



# RICOCHET



Monthly newsletter of VVAA Sunshine Coast Sub-Branch Inc. APRIL 2022

## Reality or delirium?

**“What motive sustained them? At the end of the second or third day of the Landing, when they had fought without sleep until the whole world seemed a dream, and they scarcely knew whether it was a world of reality or of delirium - and often, no doubt it held something of both; when half of each battalion had been annihilated, and there seemed no prospect before any man except that of wounds or death in the most vile surroundings; when the dead lay three deep in the rifle pits under the blue sky and the place was filled with stench and sickness, and reason had almost vanished - what was it then that carried each man on?**

**“It lay in the mettle of the men themselves. To be the sort of man who would give way when his mates were trusting to his firmness; to be the sort of man who would fail when the line, the whole force, and the allied cause required his endurance; to have made it necessary for another unit to do his own unit’s work; to live the rest of his life haunted by the knowledge that he had set his hand to a soldier’s task and had lacked the grit to carry it through - that was the prospect which these men could not face. Life was very dear, but life was not worth living unless they could be true to their idea of Australian manhood. Standing upon that alone, when help failed and hope faded, when the end loomed clear in front of them, when the whole world seemed to crumble and the heaven to fall in, they faced its ruin undismayed.”**

- A tribute for Anzac Day, from *The Story of ANZAC*, the first volume of an official history of World War One written by C. E. W. Bean and first published in 1921. RIGHT: Diggers at Gallipoli in 1915 — Australian War Memorial photo. Local services, Page 3.



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

**Our website: [www.vietnamvetssc.org.au](http://www.vietnamvetssc.org.au)**

Email: [secretaryvvaasc@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryvvaasc@gmail.com) Editor: [ricocheteditor@gmail.com](mailto:ricocheteditor@gmail.com)

General information Page 2.

Veterans & Families Counselling

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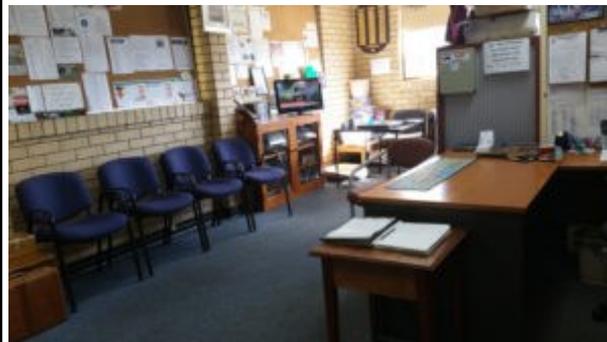
Located at the rear of the Library Complex Administration Building (upstairs) , Cnr Sixth Avenue and Beach Parade, Cotton Tree.

**Office Phone 54794552**

**E-mail: secretaryvvaasc@gmail.com**

***OFFICE HOURS:***

***Monday to Friday 0900 to 1200 (9am — noon).***



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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.

**Department of Veterans' Affairs**

**Veterans' Advice Network (VAN)**

**129 Horton Parade, Maroochydore, QLD 4558.**

**Free call to Brisbane Office 1800 555 254**

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

# SUNSHINE COAST ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATION

## CALOUNDRA

0500: Dawn Service, Kings Beach  
0830-0900: Citizens and Veterans March, Stockland Shopping Centre Carpark to Caloundra RSL Carpark  
1000: Wreath Laying Service at Caloundra RSL Memorial Garden

## COOLUM-PEREGIAN

0510: Gather entrance to sporting area for march to Cenotaph area  
0528: Dawn service. No main service

## COOROY

0445: Dawn Service commences at the Memorial Triangle, Diamond Street  
1030: Street Parade, stepping off from Cooroy Butter Factory. No main service

## KAWANA

0528: Dawn Service Coopers Point Cenotaph adjacent to the Kawana Waters Surf Club at 99 Pacific Blvd, Buddina  
1020: Form up, March 1035 Cnr of Pacific Boulevard and Weema St, Buddina  
1050: General Service, Wreath Laying

## MALENY

0428: Dawn Service RSL cenotaph/hall  
0900: Witta Cemetery  
0945: Commemoration Service Hospital  
1015: Street March, then main community service 1045 at the Hall/Cenotaph

## MAPLETON

0530: Dawn Service at the Village Green, Montville  
0845: March commences from Wilga Court to RSL Memorial Park  
0900: Commemoration Service

## MAROOCHYDORE

0428: Dawn Service at Cotton Tree Cenotaph on Esplanade  
0800: Assembly on Memorial Ave  
0830: March commences through Memorial Ave and on to the Cenotaph  
0900: Main Service at Cenotaph

## MOOLOOLABA (not RSL)

1645: Assembly beside Surf Club for service.

## MUDJIMBA

0520: Dawn Service at Cenotaph  
1030: Assembly at corner of Coolabah and Mudjimba Beach Road to march to the Cenotaph, Step off at 1045am  
1100: Service at Cenotaph

## NAMBOUR

0515: Assemble at Nambour RSL Club

for march to Wall of Remembrance

0530: Dawn Service  
0830: Assemble for March Howard St  
0915: Main Service commences

## PALMWOODS

No service. Suggest Light Up the Dawn

## TEWANTIN-NOOSA

0530: Dawn Service commences at the Cenotaph in the Town Square  
0630: Anzac Service at RSL Cemetery  
0900: ANZAC Day Main Parade  
0930: Main Cenotaph Service of Commemoration including Wreath Laying

## WOODFORD

0500: Dawn Service commences

1000: Assemble at George Street for 1015am march-off

1030: Service Memorial Park

## YANDINA

No Dawn Service or March  
1100: Main Commemorative Service begins, followed by lunch at hall

*[This list, except for Mooloolaba, has been provided by RSL Sunshine Coast with information supplied by the responsible organisations].*

Light Up the Dawn: <https://lightupthedawn.com.au/>



**THIS is one of four different commemorative quilts which will be prizes for the Vietnam Veterans Day raffle this year. They were donated to the sub-branch by Daryl and Wendy Turner and were fashioned by Wendy. They are valued at \$500 each. Tickets on sale soon .**

## From the President

Good-day to you, hope you are all feeling fit and well. The Mooloolaba Tri was an outstanding success and, I am very pleased to say, we had some new volunteers to assist. I understand that there were no incidents to talk of throughout the course or event in general and all involved seemed to have had a pretty good time. So, my thanks to all who assisted. It is much appreciated.

