

RICOCHET



Monthly newsletter of VVAA Sunshine Coast Sub-Branch Inc. AUGUST 2026

WHEN WE PAUSE TO REMEMBER

Vietnam Veterans' Day is held each year on 18 August, the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan in 1966.

On this day, Australians pause to remember everyone who served in Vietnam, including Navy, Army and Air Force personnel and national servicemen.

Many Australian communities and ex-service organisations mark the anniversaries of particular battles and operations, including: Battle of Long Tan, Battle of Coral-Balmoral and Battle of Binh Ba, and many other incidents.

These anniversaries help people understand what happened, remember those who were killed or wounded, and keep veterans' stories part of Australia's national memory.

The Vietnam War from 1962 to 1975 was one of the longest conflicts in the 20th century.

Some 60,000 Australian defence personnel served in Vietnam over 10 years of the war. Our initial commitment of 30 military advisers in 1962 grew to include a battalion in 1965 and a task force in 1966.

Australia's last combat troops came home in March 1972, about three years before the war ended. After combat operations ceased, a few Australian personnel stayed in Vietnam with the Australian embassy. Some RAAF personnel returned in 1975 to help with evacuations and refugees.

More than 500 Australians died in the war. More than 3000 Australians were evacuated with wounds, injuries or illness.

In the early 1970s, the United States (US) Government had embarked on a policy of 'Vietnamisation'. It was withdrawing its own troops from the country while passing responsibility for the war to South Vietnamese forces.

The capital, Saigon, fell to North Vietnamese forces in April 1975. This brought an end to the war, which had spilled over into neighbouring Cambodia and Laos.

The most immediate effect of the war in Vietnam was the overwhelming loss of life and social upheaval. More than three million Vietnamese people had lost their lives, and more had been wounded.

Millions more fled the South as political refugees when the country was "unified" in 1976, including thousands who settled in Australia. Some people who remained in Vietnam were imprisoned in camps for re-education.

- Continued Page 3 with photo information.



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

Veterans & Families Counselling

OPEN ARMS

1800 011 046



**VIETNAM VETERANS
ASSN of AUSTRALIA
SUNSHINE COAST
SUB-BRANCH Inc.**

PATRON: Laurie Drinkwater (pictured)

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Senior V/President	John Cunnington
Junior V/President	John Huxham
Secretary	John Cunnington
Treasurer	Deb Day

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Kerry White	Ricochet Editor
John Cunnington	VV Day
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Mark Doolan

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(vacant)	Thursday Breakfast
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(vacant)	Honorary Chaplain
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Michael Howe	Grants Officer
Margo Christie	Asst Office Manager

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Alec Chesters	0478213354
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Mentor/Assessor

Helena Smith	0439241442
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Mentor/Well-Being Officer

Ian (Ernie) Hartshorn	0422670080
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Air Force Association	Chris Wessels
Tracker Dogs Assn.	Ian Atkinson
Mooloolaba Surf Club	Kevin Lynch
Buderim Hospital	Alec Chesters
Army Cadets/ARES	vacant
Air Force Cadets	Chris Wessels
Naval Cadets	Carl Britz

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

Inquiries: Phone 0476903132

The Drop-In-Centre at the library complex is now closed and has re-opened at the RSL Hub opposite Maroochy Services Club. Opening hours Tuesday to Thursday 0900 to 1200 hours.

Note: Committee Meetings are held at 1000 hours and General Meetings at 1100 hours on the third Tuesday bi-monthly from September.

VETERANS' BREAKFAST: In front of Mooloolaba Surf Club on Thursdays.

RIFLEMENS' LUNCH: First Friday monthly at Mooloolaba Surf Club.

MEMBERSHIP: Life Subscriber option now available for General (\$45) and Associate Members (\$40). A "currently financial" General or Associate Member may upgrade to Life Subscriber by paying a one-off amount of \$25. NB: This option ceased for current financial members on 31 May 2026.

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Veterans' Advice Network (VAN)

129 Horton Parade, Maroochydhore, QLD 4558.

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PO Box 1797, (or 129 Horton Parade) Maroochydhore, QLD, 4558

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.

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FRONT page The Canberra Times, 20 August 1966.— from Trove

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

From the President

Hi Everyone,

August, can you believe it? We will very shortly be commemorating this year's Vietnam Veterans Day at the Cotton Tree Cenotaph and then celebrating the event at the Maroochy RSL.

