



# RICOCCHET



Monthly newsletter of VVAA Sunshine Coast Sub-Branch Inc. AUGUST 2023

## MARKING 50th ANNIVERSARY

A service to acknowledge and commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War will be held at the Maroochy War Memorial on 18 August.

Hosted by Sunshine Coast Sub-branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, the service at 11am will follow a march from near Cotton Tree Aquatic Centre to

the memorial with a salute taken by Mr Les D'Alton and Mr Ian Atkinson. A luncheon will follow at Maroochy RSL.

Similar services are being held around the nation, including a national commemorative service from 10am at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial (pictured) on Anzac Parade in Canberra.

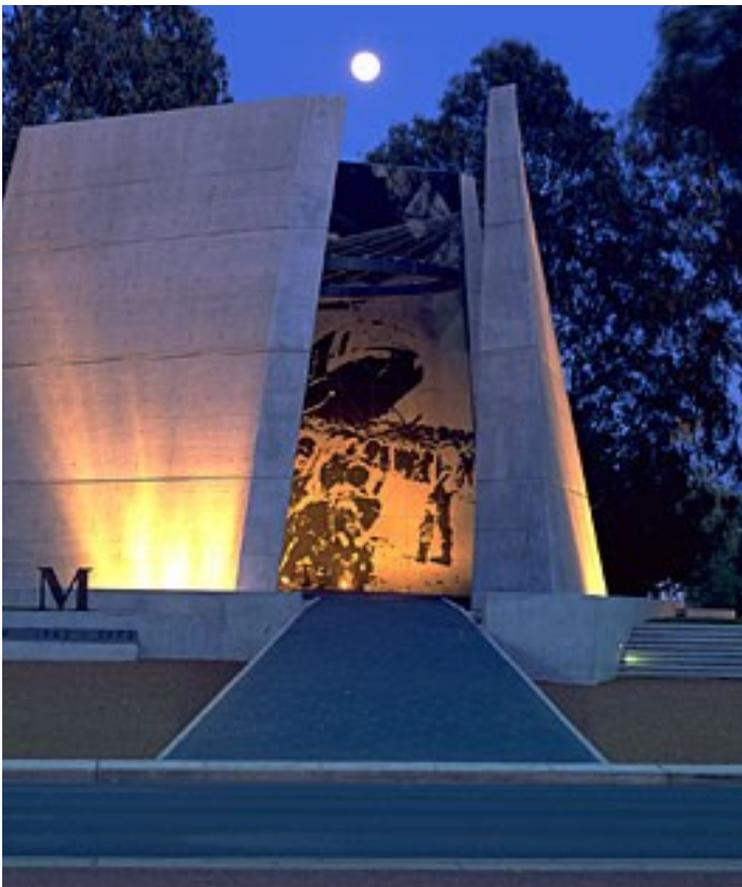
Fifty years ago, Australia's participation in the war was formally declared at an end when the Governor-General issued a proclamation on 11 January 1973. The only combat troops remaining in Vietnam were a platoon guarding the Australian embassy in Saigon (withdrawn June 1973).

Of the 60,000 Australians who served in the war, 523 lost their lives and more than 3000 were wounded. It is estimated there are more than 35,000 Australian veterans of the conflict still living, most of whom would be 70 years or older.

Ambassador for the anniversary commemorations is Vietnam War veteran Sir Peter Cosgrove, described by The Australian as: "Perhaps the most well-known Australian military leader of the past 50 years through his service as the commander of the International Force for East Timor, the Chief of Army and the Chief of the Defence Force, Sir Peter was just 22 when he commanded a platoon in Vietnam for his year-long tour in 1969 – being awarded a Military Cross.

"Sir Peter, who served as Governor-General from 2014-19, is hopeful the commemorations will bring Australians together, after the sharp political division the war caused in the '60s and '70s saw many Vietnam veterans poorly treated when they did come home.

- continued page 3.



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

**Our website:** [www.vietnamvetssc.org.au](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 INCLUDING OFFICE NEWS.**

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**VIETNAM VETERANS  
ASSN of AUSTRALIA  
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Junior V/President	Gordon Hall
Secretary	Garry King
Treasurer	Deb Day

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Bob Johnson	
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**Compensation Advocates**

Helena Smith JP (Qual)	0439241442
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**Hospital Visitation**

Alec Chesters	54761594
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**Mentor/Assessor**

Helena Smith	0439241442
--------------	------------

**Mentor/Well-Being Officer**

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

**VVAASC SUB-BRANCH  
DROP-IN-CENTRE**



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 NEWS .....**

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

*WANTED: DUTY OFFICER for Monday mornings; also one wanted available for relief (contact office).*

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

*MEMBERSHIP fees are due annually on 31 December. Renewal form on website or with mail-out Ricochet.*

*NEXT meeting Thursday, 17 August, 11am. NOTE: Meetings on Thursdays until further notice.*

**Department of Veterans' Affairs**

**Veterans' Advice Network (VAN)**

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

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

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

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

- from page 1

“While he had prepared almost his whole life to fight at war – thanks to having a father and grandfather who both served in international conflicts – Sir Peter was stunned by the moment he took his first life in battle.