We have received a request from the 'Sappers Association' to assist them in September with their plans for a reunion here on the Sunshine Coast. They have requested assistance with providing and organising a morning breakfast and the following day, a lunch.

We understand that there may be in excess of 100 people present at each function and of course, your Association is more than willing to assist in any manner possible. Your committee will be consulting with the 'Sappers' and then get down to making the appropriate arrangements.

Some of you will have noticed that the Drop-In Centre has, for the past two weeks, been operating on restricted hours. During that time, the Library Administrative staff had closed the building due to incidents of 'mould' throughout the building and were advised by their OH&S staff to work from home.

As your committee didn't wish to totally inconvenience

members, we restricted the number of days each week to Mondays and Thursdays only. It seemed to work out okay during that period of time however, the library staff have just returned to occupy the premises so from Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> instant, everything is back to normal and we will be open as usual from Monday to Friday of each week.

We have Anzac Day fast approaching and we need a few volunteers to man our stall at Buderim on April 22, 23 and 24. There will be two shifts each day; mornings and afternoons, for a duration of approximately three hours each shift. We like to have 2 volunteers on each shift so that's 4 people each day. Not a big ask, is it?

Stalls at both Sippy Downs and Spotlight, Maroochydore, have been filled by committee members so now we make this small request from the rank and file for your assistance. Let's hope we get a suitable response.

Well that's it for the time being, in closing, I hope that you all remain safe and well.

**Best Regards,  
Mick Howe APM J.P. (Qual)  
President**



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

## From the Secretary

We have put our first major fundraiser behind us for the year and again I thank all volunteers involved in the Mooloolaba Triathlon. Funds raised from this event should be in our coffers by the end of next week.

It appears my shout out for a co-ordinator at Buderim for Anzac Day sales has fallen on deaf ears. If we cannot get volunteers for this site for three days, it leaves a considerable hole in fund-raising only operating two sites from a possible three.

Hopefully I may get a response in the coming days.

Preparation for Vietnam Veterans day are well under way and we look forward to it actually happening this year despite the ever present Covid threat.

I am currently seeking an extension to our Public Liability insurance for VV day and hopefully will have this covered by the end of the week.

We have been approached by the Sappers Association of Qld to provide a costing for a two-day function (lunch and breakfast) in October.

This proposed event will involve up to 100 guests over the two days. Mick and I are liaising with the appropriate people to make this event happen. More information on the progress of this proposal in coming weeks.

The DIC is now operating normal hours, that is, 0900 to

1200hrs Monday to Friday, and I thank those members who fill the duty officer role on a day to day basis.

The recent AGM and March general meeting produced a less than satisfactory attendance and I welcome any suggestions that might attract more members to attend.

We did advise prior to the March meeting that Thai and Diamond, our Vietnamese friends, would supply lunch and sure enough they arrived with masses of food and about six or seven people were left to enjoy it. Just saying!

Can't believe we are about to launch into April; it's true as they say, the older you get the quicker time flies.

Thanks should also be given to our sponsors of Ricochet for their support over the ensuing months. Return that support if you can.

Just a reminder regarding the invitation from Mudjimba RSL for their Anzac Day function. RSVP date is closing soon.

Looking forward to a busy April.

Stay safe and well.

**Kind regards,**  
**Garry King**  
**Secretary**



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## ADF helps flood relief

The Australian Defence Force had about 7000 personnel available during Operation Flood Assist 2022 in Queensland and New South Wales—hot on the heels of COVID and Tonga support.

As of 23 March, about 4000 ADF personnel remained on task or available for tasking in northern New South Wales, assisting with clean-up and disaster relief efforts in areas such as Lismore, Richmond Valley, Clarence Valley, Evans Head, Tweed Heads, Ballina and Casino.

In Queensland ADF personnel were continuing to conduct clean-up activities and vulnerable persons checks in the Greater Brisbane area.

Overseas forces also helped: Republic of Fiji Military Forces in Tweed Heads and Byron region and sailors from the USS Frank Cable, an Emory S Land-class submarine tender, helping clean up the Brisbane River.

The ADF also supported flood relief effort in the Windsor area near Sydney.



**PICTURED:** A young fellow rescued by chopper in northern NSW (by Bradley Richardson, Army Aviation), RAN helps clean up the mess; and (above) a diver in Brisbane.

<https://news.defence.gov.au/national/operation-flood-assist-2022>

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

## Vale: Major Alexander (Alec) Weaver



**Alex Weaver in Korea**

Alec Weaver's amazing life is the stuff of legend. He died on Friday February 18, 2022 aged 99 years.

He began his military career in the Hitler Youth before he went on to become a decorated major in the Australian armed forces and then a spy for ASIO.

Born and raised in Berlin, he was a teenager travelling in Australia when World War II broke out. Alec was taken to a recruiting centre by two mates and succeeded in joining the army despite his enemy status.

However, it was not long before Alec's German nationality was discovered. Alec was in New Guinea, as a member of an infantry battalion when he was summoned before the Commanding Officer who confronted him with being an enemy alien and guilty of fraudulent enlistment.

Alec was lucky he was so highly regarded and the adjutant was an eminent lawyer who started naturalization procedures; Alec was allowed to return to the platoon and a few months later his citizenship papers arrived and thus was sworn in as an Australian citizen whilst on active service.

