



THE VIETNAM VETERANS' NEWSLETTER

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

SUPPORTING ALL WHO SERVE & HAVE SERVED

APRIL 2022



SUICIDE ROYAL COMMISSION.....What must be done.

- **Scandal: Already Huge Claim Backlog Increases**
- **What led to the Vietnam veteran movement**





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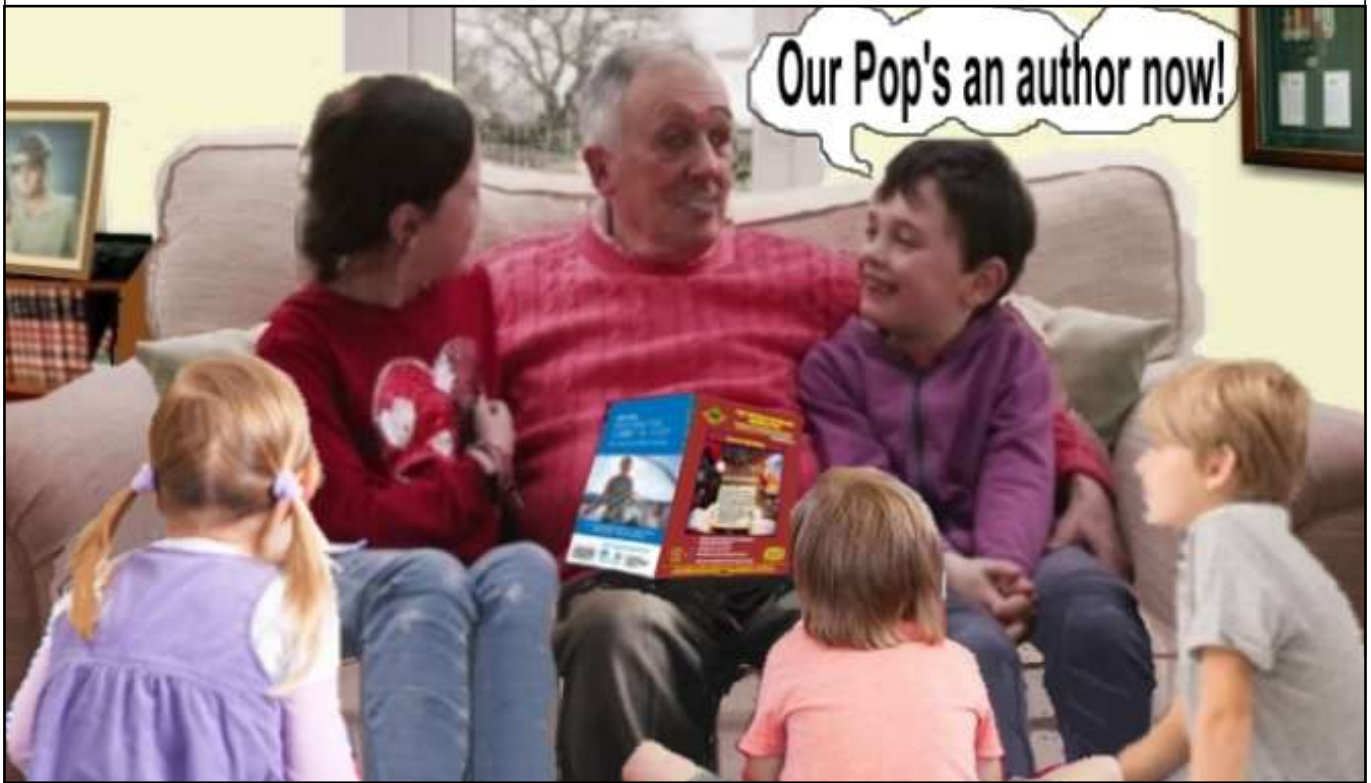
Industry super claims - income protection - TPD appeals,

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claims for Detriment Caused by Defective Administration - CDDA

Our Readers love Vietnam Veterans' Stories

Gleaned from letters diaries and memories



In this edition we welcome new author Merv Smith with the surprising adventures of an Ammo Tech.

Regular contributing author, Al Wood, serves up a piece that may bring fond memories to many readers.

Crew member, John Ingram, gives us Part 2 of the story of HMAS Sydney, the ship that carried so many of us to and from Vietnam.

Keep those stories coming in.



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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.

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*****BEFORE*****
2 JUNE 2022**

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National President's Good News

I am delighted to report that
our Editor, Bob Freshfield, has
been awarded the Order of
Australia (OAM).



Bob was the magazine's editor
from 2001 to 2006 and again from 2010 to the
present day.

As editor he is responsible for the magazine's
content and for its publishing and distribution, all
tasks requiring skill and commitment. The
distribution through Australia Post of some 8000
magazines requires considerable organization. The
Editor's task requires commitment that few others
would be prepared to make.

Bob has received much warranted praise for
his editorship.

And Bob has given much other valuable
service.

In 2000 Bob became a Pension Officer,
assisting veterans with compensation claims, and a
few years later he qualified as an Advocate, taking
veterans' rejected claims to appeal. He also became
a Mentor, supervising the work of new Pension
Officers. In 2001, Bob was elected a Committee
Member and sometimes given 'special projects' to
complete.

In 2003, Bob was elected Junior Vice
President, an important position he held till 2007.

Added to these responsibilities is Bob's
authorship of both National and NSW's web-sites
which has kept members informed and explained
our purpose to all. The web-sites have been praised
both for its style and content. ([http://](http://www.vvfagranville.org)
www.vvfagranville.org and www.vvfa.org.au)

As if these responsibilities were not enough,
in 2013 Robert accepted the position as Treasurer,
a position he continues to hold, as well as National
Treasurer since 2015.

Bob's award is well deserved recognition. ■



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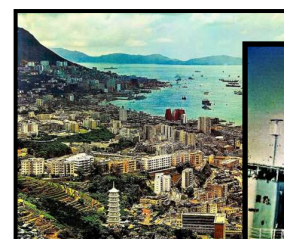
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National President's More Good News

John SCHUMANN has been made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) 'for significant service to the veteran community, to music, and to the community'.



In 1983 John Schumann gave us our anthem, I Was Only 19. But as well as giving it to us he gave it to the whole of Australia. It informed Australians that all was not well with their Vietnam veterans and initiated the progress towards atonement culminating in the 1987 Welcome Home Parade.

