



THE VIETNAM VETERANS' NEWSLETTER

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

SUPPORTING ALL WHO SERVE & HAVE SERVED

DECEMBER 2021

Season's Greetings



- **When was the RSL first challenged about Agent Orange?**
- **Homage to our wives**
- **The story of the Vung Tau Ferry**
- **Were you invited to the Dapto Dogs?**

**INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE**

**NEXT ISSUE
MARCH**

VVFA PO BOX 170 8 MARY ST GRANVILLE NSW 2142 PH 02 9682 1788 FX 02 9682 6134

NATIONAL PRESIDENT vvfanatpres@vvfa.org.au

NATIONAL SECRETARY vvfanatsec@vvfa.org.au

www.vvfa.org.au



ABN 35 490 214 100

Partners

Michael A Carbonaro BA LL B

Greg Isolani BA LL B

Level 5

488 Bourke Street

Melbourne Vic 3000

DX: 488 Melbourne

Ph: 03 8673 5888

Fax: 03 8673 5899

gregisolani@kcilawyers.com.au

www.kcilawyers.com.au

Established in 2001, our team of lawyers provide clients with high levels of personal service and professional representation in a range of legal and commercial matters.



'KCI's experience and expertise has led to them being a respected voice in Military and Commonwealth compensation, advocating for Veterans and families for 27 years'

SERVICES

DVA - Military Compensation

Commonwealth Superannuation (MSBS, DFRDB and Retrospective medical discharge claims)

Asbestos - Dust Disease Tribunal claims.

Industry super claims - income protection - TPD appeals,

Coroner's inquests

claims for Detriment Caused by Defective Administration - CDDA

See our article elsewhere in this issue

Our Readers love Vietnam Veterans' Stories

Gleaned from letters diaries and memories



We welcome our first Navy author, John Ingram, whose story about HMAS Sydney we shall serialise.

And there's the story of the Dat Do Dogs that you may have heard of (or attended?), told by Ian Granland. He also tells us about an exploding dunny.

Graham Munsell and Barry Hodges grace our pages again with the final episode of the life story of their Vietnam tank, T169041.

Popular regular author Al Wood tells about Christmas in the bush.

New author Jim Stark tells about an engagement with VC in Long Dien that is not well known.

War widow Sue Jones gives us her perspective of how Vietnam veterans have been treated.

Then there's a poem from new poet Ross Bridle, telling us elegantly what so many of us already know.

Finally, we introduce new author, John Creswell, with a story many will relate to. ■



**VIETNAM VETERANS'
FEDERATION of AUSTRALIA
Inc.**

Incorporating

**Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers and
Peacemakers**

**Association of Australia (NSW Branch)
Inc.**

**Vietnam Veterans Federation
Queensland Branch Inc.**

**Vietnam Veterans & Veterans Federation
ACT Inc.**

**Vietnam Veterans Federation Victorian
Branch Inc.**

**Vietnam Veterans Federation South
Australian Branch Inc.**

**Vietnam Veterans Federation of
Australia WA Branch.**

**Vietnam Peacekeepers Peacemakers
Federation of Tasmania Inc.**

Vietnam Veterans Federation

Committee:

National President William Roberts OAM

NSW State President Frank Cole

Qld State President Peter Handy

ACT State President Ward Gainey

Vic State President John Arnold

SA State president Mal Thiele

WA State President Milton Kirk JP

Tas State President TBA

Research Officer Graham Walker AM

Canberra Research Group

Research Officer John Godwin OAM

Research Officer Jules Wills

Cover Story

The Claims Backlog

The Government is hiring consultants to review the claims processing system to help reduce the inexcusable backlog of pension claims.

Consultants McKinsey & Company will deliver a remedial plan in December 2021.

We think Santa Clause may be a safer bet, for getting the job done quickly, but we wait in hope.

And, of course, we hope McKinsey's is not just another report DVA will hire more consultants to review and so on.

In the meantime we offer this suggestion to McKinsey.

To make sure your plan does actually reduce the backlog of claims, please recommend the following rules:

- Claims in the system for over 12 months must be settled immediately in favour of the claimant or a written explanation for the delay provided.
- Claims in the system for 6 months accompanied by medico reports supporting the claims, must be immediately settled in the claimants' favour or a written explanation for the delay provided. ■



Advertise in our Newsletter

**Best rates going
Australian Military
Associations reunions and
contact notices, all FREE!**

Corporate Rates:

(Monochrome, grayscale, black/white only)

Full Page \$660

Half Page \$330

(Prices include GST)

10% Discount applied to campaigns that run consecutively for 3 or more issues.

**Contact the Editor
always open to negotiation
editor@vvfagranville.org**

CLOSE-OFF DATE FOR MARCH 2022 ISSUE 3 FEBRUARY 2022

For items of publication contact
editor@vvfagranville.org

SEEKING

3173819 LCPL WALLACE NEESON

1 ARU AND 9 RAR 4/69– 12/69

PLEASE CONTACT

DES MACDONALD 0488 454 510

**“WALLY, DES AND ‘BLUE’ HAVE LOST
CONTACT AND WOULD LIKE TO HEAR
FROM YOU AGAIN.**

WHAT WE DO

We have over forty years' experience assisting with claims in all of the Military Compensation schemes, by our fully qualified, compassionate, highly skilled, Compensation Advocates, Pension and Wellbeing Officers.

We continually strive for the rights of veterans and their families, whenever changes to the laws that govern and recognise their service threatens to diminish just and fair compensation for those that are sent to fight Australia's wars.

We achieve our aims by continued vigilance of government proposals that affect the Acts of parliaments protecting veterans rights and entitlements. By assuring that DVA uphold and enable due process of claims to the letter of those laws. By lobbying government and ministers where the laws could be improved for the benefit of veterans and their families.

We fully support and faithfully attend the Ex-Service Organisations Round Table, (ESORT), group discussions with the government and DVA. As well as maintain a close liaison with other Ex-service organisations.

Our successes have been many, and clarified in our following pages of News, Current Issues and Historical records. Our legacy and continued efforts needs to be handed on to the next generation of youthful supporters willing to take up the challenge as our volunteers become frail and unable to take up the vigil.

We do not charge any fee nor expect recompence for any of our services, and rely upon grants, donations, gifts and bequests, along with a small income from the sale of Raffle tickets and merchandise, for paid Advocates, volunteer amenities, at our many offices throughout Australia.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE ©

Copyright of all original material in The Vietnam Veterans Newsletter is held by the author and should not be reproduced for profit without the permission of the author. Reproduction for non-profit newsletters, military archives or study purposes in proper context is allowable but acknowledgement of the author and source should be made.

Merry Christmas

NEWS HEADLINES

The Oasis Veterans' Wellbeing Centre in Townsville ...Is it all it's cracked up to be?..... Page 6

The Curious Incident The earliest Agent Orange challenge to the RSL Page 8

Private Creswell's Own Story..... Page 12

The Dat Do Dogs Were you invited?..... Page 22

The story of the 'Vung Tau Ferry' Part 1 What was it doing and what had it done before its ferry duty..... Page 24

Homage to Our Wives..... Stories from the home front.....Page 30

Getting Rid of the Dunny Flies Not recommended to be tried at home..... Page 32

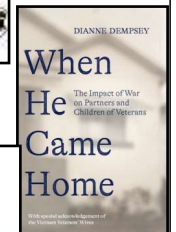
A Bush Christmas 1968 A dash of rum in the coffee Page 35

The adventures of Tank 169041, Part 4 In Vietnam and coming home.....Page 36

Important new history does the right thing..... Review of 'The Long Shadow' by Kel Robertson Page 39

Long Dien 8 February 1986 It's a story not well known..... Page 42

A War Widow Looks Back How a wife saw what was happening to her husband..... Page 44



What else is making news

NATIONAL PRESIDENT REPORT 1	16
NSW PRESIDENT REPORT	19
ASBESTOS IN THE RAAF	21
SECRETARY REPORT	28
THE LONG SHADOW EXTRACT	31
PSK FINANCES ARTICLE	46
8 RAR REUNION 2022	49
VALE FRED MORRISON	50
SPECIAL MERCHANDISE SALE	54

STOP PRESS

Jim Wain OAM Retires

One of the great contributors to veterans welfare, Jim Wain, is retiring.

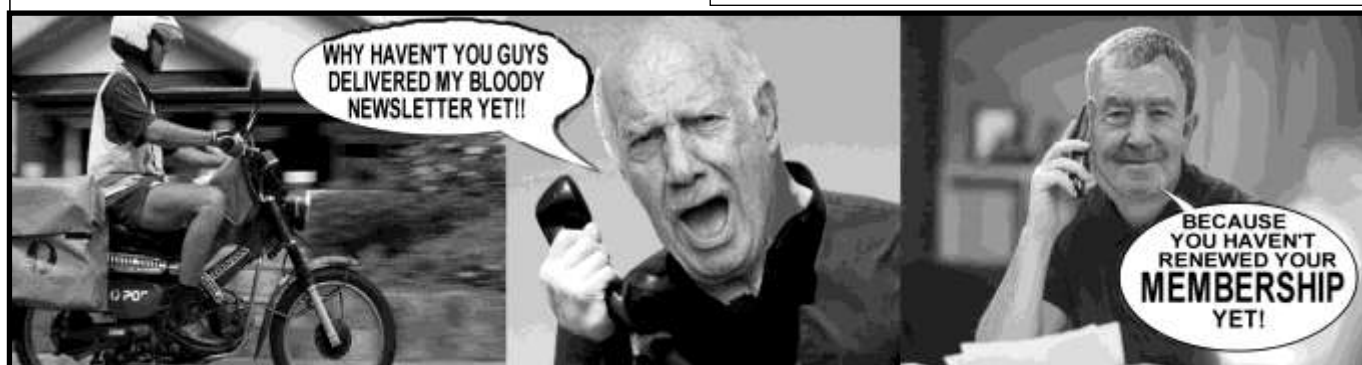
We wish him well and say 'thank you' for the great amount of good you have done for both veterans and their families.

As this edition of our magazine is heading off to the printers we have no time to explain just how magnificent has Jim's contribution been. We must leave that till our March 2022 edition.

Editor

Regular features

1. Authors intro
2. Federation Affiliates list
2. Cover Story
3. What We Do
4. Headliner News Index
5. Other News & Index
7. Kel Robertson Intro
15. The Minefield, an excerpt
18. Editors Desk
20. Letters to Editor / Apology
29. Membership Request Form
- 48 AVCAT Advert
52. Book Review—Out of Site, Out of Mind
56. Open Arms advert
57. Crossword Corner & Unknown Comic
58. Change of Address Form
59. Mortality Report Form
60. Branches / Sub-Branches Listings
62. Merchandise For Sale NSW
64. Merchandise order form
65. Operation Life Advert
66. Last Post
68. Member Discounts



DON'T FORGET YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS FALL DUE ON 1ST JANUARY

We welcome the establishment of the **Oasis Veterans' Wellbeing Centre in Townsville**

BUT

Oasis began operation espousing the aim of being a veterans' One Stop Shop.

Veterans could be helped in matters of health, jobs, housing and, of course, get help to submit a disability pension claim to DVA.

And, indeed, this is how Oasis started.

Recently, however, the Oasis Board decided that it would no longer assist with disability pension claims.

So, with one of its most important components banished, it is no longer a One Stop Shop.

So who is on the Board?

You would expect all the local ESOs would be represented.

We understand this is not the case.

The names of the Board members are not revealed on the Oasis web-site.

Why the secrecy?

We are hoping this is not another case of possibly well-meaning but ignorant authorities pushing the view that all veterans are employable in the normal workforce with permanent full-time jobs.

These optimists must realise that very many war veterans, disabled by the trauma of war, will never be fit for full-time work.

They must realise too that there is nothing more likely to increase the risk of suicides than cajoling veterans, at risk from badly disabling PTSD, to get back into a full-time job.

For many, getting a TPI (or SRDP etc) pension is the first and necessary step towards social rehabilitation and a reasonably tolerable life.

This failure to provide a disability claim service at the Oasis premises, is, to say the least, disappointing. ■



Kel Robertson has been delving into the dusty archives of the 1960s and the 1970s to discover the origins of the Australian Vietnam veteran movement.

His researches will eventually move up the decades to discover how the movement developed and what it achieved.

His first episode on the following pages tells of the first challenge to the RSL to take the Agent Orange threat seriously.

Kel Robertson is a Canberra based award winning author.

We welcome his endeavour.

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

VVAA HISTORY DRAFTS: No.1, PART 1

The most notable early public expression of concern about the exposure of Australian servicemen to chemicals in Vietnam came from an unlikely quarter, just six months after Prime Minister McMahon's announcement of the staged withdrawal of Australian troops from the war and on the day the final withdrawal phase began. The 24th of February 1972 was the second material day of public hearings for the Independent Inquiry into Repatriation conducted by Justice Paul Toose. It was also the second of two days on which the RSL's (then) National Secretary, William Keys, took the Inquiry through his organisation's lengthy submission.

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

A detailed account of what happened next no longer exists. The official record of the day's proceedings is missing from the bundle of early hearing transcripts in the National Library (seemingly the only place where any of these

records can still be found). Notes taken by Wal Newington, a prominent figure in the NSW RSL, who was attending the hearings as an observer, record the judge's question but provide little information on Keys' reaction.

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

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

Notwithstanding Keys' ready response to the judge's question, it seems improbable that the raising of the defoliants issue had been orchestrated by the League ie it seems unlikely that it was a "Dorothy Dixier". Defoliant harms to Vietnam veterans weren't comprehended by the 21



Mr. Justice Toose, who returned from a 10 week study tour on repatriation methods of Europe and America. He was conducting a four year enquiry into the Australian Repatriation System.

items in the RSL's submission, and, if the League had wanted to give the issue a public profile – at a time when it was anxious to have Vietnam veterans join the organisation – it would have included the matter in these formal submissions; it would also have later issued a media release. More to the point, there were numerous issues at that time which would have better served the purpose of making the League popular with Vietnam veterans or making it seem concerned for their wellbeing. It needs to be recalled, too, that the exposure of servicemen to chemicals in Vietnam was yet to become even a minor issue in the US or Australia.

The precise reasons for Toose's speculation about the role of defoliants in cancer causation are

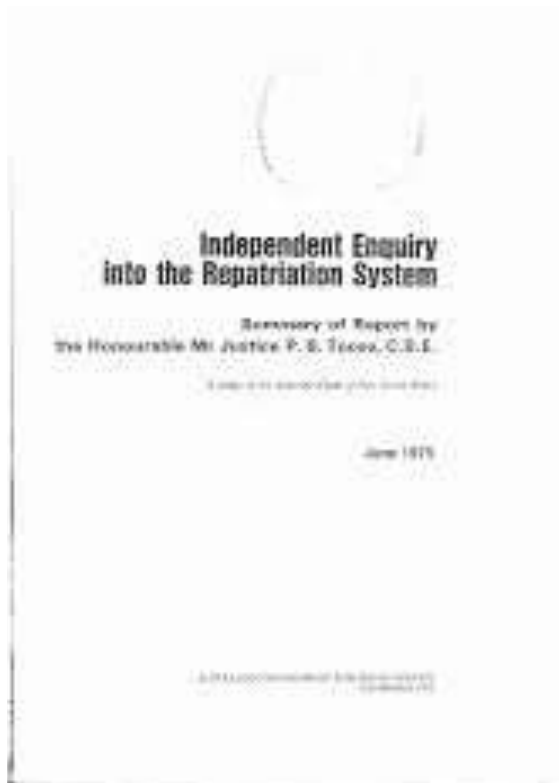
not clear. However, a number of possibilities present themselves. The first group of these possibilities relies on the judge noting speculation in the public sphere about the possible harm done to humans by chemicals in general, before concluding that there might be health consequences for soldiers in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

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

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

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

(Continued on page 10)



the Vietnamese. It is possible, too, that the judge encountered an extraordinary article in the 7 February 1970 issue of “The New Yorker” – a publication then held in high regard by well-read Australians – which traced the history of defoliant use in Vietnam, revealed the findings of Government sponsored research into the effects of 2,4,5-T on animals – a higher incidence of deformities – and exposed the reluctant, delayed action by the Nixon Administration to act on these findings (after they were, in effect, leaked). The article also drew attention to the differences between the domestic and military concentrations of 245-T and to the large amounts of dioxin – a chemical then thought to be extraordinarily dangerous – in the 245-T used in Vietnam. It speculated, too, on the impact of herbicides on the Vietnamese, making mentions of reported birth defects, without pondering the impact of spraying on foreign combatants.

