



# DEBRIEF

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**COVER STORY—Did you indulge?**

# NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Members,

You will all be aware that since the last edition of Debrief, and as a result of a leadership change in The Nationals, we have a new Minister for Veterans' Affairs (and Minister for Defence Personnel), the Hon Andrew Gee MP, the Member for Calare.



I have been in touch with Andrew's Chief of Staff and, on behalf of all members of the VVAA wrote to Andrew congratulating him on his new appointment and inviting him to meet the members of our National Council at our October meeting in Canberra, travel restrictions permitting.

While welcoming our new Minister I think that it is also important for veterans and their families to note that since the election of a Liberal and Nationals coalition government in 2013 there have now been no less than six Ministers for Veterans' Affairs.

For those members who live in his electorate and wish to contact Minister Andrew Gee, or express their opinion on any subject, Andrew's principal electorate office is in Orange,

(02 6361 7138) and a second electorate office in Bathurst (02 6231 0524). The email address for his constituents is [Andrew.Gee.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Andrew.Gee.MP@aph.gov.au). Full details, including contact for the Ministerial and Parliamentary office can be found later in this edition.

The Association's thanks to Darren Chester for his service as our Minister was sent to him through his staff and I received an appropriate and welcome response.

The formation of the Vietnam Veterans' Counselling Service in the 1980s was a major political achievement by the VVAA. Re-named the Veterans' and Veterans' Families Counselling Service, known as Open Arms, it continues to be a focal point of the attention of your National Executive and your Branch Presidents. In recent years there has been an expansion of eligibility for counselling and support from Open Arms and a consequent increase in the number of counsellors to meet the demand.

After consideration and consultation over some weeks we put to Minister Gee, in late July, the proposition that there be a slight organisational change in that, while staying within the portfolio of Veterans' Affairs, Open Arms should become an independent agency, along the lines of the Australian War Memorial. We have asked the Minister to seek objective advice on this proposal and we await his response.

A "full" meeting of the ESO Round Table (ESORT) was held by video on 4 August (sometimes there are "short" meetings on specific subjects). The Executive lodged two submissions for this meeting.

Firstly, that consideration be given to the introduction of a new definition, namely "returned veteran", to distinguish and recognise those members of the ADF who have served under war or war-like operations. Due to time constraints the Chair of ESORT, Ms Liz Cosson, will schedule a further meeting to discuss this proposal in detail.

A copy of this proposal was also been sent to Minister Gee.

Secondly, we have submitted that the process of reviewing the current policies for the advocacy system, including the funding of advocates, be accelerated. Recent

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# NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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changes to the management and governance of the ATDP have also contributed to the need for faster progress on this matter. In addition to pursuing this issue through ESORT consideration is now being given to a submission to the Minister.

The backlog of unresolved claims lodged with DVA under government repatriation legislation was addressed in the budget by an increase in Australian Public Service staff appointments in DVA. An Implementation Plan is now in place to address the backlog in 18 months, but this will be a formidable task due to the growth in claims.

As at 30 June 2021 *applications received by DVA*, (not including claims for income support and subject to verification), by year, were;

<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>
<b><u>60,663</u></b>	<b><u>105,159</u></b>	<b><u>121,835</u></b>	<b><u>141,534</u></b>

*Decisions made on applications* (excluding income support), were, for the same years;

<b><u>58,244</u></b>	<b><u>83,483</u></b>	<b><u>93,797</u></b>	<b><u>87,408</u></b>
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And, the total number of claims on hand (excluding income support) since 2019 have been;

<u>30 June 2019</u>	<u>30 June 2020</u>	<u>30 June 2021</u>
<b><u>25,496</u></b>	<b><u>44,350 (28,715 clients)</u></b>	<b><u>56,663 (40,362 clients)</u></b>

These are formidable numbers to be dealt with by any organisation, especially one whose decision making processes are constrained by the complexity and failings of the current veterans' legislation.

On 1 July 2021 and 2 July 2021 the Senate Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade (FADT) References Committee tabled its reports following on from its Inquiries into the TPI Payment (Special Rate of Disability Pension) The Accuracy of Information provided to Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) members.

Generally, the recommendations made were disappointing. The TPI Payment Report did recommend that the government consider an increase in the TPI pension but declined to recommend an amount. The National Executive is consulting with others as to what further steps may be taken on these matters.

With best regards,

*Max Ball*

National President

## COVER STORY

### Many Vietnam Veterans would have consumed several of these on the day



Cover photo and the one above supplied by the Editor.

Photo from awm.gov.au

*From ANZAC Cove to Nui Dat, our fighting men and women upheld the Australian tradition of larrikinism. In Vietnam the task force symbol of the red kangaroo, before better known as The Big Red Rat, was painted onto everything the allied forces owned. It is a symbol of mateship and the Australian spirit. This memorial is a tribute to that spirit and to every Australian who served in Vietnam.— Canberra 1992.*

These cans were specially produced by the Power Brewing Company in Queensland to commemorate the Welcome Home march of Vietnam veterans and the opening of the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial in Canberra in October 1992.

Description: Empty 375ml aluminium beer can with ring pull top. The red can has narrow blue borders top and bottom, and white lettering. One side bears the logo for Power's Big Red Bitter Ale. The other side shows a Vietnam period digger in black and white. On his left is a round black and white badge with the words 'AUSTRALIAN VIETNAM FORCES NATIONAL MEMORIAL 1992' and an image of the Memorial in the centre. To the left of the digger is a white shield bearing a red kangaroo. Above the digger are the words 'Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial'. Beneath is 'From Anzac Cove to Nui Dat, our fighting men and women upheld the Australian tradition of larrikinism. In Vietnam, the Task Force symbol of the red kangaroo, better known as the Big Red Rat, was painted onto everything the allied forces owned. It is a symbol of mateship and the Australian spirit. This Memorial is a tribute to that spirit and to every Australian who served in Vietnam. Canberra 1992.'

Article courtesy: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1014620>



## OPENING OF THE AUSTRALIAN VIETNAM FORCES NATIONAL MEMORIAL—3rd OCTOBER 1992



*Photo: Vietnam Veterans marching at the dedication of the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial on Anzac Parade in Canberra on 3 October 1992. Courtesy awm.gov.au*

About 25,000 veterans took part in the march, going on for half of the 60,000 Australians who served in the Vietnam theatre of war, and for many of those participating the march served as a belated welcome home parade. There had been no national celebration or victory parade in the 1970s because the War had been deeply divisive and ended in withdrawal. It was not until 1987 that the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia was able to organise a major national parade in Sydney.

With its cost of just over \$1.2 million funded largely by private and corporate donations, the Memorial represented a change in the Australian public's perception of the nation's involvement in Vietnam. At first, the War was strongly supported although that changed over time, and by the 1970s the majority of Australians opposed Australia's involvement in the War. Twenty years later the public supported commemoration and recognition of those who had served in Vietnam.

From 1962 until 1973, when the Australian forces were withdrawn, about 60,000 Australians served in the Vietnam War: 42,700 in the army, 4443 in the air force and 2825 in the navy. Of those, 521 died and around 3000 were wounded. The names of the dead are inscribed on a roll of honour within the memorial, and three memorial 'seats' commemorate Australia's six servicemen missing in action in the conflict.

Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War began in 1962 when 30 military advisers were sent to South Vietnam. By 1965 it was apparent that the South Vietnamese government forces could not hold out against local insurgents and North Vietnamese forces. The United States then increased its commitment of troops. Australia responded to a request from South Vietnam and increased its forces in May 1966 with army personnel reaching a peak of 8500 at the height of Australian involvement.

Most of those who marched in 1992 had served in the army, but the presence of naval personnel in the photograph is a reminder of the contribution of the Australian navy. The Vietnam War represented a major shift for the navy, which served in support of the army rather than independently.

*Article: awm.gov.au*

# MINISTER MATTERS

## The Hon Andrew Gee MP

### Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Minister for Defence Personnel

**Andrew Gee** was appointed the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Minister for Defence Personnel on 2 July 2021. Andrew was born in Wagga Wagga and raised in Maitland, where his father was the local mayor. He studied Economics and Law at Sydney University where he met his wife Christina. They have four children.

Prior to entering politics, Andrew set up a business with his brothers in Hong Kong before practising as a barrister in Orange, NSW in the fields of civil litigation and family law.

Andrew's foray in politics began in 2011, following his successful campaign (74.2% of the two-party preferred vote) to secure the NSW state seat of Orange for The Nationals. In 2015, he backed-up his 2011 result, winning 66% of the primary vote, an 8% increase, and 71.7% of the two-party preferred vote. This was one of the strongest results in the state.



Andrew resigned from the NSW Legislative Assembly in 2016 and was elected to the House of Representatives the same year, for the seat of Calare, NSW. He has since been re-elected in 2019, with a 1.5% increase in the two-party preferred vote. In January 2019, Andrew was appointed Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister. In February 2020 Andrew was appointed Australia's Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Education, and Minister Assisting the Trade and Investment Minister.

During his time in politics, Andrew has successfully led a number of community campaigns, including 24 hour helicopter rescue services for the Central West; a new hospital for the town of Gulgong; a new medical school for Charles Stuart University; funding for a new road link between Orange and Mudgee; and increased access to radiotherapy services for country cancer patients – Andrew himself is a stage 3 melanoma survivor. Andrew continues to be a strong voice for the communities of his Central West electorate.

## CONTACT DETAILS

### Electorate Office 1 (Principal Office)

Suite 1/179A Anson Street, Orange, NSW, 2800

### Postal address

PO Box 673, Orange, NSW, 2800. Ph: (02) 6361 7138 Fax:(02) 6362 3480

### Electorate Office 2

85 Keppel Street, Bathurst, NSW, 2795

### Postal address

PO Box 54, Bathurst, NSW, 2795 Ph:(02) 6331 0524 Fax: (02) 6331 2561

### Parliament Office

PO Box 6022, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 Ph:(02) 6277 7820

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# The Hon Andrew Gee MP Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Minister for Defence Personnel

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## BIOGRAPHY

### Parliamentary service

State: Elected to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly for Orange, 2011. Resigned 30.5.2016 to contest the House of Representatives division of Calare, New South Wales.

Federal: Elected to the House of Representatives for Calare, New South Wales, 2016. Re-elected 2019.

### Ministerial appointments

Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister from 25.1.2019 to 6.2.2020.

Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Education from 6.2.2020 to 2.7.2021.

Minister Assisting the Minister for Trade and Investment from 6.2.2020 to 2.7.2021.

Minister for Defence Personnel from 2.7.2021.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs from 2.7.2021.

Cabinet Minister from 2.7.2021.

### Committee service

Joint Statutory: Public Accounts and Audit from 14.9.2016 to 1.7.2019.

House of Representatives Standing: Procedure from 14.9.2016 to 11.4.2019; Environment and Energy from 11.9.2018 to 11.4.2019 (Chair from 11.9.2018 to 25.1.2019).

### Other positions

'ChuckAkubra' Champion, 2012.

'ChuckAkubra' Champion, 2014.

### Personal

Born 13.9.1968, Wagga Wagga, Australia

Married

### Qualifications and occupation before entering Federal Parliament

BEC(Hons) (University of Sydney).

LLB (University of Sydney).

Barrister from 2003 to 2011.

### State/Territory Government service

Elected to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly for Orange, 2011. Resigned 30.5.2016 to contest the House of Representatives division of Calare, New South Wales.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Deputy Premier and Regional Roads from 24.4.2015 to 4.5.2016.

### Electorate

Name: Calare

Location: Calare covers an area from Lithgow in the east to Eugowra in the west, Wellington and Mid-Western Regional Councils in the north to Blayney Shire Council and Oberon Council in the south. The main cities and towns include Bathurst, Blayney, Canowindra, Eugowra, Gulgong, Kandos, Lithgow, Molong, Oberon, Orange, Mudgee, Portland, Rylstone, Wallerawang and Yeoval.

Area: 32,666 Sq km

Electors enrolled: 118,099 (at 7.6.2019)

Industries: Mining, mixed farming, fruit, timber, vineyards, meat and wool processing, transport, tourism, light engineering, white goods manufacturing, tertiary education services, agricultural and pastoral support.