John Schumann followed up the song's success with hundreds of media interviews and gifting certain royalties to Vietnam veterans' efforts to have the harm done by exposure to toxic chemicals recognised.

John's work has helped to change public attitudes of the Vietnam war days. Those Australians opposed to the more recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are at the same time supporting and respecting the men and women sent to fight it.

John has more recently worked with both the army and police. He has toured Australia interviewing victims of the trauma of conflict followed by making acclaimed videos to help those suffering and to educate those following.

All this contribution, over so many years, has ensured the Australian public have a much better understanding of the effects of the trauma of conflict. This understanding has led to pressure on governments to properly look after those harmed by being sent into extreme danger on the community's behalf.

We thank him for his dedication to our cause and express our delight that his contribution to veterans and to Australian culture has been given this recognition. ■

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Suicide

Fussing around on the surface of the problem will not reduce ADF suicides in the long run; the government and DVA must bite the bullet and fix the structural and systemic problems in the Repatriation system

In November 2021 we made a presentation to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide round table conference for ESO representatives.

This is what we told them.

‘We believe that without solving the following structural and systemic problems, permanent remedy is impossible.’

First Issue.

Once it became normal for military personnel to be deployed 4,5, 6 and more times to Afghanistan and elsewhere, 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 have been caused by their naïve assumption that whilst the war was being fought,

no large numbers of veterans were coming forward with problems. Of course, as everyone else understood, the military personnel were bottling up their problems, so as not to miss a redeployment. Then, when the war was over, they began hitting the wall in droves.

But DVA could not be told so they were ill-prepared.



And there is the question of *why* military personnel, particularly from the combat units, were redeployed, time after time, sometimes without even the recommended gap between deployments.

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 its accountant advisors partly responsible for so many suicides?

Second Issue

Three 2005 government studies examined the health of Vietnam veterans.

The most important of these compared the

death rate (mortality) of National Servicemen who were sent to fight the war in Vietnam with those National Servicemen who were kept in Australia.

These two National Service groups were, of course, very alike groups having been selected by the same process. So comparing them made statistical sense.

The difference in mortality between the two groups turned out to be significant.

Overall, the mortality rate amongst those National Servicemen who were sent to Vietnam was 23% higher than those who were kept in Australia.

Most importantly for the Royal Commission, those who had fought the war had a 43% higher suicide rate and 31% higher rate of motor accident deaths (the latter often a form of suicide).

(Continued on page 8)



Commissioners at work
The Hon James Douglas QC, Mr Nick Kaldas APM (Chair), Dr Peggy Brown AO

This clearly showed a simple truth: fighting a war increases the combatants' risk of later suicide.

Another vital 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; so much lower, it turned out, that even fighting a war was unable to rise their suicide rate above that of their peers in the general community.

But in 2015 when the suicides of Iraq and

Afghanistan veterans became an issue, these clear-cut facts were ignored.

Statements were 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 fighting a war does increase the individual's 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 very much lower.

As it happened, those suicide statistics were, over time, revised upwards, showing the ADF suicide rate eclipsing even their civilian peers.

It was only then that the Department of



Afghanistan war veteran Jesse Bird committed suicide on 27 June 2017 aged 32.

'significant failures by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) that increased his risk factors'...

Defence and DVA linked the high suicide rate with ADF service, having wasted valuable years.

We would ask that the Royal Commission keep these two salient facts in mind.

Third Issue

The suicide of Jesse Bird exposed the failings of the Repatriation System..

Whilst Jesse's suicide was preceded by DVA bungling and dysfunction, there was, and remains, a deeper problem.

Sick veterans from more recent wars, as exemplified by Jesse Bird, can be kept waiting for a year or more for a decision on compensation because they must wait to establish their condition is stable and permanent, a very long wait for the traumatised. It is a process that makes many veterans sicker.

DVA justifies this torturous wait by saying we must not discourage rehabilitation by granting compensation too early. DVA justifies this often torturous wait 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 misses the point that very many war traumatised veterans, no matter how long they are kept waiting, no matter what rehabilitation they may receive, no matter to what sporting events they may be sponsored, will never again be able to rejoin the normal workforce.

Keeping them waiting so long for a decision on compensation can be itself traumatic.

The need to wait so long is a relatively new feature of the Repatriation system. It replaced a workable, more humane system which was tried and tested over decades.

Under legislation governing Vietnam veterans, TPI compensation is granted by a medical judgement that the veterans' 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 the Veterans' Vocational Rehabilitation Scheme (VVRS) to do so. Under this scheme the veteran is taken off the TPI pension but left on 100% of the General Rate and he returns to work.

If later the veteran's condition deteriorates, he can cease work and return to 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.

But 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.

Fourth Issue

There is a long history of backlogs of veterans' disability pension claims building up.

This is a separate but additional factor in making veterans wait unreasonably long times for a decision on their claim, causing anxiety in many already suffering war caused anxiety.

In recent times, it can be months before a claim is even looked at.

A full year seems to be the standard time for an uncomplicated decision.

Leaving sick veterans waiting for so long for a decision so vital for their future life is not only cruel but could well be a factor in decisions to suicide.

The current unacceptable backlog is several years old.

Fifth Issue

There has been much talk of creating a smooth transition for injured and sick ADF members between their military service and being looked after by DVA.

And we believe such a smooth transition must reduce aggravation encouraging suicide.

But even recently we had an instance of the Navy discharging a sailor before the link had been secured.

It is important that this dysfunction should cease.

Lastly

There is a mistaken view being expressed in some circles that many veterans' suicides have nothing to do with their war service. Causes such as family difficulties, financial concerns, alcohol consumption are cited.

But these proximate causes may well be within a context of reduced ability, caused by the trauma of war service, to cope with the stresses of life. Indeed, it is probable that this is the case.

It should be assumed, then, that in any suicide by a war veteran, their war service is a factor.

Other relevant points made at the Round Table

- There should not be three Acts covering veterans, compensation. It makes the system many times more complex and time consuming than necessary. Our concern about combining them, is that, going on past performance, the DVA will pick the worst aspects of each rather than the best
- There is a high rate of Suicidality amongst Vietnam veterans as well as their spouses (see the work of epidemiologist Brian O'Toole). It must be remembered that for a veteran to be healthy, he/she needs to be supported by a healthy family..
- Any centralizing reorganization of Advocacy should have appropriate veterans' organisations (those who are expert in the field) well represented in the governance

It should be assumed, then, that in any suicide by a war veteran, their war service is a factor.

structure. It should not be governed only by DVA.