Alec's exemplary military career of over 34 years saw him serve in World 2, the occupation of Japan, the Korean War and Vietnam War.

One of the most outstanding moments of gallantry oc-

curred when serving as a Lieutenant in the 3rd Battalion in Korea, Alec was shot in the right arm and continued to fight only then to be shot again; he kept going, helping others through minefields to an Australian outpost.

Alec spent quite some time in the MASH unit, until he was fit enough to be transferred to Japan. Alec resigned from the Australian Regular Army in 1976 and joined the Australian Security Intelligence Organization, in which he served for fifteen years, participating in many demanding and interesting operations.

On retirement from ASIO, (being an accomplished German and Japanese linguist) he was recruited by the Victorian Arts Centre as a Theatre Guide for foreign tourists.

Alec was recently honoured on an Australian Stamp to commemorate 100 years of repatriation.

To understand and appreciate the nature of the man read his *Why I Never Became a General*. Those who served with Alec will remember his joyful enthusiasm and care for his troops and comrades. We all have our precious memories of a true warrior. Rest in Peace Alec your Duty Has Been Done. – **by Ted Chitham on Royal Australian Regiment Association website.**



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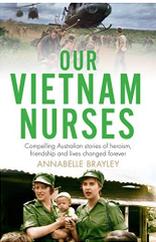







SIX months after returning from the Vietnam War, sub-branch member Wayne 'Sam' Brown had a visit from an officer who told him he had been awarded a Military Medal.

He thought it might have been for an earlier action, but it turned out to be for what he did in February 1969, running forward from a position of relative safety to one of danger under fire. While he appreciates the recognition, he says he had no choice, it was his job.



This is just part of Wayne's story included in a book, *Our Vietnam Nurses* (by Annabelle Brayley, Penguin 2016). He is featured in a chapter, Once Upon a Medic, along with another medic, Phillip Campman. (Last year we featured a book by Wayne titled *Vietnam A Memoir*.)

As you would expect, the book is mostly about the female nurses who were in Vietnam.

"...civilian and military nurses were there to save lives and comfort the wounded," reads the summary. "With spirit and good humour, they worked hard and held strong, even though most of them were completely unprepared for the war ..."

Another book tells a very different side to Australia's military history, aptly titled *Australia's Secret War*, sub-

## Stories of nurses and sabotage

titled "How unionists sabotaged our troops in World War II" (by Hal G.P. Colebatch, Quadrant Books Sydney, 2013, re-printed several times).

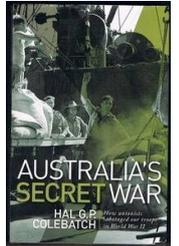
The introduction to the book relates some significant (to put it mildly) events:

- When a ship, *HMS Speaker*, arrived in Sydney in October 1945 with some Australian soldiers, who were survivors of Japanese prison camps obviously with physical and mental issues; watersiders went on strike for 24 hours, preventing disembarkation.

- When No. 317 Radar Station was being set up near New Britain during the war it was found that "all the valves for radar sets had been stolen by wharf labourers in Townsville; possibly as a result the station was unable to guide home a fleet of 18 American bombers, 16 of which perished.

There is more; "according to official records, 4123 strikes (occurred) in Australia during the war, 3662 of them in New South Wales".

The book won a Prime Minister's Literary Award in 2014 in the Australian History section.



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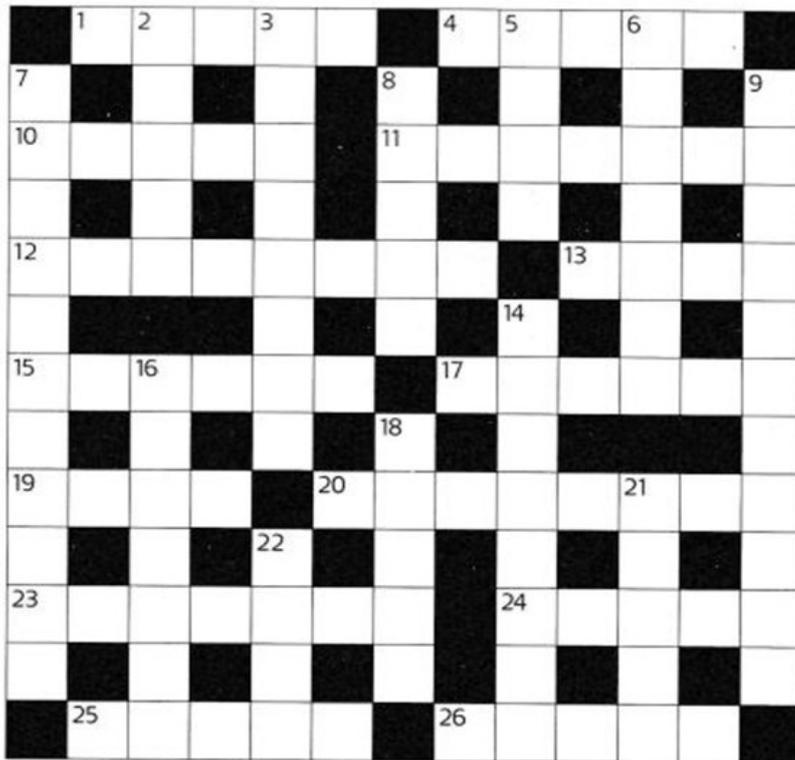
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# JC's BEFUDDLEMENT PAGE ....



