

# RICOCHET

Monthly newsletter of VVAA Sunshine Coast Sub-Branch Inc. SEPTEMBER 2021



*WHILE many official events marking Vietnam Veterans Day on August 18 were canceled because of COVID-19, an 'unofficial' ceremony was held at the Cotton Tree Cenotaph and included this Vietnamese/Australian group from Brisbane. — page 3: Be proud, says GG; page 6: more photos; page 18: Padre's message.*

## Remembering the final battle

A national service marking the 50th anniversary of Operation Ivanhoe including the Battle of Nui Le during the Vietnam War will be held on 20 September from 10.30 am and will be broadcast nationally.

Department of Veterans Affairs will hold the National Commemorative Service at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial on Anzac Parade in Canberra.

In September 1971, Australian forces were entering the final stages of their decade-long involvement in the Vietnam War. With elements of the Australian Task Force already returning home, enemy forces — particularly the battle-hardened 33rd North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Regiment — sought to establish themselves in Phuoc Tuy Province, DVA relates.

Operation Ivanhoe was intended to prevent enemy forc-

es from gaining a foothold. Launched on 19 September 1971, it was a search-and-destroy sweep of the area south of the Courtenay rubber plantation.

Operational personnel comprised members of 4RAR/NZ, the ANZAC Battalion), 3 RAR, armoured personnel carriers from A Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, engineers from 1st Field Squadron, Royal Australian Engineers along with artillery support from 12th Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery and air support from No. 9 Squadron (RAAF), 161 (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight and United States aircraft. Unfortunately, the Australian tanks that had supported previous operations had departed from Vung Tau to return to Australia less than a week before.

—Continued Page 3



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

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**General information** Page 2.

Veterans & Families Counselling

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**OFFICE HOURS: The Drop-In Centre hours have been extended — now open Monday to Friday 0900 to 1300 (9am — 1 pm).**



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

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

Veterans of wars, particularly from Vietnam through to Afghanistan, have received a special message from Governor-General David Hurley.

On Vietnam Veterans Day, August 18, he said he wanted to send a message to them – “and to all Veterans of the ADF including those who served more recently in Afghanistan who may be wondering the same things – a message that they should have been told at the time.

“You should be proud of your service. You fought for reasons that your Government determined to be important to Australia and you fought for your mates – our nation won’t forget your service.

“You inherited the Anzac legacy, built upon it and handed it to the next generation. And for that, we are grateful. We do care. You are not alone and we will support you.”

Delivering the message on Facebook, he said: “I had planned to deliver this speech at the Vietnam Veterans’ Remembrance Day 50th anniversary ceremony on Anzac Parade in Canberra. That event, sadly, has been cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It is important to deliver my speech via this means because 50 years ago the majority of our Vietnam veterans had returned to Australia ... some uncertain of what they had achieved ... of how they should feel about their service ... whether they were part of the Anzac legacy and whether anyone cared about what they had done and what they suffered in the service of our nation.

Fifty years ago, on 18 August 1971 the Prime Minister of Australia announced that Australia would cease operations in South Vietnam in October of that year. That decision brought to a conclusion Australia’s advisory and combat role that had begun in August 1962.

# Be proud, GG tells ALL war veterans

“Your service in South Vietnam occurred in the context of that global struggle. You did what your country asked, directed, you to do in that war of ideologies. And you served in an Australian way.

“In my service life I lived under the shadow and influence of your service – in all three Services. That is still true today of the current generation of Australian servicemen and women. Your legacy goes far beyond being an assessment of the value of the Vietnam War – your legacy is your influence on the character and development of the ADF over the past 50 years.

“Too many Vietnam Veterans were made to feel that they could not be proud of their service or that Australia was not proud of them. That was a national mistake from which we should all learn and which we

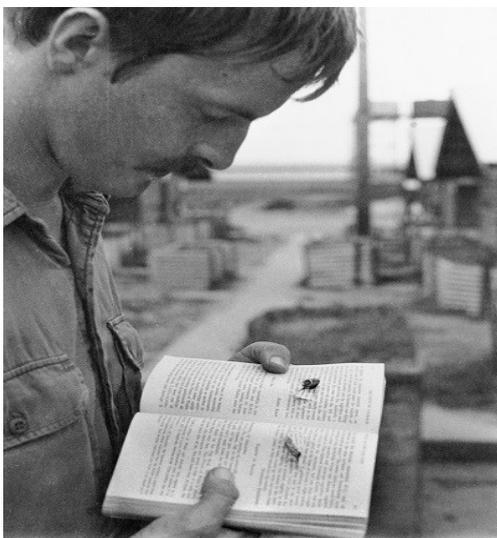
should all commit to avoiding.

“This is particularly true for any man or woman who served in Afghanistan – to them I say, you served diligently in difficult circumstances.

“We are all proud of those who served our country in Vietnam and the conflicts that followed. The ultimate outcome in the country in which you served cannot be laid at your feet. Be proud of your own service as we are proud of you.

“Lest We Forget.”

– PICTURED: David Hurley as CO of 1 RAR in Somalia in 1993 (AWM photo). Story from DVA.



SECOND Lieutenant Graham Spinkston with a book, Taste of Courage, damaged when it deflected an enemy round from his left leg during Ivanhoe. Photo and story AWM.

## Last battle in Vietnam

From Page 1.

The last major offensive operation of Australia’s war in Vietnam, Ivanhoe saw Australian forces engage in a series of heavy contacts with the 33rd NVA Regiment.

This included the last major battle fought by Australian forces in Vietnam — the Battle of Nui Le on 21 September 1971.

Throughout the day and into the night, soldiers from 4RAR/NZ’s B and D companies were engaged by NVA troops across two locations about four kilometres apart.