- Professional soldiers are not paid market rates for the danger they face; nothing like it. Soldiers, after a tour in Afghanistan were being offered three and four times their army pay to join commercial security

organisations. So any claim that our military personnel are paid upfront for the dangers they face is nonsense. There should therefore be no hesitation in compensating war caused injury and illness generously and quickly. ■



The famous 'Image of a Dead Man' by Vietnam veteran artist Ray Beattie

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

The adventures of Merv Smith

AN AMMO TECH'S STORY



I believed that it would be quite safe to join the Australian Army as there was no talk of any foreseeable major conflict. There would be peace in my time.

I enlisted on Armistice Day 1963. Eleven days later, when President Kennedy was assassinated, the Army was placed on full alert. I wasn't expecting that!

I qualified as an Ammunition Technician (AT) in 1965. Qualification required six months training at the, then, Ammunition Wing of the RAAOC Centre at Bandiana followed by a further six months of 'on the job' assessment. Ammunition Technical Officers (ATOs) were trained at the same location. The failure rate for my course was 50%, probably due to the pass marks being 80% for the weekly theory exams and 100% for all practical tests.

Shortly after I started the AT's course the then Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, announced

that Australia would be sending troops to South Vietnam (SVN). I wasn't expecting that either! Not long after that my unit (1 Composite Ordnance Company) headed off to SVN while I stayed to complete the AT's course. My unit eventually morphed into 2nd Advanced Ordnance Depot (2 AOD).

Just before Christmas 1968, as a 25-year-old, I joined 169 other soldiers on a Qantas Boeing 707 headed for Tan Son Nhut airport in Saigon.

When we disembarked at Singapore (for refuelling) we were required to wear a civilian shirt, apparently so the 170 clean-shaven men with short haircuts, spit polished shoes and military trousers would appear to be just casual tourists.

There were four Australian ammunition specialists in SVN. 1xCapt Ammunition Technical Officer (HQ AFV Saigon), 1xSSgt Ammunition Technician (25 Supply Platoon RAASC Nui Dat),

(Continued on page 13)



1xWO2 Ammunition Technician and 1xSSgt Ammunition Technician (2 Army Ordnance Depot RAAOC Vung Tau).

The responsibilities of ATOs and ATs in SVN encompassed all aspects of construction, function, use, storage, distribution, transportation, inspection, repair, maintenance, disposal and accounting of ammunition and explosives.

The majority of ammunition used by Australian units in SVN was drawn from US Army stocks. 2 AOD held some 2,000 tonnes of ammunition that was peculiar to our weapons and supplied from Australia, such as ammunition for the Centurion tanks and 9 mm small arms ammunition for the Browning pistol. This Australian ammunition was held within the US Army depot at Vung Tau, which was located about six kilometres from 2 AOD.

The 25 Sup PI (RAASC) ammunition point at Nui Dat held some 100 tonnes of ammunition in a series of bays cut into the base of SAS Hill.

This ammunition point overlooked the airfield.

I took up the posting of SSgt AT with 2 AOD at Vung Tau.

Initially the main task was the daily re-supply of ammunition forward to Nui Dat. The quantities were large by peace-time usage standards. My recollection is that the 2 AOD Ammunition Platoon supplied some 28,000 rounds of 105 mm howitzer ammunition and about one million rounds of small arms ammunition every month. Additional to that were all the other natures: 81mm mortar ammunition, 66 mm rockets, fragmentation and smoke grenades, claymore mines and so on.

The duties of ATs at Vung Tau included the safe disposal of ammunition removed from the dead and wounded brought into the 1st Australian Field Hospital (1 AFH) by the 'dust-off' helicopters.

When these helicopters were expected, a

(Continued on page 14)



Added by John Winterbotham

17101 Captain. Grant Stuart Ross, Headquarters Australian Forces Vietnam Age 27 from Brisbane QLD. On 9th February 1971, Captain Grant Ross and WO2 Terence Edward Lyon 2AOD were pre-destruction inspecting a hoard of enemy ammunition which blew up and killed them both in Nui Dat.

Inscription

17101 CAPT Grant Stuart ROSS
Killed Vietnam 9-2-1971
27 years
Forever In Our Thoughts

Gravesite Details

Also Commemorated on the Queensland Garden of Remembrance - Wall 5 - Row N.

Flowers • 4

[Plant Memorial Trees](#)



Added by Muriel Butler

siren would be sounded. If ATs were in the vicinity they would go to the hospital's helipad. As the troops arrived they would be stripped of their weapons and all ammunition and explosives; the ammunition and explosives would be collected by the ATs. If no ATs were in the vicinity the ammunition and explosives would be placed in an in-ground container for later collection.

1 AFH was close to 2 AOD. It would not be unusual for hospital medics to visit the 2 AOD Sergeant's Mess to have a break away from the hospital environment and to 'get away from it all'. Bombs and bullets were easy to handle; medics with tears in their eyes were not.

Any thoughts that I had of completing my tour in the sea breezes of Vung Tau would soon come to an end.

On 19 February 1969, there was an explosion in one of the bays at the ammunition point at Nui Dat. AT SSgt Jim Barber, who was in charge of the ammunition point at that time, was awarded a George Medal for his actions, which are explained in the following condensed version of a newspaper report:

SSgt Jim Barber has been awarded the George Medal for heroism in dragging clear burning ammunition boxes when a dump caught fire in Vietnam.

SSgt Barber was driving to an ammunition point in

Nui Dat when a bay of ammunition caught fire and exploded. A series of explosions scattered ammunition over a wide area and started many fires.

He established that all soldiers in the area were safe, then, although ammunition was still exploding and debris and unexploded ammunition was falling around him, he surveyed the area to see if any other bays were threatened.

'With complete disregard for his own personal safety' the citation says, 'SSgt Barber moved up to a threatened bay and dragged clear a number of cases of smouldering ammunition'.

'Throughout the whole time he was in grave danger of ammunition in this and the adjacent bay exploding'.

'By his cool and courageous actions SSgt Barber prevented the fire spreading to a remaining 20 tonnes of ammunition and averted a major disaster'.