# **MINISTER MATTERS**



## **The Hon Andrew Gee MP**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Minister for Defence Personnel  
Federal Member for Calare

### **MEDIA STATEMENT**

16 August 2021

#### **Support available for Australians who served in Afghanistan**

This is a distressing time for many of our Defence personnel and veterans who served our nation in Afghanistan with courage, dignity and honour, and made such a significant contribution to the allied military effort.

We must never forget the 41 Australians who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

Australia owes a great debt of gratitude to all our veterans who served with distinction and their families who supported them.

Over the past 20 years our nation has been unwavering in the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan.

I understand many of those who served our nation in Afghanistan may feel frustrated, concerned and distressed at what is unfolding there.

My primary concern is the wellbeing of all of our veterans, Defence personnel, here at home and abroad, and their families.

I have asked the Department of Veterans' Affairs to contact the families of ADF members who lost their lives in Afghanistan, as well as any veterans the Department is aware of who could suffer adversely as a result of what is currently happening in Afghanistan.

I encourage anyone who served in Afghanistan to reach out to support services available to them and their families if they need it.

For those who are not currently registered with DVA, please know that help and support is there for you. Please call DVA if you would like to access services or call Open Arms for counselling support.

ADF personnel, veterans and their families can call Open Arms 24 hours a day on 1800 011 046.

If you need to talk but don't want to disclose your name, please call Safe Zone Support which offers anonymous counselling service for ADF personnel, veterans and their families. Its free and available 24/7. You can call 1800 142 072.

Please also reach out to any mates and their families who you know may be finding it difficult at this time. Although COVID restrictions are keeping us apart, there has never been a more critical time to ensure we stay connected.

**Minister Gee's office: 0459 966 944**

#### **MEDIA CONTACTS**

**Ashleigh Weidmann: 0439 925 081**

**Defence Media: (02) 6127 1999**



# **MINISTER MATTERS**



## **The Hon Andrew Gee MP**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Minister for Defence Personnel  
Federal Member for Calare

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

3 August 2021

#### **CENSUS QUESTION TO SUPPORT VETERANS**

Have you ever served in the Australian Defence Force?

One week from today, Australians will for the first time be answering this question as part of the 2021 Census.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said the information will be invaluable in ensuring essential services are provided where veterans and their families need them most.

"Presently we do not have comprehensive demographic information about our veteran community, including simply knowing the number of veterans living in Australia today," Minister Gee said.

"The Australian Government supports 240,231 veterans and 97,245 family members and dependents, but it is estimated there could be as many as 630,000 veterans in Australia.

"The 2021 Census will provide us with a much clearer picture of how many veterans there are and the areas they live in, which will allow the Department of Veterans' Affairs and ex-service organisations to target key support services in the places where they're needed most."

The question will ask Australians to respond 'Yes' or 'No' for whether they have current or previous service in the Australian Defence Force Regular Service or in the Reserve Service.

"I encourage all our serving personnel and veterans to answer the "have you ever served in the ADF?" question in the upcoming Census, to help improve service delivery and ensure veterans and their families receive the best support possible," Minister Gee said.

"Some of my key priorities as Minister for Veterans' Affairs include making claims processing more efficient, cutting through the red tape, the adoption of new medical treatments, increasing support for veterans transitioning out of the military and providing mental health support services.

"The data we collect will mean these priorities can be tackled and targeted more effectively."

The 2021 Australian Census will be released on August 10 2021. More information is available at: [www.census.abs.gov.au](http://www.census.abs.gov.au)

#### **MEDIA CONTACTS**

**Ashleigh Weidmann: 0439 925 081**  
**Defence Media: (02) 6127 1999**

# MINISTER MATTERS



**The Hon Andrew Gee MP**  
Minister for Defence Personnel  
Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Federal Member for Calare  
**MEDIA RELEASE**

12 August 2021

## **SIGNIFICANT REFORMS TO AUSTRALIA'S MILITARY DISCIPLINE SYSTEM**

Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans' Affairs Andrew Gee has today announced significant amendments to the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982* which will modernise and streamline disciplinary matters in the Australian Defence Force.

"Our military justice system provides the Australian Defence Force with a unique Australian legal framework that is able to be applied on operations anywhere in the world," Minister Gee said.

"However it has become slow and unresponsive under the weight of administration, requiring modernisation to meet current and future demands.

"These reforms will modernise military discipline system bringing it into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to tackle new issues such as cyber bullying.

"Cyber bullying can be corrosive to discipline and have an extremely adverse effect on the mental wellbeing of its victims. These new offences will enable Defence to protect personnel from cyber-bullying through early intervention and putting a stop to the behaviour before it gets out of hand.

"These changes to the Act will not only simplify and streamline the current military discipline system, they will deliver a fairer and more transparent system that applies for all servicemen and women.

"Eighty percent of disciplinary matters in the military involve relatively minor infringements. These transgressions will be dealt with quickly, easily and fairly under these reforms.

"The reforms allow for early intervention, and by reducing delays we are helping improve operational effectiveness. We will also ensure minor disciplinary matters are nipped in the bud early.

"The defence of the nation cannot be compromised by burdensome administration.

"It is essential to have military law that is separate to civilian law for offences that occur in a military environment especially when on operations in countries where the civil order has broken down.

"It is also necessary to have separate disciplinary procedures that work to strengthen our defence capabilities through a united understanding of actions and consequences; and although discipline in the military is associated with rank, it is vital that it applies to Australian Defence Force members.

"Discipline is vital to a strong defence force. Personnel of all ranks under military law must fol-

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# MINISTER MATTERS

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## SIGNIFICANT REFORMS TO AUSTRALIA'S MILITARY DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

low all lawful orders given by their commanding officer, including orders that involve considerable risk to their own life or require them to use lethal force against an enemy.

“Consider the terrible but necessary requirements of war, from Australians charging the trenches at Gallipoli to our Desert Rats defending Tobruk. Service personnel are trained to follow the orders of their commanding officer that generally comes down through a chain of command.

“However this is reciprocal. Commanders must also act in accordance with military law.

“Reform in the handling of minor infringements will free up our military courts and tribunals and deliver a simpler swifter set of arrangements that are fairer for all involved and improve the operational readiness of our armed forces.”

In 2017 the Chief of the Defence Force commissioned a review of the Summary Discipline System. The Review found that the current Summary Discipline System is overly complex, difficult to use, unresponsive and because of its complexity, results in excessive delay in dealing with minor discipline breaches.

Dealing with minor discipline matters will be made easier in three ways:

- Enabling a wider range of minor breaches of military discipline to be managed quickly and simply as disciplinary infringements, rather than service offences where complex, adversarial court-like procedures apply;
- A better structured discipline hierarchy based on the seriousness of the offending, available punishments, rank of the individual and the seniority of the discipline authority;
- The changes introduce several new service offences relevant to the modern ADF

“Numerous internal reviews at Defence have found that aspects of the current military discipline system are cumbersome in dealing with minor matters,” Minister Gee said.

“This is not surprising given the existing approach dates back forty years and is based on British military discipline law, introduced with the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982*.

“Reform is required to modernise procedures that predate modern warfare, current technologies and tactical requirements.

“To achieve this I have introduced the *Defence Legislation Amendment (Discipline Reform) Bill 2021* into the Parliament to progress long considered reforms.

“For example the minor infringement of being absent from duty can be dealt with in as little as two or three days with a reprimand or a fine of a day's pay. More serious breaches of discipline such as insubordinate conduct will receive a more severe reprimand or larger fine but again it can be managed within days.”

Minister Gee introduced the Defence Legislation Amendment (Discipline Bill) to Parliament today, with debates expected to commence in the following sitting weeks.

**MEDIA CONTACT**  
**Minister Gee's office: 0459 966 944**

# MINISTER MATTERS



**The Hon Andrew Gee MP**  
Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Minister for Defence Personnel  
Federal Member for Calare

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

4 August 2021

### **AN UNKNOWN AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER OF THE GREAT WAR IDENTIFIED**

A previously unknown Australian First World War soldier buried in an unnamed grave in France has been identified.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said the soldier was identified as 10778 Albert Nicholson, a Driver in the 14th Field Artillery Brigade of the Australian Imperial Force.

"After years of investigative research, I can announce we now know the final resting place of Driver Albert Nicholson of the Australian Imperial Force, who died in France in the First World War," Minister Gee said.

"Albert, originally from Broken Hill, New South Wales, enlisted in Adelaide on 17 September 1915 and left Australia for overseas service on 5 January 1916. He was Killed in Action at Villers-Bretonneux on 3 August 1918."

It is believed Albert was preparing artillery positions for the Allied attack which was to occur on 8 August 1918, when he was killed by shellfire. Albert's role would have included moving horse drawn artillery and ammunition.

He was buried in an orchard at Villers-Bretonneux, however the position of his grave was lost.

When Albert's body was eventually found, his identity was not established and he was subsequently reburied in a Commonwealth War Grave, Adelaide Cemetery in Villers-Bretonneux marked as an Unknown Australian Soldier.

Recent investigations found evidence that an unknown soldier of the 5th Divisional Artillery, which Albert's unit was part of, was recovered after the war from a location close to where he was believed to have been buried.

"Further research eliminated all other fallen soldiers of the 5th Divisional Artillery in the area, allowing for the identity of Albert to be conclusively established," Minister Gee said.

"I want to sincerely thank the researchers from Fallen Diggers Incorporated, the Australian Army's Unrecovered War Casualties team and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission on the identifications.

"The quest to identify Albert's grave brings the number of Australian First World War soldiers which Fallen Diggers Incorporated has helped identify to 36, bringing closure to the families of our fallen and allowing us to know the resting places of those soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country."

He was only 21 years old when he was killed. "The identification of Albert is extraordinarily sig-

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# MINISTER MATTERS

## AN UNKNOWN AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER OF THE GREAT WAR IDENTIFIED

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nificant for his family but also for our nation. It demonstrates in the most profound way that Australia never forgets its sons and daughters no matter how long ago they lost their lives or what foreign field they rest in,” Minister Gee said.

The great nephew of Albert, John, had throughout the years searched military records and was surprised when he was told recently his great uncle was located in an unmarked grave.

“I’m extremely grateful my great uncle’s resting place has been identified and the fact we can do this 103 years after he passed and are still searching for other missing soldiers is incredible, John said.

“Finding out this news has been an opportunity to reconnect with some family members I haven’t spoken to in many years.”

In consultation with Albert’s descendants, the Australian Army, Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Office of Australian War Graves will make arrangements to replace the previously unnamed headstone with one bearing his name and service details.

Albert’s mother selected an epitaph for him, which will be engraved on his headstone.

It will read - “*Great is our sorrow but God knows best, He has taken our loved one home to rest.*”

John said he is extremely grateful his great-grandmother’s original request will be engraved on his great uncle’s headstone.

Further information on Unrecovered War Casualties is available on the Army's website: <https://www.army.gov.au/our-work/unrecovered-war-casualties>

### **MEDIA CONTACTS:**

**Ashleigh Weidmann: 0439 925 081—Defence Media: (02) 6127 1999**



*Above: 26 August 1919. French children tending graves at Adelaide Cemetery. Left: Villers-Bretonneux Adelaide Cemetery resting place of Albert Nicholson.  
Photos supplied by Dept Veteran Affairs.*



# **MINISTER MATTERS**

**The Hon Andrew Gee MP**  
Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Minister for Defence Personnel  
Federal Member for Calare

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

10 August 2021

### **ADDITIONAL MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR WHITE CARD HOLDERS**

Ten thousand veterans with complex mental health needs will have access to a network of qualified GPs nationwide, following the expansion of support provided by the Australian Government.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Andrew Gee today announced the Coordinated Veterans' Care (CVC) Program has been expanded to provide additional support for DVA White Card holders with an accepted mental health condition.

"The Australian Government already provides free mental health care to anyone who has served one day in uniform," Minister Gee said. "This program goes a step further in providing dedicated and coordinated care to veterans with chronic conditions and complex care needs.

"No two veterans have had the same experience while in service, and their level of health care requirements and support should reflect these differences. The CVC Program aims to specifically support each participant based on their individual needs.

"Expanding the program means veterans with complex mental health needs can access this life saving support through their local GP.

"Our country asks so much of our men and women in uniform. In return, Australia needs to ensure they have the best care possible we can provide once their service concludes. This further mental health support is a very welcome and positive development."

Previously open only to DVA Gold Card holders, the CVC Program engages General Practitioners and practice nurses to provide veterans in need with a multi-disciplinary care team, who develop and deliver comprehensive care plans to suit the individual needs of each veteran.