A separate, fourth set of reasons why Toose might have made the connection he did, at a time when it wasn’t being made in public by others, relates to personal experience. Published insights into Toose’s life, such as they are, tend to focus on his many achievements as a judge and public

figure, and make little mention of his private interests, but an advertisement for a property he once owned near Wagga indicates that he was a notable Hereford breeder. In this capacity he would have had contact with pasture ‘improving’ agents (and seen the serious warnings on their containers), and could well have read the rural newspaper, The Land, which featured a number of articles about poisoning risks to farmers in the early 1970s.

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

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

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

Whatever the reason for Toose’s interest in the impact of defoliant exposure on cancer rates, Keys, as stated above, responded quickly, seeking information from the Leagues’ state branches. Even if this prompt action was mostly designed to curry favour with the judge or impress upon him the League’s willingness to act on his concerns, it probably served the additional timely purpose of reminding Vietnam veterans that the League wasn’t completely focussed on matters of importance to the WWII cohort.

It seems, though, that RSL State Branches were slow in responding to Keys’ request. They didn’t have the means, before the advent of email, to quickly contact members, but there’s no

evidence, at the same time, that they took the matter seriously. For example, an article on Keys' appearance before the Toose Inquiry appeared in the April edition of the NSW Branch's publication, *Reveille*, but it was not until June that the magazine allocated space to the Toose defoliant question ... and this was after the 8 May 1972 National Executive meeting at which the matter would logically have been discussed. Scrutiny of RSL National Executive Minutes indicates that the matter was not raised on 8 May or at subsequent meetings. The defoliant incident was not, it seems, one given priority by the State Branches and, in the absence of clear harms, was a matter readily disposed of by the national leadership.

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

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

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

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

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

The second and concluding part of this article will appear in a later issue of the Newsletter.

Kel Robertson is a Canberra writer. He is currently researching the history of the VVAA. The views expressed in this article are his own and not those of the Federation. Readers who have additional information about matters mentioned in this article can contact Kel at vvhistory99@gmail.com .



© Kel Robertson 2021. ■

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

2786568

PRIVATE JOHN ARTHUR CRESWELL MY STORY

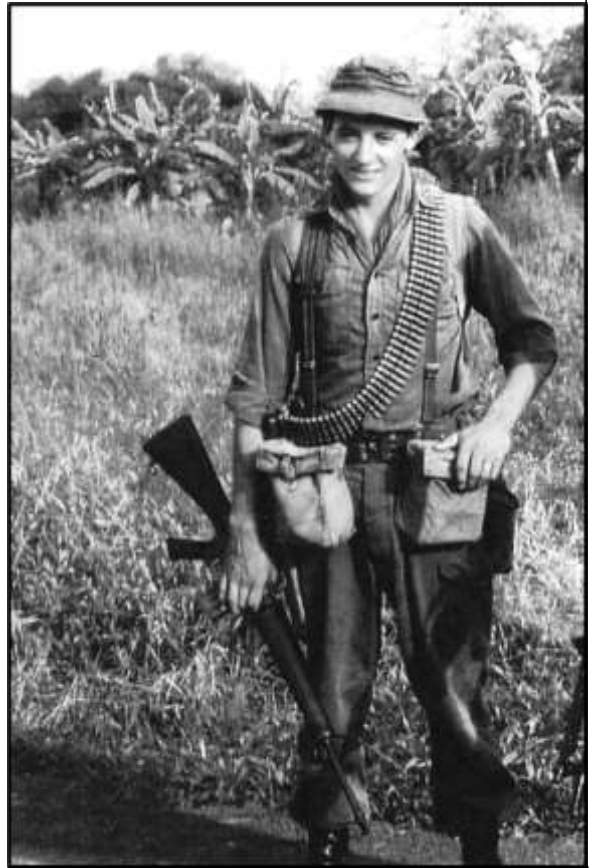
(editor's note: and maybe your story too)

I was conscripted into the Australian Army in April 1967, at age 20, for two years National Service.

After three months Recruit Training at Puckapunyal, in Victoria, and three months Infantry Corps Training at Singleton, NSW I, along with about 40 others, was posted as reinforcements to the 3rd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment at Woodside, in the Adelaide Hills, to join this Battalion as the next to go to Vietnam.

Three of us, Mal Deveson, John Desnoy and I joined 9 Section, 12 Platoon, D Coy., with Second Lt. Norm Peatling as Commanding Officer 12 Platoon. As the Battalion had already completed Jungle Training at Canungra, in Queensland, our group was sent there immediately for twenty one days intensive training. I shared a tent with John Desnoy and during that time his father died in Melbourne and he was sent home on Compassionate Leave to attend the funeral.

On return to Woodside, 3RAR left Outer Harbour, Adelaide, in December 1967 on HMAS Sydney for Vietnam. We spent Christmas Day at sea and during the trip they announced throughout the ship that the Australian Prime Minister, Harold Holt, had gone missing. As our Battalion represented an increase in Australia's commitment from two to three Infantry Battalions, we occupied a new area at Nui Dat and the first few weeks were spent digging pits, filling sand bags etc.



The Author. " Even Forward Scouts carried extra ammo for the gunner. And, check out the outdated webbing. JAC.

In February 1968, during the Tet Offensive, the villages of Baria and Long Dien were occupied by the Viet Cong and 3RAR were involved in the

retaking of these towns and it was at Long Dien that 'D' Coy. suffered their first casualties.

In March we spent over three weeks, as a Battalion operation, in the Long Hai Hills (Operation Pinaroo) which was a renowned Viet Cong stronghold. It was at this time I became Forward Scout for 9 Section, swapping my SLR for an M16 Rifle. John Desnoy Second Scout, and Mal Deveson machine gunner for the section. Australian Centurian tanks accompanied us in part and this was the first time Australian tanks had been used in combat since WWII.

During the taking of an enemy camp, 12 Platoon came under attack from enemy grenades and John Desnoy and I were trapped under a rock overhang when two

grenades landed at our feet but failed to detonate. We captured enemy supplies, rations, weapons and a VC Provincial Flag which I still have to this day. We also had success in overnight ambushes in this operation.

In May 1968 the Task Force thought that there was going to be further attacks on Saigon as a follow up to the Tet Offensive, which had occurred three months previously. As a result of this they decided to set up three Fire Support Bases around Saigon - Coral, Balmoral and Coogee - to counter these. 3RAR was sent to establish FSB Balmoral, north east of Saigon, as a Battalion Operation.

Prior to our arrival the whole area had been bombed by B52 Bombers to clear an area for our unit to set up. The first couple of days were spent digging pits and putting out barbed wire surrounds.

We were attacked by a regiment of North Vietnamese regular soldiers at about 3 a.m. on the 26th May and the bulk of the attackers were in front of 'D' Coy. lines. Hundreds of Vietnamese attacked us over open country and literally threw themselves at our barbed wire surrounds. We were also under heavy bombardment from North

Vietnamese mortars. My pit received a direct hit killing my mate, Johnny Desnoy, and I was only saved by a thin wall of dirt. All our equipment, including my rifle, was blown to pieces. The only injuries I received were severe shock, concussion and temporary deafness as my ears were screaming from the explosion. I was covered in all types of debris - punctured ration tins, torn pieces of webbing and broken rifles.

I had to be resupplied with new webbing, water bottles, packs and rifle the next day. Poor John's Mother had lost a husband and a son within

six months!

Mal Deveson fired off over 4,000 rounds during this attack and, in my eyes, was a real hero in preventing our position from being

'...during this operation I saw one of the bravest acts I ever witnessed...'

overrun. The barrel of his machine gun ran white hot and he experienced many stoppages. At daylight six enemy bodies were found outside the wire and we believe many more were dragged away during the night which was the enemy's practice.

We were attacked again on the morning of the 28th May and facing rifle fire and mortars again until we broke up the attack with the help of artillery and tanks. The next morning there were forty two enemy bodies discovered and were subsequently buried in old B52 craters. Australian casualties were two killed and about ten wounded which was light considering the ferocity of the attacks.

I remember General William Westmoreland (who was the Supreme Commander of all Allied Forces in Vietnam) visiting our Fire Support Base after the second attack. The operation wound up after another ten days when we returned to base at Nui Dat.

August saw Operation Platypus, one of our worst and most frightening from memory in terms of the concentration of enemy in one area. This took us into Hat Dich, the enemy's main base area. We encountered heavily fortified bunker systems

(Continued on page 14)

L-R: The author, John Creswell, Rod Cousins, and Johnny Desnoy. This picture was taken just a couple of weeks before Johnny was killed at FSB Balmoral 26 May 1968. JAC.



and tracks which were so well worn by the enemy we referred to them as "Pitt Street".

During this operation, Sergeant Ron Carroll of 10 Platoon, D Coy., was shot and died on his way to hospital. Twelve Platoon were involved in carrying him to the Medivac helicopter and I was on one corner of his stretcher. The pilot did an incredible job coming in so low to pick him up during the action. We harboured up that night, in the dark, into a defensive circle ensuring that there were no gaps in the perimeter - not an easy thing to do. After some initial confusion we settled in for the night and there was little, if any, sleep. The whole area "smelt" of Viet Cong.

At one stage during this operation I saw one of the bravest acts I ever witnessed of our O.C., Major Peter Phillips, running past our lead section, along with his Sig., calling in artillery on the enemy just in front of us. We prayed that his mathematics was correct as our shells were barely clearing the tree tops above us. We were well served by our Artillery and RAAF Gunships that pinned down the enemy and saved us from further harassment. The death of Ron Carroll hit D Company very hard as he was a very experienced Sergeant having served in Borneo and Malaya. We had already lost another experienced Sergeant in Peter Lewis three months previously. My unit continued operations

up until November 1968 when we returned to Australia on HMAS Sydney.

We marched through the streets of Adelaide and were given a good reception. Our Battalion casualties were 24 killed, including 7 from D Coy during our deployment. We live our day to day lives in this country in comfort and these boys can't share this with us. We will never forget their sacrifice and they will never be forgotten.

I spent the last three months in the army at South Head Barracks, in Sydney, doing Guard Duty and washing dishes in the Mess. Obviously I had to complete my two year's service, however, I felt very disappointed, after what our Unit had been through in Vietnam, to be doing it in this way.

My father, Arthur Robert Creswell, was born in 1897 in Hobart, Tasmania and served at Gallipoli and the mud and the slush that was France in World War I. Although Dad never accepted my Vietnam service. As participating in a 'real war' I think. times have changed now and we are getting the appropriate recognition for this action.

John Arthur Creswell,
3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
November 1967 to December 1968

The Minefield

Another extract from the book

[Commander of Australian Force Vietnam, General Hay], also pointed out the Australian press in Vietnam knew well that the original reason for the minefield was to 'deny enemy movement to and from population centres... [and] prevent movement of food supplies'. [In a signal to Army Headquarters in Canberra General Hay said]:

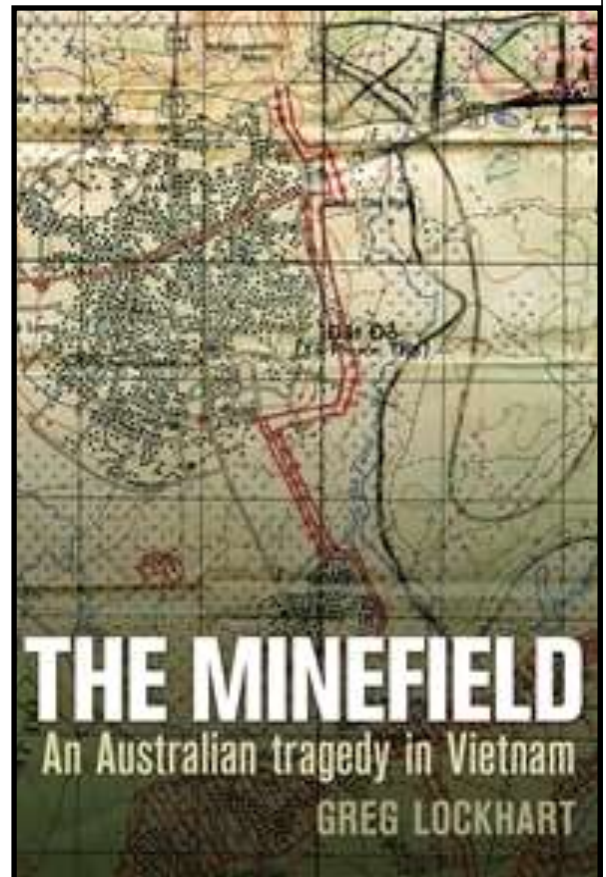
'The means of preventing the above movement is now viewed differently because we know the barrier minefield in fact had only limited success. You refer to 'most successful'. I know opinions differ on the degree of success but I think most successful is overdoing it...We are now destroying the minefield not because the minefield has achieved its purpose but because there are many gaps in it...and the minefield is a source of supply to the VC. Why cannot we say so and clear this up for good? The Australian press in this area know of this.'

Dr Greg Lockhart is a Vietnam veteran, having served with AATTV.

He is an eminent historian whose work has been widely acknowledged.

His writing of this excellent book came from the VVFA's concern that it knew very little about the Minefield when dealing with veterans damaged by their contact with it.

He is the VVFA's honorary historian. ■



It is the best book so far written about Australia's participation in the Vietnam war.

Written ten years ago and still selling well.

To get your copy simply ring the NSW Branch Granville Office on 02 9682 1788.
Or order online at: www.vfagranville.org

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A Royal Commission on ADF suicide has begun operation.

So lets get a couple of things straight

A 2005 government study compared the health of National Servicemen who were sent to fight the war in Vietnam with those National Servicemen who were kept in Australia.

The difference turned out to be significant.

Those who had fought the war had a 43% higher suicide rate and 31% higher rate of motor accidents (often a form of suicide).

This indisputably showed that fighting a war increases the combatants' risk of later suicide.

Indeed nothing could be clearer.

Another interesting statistic emerged.

Overall, the mortality rate of National Servicemen who served in Vietnam was 19% lower than their peers in the general population.

How can this be explained?

The selection process for recruits was thorough. Anyone with a hint of a physical or psychological condition was not selected.

So National Servicemen formed a much healthier group than their peers in the general population.

This meant they could be expected to have a much lower mortality rate including a much lower suicide rate.

But in 2015 when the suicides of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans became an issue, these clear cut facts were ignored.