No doubt it will be another outstanding successful day and hopefully enjoyed by everyone present.

On that note, if you haven't booked your seat as yet, I strongly advise that you do so **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**.

The Drop-In Centre at Maroochy RSL Sub-Branch office is open from 9am until noon every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, so don't leave it any longer, get your tickets now.

Members and wives/partners vouchers for the day are \$50 per head and all non-members \$60.

That price includes your three-

course meal, drinks for the day and entertainment.

You just can't get a better deal than that anywhere on the planet.

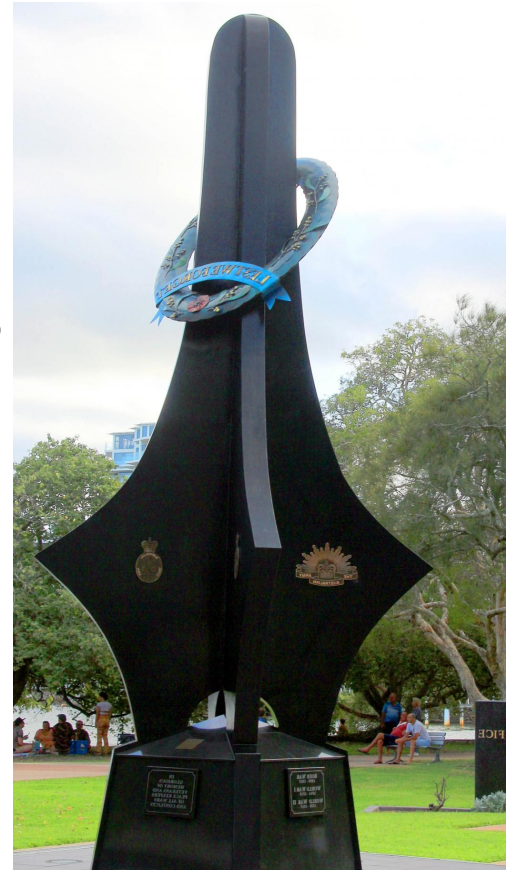
Anyway, that's all I've really got time for this month, so as always, stay safe, keep healthy and I hope to have more news for you in September.

As I've said before, any ideas, issues or matters that you may wish to raise which will impact favourably upon our Sub-Branch; please give me a call.

Best Regards,

Mick Howe,

President.



WAR Memorial, Cotton Tree Esplanade, Maroochy.



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From the Secretary

I am of the old school, and still use a wall calendar to record birthdays, appointments etc. Recently, I was checking the calendar and noticed that July 27 was Korean Veterans Day.

I cannot recollect hearing anything about this important date in the media, and I wondered if many Australians are aware of the contribution and sacrifice of Korean veterans. It certainly seems to have been "The Forgotten War".

The following is a brief history taken and modified from the Australian War Memorial site: 17,808 Australians served in Korea from 1950 to 1953; the army was heavily involved; 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, joined the 27th British Commonwealth Brigade, fighting fiercely at the Battle of Kapyong in April 1951, where they helped

stop a major Chinese advance and were awarded a US Presidential Unit Citation; later rotations included 1RAR and 2RAR, which fought in the Battle of the Samichon River (the Hook) in July 1953.

No. 77 Squadron RAAF flew Mustang and later Gloster Meteor jet fighters, providing vital ground-attack and escort support; nine Australian warships were involved including aircraft carriers, destroyers, and frigates like *HMAS Bataan* and *HMAS Shoalhaven*; they escorted troops, patrolled coasts and bombarded enemy positions.

341 Australians were killed in action or died; 1216 were wounded, and 30 were taken prisoner; it is estimated that there are only about 1100 Australian Korean veterans still alive, those remaining mostly in their 90s.

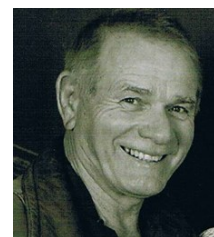
I just thought it was important to acknowledge the contribution of our Korean veterans, some of whom also served in Vietnam, like my B Company 4 RAR CSM, the late Jock Richardson MM.

On another note, Vietnam Veterans Day is fast approaching. If you have not purchased your lunch tickets, you will need to do it ASAP as the cut-off date is 9 August. Final numbers need to be given to the RSL Function staff on that date.