"The CVC program has proven to be effective in reducing unplanned hospitalisation and improving the quality of life for veterans in need of critical mental health care," Minister Gee said.

"I am pleased that 4,888 GPs are already providing services to veterans and their families through the CVC program, and I would encourage GPs around Australia who are not in the program already to consider joining.

"The Australian Government is focused on addressing veteran mental health and suicide prevention within the Defence and veteran community. Expanding this program to Veteran White Card holders provides veterans with complex needs with the support they require to receive the best possible medical treatment."

White Card holders need to have an accepted chronic mental health condition and meet the other eligibility criteria of the CVC Program. For more information on the CVC Program and eligibility visit [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au) and search CVC.

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
**Minister Gee Office 0459 966 944**  
**DVA Media: 02 6289 6466**

# AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL—UPDATE

**Mr Matt Anderson PSM**

Director



Dear Valued Supporters,

The Australian War Memorial continues to welcome visitors as we respond actively to travel restrictions around the country and to the evolving ACT Health advice about visitation. It has been encouraging to see school students, families and visitors return to Canberra when they can.

We welcomed the news on 7 June, following a period of public consultation, that the National Capital Authority (NCA) has approved the Early Works for the Memorial's Development Project. This approval allows us to embark on the demolition of Anzac Hall, the relocation of services such as water and electricity, major excavation works for the new southern entrance, and installation of temporary fencing and enclosures around these building works.

To accommodate these construction activities, a new temporary public entrance will be built as the main entry into the Memorial's galleries and Commemorative Area. This new entrance will be in use from **27 September 2021** and for the next three years. It will be located on the eastern side of the building, opposite Poppy's Cafe, and will admit visitors into the Memorial through Aircraft Hall.

During the construction period, we are committed to keeping the following areas accessible:

- Commemorative Area, Hall of Memory, and Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier
- First World War and Second World War Galleries
- Hall of Valour
- Sculpture garden
- Poppy's Cafe and the Memorial shop.

With construction works also taking place on the lower ground level, we are making every effort to accommodate visitation to as many galleries as possible during construction works. From **27 September 2021** the *Afghanistan - the Australian Story* gallery will regrettably be closed. There will be limited scheduled access for the public to the *Conflicts 1945 to today* gallery, covering the Korean War and the Vietnam War. We are in the process of assessing these limited access options and will notify you of these changes as they become available, as it will be important to plan ahead.

Visitation changes will also apply to the Middle East, Gulf War and Peacekeeping exhibitions from mid-to-late 2022. Importantly the Tarin Kowt wall for signing by veterans of the Middle East conflicts will be relocated and accessible each day by the visiting public.

Should you wish to visit these exhibitions, in particular the *Afghanistan - the Australian Story* gallery, before our visitation changes come into effect, please plan your visit now. Changes to the Memorial will be in effect from **27 September 2021**. Visit our website to confirm gallery availability and book your free online tickets. <https://www.awm.gov.au/visit>

Annual commemorative events and ceremonies will continue, in line with government advice, as will the daily Last Post Ceremony, which will remain available nationally through the Memorial's Facebook live stream.

The Research Centre's Reading Room will also relocate to a temporary location behind

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# AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL—UPDATE

*Continued from page 15*

Poppy'sCafe on the top level of the P1 visitor carpark. Use of the temporary Reading Room will be by appointment only. More information about the changes to this valued service can be found on [our website](#).

Keep in touch by signing up to [Our Next Chapter e-newsletter](#) to stay abreast of Development Project news, updates and upcoming public [consultation opportunities](#), including Major Workpackage approvals through the National Capital Authority, and the progress of our [new gallery spaces](#).

As you can appreciate, the Development project is a significant undertaking, with our sights firmly on why we are doing it. The Memorial is for all Australians and should feature the stories of veterans across all generations. Those from more recent conflicts deserve their stories to be told here at the centre of the nation's commemoration. We will continue to lead remembrance and understanding of our wartime experience - [Our Continuing Story](#).

Thank you for your ongoing support and understanding of these changes. This is a very exciting time for the Memorial, for our visitors, veterans and their families, and for the descendants of those whose memories we honour here at the Australian War Memorial.



Matt Anderson

DIRECTOR



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## CONGRATULATIONS BOB ELWORTHY AM—LIFE MEMBER



**MUSEUM BESTOWS LIFE  
MEMBERSHIP ON VVAA VIC  
STATE PRESIDENT**

**BOB ELWORTHY AM.**

The National Vietnam Veterans Museum on Phillip Island has had a remarkable journey from a trailer behind John Methven's car to what we see today.

Much of the heavy lifting has been done by volunteers who believed in the concept and made it happen.

At the May 2021 Museum AGM the Board Chair Mr Kingsley Munday AM recognised some of those who "put in" by bestowing them with Life Membership.

# VVAA HISTORY—Kel Robertson

## VVAA HISTORY DRAFTS: No.1, PART 1

### THE CURIOUS 1972 INCIDENT OF THE JUDGE, THE RSL, VIETNAM VETERANS AND DEFOLIANTS

The most notable early public expression of concern about the exposure of Australian servicemen to chemicals in Vietnam came from an unlikely quarter, just six months after Prime Minister McMahon's announcement of the staged withdrawal of Australian troops from the war and on the day the final withdrawal phase began.

The 24<sup>th</sup> of February 1972 was the second material day of public hearings for the Independent Inquiry into Repatriation conducted by Justice Paul Toose. It was also the second of two days on which the RSL's (then) National Secretary, Bill Keys, took the Inquiry through his organisation's lengthy submission.

Shortly after Keys had applied for medical experts to later appear before the Inquiry (to provide evidence in support of the League's longstanding argument for lung cancer arising from smoking to be automatically accepted as a war caused condition) Justice Toose asked whether the RSL had "considered the effects of defoliants used in Vietnam as being a likely factor in cancer development amongst ex-servicemen."

A detailed account of what happened next no longer exists. The official record of the day's proceedings is missing from the bundle of early hearing transcripts in the National Library (seemingly the only place where any of these records can still be found). Notes taken by Wal Newington, a prominent figure in the NSW RSL, who was attending the hearings as an observer, record the judge's question but provide little information on Keys' reaction.

However, an article appearing in the Canberra Times notes Keys' undertakings in response to the judge's question: commitments to ask US veterans groups and RSL Branches if they had encountered members suffering from defoliant-related disabilities.

Other newspaper reports, whether intentionally or not, recounted the defoliant-related part of the day's hearing in a different way, making it appear that it was the League which had raised the matter of chemical harms to Australian servicemen. Yet the Newington notes, the Canberra Times article and Keys' own brief account of events in his 25 February letter asking State Branches to report, all confirm that it was Toose who had initiated the discussion and prompted the undertakings.

Notwithstanding Keys' ready response to the judge's question, it seems improbable that the raising of the defoliants issue had been orchestrated by the League ie it seems unlikely that it was a "Dorothy Dixie". Defoliant harms to Vietnam veterans weren't comprehended by the 21 items in the RSL's submission, and, if the League had wanted to give the issue a public profile – at a time when it was anxious to have Vietnam veterans join the organisation – it would have included the matter in these formal submissions; it would also have later issued a media release. More to the point, there were numerous issues at that time which would have better served the purpose of making the League popular with Vietnam veterans or making it seem concerned for their well-being. It needs to be recalled, too, that the exposure of servicemen to chemicals in Vietnam was yet to become even a minor issue in the US or Australia.

The precise reasons for Toose's speculation about the role of defoliants in cancer causation are not clear. However, a number of possibilities present themselves. The first group of these possibilities relies on the judge noting speculation in the public sphere about the possible harm done to humans by chemicals in general, before concluding that there might be health consequences for soldiers in the chemical-drenched environment of Vietnam.



# VVAA HISTORY—Kel Robertson

*Continued from page 17*

## **VVAA HISTORY DRAFTS: No.1, PART 1** **THE CURIOUS 1972 INCIDENT OF THE JUDGE, THE RSL, VI-** **ETNAM VETERANS AND DEFOLIANTS—Continued....**

Toose would have encountered material about general chemical harms (including speculation about environmentally caused cancers) in the American current affairs periodicals, Time and Newsweek, which were widely read in Australia in the late 1960s and early 70s. These magazines covered the rise of the environmental movement and of environmental concerns in the US.

Although the Australian environmental movement was slower to develop than its US equivalent, and environmental concerns were slower to penetrate the mainstream media in Australia, Toose would have sighted article on general chemical and pesticide dangers (and particularly the harms associated with DDT) in the Australian media, in the years immediately before the commencement of his inquiry.

A second group of possible catalysts for the judge's speculation about a cancer/defoliant linkage are more Vietnam-related. They mostly rely on the judge noting speculation amongst scientists and journalists about the possible harm done to the environment in Vietnam (and to a lesser extent to the Vietnamese) by pesticides and herbicides, before asking himself "what about possible harms to soldiers in the same environment?" President Nixon's halt to chemical warfare, followed by a halt to defoliant spraying could just as readily have prompted Toose to speculate on a connection, and the judge didn't need to read the newspapers produced by university students' associations to be kept informed of possible links between defoliant use in Vietnam and birth defects among the Vietnamese.

A separate, third set of reasons why Toose might have made the connection he did, at a time when it wasn't being made in public by others, relates to personal experience. References to Toose's life, such as they are, tend to focus on his many achievements as a judge and public figure, and make little mention of his private interests, but an advertisement for a property he once owned indicates that he was a notable Hereford breeder. In this capacity he would have had contact with pasture 'improving' chemicals like defoliants and pesticides (and seen the serious warnings on their containers), and could well have read the rural newspaper, The Land, which featured a number of articles about poisoning risks to farmers in the early 1970s.

The cause of Toose's interest, might, however, have been as simple as a small article appearing in the Sydney Morning Herald article on the day before Keys' opening address: an article reporting cancer deaths and other illnesses among workers using chemical defoliants on railway lines in Sweden.

Enquiries of the Toose family may yet provide pointers to what prompted the judge's prescient questions about war-time chemical exposure and cancer.

In considering the above speculation, it should be recalled that Toose, as a returned serviceman, would have known that the safety of combatants in war is as much placed in jeopardy by the chain of command as by the actions of the enemy, and that in an environment where death is a daily possibility, other dangerous occurrences, like exposure to toxic chemicals, could be regarded as hazards of a lesser order.

Whatever the reason for Toose's interest in the impact of defoliant exposure on cancer rates, Keys, as stated above, responded quickly, seeking information from the Leagues' state branches. Even if this prompt action was mostly designed to curry favour with the judge or impress upon him the League's willingness to act on his concerns, it probably served the additional timely pur-

*Continued page 18*

# VVAA HISTORY—Kel Robertson

*Continued from page 18*

## **VVAA HISTORY DRAFTS: No.1, PART 1** **THE CURIOUS 1972 INCIDENT OF THE JUDGE, THE RSL, VIETNAM** **VETERANS AND DEFOLIANTS**

pose of reminding Vietnam veterans that the League wasn't completely focussed on matters of importance to the WWII cohort.

It seems, though, that RSL State Branches were slow in responding to Keys' request. They didn't have the means, before the advent of email, to quickly contact members, but there's no evidence, at the same time, that they took the matter seriously. An article on Keys' appearance before the Toose Inquiry appeared in the April edition of the NSW Branch's publication, *Reveille*, but it was not until June that the magazine allocated space to the Toose defoliant question... and this was after the 8 May 1972 National Executive meeting at which the matter would logically have been discussed. Scrutiny of RSL National Executive Minutes indicates that the matter was not raised on 8 May or at subsequent meetings. The defoliant incident was not, it seems, one given priority by the State Branches and, in the absence of clear harms, was a matter readily disposed of by the national leadership.

It seems likely that as part of the RSL's information gathering exercise, there were contacts with the organisation's US equivalent, the American Legion, and perhaps with the American military. Whether there was a formal approach to the Pentagon or the Veterans Administration is not yet clear from scrutiny of RSL records. However, the surviving papers for the 12 May 1972 Repatriation and War Service Homes Committee Meeting feature a handwritten notation in red pen, adjacent to mention of Justice Toose's defoliant enquiry: "Nil return from U.S".