In support of the fighting on the

ground, United States aircraft and helicopters from No. 9 Squadron RAAF provided substantial and effective air support, while artillery burst among the NVA positions.

Overhead, helicopters from 161 (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight dropped ammunition and monitored activity on the ground.

The intense fighting that day came at a cost. Five Australian servicemen were killed and 24 were wounded.

Details about the service will be available on the Commemorative services page of the DVA website.

## From the President

Hi Everyone,  
I sincerely hope that you and yours are both fit and well. All I can say is: bugger, bugger bugger!!! Once again, we have been forced to cancel our Vietnam Veteran's Day activities. We can only hope that we will be in a position to carry it out next year.

Your committee has been flat out over the past week and a half contacting those who had tickets for the lunch and arranging to obtain their banking BSB and Account numbers in order that the Treasurer can refund their money.

We had some 300 people attending so as you can imagine, it's been a big job trying to arrange their individual reimbursements. The list of those to be repaid has not yet been completed but we hope to have that matter rectified within a few days. So, if you haven't received a payment from the Treasurer as yet, please don't

worry; it will happen as we progress.

**The Secretary will shortly be posting a 'Heads-Up' message to all indicating that we will be in need of volunteers for two upcoming events. How about it? Do we really need to keep on imploring you to put your hands up for a few hours once or twice a year! How about this time we make it just a bit easier on your committee? If available, contact the Duty officer at the Drop-In Centre on 54794552.**

It seems that we now have the Thursday breakfasts back at the Mooloolaba Surf Club, although only God knows how long that will be allowed to progress. In fairness though, the Club has been most gracious to our members and the blame for these impositions does not lay with them.

It's the idiots who continue to flout the law with their selfish and egocen-

tric conduct that are holding the majority of the community to ransom. Let's hope that eventually, these people will wake up to themselves and let the general population get on with their lives.

Owing to the situation that presented itself, we were not able to draw the raffle as planned. However, by the time you are reading this (if indeed you are), we will have had the draw and a heads-up will have been sent out notifying members of the lucky winners (opposite page).

Once again, if you have any ideas or suggestions that in your mind will benefit and/or advance the ideologies and doctrines of our Association, don't be shy, let us know.

**Best Regards,  
Mick Howe,  
President.**



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## From the Secretary

Well VV day has come and gone for another year and despite the dreaded plague, we celebrated in our own way with quite a number of the public witnessing a very informal memorial to our fallen comrades.

Our Patron, Laurie Drinkwater, headed the service with some of the remaining originals from Long Tan.

Our South Vietnamese friends were also present and as usual arrived with the usual pomp and flair and again expressing their gratification for our Vietnam Vets.

We again express our thanks to Thai and Diamond for their efforts and attendance.

As you probably know by now, we have drawn the V V Day Raffle at the DIC Thursday, August 26. (details at right)

We have also had the volunteer sheet up on the notice board for over a week and we are still seeking names to fulfill our obligation for the Ironman 70.3 on 12th September, which is only a couple of weeks away.

If you can possibly help out it would be greatly appreciated by our management.

By the time you read this we would envisage most people would have received refunds for VV day Tix. If you have not been reimbursed, it will be pending.

Short and sweet this month.

**Stay Safe**  
**Kind regards**  
**Garry King**



*The V V Day raffle was drawn by Linda Thomas from Maroochydore Library, pictured with John Cunningham, holding the ticket of the major prizewinner, Graham Capeness (prize an Indigenous painting "Star Brothers" by Peter Murray Djeripi Mulcahy).*

*Second Prize: Dan O'Kearney ("The Forceful One" by Jackie Coghill).*

*The following people won minor prizes of two bottles of wine: Kerry White, Cliff Glover, Ian Brown, Ian Warburton, Andy Usher and Patrick McCardle (Patrick donated his prize back).*

*Thank you to all who participated.*



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## 'Unofficial' V V Day at Cotton Tree

While official events marking Vietnam Veterans Day were cancelled because of COVID restrictions, an 'unofficial' service was held at Cotton Tree Cenotaph: attendees included Long Tan veterans Harry Smith and Laurie Drinkwater (right); Garry King and Mick Howe (top left); Kev Butcher and Max Morrow (left). They are holding inscribed mugs which were presented as gifts by a group of Vietnamese/Australians from Brisbane, including our supporters Thai and Diamond.



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## Confrontation ended 55 years ago

Last month marked 55 years since the peace treaty was signed between the Indonesian and Malaysian governments, bringing to an end the Indonesian-Malaysian Confrontation.

Signed on 11 August 1966, it ended an undeclared war that began in 1962 involving New Zealand, Britain, and troops from Australia arriving in Borneo from March 1965.

“Malaya gained independence from the British in 1957 and the expectation from the Malayan Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, and from the British, was for North

Borneo to join Malaya in a new federation of Malaysia.” Minister for Veterans’ Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel Andrew Gee Minister Gee said.

“Australian forces became involved in the conflict through our membership in the Far East Strategic Reserve and fought as part of a larger British and Commonwealth force under British command.

“During the conflict, Australia provided training and supplies to Malaysian troops, along with a number of Royal Australian Navy vessels to patrol the area,” Minister Gee said.

On August 11, the Last Post at the Australian War Memorial featured Private Victor Herbert Richards, 24, of 4 Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, who died from wounds received in the conflict on 15 June 1966.

Mr Gee said 23 Australians were among the 114 Commonwealth serving members who lost their lives in the Confrontation. A further eight Australians were wounded.

- PHOTO: Action in the confrontation. All from AWM.



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## Women's Army formed 80 years ago

Eighty years ago, on 13 August 1941, the War Cabinet of the Australian Government approved the establishment of the Australian Army Women's Service, later known as the Australian Women's Army Service.