**ACROSS**

- 1. Egg-beater (5)
- 4. Pocket-bottle (5)
- 10. Oyster gem (5)
- 11. Different (7)
- 12. Donald Sutherland film, \_\_\_ People (8)
- 13. Lake (4)
- 15. *Dr. Who's* time machine (6)
- 17. Play reviewer (6)
- 19. Pry (4)
- 20. In a commanding position (8)
- 23. Put out (4,3)
- 24. Spanish friend (5)
- 25. Annoyed (5)
- 26. Scuffle (5)

**DOWN**

- 2. Listened to (5)
- 3. Magnificent (8)
- 5. Garish (4)
- 6. Learner (7)
- 7. TV talent-show, \_\_\_ Knocks (11)
- 8. Paper measure (5)
- 9. Argument (11)
- 14. Make fertile (8)
- 16. Team substitute (7)
- 18. Disney dog (5)
- 21. Stage whisper (5)
- 22. Budge (4)

## April Conundrums

1. There is a word in the English language in which the first two letters signify a male, the first three letters signify a female, the first four signify a great man, and the whole word, a great woman. What is the word?
2. What letter comes next in the following sequence? D R M F S L T \_
3. I have a large money box, 10 inches wide, and 5 inches tall. Roughly how many coins can I place until my money box is no longer empty?
4. What do an island and the letter "t" have in common?
5. What is unusual about the following words: revive, banana, grammar, voodoo, assess, potato, dresser, uneven?
6. A sundial has the fewest moving parts of any timepiece. Which has the most?

1. What is a Rocky Mountain oyster? .
2. How long is New Zealand's Ninety Mile Beach?
3. How many months have 28 days in them?
4. What is the main ingredient of Bombay Duck?
5. What is the correct term for a question mark immediately followed by an exclamation mark?
6. In which month does the German festival of Oktoberfest mostly take place?
7. Which movie star entered a look-a-like contest about himself only to come 3rd in it?
8. What is the collective noun for a group of pandas?
9. Which country do kiwifruit originate from?
10. Which part of his body did musician Gene Simmons from Kiss insure for one million dollars?
11. What Benedictine monk invented champagne?
12. In which country are Panama hats made?
13. Which European country has 158 verses to its national anthem?
14. Which sea creature has three hearts?
15. True or false: You can sneeze in your sleep?
16. Which European country eats the most chocolate per capita?
17. What do the "M's" in M&Ms stand for?
18. James Bond was searching for what kind of airplane in 'Thunderball'? (a) 707, (b) Piper Club, (c) Vulkan (d) B-52
19. Who wrote "don't count your chickens before they are hatched"? (a) Aesop, (b) Shakespeare, (c) Ben Franklin, (d) Chaucer
20. In which book is there an inn called Admiral Benbow? (Lord of the Rings, (b) Gulliver's Travels, (c) Treasure Island, (d) Peter Pan.
21. Festfolk was the original name for which group? (a) The Beach Boys, (b) Abba, (c) The Seekers, (d) Simon and Garfunkel.
22. Herodotus is known as the father of what? (a) History, (b) Medicine, (c) Theatre, (d) Music.

• ALL ANSWERS PAGE 17

# Always something happening at the Drop-In Centre



*TOP team got together (left) for folding and preparing the Ricochet for mailing, with a bonus—cake provided by a generous benefactor (and great cook); while (above) after the March general meeting members enjoyed lunch provided by Diamond and Thai Dang (centre), with Chris Wessels, Graham Scott, John Cunnington and Cairns visitor Bill Lewis.*

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*THRICE in one issue, on the same page, Scotty appears — maybe preparing in secret for the RAAF Radschool's Scootaville motor-scooter charity ride to Townsville in September. More details: <https://www.radschool.org.au/scootaville/>*



*A group of 6 RAR lads met recently for coffee at Mooloolaba beachfront, reports Peter Stammers. Allan Frisby drove all the way from Hervey Bay (after securing a bank loan to fill his fuel tank). Present were: Barry Vassela, Clay Sutton, Don Marshall, Greg Sawrey, Alan Chandler, Lofty Eiby, Allan Frisby, John Davidson, 'Dools' Doolan, Mal Brough, Wayne Giddings and himself (the only one dressed correctly for St Patricks Day, he noted).*

# ANZAC DAY SERVICES ON AGAIN

Anzac Day services, led by DVA, will take place in Gallipoli, Turkey and in Villers-Bretonneux, France this year.

For the past two years, international services could not proceed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Local wreath-laying services were conducted to mark the occasion.

A Dawn Service will take place at Anzac Cove on Gallipoli, followed by a service at the Lone Pine memorial.

The Dawn Service in France will take place at the Australian National Memorial near Villers-Bretonneux, followed by an afternoon service at the Australian 'Digger' Memorial at Bullecourt.

More information on the services is available from the Anzac Day 2022 page of the DVA website.

## BT Sports & Health Centres

Incl. Dr. Uwe Schwiersch - Defence Physiotherapist - 10 years RAAF Base Tindal/NT



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

Despite the seriousness of the situation in the region, some Russian jokes seem appropriate:

Vladimir's Putin's plan for the new economy. The goal? Make people rich and happy. List of people attached.

An American and a Russian are arguing about which country has more freedom. The American says, "I can walk right up to the White House and shout 'Down with Donald Trump!' and nothing bad will happen to me." The Russian replies, "Guess what? I can walk in front of Kremlin and shout 'Down with Donald Trump!' and nothing will happen to me either."

Stalin, during a speech: "I am prepared to give my blood for the cause of the working class, drop by drop." A note is passed up to the podium: "Dear Comrade Stalin, why drag things out? Give it all now."

A drunk was taking a walk in the zoo. Suddenly he saw a donkey. He elbowed his way up to the enclosure, pulled the donkey's face up close to his own, kissed it and began to weep: "You poor bunny rabbit, what have the Communists done to you?"

Question to Radio Armenia: "Is it possible to build Communism in a random capitalist country like, say, the Netherlands?"

Answer: "Of course it's possible but what have the Netherlands ever done to you?"

Two rabbits on a road during the Stalinist terror of 1937.