“I remember the first time that occurred. We had shot people in the attack that we were doing. I was on the radio informing my superiors that we’d had this battle and this was the outcome,” he told the newspaper.

“It was only part-way through that necessary passage of information that it just came into my mind: I was standing in the midst of the bodies of our slain enemy. I realised that my training had subsumed the ordinary human horror of being at a scene of this nature.”

He said he felt he had not suffered the scars many of his fellow soldiers had after Vietnam, but struggled to see friends who were later dogged by the memories of war. “Even those who had been traumatised, in my experience, got on with the job. But I’ve got no doubt that later on it

## 50th ANNIVERSARY



SIR PETER COSGROVE

came back to haunt them,” he said. He described the behaviour of those who directed their concerns over the conflict at returning soldiers as un-Australian.

“I know plenty of people who found themselves either as a collective when they were copping a serve, so to speak, or individually were harangued about being part of a murderous activity,” he said.

“That was very confronting because the Australian image was of dignified, respectful acknowledgment of legions of men and women now in civilian clothes, marching down our main streets in the capital cities or towns to the sympathetic reception from the onlookers.

“It was quite the reverse when you’re having people run out throwing paint on you, or you know, pushing and shoving. That’s not what you expect from your fellow Australians.”



## Exercise involves 13 countries and 30,000 people

More than 30,000 personnel from the Australian Defence Force and 12 other nations are taking part in Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023 from 22 July to 4 August.

It will consist of field training exercises incorporating force preparation activities, amphibious landings, ground force manoeuvres, and air combat and maritime operations.

Other countries taking part include Fiji, France, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, the United Kingdom, Canada and Germany with The Philippines, Singapore and Thailand attending as observers.

The exercise will utilise a number of locations, both Defence and non-Defence training areas including Jervis Bay, Bowen, Charters Towers, Gladstone Port, Ingham, Mackay, Macrossan Training Area, Midge Point and Bloomsbury, Mt Stuart Training Area, Napranum, offshore from Central Queensland to the Far North Coast, RAAF Bases Amberley, Scherger and Townsville, Shoalwater Bay Training Area, Stannage Bay Peninsula, Townsville Field Training Area, Weipa, RAAF Bases Darwin, Tindal and Curtin, and Norfolk Island.

Soldiers from Australia, the United States, Japan, and South Korea conducted a combined joint live-fire demonstration at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area on July 22 to launch this year’s Exercise Talisman Sabre **(ADF photos)**.

**UPDATE, 1 August: A search was continuing in the Whitsundays for four crew members of an Australian Army MRH90 Taipan helicopter which crashed on a night exercise as part of Talisman Sabre.**



## From the President

Hi Everyone,

Hope you are all safe, happy and healthy. Only about two weeks to go until our biggest day of the year.

John Cunnington has been working flat out getting things prepared and ordered for the day and this year we will be having a contingent from the Mudjimba RSL in attendance also.

Garry is extremely happy that his message seems to have finally registered with some, in that volunteers are already starting to register for the Mooloolaba Tri in September. As the majority of you would be aware, we act as road marshals for the cycling event and the job consists of usually sitting down in a chair for a few hours manning a roadblock. It's easy work/play and your Association gets paid for your efforts on the day.

Our Thursday morning breakfasts at the Mooloolaba Surf Club are going extremely well and my thanks go out to Mick who has taken over the cooking duties from Geoff Jewel, who has been ill lately. Mind you, Geoff still makes sure he is in attendance and watches Mick's preparation with an eagle eye.

Garry and I attended a meeting at Ted O'Brien's of-

fice last week as did a number of other ESO representatives. Barnaby Joyce was the guest speaker at the event and took questions from the floor regarding anything and everything military.

I addressed Barnaby about the anomaly between prior and past veterans benefits with respect to assistance with funeral benefits for veterans of both eras and he seemed genuinely upset and dismayed at the news. Accordingly, he has given a very strong undertaking to investigate the matter as a matter of urgency. We will wait and see.

Well, that's about it for the moment. Remember, if you have any ideas or thoughts on how we can improve our Association, drop us a line or give us a call at the office. We welcome all feedback, good or bad.

**Best Regards,  
Mick Howe,  
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

As another month slips by, we find ourselves ever closer to the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War.