Before World War II, women in Australia were only permitted to serve in the Defence forces within medical services.

Selection for the first 29 officers was stringent and dependent on interviews in each of the states.

They received training at the first Officer's Training School in Victoria through November and December 1941. Recruitment of other workers then followed. Initially, just a small number of women between the ages of 18 and 45 were to be employed as clerks, typists, cooks and motor transport drivers.

However, the entry of Japan into the war changed that. By the end of 1942, 12,000 women had been recruited and trained, and their duties were far-ranging, from butchers to Cipher clerks. Motor transport drivers' duties included forming military convoys, and driving cars, ambulances, trucks up to three tons, jeeps, floating jeeps, Bren Gun Carriers and amphibious vehicles.

Special approval was granted by the War Cabinet in 1945 for 500 women in the AWAS to serve outside Australia. A contingent was posted to Lae, New Guinea, and a smaller group sent to Hollandia.

In June 1946, an Officer, three NCOs, and one Private AWAS were included in the Army quota of 160 personnel in the Victory March contingent in London.



*Women's Army marching in Sydney 1942.*

When the war ended in 1945, 24,026 women had served in the Australian Women's Army Service. It was disbanded in June 1947.

*- from AWM /Facebook.*

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## Ex. Talisman Sabre 2021

USS America (LHA-6) conducts a fueling-at-sea with the Royal Australian Navy frigate HMAS Ballarat (FFH155) in support of flight deck operations during Exercise Talisman Sabre 21 on July 27, 2021. – US Navy Photo.



Units from RAAF Amberley supported 30,000 Australian and United States military personnel for the biennial exercise, Talisman Sabre. — ADF photo.



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# Copper tells like it is ... or isn't

A North Island NZ police station received this question from a resident through the feedback section of a local Police website:

"I would like to know how it is possible for police officers to continually harass people and get away with it?"

In response, a sergeant posted this reply:

First of all, let me tell you this ... it's not easy. In the Palmerston North and rural area we average one cop for every 505 people. Only about 60 per cent of those cops are on general duty (or what you might refer to as "general patrols") where we do most of our harassing.

The rest are in non-harassing units that do not allow them contact with the day to day innocents. At any given moment, only one-fifth of the 60 per cent of general patrols are on duty and available for harassing people while the rest are off duty. So, roughly, one cop is responsible for harassing about 6000 residents.

When you toss in the commercial business and tourist locations that attract people from other areas, sometimes you have a situation where a single cop is responsible for harassing 15,000 or more people a day.

Now, your average eight-hour shift runs 28,800 seconds long. This gives a cop two-thirds of a second to harass a person, and then only another third of a second to drink a Massey iced coffee AND then find a new person to harass. This is not an easy task. To be honest, most cops are not up to the challenge day in and day out. It is just too tiring. What we do is utilise some tools to help us narrow down those people we can realistically harass.

PHONE: People will call us up and point out things that cause us to focus on a person for special harassment. "My neighbour is beating his wife" is a code phrase used often. This means we'll come out and

give somebody some special harassment. Another popular one is, "There's a guy breaking into a house." The harassment team is then put into action.

CARS: We have special cops assigned to harass people who drive. They like to harass the drivers of fast cars, cars with no insurance or drivers with no licences and the like. It's lots of fun when you pick them out of traffic for nothing more obvious than running a red light. Sometimes you get to really heap the harassment on when you find they have drugs in the car, they are drunk, or have an outstanding warrant on file.

LAWS: When we don't have phone or cars, and have nothing better to do, there are actually books

that give us ideas for reasons to harass folks. They are called "statutes". These include the Crimes Act, Summary Offences Act, Land Transport Act and a whole bunch of others... They spell out all sorts of things for which you can really mess with people. After you read the law, you can just drive around for a while until you find someone violating one of these listed offences and harass them. Just last week I

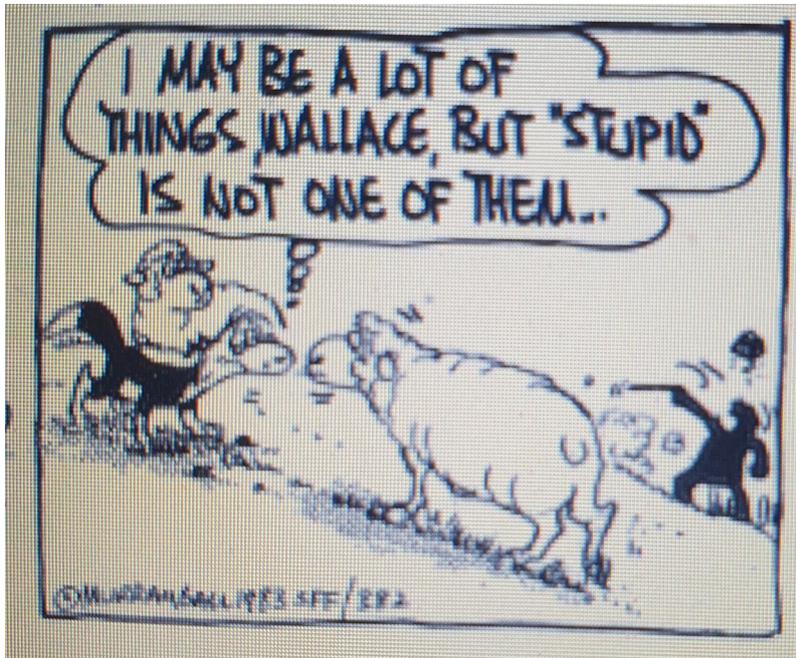
saw a guy trying to steal a car. Well, the book says that's not allowed. That meant I had permission to harass this guy.