'SSgt Barber was subsequently injured while destroying ammunition which had been damaged during the fire and explosions'.

Capt Kevin Graham from HQ AFV joined SSgt Barber to undertake the hazardous task of cleaning up all the damaged and unsafe ammunition that had been randomly and violently strewn over distances up to one kilometre.

During that clean-up operation a white phosphorus smoke grenade exploded in close vicinity to both personnel. Both were severely

(Continued on page 15)



Long Binh Post was a sprawling logistics facility and the largest U.S. Army base in Vietnam, with a peak of 60,000 personnel in 1969.

burnt and were dusted-off to the hospital in Vung Tau.

Capt Graham was returned to Australia for further treatment. SSgt Barber remained in hospital but, after treatment, was able to return to his duties in Nui Dat.

I moved from Vung Tau to Nui Dat to continue the clean-up task with ATO Capt Martin Tobin who was seconded from non-technical duties in Saigon.

There was speculation as to what caused the fire in the ammunition bay but no definite conclusion was reached.

While performing the clean-up task at Nui Dat, I was summonsed to Long Binh on the basis that *'a truck of ammunition has blown up'*. I was flown there by Cessna aircraft.

After operations troops were quite happy to rid themselves of any ammunition that was left over. As the original packaging had long gone, the ammunition was usually all clumped together in whatever containers were available.

The truck in question was carrying containers that held all types of ammunition: small arms ammunition, fragmentation and smoke grenades, hand held signals, trip flares, claymore mines, 66 mm rockets, etc.

It became apparent that a trip flare had

ignited. These flares burn intensely for 60 seconds, quite enough time to start a chain reaction by igniting other ammunition and causing fires within the tray of the truck. Resultant explosions propelled burning and unsafe ammunition for quite large distances. This called for a *'one-man risk'* clean-up.

I stayed at Long Binh until that task was completed then returned to Nui Dat to continue the clean-up task there.

Around mid-1969 it was decided that the US Army ammunition depot at Vung Tau would be closed. All ammunition, including Australian stocks, were moved to Long Binh. I also moved to Long Binh, which was 20 km from Saigon.

I had been to Long Binh before when Australian troops were deployed near there. I recall quite well the date of 2 April 1969 when the camp came under a very heavy rocket attack. Although I was not injured, several US soldiers near me received shrapnel wounds. Many purple hearts were earned on that day. There were unconfirmed reports that 21 US soldiers had been killed.

My final stint at Long Binh, in the latter part of 1969, was without any major dramas but it was eye-opening to see the scale of the US Army

(Continued on page 16)

operations.

Long Binh was the largest military base in SVN, accommodating some 60,000 troops.

Quite a lot of the US Army ammunition supplies came in through the port of Cogido, which had a quota to move 2,000 tonnes per day.

The US Army ammunition depot worked two 12-hour shifts. The day shift spent 12 hours receiving ammunition; the night shift spent 12 hours issuing ammunition and loading semi-trailers for despatch the next morning.

The largest ammunition convoy that I saw leave Long Binh was 177 semi-trailer loads. These semi-trailers would leave together then peel off to various places (such as Nui Dat) as the convoy moved along.

I returned to Australia in time for Christmas 1969. That's when this story should have ended, but it didn't.

Sadly, the ammunition point at Nui Dat was the scene for another tragic event.

On 9 February 1971, when ammunition was being prepared for demolition, a fragmentation grenade detonated killing my colleagues ATO Capt Grant Ross and AT WO2 Terrence Lyon. ■

The author.

38133 Mervyn (Merv) Smith enlisted, as a recruit, on 11 November 1963 and retired as a Captain (PSO) on 12 June 1984 after 20 years 7 months of service.

He qualified as an Ammunition Technician in 1965 then spent the following 18 years as an Ammunition Technician and Ammunition Technical Officer.

His tour of South Vietnam (with 2 AOD) was from December 1968 to December 1969. ■



Is the government taking part of your DFRDB pension that should be returned to you?

Are you on a DFRDB military superannuation pension?

Did you 'commute'? That is, did you take a 'lump sum payment' and, as a consequence, accept a lowered pension?

Many of us, by now, will have well and truly paid back the amount of that 'lump sum' through our reduced pension. Even so, the government refuses to restore our pensions to their original value.

This is unfair and possibly illegal.

The case is presently being argued in the Federal Court.

The case is being sponsored by the Australian Defence Force Retirees Association who represent the interests of Defence Force Retirees regarding their Superannuation [www: https://www.adfra.org/](https://www.adfra.org/)

We will keep you posted.

NEW SOUTH WALES PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Robert Freshfield OAM - Our sincere congratulations go to Robert (Bob) Freshfield who was named in the Australia Day Honours List as a recipient of an award in the General Division (OAM) for services to the veteran community. Bob has been an NSW Branch Committee member for 23 years and a Life Member of the Association since 2015. His extensive contributions to the affairs of the Association cannot be under-estimated, He has attacked each role with dedication and professionalism including pensions/welfare, Newsletter Editor, website author and National and State Treasurer. He has also held senior positions in both the Merrylands RSL sub-branch and the Club Ltd. Bob is, of course, a Vietnam Veteran having served in the Australian Army from 1970-72. We are very proud of his selfless volunteer contributions to the welfare of veterans.

Alice Kang OAM - Alice Kang is also a recipient of an OAM for her selfless contributions to veterans and community health. Alice began nursing at Concord Hospital in 1974 and rose to occupy various senior positions. She is a founding member of the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway and has been Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of that body since 1995. Her dedication to the health and welfare of Australian War Veterans has been enormous. Congratulations Alice for a job well done indeed.

RSLNSW Proposal - The NSW Branch of the Association received a merger proposal from RSLNSW and requested a meeting to discuss the issue. Our Executive Committee subsequently met with Ray James OAM (RSLNSW President) and

Jon Black (NSWRSL CEO) to hear their proposal. Essentially, they suggested that we might become a sub-branch of the RSLNSW. The proposal was taken to our elected NSW Branch Committee Meeting for discussion where it was unanimously rejected. Our NSW Branch is, of course, part of the Vietnam Veterans Federation and is the largest such branch. We take pride in the services we have provided, and continue to provide, to our Nations veterans particularly in terms of DVA claims where the number of veterans assisted continue to be up to three times greater than other ESO's.