VVFA headquarters, Granville

Statements were being made by spokespeople for the Department of Defence and DVA that, tragic as veterans' suicides were, their rate was no more than their peers in the general community, implying that their military service had no part in it.

They were, of course, wrong twice.

Firstly, regardless of what statistics they might have dug up, the Vietnam example showed conclusively fighting a war **does** increase the risk of suicide. Secondly, even if ADF suicides were at no greater rate than that of their peers in the general community, it was a matter of concern because that suicide rate should have been significantly lower.

Those suicide statistics were revised upwards as the enquiry deepened, showing the ADF suicide rate eclipsing even their civilian peers.

It was only then the Department of Defence and DVA linked the suicide with ADF service, having wasted valuable time.

We trust the Royal Commission accepts and understands these two vital facts.

Once the Royal Commission is sure DVA understands that fighting a war increases the fighters' risk of suicide and understands that a

group of veterans would be expected to have a lower mortality rate including suicide than their peers in the general community, then the Royal Commission might look at the multi-deployment policy for the Iraq, Timor and Afghanistan conflicts.

Once it became normal for military personnel to be deployed 4,5, 6 and more times, it was clear to us there would be a tsunami of trouble in the years after the fighting was over. It was simply inevitable.

DVA's failure to accept and plan for this seems to be the naïve assumption that whilst the war was on no large numbers of veterans were coming forward with problems. Of course, as everyone else understood, the military personnel would bottle it up so as not to miss a redeployment. Then, when the war was over, they would be hitting the wall in droves.

But DVA could not be told.

And there is the question of why military personnel, particularly from the combat units, were deployed, time after time.

Should the government have raised another SAS Squadron and another Commando battalion so redeployments of individuals would be kept at a reasonable level?

Was the government just waging war on the cheap to the detriment of those who fought?

Does this make the government and it's accountant advisors partly responsible for so many suicides?

THE suicide of Jesse Bird exposed the failings of the Repatriation System, failings that we have fought against for years.

The basic problem is this:

Sick veterans from more recent wars can be kept waiting for a year or more to establish their condition is stable and permanent, a very long time for the traumatised. It is a process that makes veterans sicker.

DVA justifies its fetish on rehabilitation by making the obvious point the best outcome for a sick veterans is economic rehabilitation; that is, for

the veteran to recover so they can return to full time work.

Of course that is true. But it missed the point that many war traumatised veterans, no matter how long they are kept waiting, no matter what rehabilitation they may receive, will never again be able to rejoin the normal workforce.

Keeping them waiting can be torture.

And it is not necessary. There is a workable and humane alternative.

Under legislation governing Vietnam veterans, TPI compensation is granted by a medical assessment that the condition is permanent and veterans' capacity to work is limited. Under this system compensation has been granted much more quickly.

And, under this system, if the Vietnam veteran pensioner, after some time, believes his condition has unexpectedly improved so much that he can reenter the workforce, he can apply to do so. He is taken off the TPI pension but left on 100% of the General Rate and returns to work.

If later the veterans' condition deteriorates they can cease work and be put back on the TPI pension.

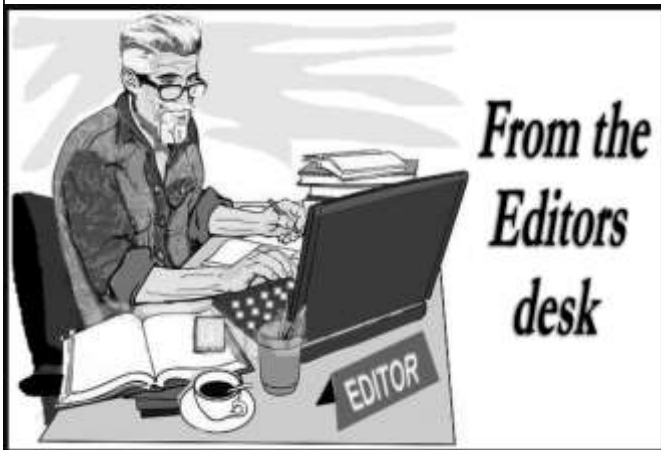
This old but good system avoids the often destructive wait that younger veterans must suffer, yet allows a return to work for the few who unexpectedly recover.

For so many veterans, economic rehabilitation is simply a fantasy. What we should be focusing on is social rehabilitation and this starts with a modicum of financial rescue with a TPI or equivalent pension.

Giving such veterans fast financial peace of mind and encouraging them through VVCS and veterans' organisations to reenter society, should be the priority. It is certainly better for their mental health.

The current system is harmful and should be replaced by its predecessor. ■

Bill Roberts OAM JP
National President
VVFA



Sometimes a man is so loved by his family friends and colleagues, that they seek in his memory, a memento of his passing.

A bereaved wife and daughter asked us to help with such a memento and we were happy to do so. So, with our sincerest condolences to Berenice and Cheryl, and all the family, and many friends, we have included the eulogy, for **Frederick Lyle Morrison**, at page 50, so that as Berenice requested, many of Freds ex-digger community could have access to the words so well prepared and read at the funeral by a grandson.

And we would also like to acknowledge and correct Fred's listing in the August issue 'Last Post'. Fred was born on 24 March 1937 and died on 25 March 2021. Again, our sympathies to all who knew him.

While on the subject of our Last Post listings, I have one more duty to perform. And, that is to advise that one such listing, in the August edition has phoned me to report he is alive and well. To put it mildly we owe Geoff Carthew, his wife and family and wealth of friends and colleagues our most heartfelt apologies.

Part of that duty included the rigorous tracing of how these notices appear. There are usual safeguards and protocols in place that are rarely unattended, with all due care, and nothing taken at face value.

On this occasion the notice came from within Geoff's own sub-branch, and we have reprinted their report on the matter, overleaf on page 20, and ask that the Carthew family accept Stephen Finney OAM, and our sincerest apology.

MEMBERSHIP

Belonging
Advocacy
Success

*Membership is due on 1 January each year.
(July 1 for Queensland members)*

Membership to our organisation empowers a team to achieve much within the veteran community, by assisting veterans with claims and applications on a wide spectrum of government provided avenues of compensation and benefits across 3 Acts of parliament.

Each as an individual is ineffective when lobbying governments for change, or to amend an injustice. Together as an organisation, with a strong membership we are able to, and have done, improve pathways for better treatment of veterans.

We survive as an organisation on the strength of our membership, and even if you have won the battle with Veterans Affairs (DVA), there is always the risk of changes in Government policy which may erode benefits and pensions or changes to eligibility entitlements.

We encourage membership from all who support our objectives, veterans, service and ex-service members, as well as war-widows and their families. You don't have to be a member or ex-member of the Australian Defence Forces (ADF). In most instances, anyone may join our organisation, with few exceptions, so why not enquire today.

It is through our membership subscriptions, fund raising activities and many kind donations from our members, and general public, that we are able to continue supporting our fellow Veterans and Service members in need, and meet our increasing welfare and pension workload.

Should you be able to help with a donation, or leave a bequest in your Will, it would be extremely beneficial and greatly appreciated.

We thank you for your kind support.

NEW SOUTH WALES PRESIDENT'S REPORT



COVID-19

We are naturally all pleased and relieved that most of the COVID-19 health orders have been lifted and we can now get back to some sort of normality. Our Granville head office was closed for a couple of weeks with staff working from home where possible. We are now back in full operation with all COVID protection measures in place including the requirement to use our QR code or sign in procedures. We are a COVID safe workplace.

DVA claims

Notwithstanding closures due to COVID-19 the work performed by our Advocates has not abated. Claims lodged through our Granville Veterans Support Centre continue to be high in number and in success outcomes. The number of serving and former members of the Australian Defence Force who utilise our Granville services is approximately triple that of the next Ex-Service Organisation. This fact can be attributed to the quality of our vastly experienced Compensation Advocates and support staff. The work performed from our Granville Veterans Support Centre is something which all members can be proud. Similarly, the work of our many sub-branches should not go without mention. They continue to proudly serve their members with a variety of services.

Funding

Association membership continues to be strong and many make regular donations with every dollar being utilised to cater for the needs of our members and other clientele. Donations also continue to be received from registered clubs through their Grants programs. You can be assured that our finances are being well managed by Treasurer Bob Freshfield and Office Manager

Romina Betvardeh, Your very active elected NSW Branch Committee members continued to be briefed during the COVID closure period and are now once again meeting face-to-face to discuss issues of concern and action required to improve the lot of our veteran community.

Outreach Program

Our extensive Outreach Program remains on hold due to restrictions imposed throughout the pandemic but plans are now being put in place for a resumption of this very successful program to cater for the needs of those living in regional and remote areas. We also conduct this program in Sydney and surrounds for those who may be incapacitated or otherwise unable to visit our office or communicate electronically.

Reminder

Should you have been receiving a part disability pension for some time and have not had it reviewed you may have an entitlement to a higher amount. A worsening of your accepted disabilities or new conditions which may be related to your service may be grounds to lodge another DVA claim. One of our Compensation Advocates can advise you in this regard.

Festive Season

On behalf of the NSW Branch Committee and our staff I would like to wish all members and their families all the very best for a very happy, safe and COVID free Christmas period. May 2022 be a very good year for you all.

Frank Cole
NSW
President





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Newcastle and Hunter Region Vietnam Veterans Inc. (Including Peacekeepers and Peacemakers)

ABN: 20-997-216-922

PO Box 288 WALLSEND NSW 2287
Telephone (02) 4951 2666
Fax (02) 4951 2633
Email: nhvets@bigpond.net.au

Wallsend Diggers Club
17 Tyrrell Street WALLSEND NSW 2287
Reg No. Y2897820
Charity No. CFN15630



Patron: Tom Yeo OAM

Monday, 11 October 2021

The Editor, VVFA Newsletter
C/O PO Box 170
GRANVILLE, NSW 2142



Dear Sir or Madam,

In your August 2021 edition of the Vietnam Veterans' Newsletter in "last Post" page 82 the death of 2793339 Gnr. G.S. Carthew who served with Det.131 IOC BTY Date of death was April 24/9/49.

The death was reported to the Federation Granville by me as membership officer of the Newcastle & Hunter Region Vietnam Veterans' because of information received by our office. As it turns out the information we received was false.

I have since spoken with Geoff Carthew and have apologised as I feel the error was by me as I never followed up to verify the information I received. Systems have now been put into place in the office procedure so as to alleviate any such error happening again.

As the Editor of the magazine could you please print a retraction of the notice and if possible a personal apology from me as Branch membership officer.

I do hope you can help with this situation as it has caused unwanted stress to the Carthew family, their friends and colleagues.

Regards,

Stephen W. Finney OAM JP
VICE PRESIDENT
MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

This Association is proudly supported by



An important message from Ted McEvoy about asbestos exposure in the RAAF

Morning all,

You may have heard about a possible asbestos exposure to personnel who worked on RAAF Base Laverton in building 474.

It's the RADS, AMSPO, DGTA, AFTG building, depending on your era.

This is how I found out from RAAF Laverton Face Book page:

"This email is to advise workers who have worked in building 474, at RAAF Williams Laverton Base of a potential asbestos exposure. Enquiries into the historic use of the building and likely exposure period have not been conclusive.

Defence WHS Branch has requested Groups and Services to ensure this information is distributed widely.

In December 2020, an occupational hygienist report confirmed friable asbestos existed in the ceiling spaces of Ground Floor B Wing and C Wing, as well as Level 1 B Wing and C Wing, of building 474, RAAF Williams Laverton. Consequently air monitoring and asbestos fibre monitoring were undertaken in areas below the ceiling line. At the time of the monitoring fibres detected were found to be below the asbestos exposure standard and this report is available via Objective links BS22687261 (report dated 24 May 2020) and BS21648113 (Report date 07 Jul 2020).

While the monitoring levels undertaken in May and July 2021, indicate levels of fibres to office workers remained below exposure limits, however it cannot be confirmed that asbestos fibre levels were consistently maintained below the exposure standard level prior to these reports being delivered this year.

The latency period for asbestos related diseases is between 10 to 50 years, therefore if you or anyone you know worked in any of these areas you should register with Defence Asbestos and Hazardous Chemicals Exposure Scheme (DAHCES). An asbestos fact sheet is attached for your information."

This link will take you to the Defence Asbestos and Hazardous Chemicals Exposure Scheme [www](https://www1.defence.gov.au/about/complaints-incident-reporting/asbestos-hazardous-chemicals-exposure-scheme) and details the process for you to register under the scheme.

<https://www1.defence.gov.au/about/complaints-incident-reporting/asbestos-hazardous-chemicals-exposure-scheme>

In short, ring 1800 333 362 and they will take you thru the rego process.

If you spent time in Bld 474 on Laverton, please consider registering under the Scheme. ■

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

DAT DO DOGS

Australia's involvement in South Vietnam between 1965-72 was to assist in blocking the communists insurgency in the north from infiltrating to the south.

There are many stories about non-combative incidents that may never be told so I feel it essential that we document as many of these anecdotal yarns as possible, while we can.

In 1970 I was a national serviceman attached to 104 Signal Squadron at Nui Dat, South Vietnam.

An outing to the *Dat Do Dogs* (pronounced *Dat Doe*) was a 'must visit' place for soldiers new to the major Australian Task Force Base at Nui Dat. It was either this or the Hoa Long Dance but if you were very lucky, both!

Many of the new arrivals were greeted with an invitation to these innocuous functions deep in the heart of a war zone.

Nui Dat was established in April 1966 by members of the United States 173rd Airborne, the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR) and the newly arrived 5th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (5RAR).

When complete it is said that the perimeter fence surrounding Nui Dat measured a distance of 12km; so that will give you some idea of how big the place was.

It contained an airport called *Luscombe Field*, a bitumen chopper pad, *Eagle Farm*, measuring at least 200m x 100m, a blue metal quarry, a concrete batching facility a small hospital and many, many units, ranging from Infantry, Cavalry (tanks) and Artillery to Hygiene, Civil Affairs, Dental Units, Postal Units and the list goes on. Really, Nui Dat was a reasonable sized

settlement by Australian standards, populated by about 5000 soldiers at its peak in 1969, although many of these were on operational duty outside of the limits of the task force area.

So you can imagine with a population that size, it contained virtually all the facilities of a similar sized Australian centre and it took lots of soldiers to keep the place running. Interestingly, one thing it had very few of, unlike the US bases, were local inhabitants. These were limited to barbers and a controlled number South Vietnamese troops who were assisting sections of the Australian contingent.

It is interesting to note here that one of the South Vietnamese barbers working at the base which was located near the PX at Luscombe, was killed one night in 1970 during a contact with Australian troops, apparently whilst active with the VC.

Nui Dat was located on Route 2 located approximately 30km inland from the major coastal Australian Support Base of Vung Tau. To its west, about 80km distant, was the capital of South Vietnam, Saigon, now Ho Chi Min City.

There were numerous villages dotted around Nui Dat: Hoa Long (pronounced *Har Long*), the provincial capital Bar Ria, Long Dien and to the south east, the village of Dat Do.

Dat Do was well known as a hostile VC Village and the population contained a high percentage of VC families, a Viet Cong infrastructure and sympathisers willing to live in co-existence with each other.

In Australia, the village of Dapto, on the South Coast of New South Wales and now a

(Continued on page 23)



suburb of Wollongong, was officially founded in 1834, when George Brown transferred the Ship Inn from Wollongong to Mullet Creek Farm. It gained its basic prominence as an area rich in dairy production.

Greyhound racing at the Dapto Showground began in February 1937. The first meeting offered £108 in total prize money, with the club approved to hold 40 races meetings a year.