That's it for me. See you on the 18th.

Regards
John Cunningham

LEFT: Our Diggers in Korea (AWM photo)



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ATTENTION MEMBERS

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY TUESDAY 18 AUGUST 2026

COTTON TREE CENOTAPH

The day will commence 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: \$50 for members and partners. Non-member’s price is \$60 per head. Lunch includes a sumptuous three-course meal, subsidised beer and wine, entertainment, lucky door prizes, raffle draws and surprises! There are some great raffle prizes this year so don’t forget to bring along a few dollars.

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

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

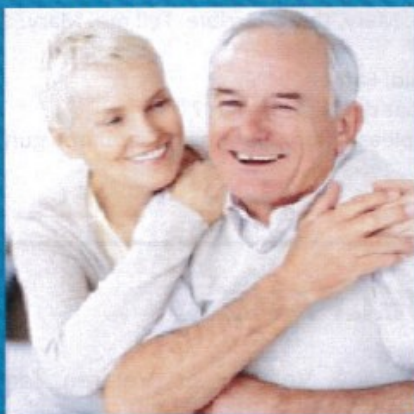
CALOUNDRA TRANSPORT: It is hoped that a courtesy bus will be available for those requiring transport from Caloundra RSL. This is yet to be confirmed as numbers from Caloundra have shrunk noticeably over the years. More information on this issue will be provided as soon as possible. It would be helpful if anyone requiring transport from Caloundra RSL could mention this when purchasing luncheon tickets. At this stage, the provision of a courtesy bus cannot be guaranteed. It all hinges on numbers!



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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 Maroochydore, 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



HAVING A BALL ...



FAMILIAR faces at the recent Maroochy RSL Veterans' Mid-Winter Ball.



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FLASHBACK: All one for a common cause ...



ALL in this together ... three services of the Australian Defence Force served in South Vietnam—these photos from the Australian War Memorial showing (from top) Canberra bombers releasing their “cargo”, HMAS Vendetta on patrol and Diggers arriving in Saigon en-route to Nui Dat. The photo of the Canberra was taken by the late Norm Cooper, who was a RAAF photographer.





FOR ABSENT COMRADES...

ON VIETNAM Veterans Day we will miss many who have passed in recent years such as legendary supporter Thai Dang (far left), with Peter Beadle, and "elder" Chips Ross, with wife Gretchen.



NINE Battalion RAR Vietnam veterans who got together recently at a Riflemen's Lunch at Mooloolaba Surf Club are (from left) Bob Cochrane, Alan Chandler, Sand Savage, Jack English, Kev Lynch, Bob Plummer (SA), Keith Kirley and Dan Penman.



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DURING Exercise Pitch Black in Northern Australia Air Marshal Stephen Chappell, in a Royal Australian Air Force F/A-18 Super Hornet, top, and Lieutenant General Holger Neumann, in a German Air Force Eurofighter Typhoon, flew a sortie together out of RAAF Base Darwin. – from ADF.

ATLAS PERIO

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BUSHMASTER IN UKRAINE

AN AUSTRALIAN Bushmaster at a site hit by Russian forces in Ukraine. The Bushmaster is keeping countless Ukrainian troops safe as Russia's brutal invasion rages on. Experts say the Bendigo-built four-wheel drive's unique design, four-tonne payload, speed and versatility have made it a must-have for militaries the world over. They say the nation should be proud of it. – from news.com

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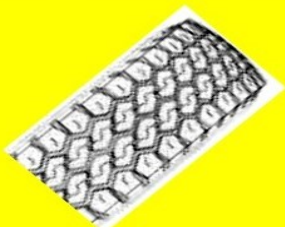
CONDUCTING a dual replenishment off the coast of Hawaii are (from left) HMCS Regina, HMNZS Aotearoa and HMAS Sydney. Sydney has rendezvoused with the other ships during Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) in the waters off Hawaii. Other ships involved included frigate HMNZS Te Mana, as well as United States destroyers USS Decatur and USS Carl M. Levin. ADF photo by Leading Seaman Lauren Pugsley.

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Scootaville on again

This month up to 40 military veterans will embark on an 18-day Motorscooter ride across regional Queensland in an event dubbed Scootaville. Photo from a previous event.