It is a really cool system that we have set up, and it works pretty well. We seem to have a never-ending supply of folks to harass. And we get away with it. Why? Because, for the good citizens who pay the tab, we try to keep the streets safe for them, and they pay us to "harass" some people.

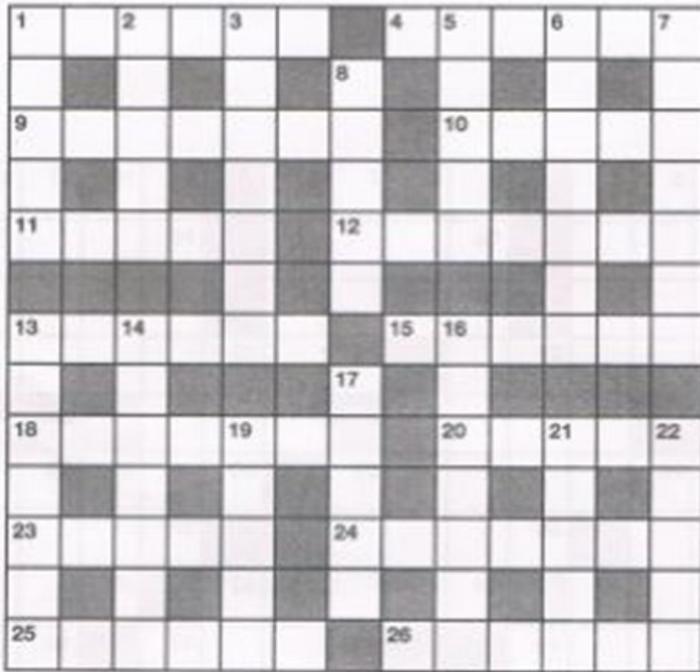
Next time you are in Palmerston North, give me the old "single finger wave". That's another one of those codes. It means, "You can harass me." It's one of our favourites."

- **Unknown Author**

**Cartoon reproduced with apologies to the late Footrot Flats creator and Kiwi Murray Ball.**



# JC's BEFUDDLEMENT PAGE ....



**ACROSS**

- 1. Tune (6)
- 4. Shriek (6)
- 9. Elaborate ceremony (7)
- 10. Youngster (5)
- 11. Plaudit (5)

12. Dried Grapes (7)

- 13. Comfort (6)
- 15. Slapstick (6)
- 18. Lamp (7)
- 20. Legally acceptable (5)
- 23. Happening (5)

24. Coach (7)

- 25. Tallies (6)
- 26. Tiers (6)

**DOWN**

- 1. Tree (5)
- 2. Licit (5)
- 3. Extreme (7)
- 5. Desert plants (7)
- 6. Building (7)
- 7. Freedom from vanity or conceit (7)

- 8. Rear part of a ship (5)
- 13. Prominent (7)
- 14. Soft or indulgent (7)
- 16. Avert (7)
- 17. Combine (5)
- 19. Laud (5)

21. Spear (5)

22. Sews (5)

**Conundrums**

- 1. 84% of people reading this will not find the the mistake in this;-  
A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K,L,M,N,O,P,Q,R,S,T,U,V,W,X,Y,Z.
- 2. How can you throw a ball as hard as you can and have it come back to you, even if it doesn't bounce off anything? There is nothing attached to it, and no one else catches or throws it back to you.
- 3. What occurs once in every minute, twice in every moment, yet never in a thousand years?
- 4. What's full of holes but still holds water?
- 5. What flies without wings?
- 6. Where will you find roads without vehicles, forests without trees, and cities without houses?

- 1. Famous artist Pablo Picasso belongs to which country? a) Spain b) Italy c) France d) Portugal
- 2. What is the oldest sport? a) Wrestling b) Kabadi c) Bull Fight d) Cockfight
- 3. Which planet rotates the fastest? a) Jupiter b) Mars c) Uranus d) Saturn
- 4. Which country has the most rivers? a) Bangladesh b) Brazil c) India d) China
- 5. An estimated 50-80% of all life on earth is found under the ocean surface and the oceans contain what percentage of the living space on the planet? a) 99% b) 95% c) 79% d) 89%
- 6. Which planet rotates the slowest? a) Earth b) Venus c) Mars d) Mercury
- 7. Which planet rotates in a clockwise direction? a) Saturn b) Mercury c) Venus d) Mars
- 8. Permanent snow and ice cover about what percentage of the Earth's land surface? a) 12% b) 6% c) 21% d) 24%
- 9. What is cumulonimbus? a) Largest ice b) Biggest underwater volcano c) Biggest clouds d) Biggest asteroids
- 10. During lifetime, we produce enough \_\_\_\_\_ to fill two olympic sized swimming pools. a) Urine b) Sweat c) Blood d) Saliva
- 11. The brain is much more active at night than during the day. True/ False?
- 12. Our nose can remember how many types of different scents? a) 5,000 b) 50,000 c) 5,00,000 d) 1,000
- 13. Women's hearts beat \_\_\_\_\_ than men's. a) double b) equal c) slower d) faster
- 14. Which organ has the same size during birth and death? a) Lungs b) Ears c) Nose d) Eyes
- 15. Which body parts never stop growing? a) nose and ears b) eyes and teeth c) hearts and lungs d) ears and eyes
- 16 Babies start dreaming \_\_\_\_\_ they're born. a) after b) before c) during d) never
- 17. Freetown the capital of a) Congo b) Cabo Verde c) Ethiopia d) Sierra Leone
- 18. What is Dendrochronology? a) Study of of calculating the chonology of civilization b) Science of calculating a tree's age by its rings. c) Science of calculating dndruff in the hair d) Research of calculating the age of the earth
- 19 Brazil is named after a a) Tree b) Goddess c) Grass d) River
- 20. What year was Wimbledon boycotted by the Association of Tennis Professionals ? a) 1971 b) 1973 c) 1975 d) 1977

• ALL ANSWERS PAGE 18

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

Clementine, Sir Winston Churchill's wife, was talking to a street sweeper for a while. "What did you talk about for so long?" asked Sir Winston.