This conflict, in the sixties, changed the life path of everyone involved including the extended families of those service men and women.

Our association plans a great service and luncheon for all our members and many guests who have attended in previous years.

South Vietnam representatives will again attend and add that well-known colour and entertainment that we have become so accustomed to.

Tickets for the event are selling quite rapidly, so get yours from the DIC before they are gone.

We have managed to obtain our PLI (Public Liability Insurance) or Certificate of Currency in the last few days after what seems like months of angst trying to get some guidance from many sources as to when it will be available.

Thanks to Peter Fox at National for his hasty action on this matter.

I have recently sent out a request for Volunteers to assist in the upcoming Ironman Event at Mooloolaba in September.

The response has been exceptional so far with about

10 members already advising of their availability.

Members who attended the July monthly meeting will recall that I was tasked to investigate bringing our meeting day back to Tuesday. I have emailed Susan Barnes at Library Admin, and she advised this is still not possible as the meeting room is still booked for language lessons on Tuesday.

She also advised these times could be further assessed closer to year's end, that is, 3rd Tuesday of month, 1000-1200hrs. Being a tenant of the building should give us some priority.

Mick Howe and I attended a breakfast meeting with Barnaby Joyce and Ted O'Brien along with other veterans and ESO reps a couple of weeks ago. Mick Howe raised the discrepancy between Vietnam War veterans and later conflicts the allowance for funeral costs, that is, \$2000 as opposed to \$10000. Barnaby Joyce took up the challenge and will follow up vigorously.

Stay safe and, remember, without volunteers we are no more!

*Kind regards*  
**Garry King**



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## Vigils for those who gave their lives

Across Australia and overseas people took the opportunity on 3 August to conduct a vigil at the grave of an Australian killed in the Vietnam War.

“The vigil will provide surviving Vietnam Veterans and the Australian people the opportunity to participate in a meaningful way right across the nation and overseas in recognizing the individual loss and to pay their respects to those who died and to show solidarity with their loved ones for their loss,” organisers said.

“We intend to hold a Service of Remembrance at every grave or Commemorative plaque site across the nation and overseas, the first at the national memorial in Canberra. Other Services will be held at 1100 (local time) across Australia and in Malaysia.

“The last Service will be held in Scotland, at Birkhill Cemetery where LCPL Robert Buchan is laid to rest with his Mum and Dad.”

Organisers asked that every grave visited be photographed by those in attendance. The photographs can then be uploaded to the website <https://vwma.org.au/>

This collated virtual Gallery of Remembrance will provide an enduring legacy of Remembrance for all Australians both now, and into the future, to reflect upon.

## ANNIVERSARY FOR KOREAN WAR

The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Korean War Armistice was commemorated on 27 July.

The Korean War began on 25 June 1950 when North Korea (People’s Democratic Republic of Korea) launched an invasion of South Korea (Republic of Korea) in an attempt to unify the country under its

communist government.

About 18,000 Australian military personnel served during the Korean War and the post-war phase.

More than 350 Australians lost their lives during the war and in the post-armistice period, more than 1200 were wounded and 30 taken prisoner, with 40 still listed as missing in action.



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**COMMEMORATION** for Operation Rimau at Hervey Bay recently, marking an attack on Japanese shipping in Singapore Harbour, carried out by an Allied commando unit Z Special Unit in 1944.



**LAST SURVIVING PILOT OF THE Battle of Britain John 'Paddy' Hemingway DFC AE turned 104 recently in Dublin, where he was born in 1919.**

## VVAASC MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING, THURSDAY 20 JULY 2023

**Meeting opened at 1210hrs. Ode to the Fallen recited by Garry King.**

**Attendance:** as per the register. **Apologies:** as per the register. Prior to opening the General Meeting the President Mick Howe welcomed Glenn Tratt from the Airforce Cadets 233 Sqn.

**Previous Minutes read by:** Mick Howe, moved Mick Howe, seconded Bob Johnson. Carried. No further business arising.

**Correspondence/Secretary Report:** Garry King advised the Meeting that Alec Chesters for the period of April/May 2023 had made 44 hospital and home visits; also delivered many copies of Ricochet. Caloundra RSL has offered a \$2000 grant. An email from Fiona Ewington advising the Ironman will require assistance on Sunday 10 September 2023. Further updates to members via email. There has been more discussion with State re Public Liability Insurance and we have been assured that it will be current for VV Day. The Caloundra RSL Spring Ball will be held on 23 September 2023 (dress: formal, with miniatures). Normie Rowe guest artist. The opportunity arose to discuss with Barnaby Joyce and Ted O'Brien the disparity of funeral benefits for Vietnam Veterans e.g. \$2000 v \$12,000. Barnaby Joyce now aware of the issue will follow up on this. Moved Garry King, seconded John Oxenham. Carried. No further business arising.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mick Howe gave an overview of the Treasurer's report, copies were made available for all at the meeting to read. Overall the VVAASC is in a good financial position.