Our NSW sub-branches - We have fourteen sub-branches in NSW which continue to provide valuable support and services to our regional membership. We have always had at least two face-to-face conferences annually with sub-branches. With the advent of COVID we have resorted to conferring on-line only. We expect to resume face-to-face conferences on 31 March 2022. Such conferences are necessary to enhance two-way communication and to exchange ideas and issues generally.

NSW Branch AGM - Please note that the NSW Branch AGM will commence at 1000 hours on Wednesday 11 May 2022 at our Veterans Support Centre, 8 Mary Street Granville. The meeting Agenda appears in this Newsletter. 2022 is not an election year.

Frank Cole
NSW President



We bring you the second part of Kel Robertson's dive into the dusty archives of the 1960s and 1970s to discover the origins of the Vietnam veteran movement..

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

His second episode on the following pages sets the scene for the earliest claims by Vietnam veterans that they had been harmed by their exposure to toxic chemicals.

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 (PART 2 OF 2)

Previously: In February 1972, at one of the initial public hearings of his Independent Inquiry into Repatriation, Justice Paul Toose asked the RSL representative, Bill Keys, whether the League had speculated on a **connection between cancers and servicemen's exposure to defoliants in Vietnam**. The reasons for Toose's question were unclear. There was little enough interest at this time in the direct effect of defoliants on the Vietnamese, and no one before Toose would seem to have speculated in a public forum about the harmful effects of defoliants on Australian military personnel. Keys made enquiries of RSL State Branches and would also seem to have made enquiries in the US, but nothing resulted.

The RSL's 1972 call for veterans with defoliant-caused cancer to come forward was always going to fail.

While some Vietnam veterans would later prove to be assiduous joiners of service organisations, and the RSL would claim, in the 1980s, to represent more Vietnam veterans than any other Ex-Service Organisation, anecdotal evidence suggests that the League didn't have a large proportion of Vietnam veterans on its books in 1972, let alone a majority of those veterans or many engaged ones. The message about possible defoliant-related cancers wouldn't have reached a significant proportion of the Vietnam cohort.

Even if the message received more prominence in other RSL State branch publications than it did in NSW (see part 1 of this article), many of the veterans were busy with new or resumed careers, or with young families and adjusting to life at home. They were unlikely to have registered the call, noting that its focus was on cancers, rather than on the child deformities or other conditions that would later fuel their distress. It's true, also, that cancers take time to develop and probably

(Continued on page 20)

weren't diagnosed in noticeable numbers at the beginning of the decade.

Vietnam veterans were unlikely, even if they had been diagnosed with cancer before 1972, to have connected that cancer to their war service; many did not have the contact with other veterans necessary to reach conclusions about shared health conditions. More to the point, even those who were directly exposed to chemicals, rather than indirectly exposed via food, water and the environment, may not have consciously registered the fact. In any event, officials had always maintained that the substances were harmless to humans; veterans could reasonably have regarded the RSL's enquiry as alarmist or as proof of the success of enemy propaganda about the dangerous nature of the defoliation program.

In addition, when Vietnam veterans did gather, for example at Anzac Day functions - as good numbers evidently did - they were unlikely to have engaged in discussion about the causes of less obvious illnesses. On top of that, this was a time before the internet and before health consumers' rights; it was a time when the ill were discouraged from being informed about the causes and treatment of disease; such matters were best left to health professionals; doctor knew best.

There were sound reasons, nonetheless, why the RSL might have been expected, in 1972, to assist any veterans who responded to its call. The organisation had been supportive of the war (as the principal Australian initiative in the fight against Asian Communism), had been, for various reasons, equally keen on conscription, and had

displayed, during the war, a paternal interest in personnel posted to Vietnam (see below).

It had taken an active (but mostly ineffective) role during the 1960s and early 1970s in urging improvements in the service and post-service conditions of Vietnam personnel, as part of (and separately from) agitation for improvements in conditions, generally. However, it had taken a special interest in the welfare and entitlements of national servicemen posted to Vietnam.



As part of its wartime courting of Vietnam veterans, the League had not only supported the war and conscription in the face of domestic opposition but had repeatedly asked the Government to take steps to curtail that opposition. It had also provided troops with amenities and

entertainment, and had supplied them, at least for a while, with Christmas gifts. It had, further, attempted to encourage attachment to the RSL through honorary memberships, distribution of a pamphlet outlining the benefits of membership and occasional recruitment drives at discharge centres. It had even, from the earliest days of the war, played a part in linking the service and sacrifices of the Vietnam men to those of previous generations, thereby emphasising their place in the Anzac tradition.

League senior officials were especially conscious of the need to have the Vietnam generations join the RSL if the organisation was to survive, and if its WWII members were to be advocated for in their old age. Bill Keys was to expend significant energy in following decades in the struggle to widen the

League's membership.

Keys was particularly keen, as part of the end-of-commitment wooing of Vietnam men, to acknowledge their efforts, pushing a 1971 proposal from within Army to have a special event for Vietnam veterans or, alternatively, to have them lead the 1972 Anzac Day Marches in state capitals.

Some Vietnam veterans - doubtless of the more respectable and respectful sort - were even elected to positions in RSL sub-branches. But there were other more tangible pointers to a potentially sympathetic response to victims of chemical exposure in 1972, well before the emergence of factors that would eventually prompt Keys and the National Executive to oppose any formal investigation of links between that exposure and harms to veterans and their families.

In the early 1970s the League could afford to entertain the possibility of chemical harms. The extent of defoliant exposure (direct and indirect)

wasn't widely known; the possible implications of exposure for wives and children were seemingly unthought of; and the threat to the big chemical companies and domestic agriculture posed by an acknowledgement of defoliant-related harms was yet to materialise. Chemical harms were, on the few known facts, unlikely to have been a significant impost on repatriation budgets or to have affected the League's relationship with Federal Governments concerned about repatriation expenditure, Ministers' reputations or possible bans on agricultural chemicals.

It's interesting to note that before 1972 there would already have been RSL-assisted repatriation claims for medical conditions later attributed to

chemical exposure e.g., for chloracne, mistaken for a tropical skin complaint. The nature of the repatriation system was such that there was no requirement of claimants to identify the exact war-related cause of medical conditions. It was to be another decade before it became important to some veterans to have defoliants, in particular, specified as the cause of their (and their families') health problems.