Riding from Brisbane to Townsville, the event will cover more than 2500km with riders experiencing the rare opportunity of exploring our beautiful country with their peers, over-nighting in the following towns: Warwick, Goondiwindi, Too-woomba, Caloundra, Gayndah, Gladstone, Rockhampton (via Biloela), Mackay, Bowen, Ayr and finally Townsville.

Participating veterans will connect with like-minded individuals on this exciting cross-country outback adventure and host events to celebrate with the community.

Scootaville is open to both men and women, as either riders or supporters. A motorcycle license is required for riders; issues covered include scooters, jackets, helmets, bedding, overnight accommodation and most meals.

More information at <https://www.scootaville.org.au/>

REMEMBER LONG TAN
1966 - 2026

A special event commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan.

Come along and help us raise funds for the restoration of our iconic 'Huey' Iroquois Helicopter.

This will be an evening of dining, dancing and reflection.

WHEN: Saturday 15th August
LOCATION: Queensland Air Museum
Gates open at 5:30pm
Dress code: evening wear with 60s, 70s optional dress.

Tickets include:
Two course dinner and canapes

Entertainment throughout the evening including appearances by
The Royal Australian Navy Band
Golden Beach State School Choir
Brisbane band 'Tune In' playing 60s and 70s music
Surprise Guest Compere
Special Guest Speakers

Tickets are \$105 General Admission \$85 for Veterans

Bookings via trybooking.com/DKRJE or scan the QR code

Note this event is over 18s only

www.qldair.museum | 0434 123 322 | 7 Pathfinder Drive, Caloundra

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



- from Vintage News

At the 1966 Academy Awards, Lee Marvin stepped up to accept the Oscar for Best Actor. He looked out over Hollywood's most powerful room and said, "I think half of this belongs to a horse somewhere out in Nevada." The audience laughed. He meant it.

That horse — a grey named Smoky — had shared nearly every scene with Marvin in *Cat Ballou*.

Marvin played a famously drunken gunslinger, barely able to stand, while Smoky matched him beat for beat—leaning, stumbling, and swaying with uncanny comic precision. The performance was so striking that the American Humane Association gave the horse its own award. Marvin, for his part, believed Smoky had earned half the Oscar.

That was who he was. What few people in that room fully grasped was where his performance came from.

In June 1944, on the island of Saipan, Marvin was a 20-year-old Marine scout sniper with the 4th

Marine Division. During a brutal engagement, Japanese machine gun fire tore through his unit. He was hit, the bullet severing his sciatic nerve. He spent over a year recovering in naval hospitals. Only a handful of men from his company survived.

A CERTAIN elderly stockman goes into a barber shop for a shave and a haircut.

He tells the barber that with the age wrinkles on his cheeks he can never get all his whiskers off.

The barber gets a little wooden ball from a cup on the shelf and tells him to put it inside his cheek to spread out the skin.

When he's finished, our old friend thanks the barber.

"That's the cleanest shave I've had in years. What would have happened though if I'd accidentally swallowed that little ball?"

"Ah, you'd just bring it back in a couple of days like everyone else does," replied the barber...

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Roll of Honour — Vietnam, AUGUST 1962-75

August 1966

Aldersea, Richard Alfred (551206), 20, 6 RAR, Pte, Karra-katta Cemetery, Perth.
 Checkley, Thomas William (311534), 28, 131 DLB, Gnr, Buxton Cemetery, Derbyshire, England.
 Clements, Peter Edward (54570), 21, 1 APC Sqdn, Trp (Temp.Cpl), Moora Cemetery, WA.
 Drabble, Glenn Alfred (1730929), 21, 6 RAR, Pte, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.
 Gant, Kenneth Howard (1730941), 21, 6 RAR, Pte, Mount Gravatt Cemetery, Brisbane.
 Grant, Ernest Francis (3411673), 20, 6 RAR, Pte, Albury Cemetery, Albury, NSW.
 Grice, Victor Roy (1730947), 21, 6 RAR, Pte, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.
 Houston, James Michael (43893), 22, 6RAR, Pte, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.
 Jewry, Jack (2781847), 21, 6 RAR, LCpl, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.
 Kennedy, Raymond John (16196), 26, 5 RAR, Pte, Redcliffe Cemetery, Qld.
 Large, Paul Andrew (2781704), 21, 6 RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.
 McCormack, Albert Frederick (1730993), 21, 6 RAR, Pte, Carr Villa Cemetery, Launceston, Tas.
 McCormack, Dennis James (1730994), 21, 6 RAR, Pte, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.
 Mitchell, Warren David (1731013), 21, 6 RAR, Pte, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.
 Salveron, Douglas Javing (1731040), 21, 6 RAR, Pte, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.
 Sharp, Gordon Cameron (2781465), 21, 6 RAR, 2Lt, Memorial Gardens and Crematorium, Tamworth, NSW.
 Thomas, David John (38712), 21, 6 RAR, Pte, Kangaroo Flat Cemetery, Bendigo, Vic.
 Topp, Francis Brett (1200265), 19, 6 RAR, Pte, Helidon Cemetery, Queensland.
 Wales, Maxwell Ray (216559), 22, 6 RAR, Pte, Moree Cemetery, NSW.
 Whiston, Colin Joseph (3787607), 21, 6 RAR, Pte, Crib Point Cemetery, Vic.