First rabbit: "Where are you going in such a hurry?"  
Second rabbit: "Haven't you heard? There's a rumour going round that all camels are to be castrated."

First rabbit: "But you're not a camel."  
Second rabbit: "After they catch you and castrate you, try proving you're not a camel."

"Comrade Rabinowitz, why weren't you present at the last meeting of the Communist Party?"

"No-one told me it would be the last one. If I had known that I would have come with my whole family."

And not Russian (necessarily). A bent over old lady hobbled into a doctor's office. Within minutes, she came out, but miraculously she was standing up as straight as could be.

A man in the waiting room, who had been watching her, said in amazement: "My goodness, what did the doctor do to you?"

>>>>>



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

The old lady replied, "He gave me a longer cane."

An Irish priest is driving down to New York and gets stopped for speeding in Connecticut.

The state trooper smells alcohol on the priest's breath and then sees an empty wine bottle on the floor of the car. He says, "Sir, have you been drinking?"

"Just water," says the priest.

The trooper says, "Then why do I smell wine?"

The priest looks at the bottle and says, "Good Lord! He's done it again!"

Sunday morning, a man bursts into church and interrupts the sermon, shouting, "It's a miracle! I'm walking! I'm walking!"

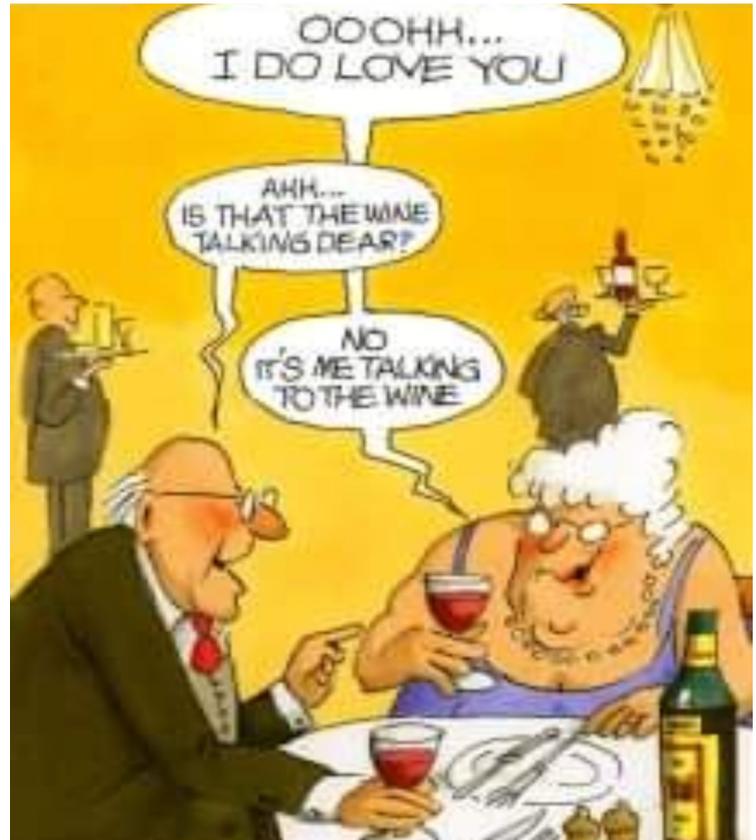
"What happened?" the preacher asked.

"They stole my car" the man replied.

A man is recovering from surgery after a car crash, and he notices that both his hands are covered in casts. When a nurse comes to check on him, he asks, "Will I be able to play piano after this?"

"Yes, the casts should come off in a few weeks, then you should be able to play."

"That's funny, I couldn't play piano before the accident."



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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.

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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.

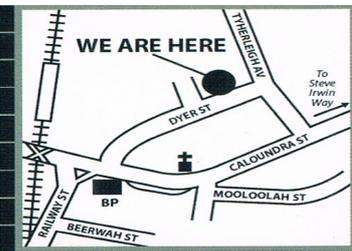
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*IN HER 95th birthday year, the Queen celebrates her 70th anniversary as Queen Elizabeth II. Her life included service in World War Two as a driver (above) and maintaining an interest in the Royal pigeons which were used as carrier pigeons (left).*

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## April Timeline — from Leichardt to Vietnam

**3 April 1848:** Ludwig Leichardt set out for a second time on an expedition from the Darling Downs to Perth, but was never seen again. He had previously led an expedition from the Downs to near Darwin.

**4 April 1949:** Twelve nations signed the treaty creating NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The nations united for common military defence against the threat of expansion by Soviet Russia into Western Europe.

**5-10 April 1896:** The first Olympic Games of the modern era were held in Athens and Edwin Flack, an accountant and Australasian champion runner – considered Australia's first Olympian – won the 800-metre and 1500-metre sprints, took part in the marathon and won a bronze medal in doubles tennis.

**7 April 1967:** Major Peter Badcoe dies leading his company against more powerful opposition in the Vietnam War. He is posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery, conspicuous gallantry and leadership on more than one occasion.

**10 April 1998:** Politicians in Northern Ireland reached an agreement aimed at ending 30 years of violence which had claimed over 3400 lives.

**25 April 1915:** Australian soldiers landed at what is now called Anzac Cove on the Gallipoli Peninsula. For the vast majority of the 16,000 Australians and New Zealanders

who landed on that first day, this was their first experience of combat. By that evening, 2000 of them had been killed or wounded.

**26 April 1879:** Australia's first national park – (now Royal National Park – was created in 1879 just south of Sydney. It was only the second in the world. Australia now has more than 500 national parks covering 28 million hectares.

**26 April 1976:** The first boatload of refugees fleeing post-war Vietnam sailed into Darwin Harbour, heralding a series of arrivals over the next few years. Many more were to arrive by air via refugee camps in South-East Asia.

**28 April 1996:** 35 people lost their lives and at least 18 more were injured when a lone gunman went on a shooting rampage in Port Arthur, Tasmania. Tighter gun laws followed, and are regarded as among the strictest in the world.

