurer's Report is available at the Drop in Centre.

Membership Report: Pieter Reus gave an update of the Membership status of the Association: 162 financial members, consisting of Life Members 15, Life Subscribers 93, Ordinary 25, General 14, Associate 6, POSH 4. Moved Pieter Reus, seconded Win Fowles, Carried. Further business arising: Win Fowles queried how the VVAASC compares number-wise to other VV groups. Discussion ensued, our membership was 460 in 2012. As the Sunshine Coast Branch was once one of the biggest groups in Australia it would be fair to surmise, we are still doing well. No

further business arising.

Ricochet Report: Kerry White informed the meeting he will be away for the remainder of this month, nor will he be here for the June edition of Ricochet. No current advertisers have dropped out. Moved Kerry White, seconded John Huxham. Carried. No further business arising.

Office Manager Report: John Huxham. Thanks to the Duty Officers. Pleased with the new office area at RSL Sub-Branch. Moved John Huxham, seconded John Cunningham. Carried. No further business arising.

Sub-Committee: John Cunningham advised that everything is going to plan for VV Day 2025. Corresponding with all groups involved. Kerry White to be Guest Speaker. Tickets are now available at the Drop in Centre. Moved John Cunningham, seconded Mal Overend. Carried. No further business arising.

Merchandise Officer: Mick Gay updated the meeting that 10 Digger Hat Key-rings had been gifted to Kerry White to take overseas. The DHJ keyrings are recorded as "written off". Moved Mick Gay, seconded Mark Doolan. Carried. No further business arising.

DHJ: Graeme Scott had four attendees to the May session; 200 pennies were pressed. A generous donation of 100 pennies (thanks to Win Fowles) and more pennies have been ordered. Labels were printed by Nambour Print and Copy. Moved Graeme Scott, seconded Win Fowles. Carried. No further business arising.

General Business: Kerry White informed the meeting he will be meeting up with four fellow 5RAR comrades on Saturday, 24 May to honour the memory of Errol Noack 4717546, BCoy 5 RAR, the first National Serviceman killed in Vietnam.

Mick Howe mentioned it was good to view the "new office area". Meeting closed: 1135hrs. Next meeting Tuesday 17 June 2025 1100hrs.

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TIMELINE JUNE

3–6 June 1942: The Battle of Midway, the first decisive defeat inflicted on Japan by the United States in the Second World War.

6 June 1944: D-Day, Allies land in Normandy, opening up a third front against Germany

6 June 1969: Battle of Binh Ba, 6km north of the Australian base at Nui Dat, between an Australian Ready Reaction Force and a combined force of Viet Cong guerrillas and North Vietnamese Army troops who had occupied the village. The enemy were driven off after more than a day's fighting (**PHOTO**).

8 June 1942: A week after they launched the midget

submarines that attacked Sydney Harbour, four large Japanese submarines shell Sydney and Newcastle, but to little effect.

9 June 1803: British explorer Matthew Flinders became the first person to circumnavigate Australia. Flinders proved Australia was a single continent. By using the name 'Australia' in his maps and writings, he helped the word enter common usage.

9 June 1928: Australian pilots Charles Kingsford Smith and Charles Ulm, along with two US crewmen, landed in Brisbane, the first to cross the Pacific Ocean by air in their three-engine Fokker the Southern Cross.

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12 June 1902: The Commonwealth Franchise Act was enacted giving women in Australia over the age of 21 the vote in national elections and stand for the Australian Parliament, despite many not possessing the right to do so in their home states.

12 June 2012: On 17 August 1980 nine-week-old Azaria Chamberlain was taken by a dingo from a tent at Uluru. It was not until this day in 2012, after a fourth coronial inquest, that a certificate was finally issued stating her true cause of death.

24 June 1852: A catastrophic flood swept through the New South Wales town of Gundagai. Only three buildings were left standing when the water receded. Between 80 and 100 people died.