**Membership Report:** Report supplied by Pieter Reus, in his absence read by Garry King: 218 members including two new members. Moved Garry King, seconded Mark Doolan. Carried. No further business arising.

**Ricochet Report:** Chris W updated the Meeting from the report delivered by Kerry White at the Committee Meeting. The total of replies for the mailing of hardcopy of Ricochet is under 20. It is assumed most are now reading the Ricochet online.

**Office Manager:** John Huxham thanked the VVAASC for support during his recent illness. Great to see Margo back too. Moved John Huxham, seconded Mal Overend. Carried. No further business arising.

**Sub-Committee:** John Cunnington advised the Meeting the Catafalque will be provided by 233 Sqn Airforce Cadets. The RAAF maybe able to provide flypast. Ticket sales VV Day to date are 144. Moved John Cunnington, seconded John Huxham. Carried. No further business arising.

**Digger Hat Jewellery:** Report supplied by "Scotty" read by "Johnno". DHJ this month had five attendees, the penny press was changed over to press half pennies to manufacture the lapel pins and fulfil backorders. Thanks to Bob Ryan, a VVAASC Member who dropped off a bag of pennies at the DIC. A coin dealer was located this month and an amount was purchased. Two sales this month and thank you to Cairns Legacy and Morwell RSL for their purchases. Moved Johnno seconded Bob Johnson. Carried. No further business arising.

### GENERAL BUSINESS:

Mark Doolan: reminded everyone of the Dan Keighran Memorial opening in September.

Johnno: mentioned "Go to the Grave", 3 August.

Bob Johnson: enquired BBQ Bunnings – date to be advised.

Glen T: asked about roster process of Bunnings. Mentioned we could contact Airforce Cadets to view a parade.

Mick G: queried if any process in place to encourage new members from the younger veteran community. He also thanked the Committee for their hard work.

Mal O: asked if there would be a donation to 233 Sqn for their attendance on VV Day.

Meeting closed at 1250hrs. **NEXT GENERAL MEETING THURSDAY 17 AUGUST 2023**



## Veterans catch up at Surf Club

*IT WAS on again and a popular place to be — Riflemen's lunch at Mooloolaba Surf Club. First Friday of each month., Good catch-up and great value lunch.*



**Steve Searle and Les D'Alton.**

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At the MONTHLY Riflemen's Lunch at the Mooloolaba Surf John Hartley (retired Major-General), right, with Greg Haggett; (top left) Ian Atkinson, visitor Natalie Sutcliffe (UK RAF) with Mick Howe; and (left) Tex Weston with Clay Sutton.

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**Darren Fletcher**  
Dip D.T Adv Dip D.P. (Syd)

Dental Prosthetist



**CONTRASTING** with the vessels at right, USS Canberra cruised into Sydney Harbour recently ahead of its official commissioning. It was designed by Australian-owned Austal USA.— NCA/Newswire photo.



**HISTORY ...** the U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (right, as if you could not guess) and the British aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal tied up at Norfolk Naval Station, Virginia (USA) in 1975.

<p>WE ARE HERE</p> <p>Map showing location of D &amp; F Auto Care at 11 Dyer Street, Landsborough, QLD 4550. Streets shown include Dyer St, Caloundra St, Mooloolah St, Beerwah St, and Bulwin St. A BP station is also marked.</p>	<p><b>D &amp; F Auto Care</b>                  Shed 1,                  11 Dyer Street,                  Landsborough                  QLD 4550</p>
<p>Mob: 0432 215 628                  Ph: 5494 1222                  Fax: 5494 1224</p>	
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## ATTENTION MEMBERS



## VIETNAM VETERANS DAY FRIDAY 18 AUGUST 2023 COTTON TREE CENOTAPH

THIS YEAR MARKS THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE PROCLAMATION TO END AUSTRALIA'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE VIETNAM WAR.

The day will commence around 0600 hours with the "Toast to the War Dogs" at the National War Memorial, Alexandra Headland. Breakfast, tea and coffee will be supplied.

### Main Commemoration Ceremony

Assembly: 1045 hours at the swimming pool complex, The Esplanade, Cotton Tree. The short march to the Cotton Tree RSL Cenotaph commences at 1055 hours.

Service: 11.00 hours—1200 hours.

Luncheon: Maroochy RSL after the service. Welcome at 1230 hours.