The raising of the defoliant issue by Justice Toose, well before any community concern about the direct effects of defoliants on humans, let alone on Vietnam veterans, wasn't the League's first encounter with the use of chemicals in Vietnam.

In June 1969, after sparring between the major Australian political parties on whether the use of CS (tear) gas and defoliants were breaches of the Geneva Convention, the Far North Queensland Sub-Branch of the League put a motion to its State Conference seeking an assurance from the Minister for Defence that the records of men who'd served in Vietnam and other theatres where chemical weapons had been used, would be appropriately endorsed. This was clearly an effort to ensure that any later chemical harms could be readily attributed to war service.

The National Executive took this matter up with the Minister for Defence and was informed in March of 1970 that provision was already made by the Army and Air Force for the required endorsements, but that these two services would be required to review their practices, while the Navy would be required to introduce the practice.

The failure of these measures in later years to assist in the identification of individuals exposed to herbicides in Vietnam is partly explained by the Minister's response to a later National Executive request for information on Australia's role in the use of napalm and chemical warfare in South East Asia; the Minister replied to this later request by saying that the use of herbicides, was not viewed by Defence as chemical warfare. Consequently, any exposure to herbicides, assuming officers were conscious of it in the day-to-day events of war, didn't warrant mention on service files.

*The second and concluding part of this article will appear in the next issue of Debrief.*

**Kel Robertson is a Canberra writer. He is currently researching the history of the VVAA. The views expressed in this article are his and not those of the Association. Readers who have additional information about matters mentioned in this article or who would like a copy of the article with references to sources included can contact Kel at [vyhistory99@gmail.com](mailto:vyhistory99@gmail.com) . © Kel Robertson 2021.**

## OUR VETERANS



Community - JUNE 16, 2021

### Portland's Anthony Walker makes Queen's Birthday honours for service to Vietnam Veterans

**QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY  
HONOURS  
BY ALANNA TOMAZIN**



*SERVICE TO VETERANS:  
Portland's Anthony Walker  
was recognised with an OAM  
in this years Queen's Birth-  
day honours.  
Photo: CIARA BASTOW*

He's overwhelmed and honoured.

Anthony Walker is soaking up the moment after being awarded with an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for his service to veterans in the Queen's Birthday honours.

The Portland local served in Vietnam as a medic for 12 months in 1968.

Since 2001 he has been a member of the Bathurst and Districts Sub-Branch, Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia and has been the secretary and treasurer since 2003.

He has also been the treasurer of the NSW Branch Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia since 2006.

Mr Walker said originally, he wanted nothing to do with the association because of the way service people were treated when they returned home from Vietnam.

"But then someone got me involved and I like it because of the companionship, we've all got something in common and we are all in that age group where we need mates," he said.

In his roles with Vietnam Veterans Mr Walker is responsible organising many events including Veterans Day and camping on Bathurst Race weekend.

"During race weekend that's our main fundraising area. I also organise the Vietnam Veterans Day parade, service, guest speakers and luncheons," he said.

Mr Walker has also been a unique member of Portland Men's Shed since 2014 and secretary since 2016.

*Continued page 21*

## OUR VETERANS

*Continued from page 20*



"Being associated with these groups has been very fulfilling and it's created a great group of friends in both communities the veteran community and the local men's shed," he said.

"It's really good because the older you get the harder it gets. You out live a lot of people and you need companionship you need mates."

He said it was quite the surprise to be rewarded for his work with an OAM.

"I'm really excited about it and I'm really proud actually, and to think that all these years I've been involved, I've been recognised for it."

Mr Walker wanted to thank those who nominated him and he felt honoured.

"It's all a bit much at the moment, but I'm thankful for it and for living in such a wonderful community," he said.

Awards and recognition include:

- Australian Active Service Medal (Vietnam)
- Anniversary of National Service (1951-1972) Medal
- Vietnam Medal
- Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

## THINKING OF YOU

14th August 2021

Greetings,

I, for one, am thinking of all of you on the east coast – especially to those in NSW – during this third wave of COVID-19.

We, in WA, are thankful that our perceived isolation from the east of our border is proving to be a major asset in the fight against COVID. Life in WA is nearly back to normal pre-COVID.

Even though we are fully aware that circumstances can suddenly change, the only changes which I notice is the use of QR codes and bottles of hand-sanitiser.

Our state government has had a policy of “go hard – go now” which has proven to be effective. I, for one, have had a gutful of the interstate, political knit-picking.

During the Second World War, our country became a cohesive force which helped to defeat our enemies.

COVID-19 is our current enemy so please can we combine our energies to defeat this bloody awful virus?

I wish you well during these awful times

**Ted McEvoy**

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# VIETNAM VETERANS DAY SPEECH 18 AUGUST 2020

## GROUP CAPTAIN IAIN CARTY CSM

Mayor, Federal, State and Local Government Representatives, President **Goodna** RSL Sub-Branch, Official Guests, Veterans and Community. It is my sincere privilege to be able to honour our Vietnam Veterans and their contribution to war and peace.

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet and pay my respects to their Elders past present and emerging. I would also like to acknowledge those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have served the ADF in times of peace and war.

On behalf of all current serving members I would like to thank all Vietnam Veterans deeply for your service and sacrifice and the massive legacy you have left Australia and the Australian Defence Force.

Australia's contribution to the Vietnam War lasted almost eleven years from July 1962 to June 1973, making this the longest continuous war in the Nation's history and Australia's longest war of the twentieth century. It was conducted in some of the most hostile and debilitating environments on the planet against a highly motivated and committed enemy.

Over 60,000 Australians served in the Vietnam War which included some 15,000 National servicemen. Pending the records utilised, a total of 521 personnel were killed and a further 3129 were wounded/injured or ill over the period 1962 -1973. And we know that many more than that number struggled significantly after the war, many taking their own lives.

Today's date is significant as it commemorates The Battle of Long Tan and the ferocious fighting spirit and combat achievements of Delta Company. 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment. Long Tan, Fire Support Base Coral and Balmoral and many other battles embodied the courage of the Australian fighting forces and our Allies and that enduring legacy of not wanting to let your mates down.

On the lighter side I am reminded of four Airfield Defence Guards, left behind in Saigon, as the last Australian C-130 departed with Embassy Staff and stores without enough room for them. Fortunately they were cunning enough to find their way home and most likely via some watering holes.

For the majority of our veterans whether decorated in battle or not, they came back to a Nation in social turmoil that did not properly acknowledge their place in history, welcome them home nor thank them for their service - something that was not addressed as a Nation until October 1987 and should never happen again.

On a more personal note and as a misunderstood mix of Air Force and Army, nearly every aspect of my initial military officer training was based upon the Australian Forces experiences in Vietnam.

Battle discipline, fire control orders, field hygiene, the effectiveness of a well planned and executed ambush and the critical difference between cover and concealment.

How to site a claymore and the machine gun on a likely approach to maximise the killing ground. Establishing a secure harbour at rest and the absolute requirement for clearing patrols were hammered into us.

The importance of treating your rifle, communications gear or section weapons like gold, so that when you really needed them, they kept you alive and your mates safe.

*Continued page 23*

# VIETNAM VETERANS DAY SPEECH 18 AUGUST 2020

## GROUP CAPTAIN IAIN CARTY CSM

*Continued from page 22*

I still walk through the bush to this day and try to minimise noise and avoid stepping on sticks and turning rocks.... I still scan right to left when I look through vegetation, I still regularly check my six and I still take some quiet time at first and last light.

All these lessons were hard fought and won in the battlefields of Vietnam and have stood the test of time as an integral part of our military training today. While some of the tactics have changed the principles remain the same.

Post war and despite significant resistance, one of your greatest achievements as a veteran's community was the fight for your own recognition and veteran's welfare. You have ensured future generations are welcomed home despite your own experiences and you have initiated and maintained the fight for those who suffer the mental and physical scars of battle.

Services such as the Vietnam and Veterans Family Counselling Service or now Open Arms, not only support the Vietnam Veterans community, but have evolved to help any serving and or returned veteran that seeks support. You have maintained the fight and the current generation of veterans are extremely grateful for your courage and determination.

We all acknowledge the Vietnam Veteran journey has not been easy and you have all lost very good mates along the way, both in battle and since coming home. It took a little time but the nation is now very proud of your sacrifice and I for one stand in awe of the legacy you have left for the ADF and this country.

History has shown that the North Vietnamese held great respect for the ferocity and fighting spirit of the Aussie Forces in Vietnam, our own special forces were known as the phantoms of the jungle. In the air, on the land and on the sea you excelled and fought for your mates, your families and your country.

We will always remember and acknowledge your legacy. We will never forget the lessons we learned in war and in peace. To those who paid the ultimate sacrifice may they rest in peace, always! Stand proud, shoulder to shoulder, today and always. Thank you sincerely for your service, your courage and for continuing the good fight. Lest we forget.

### Bio details:

*GPCAPT IAIN CARTY CSM Senior ADF Officer for RAAF Base Amberley. Group Captain Iain Carty, CSM, was appointed as Senior ADF Officer RAAF Base Amberley on the 13th of January 2020. He graduated from the Royal Military College - Duntroon in July 1992. After various flight command and executive positions as a Junior Officer, he was promoted to Squadron Leader in 2002. He was appointed the Commanding Officer 2AFDS from Oct 2008 to Oct 2011. He then served as Deputy Director Battle Space Operations and Specialist Support, Directorate of Personnel - AF until the end of 2014 and Deputy Director Security - Directorate of Security Air Force until November 2016. His operational service includes East Timor, Iraq and the Middle East Region. Awards include the Meritorious Unit Citation, Army Combat Medal and Chief of Air Force Commendation for Exemplary Performance. A graduate of Australian Command and Staff College in 2005, he has also completed a CERT IV Executive and Business Coaching and participated in an Australian Human Rights Commission Inclusive Leadership Program. He has three beautiful daughters. He enjoys personal fitness, yoga, playing golf, scuba diving and new experiences from around the world.*

# DFRDB—CALL TO ACTION

**From:** Ken Stone <[marganken@bigpond.com](mailto:marganken@bigpond.com)>

**Sent:** Sunday, 25 July 2021 2:57 PM

Many of you will be aware that the Senate inquiry into whether DFRDB contributors were informed of the conditions of Commutation is now complete with the FADT Reference Committees report tabled in the Senate. My response to that report is enclosed.

The next step in the process is for that report to be considered by the Parliament within the next three months. The outcome on the face of it is very predictable.

Accordingly, I am prevailing upon every **ONE** of you to make one final pitch at obtaining a fair and just outcome from our three year battle with Government to find honesty, fairness and justice for the financial life-burden placed upon us and our 55,000 colleagues who are in financial detriment together with their families.

I am proposing another assault on the Parliament through our local members, which on previous occasions has proven so effective in getting at least some action and enquiry, to wit, the Ombudsman's Inquiry and that of the Senate following our Valentine's Day initiative. There is some urgency required in taking this action, because once the matter is considered by the Parliament with the present content of the Senate Report the whole issue will be over and finalised, then with only court process open to us.

Through our local members of all political persuasions, the only hope we have is to obtain a majority, in favour of our cause within the lower house. The contact details for your local member and senator can be found by pasting the following link into your browser or through Google -[https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Parliamentarian\\_Search\\_Results?q=2620&sta=NSW&mem=1&par=-1&gen=0&ps=12](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Parliamentarian_Search_Results?q=2620&sta=NSW&mem=1&par=-1&gen=0&ps=12) Just input your post code to determine who your local member is. Their details will appear on screen with either a Contact Form to post your form letter into, or, an email icon to activate, or, other address options for office and parliamentary locations, phone contact etc..

Accordingly, I seek the support of every one of you to forward under your signature the enclosed text to your Local Member and Senator together with a copy of my enclosure AP-PEAL to SENATORS.

Yours sincerely

Ken

Ken Stone  
Wing Commander Retd  
Independent Advocate  
DFRDB COMMUTATION CAMPAIGN  
3 Lerra Street  
JERRABOMBERRA NSW 2619  
Ph 02 62559732

*PS. This email would have been sent to all members by their Branch Secretary. Further information can be obtained by contacting Ken Stone direct.*

# STORIES

## INCIDENT AT THE 'HORSESHOE' NUI DAT, VIETNAM 1968

By KEN LOVELL—CHARLIE COMPANY 4 RAR

As was the normal practice, a few ADG's were attached to the Army at the 'Horseshoe' on an exchange program. The Horseshoe was a ridgeline of reasonably high ground in the shape of a horseshoe in an otherwise very flat area (hence the name), situated near the village of Dat Do. This exchange had been going on for some time and was on mutual agreement by the Ground Defence Officer and the Company Commander of the RAR who was in position at that time.