WWII put a stop to this activity but by early 1944 the action had resumed with a 10 race program held for some time, on Saturday afternoons due to power restrictions, then later when things settled down, returning to their regular Thursday night meetings.

The name or the title “Dapto Dogs” has almost become an iconic term ingrained in Australian folklore, so when our troops heard the name of the South Vietnam village, Dat Do, they immediately introduced a parallel or a play on words with that of the NSW South Coast activity.

This expression quickly circulated around the Task Force and it was commonplace for replacement troops and even units to be “invited” to attend the following Friday Night’s outing to the “Dat Do Dogs”.

Of course most were unsuspecting and when told several of their colleagues would also be going along, they fell into the trap.

Some even dressed in their civilian clothes on the Friday Afternoon expecting to take the short drive to Dat Do for the dog meeting.

On several occasions troops new to Vietnam would be trucked to AFV PRO (Provost Unit) at Nui Dat for a pre-departure inspection by

the senior NCO before being permitted to leave the camp.

I just happened to be at the Provo Unit late one Friday afternoon when an army truck pulled up at the unit, and a corporal left the vehicle going straight into the Orderly Room, where he explained the situation to the CSM. Obliging, the CSM was smartly out on the parade ground ordering the troops to debus and form up in twos, for their review before they would be “permitted to leave the Task Force Area.”

Of course in reality, there was no leaving the task force after dark or any time unsupervised or without a valid reason. The gates were locked and the perimeter defence system had been deployed.

The CSM smartly inspected the group, finding fault with each of the twenty or so soldiers. Some did not have their shoes cleaned, others needed a haircut whilst some were told that their trousers were not adequately pressed.

He then addressed the group with swagger stick under arm, bawling them out for being so sloppily turned out and announcing that they would not be permitted to go out of a Friday Night until they showed some regard for their dress. He ordered the corporal to take the group back to their unit and have them on his parade ground the following Friday Afternoon for a further inspection if they intended to again visit the Dat Do Dogs!

Remember, painting rocks white is good for the soul.

Ian Granland OAM JP ■

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

We have published stories about the experience of army passengers on HMAS Sydney (or the Vung Tao Ferry as those passengers called her).

Here we have a story from one of the crew, John Ingram



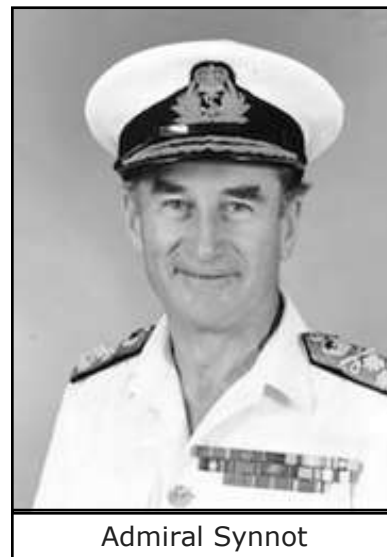
HMAS SYDNEY: the bloody “American War” 1966-67

Part 1 The first of many parts.

HMAS SYDNEY's crest is that of her namesake city while her motto is “**Thorough and Ready**”. This motto had relevance as an operational aircraft carrier but was certainly not the case in the mid-1960s as a nondescript and euphemistically titled **Fast Military Transport** with a consequential change in pennant number from R17 to A214. We, the Ship's Company, reduced the motto to “**Rough and Ready**”. In sailor speech this translated to “get the bloody job done!”.

Our Commanding Officer in 1966 was Captain “Tony” Synnot, an outstanding leader in every respect and later to become Chief of the Australian Defence Force (1979-82) as Admiral Sir Anthony Monckton Synnot KBE, AO

The ADF involvement in this long and tragic conflict is well documented in official accounts. I've no intention of reproducing in this



Admiral Synnot

personal record. Rather, my objective is to record incidents I recall or experienced; not “highlights or lowlights”, but matters remaining in my mind decades later.

By 1966 I'd been in the RAN 10 years. The operational experience of “Konfrontasi” between Indonesia and (now)

(Continued on page 25)

Malaysia, and demanding training, such as that undergone in 1962 at the Jungle Training Centre, Canungra QLD, had boosted my sense of worth as a junior officer. That said, no amount of preparation equips one fully for the “unknowns” of combat, of how one will react in a life-threatening situation or lead men in challenging and confronting circumstances.

In April 1966 the SYDNEY was to commence a long overdue refit. Instead, we were “under sailing orders” but the matter of “when” was veiled in secrecy. Not even our “nearest and dearest” were to be informed. Early one morning I was under the shower when my wife entered the bathroom, angry and emotional. For the second time in two years of our marriage I was about to go to war again. She’d learned on the 0600 ABC Radio news the SYDNEY and her two escorts were to depart that day for South Vietnam, fully laden with her 600 combat soldiers and the appurtenances with which to fight the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Regular Army. Of course, her anger was justifiable, more so in that I’d failed to confide our imminent departure. I was the dutiful, professional sailor maintaining a position that overlaid spousal loyalty.

The departure from Sydney Harbour was both sombre and emotional with sailors and soldiers lining the flight deck for the ceremonial departure. But at the Heads all changes as the entire complement is “stood down”, to change into sea “working dress” and then mustered for emergency lifesaving drills. As the big ship, loaded to the gunwales with thousands of tonnes of fuel, stores, military vehicles ranging from ambulances and graders to tracked vehicles and howitzers sets course north, the escorts race to take up station.



Troops from 3 RAR embark at Garden Island

The “old girl” belches smoke as her boilers are called upon to feed more steam to her turbines, her plates grind as the swell from abeam causes the characteristic roll of a carrier with a top weight problem. There is a distinct throbbing aft as the huge propellers pass through 18 knots. In the boat spaces are young soldiers experiencing “mal de mer”, wishing they were anywhere but onboard a Fast Military Transport taking them to war and a very uncertain future.

The first night at sea on any deployment is always an emotionally stressful time as one reflects upon the tearful eyes of those nearest and dearest left behind. There’s no beer issue that evening and many soldiers prefer to rest on their bunks or on camp stretchers or sling their new-found hammocks rather than attempt a meal (or “scrان” in sailor talk). For the fortunate soldiers it will be 365 long days and nights before they see Sydney once more.



HMAS SYDNEY 1966

The **SYDNEY** is a compromise; outdated as an aircraft carrier for fixed wing aircraft, yet has a flight of four Wessex 31B helos embarked for ASW (anti-submarine warfare) protection complete with a range of support equipment and spares; has 600 plus combat troops and their military hardware embarked; is the major fleet training unit and is engaged in a "hot" conflict in war-torn Vietnam. To manage this menagerie of SYDNEY's men and equipment are just 21 naval officers drawn from the permanent and reserve forces.

The SYDNEY also doubles as the Navy's primary training ship for both junior officers and sailors. Each deployment she undertakes (until retired from this arduous duty in 1972) will see an average 200 young sailors ranging in age from 17, and 12 midshipmen 17-19 years old, embarked at any one time, not only for training, but forming an integral part of the ship's company. These trainees will fill complement billets on the boiler plates, in the sea-boats, in fire-fighting and damage control parties, manning the fuelling-at-sea rigs, loading the helos with provisions and the guns with ammunition.

(Continued on page 27)



Secured to palms in Seeadler Harbour, Manus Island 1966

Once the ship enters the Coral Sea temperatures and humidity levels rise noticeably. North of New Guinea life between decks becomes most uncomfortable both day and night. SYDNEY is not air conditioned but reliant on old and very noisy fan forced air, distributed via overhead trunking. These fan motors often overheat resulting in acrid, black smoke being piped into compartments. Fire is a constant threat in a warship and SYDNEY has embarked thousands of tonnes of combustible material including fuels for her own consumption in her boilers and generators, for her helos and destroyer escorts. Should the salt water sprinklers be activated in the vast hangar spaces just 80 mm of surface water would capsize the ship with TARANGAU in PNG as the sole fleet oiler, SUPPLY, is unavailable. This is a fine, deep-water harbour (some say the finest in the world) but facilities are next to none. Rather comically SYDNEY is required to undertake a stern

refuelling evolution, a task I'd never seen previously or subsequently in my naval career. In lay terms SYDNEY anchored, without tug assistance, as close to the shore as possible without grounding. Two lines were then taken by sea boat and secured to large palm trees. A heavy 6-inch fuel line was then passed to shore and connected to a corroded pipe line. Atop a nearby hill was a huge rusty, furnace fuel oil storage tank of WW2 vintage. When SYDNEY was ready to receive, the valves were opened and under gravity feed, hundreds of tonnes of heavy black furnace oil filled our tanks. After some six hours we recovered the gear and re-joined our escorts at sea that evening .

Part 2 in the April 2022 edition. ■

FROM THE SECRETARY



ONCE again, we say **THANK YOU** to our many members who have made a financial donation to their State Branch. Without these donations we would find it much more difficult to cater to the needs of our war veterans, service and ex-service persons generally. Whilst all donations are gratefully received, and combined are of enormous assistance to us, they are too numerous to list. However, periodically, we will publish a list of individual NSW Branch members who have donated amounts of \$200 or more.

Generous supporters of the NSW Branch since the last Journal are:

\$500	Anonymous
\$300	Brian McVinish
\$200	William Bishop Paul Turner Leon Tranby Harold Ford

Whilst the above refers to, mostly, individual donations, we are also indebted to the many RSL sub-branches and other licensed clubs who generously contribute to our cause.

Ron O'Connor JP
NSW Secretary
VVPPAA NSW

2022 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE NOW DUE!!

Dear Member

It is that time again when annual membership renewals are due.

Members of our various State Branches and sub branches should receive membership renewal notices from their respective organizations. NSW membership subscription renewal forms for 2022 have already been sent out to NSW Branch members under separate cover by the Granville office. In the event you do not receive a form in the mail you can use the Membership Renewal form included in this Newsletter or the one available on our web site at www.vvfa.org.au

To renew your membership, just complete the membership form you receive and return it to your State Branch, Sub Branch or, for NSW Branch members, to the Granville office. Please check the Membership Application form to ensure your details are correct and amend any incorrect details so we can update our records.

Once again, we are offering all members of the NSW Branch, who renew by 30 January 2021, the chance to enter into the draw to win 1 of 3, \$100.00 gift vouchers from Bunnings Hardware. So, get your application in quickly to ensure you don't miss out on this great opportunity. Cheques and money orders from NSW Branch members can be made payable to **VVPPAA NSW**.

Your financial support in the past has been most appreciative and we hope you will continue to support the Association and therefore assist our fellow Veterans and Service members in need.

It is through our membership subscriptions, fund raising activities and the many kind donations we receive from members that we are able to meet our increasing welfare/pension workload. Should you be able to help with a donation in this regard it would be greatly appreciated.

We look forward to receiving your renewal for 2022 and thank you for your on-going support and patronage of the Federation.

Ron O'Connor JP
Hon. Secretary
VVFA



JOIN US AND BECOME A MEMBER

We continually strive for the rights of veterans and their families, whenever changes to the laws that govern and recognise their service threatens to diminish just and fair compensation for those that are sent to fight Australia's wars.

We achieve our aims by continued vigilance of government proposals that affect the Acts of parliaments protecting veterans rights and entitlements by; assuring that DVA uphold and enable due process of claims to the letter of those laws; by lobbying government and ministers where the laws could be improved for the benefit of veterans and their families.

Each individual is ineffective when lobbying governments for change, or to amend an injustice. Together as an organisation, with a strong membership base we are able to, and have done, improve pathways for better treatment of veterans, and those still serving.

We survive as an organisation on the strength of our membership, and even if you have won the battle with Veterans Affairs (DVA), there is always the risk of changes in Government policy which may erode benefits and pensions or changes to eligibility entitlements. We are here for you!

We encourage membership from all veterans, service and ex-service members, as well as war-widows and their families together with all those who support our objectives.

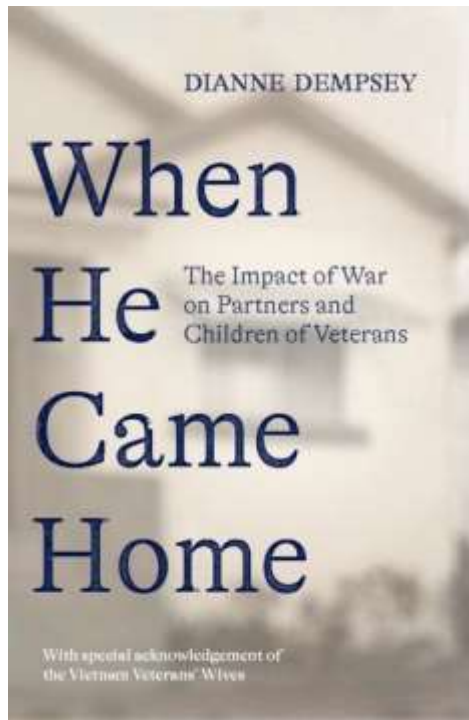
The following form will give you the opportunity to seek membership of the VVFA at any of our State Branches and/or Sub-Branches, of your choosing, from the Branch lists found on our websites,

(<http://www.vvfa.org.au>) (<http://www.vvfagranville.org>), or as listed in our Newsletters.

Please complete this form in clear printed definition in the boxes applicable for your personal details. Naturally, all privacy issues and existing policy concerning your details will be strictly enforced and never passed, copied or sold to any other entity. It is in your interest not to attempt to complete the form on-line as this method is currently unavailable.

All you need to do to become a member, is to complete the following information and send it to the State Branch of your choice as listed elsewhere in this issue and you will be sent an application form.

Preferred Branch/Sub-Branch:			
First Name:	Second Name:	Surname:	
Street Address:			
Town/Suburb:		State:	PC:
Landline:	Mobile	Alternate:	
Email:			
Signature:			Date:



An extract

'I wanted him to see a psychiatrist after I had been nursing women who had been married to WW1 and WW2 soldiers. These ladies were all saying the same thing about their marriage. There was the same theme of walking on eggshells. Bloody eggshells. Do they give them out when the veterans are released from the army? Then there were nightmares. Fights over money. The need for control. I started thinking, they're all the same symptoms. We've all been married to the same man.' ■

TO OUR WONDERFUL WIVES AND PARTNERS

Can I ever find words to say thank you -

Thank you for just being you.

You don't see yourself as a hero,

But darling, believe me, I do.

Can I ever find words to say thank you -

For being my "rock" in those storms.

You saw in me something worth loving,

Even when at my lowest in form.

Can I ever find words to say thank you -

For leading me out of my "cave".

For you , Life is a glorious journey,

And your love gives me life day by day.

Can I ever find words to say thank you -

For being my "soul mate" so true.

You don't see yourself as a Hero ,

But , darling , believe me , I do !

Ross Bridle.