She smiled, "Many years ago he was madly in love with me."

Churchill smiled ironically, "So you could have been the wife of a street sweeper today."

"Oh no, my love," Clementine replied, "If I had married him, he would have been the prime minister today."

A beautiful woman loved growing tomatoes, but could not seem to get her tomatoes to turn red. One day, while taking a stroll, she came upon a gentleman neighbour who had the most beautiful garden full of huge red tomatoes.

The woman asked the gentlemen, "What do you do to get your tomatoes so red?"

The gentlemen responded, "Well, twice a day I stand in front of my tomato garden naked in my trench coat and flash. My tomatoes turn red from blushing so much."

Well, the woman was so impressed; she decided to try doing the same thing to her tomato garden to see if it would work. So twice a day for two weeks she flashed her garden hoping for the best.

One day the gentleman was passing by and asked the woman, "By the way, how did you make out? Did your tomatoes turn red?"

"No", she replied, "but my cucumbers are enormous."

Why Did The Chicken Cross The Road?

DONALD TRUMP: I've been told by my many sources, good sources - they're very good sources - that the chicken crossed the road. All the Fake News wants to do is write nasty things about the road, but it's a really good road. It's a beautiful road. Everyone knows how beautiful it is.

JOE BIDEN: Why did the chicken do the...thing in the...you know the rest.

SARAH PALIN: The chicken crossed the road because, gosh-darn it, he's a maverick!

BARACK OBAMA: Let me be perfectly clear, if the chickens like their eggs they can keep their eggs. No chicken will be required to cross the road to surrender her eggs. Period.

HILLARY CLINTON: What difference at this point does it make why the chicken crossed the road.

GEORGE W. BUSH: We don't really care why the chicken crossed the road. We just want to know if the chicken is on our side of the road or not. The chicken is either with us or against us. There is no middle ground here.

DICK CHENEY: Where's my gun?

BILL CLINTON: I did not cross the road with that chicken.

AL GORE: I invented the chicken.

JOHN KERRY: Although I voted to let the chicken cross the road, I am now against it! It was the wrong road to cross, and I was misled about the chicken's intentions. I am not for it now, and will remain against it.

DR. PHIL: The problem we have here is that this chicken won't realize that he must first deal with the problem on this side of the road before it goes after the problem on the other side of the road. What we need to do is help him realize how stupid he is acting by not taking on his current problems before adding any new problems.

PAT BUCHANAN: To steal the job of a decent, hard-working American.

DR SEUSS: Did the chicken cross the road? Did he cross it with a toad? Yes, the chicken crossed the road, but why it crossed I've not been told.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY: To die in the rain, alone.

GRANDPA: In my day we didn't ask why the chicken crossed the road. Somebody told us the chicken crossed the road, and that was good enough for us.

ARISTOTLE: It is the nature of chickens to cross the road.

ALBERT EINSTEIN: Did the chicken really cross the road, or did the road move beneath the chicken?

COLONEL SANDERS: Did I miss one?

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**FROM THE EDITOR**

Recently I came across a surprising comment towards the end of a newspaper story on the Kabul situation: “commandos are filling COVID showbags” (23 Aug.).

Former special forces Major Heston Russell made the comment in response to a claim by the Prime Minister the government was doing all it could to get allies out of Kabul, but “despite our best efforts ... support won’t reach all that it should”.

Russell, an advocate for veterans, said the statement had enraged special forces because efforts could be improved by deployment of the Sydney-based 2nd Commando Regiment, whose members had spent years in Kabul and knew people on the ground.

“Instead they remain on task committed to supporting Operation Covid out in western Sydney,” he said. “They are filling Covid showbags in a hangar rather than doing the non-combatant evacuation operation they are trained to do.”

In *Ricochet*, we like to remain apolitical, but this situation seems worth noting. The same article also claimed that one of 13 SAS soldiers who had been earlier asked to show cause why he would not be dismissed over Brereton Report claims, was on the ground at Kabul Airport.

Originally these soldiers were sent the show-cause by ADF Chief Angus Campbell on the basis of “credible information”, apparently, but now had received advice from him that he “not satisfied that there is sufficient information available” to refer the matter to investigators. Russell said the “climb down” was done on the quiet while people are otherwise distracted, whereas the initial allegation were done with huge publicity.

This situation seemed to be developing further as I finalise this column. Last I heard before printing was that the 13 are taking legal action. A worrying situation with our Defence Force.

**Go well, Lest We Forget,  
Kerry White, Editor**

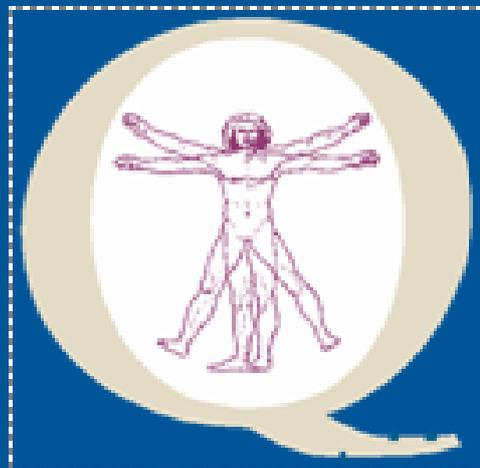


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# Hero in three wars, wounded many times

Sir Adrian Carton de Wiart was a one-eyed, one-handed war hero who fought in three major conflicts across six decades, surviving plane crashes and PoW camps. His story is like something out of a Boy's Own comic.