One pointer to likely sympathy for chemical-related cancer claims in the early 1970s was the League's acknowledgement that some of the Vietnam men were having difficulty finding their

way in society, just as many veterans before them had done. This concern was arguably evidenced in two motions carried at the October 1971 RSL National Congress, just four months before Justice Toose's question about defoliants.

The first of these motions, from the ACT Branch, urged the Government "to appoint an authoritative senior body,

including members of standing in the disciplines of law, psychology, sociology and oriental studies to examine and report on non-operational environmental aspects of Australian servicemen's tours of duty in Vietnam." (This was clearly a motion about the psychological, rather than physical impact of the war and was dismissed by the Minister for Repatriation, R M Holten, just as most other RSL representations to Ministers in these years were.)

The second motion was one "that the RSL take more interest regarding the welfare and repatriation of the Returned Servicemen from Vietnam." This motion was given substance at the

(Continued on page 22)



National Executive meeting at the conclusion of the 1971 Congress, at which the ACT member of the Executive sought a reaction from State Branches on the problem of unemployed Vietnam veterans seeking over-night accommodation and assistance in Canberra. Although the Executive responded by discussing the importance of better discharge information on available help, it didn't dismiss the issue or blame the veterans.

It is worth noting, in passing, that this response points to one of the reasons why the RSL could afford to be sympathetic: any war-caused health problems of the Vietnam men would be the responsibility of the Government, not of the RSL, except in so far as some veteran members would seek assistance in pressing their repatriation claims. And to further press a point made above, the number of Vietnam men, compared to the veterans of earlier wars, was tiny; even if high proportions of them were to make repatriation claims

(as was to be the case, soon enough) they were unlikely to make a dent in total repatriation expenditure ... until such time as their wives and children also needed to be compensated, legislative change permitting.

Other noteworthy pointers to likely RSL support were motions at the 1970 National Congress about the dangers posed by pollution and polluting chemicals, and the longstanding campaign to have cancer, type regardless, automatically accepted as a war caused condition.

It needs to be conceded that any tendency there might have been to assist ill Vietnam men in 1972 wasn't going to be reflected in positive experiences for young veterans who attended their local RSL club or who tried to participate in the activities of their local sub-branch. Stories about frosty receptions from WW11 men and derogatory remarks about the nature of the Vietnam conflict are reported as having been extraordinarily frequent.

Most of the hostile behaviour which bewildered, irritated and even saddened Vietnam veterans is likely to have had its roots less in the spurious distinctions made between the war-time experiences of different generations than in the fact that the Vietnam men were younger – in some cases much younger – than the WW11 veterans who were the bulk of RSL members in the early 1970s. Some regulars were so young that, during periods of home leave, they were refused access to RSL clubs under licensing laws that

“This missed opportunity would have significant consequences for veterans’ politics in the 1980s and have consequences for Vietnam veterans and their families for decades afterwards”

prohibited the service of alcohol to persons under 21 years of age. Other unpleasant incidents were a reflection of older Australians' intolerance of the dress and grooming of the young, and were by no means restricted to RSL clubs and Vietnam veterans. Indeed, it's likely that most of the reported nastiness in RSL clubs was a result of one generation's presence in a place that previous generations had come to regard as their own; it probably signalled a fear, too, that more recent tales of perseverance and hardship would outshine those staled by too-frequent retelling. The roots of

this animosity, where present at the local level, ran deep.

This notwithstanding, Keys and other members of the RSL executive were, as mentioned above, keen for the Vietnam generation of returned men to bolster the organisation's membership, and this desire could well have shaped the League's response to early cancer cases.

Counterbalancing any inclination in 1972 to sympathise with chemical-affected veterans would have been a phenomenon that troubled Keys and was to play a major role, along with his obstinacy, in the National Executive's refusal, a decade later, to support an independent enquiry into chemical exposure. This phenomenon was a flurry of anti-repatriation stories in the media in 1969 and 1970, claiming that many repatriation pensioners were defrauding the system, and referring to claimants as bludgers and fakes.

More will be written about these stories and Keys' response to them in a later article. It only needs to be remarked here that the widespread nature of critical media reports and the alleged echoing of anti-repatriation sentiments by a prominent Liberal politician (who was heading a Senate Inquiry into repatriation at the same time as the Toose Inquiry) shocked the RSL leadership. Keys knew, from 1969, that there were limits to the support the Australian public was prepared to provide for returned servicemen. This understanding might

have precluded support for (then) unusual cancer claims by the Vietnam men.

Another counterbalancing factor might have been the occasional pressure on the League to advocate for the (better) inclusion in the repatriation system of non-returned WW11 men and women. Why advocate for out-of-the-ordinary claims for the young when there were "second order" WW11

veterans (albeit non-members) to be looked after? Why, for that matter, support the unusual claims of the young when emphysema was not automatically accepted as a war-caused condition for gassed WW1 diggers or when heart disease and cancer (whatever the cause) weren't automatically accepted as war-caused for the veterans of the two World Wars?

In the event, the RSL and Keys weren't required in 1972 to engage in any weighing up of their obligations to Vietnam

veterans and to the mass of their membership i.e. the WW11 generations. It seems that no one, for reasons outlined at the beginning of this article, came forward to claim that they had cancers arising from chemical exposure.

It would be another 6 years before the chemical exposure of Australian soldiers was raised again in public, after newspaper reports of sick American veterans prompted Gary Adams (a later stalwart of the early NSW Vietnam Veterans Action Association) to speak to the "Sunday Telegraph" and speculate that some of his health problems

"Bill Keys would later become the President of the League and, after a period of cautious support for an independent inquiry into chemical exposure, would ... be implacably opposed to it, even though sub-branches of his own organisation didn't support his position."

(Continued on page 24)

might have been caused by defoliants. (A newspaper report from WA in 1980 maintained that a prominent local veteran, Terry Spriggs, had been agitating since the early 1970s for recognition of chemical-related health issues, but no evidence has so far been discovered by the author to support this claim.)

The RSL's response to Justice Toose's question was to have far-reaching consequences. The enquiries made by the RSL about defoliant harms – results not publicised - would later enable Keys to claim, disingenuously, that the RSL, in the face of criticism from the Action Association, had been on top of the defoliant issue for years.

The unfortunate thing about this incident is that, if Toose's concerns had been treated seriously, the League might have agitated for early monitoring of the health of Vietnam veterans or for a modest epidemiological study to chart the harms to those veterans: one which might have borne useful preliminary fruit by the end of 1979 (when the defoliant issue finally came to the fore).