*Lunch tickets are available at the Drop-In Centre for only a limited time. Please purchase tickets ASAP as the cut-off date is fast approaching.*

*Cost: \$40.00 for members and partners. Non-member's price is \$55.00 per head.*

*Lunch includes a sumptuous three course meal, subsidised beer and wine, entertainment, lucky door prizes and raffle draws.*

**IMPORTANT:** At the luncheon there will be free seating available. However, If you would like to pre-book a table (groups of 10 are preferable), please notify John Cunnington on 54933513 (0415375968) or email [hookin1947@gmail.com](mailto:hookin1947@gmail.com) and arrange the bookings with him after you have purchased your tickets. Names are required for each person.

**Transport:** A bus will be provided to transport guests to and from the Caloundra RSL. Pick-up time will be 0945 hours. The bus will leave the Maroochy RSL at 1630 hours. Guests in the Maroochy area can avail themselves of the Maroochy RSL courtesy bus.

**Special dietary requirements:** leave a message with the duty officer at the Drop-In-Centre or contact John Cunnington on 54933513, (0415375968) or email [hookin1947@gmail.com](mailto:hookin1947@gmail.com)

**JC's BEFUDDLEMENT PAGE ....***August Trivia*

1. In which US city is Broadway located?
2. What is the longest-running Broadway show?
3. Which show is the highest-grossing production on Broadway ever?
4. During which time of the year is the Nutcracker primarily performed?
5. What is a plié in ballet?
6. Which Williams sister has won more Grand Slam titles?
7. What country won the very first FIFA World Cup in 1930?
8. In what year was the first-ever Wimbledon Championship held?
9. Which racer holds the record for the most Grand Prix wins?
10. Which Jamaican runner is an 11-time world champion and holds the record in the 100 and 200-meter race?
11. What sport was Jesse Owens involved in?
12. What is the common name for dried plums?
13. What name does deer meat go by?
14. Which country produces the most coffee in the world?
15. Which country invented tea?
16. What is the national dish of Spain?
17. Which European nation was said to invent hot dogs?
18. In which body part can you find the femur?
19. What kind of cells are found in the brain?
20. Which bone are babies born without?
21. About how many taste buds does the average human tongue have?
22. What percentage of our bodies is made up of water?
23. Which element is said to keep bones strong?
24. What does the acronym AIDS stand for?
25. How many times does the heartbeat per day?
26. What is the name of the thin and long country that spans more than half of the western coast of South America?
27. What is the smallest country in the world?
28. What is the capital of New Zealand?
29. What is the name of the world's longest river?
30. Which city in India would you find the Taj Mahal in?
31. How long did the Middle Ages last?
32. Which religion dominated the Middle Ages?
33. In which year World War I began?
34. In which country Adolph Hitler was born?
35. What was the name of the rock band formed by Jimmy Page?



ANSWERS PAGE 15

*Classic Quotes*

*"Sometimes, when I look at my children, I say to myself, 'Lillian, you should have remained a virgin'."* – Lillian Carter (mother of Jimmy Carter).

*"I had a rose named after me and I was very flattered. But I was not pleased to read the description in the catalogue: 'No good in a bed, but fine against a wall'."*  
– Eleanor Roosevelt .

*"Last week, I stated this woman was the ugliest woman I had ever seen. I have since*

*been visited by her sister, and now wish to withdraw that statement."*– Mark Twain.

*"By all means, marry. If you get a good wife, you'll become happy; if you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher."*  
– Socrates.

*"I have never hated a man enough to give his diamonds back."*  
– Zsa Zsa Gabor.



## Remains found at Kokoda

Australian archaeologists have recovered partial remains of World War Two soldiers on the Kokoda Track (photo — ABC).



They are believed to belong to 15 soldiers who were buried in temporary graves before being transferred elsewhere.

A local landowner found the remains in 2018 but plans to examine the site were delayed by COVID.

The site is at Templeton's Crossing is deep into PNG's Kokoda Track — accessible either by several days' walk or a helicopter flight from Port Moresby.

The area marks the site of a series of battles fought in October 1942, during Japan's withdrawal along the Kokoda Track.

During the fighting, 65 Australian soldiers were buried in temporary graves at Templeton's Crossing, among more than 600 soldiers killed in the Kokoda campaign.

The soldiers' remains were transferred to the Bomana War Cemetery in Port Moresby.

But more than eight decades on, a chance discovery revealed the task was not quite complete.

## AHOY! Want to go sailing?

Sunshine Coast Saltwater Veterans are offering a range of activities out on the water.

The latest, the first of a few new sailing opportunities in south-east Queensland, is on the Gold Coast with Southport Yacht Club at their Oxenford Aquatic Park location.