Extract from *The Long Shadow* (our long suffering wives)

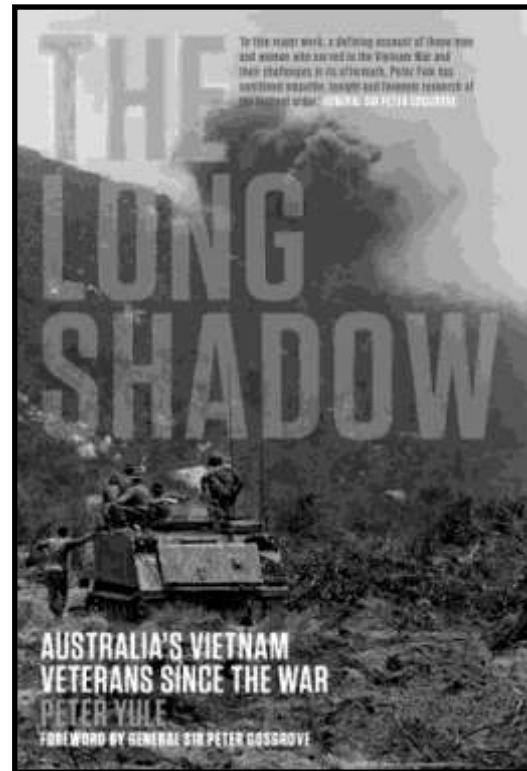
The Long Shadow

Australia's Vietnam Veterans Since the War

An extract from the book

'Bomber' Bower-Miles recounted how 'I went to a party when I got home from Vietnam. The trouble is the party only finished a few years ago. Every opportunity, I was on the piss...As far as I was concerned I was just having a good time, but I was drowning myself. Alcohol was my medication. Regular soldier Lynton Reynolds was only 20 when he returned from Vietnam and 'was an incredibly heavy drinker, if not an alcoholic. This put strains on his marriage, but his wife eventually 'dried me out'.

Although some relationships collapsed in the years after return from Vietnam, it is hard not to be struck by the number of women who stuck by their husbands, often through extremely difficult circumstances. Conscript Fred Manno (8RAR, 1969-70) married in 1975 and says that his wife deserves a medal for 'putting up with me. I was very moody, I used to fly off, sometimes for no reason at all. Yeah, she put up with a fair bit of shit.' ■



The VVFA campaigned for twenty years to have the flawed and insulting Official History account of the Agent Orange controversy, rewritten.

The Australian War Memorial Council was eventually convinced and in 2015 commissioned eminent historian Dr Peter Yule to author the story of the health and medical legacies of the Vietnam War.

Books are available from the NSW Granville Office, on-line from the AWM and other good book stores.

E-books can be downloaded more cheaply. ■

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

Getting rid of the dunny flies

I was a National Serviceman serving in the Army at the Australian Base of Nui Dat during the Vietnam Conflict.

One of my daily jobs at our 104 Sig Squadron Task Force Unit was to clean out the toilets etc. and the army had a trade of 'Hygiene/General Duties', whose tasks were really to turn their hand at anything regarding maintenance and cleaning up stuff.

I was lumbered with this job because there was no other trade for me to do and not enough time to train me up within my two year period, but that's another story.

The toilets (W.C.s) at our unit, and I imagine other groups on the base, consisted of a 2-3 meter long trench dug to about 1.5 metres in depth topped with a concrete slab and three to four metal WC pans encased at equal distances on top. They were enclosed in a green painted shed constructed with a timber frame with corrugated iron, walls and roof.

The pans had metal seats and lids, each with a large peach tin bolted to it and filled with concrete in an attempt to form a seal. It never worked.

Because of an organic process the pits never filled and the faeces was kept at a low level, the same principal as used in many outback toilets today.

The pans were not in individual cubicles but rather what can be described in contemporary terms as "open planning" and it was not

uncommon to see four guys sitting side by side reading or talking whilst having their daily crap. Week old newspapers (all we could get) were strewn on the floor which provided ample reading material. It is amazing how war breaks down the veil of modesty.

The front side of these facilities, where the occupants faced when seated, was a half wall with fly screen material making up the top section giving the user the opportunity of a view, in our particular troop's case of the Eagle Farm chopper pad.

I was a National Serviceman serving in the Army



at the Australian Base of Nui Dat during the Vietnam Conflict.

One of my daily jobs at our 104 Sig Squadron Task Force Unit was to clean out the toilets etc. and the army had a trade of 'Hygiene/General Duties', whose tasks were really to turn

their hand at anything regarding maintenance and cleaning up stuff.

I was lumbered with this job because there was no other trade for me to do and not enough time to train me up within my two year period, but that's another story.

The toilets (W.C.s) at our unit, and I imagine other groups on the base, consisted of a 2-3 meter long trench dug to about 1.5 metres in depth topped with a concrete slab and three to four metal WC pans encased at equal distances on top. They were enclosed in a green painted shed constructed with a timber frame with corrugated iron, walls and roof.

The pans had metal seats and lids, each with a large peach tin bolted to it and filled with concrete in an attempt to form a seal. It never worked.

Because of an organic process the pits

never filled and the faeces was kept at a low level; the same principal as used in many outback toilets today.

The pans were not in individual cubicles but rather what can be described in contemporary terms as "open planning" and it was not uncommon to see four guys sitting side by side reading or talking whilst having their daily crap. Week old newspapers (all we could get) were strewn on the floor which provided ample reading material. It is amazing how war breaks down the veil of modesty.

The front side of these facilities, where the occupants faced when seated, was a half wall with fly screen material making up the top section giving the user the opportunity of a view, in our particular troop's case of the Eagle Farm chopper pad.

It was here on my second day in country that I felt the effects of the local US 83rd Artillery battery, located about 500 meters away. When they fired off their ordnance, the ground would reverberate sending shock waves and if someone was seated on pans, it ever so slightly lifted their rear end from the seat.

There were four of us in my section with normally three to do these daily cleaning tasks, which for the most part didn't take long. A quick sweep, stack up the newspapers, replace the toilet rolls and every now and then tip some disinfectant or the like into the pit to keep a reasonable odour. Care had to be taken not to introduce too much toxic material which could upset the equilibrium of the bacteria.

One constant request we received was to "get rid of the 'shit flies' out of the dunnies".

'Shit flies' were small insects which lived in the pit and, we believed (or we used to tell everyone) because it was dark and they had poor eyesight it caused them to continually crash into users' bums when they entered into 'the world of the shit fly'. Perhaps **they** were trying to tell us something?

They didn't do any damage, but continual

(Continued on page 34)





contact with the rear end was quite annoying when enjoying a good read.

We tried everything to get rid of them, the favourite being "fogging". This was done with a portable smoke machine with a long barrel type applicator powered by a two stroke motor, which we would fill with pyrethrin insecticide, start the motor and insert the barrel through an open WC lid.

The photograph shows a similar machine with an operator clad in overalls and dust mask etc. We just wore our green shorts, boots, socks and giggle hats – (hat, utility, green to be exact). No other protection and we had to get a lend of the machine from the nearby task force hygiene unit.

Whilst recommended, this was a band-aid solution and had minimal effect on those annoying little creatures.

One time, when the complaints became so continuous, particularly when the boozier opened late in the afternoon, someone came up with a brilliant idea: Why not pour some petrol into the pits, ignite it and bingo, no more shit flies - well for a while anyways.

The deal was done, the petrol was obtained and carefully tipped into each of the four pans (which directly led into the pit).

Knowing there might be some type of combustible reaction, we obtained extra weights for the toilet lids. The question then remained as to who was going to fire up our project. Some buckets of water were placed strategically at the

entrance should they be needed.

"No-bloody way", I said, "I'm not lighting it". My other colleague agreed and we all just stood there outside the dunny looking at each other.

The lance corporal, who had the endearing nickname of 'the colonel' – mainly because his surname was Clink, grabbed some newspaper, telling us to "get out of the f****ing way you're as weak as piss", lit the end, entered the room, lifted the nearest seat and thrust down the ignited piece of paper, then took off. We too ran about 20 metres from the building.

"Kerbaaang". The building shook, the ground shook and we all looked at each other with utter trepidation. Heads popped out of the tents adjacent to the toilets with cries of anguish from the sleeping shift workers. *"Had someone been fragged? Had someone let off a live one? Had, had, had.....???"*

Slowly we opened the toilet door. Unfortunately we hadn't eliminated the shit flies but the process had caused such a mess it created a whole day's work for the three of us:

The inside walls of this 10' x 4' shed were littered with toilet paper, and shit. Three of the lids where blow off, one catapulting through the screen wire at the front like an uncontrollable missile and the poor screen door was half off it's hinges. The extra weights we placed on the lids were on their way to Vung Tau.

The nightmare which now faced us was the cleaning up. We had no mains pressure water to hose down the place. It was all bucket and cloth and in some cases, brushes. *"Never again"* we told each other and when someone mockingly mentioned the shit flies again, we simply said *"Suffer"*.

The exercise, whilst a genuine attempt to reduce the irritation for the diggers was a complete flop, and worst still, we became the butt of the units jokes for weeks to follow.

Ian Granland OAM JP ■

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

A Bush Christmas ~1968

Christmas Day '68 came for us out in "the scrub". It was Operation 'Goodwood'. 4RAR was assigned to block any VC/NVA movements toward *Bearcat* Base, the giant US complex NE of Saigon. A 4RAR digger, (Pte. Roost) had been killed a day or two ago whilst on patrol, so we knew we were not alone out there. And that digger's death we realised would make a sad Christmas for a family back home.

Not a busy day for our platoon though. I recall we were dug-in on a hill-side in fairly sparsely vegetated terrain for Christmas Eve. Those who were not already awake (waiting for Santa?) in the early morning dawn, were roused for the usual "stand-to" routine, & were each served-up a mug of "coffee-Royale", (coffee laced with a dash of rum mixed in), by either our platoon CO Lt. Sayce, or the platoon-sergeant Gerry Villalba. Apart from a hot Christmas meal flown out to us by chopper that day, this was to be our only Christmas gift.

What did await me back at 'the Dat' however, was a Christmas parcel of 'goodies', sent from the RSL branch in San Souci (Sydney), me being their random selection to receive thus.

Al Wood



Christmas goodies

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

The adventures of Tank 169041 Part 4 Operations in Vietnam, journey back to Australia and retirement



Authors Cpl Graham Munsell & A B
Hodges Driver

SWEET FANNYS FINAL ACTION

Towards the end of December, Sweet Fanny was coming to the end of her tour, but enemy activity was again increasing in the south of the Long Hai hills. A composite troop was formed from HQ but only three serviceable tanks were available, so Sweet Fanny was assigned to reactionary troop. Each tank was followed by a mark 3 international truck loaded with HE. SGT Robert Browning led the troop with orders to engage anything that could be a likely target, so after two full days of firing HE we emptied the trucks of all their ammunition and headed back to Nui Dat. After action reports indicated that enemy movement ceased.

SPRAYING HERBICIDES ON BATTLES FRONTS

Aerial spraying of chemical defoliants was common during the Vietnam conflict. In addition, there was regular spraying of the perimeter of the Nui Dat base with chemicals and herbicides in order to remove vegetation from the area.



GOING HOME

On the last day of December 1969, Centurion tank 169041 "Sweet Fanny" was taken out of service and she was replaced by 169039. But that's another story and not as interesting.

The journey home

By the end of 1969, 169041 had covered nearly 2,500 miles on operations, and she was ready for yet another rebuild. Replaced in the squadron in January 1970, 169041 spent her final days in South Vietnam with 2nd Advanced Ordnance Depot



L-R Munsell, Nicko, and Perc

(2AOD) at Vung Tau while awaiting space to return to Australia on a transport ship.

Eventually 169041 was shipped back to Australia on the HMAS Jeparit, leaving Vietnam in April 1970 where she repatriated back to the 1st Armoured Regiment at Puckapunyal. The deployment of 1st Australian Task Force in South Vietnam finished on 29 February 1972, with the subsequent return of the final force elements and remaining equipment to Australia aboard HMAS Sydney.

The Centurions served with the Army until the arrival of the replacement tank, the German Leopard AS1, in 1976. November 20th 1976 was the last all-Centurion Cambrai Day parade. 169041, as call sign 11A, was one of around 60 Centurion vehicles, including ARVs, bridge layers and a dozer tank, that participated in this historic occasion.

Although sent to long term storage during the first half of 1977, she was recovered back to the 1st Armoured Regiment several years later. Restored to reliable running condition she was used to carry the retiring Chief of the General Staff (the term then used for the Chief of the Army), Lieutenant General H.J. Coates, AC, MBE, during his farewell parade in April 1992.

169041 then spent some time in storage,



Trooper Hodges with canister rounds

underwent several maintenance overhauls and rebuilds, and lived out her days with the 1st Armoured Regiment participating in parades.

To this day Centurion 169041 in her original design (minus the 100 gallon rear fuel tank fitted for South Vietnam) is holding ground at the Edinburgh Air Force Base in South Australia, within the Lines of 1st Armoured Regiment. Of note, she had passed through Edinburgh 65 years ago, in 1953, while en route to the Emu Field test site.



The Centurion Tank at War

One of the most successful tank designs of the immediate era post the Second World War, the Centurion was originally requested in 1943 and commenced production in 1945, though too late to see service during the war. Centurion production ceased for all variants in 1962, at that time in total 4423 had been delivered.

The Centurion first saw combat with the British Army during the Korean War, also where British Centurion Tanks supported 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment as part of 28 Commonwealth Brigade. Its final campaign with the British Army was during the Gulf war of 1991, where 12 AVRE variants (Armoured Vehicle Royal Engineers) were deployed. Centurions have fought in operational theatres all over the world, except for North Western Europe: the theatre for which it was originally designed!.

The Centurion Tank specifications

Accuracy of the 20 pound main armament

The accuracy of the Centurion main gun was exceptional - if the gunner was given an accurate range he could put a 20 pounder into a man's shirt pocket. A report from the pilot of a spotter plane observing shelling of the Long Hai caves was amazed at the accuracy as the shells were entering the cave entrances - a distance of 1000 - 3000 meters.

In one case a large tree was situated in front of a cave entrance and one shot blew it out of the ground.

Crew	4 (Crew Commander, Loader, Gunner and Driver)
Dimensions	Length: (hull) 7.8 m (gun forward) 9.85 m Width: (including skirts) 3.39 m Height: 3 m Weight: 51.8 Tons Max Armour thickness 152 mm (Glacis Plate).
Engine	The Centurion was powered by 650 bhp rolls Royce meteor Mk 1V 38litre V12 engine, water cooled by two large radiators holding 150 litres of water for the cooling system. These were petrol engines which used 80 high octane fuel. On reasonable terrain would guzzle four gallons per mile.
Fuel tanks	The Centurion Mk V's were fitted with 100 gallon (450 litre) rear tank, 122 gallon (550 litre) tanks within the hull.
Gearbox	The drive and steering gears were enclosed in a Merritt Brown 5 forward/2 reverse gear box. The driver could use two techniques stick change or the 70lb clutch.
Tracks	The tracks consisted 108 links, with each link weighing 9 kilograms. In total, each track weighed 2 tonnes.
Armaments	Both the Centurion Mk III and Mk V/1 had a 20 pounder (83.5 mm) main armament with a central fume extractor. The main armament was fully stabilised. The Mk V/1 Centurions used in South Vietnam were fitted with a .50 calibre ranging machine gun and a .30 calibre browning machine gun to the left of the main gun. A .30 calibre browning machine gun was mounted on the turret hatch (crew commander weapon) plus personal weapons of choice (9mm browning pistol). The tanks typically carried 9 hand grenades and reserve rounds for the .50 and .30 calibre machine guns and various flares in yellow, red and white.