This missed opportunity would have significant consequences for veterans' politics in the 1980s and have consequences for Vietnam veterans and their families for decades afterwards.

The defoliant issue raised by Justice Toose seems not have featured in the official report of his inquiry, but the judge was later to play an important part in a repatriation-related clash between ESOs and the Hawke Government.

Bill Keys would later become the President of the League and, after a period of cautious support for an independent inquiry into chemical exposure, would (as mentioned above) be implacably opposed to it, even though sub-branches of his own organisation didn't support his position.

RSL Clubs and local sub-branches of the RSL, whose patrons and members are recalled as being hostile to Vietnam veterans in the 1960s and

1970s, became the major supporters of the early VVAA in NSW and provided assistance of various sorts in other States, with some continuing to provide financial support even after a September 1980 National Executive decision (endorsed by the National Congress) that was widely believed to have prohibited the provision of financial help to any Vietnam veterans without National Executive permission.

The next article in this series will step through the early events in the establishment of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association.

Kel Robertson is a Canberra writer. He is currently researching the history of the VVAA. The views expressed in this article are his and not those of the Federation. The aim of "History Drafts" is to inform readers about progress made with the organisation's history and encourage

people who have extra information to contact the writer. Readers who have additional information about matters mentioned in this article or who would like a copy of the article with

sources cited, can contact Kel at vwhistory99@gmail.com. Readers who wish to take issue with the content of this article are encouraged to first view the extra material and notes on sources which are contained in the version available from Kel.



From the National and NSW Secretary



A MESSAGE FROM THE NSW BRANCH

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:

\$1,800	Paul Turner	
\$1,000	Anonymous	James McGeachie
	Anonymous	Brian (Tab) Hunter
	Kevin Faust	Colin Robinson
	Warren Axford	
\$500	Gordon O'Brien	Bruce Cullen
	Stephen Bunter	Geoffrey Jones
	Peter Unwin	John McNeil
	Anonymous	Adrian Starr
	Jacqui & Shane Matthews	
	Christine Senini	
\$400	Anonymous	Geoffrey Peattie
	William Smith	
\$300	John Morgan	Hy Xuan Trinh
	Garry Smyth	Dallas Mulhall OAM

\$300	Geoffrey Lopez	Henry Walker
	Anonymous	Wesley Hindmarsh
\$270	Anonymous	Philip Calvert
	Ivan Waskiw	
\$250	David Gibbs	Gary Chenhall
	Alan Limn	Anthony Shephard
\$220	Samuel Panarello	
\$212	Edward Davies	
\$200	Valerie Ekman	Peter Miller
	Anonymous	Anthony Thomas
	Brian Carney	John Stoker
	Kerry Bee	Anonymous
	David Evans	Phillip Inman
	David Ashley	David Aitkin
	Kevin Stewart	Brian Wood
	Anonymous	David Gilmer
	Tania Edwards-Hackett	
	Robert Allen	Hector Grant
	Denis Nolan	Danny Hay
	Charles Shay	Peter Brown
	Colin Kelson	Patrick Gallagher

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

In other news, please note that our NSW AGM will be held at our Granville offices this year, as per the agenda on page 30.

Lucky winners of our NSW 2022 Membership Renewal Gift draw are:

William Atkinson
Robert Scott
Kenneth Cooper

A \$100 Bunnings Gift Voucher has gone out to the lucky winners. Special thanks to all our of members who have renewed for your support of the Association in its work to assist our serving and ex-service personnel and yheir families in need.

Ron O'Connor JP
National and NSW Secretary

It's taken a Royal Commission to dig out the whole truth about something we have been complaining about for years

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide was sitting in the week 14 to 18 February 2022.

Here is an extract from a report by journalist Phoebe Bowden for ABC news.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has been swamped with claims, the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide in Sydney has been told.

Three senior public servants were grilled on Friday about the hurdles veterans faced when seeking support from the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA).

On Monday when the second round of hearings began, the commission heard the DVA had 56,663 claims on hand as of June, 30 2021 — more than double the 25,496 from June, 30 2019.

It was later told that processing times had blown out to an average of 200 days for non-urgent claims.

And on Friday the department's deputy secretary Vicki Rundle admitted they were swamped with claims.

Ms Rundle was repeatedly asked if it was due to poor planning or a lack of resources.

"The experience has been that claims have still exceeded our capacity to process them, so it

was greater than we had anticipated," she said.

Ms Rundle says the number of claims were greater than what was anticipated.

Counsel assisting Peter Gray then asked: "So you are saying that, in hindsight, the forecasting is inaccurate and actual volumes of claims exceeded the forecasts?"

"Well, I don't think I can say it was inaccurate at the time," Ms Rundle responded.

Mr Gray then tried to pinpoint what had led to such a blowout in the volume of claims and processing time.

"What we have here is quite concerning evidence of a steeply increasing backlog and it's been going on for some years," he said.

"That increase suggests that something has gone wrong.

"The options appear to be that either the forecasting was wrong over that period, leading to inadequate requests for resources, or that government didn't provide the resources that were requested."

Deputy secretary Traci-Ann Byrnes told the commission that in the lead-up to claims increasing, the DVA's staffing level had declined.

In 2015, it had a workforce of 1,935 but that dropped to 1,615 by 2020."



So the backlog was increasing while the staff numbers were decreasing. And while this was going on ex-service organisations were complaining of claims processing delays.

So much for DVA's and the government's claim to be 'listening to veterans'.

So much too for DVA's claim to of 'veteran centred' operation. These revelations make it perfectly clear that DVA's operations are far from veteran centred; they are clearly money centred.

And it's not as though DVA was not warned by us and others that a tsunami of claims would be inevitable following the practice of sending soldiers for 4, 5, 6 and sometimes 7 deployments to Afghanistan. Even the fabled 'drover's dog' could have told them that.

These are serious failings by both DVA and the government.

Do these failings contribute to an increased risk of suicide?

We think so.

Leaving sick and traumatised veterans hanging on for so long for decisions that will so critically effect their lives can only increase their anxiety, probably already at damagingly high levels. High levels of anxiety must feed into the risk of suicide.