25 June 1950: North Korea invades South Korea, beginning the three-year-long Korean War. A peace treaty was never signed; the war has not officially ended.

26 June 1945: Australia played an important role in the establishment of the United Nations. 'Doc' Evatt, Minister for External Affairs in the Curtin and Chifley governments, was president from 1948 to 1949.

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.awm.gov.au/articles/atwar>

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


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

Geoffrey [Boycott] is the only fellow I've ever met who fell in love with himself at a young age and has remained faithful ever since" - Dennis Lillee

"The other advantage England have got when Phil Tufnell is bowling is that he isn't fielding" - Ian Chappel

"Being the manager of a touring team is rather like being in charge of a cemetery - lots of people underneath you, but no one listening" - Wes Hall

"Shane Warne's idea of a balanced diet is a cheeseburger in each hand" - Ian Healy

"I absolutely insist that all my boys are in bed before breakfast" - Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie explaining how Hampshire won the County Championship under his captaincy

Cricket is a funny game, old chap

"The bowler's Holding, the batsman's Willey" - Brian Johnston as Peter Willey faces up to Michael Holding

"Neil Harvey's at slip, with his legs wide apart, waiting for a tickle" - Brian Johnston

"England have nothing to lose here, apart from this Test match" - David Lloyd

"No good hitting me there, mate, there's nothing to damage" - Derek Randall to Dennis Lillee after being hit on the head by a bounce

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VIETNAM MEMORIAL WALK FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Yorke Peninsula is set to make history with the official launch of South Australia's first Vietnam War Memorial Walk in August, honouring all Australians who stood for our country.

To mark the occasion, an official opening ceremony will include the arrival of a genuine Huey helicopter from the war era alongside a performance from John Schumann and the Vagabond Crew.

Led by Yorke Peninsula resident and ex-National Serviceman Roger Hogburn, this memorial is a passion project that's close to the heart.

"It's really great that we were able to make this happen. It wasn't a council-led project, just a couple of old blokes over a cup of coffee, tossing around the idea," he laughs.

Set up against the breathtaking 4km stretch of Yorke Track between Coobowie and Edithburgh, the memorial will include 30 custom-designed signs. Visitors can wander through an honourable and poignant history all while taking in the scenery of the southern Yorke coast.

"There'll be an introductory board, a couple of honour roll boards... it's not just the Army, Navy, and Air Force, but everyone right down to the reporters. It'll be the only memorial of its kind in Australia," explains Nick Perry, Manager of Economic Development and Business Sustainability at the Yorke Peninsula Council.

"It took many, many hours to ensure the stories we had

were accurate," Roger says. "There are a lot that have not been recognised ... for example, the doctors and nurses who went with the Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation, over 400 of them served in South Vietnam's public hospitals."

The launch ceremony on 18 August will begin with the rare Huey helicopter, which is widely considered the "soundtrack of the war." It's one of only two still flying today.

"There's every chance this could be the last time we see a Huey in SA, especially operating. Getting one to South Australia has been a huge effort."

More information from email: admin@yorke.sa.gov.au

PICTURED: Workers on the track with a Huey—Photo Howard Mitchell and the Yorke Peninsula Council



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- CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH

Between the Babylifts co-ordinated by the United States, Detachment S was called in to transport civilian refugees away from the front lines. To maximise the number of passengers, no seats were fitted. Over several days in April 1975, the RAAF detachment evacuated more than a thousand civilians from Phan Rang to the safer southern town of Can Tho. Loadmaster Al Harris recorded unparalleled chaos.

"There were masses of people trying to get on the aircraft, some were throwing babies to us from the back of the crowd. That day showed us the value of our procedures to control and limit access to the aircraft in mass-people situations. We learnt to only open one door and block all the other accesses, including overhead hatches, to take control of desperate people as they climbed up one at a time. Even then, one of our aircraft taxied with people hanging off the crew entrance door handle."