*The Long Shadow: Australia's
Vietnam Veterans Since The
War* by Peter Yule;

A Review by Kel Robertson

**Important New
History Does the Right
Thing**

NewSouth Publishing in association with the
Australian War Memorial; 671 pages. RRP
Hardback \$49.99



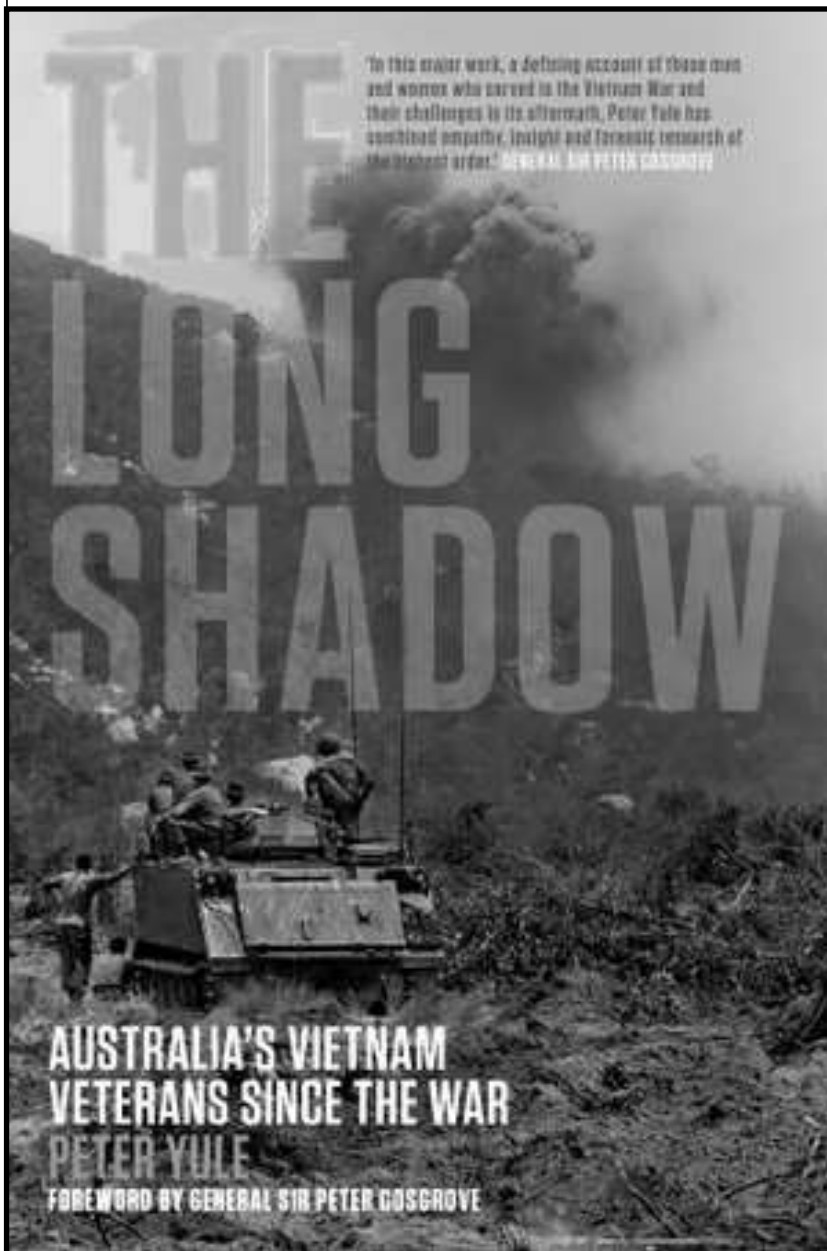
Historian Dr Peter Yule whose book
“deserves a place on all Vietnam
veterans’ bookshelves”.

The challenge that confronted Peter Yule in writing “The Long Shadow” was a formidable one: to cover more than four decades of studies and inquiries into the health of Vietnam veterans (as well as agitation for those inquiries, and arguments surrounding their findings), while restoring veterans’ voices to the record, and fitting the veterans’ story into the bigger history of Australian veterans’ health and of the repatriation system. That Yule has met this challenge is undeniable. “The Long Shadow” is a remarkable book and will be the definitive work on Vietnam veterans’ health for decades to come.

More than that, it does the task Vietnam veterans wanted it to do, by discrediting F.B. Smith’s 1992 analysis of the Evatt Royal Commission, correcting his assessment of veterans’ motives for pursuing the chemical issue, and revising his harsh judgement of the conduct of the early VVAA.

It also does the ‘difficult to accomplish’ task of meeting the requirements of readers who are new to the history of Vietnam veterans’ health, as well as the requirements of readers more familiar with the relevant controversies and struggles.

Although Peter Cosgrove claims in his forward to have consumed the book “in one go” – a mighty feat, even though the work is highly readable – the volume rewards a slower, more careful reading and even re-reading. This is not just because it is packed with useful commentary and insightful observations, or because it includes illuminating quotations (mostly from interviews), but because it contains significant new material. Some of that material is based on new interviews: more than 120 with veterans; others with key people from government etc Some of the new materials is from records in DVA’s Melbourne file



psychological difficulties), and about the evolution of the repatriation system – all written in Yule’s highly accessible style – will also interest. The concluding chapter, meanwhile, is vital reading, including, as it does, a useful summing up, a reassessment of the achievements of the early VVAA, and a recommendation, in effect, for further medical research (into the effects of pesticides).

It is the chapters on health studies in the decades after Evatt that veteran readers may find less rewarding, even though Yule and his team do an exemplary job of describing the studies, summing up the findings and working out what (if anything) they contribute to the store of knowledge about veterans’ health. It is not Yule’s fault that the description and analysis of studies in Australia and the US becomes a disheartening blur; there are so many studies and they too often achieve little. The findings, as demonstrated by Yule, are too frequently limited to a specific subgroup, marred by flawed study design or just plain inconsistent. Bearing in mind the improvements in science over the nearly forty-year period since the last Australian troops came

repository (which this reviewer has been denied access to).

Veterans should not be put off by the size of the book; it needn’t be read cover to cover and, in any event, there is a voluminous index to assist browsing. However, the narrative is best digested from beginning to end, in the way Yule intended it to be. The chapters on waging war and medical issues in Vietnam, on the Evatt Royal Commission and on the Smith component of the official history are likely to be of particular interest to veterans. The earliest chapters about the health outcomes of earlier wars (with an intermittent focus on

home, and considering the money, hope and effort invested (by various players) in the many, many investigations, a clearer understanding of the causes and incidence of veterans’ health problems might reasonably have been expected. The failure of most studies only serves to demonstrate the very real limitations of science.

Also, as Yule points out, quoting an American writer, readers who are looking for clear answers on the causes and incidence of specific health problems will not get much solace from the health studies.

(Continued on page 41)

Graham Walker (VVAA Research Officer, for most of the 1980s) observed, in discussing the “Long Shadow” with this reviewer, that the lack of a clear outcome on the herbicide issue (noted by Yule at various points) vindicates the position of the Association in the 1980s. This is because doubt, even then, was enough, under the repatriation legislation in place at the time, to have caused claims for herbicide-related harms to succeed. History shows, of course, that DVA ignored the requirements of legislation by not giving veterans “the benefit of the doubt” (something, ironically, pointed out by Evatt).

Why public servants thought themselves able to ignore the requirements of legislation made by the Australian Parliament has never been explained. If senior public servants or Ministers thought the law was no longer appropriate, it was incumbent on them to put changes to the Parliament. It was not up to them to decide which parts of the *Repatriation Act* they would implement and which parts they would ignore.

Yule’s point about the early ‘veteran activists’ being motivated to struggle for a better deal for their mates because of the poor health they observed around them – because of the activists ‘lived experience’ – is an equally important one. Yule’s rejection of the view held by other historians, that the VVAA’s early focus on chemical harms impeded efforts to deal with other health problems, is also important.

But Yule has been brave in numerous other ways. He deals with sensitive issues – like alcohol and tobacco abuse, over-reporting of harms, the problem of distinguishing service from age-related conditions, and “me too-ism” on the part of some veterans – but is, at the same time, not averse to criticising DVA (especially for being

slow to deal with veterans’ mental health issues).

In such a big and complex work there are, inevitably, going to be at least a couple of mistakes. Adrian Bishop will be surprised to read that he was the president of the ACT Branch of the VVAA. Veterans in states other than Victoria who were pressuring Government for an independent counselling service will be just as surprised to learn that Operation Simpson – mostly a Victorian VVAA initiative – was the only veterans’ push for such a service. These are, though, minor issues.

Peter Yule and his team have provided a thorough, comprehensive and veteran-inclusive history of the struggle to understand the range of health difficulties (physical and psychological) that have caused such harm to Vietnam veterans and their families. Yule has corrected the most important mistakes in earlier works, while displaying both compassion and rigour. “The Long Shadow” is, consequently, a volume that deserves a place on all Vietnam veterans’ bookshelves.

“The Long Shadow” is, consequently, a volume that deserves a place on all Vietnam veterans’ bookshelves.

Kel Robertson is a Canberra writer. He is currently researching the history of the VVAA.



Kel Robertson

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

How do we remember those events of so long ago?

Most of us remember in flashes, the bits that imprint on our brains, and we forget the bits in between.

That's how it should be, otherwise our brains would be so full we couldn't make sense of any of it.

Jim Stark has given us those flashes of a contact in the village of Long Dien on 8 February 1968.

The official version of this series of contacts gives more detail describing more than one enemy encounter.

But here is how Jim Stark remembers it.

I read in the Journal that you would like to hear some stories.

I'll tell you one that never gets mentioned anywhere. It was during the TET Offensive.

B Company was sent into Baria. A Company was already there with APCs. B Company went in to help them clean up.

This was with 3RAR being in the Country for about seven weeks.

Later that afternoon B Company was sent to Long Dien. They slept in the rice fields over-night then next day went into the town of Long Dien to search for any enemy still in the town.

The day went on and showed nothing. But the boss of 5 Platoon, 2nd Lieutenant Taylor, late

in the day, said, 'One more street'.

So the platoon started down the street and all Hell broke out. They were ambushed from a boarding house in front and two Cong up trees.

As soon as they fired, our Lieutenant Boss was killed along with his wireless man and a rifleman. There were also some wounded.

The rest of B Company and helicopters came to help but the Viet Cong were gone after 3/4 hour.

We stayed in the village that night very rattled and went back to Nui Dat Next day on APCs.

One of our section commanders, he of 4

(Continued on page 43)



Long Dien
soon after the
battle

Long Dien some
years later



Section, Mr Barry Joyce, was Mentioned in Despatches. Even though he was badly wounded, he still helped others until they were flown out to hospital.

Little has been written or said of this ambush and fight anywhere, only in B Company.

PS Nashos who got through Long Dien, two and a half months later fought at Coral and Balmoral.

When we got back to Nui Dat after that,

some Natos packed up and went home because their two years was up.

These boys ended up 3 days short of the six months in Country required for the Viet Nam medal. Even with that amount of fighting, the government would not give it.

So much for Long Dien, Coral and Balmoral and bush patrols.

Jim Stark

A War Widow's Story

From her memories

A War Widow Looks Back

I was married to a Vietnam Veteran for 57 years, who passed away in May 2021. The changes I have seen during this time have not been pleasant. The prejudice of others, each with their own views on the conflict still exists today.

Most service personnel are able to share their experiences but once they move away from this select group, others tend to compare other wars and the results as something that has to be handled, it's your problem not mine.

Each conflict/war results in traumas experienced which can only be understood by those who have stood alongside one another.

After WW1, men came home with 'shell shock', or suffering from the effects of 'nerve gas'. The neighbours quietly said he will never be the same, but offered no help.

The RSL was formed in 1916 to help those who had served. It was a place where they could gather, talk and be recognised and assisted, if necessary, but with each conflict came a new set of problems.

After WW2, they came home. Many families had lost someone. Some understood, others not effected could not. Early in my career, I worked with a group who had served, in fact most of the staff with this company had done service in some way. My boss was the nicest bloke, never a harsh word. The men under his control respected him. I learnt later that he was POW, he had been

reported as 'missing in action, presumed dead'. He came home to a wife and son who could never adjust to the reality that he was back. He lived alone from there on. Another was a pilot who was shot down over Germany. I as a naïve girl made a statement and was firmly put in my place. This person had nothing but high regard for the German doctors who tended to his burns and made him whole again.

Within this group there was a comradery. They had all experience the feeling of loss and terror.

Several years later the Korean War took place, the veterans who returned from this conflict never received the same recognition that the WW2 veterans did.

By the time the younger veterans came on the scene after Vietnam, the older veteran considered that they, the younger ones, did not know what war was. It had never actually been declared a war.

No one considered that the war in Vietnam was like no other. It was televised. Many were selected by conscription to participate. The method of warfare was like no other, the methods used were not traditional.

In previous conflicts/wars all Australians were affected, with Vietnam only a small minority were involved.

(Continued on page 45)



During the early stages our servicemen were flown into action, on commercial airlines, wearing civvies, carrying their own Passports.

People at home formed their own prejudices and aired them; at social events, in the pub, in the schools, at demonstrations. We saw red paint splashed on one soldier during a homecoming march.. Some school teachers spoke out condemning our commitment, no consideration given to those who may have had love ones involved. This went on for years.

With previous conflicts/wars the men had a common bond they could talk amongst themselves, with the Vietnam vets they withdrew and never mentioned their participation.

Came 1987 they gathered for the 'Welcome Home Parade'. Seeing people they had no contact with for over 20years. The stories began to roll. They had a common bond; they were amongst their own.

They all had their problems. It was about this time that many banded together to try and resolve their issues. Each had experienced early rejection of some kind either from older RSL members, DVA or the public in general.

They formed their own associations. They trained their own counsellors, gathered their own legal advocates.

For the first time they marched as one under their own banners in the ANZAC Day March.

History is repeating itself. The younger veteran does not know where to turn for help. The older veteran is running out of steam. Perhaps those who are able should step up and assist those in need with the structure set up by previous veterans, in particular the older Vietnam veteran.

Mrs Sue Jones

War Widow & Member of VVPPAA ■

PSK FINANCIAL SERVICES ARTICLE

Super bring-forward rules now apply to more people

More Australians can make up to three years' worth of non-concessional super contributions in the same financial year, with the government increasing the age limit from under 65 to under 67.

Last month the government announced that Australians aged 65 and 66 (to be specific, under the age of 67 at the start of the tax year), would be able to make up to three years of non-concessional super contributions under bring-forward rules. Previously, bring-forward rules only applied to those under age 65.

What are non-concessional contributions?

Non-concessional contributions are voluntary contributions you can make using after-tax dollars (such as when you transfer funds from your bank account into your super), which you don't claim a tax deduction for.

Currently, the annual non-concessional contributions cap is \$110,000.

Apart from non-concessional contributions, there are also concessional contributions and limits to the amount of both types of contributions you can make each year.

What are the bring-forward rules?

The bring-forward rules apply to non-concessional contributions only.

These rules allow you to make up to three years of non-concessional contributions in a single income year, if you're eligible. This means you can put in up to three times the annual cap of \$110,000, which means you may be able to top up your super by \$330,000 within the same financial year.

However, how much you can make as a non-concessional contribution will depend on your total super balance as at 30 June of the previous financial year. More on this below.

How could the bring-forward rules benefit me?

If you've reached your concessional contributions cap, received an inheritance, or have money from the sale of a large asset, non-concessional contributions may be a good way to top up your

super.

However, contribution caps limit the amount you're able to put into super in a single year, which is where bring-forward rules may be helpful, as they could allow you to make a much larger non-concessional contribution, or more non-concessional contributions, than you'd otherwise be able to make in 12 months.

How does my total super balance cap affect bring-forward rules?

Your total super balance may impact your ability to contribute up to three years of non-concessional contributions under the bring-forward rules.