Carton de Wiart (**pictured**) served in the Boer War, World War One and World War Two. In the process he was shot in the face, losing his left eye, and was also shot through the skull, hip, leg, ankle and ear.

In WW1 he was severely wounded on eight occasions and mentioned in dispatches six times. Having previously lost an eye and a hand in battle, Carton de Wiart, as commanding officer, was seen by his men pulling the pins of grenades out with his teeth and hurling them with his one good arm during the Battle of the Somme, winning the Victoria Cross.

WW1 historian Dr Timothy Bowman believes Carton de Wiart's example helps debunk some myths: "His story serves to remind us that not all British generals of WW1 were 'Chateau Generals' as portrayed in Blackadder. He exhibited heroism of the highest order.

"Evelyn Waugh supposedly used Carton de Wiart as the model for his fire-eating fictional creation, Brigadier Ritchie Hook, but Waugh's fictional creation experienced considerably fewer adventures than his real life counterpart."

It says much for Carton de Wiart's character that de-

spite being one of the most battle-scarred soldiers in the history of the British Army, he wrote in his autobiography: "Frankly, I had enjoyed the war."

He was born into an aristocratic family in Brussels on 5 May 1880. In 1891 he was sent to boarding school in England, going on to study law at Oxford.

In 1899 he saw the opportunity to experience his first taste of war. Abandoning his studies, he left for South Africa to serve as a trooper in the British Army during the second Boer War. As he was under military age, wasn't a British subject and didn't have his father's consent, he pretended to be 25 and signed up under a pseudonym.

It was a baptism of fire which ended with him receiving bullet wounds to the stomach and groin, necessitating a return to England. Although eager to get back in the mix again, he had to wait more than a decade to experience further front-line action.

At the outbreak of WW1 in November 1914, Carton de Wiart, now naturalised as a British subject, was serving with the Somaliland Camel Corps, fighting the forces of the Dervish state.

During an attack on an enemy stronghold, he was shot in the arm and in the face, losing his left eye and part of his ear. He received the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) for his exploits.

– Continued next page.



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– from previous page.

While recuperating from these injuries, Carton de Wiart received a glass eye. It caused him such discomfort that he allegedly threw it from a taxi and instead acquired a black eye patch.

Such setbacks were not to delay him long. He soon realised his ambition to fight on the Western Front when he was sent to Ypres in May 1915. During the Second Battle of Ypres, the Germans launched an artillery barrage in which Carton de Wiart's left hand was shattered. According to his autobiography, *Happy Odyssey*, he tore off two fingers when the doctor refused to amputate them. His hand was removed by a surgeon later that year.

After a period of recovery, Carton de Wiart once more managed to convince a medical board he was fit for battle. In 1916, he took command of the 8th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment, and while commanding them at the Somme his legend was cemented. He electrified his men. The eye patch, empty sleeve and striking moustache, combined with his bravery, made him famous, with men under his command describing his presence as helping to alleviate their fear before going over the top.

During fierce fighting, the battle for the village of La Boisselle swayed back and forth. When three other commanding officers were killed, Carton de Wiart took charge of all units fighting in the village and led from the front, holding off enemy counter-attacks.



## 'Model of chivalry and honour'

He received the Victoria Cross, the highest British military award for gallantry, for his actions at La Boisselle. He declined to even mention the medal in his autobiography, later telling a friend that "it had been won by the 8th Glosters, for every man has done as much as I have".

When World War Two broke out, he led a campaign in Norway in 1940 and was briefly stationed in Northern Ireland.

In April 1941 he was dispatched to form a British military mission in Yugoslavia, but his aircraft was shot down over the Mediterranean. After swimming to shore, he was captured by the Italians. Despite being in his 60s, he made numerous attempts to escape the PoW camp, on one occasion eluding recapture for eight days, quite a feat given his distinctive appearance and lack of Italian.

Churchill was a firm admirer of Carton de Wiart, describing him as "a model of chivalry and honour" and writing the foreword to his autobiography.

In retirement, he eventually settled in County Cork, spending his time fishing. Having proved indestructible on the battlefield, he died peacefully in 1963, aged 83.

– Pictured are his medals. Story by Peter Crutchley, from BBC Digital & Learning NI, Published January 6, 2015 (abridged).

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The application for an electric scooter or wheelchair involves a comprehensive process and may take some time as it requires prior approval from DVA. To start the application process, talk to your general practitioner (GP) or medical specialist first as they will need to complete a medical questionnaire.

Once you have medical clearance your ActivOT OT can complete the next steps. Your OT will visit you in

your home environment and assist you to work out what item will best suit your needs and make sure you have somewhere safe and secure to store it and charge it. Once approved your OT will arrange a trial of suitable electric scooters or wheelchairs to take place at your home. Then once it is delivered your OT will continue to work with you to ensure you can safely operate the scooter or wheelchair.

We are happy to assist you in accessing eligible products and services you are entitled to through the DVA RAP program. It is always our aim to work with you to help keep you living safely and independently in your home for as long as possible.

**Warmest wishes,  
Your ActivOT OT  
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## They do not know

by D R Dymock

They do not know,  
those who came after,  
how the bugle call sounded  
and the men went away;  
when ration cards sold  
in back streets of the city  
and meat cost as much  
as a decent week's pay.

They do not know,  
those with buds in their ears,  
how we listened to rumours  
of invasion to come;  
how we lived with anxiety,  
with gossip and blackouts,  
and ran for the shelters  
but refused to succumb.

They do not know,  
those folk on high salaries,  
how we once had sweet fun

## POETRY TIME

on minimal pay  
in the arms of young soldiers  
at dances and parties  
knowing the foe  
was just islands away.