During the Phan Rang air lifts one RAAF C-130 suffered gunshots to the empennage (tail assembly), fired into the air by an ARVN soldier trying to control the crowds. Luckily the aircraft remained serviceable.

Earlier in the month, at the Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital in Melbourne, Matron Vivian Bullwinkel had been asked to put together a team of nurses to travel to Vietnam to bring home the second Babylift.

They bussed up to Sydney, boarded a Qantas 747 flight to Bangkok and after a night there the nurses split into two teams. Team one, led by Bullwinkel, flew on a RAAF C-130 to Saigon to meet and sort the

babies into categories of age and level of care required. The second team stayed in Bangkok and reconfigured the 747 into a flying hospital.

Flying into Saigon for the second Babylift on April 17, Navigator Ian Scott flew saw the huge scar on the ground from the Galaxy crash. "Up to that point I had believed in the domino theory and that Communists were evil, but in Saigon itself I was struck by how the people were just intent on living: working to build a life for their families – commerce and trade. It was a pointless war – we were stupid to go there [as] we had no grand strategy."

Scott's crew had been delivering food relief to Phu Quoc Island from Saigon for about a week, but the night before Babylift they were in Bangkok. After landing at Saigon, nuns and organisers from various orphanages began arriving with their charges. It took over two hours for all to arrive, and by that time the smallest babies needed feeding.

"Someone came and told us these kids need feeding. They were thin and didn't look well. It was while I was feeding babies on the tarmac that suddenly the human cost of the Vietnam war became very real. The fallout of victims was very very sad."

Once the Hercules landed in Bangkok the precious cargo was whisked onto the 747. Pilot Ian Frame regrets never having had the chance to see the babies off.

Dominic Golding believes he was born in Cholon, the Chinatown of Saigon. He was discovered in the street by an Australian doctor outside a

TATTOO TELLS THE STORY

building which had just been bombed. Dom's deafness is attributed to this bombing. A vulnerable newborn with cerebral palsy, Dom was taken to a World Vision Orphanage and at some stage named Hong Duc Nguyen, Duc meaning 'good'.

For Australia-bound orphans to qualify for evacuation, they had to have adoptive parents, approved by state and territory adoption authorities, waiting to receive them. Dominic believes he was one of four children without any such paperwork. "The circumstances which led to me being placed in the C-130 are haphazard. I think I was so small and sick they thought I would probably die, so they just put me on the aircraft hoping for the best."

He survived the journey, but two of the other babies did not. When he arrived in Melbourne, the Golding family of Mt Gambier met the Qantas Babylift, only to find that the baby they had been allocated had died in-flight. In Dominic's words, "They asked if there was a spare baby."

Dominic spent four months in Melbourne's Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital under the care of Matron Vivian Bullwinkel, after which he was able to go to his new home and family at Mt Gambier.

His adoptive parents were school teachers who had worked in Papua New Guinea, and he had four older siblings. Thus, in Dominic's words, "they had already been de-programmed from racial discrimination." In 1975 orphans and refugees from Vi-

etnam were test cases for the new Racial Discrimination Act which replaced the openly racist White Australian policy.

Though nearly fifty now, Dominic Golding Nguyen's life has been completely shaped by his first chaotic months. Dominic went to a loving family with first world medical care and opportunity. He is absolutely certain that his life was saved by Babylift. Life for a foreign adoptee, though, is not without difficulty. Placing a child of one race with adoptive parents of another race creates a complex identity narrative. Reflecting on his life, Dominic is outspoken on race relations and chooses to 'interrogate whiteness'.

In this context, the question of his feelings toward the C-130 Hercules was posed carefully. When we spoke, Dominic stood up, with some difficulty removed his coat and pulled up his sleeve. There on his left forearm was the answer. A bold black tattoo, the silhouette of a C-130 in-flight and the year [19]75. The C-130 means everything to him.