Currently, your total super balance must be below \$1.48 million, as of 30 June of the previous financial year, for you to be able to contribute up to three years of annual caps (\$330,000) under the bring-forward rules.

If your total super balance rises above this level, your ability to bring forward future year caps may be reduced, or no longer available at all, meaning only the standard annual cap (or no cap at all) may be available.

See the table below to get an idea of what you may be able to contribute under the bring forward rules.

Your total super balance cap on previous 30 June	Your non-concessional contribution limit	Bring-forward period
Under \$1.48 million	\$330,000	Three years
\$1.48 million - \$1.59 million	\$220,000	Two years
\$1.59 million - \$1.7 million	\$110,000	One year / standard annual cap
Equal to or above \$1.7 million	\$0	N/A

©AWM Services Pty Ltd. First published July 2021

How to spot a scam

In this day and age, it's important to be aware of the potential to get scammed. With online scams on the rise during COVID-19, here are a few tips to protect yourself online.

What is an internet scam?

An internet scam is when someone uses the web to cheat an individual or organisation out of their money or personal information. Sometimes scams involve the perpetrator loading malicious software, known as 'malware' onto their victim's computer. Scammers' techniques are becoming more sophisticated every day, with the most successful scams often targeting vulnerable groups by posing as organisations of authority such as banks, insurance or superannuation companies.

What are insurance-related scams?

Phishing: This is when a scammer pretends to be from a trusted organisation in an attempt to access the victim's personal information, gain access to their computer or steal money. Phishing can be difficult to spot, often taking the form of texts or emails and can steal the branding from your own bank, insurer or super-fund.

Insurance agent fraud: It's not uncommon for scammers to pretend to be insurance agents offering you new products or claiming to be adjusting your cover in a bid to access your personal information. Remember that if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Insurance fraud: Sometimes scammers make phone calls or send emails claiming that you were in an accident and asking for your details to complete an insurance claim. As realistic as these can seem, be very careful as they may be trying to steal information or money.

How to protect yourself against internet scammers

Act with caution: Do not open attachments or click on links in suspicious emails and remember that banks and insurance companies will never ask for your personal information over text or email. If you're not sure that an email is real, hover over any URLs before clicking on them. This will show you the address you're going to be directed to – a scam email will often show an unusual and unexpected

URL. Remember that if you're not sure then it's better not to click.

Keep your devices secure: Create strong passwords for your phone, computer, social media and email accounts. These should be difficult to guess, and not the names of pets or family members.

Report scams: If you are the victim of an internet scam – or think you have spotted one in action – you can report it to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Check with your real provider: If you receive suspicious communication claiming to be from one of your providers, give your provider a direct call to check if it was them. Chances are it will be a scam.

©TAL

To discuss further or to arrange a time to review your current financial position please contact Paul Messerschmidt at PSK Financial Services on 0414 811 777, 02 9895 8800 or paulm@psk.com.au

PSK Financial Services Group Pty Ltd (ABN 24 134 987 205) and Paul Messerschmidt are Authorised Representatives of Charter Financial Planning Ltd (AFSL 234666), Australian Financial services Licensee and Australian Credit Licensee.

Information contained in this article is general in nature. It does not take into account your objectives, needs or financial situation. You need to consider your financial situation before making any decisions based on this information.

**SEE OUR ADVERTISEMENT
ON THE BACK COVER OF
THIS NEWSLETTER**



AUSTRALIAN VETERANS'
CHILDREN ASSISTANCE TRUST

AVCAT

SCHOLARSHIPS



Transforming lives through
education

**Applications open 18 August,
and close midnight 31 October
2021.**

AVCAT Scholarships, including the Long Tan Bursary, are for the children and grandchildren of Australian ex-serving veterans. Scholarships provide up to \$4000 per year, for three years, to full-time students at uni, TAFE or a registered training organisation.



Scholarship Eligibility

Eligibility Criteria includes Australian residency, child or grandchild of Australian ex-serving veteran, full-time tertiary student in 2022 at uni, TAFE or a registered training organisation, in receipt of or eligible to receive Centrelink payments including Youth Allowance, ABSTUDY, Austudy or an accepted means-tested Commonwealth government payment.

**'My AVCAT
Scholarship gave
me confidence that
I still draw on. It's
something that
cannot be taken
away.'**

— AVCAT Scholar

Apply online at avcat.org.au

VALE

Fredrick Lyle Morrison

A Soldiers' Soldier

Vietnam Service

1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, 07 Jun 1965 to 09 Jun 1966

1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, 18 Mar 1968 to 18 Feb 1969

Eulogy

Fred Morrison was born on the 24th March 1937 in Goondiwindi to Les and May Morrison, the second of 4 sons. Fred's Mum, May, thought that he was not a very pretty baby so she hid him away for a few weeks. What his father Les thought about this is not known.

Fred wasted little time with childhood. Times were hard and his family moved constantly chasing work and staying with relatives. Some places they lived in were Goondiwindi, Margate and East Brisbane. It was here that rumour has it that he went to the girls school. Fred would always counter that by telling us that it was co-ed back then and he had the photos to prove it.

When Fred was a boy he contracted polio myelitis which brought his school days to an end. At 12 he went to work with his Dad, Les, in the rough and tumble world of the shearing sheds and stock yards of country Queensland. At 17 he ended up at Comoomie station near Tara where fate in the shape of a good looking governess called Berenice Cook, dealt him a winning hand. True to his forthright character within a week he had told her he was going to marry her. They married in the next year 1955.

Fast forward to 1958 and married to Berenice with two little girls, Karen and Cheryl, Fred joined the regular Army in order to provide for his family. The Army was to become his

second family, a place where mateship and life-long friendships were to be found.

In 1959 Fred and his family boarded a super constellation aircraft and made the journey to Penang Malaya, via Brisbane, Darwin and Singapore. A great new life opened up to them, a life of parties, travel, new cultures and fabulous life-time friendships, in particular the Evans family of Ray, Joan and Malcolm and the Harper Family: Jim, Ena and their children Tony, Kevin and Samantha. There was also the small matter of fighting the communist insurgency in the fetid, tropical Malayan jungle. There in the jungle Fred forged many strong friendships among his Army mates, some of whom are with us here today.

In July 1961 a tragic accident occurred when the brakes of a truck carrying Fred and his platoon failed and sent them careening over a ravine before bursting into flames. One of Fred's best mates, Clive Bridges died that day. Fred was thrown from the truck and shattered his left arm. Unbeknownst to anyone, especially the British Army doctors at Lassa and Penang, his neck had also been broken. It would take 45 years and two more war zone tours before this would be discovered.

Our family was medevaced out of Penang and sent to a new life in Sydney. It wasn't long

(Continued on page 51)



before Fred and his mates in the First Battalion Royal Australian Regiment were packed off again to South East Asia to fight a war in the then little known country of Vietnam. Fred was to serve two tours of duty there from 1965-1966 and the next from 1967-1968. This period of time would come to define our family for the next 50 years. As with many of his mates the battles of Coral/Balmoral and Plain of Reeds didn't end in Vietnam but relentlessly pursued the soldiers for decades after their return to Australia.

Fred had stoically battled PTSD and constant pain and the untimely deaths of his friends over the intervening years. War is hell but

the peace can sometimes be even tougher. Fred used many avenues to dull the pain but what helped him the most was the continued support of his wife and family, his stable home, which he considered his castle and his love of country music. Fred was a snappy dresser who also loved to wear Hawaiian shirts and John Wayne tee shirts. He had a strong love of the Australian bush and sense of obligation and duty to Her Majesty the Queen, Australia, the Army and the Flag. In fact when the Queen visited Papua New Guinea in 1972 her Majesty stopped and talked to Fred out of ear shot of anyone else. They both laughed and Fred saluted her. No amount of alcohol could get Fred to reveal the Queens words to him. He had signed the Official Secrets Act after all.

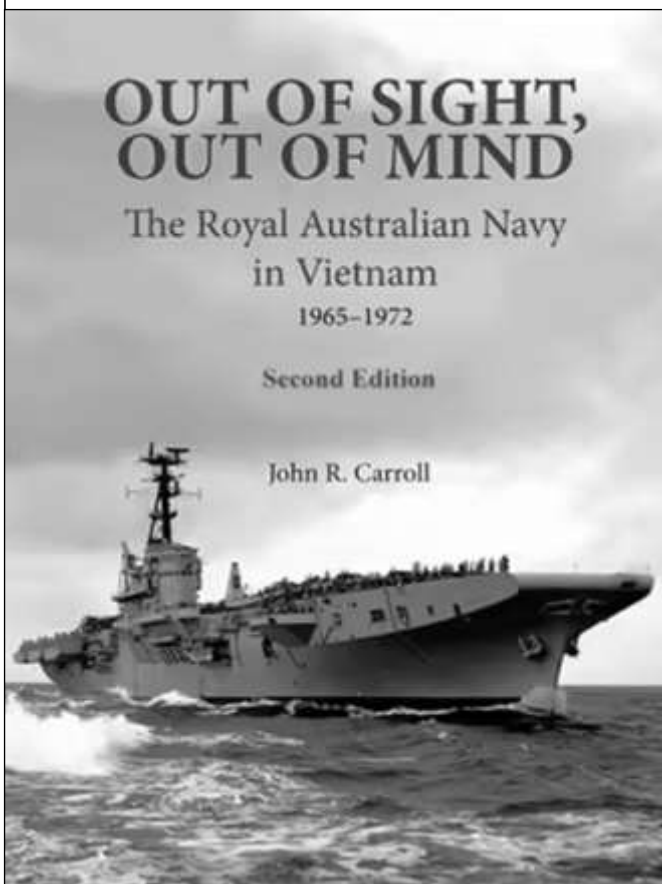
Fred loved his Bonnie, as he called Berenice, with all his heart. He would kiss her every morning and every evening. Their love for each other was obvious to everyone and has been a fabulous example to all who knew them, they were married for 65 years. Fred's life in retirement took him to the little town of Kalbar in the Fassifern Valley. He and Berenice soon settled into life in this town and became well known and liked by the inhabitants. They spent 26 years there engaging in town life. Fred was well known for sitting on husbands' bench outside Shirley's craft shop chatting to all and sundry as they past by. People such as Karole and Matt Nissan, Shirley and John Ernst, Lorraine Gotsch and Carlee Lutter became almost family and assisted Fred in his declining years.

I am proud to say Fred's resolve and inner strength saw him triumph over his war time demons. He is an example and inspiration to all who knew him. Blessed with a loving wife, two adoring daughters, five fabulous grandchildren and thirteen awe struck great grandchildren Fred was a hero to all of them. I had the great privilege to be Fred's grandson and I think I speak for all our family in saying Freddie you will never be forgotten. ■

BOOK REVIEW

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND: The Royal Australian Navy in Vietnam 1965 – 1972 -Second Edition by John R Carroll

First published in 2013 this second edition has been revised with new material added. This folio sized softcover volume of 258 pages with illustrations and photographs was published by Rosenberg, Sydney in January 2020 at a RRP of (AUD)\$34.95.



During the Vietnam War the task of moving, supplying and maintaining the Australian Force in Vietnam was crucial. The RAN played the major role and did the heavy lifting for these logistic tasks. The principal effort was undertaken by the first troop transport and former aircraft carrier HMAS *Sydney*. *Sydney* was always escorted in Vietnamese waters by a RAN destroyer or frigate from the Far East Strategic Reserve.

Captain A J Robertson DSC, later Rear Admiral,

quoting from the commanding officer's letter to his Flag Officer (FOCAF) noted "From 1965 until March 1972 HMAS *Sydney* completed 24 voyages to the operational area, transporting troops and large quantities of important equipment. 15,619 troops were carried, 8,129 taken to South Vietnam and, 7,490 brought back to Australia. 2,301 vehicles were carried, 1,523 on the forward journey and 778 on the return. Short tonnage cargo totalled 5,561 with 4,289 for South Vietnam and 1,272 returned. Whilst in Vietnamese waters, she was subject to the same threat as other fleet units, particularly rocket or swimmer attacks in Vung Tau harbour". There is no doubt that HMAS *Sydney* was the logistical lynchpin for the Australian military effort in Vietnam. *Sydney* was assisted in the sealift requirement by MV, later HMAS *Jeparit*, and MV, later HMAS *Boonaroo*.

Complement details of *Sydney* during each of her voyages to Vietnam are tabulated as well as anchorage details of the ship and her escorts. Security precautions whilst in Vung Tau are presented. There is a chapter with candid comments from the author's shipmates as well as embarked troops.

Dr Carroll, in his well-written and superbly researched book offers evidence based arguments regarding the critical role of the RAN. Furthermore, he presents compelling evidence that RAN personnel in *Sydney* were affected by the runoff from the liberal use of the toxic Agent Orange and its active and toxic by-product "Dioxin". He further addresses the inequity suffered by RAN persons toward provision of medical care under the repatriation system. There was also inequity for awards under the Honors and Awards system particularly in respect to the Vietnam Active Service Medal. All this revolved around the interpretation of the word 'allotted'. Soldiers were eligible for the above benefits

because they had been allotted a role with their battalion whilst in Vietnam. Seamen on the other hand were not allotted a role but were among the ship's company which did not necessarily set foot on Vietnamese soil. Hence the discrimination or inequity.

From January 1962 herbicides were used by the US and Allied forces to strip the thick jungle canopy which helped conceal the enemy. Crops would also be damaged. HMAS *Sydney* and her escorts were often at anchor in Vung Tau harbour in waters now known to be contaminated with herbicide residue. By the time *Sydney* and her escorts and the first Army contingent arrived at Vung Tau in June 1965 the Rung Sat Special Zone(RSSZ) had been sprayed by the USAF since September 1962.

In 1997 the Department of Veterans' Affairs reported that RAN veterans were experiencing a far higher mortality rate than other Australian Vietnam Veterans, particularly RAN logistic support personnel. This was further supported by the 2001 Vietnam Veterans Cohort Study where it



HMAS SYDNEY IN VUNG TAU HARBOUR

was noted that sailors from *Sydney* and her escorts as well as those from *Jeparit* and *Boonaroo* were dying at a rate which was higher than the national average.

Carroll provides a chapter on Herbicide Exposure. This chapter argues a likely link between the mortality rate of RAN logistic support personnel exposed to the evaporation distillation used in RAN ships while in Vietnamese waters which was enhanced by the effects of Agent Orange. The author also addresses the issues and responsibilities of government agencies in regard to the singularly crucial use of the word 'allotted'. CDRE John Goble stated "no one allotted the RAN elements. There is no doubt that all servicemen were at risk by being in an operational area".

The substance of the book was the basis for Dr John Carroll's PhD thesis – as such it is of an extremely high standard. There is a forward by VADM I W Knox AC previously Vice Chief of Defence Force who commends the work for those interested in maritime affairs and logistical support of Australian forces in Vietnam. The book will long stand as a key reference point to the RAN contribution in Vietnam and, as such, will not be *Out of Sight nor Out of Mind*.

Reviewed by Kevin Rickard. ■



HMAS VAMPIRE ON ESCORT

Our name has changed but we will continue to provide professional, military aware, support to all current and former serving ADF personnel and their family members.



Free and confidential counselling to support your mental health and wellbeing is available 24/7. We also run group programs and suicide prevention training.