This activity is for Saltwater Veterans Sailing Project club members (which anyone can be) and over July and August the club meets the cost of participation, which is on 30 July and 27 August.

Two events are planned for the Sunshine Coast:

In October, they will support current serving soldiers from the 2/14 Light Horse Reg. with a second day as a shadow for their own crew to enjoy. Dates to be confirmed.

On December 15 a training day and twilight racing is planned.

In between there are regular opportunities for veterans to sail at Mooloolaba within the club's racing and training program. Inquiries to Saltwater Veterans [hello@saltwaterveterans.org](mailto:hello@saltwaterveterans.org).



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

Most of you were home-schooled in many ways. Remember these?

1. My mother taught me "to appreciate a job well done": "If you're going to kill each other, do it outside. I just finished cleaning."
2. My mother taught me "religion": "You better pray that will come out of the carpet."
3. My father taught me about "time travel": "If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week!"
4. My father taught me "logic": " Because I said so, that's why."
5. My mother taught me "more logic": "If you fall out of that swing and break your neck, you're not going to the store with me."
6. My mother taught me "foresight": "Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you're in an accident."
7. My father taught me "irony": "Keep crying, and I'll give you something to cry about."
8. My mother taught me about the science of "osmosis" "Shut your mouth and eat your supper."
9. My mother taught me about "contortionism": "Just you look at that dirt on the back of your neck!"



**"I hope this is the right wine for reading and ignoring each other."**

P.C. VEY FOR READER'S DIGEST

10. My mother taught me about "stamina": "You'll sit there until all that spinach is gone."
11. My mother taught me about "weather": "This room of yours looks as if a tornado went through it."
12. My mother taught me about "hypocrisy": "If I told you once, I've told you a million times, don't exaggerate!"
13. My father taught me the "circle of life": "I brought you into this world, and I can take you out."
14. My mother taught me about "behaviour modification": "Stop acting like your father!"
15. My mother taught me about "envy": "There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don't have wonderful parents like you do."
16. My mother taught me about "anticipation": "Just wait until we get home."
17. My mother taught me about "receiving": "You are going to get it from your father when he gets home!"
18. My mother taught me "medical science": "If you don't stop crossing your eyes, they are going to get stuck that way."
19. My mother taught me "ESP": "Put your sweater on; don't you think I know when you are cold?"
20. My father taught me "humour": "When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me."
21. My mother taught me "how to become an adult": "If you don't eat your vegetables, you'll never grow up."
22. My mother taught me "genetics": "You're just like your father."
23. My mother taught me about my "roots": "Shut that door behind you. Do you think you were born in a barn?"
24. My mother taught me "wisdom": "When you get to be my age, you'll understand."
25. My father taught me about "justice": "One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you!"

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There is much talk and kind offers about the cessation of Australian involvement in Vietnam 50 years ago. I have applied for my letter of recognition and medallion, and I trust all readers have too. Many say it is too little, too late, but thankful that our time in Vietnam is finally being recognised.

For those of you who thought I was a meek and mild Padre, let me dispel that notion, for I was quite a 'stirrer' in my younger days.

I was at the end of my second tour in Vietnam, when my Orderly Room in VungTau told me the Air Force would take us to Sydney where we would book our own hotel accommodation overnight before flying out to Melbourne the next day, (the homeward bound flight was to be at Air Force expense).

The hairs on my neck bristled as I said, "You sent me to Vietnam, you provide me with overnight accommodation". (Doesn't sound like the bloke I have mellowed to today!)

The upshot of my undignified stand was that a Commonwealth car picked me up at Mascot, and drove me to RAAF Base, Bankstown. On my arrival, the Orderly Officer advised me that the Sergeants' Mess was holding a dining-in night and that there wasn't a spare bed on the base. All he could offer me was a bed in the cells.

I replied, "That is OK, but with two conditions. One, that you leave the cell door open, and two, that you understand that I will tell this story for the rest of my life, that after two tours of Vietnam, I had to spend the first night in Australia in the cells!" (And there, I have done that again!)

The next morning, I enjoyed a breakfast in the Mess and another Commonwealth car arrived to convey me back to Mascot for my flight to Melbourne, and to my wife, and my

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



two children.

Now for the mathematicians out there, which option would have been the cheapest for the Commonwealth coffers?

Back to being a Chaplain, who doesn't stand on his haunches and put his own desires first, may you enjoy the events of Vietnam Veterans' Day and catch up with your old friends, most of whom would have paid for a night in a Sydney hotel rather than stay in a cell on a RAAF Base for your first night back in 'Uc dai loi'.