In 1968, LAC Ken Lovell (me), along with AC Errol Charles and another AC Trevor Beaven all RAAF ADGs, were attached to Charlie Company, 4 RAR, for a period of two weeks. We arrived in the morning by a 9 SQN Chopper dispatched from Vung Tau and was handed over to our Platoon Leaders; all three of us were split into three sections.

The very next day the section I was in (10 men) were sent on a mission to man a checkpoint on the main road, this main road was dirt and it ran parallel to the horseshoe, this was 'Checkpoint Charlie'. This checkpoint (as opposed to a road block) was to monitor all traffic that passed in and out of Dat Do. The position was set with a machine gun bunker at each end (approximately 30 metres apart), on opposite sides and within 5 metres of the road facing in opposite directions. The pits were three sand-bags high, 'U' shaped and surrounded by a double roll of concertina, which encircled the weapon pit leaving a rear entry 'door'. In the center of the checkpoint was a 'waiting area (similar to and longer than the weapon pit, but shaped like a large bus shelter with corrugated iron and a four high sand-bag wall) where off duty section members rested. Also in the center, but further back from the road was a circular bunker that was manned by the ARVIN (South Vietnam Army).

About 1030 hrs a young Vietnamese boy came to the checkpoint, he was selling drinks and other items and as he walked up to me and he said in broken English, "VC". I asked him "Where?" and the boy indicated with his eyes and head toward the heavily bushed area to our North. I reported it to the section commander and thought no more of it.

It was about mid afternoon, and it was my turn again to man the Gun in the bunker facing the 'Horseshoe'. I had been there awhile when the Digger in the other bunker called out and asked me if he would like to exchange places for a break (as the Digger's bunker was in a shaded area). As we swapped places I noticed that all civilian and animal traffic had stopped and that the people were congregating as if in a traffic jam about 150 metres from the check point.

As I arrived at my new position I looked back at the Digger who had exchanged with me and saw what looked like a black ball going through the air from the heavily wooded area toward his position. The 'ball' landed between the feet of the digger then exploded, killing him and disabling the M60.

The incoming M79 must have been the initiating signal for the VC in the wooded area to attack.

The enemy was well concealed and seemed to occupy a position that had a wide front covering our whole position simultaneously. I quickly ascertained that I could not bring effective fire to bear from my position. I grabbed the gun and ran to the 'waiting area' bunker and took up a position on the ground outside the bunker. I handed the gun over to one of the diggers who was normally the No 2 on the gun and he started to return fire. The other diggers in the waiting area moved out of the bunker on the opposite side and took up a position on the ground and returned fire. Meanwhile the ARVIN had all gone to ground inside their bunker and did



*Photo: Australian War Memorial*

*Continued page 26*



## **INCIDENT AT THE 'HORSESHOE' NUI DAT, VIETNAM 1968**

*Continued from page 25*

not return fire.

Immediately after the gun started firing, there was a stoppage, and then another. Finally, the weapon seemed to be working OK. At this time I was acting as the gunners number 2. As the belts started to deplete I told the gunner that I was going back my bunker to get more ammo, I just ran to the pit, retrieved some of the belts and returned. The firefight continued, within 30 seconds the 50 cal's opened up from the 'Horseshoe' over our heads into the woods in support.

The gunner continued to use up the ammo at a rapid rate. I made the same trip for more ammo on three separate occasions. While this was going on I realized that everyone was concentrating on the wooded area and there was no one covering the rear. I continued to look to the rear toward the Banana plantation and after what seemed like several minutes I noticed movement in the Plantation of what looked like armed VC moving to encircle the position from the rear and engage from two fronts. I then ran to my original position that had been destroyed from the opening round and from here I opened fire with the M79 HE. After several rounds I had definitely hit at least one of the enemy and the rest withdrew. I returned to the Gunner and again saw that he was low on belts.

At this time the commander had called for air-support and a roving US Cobra was in the area and came in to assist. As the Cobra swept in from the horseshoe straight down beside the road toward our position the pilot mistakenly took the milling civilians for the enemy and opened fire through the civilian position and straight through and slightly in front the check point. The Section Commander screamed to the Cobra "Yank, Fuck off" Yank, Fuck off" Yank, Fuck Off".

A passing Australian 'Bushranger' picked up the radio procedure and after radio contact was made swept in to lay down covering fire (which was more accurate). Meanwhile, I continued to re-supply the gunner with more belts, this time from the original weapon pit, which had the dead digger in it.

At this point there were three US enormous APC's coming down the road (all with mounted 50 cal's) and as they drove into their position they also opened fire into the wooded area. This action seemed to break the back of the enemy as the incoming fire started to deplete. As this was happening the Yanks had dismounted and started to assist with 'bagging' the dead and assisting the wounded.

At this time I noticed that both my legs were bleeding and after close examination found they had been peppered with small stones. My trouser legs were full of holes and some of the wounds contained small copper pieces from the metal jackets of the incoming rounds. Apparently this happened as I continued to run between the gun and the bunkers for more ammo.

The relieving section arrived by APC from the Company Base camp atop the Horseshoe. This group included LAC Errol Charles who moved through, cleared and followed blood trails as a SOP. My section was relieved and they returned to the top of the Horseshoe and the Company Patrol continued as normal.

After the debrief I was told that the CO of 'Charlie' Company was going to make a recommendation that I be recommended for the Military Medal or bravery medal for my action in the face of the enemy.

I'm led to believe that the recommendation was passed to the RAAF at Vung Tau and the OC's secretary even congratulated me as he stated that he had just finished typing up his recommendation for the Medal. Even on my return to Australia I has been congratulated by those same 4RAR members who served in that particular incident.

I tried to find out through "Freedom of Information" and through the recommendations of 4RAR as to the why of it all but the Files of Vietnam has been locked secret until the year 2020.

I was always led to believe that the recommendation by the CO Charlie Company that was sent to the RAAF was not proceeded with or was denied because "officially" we (RAAF) were not authorized to be there.

*Ken Lovell*



AUSTRALIAN VETERANS'  
CHILDREN ASSISTANCE TRUST

## AVCAT SCHOLARSHIPS

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

### Apply online

Applications open Vietnam Veterans' Day  
18 August 2021

And close midnight 31 October 2021

Scholarships provide up to \$4000 per year, for three years, to full-time students at university, TAFE or RTO.

To be eligible a student must be the child, stepchild, foster child or grandchild of an ex-serving Australian veteran. Scholarships are awarded to students based on financial need and academic potential.

[avcat.org.au](http://avcat.org.au)

#### Sponsored Scholarships managed by AVCAT

Children and grandchildren of all Australian veterans whether they have served overseas or not are eligible to apply. If the veteran has not served overseas then they will have had 3 or more continuous years of full-time other service, as a member of the Australian Navy, Army or Air Force. This also means the veteran is not currently serving in the defence forces.

## **BATTLE LONG KHANH—COMMEMORATIVE COIN**

**From:** info <[info@ramint.gov.au](mailto:info@ramint.gov.au)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, 20 July 2021 1:00 PM

**To:** undisclosed-recipients:

**Subject:** Battle of Long Khanh commemorated on coin

Hi there,

I'm reaching out to let you know about a special commemorative coin released by the Royal Australian Mint to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Long Khanh, which I thought would be of interest to you.

The coin, which was released last month, features an artistic depiction of Australian soldiers during the Battle. In developing this coin, we worked closely with veterans of the 3RAR who fought in the Battle of Long Khanh. We especially worked with Peter Scott, who advised us on the design of the coin to ensure it was an accurate representation of the events of the Battle.



I have attached an image of the coin for your reference. They can be purchased from the Mint's online shop [COIN PACK 50CENT UNC 2021 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF LONG KHANH | RAM eShop \(ramint.gov.au\)](https://www.ramint.gov.au/coin-pack-50cent-unc-2021-50th-anniversary-of-the-battle-of-long-khanh)

If you would like any further information on the coin, let me know.

Kind regards,

Annika

**Royal Australian Mint**

Denison Street, Deakin ACT 2600

P. 02 6202 3466

E. [info@ramint.gov.au](mailto:info@ramint.gov.au)

[ramint.gov.au](https://www.ramint.gov.au)

## **VVAA VICTORIA**

### **Congratulations**

**Paul PENNO OAM,  
President ,VVAA Bendigo.**



**Martin Stephen (Steve)  
LOWE OAM,**

**VVAA Victorian Branch**

**Education Team**



Well deserved awards and recognition for many years of dedicated work in Veteran Welfare and community involvements.

# ADFRA MEMBERSHIP

**From:** Jim Hislop [<mailto:jghislop1937@hotmail.com>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, 28 July 2021 9:01 AM

**Subject:** Membership ADFRA

Fellow DFRDB Superannuants,

Attached is a request to Ex-Service Organisations to become members of ADFRA and for individuals on my list to consider membership. The attachment sets out where we are and where we are going but the lack of numbers and clear direction always plays into the hands of the bureaucrats as was pointed out in the Senate Report. There are no costs associated with membership and you can withdraw at any time. If you are an individual on my list and decide to join, could you email me, and I will remove you from this list and you will receive Updates from our membership data base.

For ESO's I believe most would be incorporated and have the ability to make a quick decision. Most ESO's would have members or spouses suffering under the DFRDB/MSBS schemes.

We need the numbers NOW and you could also support us by notifying any ESO you have contact with to sign up.

Regards

Jim

**DO IT NOW—COPY LINK TO YOUR BROWSER**  
**REGISTRATION ADFRA**

## **Individuals**

We need all the numbers we can get.

We only require very basic information which is password protected. But you must complete the registration form. Spouses, family, and friends are most welcome to show their support by registering as supporters.

If you are not already registered, copy the link to your browser and follow the instructions:

<https://adfra.org/reg.php>

## **Ex-service Organisations**

ESO's should register as individuals to receive our regular updates and enter into a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This allows us to list the ESO's that support our approach to cover ALL DFRDB issues and the government will realise that the ex-service community are coming together on the disgraceful situation of DFRDB.

Remember it is not only ex-servicemen/women who would benefit from your actions but also the spouses of deceased members.

A copy of the MOU can be downloaded from:

[https://www.adfra.org/docPDF/ADFRA\\_Memorandum\\_of\\_Understanding\\_1.pdf](https://www.adfra.org/docPDF/ADFRA_Memorandum_of_Understanding_1.pdf)

If the links don't open the Registration or MOU forms, copy and paste the links into your web browser.



# BOOK

## MORE BANG FOR NO BUCKS

**Campbell, Colin**—*More Bang for No Bucks*— *self-propelled artillery used by Australian cavalry in Vietnam 1967-68.*

This book describes the unique story of armoured, artillery and infantry soldiers drawn together in Vietnam in 1967-68 to form 6 Troop, A Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment.

This mixture of Army corps in a small combat unit is very rare. Because of casualties and unit rotations, a total of 35 men served in the troop in six M108 self-propelled howitzers, loaned at no cost from the US Army. It is believed that it is the only time Australia has used self-propelled guns on active service. The book records why the troop was formed. It describes how it was raised and trained in-country, deployed under tight restrictions and overcame many obstacles to achieve the success that it did.

The soldiers learnt a greater variety of skills and displayed a level of responsibility and initiative not normally required of their peers. 6 Troop demonstrated an ability to adapt which, history shows, occurs time and again with Australian soldiers at war.

The book relies on original documents and is supported with personal accounts provided by 46 interviews. It has been peer reviewed by four military historians.

The foreword has been written by Maj Gen (Retd) Steve Gower, The then Director of the Australian War Memorial.

Paperback, 116 pages, includes 24 pages of colour photographs.

ISBN: 978-0-9870720-0-9

It is indexed and has CIP information.

The author can provide signed copies.