JUST CALL 1800 011 046

If overseas call +61 8 8241 4546

FORMERLY KNOWN AS

Veterans and Veterans Families
Counselling Service



**Call
24/7**

A service founded by Vietnam veterans



1300 924 522

Our programs

**Alcohol Drugs Eating disorders
Anxiety Depression Bipolar disorder
Borderline personality disorder
Schizophrenia and psychosis**

Veterans services

Wesley Hospital Ashfield and Wesley Hospital Kogarah provide compassionate care for those in need of psychiatric help. The goal of the hospitals is to provide positive outcomes, not only for our **patients** with a mental illness but also for their **family and carers**. As centres of excellence within Wesley Mission our Wesley Hospitals have been providing professional and compassionate care for over 60 years.

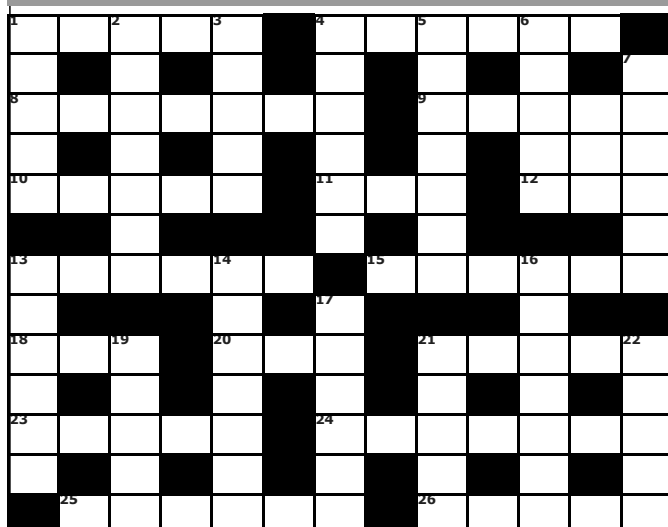
Wesley Hospital Ashfield and Wesley Hospital Kogarah are private psychiatric hospitals which offer both **in-patient** and **day patient** services. Our treatment programs combine medication, therapy and include life skills and support networks to ensure recovery is effective, ongoing and enriching.

**91 Milton Street,
Ashfield NSW 2131**

&

**7 Blake Street,
Kogarah NSW 2217**

CROSSWORD CORNER



ACROSS

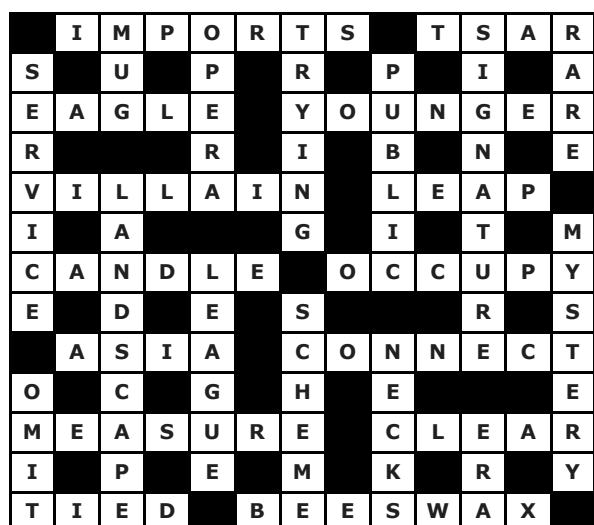
1. Horse
4. Constabulary
8. Chief at top
9. Stance
10. Records
11. Sign of lion
12. Public transport
13. Kidnap
15. Allocate
18. Very warm
20. Fish trap
21. Bus terminus
23. Scope
24. Shelled seafood
25. Pacify
26. Make effort

DOWN

1. Fibre
2. Revealed
3. Forest animals
4. Dog breed
5. Minions
6. Ascend
7. Human
13. On the beach
14. Gig
16. Enhance
17. A gas fuel
19. Dance
21. Enfold
22. Internet message

*Solution next
issue*

AUGUST 2021 SOLUTION



THE UNKNOWN COMIC

This is a story of self-control and marksmanship by a brave, cool-headed woman with a small pistol against a fierce predator. Here's her story in her own words: "While walking along the edge of a river near my house in the Villages Estate near Darwin discussing a property settlement with my soon-to-be ex-husband, and other divorce issues, we were surprised by a huge 4-metre crocodile which suddenly emerged from the murky water."

"It began charging us with its large jaws wide open. She must have been protecting her nest because she was extremely aggressive. If I had not had my little Ruger 22 calibre pistol with me, I wouldn't be here today!" said Beverly. "Just one shot to my estranged husband's knee cap was all it took."

"The big croc got him easily, and I was able to escape by just walking away at a brisk pace. The amount I saved in lawyer's fees was really incredible - and his life insurance was also a bonus!"

If a word in the dictionary were misspelled, how would we know?

What is the difference between a bad golfer and a bad skydiver?

A bad golfer goes *Whack!*.... "shit!". However, a bad skydiver goes "shit!" *Whack!*

Remember when it all started. They said a mask and gloves was enough to go to the grocery store. When I got there, everyone else had clothes on.

Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would go into a bank and request money with a mask on.

One fine day this very famous Admiral, and an as equally famous General were enjoying a quiet fishing moment out on the lake, when a sudden squall sends both sprawling into the water. The General barely makes it back to the boat, but mustering up all his strength he manages to get the Admiral back into the boat with the help of an oar. When both recapture their breath, the Admiral begs the General not to tell anyone he can't swim because he'd be the laughing stock of the Navy. The General replies, "Don't worry, your secrets safe with me, I'd hate to have my men know I can't walk on water!"

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

SURNAME

FIRST NAME

SECOND NAME

--	--	--

OLD DETAILS *[PRINT CLEARLY]*

OLD ADDRESS

--

SUBURB/TOWN

STATE

POST CODE

--	--	--

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

OTHER PHONE

--	--	--

NEW DETAILS *[PRINT CLEARLY]*

NEW ADDRESS

--

SUBURB/TOWN

STATE

POST CODE

--	--	--

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

OTHER PHONE

--	--	--

EMAIL ADDRESS *[PRINT CLEARLY]*

--

YOUR SIGNATURE

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

Complete all sections and post to:

The Secretary
 VVPPAA NSW
 PO Box 170
 Granville
 NSW 2142

OFFICE USE ONLY**MEMBERSHIP REGISTRY****DETAILS CHANGED****DATE:** ____/____/____**INITIALS:** _____

VETERANS MORTALITY REPORT

As you are aware, Vietnam Veterans are dying at a rate higher than while on Active Service. This situation is perhaps a natural phenomenon compared to non-serving members of the public, who might die of an illness which is equally distributed through the population of the same age group.

Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers & Peacemakers Association of Australia (NSW Branch) Inc has for many years maintained records of the deaths of Vietnam Veterans and the cause of death if known. This has proved invaluable regarding the health standards of Vietnam Veterans when compared to the general public. We seek your assistance in reporting the death of Vietnam Veterans, past or recent, to allow the Federation to expand and preserve it's record base.

Kindly circulate a copy of this page through your RSL Club, Unit or Corps reunions and meetings and raise it as an issue. The information gained from these reports will greatly assist all Vietnam Veterans and their families regarding future claims for benefits.

Please print clearly

VETERANS DETAILS

SURNAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER

SVN UNIT/S	TOUR DATES

CAUSE OF DEATH (If known)

SR Service Related **UNK** Unknown **S** Suicide **O** Other)

DATE OF DEATH (If known) LOCATION AT TIME OF DEATH

	(TOWN)	(STATE)
----------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------------

YOUR NAME

SUBURB/TOWN STATE POST CODE

----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

HOME PHONE MOBILE PHONE SIGNATURE

----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

RETURN FORM TO: **The Welfare Officer**
VVPPAA NSW Branch
PO Box 170
Granville NSW 2142

Phone: 02 9682 1788
Fax : 02 9682 6134
Email: secretary@vfvagranville.org

VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

FULL STATE AND SUB-BRANCH LISTING

NATIONAL HEAD OFFICE (VETERANS SUPPORT CENTRE)

VVFA HQ

PO Box 170, (8 Mary St.)
Granville, NSW 2142

National President: **William (Bill) Roberts OAM JP**

National Secretary: **Ron O'Connor JP**

Email: vvfanatpres@vvfa.org.au

Email: vvfanatsec@vvfa.org.au

Tel: 02 9682 1788

Fax: 02 9682 6134

Web: <http://www.vvfa.org.au>

**VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA
FULL STATE AND SUB-BRANCH LISTING**

Currently in the ADF, Transitioning, a younger Veteran?

We invite you to join our association and become a member.

Simply select your preferred Branch or Sub-Branch from the list above, complete the form on page 29, and mail it, or email a copy, to the address indicated.

MERCHADISE FOR SALE



VVPPAA NSW

MAIL ORDER FORM

TO: Admin Manager
PO Box 170
Granville NSW, 2142

NAME:				
ADDRESS:				
TOWN:			STATE:	PC:
PHONE:		ALT PHONE:		
EMAIL:				
ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE ea	QTY	\$TOTAL
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
		\$		\$
XXXXXXXX	POSTAGE & HANDLING (Phone to confirm)	\$		\$
XXXXXXXX	RAFFLE TICKET /S	\$ 2.00		\$
XXXXXXXX	DONATION AMOUNT	XXXXXXXX	XXX	\$
XXXXXXXX	TOTAL ORDER VALUE	XXXXXXXX	XXX	\$
DELIVERY ADDRESS:				
IF DIFFERENT TO ABOVE				
PAYMENT METHOD MASTERCARD VISA (Cross out card type that does not apply)				
NAME ON CARD:				
CARD NUMBER:				
EXPIRY DATE:	/	APPROVED AMOUNT: \$		
SIGNATURE & DATE:				

Please consider leaving a bequest in your will

Every Veteran deserves a lifestyle and better treatment than is currently available.
Every Veteran should be able to successfully attain their rights to pensions and just compensation.

Yet we still receive veterans unaware of their rights, what they may be entitled to, and where and how to apply or enter a claim.

Through your Will, you have the power to help us achieve our goals. Help surviving veterans, and those that follow them, to receive their true entitlements.

Through your Will you have the power to make a difference. Any gift you bequest to our Association, no matter how large or small, will assist a fellow veteran.

You don't need to be wealthy or have tens of thousands of dollars to make a difference to the lives of veterans and those who follow us. Many people leave amounts both large and small through their wills to our association.

Combined each amount assists our association to carry on the vital support network we provide to the veteran community.

Operation Life



Register Now!!

CALL **1800 011 046**

OPEN
Veterans & Families
Counselling
ARMS

Operation Life workshops emphasis is on suicide prevention – they aim to help members of the services and veteran community to recognise someone who might be thinking of suicide, and link them with appropriate assistance. There are 3 types of workshops

- Suicide alertness for everyone (Safetalk) ½ day presentation
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) 2 day skills course
- ASIST Tune Up ½ day refresher workshop

Workshops are open to anyone concerned about veterans, their family, friends and mates in the service and veteran community. Welfare, Compensation Advocates and other helpers from ESO's are welcome and encouraged to attend.

FORMERLY

Veterans and Veterans Families
Counselling Service





Last Post





Last Post



PLEASE NOTE

We make every endeavour to ensure the accuracy of all names published in “The Last Post”. If any omission or error has been made we apologise unreservedly...please contact the editor if you feel an error has been made.

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

The following businesses are offering discounts to members of The Vietnam Veterans Federation.

MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICES

CARNEEDS Pty Ltd

152 Parramatta Rd

STANMORE

Prptr: Robert Stenta

Ph: 9519 1441

10% discount

On mechanical repairs & competitive prices on tyres and batteries.

To all Vietnam Veterans Federation Members.

MALCOLM MOTORS

Automotive Service Specialist. All mechanical repairs & servicing.

15% Discount for members on services and repairs.

JOE CARE

603-605 Parramatta Rd

Leichhardt NSW

MTA Lic. # 42198

TRAILERS

TOWBARS BULLBARS

Fastfit Bullbars & Towbars

Trailer sales and spares-side steps
Bike beacons-Custom work

65 St Hilliers Road

AUBURN

Ph: (02) 9749 1209

10% Discount on products

EXHAUST SYSTEMS

Menai Mufflers

Unit 4/788 Old Illawarra Rd

MENAI

Ph: (02) 9541 4720

20% Discount

Balmain Radiator Centre

Mark Borghonzian

22d Crystal St

ROZELLE

Ph: (02) 9818 4920 Mbl: 0419 417 206

10% Discount

NEW CARS

carhelper.com.au

New car buyer's advocate

Buy a discounted new car over the phone and have it home-delivered

No salesmen, just independent advice from a Wheels magazine car reviewer

Contact James Whitbourn

Motoring journalist & new car buyer's advocate

james@carhelper.com.au

0403 892 897

Service cost of \$165 reduced to \$110 for members

MOTOR CYCLE ACCESSORIES

Motor Cycle Accessories

Supermarket

Head Office.

321 Parramatta Rd

Auburn NSW

(02) 9648 1400

www.mcas.com.au

CITY: 9261 5182.

LIVERPOOL: 9601 8276.

CARINGBAH 9574 5100

PENRITH 4737 6100

10% Discount except

helmets and tyres

NEW AD SOON

Know of a company that supports your local veterans with discounts.

Ads placed in this section are free
0421 690 959
For advice

BATTERIES

POWER PRODUCTS

For all your power needs

BATTERIES

SOLAR POWER

INVERTERS

GENERATORS

Motor Cycle battery specialists

Russell is offering 15% discount to VVF Members on Batteries . 5% on Solar products,

Inverters & Chargers 10%

3/3 Sovereign Pl

South Windsor

Ph: (02) 4577 7761

Fax: (02) 4577 7768

Ashfield Battery Centre
110 FREDERICK STREET

ASHFIELD, NSW, 2131

02 9798-6166

GEORGE KAWAUCHI (owner)

We sell:

CAR, TRUCK, MARINE, DEEP CYCLE, GOLF CART, MOBILITY, MOTOR CYCLE BATTERIES.

CHARGERS, SOLAR PANELS, BOOSTER CABLES, FUSES, GLOBES, INVERTERS, TERMINALS, BATTERY BOXES.

OPEN FROM: 9am - 5-30pm Mon-Fri

OPEN SAT FROM: 9.30am- 3.30pm

Closed Sundays and public holidays.

10% Discount to veterans

SMASH REPAIRS

Wreck-A-Mended

Smash Repairs

Unit 1, 20 Bosci Rd

Ingleburn NSW

02 9605 9008

Ask for Alan

Tell them you are a member and they will send us a donation

FLOOR COVERINGS

Waratah Floor Coverings

473 Burwood Rd

BELMORE

Ph: (02) 9759 6511

Ask for Special Rate

MOTELS

Golden Chain

Motor Inn Ltd

Ph: 1800 023 966

Must have Golden Chain Card. Its Free When You Call The Number Above And Ask

Present your Federation membership card and ask for a "Golden Link" card to be issued.

There is a **10% discount** on room rates **Australia wide**

TRAVEL TRANSFERS

GROUP TRANSFER

Airport or Cruise Terminals

All Tours, All Services

15% DISCOUNT FOR VETERANS

For Bookings call:

Michael Viet

(02) 9723 2262

0404 754 899

**If you're reading
this we don't
have to tell you –
it works!**



Stand out from the crowd!

In these difficult times, you need to get noticed. Attract new customers, boost sales and brand recognition with innovative marketing, direct mail, print, and fulfilment services. Getting back on your feet can be tricky. However, targeted, direct mail can be the difference with cutting through the noise and finding your next client.



02 9633 2883



info@alphamail.net.au



www.alphamail.net.au



ALPHAMAIL

Smart Name. Simple Solutions.