For over 65 years RAAF C-130's have continually provided invaluable support in times of humanitarian crises. Though Australian Hercules squadrons have demonstrated their capacity, willingness and rapid responsiveness to unfolding disasters time and time again, Babylift must surely have been one of their more rewarding operations. Dominic Golding-Nguyen is proof of that.

PICTURED: RAAF officers Ian Frame, Hugh Howell and Ian Scott on Operation Babylift. — AWM photo.





ATTENTION MEMBERS
VIETNAM VETERANS DAY MONDAY 18 AUGUST 2025
COTTON TREE CENOTAPH

The day will commence at around 0600 hours with the “Toast to the War Dogs” at the war dog’s memorial, Alexandra Headland. Breakfast, tea and coffee will be supplied.

Main Commemoration Ceremony

Assembly: 1045 hours at the swimming pool complex, The Esplanade, Cotton Tree. The short march to the Cotton Tree RSL Cenotaph commences at 1045 hours.

Service: 1100 hours—1200 hours.

Luncheon: Maroochy RSL following the service. Welcome to guests at 1215 hours. Lunch tickets are now available at the Drop-In Centre.

Cost: \$45 for members and partners; non-member’s price is \$55 per head. Lunch includes a sumptuous three course meal, subsidised beer and wine, entertainment, lucky door prizes, raffle draws and surprises!!!

IMPORTANT: At the luncheon there will be free seating available. However, if you would like to pre-book a table (maximum of 10), please notify John Cunnington on 54933513 (0415375968) or email secretaryvvaasc@gmail.com and arrange the bookings with him **after you have purchased your tickets.** Names are required for each person.

Transport: In previous years, a bus was provided to transport guests to Cotton Tree from the Caloundra RSL. Due to the small number who caught the bus last year, (9 on a 57 seater), the Association is looking at other transport options. When purchasing tickets you will be asked whether you require transport from the Caloundra RSL. Depending on numbers, a smaller bus may be an option. Pick-up time will be 0945 hours. The bus will leave the Maroochy RSL at 1630 hours.

Special dietary requirements - leave a message with the duty officer at the Drop-In-Centre or contact John Cunnington on 54933513, (0415375968) or email secretaryvvaasc@gmail.com

Roll of Honour — Vietnam, JUNE 1962-75

June 1963

Hacking, William Francis (36448), 30, AATTV, Sgt, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

June 1965

Bourke, Michael Alwyn (37867), 19, 1 RAR, Pte, Cheltenham New General Cemetery, Melbourne.

Carroll, William Thomas (37010), 21, 1 RAR, Pte, Warnambool Cemetery, Vic.

Van Valen, Arie (54320), 21, 1 RAR, Pte, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

June 1966

Arnold, Kevin John (35956), 31, 2 Comp. Ord. Depot, Cpl, Albury Cemetery, NSW.

Brown, Ian Robert (54157), 26, 1 Div. Provost Coy, Cpl, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

Coupe, Brendan Francis (15358), 23, 5 RAR, Cpl, Macquarie Park Cemetery and Crematorium, Ryde, Sydney.

Farren, Leslie Thomas (3786921), 20, 5 RAR, Pte, Fawkner Crematorium and Memorial Park, Melbourne.

Hood, Ronald Dean (4410911), 23, 1 ARU, Pte, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Ruduss, Arthur (3410295), 29, 1 ATF, Pte, Springvale War Cemetery, Melbourne.

Sweetnam, John Robert (215958), 19, 5 RAR, Pte, Woronora Crematorium, Sutherland, Sydney.

June 1967

Cox, James George (1731426), 22, 7 RAR, Pte, Crematorium and Garden of Remembrance, Rockhampton, Qld.

La Grasta, Gaetano (A222023), 20, Base Support Flight, LAC, Rookwood Necropolis, Sydney.

June 1968

Barnett, Stuart John (5715206), 21, 4 RAR, Pte, Shepparton Cemetery, Vic.