They do not know,  
the punters and brokers,  
how we bet on the future  
with our wounded and dead;  
not knowing if lovers  
would ever come back,  
not knowing if there were  
more dark days ahead.

They do not know,  
those planning grand houses,  
that there was a time  
we had hopes and dreams too;  
but our visions were clouded  
by tears for the dying;  
the best we could pray was  
we'd all see it through.

They do not know,  
those who came after,  
of that unreal existence  
when nothing was sure,  
or why we still yearn  
for missed fun and laughter:  
those who grew up  
when the world was at war.

*Brisbane-born D R (Darryl) Dymock was a National Serviceman 1969-70 who became a sergeant in the Royal Australian Army Educational Corps. In late 1969 he was one of 300 Nasho teachers sent to Papua New Guinea on 12-month postings between 1966 and 1973 to help raise the standard of education in troops of the Pacific Islands Regiment. He has written about the experiences of those Nashos in a book, The Chalkies, and is author of several other published books. He now works part time as a sessional lecturer and part-time researcher at Griffith University, Brisbane, and is convenor of a writers group at Oxley Men's Shed. He blogs occasionally at <https://drdymockwriter.com>*



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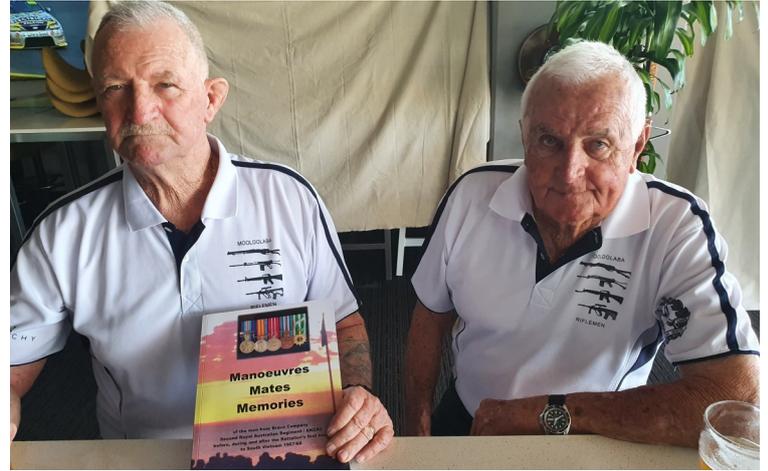
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# Enjoying the August Riflemen's Lunch ...



**VETERANS** enjoyed a delayed Riflemen's Lunch under COVID rules at the Surf Club, Mooloolaba, in August. Among the strong turn-up was, as always, Ian Atkinson (bottom right with Hayden Kenny) with a recently published book, "Manoeuvres Mates Memories ... of the men from Bravo Company Second Royal Australian Regiment/ANZAC before, during and after the Battalion's first tour to South Vietnam 1967/68".



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~ Onwards and Forward ~

The fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban, evoked all the sadness that we Vietnam Veterans felt on April 30, 1975 when Saigon fell to the marauding Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces.

I was at an official function when I first heard the news, and I will never forget the sense of sadness, failure and disbelief that swept over me.

Like many of you, I had gone to Vietnam believing I would give the Vietnamese people a life of freedom from oppression and tyranny, but suddenly it appeared our efforts were in vain.

Our heartfelt sympathies are with all Afghanistan Veterans who surely will be feeling the same gloom as we Vietnam Veterans felt when Saigon fell, and our thoughts centred on the friends we made in the South Vietnamese Armed Forces, the friends we made among the Vietnamese civilians that worked alongside us at our bases. How would they now cope, as they faced a grim future?

I shared many a meal at the dining table of ARVN compatriots. I visited often at the home of my secretary, Mrs Hai, whose husband was an ARVN Medic, and their five lovely children.

I also had a friend who was the Second-in-Charge of the National

## ***Fireside with the Padre***



Police in the local town. The kitchen floor was only dirt, and on a lean, so that mealtime consisted of a vigilance to keep your meal from sliding off the plate! After the fall, where were these families?

Chaplain Rodger and I often had a meal with Father Quy, and as we ate on his veranda built on the mud flats, we were entertained with lung fish splashing through the muddy waters.

We do know that Father Quy was forcibly evicted from his home by his parishioners as the Viet Cong Police were coming for him and we do know that Father Quy eventually ended his days in France.

Neville Clarke, who was Assistant Provost Marshal (APM), Vietnam, told me that one of our workers, Ban, had escaped Vietnam when they met in Western Australia.

Ban gained permission to take our left-over bread home to feed to his chickens. He wrote a poem in broken English, "Chook, Chook, Ba

ria", in which he wrote that even the chickens of Ba Ria thank the Australians for coming to Vietnam.

But we didn't go to Vietnam for our own self-gratification. We went to give the Vietnamese hope, freedom, and a secure way of life.

In our own present circle, we are pleased that Vietnamese Australians like Thai, Diamond and their friends, attend our ceremonies with their banner, 'Thank you, Vietnam Veterans'.

They found the freedom, hope and peace that our Australian Forces went to Vietnam to offer them. But what of the others we left behind?

Afghanistan Veterans, our hearts are with you as you raise the same questions that we raise and pray that many of your compatriots and colleagues who served Australia so well during the conflict, will find that safe life in our country or another that offer the Afghan civilians and former soldiers, that refuge.

God bless you, through these dark days, a place where we Vietnam Veterans have sadly walked in the past.