**29 April 1965:** Prime Minister Robert Menzies announced in parliament that Australia would send a battalion of combat troops to Vietnam, saying the decision was motivated by a desire to strengthen strategic relations with the United States and to halt the spread of communism in South-East Asia.

Sources include:

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

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military\\_history\\_of\\_Australia\\_during\\_the\\_Vietnam\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_history_of_Australia_during_the_Vietnam_War)

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

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*The Australian Defence Force (ADF) has been working with our south-west Pacific neighbours to detect and deter illegal maritime activity in the region. Operation Solania, the ADF's regular contribution to regional maritime security conducted in partnership with Pacific island nations, recently deployed personnel to Palau and Micronesia in support of the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency's own Operation Rai Balang. Support included a RAAF C-27J Spartan aircraft from No. 35 Squadron and the RAN hydrographic ship HMAS Melville. — ADF photos.*



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Since being diagnosed with Macular Degeneration, I started on needles in the eye which blew my retina apart, followed by two surgeries, and I have been waiting for over twelve months for the success of those surgeries to return my sight to normal.

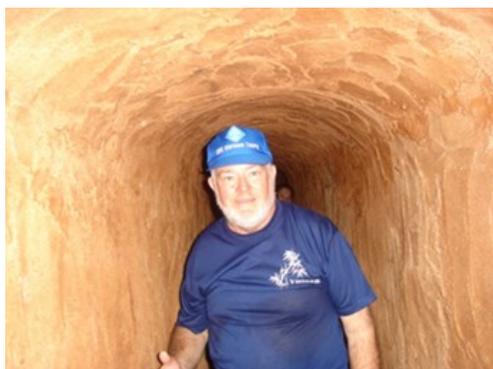
Vision Australia, Maroochydore, have been marvelous in providing oodles of gadgets to assist my vision, including supply of a solar powered talking book.

This talking book has about 20 books which include a mixture of mysteries and military stories. I have particularly enjoyed two gripping mysteries by Stephen Leather, fictional stories based on a true-life event, the Vietnam War.

They are 'The Tunnel Rats' and 'The Vets.' The 'Tunnel Rats' particularly grabbed me, as I have been down in the Viet Cong tunnels (not when I was serving there,) but in 2016, when the claustrophobic conditions coupled with the heat in the tunnels saw me emerge covered in red dust mingled with copious quantities of sweat, as I dripped mud! Red mud! I looked so dirty that not even my wife knew me or wanted to know me. Annette exclaimed, "Look at you," to which I replied, "But I am having fun, Mummy!" Delightful books;

great mysteries.

We are soon coming into Easter. While thinking of mysteries, Easter is about another great mystery. It is about the leader of Christendom, the Creator of the Universe, who



came to earth as a little baby, worked as a carpenter for thirty years, then called 12 inconspicuous disciples around Him.

## Fireside with the Padre



He was hailed as a hero as he rode a donkey into Jerusalem, when its citizens threw their coats and palm leaves before the path of the donkey to welcome their 'hero.' Yet a few days later, after His trial, the same people were calling for His crucifixion. How did that happen? What a mystery?

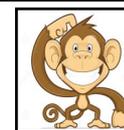
But the story does not end there. When Jesus was crucified on the cross at Golgotha, the Place of the Skull, he gave up His life, not as a criminal, but as the Saviour of the world. He was buried in a borrowed tomb, but three days later, he rose from the grave. He appeared to His disciples and several others.

To find out more about this incredible story, I urge you to go to a church of your choosing where the pastor or priest will fully explain about this amazing mystery that we will be celebrating from April 15 to 18. Unlike Stephen Leather's mysteries, which are classed as fiction, based on a true story, this story I speak about is the Gospel truth! Trust me!

Annette and I hope you enjoy your Easter, as you worship the One who is central to this story. Your Pastor or Priest also knows the story well. Listen to him as I listen to the wonderful books that Vision Australia gave me and read the truths of the Scriptures. Have a wonderful Easter.

**Arthur Fry**  
*Honorary Chaplain*

## Answers from page 9



### Trivia

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Rocky Mountain oysters (also known as prairie oysters) are a delicacy made from bull testicles | 12. Ecuador   |
| 2. 88km, (55) miles long.   | 13. Greece  |
| 3. All of them!   | 14. Octopus.  |
| 4. A Bombay duck is a particularly pungent fish from India.                                       | 15. False   |
| 5. An interrobang.  | 16. Switzerland   |
| 6. September.   | 17. Forrest Mars and Bruce Murrie, the two businessmen who created the candy-coated chocolates. |
| 7. Charlie Chaplin.   | 18. Vulkan  |
| 8. An embarrassment of pandas.  | 19. Aesop   |
| 9. China  | 20. Treasure Island   |
| 10. His tongue.   | 21. Abba  |
| 11. Dom Pierre Pérignon.  | 22. History   |

### Crossword

- Across:** 1. Whisk, 4. Flask, 10. Pearl, 11. Unusual, 12. Ordinary, 13. Mere, 15. Tardis, 17. Critic, 19. Nose, 20. Dominant, 23. Turn off, 24. Amigo, 25. Vexed, 26. Melee.
- Down:** 2. Heard, 3. Splendid, 5. Loud, 6. Student, 7. Opportunity, 8. Quire, 9. Altercation, 14. Irrigate, 16. Reserve, 18. Goofy, 21. Aside, 22. Move.

### Conundrum

1. Heroine. 2. D—each letter represents one note in the diatonic musical scale: Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do. 3. Just one, after which it will no longer be empty. 4. They are both in the middle of water. 5. Take the first letter of each word and place it at the end. It will spell the same word backward. 6. An hourglass—It has thousands of grains of sand.