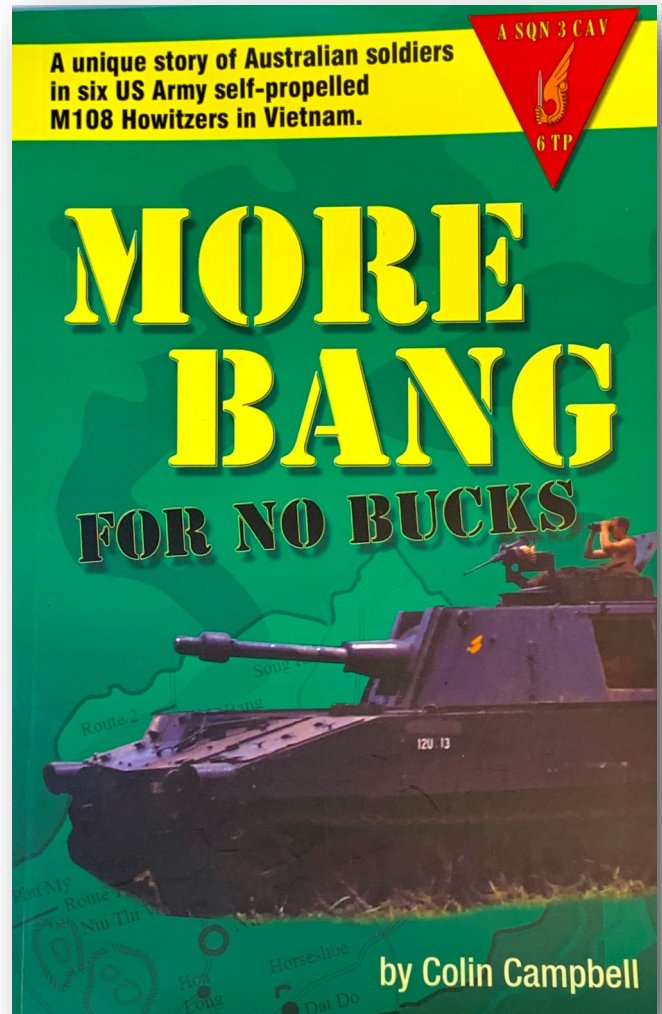
Price (including postage) is AUD \$27.00. Payment can be made by cheque, money transfer or money order.

Contact Colin Campbell,

PO Box 701, Mawson, ACT 2607, Australia.

[colinrcampbell@bigpond.com](mailto:colinrcampbell@bigpond.com),

0408 442 186



# VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

## Vietnam Veterans Memorial Day Service 2021. King Park. Perth.

I guess WA can be considered the lucky state at present, lock down free and able to hold our Vietnam Veterans Day Service, at the Vietnam Memorial, Kings Park, Perth.

The Day, 20 degrees +, good support, from VIP's, Veterans, families and public. Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Peter Heeney, did his usual first class duty, conducting the service, with Padre Allen Pipes, officiating.

A welcome address was given by VVAA WA President, Richard Williams. OAM, dedicating the service to Private Harley Webb, WIA at Long Tan, 18th August 1966. The last remaining Western Australian member of D Company 6 RAR, who passed away recently. A tribute to Private Harley Webb, is included in this edition of Debrief.

An excellent Memorial Day Address was delivered by the Honourable Kim Beazley AC Governor of Western Australia. The Governor has a keen interest in Military History, delivering a well-researched and informative address.

502 Cadet Unit, Karrakatta, provided the Catafalque Party, with the Bugler and Drummer, from the Navy Band WA.

In all, a successful service, with the members of the Republic of South Vietnam Veterans Association and the Vietnamese community, providing their usual array of food for attendees, following the service.

Other services will be held regional areas of the State on the 18th, with the VVAA WA being represented a Mandurah, Wanneroo, Northam and Jennacubbine.

*Richard Williams  
President VVAA WA*



*Hon Mark McGowan Premier WA, Richard Williams President VVAA WA, Hon Kim Beazley AC Governor WA*



*Above: 502 Cadet Unit Karrakatta.  
Left: Ladies from the Vietnamese Community in traditional dress.*



# AROUND THE STATES

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**ANZAC Cottage.** At last the transfer of Title has been completed, with a function held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May, to mark the occasion. The City of Vincent handing the Cottage, to the National Trust of Western Australia. This is a result that the VVAA WA are comfortable with, ensuring the future of ANZAC Cottage being retained in safe hands.

The VVAA WA held an Open Day at ANZAC Cottage on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The day recognised the Battles of Coral and Balmoral, 12<sup>th</sup> May to 6<sup>th</sup> June 1968, attended by several veterans and descendants of the battles, with Dr. Neil McNeil giving an informative recollection of his time at Coral.



*Photo: The Honourable Ken Michael. AC. President of the National Trust WA, accepting the Cottage key from VVAA WA President, Richard Williams. OAM.*

The day also recognised the Working [Tracker] Dogs, deployed to South Vietnam. It was not possible to have ADF working dogs attend, it was considered appropriate to invite SAFE, animal rescue group along on the day. In context, a number of the Vietnam tracker dogs, were obtained from council pounds, they were rescued dogs.

The next Cottage Open Day, will be on the 8<sup>th</sup> August, to acknowledge the Battle of Long Tab and Vietnam Veterans Day.

**The Vietnam KIA Commemoration.** 2021, will be the 15<sup>th</sup> year that this commemoration has been held, placing “Poppy Tributes” on the grave sites of the Western Australian Vietnam KIA’s. “Poppy Tributes” are also sent to regional areas, where there are KIA grave sites.

The Perth Commemoration will be held at the Perth War and Karrakatta Cemeteries, at 2.00pm, Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August.

**Vietnam Veterans Day.** The VVAA WA, will conduct the 2021 Vietnam Veterans Memorial Day Service, at the Vietnam Memorial Pavilion, Kings Park, at 11.00am, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August.

The Mandurah- Murray Vietnam Veterans Group, will hold a service at the Mandurah Memorial, 11.00 am on the 18<sup>th</sup> August. Other services will be held in the Perth metro and regional areas.

The VVAA WA recently received a request to conduct a Vietnam Veterans Day Service at Jennacubbine, on the 18<sup>th</sup> August. The day coincides with a visit to the town, by the VRC, [COVID permitting] with the Melbourne Cup. Jennacubbine, is one of five WA towns to be visited by the VRC and Melbourne Cup in 2021. A nice gesture by Jennacubbine Progress Association, wanting to honour Vietnam Veterans, on “our day” and a significant day for the town.

**“Camaraderie” Videos.** The State Library of Western Australia, recently contacted the VVAA WA, requesting permission to archive both series of “Camaraderie” videos. A compliment to the VVAA WA, to have our video projects, considered as significant, in terms of WA history.

**Long Tan Commemorative Golf Day.** After 17 years of conducting this event, the Partners of Veterans Association WA, have handed the organisation and running of the event to the VVAA WA. The 2021 event, part of Veterans Health Week, a pair’s competition, teeing off at 7.00am, at the Altone Park Golf Course, will be held on the 7<sup>th</sup> October, finishing with a BBQ lunch and presentation of trophies.

**Bruce Rock.** The Back to the Bush Veterans Reunion, is on again in 2021, Bruce Rock, 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

*Richard Williams. OAM.  
President, VVAA WA.*

## AROUND THE STATES—VICTORIA

### **VVAA VIC ETEAM HEADS TO THE BUCHAN RACES**

In 2020 the VVAA Vic State Council agreed to donate \$7,000 to the Buchan Shire following the disastrous bush fires that ravaged the District—those funds will be directed to reforestation in the area. As a follow up to that decision the VVAA ETEAM recently headed to Buchan to identify the area appropriate to lay a Plaque, to “Fly the Flag” at the Race Meeting and promote some VVAA./Buchan goodwill.

Well, it was certainly a great time for all involved, especially after a staggered start to the Race Meeting due to rain.



There was much interest shown in the ETEAM display not only from the children but also the grownups and Race organisers certainly made the ETEAM welcome.

Well done Brendan Kincade OAM and his “Team”.



*Story from FSB-VIC Winter 2021*

## NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERAN MUSEUM

At a recent presentation to VVAA National an architect depiction of what YOUR MUSEUM will look like after relocation to their new site on Phillip Island was tabled and discussed.

The final design and other details may not yet be complete but the “Museum Story” is moving ahead.

An exciting development for the NVVM and a testimony to the tireless dedicated work put in by so many volunteers, and more recently, the NVVM Board.



*Article courtesy FSB-VIC Winter 2021*

A big step forward from days when John Methven OAM hauled his trailer around Australia collecting various Vietnam related items—birth of the Museum.

### **VIETNAM VETERANS REMEMBRANCE DAY**

Wednesday 8th AUGUST 2021

### **MELBOURNE SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE - CANCELLED**

A digital Streamed Service will be aired from the Melbourne Shrine at 11:00 am on Wednesday 18th August 2021 for viewing on the Shrine Facebook <https://www.shrine.org.au/remembrance-services> and RSL Vic Facebook.



# AROUND THE STATES—QUEENSLAND

## Veterans to scooter from Brisbane to Townsville

25 June 2021

On 12 September, 40 people – mostly veterans – will set off from RAAF Base Amberley near Brisbane on 50cc-scooters for the 2,100-kilometre trip to RAAF Base Townsville.

Nicknamed ‘Scootaville’, the trip has been organised by the RAAF Radschool Association based in Brisbane, partly to celebrate the centenary of the Royal Australian Air Force but also to raise funds for the organisation.

The Association was established in 1999 for graduates of the RAAF Radio School, but its membership now includes veterans from all three services. Its work includes organising reunions for veterans, reuniting old mates, and helping members in their dealings with DVA.

Association Secretary & Treasurer Trevor Benneworth says the trip will take 13 days and involve passing through a variety of iconic Queensland towns including Kilcoy, Kingaroy, Mundubbera, Biloela, Emerald, Barcaldine, Longreach, Winton, Hughenden and Charters Towers. Individual IGA and Woolworth’s supermarkets along the way will provide ingredients for cooked breakfasts, which will be prepared by a mobile kitchen. He says, ‘those who dare to take part will have a hell of a lot of fun’.

While most of the 40 riders have been confirmed for the trip, it is still not too late to register your interest in participating in this event, either as a rider or to show your support along the way. If you are interested in taking part in ‘Scootaville’, then please email Trevor at [trev@radschool.org.au](mailto:trev@radschool.org.au). You don’t need to be a veteran to participate or show your support.

The Association is raising funds through corporate sponsorship. If your organisation would like to sponsor Scootaville, contact Trevor at the email address above



Peter Hindle (left), President VVAA Queensland was presented with a Vietnam Veteran themed quilt which was cleverly designed and made by one of their valued supporters. The quilt will take Pride of Place on the walls of Remembrance House (below) in Burpengary Queensland.



## AROUND THE STATES



### **18th LONG TAN REMEMBRANCE DAY GOLF CHALLENGE**

**By Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia WA Branch  
(Formerly conducted by Partners of Veterans Association WA)**

**Ambrose Pairs  
ALTONE PARK GOLF COURSE  
320 Benara Road, Beechboro WA**

**Thursday 7 October 2021**

Cost: \$40.00 per player incl Green Fees, Lunch, Prizes all holes

Registration: 0700 – briefing 0730 - siren/shotgun start 0745

Raffle on the day with proceeds to VVAA WA Branch Inc

Further details - Peter Fox 0418 944 495 or

email [longtangolf@inet.net.au](mailto:longtangolf@inet.net.au)

No Partner? - No worries we will do our best to find you one

Limited Field of thirty pairs/teams so first in best dressed

A limited number of electric carts are available (\$20). – book on the entry form or call/ text 0418 944 495 **(Do not book at the course)**

## LETTERS

### DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS AUSSIE SOLDIER?



**From:** Bethany LaSpina <[bethanylaspina@yahoo.com](mailto:bethanylaspina@yahoo.com)>

**Sent:** Saturday, 10 July 2021 9:28 AM

**To:** [secretary@vvaa.org.au](mailto:secretary@vvaa.org.au)

**Subject:** Australian veteran

Dear Sir:

My name is Bethany LaSpina. I am from the United States, but since I have a matter relating to an Australian veteran, I am hoping maybe you can be of assistance.

Attached is a photograph of Bob Hope along with my uncle on the right and an unidentified Australian soldier on the left. The photograph was taken at one of Bob Hope's USO shows in Long Binh in December 1967.

My goal is to identify the Australian soldier on the left somehow to see if he is still living so I can send him a copy of this photograph.