This 97th edition of my monthly ramblings has started differently from previous editions. Many of you know the difficulties I have experienced with my old laptop, that Microsoft ceased any updates due to its age. While in the USA, my dear wife felt sorry for my ongoing battles with my beloved, which was not reciprocal, computer and bought me a new one.

Both laptops are with my eldest grandson, an IT wizard who has both machines in Brisbane where he is transferring files from the old to the new. So, to keep my target date with Ricochet, I am typing this on my iPad without the benefit of word count, so if I exceed my quota of words, please excuse, or "xin loi", as we would have understood, 50 years ago.

**Arthur Fry**  
**Honorary Chaplain**

# Answers from page 12



## **TRIVIA** .....

- |                             |   |                      |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1. New York City            | 15. China                               | 29. The Nile         |
| 2. The Phantom of the Opera | 16. Paella                              | 30. Agra             |
| 3. The Lion King            | 17. Germany                             | 31. About 1000 years |
| 4. During Christmas season  | 18. Leg                                 | 32. Catholicism      |
| 5. Bending at the knees     | 19. Neurons                             | 33.1914              |
| 6. Serena                   | 20. Knee cap                            | 34. Austria          |
| 7. Uruguay                  | 21.10,000                               | 35. Led Zeppelin     |
| 8. 1877                     | 22. 60-65%                              |                      |
| 9. Michael Schumacher       | 23. Calcium                             |                      |
| 10. Usain Bolt              | 24. Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |                      |
| 11. Track and field         | 25. About 100,000                       |                      |
| 12. Prunes                  | 26. Chile                               |                      |
| 13. Venison                 | 27. Vatican City                        |                      |
| 14. Brazil                  | 28. Wellington                          |                      |



*A human tongue has 10,000 taste buds.*

## August Timeline

**2 August 1945:** Start of post-war immigration drive with two million immigrants arriving in Australia between 1945 and 1965; based on the notion of 'populate or perish' in the wake of the Second World War.

**2 August 1990:** Iraq invades Kuwait, beginning a series of events that led to the Gulf War of 1991.

**4 August 1845:** Cataraqui wrecked off King Island – 400 die in Australia's deadliest maritime civil disaster.

**5 August 1944:** Mass breakout of Japanese prisoners at Cowra prisoner-of-war camp, NSW, the largest ever mass escape from a prisoner-of-war camp. About 378 Japanese prisoners succeeded in escaping the camp; 234 were killed and 108 wounded. Three Australian guards died.

**6 August 1699:** William Dampier becomes the first Englishman to explore parts of the Australian coastline.

**6 August 1945:** First atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Nagasaki was bombed three days later, leading to the Japanese surrender.

**7 August 1858:** Students from Scotch College and Melbourne Grammar competed against each other in several

games of football – credited as the first organised games of Australian Rules football.

**7 August 1964:** Following an attack on two US destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin off North Vietnam, the US Congress approved the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, granting President Lyndon B. Johnson authority "to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression."

**8 August 1907:** The New South Wales Rugby League was formed at a meeting at the Bateman's Hotel in Sydney. Rugby league split from rugby

by union over disagreements about whether to pay players.

**13 August 1914:** Establishment of the Australian Red Cross.

**16 August 1977:** Elvis Presley (pictured in the Army) was pronounced dead at a Memphis hospital aged age 42. Known as the "King of Rock and Roll" he was one of rock music's dominant performers from the mid-1950s.

- continued next page.



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## August Timeline

**18 August 1966:** Battle of Long Tan, South Vietnam, when 108 men of D Company, 6 Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, supported by artillery and a timely resupply by the RAAF, fought off an attack by an enemy force of more than 2000 in a rubber plantation near the abandoned village of Long Tan. The arrival of Armoured Personnel Carriers carrying reinforcements brought the action to an end. Seventeen Australians were killed, one died of wounds, and 24 were wounded. More than 245 enemy bodies were later counted, but many more had been taken away. The day is now also known as Vietnam Veterans Day (**more Page 19**).

**18 August 1971:** Prime Minister William McMahon announces that 1 ATF would cease operations in South Vietnam in October, and would begin commencing a phased withdrawal after that.

**20 August 1860:** Robert O'Hara Burke, William John Wills, John King and Charles Gray left Melbourne to become the first Europeans to cross Australia south to north, reaching the Gulf of Carpentaria in February 1861. They did not survive the return journey.

**21 August 1915:** Last major fighting on Gallipoli takes place at Hill 60. The operations at Hill 60 were intended to widen and strengthen the corridor that connected the newly landed British force at Suvla Bay with the beachhead at Anzac.

**22 August 1770:** Lieutenant James Cook, captain of HMB Endeavour, claimed the eastern portion of the Australian continent for the British Crown in 1770, naming it New South Wales.