# Combat rations were a matter of taste

The image of the menu for the Combat Ration (One Man) aka 24 hour ration pack published on the 5 RAR website got me reminiscing about the tucker we sustained ourselves with in training and in the "J". (refer <http://www.5rar.asn.au/reference/24-hour-ration-packs>).

One quickly found out during training in Australia that there was a very good reason for including Curry Powder in the A, B and C menus of the one-man packs. Either that or Tabasco sauce were the only things to make the Ham & Egg, Pork & Beans and Luncheon Meat halfway edible. The Beef & Egg in the E menu also needed a supplementary 'kicker' together with the Corned Beef and Corned Beef hash. I was also known to carry a supply of onions in my pack to add variety to the meals.

As for the Cereal Block and Chocolate, one could have

*An article from the 5RAR Association website under the heading, "FEED THE MAN MEAT, Remembering the Australian 24 hour Ration pack, the US 'C' Rations and cooking utensils/ accessories", by 2LT Roger Lambert (below), Platoon Commander, 9 Platoon, C Company, 5RAR (2nd Tour 1969-70).*

used these, given enough supplies, as body armour or overhead protection. I cannot recall anyone actually using the Cereal Block although the Chocolate, complete with its white coating of who-knows-what, was at least consumed in lieu of anything better. The Soup Powder (Beef or Chicken) and the Fruit Drink Powder defy description to this day.



Two things were the saving grace of the 24-hour pack and accessories. One of course was the tube of Sweetened Condensed Milk. This was considered pure gold both in Australia and in country, even if it caramelized in the tube. The condensed milk, together with the sugar packets, at least gave one half a chance at a decent brew. The other was the Can Opener apparently known as FRED (Field Ration Eating Device) or as some wags would have it "Freaking Ridiculous Eating Device".

FRED was a combination can opener, bottle opener and spoon all in one. I always carried mine attached to the cord of my 'dog tags'. It was such a useful utensil I made sure that I didn't lose it. At least FRED was a darn side more user-friendly than its American counterpart, the ridiculously small P-38 opener.

At least with FRED, one could open a can in no time flat whereas the US counterpart took ages to get a can open. Some say that the "38" in the designation P-38 actually referred to the number of times around a C Ration can to actually open the thing!

Ration pack wise, things didn't change all that much in country except we were introduced to the gastronomic delights of the American 'C' Rations (three boxes constituted a day's rations), a welcome dietary supplement to the Aussie 24-hour pack.

However, it seemed that even the Yanks had a predilection for beef, ham and eggs and pork. There were however a couple of stand-outs in the menu line-up including (to my taste) Beans W/Frankfurter Chunks in Tomato Sauce, Chicken Boned and Spaghetti W/Ground Beef although the latter still need a good splash of Tabasco to create a palatable meal. It was inevitably the Beans W/Frankfurter Chunks in Tomato sauce that became a valuable trading commodity.

- Continued next page.



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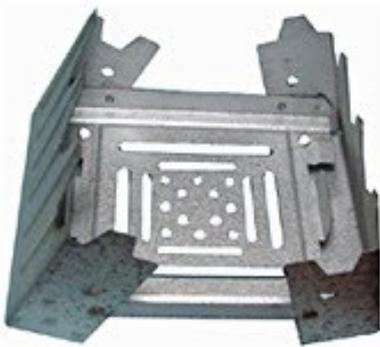
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- from previous page.

Like the Australian 24-hour ration pack, there were a couple of other redeeming inclusions in the 'C' Ration. One was the Pound Cake (closely followed by the Pecan Roll). The other, which would be absolutely frowned upon today, was the inclusion of a packet of four cigarettes of various brands in each box **(pictured)**.

Then of course there were the American Supplementary Ration Packs designed to cater for 100 personnel. Besides a whole range of 'goodies', these came with whole cartons of cigarettes.

Now, when I was in charge of putting the Battalion through Week One at the Jungle Training Centre at Canungra, I switched from "Marlboro" to "Kool" menthol cigarettes, kidding myself that these were better for me than the full-strength smokes. Of course, when we got into country, my Diggers were well aware of my menthol habit and so any Salem cigarettes that were received in their 'C' rations were donated to the 'Skipper'. And it goes without saying that the cartons of Salem also ended up with me. There's a footnote to these menthol 'donations' which I'll come back to later.



One thing that we didn't have to re-invent was the Australian Field Stove. **(pictured)** Couple this handy device with the blocks of Hexamine tablets we were issued and, given the opportunity, one could cook up a storm. The Hexamine blocks contained

in a wax-coated cardboard cover actually fitted inside the stove enabling a compact unit to be carried in a Basic Pouch or pack.

Interestingly, when we first went on operations, and in order to save weight for ammunition and water, a lot of the tinned rations were discarded. As our tour of operations progressed, and we became even fitter than we previously were, there wasn't all that much that was discarded as we needed as much sustenance as we could possibly get our hands on. Of course, whenever practical, our hard rations were supplemented in the field with hot box meals and in Charlie Company, SGT Paddy Cahill's famous hamburgers (although we were never quite sure what constituted the 'meat patty' and some of the vegetables!)

"Pressure cooking" was developed into a real culinary art form. To cook say one's Beans W/Frankfurter Chunks in Tomato Sauce, you simply dented one side of the can and then the other by knocking it against the heel of your boot. The dented can was then placed directly on the Hexamine stove with a portion of Hexamine and when the can started to pop, it was cooked. Mind you, there were also



some explosions where too much Hexamine was used. One learnt to judge the amount of 'fuel' required.

Making a brew was simplicity itself. Using one's Cups Canteen, Aluminium, Troops for the Use Of, water was poured in and the 'mug' placed directly on the Hexamine stove to boil. Add coffee, sugar and Sweetened Condensed Milk to taste and there you had it.