I know this is a real long shot, but I was wondering if you knew of any other Australian soldiers who were there that day who could possibly identify him. Unfortunately, I don't know the name of his unit or in what branch he served. I appreciate any help you may provide.

Sincerely,  
Bethany LaSpina

Bethany LaSpina <[bethanylaspina@yahoo.com](mailto:bethanylaspina@yahoo.com)>

*In a follow up with Britany she elaborated on the events leading up to the photograph being taken.....*

*Continued page 37*



## LETTERS

### DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS AUSSIE SOLDIER?

*Continued from page 36*

My uncle on the right of the photograph is Lieutenant Colonel Jack LaSpina. He served with the US Army in G3 air operations (air defense artillery) working with the army at Long Binh and with the air force at Bien Hoa air base.

Along with coordinating air strikes against the enemy, he also coordinated the arrival of the Royal Thais from Thailand who aided in the conflict.

He saw action on January 1st 1968 when the Viet Cong attacked all friendly forces in heavy fighting throughout South Vietnam.

My uncle believes that the unidentified Australian soldier possibly belonged to the 1st Australian task force that was stationed near Long Binh.

The story of how this photograph came to be is a very interesting one.

My uncle was determined to get a photograph with Bob Hope who was performing along with Raquel Welch for over 40,000 servicemen and women at Long Binh in December 1967. His buddies told him he'd never get through to Bob Hope, especially with that enormous crowd of soldiers.

However, my uncle persisted and made his way to Bob Hope's tent. He knocked on the tent flap and Bob Hope came out. When Jack explained his purpose, Bob Hope happily obliged. Just at that moment, the Australian soldier was walking by and Bob Hope suggested that this man be in the picture as well.

Thus, I have one of America's most famous comedians to thank for giving me a mystery to possibly help solve all these years later. I hope we will be able to find this man so that he can own a copy of this photograph as well.

When you publish this article next month, would it be possible to send a copy of the magazine to me as well as to my uncle who lives in Texas. I'll be happy to give the addresses if you are able to do so. If you need any further information, please let me know.

Thank you so much and I wish you well in this endeavor. Your kindness is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Bethany LaSpina

Bethany LaSpina <[bethanylaspina@yahoo.com](mailto:bethanylaspina@yahoo.com)>





## OUR VETERANS

### Long Tan survivor remembers the day all hell broke loose

(Jarrod Lucas—The West Australian, Tue, 16 August 2016 4:10AM)

Albany farmer Harley Webb's souvenir from the Battle of Long Tan is a bullet that ripped through his right shoulder, broke his collarbone, shattered his ribs and lodged in muscle centimetres from his heart.

The 71-year-old had the round framed and hung on his wall as a reminder of the day his best mate Colin Whiston was among 18 Australians killed in a rubber plantation in Vietnam.

Mr Webb recalls his Armalite rifle had fewer than 10 rounds of ammunition left facing an enemy force estimated at up to 2500, outnumbering the Australians more than 10 to one.



*Vietnam Veteran Harley Webb with his service medals from the Battle of Long Tan: Credit: Laurie Benson*

"We didn't think we were going to get out ... we all thought this is the end and we're all going to be wiped out," he said.

"The stupid things that go through your mind were, 'What are my parents going to say when they get a telegram telling them I've been killed?'"

Conscripted as a 20-year-old, Pte Webb had been in Vietnam under three months when the Australian Task Force Base at Nui Dat was mortared on the night of August 16, 1966.

Mr Webb and two others had been assigned to Delta Company, of 6 Royal Australian Regiment, and arrived after dark when the mortar bombs hit.

"When the mortaring started during the night we didn't know where our gun pits were or where to go," he said.

"We just stayed in our tent all night while there were mortars flying around everywhere."

The mortar attack was the prelude to what was to be Pte Webb's baptism of fire on the afternoon of August 18.

Initially, B Company went out on patrol and found the base plates from where the mortars had been fired but no enemy were sighted.

The next day D Company — made up of 105 men across three platoons and three New Zealand artillery forward observers — was sent forward to relieve them.

They stopped for lunch with B Company and could hear pop-stars Little Patti and Cole Joy singing at a concert for the troops at Nui Dat.

The patrol had moved only another few kilometres when Mr Webb said "all hell broke loose".

There was no cover, and the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army were swarming.

The only saving grace was the monsoonal downpour that began just after the initial contact that meant confusion reigned on both sides.

*Continued page 39*

## OUR VETERANS

### **Long Tan survivor remembers the day all hell broke loose**

*Continued from page 38*

After pulling back through a small opening in the ambush and reforming with 10 Platoon and headquarters, the situation looked grim for the Australians who called for an ammunition resupply.

It was dropped in, wrapped in blankets for the wounded, by brave helicopter pilots flying low amid a withering artillery barrage.

"It absolutely pelted down ... I've never seen rain like it in my life," Mr Webb said.

"It was unbelievable, and it was a blessing in a way. My idea of it was the Viet Cong were a little disorientated and they didn't know how many of us there were.

"If they had known there were only 100 of us they would have walked through us in five minutes."

Mr Webb recalled the "whistling noise" of the New Zealand artillery as it rained down within 75m of the Australians and the "horrendous", thunderous crash of rounds striking.

The artillery acted like a shield but occasionally it "forced the enemy on top of us, which wasn't very pleasant".

"That was the first time I think the Australian troops had ever heard them using their bugles," he said. "The Viet Cong used a bugle to rally their troops and you could hear it going everywhere and they would rush at us again and again."

The ammunition resupply brought its own problems. No rounds had been loaded into magazines and the soldiers were forced to do it under fire.

Mr Webb recalled the hard lesson the soldiers learned from their first engagement.

"We were only carrying the basic amount, about 120 rounds, and I was down to my last magazine," he said.

"Before we went out on patrol, being my first operation, you went to the Q store to get ammo and I was asking the other guys 'how many rounds do we take?'

"They just said 'take the basic we've been here three months and haven't fired a shot in anger'.

"Then of course every time they went out on patrol after Long Tan they were loaded down with ammo."

Mr Webb said the battle was a kill or be killed situation and it remains clear in his mind "like yesterday".

He said he saw heroic acts that day, but played down his own role.

"I've always preferred to be a live coward than a dead hero. Some of the things I saw guys doing, running around under heavy fire when there was no cover, I thought 'Jesus I wouldn't do that'," he said.

"The sound 2500 people shooting at you makes is quite incredible — the crack, crack, crack of rounds — and the scary part is seeing the tracers.

"Tracers are one in every five rounds and the whole sky was lit up. One stuck in the ground right next to me."

Mr Webb was wounded popping his head up to take a shot.

*Continued page 37*

# Long Tan survivor remembers the day all hell broke loose

*Continued from page 39*

He was carried out by Warrant Officer Jack Kirby, a bull of a man who was recommended for Australia's highest military honour, the Victoria Cross, but instead received a Distinguished Conduct Medal.

"Jack Kirby was an absolute hero," Mr Webb said. "I'm 6ft 3in (190cm) and he just picked me up like I was a bag of flour."

Mr Webb described falling in and out of consciousness and heard one army medic look him over saying "this poor bastard's not going to make it".

"If it had gone another half an inch it would have killed me, but luckily it stopped," he said.

As night loomed, heavy artillery fire and the arrival of reinforcements in armoured personnel carriers finally stopped the assault.

The next morning the extent of the carnage was apparent. In the plantation and jungle were the bodies of 245 enemy fighters, and signs that others had been removed.

Mr Webb was one of the first of 24 wounded Australians on the operating table in Vung Tau. Three weeks later he was back in Perth at Hollywood Hospital.

Tomorrow he will join Long Tan veterans dining with Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull at Parliament House and will spend Thursday's 50th anniversary at a reunion at Brisbane's Enoggera Barracks with his son Craig, who served in Afghanistan, Iraq and East Timor.

*Jarrold Lucas—The West Australian, Tue, 16 August 2016*



SAVE THE DATE

**BACK TO THE BUSH  
VETERANS REUNION**

BRUCE ROCK, WA 6418

**1st Nov - 7th Nov 2021**

WELCOMING ALL MILITARY  
PERSONNEL - PAST & PRESENT



## VALE—JAMES NICHOLSON 44754

James Nicholson (44754) was born in Glasgow Scotland and joined the Australian Army. His service in Vietnam in Detachment included 1<sup>st</sup> Forward Delivery Troop from 10 Sep 1969 to 24 Dec 1969. Then, A Squadron, 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Regiment from 25 Dec 1969 to 03 Dec 1970

James was a gunner on 24/Charlie 1969 B Sqn under the command of corporal Graham Munsell. James sadly passed away some time ago, with his family knowing very little of his service.

Graham's reflections: Nicko was a fearless soldier but not reckless and a dam good gunner. With his mischievous smile and great sense of humour made our tank the envy of the troop. To hear of his passing brought back treasured memories of the many adventures we experienced together. R.I.P. Old Mate - Munsell

The Centurion tank was developed by the British at the very end of World War II by redesigning the Comet light tank. The Centurion was larger, heavier, had sloped armour, a more powerful gun, robust suspension system. It was Britain's main battle tank through the post-war and Cold War period, seeing useful service into the 1990s.



This Mk3 Centurion tank serial number 169041 had an astonishing service record, first developed in 1948 and equipped with an automated gun stabilization system. 169041 was built in 1951 and sold to Australia in 1952, where it spent some time training tank crews in Puckapunyal, Victoria.

These are some photo's of a recent presentation to the Nicholson family at Edinburgh SA.

*Photos supplied by family: Left, Barry Hodges, Scott, Rosemary and Dennis Nicholson in front of the Atomic Tank 169041*



*Designed by Barry Hodges and presented to Nicholson Family*



*Captain Chloe Pinheiro presenting Hammersley certificate of service to Rosemary Nicholson, James' widow.*





*It is with great Sadness  
we announce the passing  
of*

**2781433 Barry BANNERMAN**  
*on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2021*

*Barry served in Vietnam with  
1<sup>st</sup> Field Regiment  
Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery*

*On behalf of VVAA St Marys Outpost  
we extend our deepest sympathies to  
family, veterans and friends of the late  
Barry Bannerman*

***MAY HE REST IN PEACE***



# VALE



*It is with great Sadness  
we announce the passing  
of*

***R50591 Collin "Irish" O'Flynn***  
*on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021*

*Collin served in Vietnam with  
the Royal Australian Navy*

*On behalf of VVAA St Marys Outpost we extend  
our deepest sympathies to family, veterans and  
friends of the late Collin "Irish" O'Flynn*

***MAY HE REST IN PEACE***



# VALE



*It is with great Sadness  
we announce the passing  
of*

**38574 John Francis WALLIS**  
*on 24th July 2021*

*John served in Vietnam with RAEME,  
17th Construction Squadron*

*On behalf of VVAA St Marys Outpost we extend  
our deepest sympathies to family, veterans and  
friends of the late John Francis WALLIS*

***MAY HE REST IN PEACE***





# VALE



*It is with great Sadness  
we announce the passing  
of*

***R96297 Allan John TURNER***

*on 21<sup>st</sup> MAY 2021*

*Allan served in Vietnam with the Royal  
Australian Navy on HMAS Parramatta*

*On behalf of VVAA NSW we extend our  
deepest sympathies to family, veterans and  
friends of the late Allan John Turner*

***MAY HE REST IN PEACE***





# VALE



*It is with great Sadness  
we announce the passing  
of*

**2781371 Trevor John LAWRENCE OAM**  
*on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021*

*Trevor served in Vietnam with  
1st Field Regiment RAA  
18/05/1966 - 19/09/1966*

*On behalf of VVAA NSW we extend our deepest  
sympathies to family, veterans and friends  
of the late Trevor John LAWRENCE OAM.*

*MAY HE REST IN PEACE*



# VETERAN FRIENDLY RETREATS

## Murraguldrrie Veterans Retreat



**VVAA South West New South Wales and Wagga Wagga**

**Tumbarumba Rd & Burngoogee Fire Rd**

**Murraguldrrie State Forrest, NSW**

**<http://www.murraguldrrie-veterans-retreat.com.au/>**



The Murraguldrrie Veterans Retreat was established in 2006 by local Vietnam Veterans as a place of solace and solitude for Vietnam Veterans. The retreat is maintained by volunteers in the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (NSW) South West New South Wales (VVAA).

Access is on request and the gate code will be supplied with your booking confirmation. Site fees by donation. Check the website for rules of entry and the location of the retreat.