**23 August 1966:** 200 Gurindji stockmen, domestic workers and their families initiated strike action at Wave Hill station in the Northern Territory, leading to a seven-year dispute and eventual passing of the first legislation allowing for First Nations peoples to claim land title if they could prove a traditional relationship to the country.

**31 August 1997:** Britain's Princess Diana (**below**) died aged 36 from internal injuries suffered in a high-speed car crash, reportedly after being pursued by photographers.



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.awm.gov.au/articles/atwar>

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

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# R.A.A.F. SERVICE IN SOUTH VIETNAM

The first meaningful RAAF commitment in South Vietnam occurred in May 1963 when an Air Attaché was appointed to the Australian Embassy in Saigon; followed within days by the first operational missions in South Vietnam by a RAAF aircraft.

Over the period 9-21 May 1963, Dakota A65-119 from No 2 Squadron's transport flight based at RAAF Base Butterworth and captained by Flying Officer David Cooper, conducted 28 sorties in South Vietnam.

The missions were predominantly humanitarian aid flights, delivering some 25,000 kg of food and medical supplies to Montagnard refugees displaced by the Viet Cong insurgency.

Before this, Australia had been under increasing pressure from the South Vietnamese and US governments to commit transport aircraft to provide supply and administrative support to the counterinsurgency effort.

These calls had been resisted for three inter-related reasons: the RAAF was undergoing a major re-equipment program; existing counterinsurgency and Far East Strategic Reserve commitments in Ubon, Thailand and at Butterworth, Malaysia; and third was concern that the RAAF budget was already fully committed and any



R.A.A.F. Iroquois and Caribou in Vietnam—AWM photo.

additional costs incurred due to further operational deployments would potentially curtail the Air Force's development plans.

Still, the commitment of a RAAF Caribou deployment was announced on 8 June 1964, but there was a significant amount of work required before the aircraft were available for deployment.

The RAAF Transport Flight Vietnam (RTFV) was established at RAAF Base Butterworth from aircraft delivered directly from the de Havilland factory in Canada. Its arrival in Vietnam in August 1964 marked the beginning of a significant RAAF presence in Vietnam which lasted until 1971.

The RTFV was expanded into No 35 Squadron and would be joined in theatre by Nos 2 and 9 Squadrons, flying Canberra bombers and Iroquois helicopters, respectively, No 1 Operational Support Unit and No 5 Airfield Construction Squadron.

Not all of the RAAF units served together under common operational lines of command: Nos 2 and 35 Squadron were allocated for duty with the USAF Seventh Air Force, No 9 Squadron was under the direct control of No 1 Australian Task Force.

The commitment of RAAF forces to Vietnam mirrored the incremental commitment of Australian forces to the Vietnam War as a whole.

(This abridged article by Martin James was originally published in Pathfinder #274)

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# LONG TAN CROSS: REMEMBRANCE OF THE BATTLE

NOW on permanent display in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, the Long Tan Cross symbolises the historic battle of 18 August 1966. The date is now commemorated as Vietnam Veterans Day in Australia.

The Long Tan Cross was erected by 6 Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, on 18 August 1969 to mark the site of the Battle of Long Tan. The men of Delta Company, 6 Battalion faced a force of around 2000 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops.

By the end of the day, 17 Australians had been killed in action and 25 were wounded, one of whom died a few days later.

While the cross was removed following the Communist victory in 1975, it was recovered by the Đồng Nai Province Museum in 1984 and placed on display.

A replica cross was erected on the battlefield during the 1980s and is frequently visited by Australian Vietnam War veterans. The original Long Tan Cross was gifted to Australia by the Vietnamese Government in 2017 and placed on permanent display at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

According to an article in *The Canberra Times*, the cross was "the brainchild of Lieutenant Colonel David Butler and Warrant Officer James Cruickshank" and was made from concrete by New Zealand Army Corporal Barry McAvinue, attached to 6 RAR. It weighs over 100 kilograms (220 lb) and is just under 2 metres (6.6 ft) tall.

In the late 1980s a replica of the Long Tan Cross was erected on the battle site by the Long Dat District People's Committee.

This replica is often visited by Australian Vietnam War veterans and is believed to be one of only two memorials to foreign military forces permitted in Vietnam (the other being a monument to the French forces who fought in the Battle of Dien Bien Phu during 1954).

**PICTURED:** In August 1969 (bottom), a dedication ceremony involving many first-tour veterans was held at the Long Tan site in Vietnam; and (top) the original Long Tan Cross on display in the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.—photos from the Memorial.



## Roll of Honour – Vietnam, August 1962-75. Lest We Forget.

### August 1966

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

### August 1967

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

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

### August 1968

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

### August 1969

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

### August 1970

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

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

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