The Cups Canteen was also used to boil water for shaving and one quickly learnt to carry two, one for brews and one for shaving – it's a taste thing. Note the shape of the canteen — the standard issue water bottle fitted neatly inside and was able to be carried in the issue water bottle webbing pouch **(photo previous page)**.

The handle on the Cups Canteen could become very hot when water was boiled and that's where the ubiquitous "Giggle Hat" came into play.

The "Giggle Hat" could be used as an 'oven mitt' to take the hot brew off the stove. It could also be used as means of surreptitious smoking at night. With a suitable size hole in the crown, a cigarette could be lit and smoked using the hat to 'camouflage' the glow as well as dissipating the cigarette smoke. This practice was not condoned but we were aware that it sometimes occurred in tactical harbours (as the late LCPL Reg Smith would attest to) as opposed to ambush positions which were conducted in deadly earnest.

That brings me back to the subject of Salem cigarettes. These things were in such plentiful supply there was simply no way an individual could get through them all. What was the solution? I'm sure that the statute of limitations has now long passed after 40 odd years so.

The solid cardboard cylinders that 105 Field Battery's 105mm howitzer ammunition came in were in plentiful supply as well and they made very useful mailing tubes to ship articles back home to Oz. Now a number of cartons of cigarettes could be stowed inside these cylinders and to keep the Custom's Declaration 'reasonably accurate', articles of unwanted clothing could be used to pack around the cigarettes.

The Custom's Declaration affixed to the 'mailing tube' simply stated "Clothing no longer required in country."

Needless to say, I had pretty much a six-month (or more) supply of cigarettes waiting for me when we finally came home to Australia in March 1970.

## Roll of Honour – Vietnam, April 1962-75

### April 1967

Ashton, William John (1730888), 6 RAR, 22, Pte, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

Badcoe, Peter John (41400) AATTV, 33, Maj., Terendak Military Cemetery, Malaysia.

Copeman, Russell James (215989), 3 Sqd, SAS, 20, Pte, Wollongong Crematorium.

Lloyd, Richard Edward (2784015), 5 RAR, 21, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

Rinkin, Kerry Patrick (217479), 5 RAR, 21, 2Lt, Dawson Cemetery, Taree.

Stone, John Maxwell (53326), AATTV, 27, Sgt (Temp. WO2), Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

### April 1968

Danilenko, Anatoly (235250), AATTV (attached RAInf), 24, Lt (Temp. Capt.), Parkes General Cemetery, Parkes, NSW.

Fisher, Roger Leon (4718368), 3 RAR, 23, L/Cpl, Mintaro Cemetery, SA.

Gollagher, Peter James (172377), 1FIdSqn, 22, Staff Sgt, Pinnaroo Cemetery and Crematorium, Brisbane.

Nicholson, Kenneth Roy (2412486), 1FIdSqn, 23, Spr, Rookwood Military Cemetery, Sydney.

Polglase, Garry Robert (38763), 3 RAR, 20, Pte, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

### April 1969

Black, Trevor Ralph (1734408), 9 RAR, 21, Pte, Bowen, Queensland.

Bond, John Albert (21977), AATTV, 29, WO2, Northern Suburbs Crematorium, Chatswood, Sydney.

George, Barry Randolph (2789508), 9 RAR, 21, Pte, Rylstone Cemetery, Rylstone NSW.

McPherson, Lyall Hugh (5715701), 9 RAR, 21, Pte, Karrakatta Cemetery, Perth.

Petith, Trevor Graham (A319010), 22, AC, Garden of Remembrance, Springvale, Melbourne.

Pike, Geoffrey Anthony (218421), 5 RAR, 26, Pte, Macquarie Park Cemetery/Crematorium, Ryde NSW

Remeljej, Alexander (4719818), 5 RAR, 21, Pte, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

White, James Mungo T (5715978) 5 RAR, 21, Pte, Collie Cemetery, Collie, WA.

### April 1970

Fitzgerald, Jack (27974) AATTV, 41, WO2, Wagga Wagga General Cemetery, NSW.

Garland, Bernard Anthony (235324), 4 Fld Regt, 23, Lt, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

Hughes, Robert Edward (44897), 7 RAR, 19, Pte, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Hurst, Harold Walter (2791326), 1 Fld Sqn, 22, Spr, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

Kavanagh, Graham Robert (4720992), 7 RAR, 21, Pte, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

McQuat, John Leonard (5716533), 8 RAR, 21, Pte, Allambie Park Cemetery, Albany WA.

Pettit, John Gordon (13824), AATTV, 33, WO2, Mount Thompson Crematorium, Brisbane.

Pothof, Robin Christiaan (235354), 7 RAR, 21, Lt, Woden Cemetery, Canberra.

Poulson, Daryl (3795605), 8 RAR, 21, Pte, Springvale Crematorium, Melbourne.

Smith, Ronald Keith (2257880), 7 RAR, 21, Pte, Rookwood Cemetery, Sydney.

Stanczyk, Henry John (44679), 7 RAR, 21, Pte, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Tognolini, Michael Peter (218453), 3 Cav. Regt, 19, Trp, Garden of Remembrance, Rookwood, Sydney.

### April 1971

Blackhurst, Thomas Douglas (19983), AATTV (attached RAInf), 24, Cpl (temp.), Belmont South Cemetery NSW.

Chapman, Rodney Stewart (4721369), 2 RAR, 22, Pte, Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.

Gillespie, John Francis (3170244), 8 FldAmb, 24, L/Cpl, Springvale Botanical Cemetery, Melbourne.

Jones, Brian Richard Alan (55780), 2 SAS Sqn (RAInf), 22, 2Lt, Memorial Cemetery, Alice Springs.

Salzmann, Ronald Wayne (1732899), 3 RAR, 24, L/Cpl, General Cemetery, Bundaberg.

### April 1972 – 75 nil



**PART of the War Memorial at Beachmere on Moreton Bay, which was dedicated only in 2008 after being relocated.**

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

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