**Arthur Fry**

**Honorary Chaplain**

# Answers from page 11



## September Trivia answers

1. Spain
2. Wrestling
3. Jupiter
4. Bangladesh
5. 95%
6. Venus
7. Venus
- 8.6
9. Biggest clouds
10. Saliva
11. True
12. 50,000
13. Faster
14. Eyes
15. Nose and Ears
16. Before
17. Sierra Leone
18. The science of calculating a tree's age by its rings (pictured)
19. Tree
20. 1973



## Conundrum Answers

- 1 – "The" is repeated.
- 2 – Throw the ball up in the air.
- 3 – The letter "M".
- 4 – A sponge.
- 5 – Time.
- 6 – A map.

# SEPTEMBER TIMELINE: Papua to America's Cup

**September 1, 1906:** The young nation of Australia became a colonial administrator when it assumed responsibility for the external territory of Papua – the southern half of what is now Papua New Guinea.

**September 1, 1939:** At 5.30 a.m., Hitler's armies invaded Poland starting World War Two in Europe.

**September 1, 1951:** The Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America (ANZUS) was signed with the aim of ensuring peace and safety in the Pacific region.

**September 2, 1945:** President Harry Truman declared V-J Day (Victory over Japan Day) commemorating the formal Japanese surrender to the Allies aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

**September 5-6, 1972:** Eleven members of the Israeli Olympic Team were killed during an attack on the Olympic Village in Munich by members of the Black September faction of the Palestinian Liberation Army.

**September 6, 1940:** 'Enemy aliens' from Britain disembarked HMT Dunera in Melbourne and Sydney. Most of the 2542 were Jewish refugees who had fled Nazi persecution in Germany and Austria. The 'Dunera Boys' included musicians, artists, philosophers, scientists and writers.

**September 11, 2001:** The worst terrorist attack in U.S.

history occurred as four large passenger jets were hijacked then crashed, killing nearly 3000 people. Four separate teams of Mideast terrorists, operating from inside the U.S., boarded the morning flights posing as passengers, then forcibly commandeered the aircraft. Two jets were diverted by the hijackers to New York City where they were piloted into the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

**September 12, 1854:** The Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company opened Australia's first steam railway line in Melbourne, a 4km track from Flinders Street Station to Sandridge, now known as Port Melbourne. The line is still in use today, having been converted to light rail for Melbourne tram services.

**September 15, 2000:** Aboriginal athlete Cathy Freeman lit the Olympic flame in the spectacular opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympic Games. Ten days later she won the gold medal in the women's 400-metre race, achieving her greatest goal.

**September 26, 1983:** Off the coast of Rhode Island in the United States, the yacht *Australia II* crossed the finish line to win the America's Cup. In the best of seven races, it was the first America's Cup race in 132 years that a country other than the US has won.



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## Roll of Honour – Vietnam, month of September 1962-75



*Over the past year to February we published on a monthly basis an Australian Roll of Honour for the Vietnam War (1962-75) with a photo of each of those who lost their life. We are continuing to publish a monthly roll without the photos. Lest We Forget.*

**LEFT: Vietnam War Memorial, Anzac Square Brisbane.**

### **September 1965**

Scott, Ronald Allan (213006), 37, AATTV (attached RAI), Sgt (Temp. WO2), Rookwood Military Cemetery, Sydney.

Smith, Francis John (37003), 25, 1RAR, Pte (Temp. Cpl), Ouyen Cemetery, Vic.

### **September 1965**

Blanck, Wayne Allan (38033), 28, AATTV (attached RAI), Sgt (Temp. WO2), Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

### **September 1967**

Brett, William John (2785150), 21, Pte, 2RAR, Armidale General Cemetery, NSW.

McDuff, Peter Edward (2782440), 22, LCpl, 2RAR, Darlington Point Cemetery, NSW.

Nelson, Dennis Edwin (4718427), 21, Pte, 2RAR, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Radomi, Stanley Edwin (43573), 22, Pte, 2RAR, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Twomey, John Warren (1200750), 33, Sgt, 2RAR, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

Weston, Leslie James (1731955), 22, Pte, 2RAR, Atherton Cemetery, Qld.

### **September 1968**

Abraham, Dennis Eric (4718946), 22, Sig. 104 SigSqn, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Burns, Robert (4718097), 22, LCpl, 4RAR, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Le Bherz, Norman William (18395), 22, Spr, 1Fld-Sqdn, Brisbane General Cemetery.

Rhodes, Maxwell Lachlan (2796378), 22, 4RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

Smith, Robert Stanley (1/4209), 2RAR, WO2, died Brisbane (no other details).

Muc, Michael (2787512), 21, 4RAR, Pte, Rookwood Necropolis, Sydney.

Noonan, Michael James (2787793), 21, 4RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

Sukmanowsky, Michael (4719573), 21, 1ARU, Pte, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Williams, Archibald Stanley (5715189), 21, 1RAR, Pte, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

Fisher, David John E (2787344), 23, 3 SqdnSASR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

Kingston, Ian William (1734754), 20, 6RAR, Pte, Mount Thompson Crematorium, Brisbane.

Rennie, Brian (312641), 21, 9RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

### **September 1970**

Mowbray, Brenton George (53657), 36, HQ AFV (AA Psych C), Capt. (Temp. Maj.), War Cemetery and Annex, Perth.

### **September 1971**

Beilken, Brian Charles (5718195), 21, 4RAR, Pte, War Cemetery and Annex, Perth.

Duff, James (3799449), 20, 4RAR, Pte, Mitta Mitta Cemetery, Vic.

Kingston-Powles, Keith Michael (56226), 24, 4RAR, Pte, Woongarra Crematorium, Townsville, Qld.

Niblett, Ralph James (3798081), 21, 4RAR, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

Sprigg, Roderick James (5718122), 21, 4RAR, Pte, Mukinbudin Cemetery, WA.

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

**'At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them ...'**

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