Butterworth, Raymond John (R66558), 18, HMAS Hobart, OS QMG, Cornelian Bay Public Cemetery, Hobart.

Hunt, Raymond Henry (R54257), 27, HMAS Hobart, Chf Elect Wpns Radio, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

June 1969

Bancks, Lindsay Ronald (19220), 52, 17 Const Sqdn, WO2, Rookwood Necropolis, Sydney.

Brennan, David John (2184013), 22, 9 RAR, Cpl, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

Dewar, Keith Ivan (5715633), 21, 3 Cav Regt, LCpl, Collie Cemetery, WA.

Jackson, Peter Joseph (2789790), 21, 5 RAR, Pte, Binalong Cemetery, NSW.

James, Barry (1201885), 20, 6 RAR, Pte, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

Kennedy, John Joseph (216304), 29, 5 RAR, Cpl, Liverpool Cemetery, Sydney.

Sorrensen, Gordon Dennis (2790417), 24, 9 RAR, Pte, Gympie Cemetery, Qld.

Teeling, Wayne Edward (2790880), 21, 5 RAR, Pte, Botany General Cemetery, Sydney.

Turner, Timothy Charles (4720253), 21, 5 RAR, Pte, Kingstote Cemetery, Kangaroo Island SA.

Walsh, Brian (214468), 29, AATTV, Sgt (Temp. WO2), Rookwood Crematorium, Sydney.

Waring, Anthony Edward Loughran (5716163), 21, 5 RAR, Pte, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

Young, Robert George (1733547), 22, 3 Cav. Regt, Gatton Cemetery, Qld.

June 1970

Cashion, Garry Owen (62036), 19, 7 RAR, Pte, Cornelian Bay Public Cemetery, Hobart.

Dickson, Stephen Warwick (2792089), 21, 7 RAR, Pte, Beresfield Crematorium, NSW.

Larsson, Stanley Gordon (4720583), 23, 7 RAR, Pte, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Morgan, John Leslie (3795756), 22, 2 Adv. Ord. Dep., Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

Navarre, Paul John (2792729), 21, 7 RAR, Pte, Beechworth Cemetery, Vic.

Scott, Ian Neil (1735424), 21, 1 Fld Sqd., Charleville General Cemetery, Qld.

Waldock, David John (58625), 30, 198 Wks Sect., Sgt, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Wojcik, Bogdan Kazimierz (R62713), 23, CDT 3, RAN, AB CD, Rookwood RC Naval Cemetery, Sydney.

June 1971

Attwood, Trevor James (2794278), 23, 1 ATF, Pte, Uralla Cemetery, NSW.

Boardman, Kenneth James (218336), 22, HQ Task Force (RAAC), Cpl, Woronora General Cemetery, Sydney.

Driscoll, Roger William (2794265), 22, 1 ATF, Pte, Coonamble Cemetery, NSW.

Dubber, David John (A317809), 28, 9 Sqdn RAAF, Cpl, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

Hill, Donald Cameron (2794350), 22, 1 ATF, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

Lance, Everitt Murray (O316996), 43, 9 Sqdn RAAF, FltLt, Woden Cemetery, Canberra.

Mathers, Ian George (2794496), 22, 12 Fld Regt, 2Lt, Mount Thompson Crematorium, Brisbane.

McCarthy, John Noel (3112702), 26, 3 Cav. Regt, L/Cpl, Springvale Cemetery, Melbourne.

Tebb, Peter (1203166), 20, 1 ATF, Pte, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

Towler, Michael (2792254), 22, 1 ATF, Pte, Rookwood Crematorium, Sydney.

June 1972

Hewitt, Ronald David (A118817), 22, 2 Sqdn RAAF, LAC, Albany Creek Crematorium, Qld.

- *From Australian War Memorial, Roll of Honour; Department of Veterans Affairs; Virtual War Memorial, Australia; Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Wall of Faces.*

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