August 1967

Aylett, Donald Raymond (38110), 22, 7 RAR, Pte (Temp-Cpl), Tatura Cemetery, Vic.
 Baudistel, Karl William (17073), 28, AATTv (attached RAI), Cpt, Albany Creek Crematorium, Qld.
 Brophy, Edward Francis (2412450), 21, 7 RAR, Pte, Gulgong Cemetery, NSW.
 Cutcliffe, Timothy Joseph (2785238), 21, 2 RAR, Pte, Orange Cemetery, NSW.
 Donnelly, Denis John (216445), 21, 104 SigSqdn, Sig (TempCpl), Garden of Rem., Rookwood, Sydney.
 Harstad, Barleif Alfred (38939), 21, 7 RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

Hayes, James Francis (213834), 27, 7 RAR, Cpl, Kenmore Roman Catholic Cemetery, Goulburn NSW.
 McGarry, Peter Shaun (2412362), 19, 2 RAR, Pte, Northern Suburbs Crematorium, Chatswood, Sydney.
 Milford, David Geoffrey (3411862), 22, 7 RAR, Pte, Harcourt Cemetery, Vic.
 O'Connor, John Martin (16327), 25, 7 RAR, Pte, Redcliffe Cemetery, Qld.
 Siggers, Anthony Peter (216455), 35, AATTv, Sgt (TempWO2), Northern Suburbs Crematorium, Chatswood, Sydney.
 Woolford, Richard Mervyn (4718082), 21, 2 RAR, LCpl, Wirrabara Cemetery, SA.

August 1968

Campbell, John Alexander (2787278), 21, 3 RAR, Pte, Rookwood Military Cemetery, Sydney.
 Carroll, Ronald Thomas (14208), 31, 3 RAR, Sgt, Perth War Cemetery and Annex, WA.
 Casadio, Anthony Austin (O2361), 22, RAN HeliFlt, Lt (SL), Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.
 Gillard, Robert James (3790395), 22, 3 CavRegt, Trp, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.
 Grist, Robert Maxwell (39426), 19, 1 RAR, Pte, Traralgon Cemetery, Vic.
 McGoldrick, William (217762), 26, 1 ARU, Pte, Rookwood Military Cemetery, Sydney.
 Moss, Graeme John (1200817), 22, 1 RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.
 Phillips, O'Brian Cedric Ignatious (R56859), 32, RAN HeliFlt, POACM, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

August 1969

Banfield, David John (6709107), 21, 5 RAR, Pte, Carr Villa General Cemetery, Launceston, Tas.
 Hards, Edward William George (515835), 20, UL W Comd ex 1 ARU (RA INF), Pte, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.
 Hoare, Frederick William (15705), 29, 6 RAR, Cpl, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.
 Smith, Baron Fredrick (3793566), 21, 5 RAR, Pte, Woden Cemetery, Phillip, Canberra.

August 1970

Moore, Sydney Thomas (3175954), 20, 110 Sig Sqn, Sig, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.
 Penneyston, Peter Lawrence(6709611), 1 FldSqn, Spr, Mersey Vale Memorial Park Cemetery, Devonport, Tas.
 Raffin, Francis Lindsay (4186), AATTv (att. RAI), Sgt (Temp WO2), Garden of Remembrance, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.
 Richardson, Neil Thomas (218697), 22, 7 RAR, LCpl, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.
 Thompson, Donald Leslie (1202729), 20, 2 RAR, Pte, Mount Basset Cemetery, 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 ...'