**<http://www.murraguldrrie-veterans-retreat.com.au/>**

**Contact: David Abbott 0466 883 552 Email: [murraguldrrie.veterans.retreat@outlook.com](mailto:murraguldrrie.veterans.retreat@outlook.com)**

**ENJOY YOUR STAY - WE ARE PROUD OF OUR RETREAT**



# REUNIONS

**1ALSG EX-VIETNAM - 8-13 NOVEMBER 2021**

## **HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY**

1st Australian Logistic Support Group—*Ex-Vietnam*

The reunion will be from November 8, till November 13, 2021 and will be held at:

**Lake Hume Discovery Park,**

**33 Boathaven Road, Ebdon VIC 3691** via Albury/Wodonga

For details of the Reunion and Accommodation Bookings

Contact Tony Brown on:

Mobile: 0428 852 736

Email: [tr4950@optusnet.com.au](mailto:tr4950@optusnet.com.au)

## **21 Engineer Support Troop Reunion**

### **21 EST REUNION CANCELLED 2021**

It is with great regret that the Reunion Scheduled for this year will have to be cancelled. The Delta variation is just proving too difficult at this time and until vaccination rates get higher it is just too risky.

Now the GOOD NEWS, we are on for next year with a date at the Tuncurry Bowling Club sorted, and they are just as pleased to be able to host this for us again.

Here's the date for your Diary so put it in for forward planning, we know of a few keen to come this year that ended up already committed elsewhere.

**Rescheduled 29<sup>th</sup> August to Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**

At this stage we are able to contact those on our email list first, due to inability to print off address labels whilst we do our next 4 weeks' lockdown, so if you have a mate that you know is not on email, please contact him and let him know. It's a good excuse to have a chat, Right?

The committee will be contacting our fantastic accommodation supporters and tour operators at Tuncurry over the next few days however if you do still have accommodation booked you should contact them and decide if you wish to organize a refund or transfer it to next year. The same can be done with your reunion fees. Please contact Bev directly on email [rossnbev@hotmail.com](mailto:rossnbev@hotmail.com) to organise a refund or if you just want to leave it in place for next year.

A big thank you to the troop for responding to emails when asked, it's made our job so much easier and though we now have 396 days and A-Wakey the committee is available via phone or email if you want a chat or to bounce ideas around.

Stay Safe Everyone, Get Vaxed, and look forward to 2022 Reunion

Regards,

21 EST Committee.

*For further information contact Ian (below), Phil Hicks 0414 761932*

*[phil.hicks@gmail.com](mailto:phil.hicks@gmail.com) or Stan Monkley 0411 506787 [stan21est@gmail.com](mailto:stan21est@gmail.com). Contact Ian McLean (0412 431297) [jaim@hotmail.com.au](mailto:jaim@hotmail.com.au) Website: [www.21est.org](http://www.21est.org)*

# REUNIONS



## 102 Field Workshop RAEME Reunion

**When: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2021**

**Where: Koondrook Victoria.**

**Friday Saturday & Sunday  
(including 5 Meals, wine, beer, soft drinks, tea and coffee)**

**COST: Friday to Sunday midmorning (including 5 meals, wine, beer, soft drinks, tea and coffee)**

**Single \$100.00**

**Double \$150.00**

### One Day only

**Single \$60.00**

**Double \$85.00**

**Please contact Noel Lake on 03 5456 9246**



# REUNIONS



## **HEADQUARTERS 1ST AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE SOUTH VIETNAM 1966 - 1972**

### **HQ1ATF ASSOCIATION REUNION**

*In Memory of our D&E losses at Long Khanh (12 June 1971)*

**CANBERRA 18-22 NOVEMBER 2021**

#### **RESCHEDULED DATES**

**Capital Country Holiday Park**

**47 Bidges Road, SUTTON NSW 2620    Ph:(02) 6230 3433**

**Email: [bookings@capitalcountryholidaypark.com.au](mailto:bookings@capitalcountryholidaypark.com.au)**

**Web: [www.capitalcountryholidaypark.com.au](http://www.capitalcountryholidaypark.com.au)**

Due to the ongoing Corona Virus situation our 2020 Reunion of Headquarters 1st Australian Task Force / D & E Platoon (Nui Dat, South Vietnam 1966-1972) has now been rescheduled to 18-22 November 2021 and will still be held at the Capital Country Holiday Park which is located just off the Federal Highway, some eight km north east of Canberra.

Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war from 1965 – 1972 has had a lasting impact on all the servicemen and women who served there. HQ1ATF and its sub-unit Defence and Employment (D&E) Platoon, the longest continually serving Infantry Platoon in South Vietnam, served from 1966 – 1972 and encountered much enemy action during those years.

Each two years HQ1ATF Association holds a reunion and the rescheduled 2021 event will remember 50 years since we closed the gates of Nui Dat. It is anticipated that some 70 Veterans and 60 wives/partners (a total of 130 people) will participate in the four day event. The reunion is an important part of the Association's efforts in the healing process which is achieved through the continual networking of members and also importantly their partners and carers. With objectives to improve health and well-being and to reduce social isolation, the reunion plays a significant role.

The Commemorative Dinner will be held on Saturday 20 November 2021 at the Old Parliament House (Museum of Australian Democracy). The dinner will be preceded by a Memorial Service at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Anzac Ave, Canberra.

For details contact: John Verhelst: 0437212121 or [jeverhelst@gmail.com](mailto:jeverhelst@gmail.com) [www.hq1atf.org](http://www.hq1atf.org)

## MERCHANDISE



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### VETERAN FRIENDLY RETREATS



Some VVAA State branches have retreats on their websites.

Under the current COVID restrictions, check before you travel



*DISCLAIMER—The material in DEBRIEF is in the nature of general comment only and neither purports nor is intended to be advice on any particular matter. NO persons should act on the basis of any matter contain in DEBRIEF without considering and, if necessary, taking appropriate professional advice upon their own particular circumstances. The VVAA, the authors and editors, expressly disclaim all and any liability in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by any such person in reliance, whether whole or partial, upon the whole or part of the contents of DEBRIEF.*

# MERCHANDISE

## VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA ST MARYS' OUTPOST SUB-BRANCH



### ORDER FORM – MOUSE PADS



DESCRIPTION	COST	QTY	TOTAL
Small Mousepads 225mm x 195mm x 3mm	\$ 12.00		\$
Large Mousepads 243mm x 198mm x 5mm	\$15.00		\$
<b>DIRECT DEPOSIT - BSB:082799 ACC:799039554</b> Please add name to Bank Reference	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$</b>
<b>NAME:</b>			
<b>POSTAL ADDRESS:</b>			
	<b>STATE:</b>	<b>POST CODE:</b>	
<b>Phone:</b>			
<b>Email:</b>			

Orders can be emailed to [vietvet@tpg.com.au](mailto:vietvet@tpg.com.au) or posted to Secretary,  
VVAA St Marys Outpost PO Box 3049 South St Marys NSW 2760



# SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VETERANS & THEIR FAMILIES



**SAFE ZONE  
SUPPORT**

FREE ANONYMOUS  
COUNSELLING LINE  
CALL 1800 142 072

Safe Zone Support is a free and anonymous counselling line, for veterans and their families – call 1800 142 072 (available 24/7).

This service provides access to specialised counsellors, with an understanding of military culture and experience.

The service offers care without the need for individuals to identify themselves or be concerned that their call will be recorded.

This line has been created for vulnerable cohorts of veterans and their families which might not otherwise seek mental health care.



**OPEN**  
Veterans & Families  
Counselling  
**ARMS**

A service founded by Vietnam Veterans now for ALL Veterans and their Families. 1800 011 046

## **SUPPORTING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

At Open Arms your wellbeing is our business.

We offer free:

confidential counselling for individuals, couples  
and families  
group programs  
transition workshops  
peer networks  
suicide prevention training  
education, self-help resources, and more...

**To get support or find out more  
call or visit:**

**1800 011 046 | [OpenArms.gov.au](http://OpenArms.gov.au)**

# **OPEN ARMS**

**Veterans & Families Counselling**

**> A service founded by Vietnam veterans,  
now for all veterans and families**

## **OUR HISTORY**

Recent research has identified a loss of records from our associations past. If anyone has copies of VVAA. National Congress minutes prior to 1996 please forward to:

[president@vvaa.org.au](mailto:president@vvaa.org.au) or [secretary@vvaa.org.au](mailto:secretary@vvaa.org.au)

## **TELL OTHERS ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES**

VVAA States and sub branches are encouraged to contribute reports on their local activities for publication in Debrief.

Don't miss this opportunity promote your group; it may give others ideas of what they can do for, and with, members and their families.

The preferred method is to attach to an email the article in Word format and photographs in JPG format for better quality, to [debriefeditor@gmail.com](mailto:debriefeditor@gmail.com)

## **Has your Email Address Changed?**

Please advise your new email address to the VVAA National Secretary at [secretary@vvaa.org.au](mailto:secretary@vvaa.org.au).

# NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM

25 Veterans Drive, Newhaven, Phillip Island VIC 3925  
[www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org.au](http://www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org.au)

Membership enquiries welcomed—application form next page



## AUSTRALIAN WAR WIDOWS Incorporated

*(formally War Widows Guild of Australia)*



*"We all belong to each other.  
We all need each other.  
It is in serving each other  
and in sacrificing for our common good  
that we are finding our true life."*

A strong part of the Guilds History is the origins of its Logo. The kookaburra was adopted as the Guilds Logo from its inception and remains today.

The **kookaburra** was the mascot of the 7th Division of the 2nd AIF, commanded by Mrs Jessie Vasey's husband, Major-General Vasey.

**More information on [www.warwidows.org.au](http://www.warwidows.org.au)**

## DEBRIEF DEADLINE

The deadline for articles to be included in DEBRIEF is the first day of every even month.

When submitting articles with photographs, to achieve the best print quality please include the photographs separately in JPG or similar format.

Also identify each photograph i.e., Photo 1 – SA President laying a wreath; Photo 2 – Cenotaph gates etc.



# NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP

## Become a Friend of NVVM



The Friends of NVVM program unites people committed to supporting the mission of this unique museum: to remember, interpret and understand the experience of Vietnam War veterans and the enduring impact of the war on society.

As well as demonstrating your high regard for NVVM and its work, Friendship brings you:

- ♥ Free admission on all visits to the museum.
- ♥ 2 free guest passes per year.
- ♥ 10% discount on admission cost for immediate family.
- ♥ 10% discount in NVVM shop & Nui Dat Cafe.
- ♥ Exclusive "Friends" only private viewing & events.
- ♥ Regular newsletters.
- ♥ Discounts for guest lectures, film nights, conference and other special events.
- ♥ Single vote at AGM.

Payment:	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year
Individual	\$35 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$65 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$95 <input type="checkbox"/>
Concession	\$25 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$45 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$65 <input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$70 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$130 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$190 <input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate	\$200 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$350 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$500 <input type="checkbox"/>
Life: Aged 60 yrs+			
Individual	\$800 <input type="checkbox"/>	Concession \$600 <input type="checkbox"/>	
Life: Aged under 60 yrs			
Individual	\$1200 <input type="checkbox"/>	Concession \$800 <input type="checkbox"/>	

Direct payments can be made to:  
NVVM Ltd Trading Acct  
Bendigo Bank BSB 633 000  
Account: 149738577

### Primary Members Details (please print)

Company name: .....  
Title: ..... Surname .....  
First Name/s: .....  
Address: .....

State: ..... Postcode: .....

Email address: .....  
@ .....

Phone: .....

Signature: .....

Date: ...../...../.....

Immediate family in Friend's household.  
(Please provide given name and surname).

.....

.....

**Concession** applies to veteran card holders, full time students & pensioners, does NOT include Senior Card. Benefits as per individual member.

**Family** allows for 2 adults and up to 4 children. Benefits as per individual member.

**Corporate** allows for four adults and up to 10 children. Benefits as per individual member.

**Post:** Friends of NVVM Association  
PO Box 318  
San Remo VIC 3925

**Email:** office@vietnamvetsmuseum.org

**phone:** 03 5956 6400

**Website:** www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org

25 Veterans Drive, Newhaven, Phillip Island VIC

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Card holder's name: .....

Signature: .....

Card number: .....

Date signed: ...../...../.....