What these revelations show is that DVA and the government have been guilty of incompetence in not foreseeing the increase in claims or, foreseeing them, not being prepared to increase and prepare staff to cope.

Whatever the cause, it is a major scandal.

We can only hope that pressure from the Royal Commission speeds up the elimination of that disturbing backlog. ■

(Note: DVA reports an average delay of 200 days for non-urgent claims. VVFA has experienced much longer such delays; one of 672 days.)



From the Editors Desk

On receipt of the OAM

Dear Reader,

It is unlike me to be short of words, so let me begin. I began my second life as a volunteer helping veterans because I found that being among veterans and their families aided in allaying my own demons. That I was privileged to witness their own successful outcomes, was a major driving force why I remained volunteering with fellow veterans for more than twenty three years.

Of course I am excited and honoured to receive this OAM, and the recognition from my peers is overwhelming, because I realise that work in the veteran community is a very large commitment from many people, it's not something you do on your own. And, while accepting the award, I pay recognition to the many who have helped me along the way. None more so than the unmitigated support and strength of my wife Christine.

I do what I do because I enjoy it and I love being an active part of the veteran community.

The Editor
Bob Freshfield OAM.

Back to Basics

Twenty years ago the Federal Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations argued that military personnel sent to fight a war should not be given special compensation consideration. They were, he argued, no different to firemen and police who are paid up front to compensate for the dangers they face. (1)

In other words, the TPI pension was an unwarranted extravagance.

Of course we know that when troops are despatched on war (war-like) service, they are required to fight an often well armed, well trained, well organised, numerous enemy who are determined to kill them. It is not just a dangerous environment like a fire or a building site. The fire has no malice towards the firemen and the building site no intention of harm towards the construction worker. And whilst it is true that occasionally police may have to face an armed criminal, these occasions are infrequent and the criminal's first priority is escape, not the death of the policeman.

Indeed, war (war-like) service is a service so dangerous that the governments know, even before deployment of the troops, that, despite the best efforts of all concerned, some of those sent will be killed, many more will be wounded and some one third will suffer a psychological illness requiring professional help at some future time.

Governments also know that the health and lifestyle of the families of traumatised veterans will suffer (as evidenced by the children of Vietnam veterans having a 300% higher rate of

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suicide than their equivalent in the general population).

The Minister did not get his way, thanks largely to ex-service organisations such as ours hooking in. But such sentiments are not killed off permanently; they hibernate waiting for an excuse to burst into life.

That's why a strong ex-service community is necessary.

We must remember that DVA has two aims. One is to help veterans, the other is to save money. It is often the aim of saving money that trumps veteran care.

Take for instance DVA's recently reducing the standard of hearing aids available under the SCRA compensation scheme to match the less generous standard available in the other two compensation schemes it administers.

DVA justified this reduction by saying they wanted to have the same quality available across all the three compensation schemes it administers.

We asked, of course, why they didn't raise the other two less generous scheme's quality of hearing aids to make them all the same.

No satisfactory answer has ever been given.

The magazine produced in our Granville office has, for some forty years, exposed government and DVA attempts to shirk their responsibility to properly care for and compensate those damaged by the trauma of war. It continues to do so.

I commend this edition's President's Report which identifies what basic changes should be made to the Defence and Repatriation systems to reduce the tragic rate of veteran suicides.

History suggests those changes won't be made because 'saving money' will continue to trump 'veteran care'. ■

(1) Submission 2466 to the Pearce Inquiry, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission to the Review of Veterans' Entitlements by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations*, 13 June 2002

WHERE ARE THE VOLUNTEERS

Now that the Covid battle is half won....

Now, as we climb out of the Covid doldrums, is the time to rethink your previous contributions as a volunteer for your local Branch and Sub-Branch of the Association. Our nonprofit veteran support centres as a whole are very inspiring and making a difference in the lives of the many people within our communities Australia wide.

Prior to Covid the Granville office alone, volunteers would contribute some 40,000 hours over a year. Remarkable! However, with the onset of Covid and the subsequent downturn in volunteer availability, we have seen a drastic drop in the number of volunteer hours, except for the hardy individuals who continued in any way they could.

Granville is not alone in this respect, and it is now time for your favourite team to regather, regrow, and even retrain those well hewn skills of yesterday. Encourage the younger veteran at every opportunity with the word spread at face to face discussion and interview by our Compensation and Wellbeing Advocates. Look upon every visitor and client as a potential candidate to bolster volunteer numbers at your place.

Three important factors to consider if you think you have no talent or a specific skillset to help out. 1. Start where you are. 2. Use what you have. 3. Do what you can. All of us began somewhere, and remember that volunteering is akin to heroism on a grand scale. It matters profoundly. It does more than help people beat the odds; it very often changes the odds. So come on all you long suffering, hard working volunteers, now is the time to get back to somewhere you are welcome, somewhere where you make a difference.

Who knows, one day soon you may wish to improve your skillsets and become a Compensation or Wellbeing Advocate. You shall receive every bit of mentoring and training that is required. Come on! Contact your local Vietnam Veterans Federation, or Vietnam Veterans' Peacekeepers & Peacemakers Association office in your State, (listing on pages 62 and 63 of this publication), and enquire today.



VVPPAA NSW ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

The 2022 Annual General Meeting of the Vietnam Veterans, Peacekeepers & Peacemakers Association of Australia (NSW Branch) Inc, will be held at the Granville Veterans Support Centre, 8 Mary Street, Granville 10.30am Wednesday, 11th May 2022.

AGENDA

Opening of Meeting by the Chairman

Apologies

Confirm the Minutes of the AGM 2021

Business Arising from the Minutes of the AGM 2021

President's Report

Treasurer's Report

Secretary's Report

Membership Report

Appointment of Association Auditors

Life Membership proposals

Other Business by leave of the Chairman

Close of Meeting

NB: The NSW Branch Constitution requires elections to be held biennially. The next election will be held in 2023.

Any items for General Business must be in the hands of the Secretary by close of business on Friday, 6th May 2022.

Next AGM to be held on a date to be confirmed during May 2023.

All attendees will be required to follow Covid-19 safety protocols that may be in place at the time, including proof of vaccinations.

These arrangements, of course, will be subject to any changes to the Covid-19 situation which might impact on being able to proceed

Ron O'Connor JP
Hon. Secretary
NSW Branch

The Minefield

An Australian tragedy in Vietnam

Another extract from the book

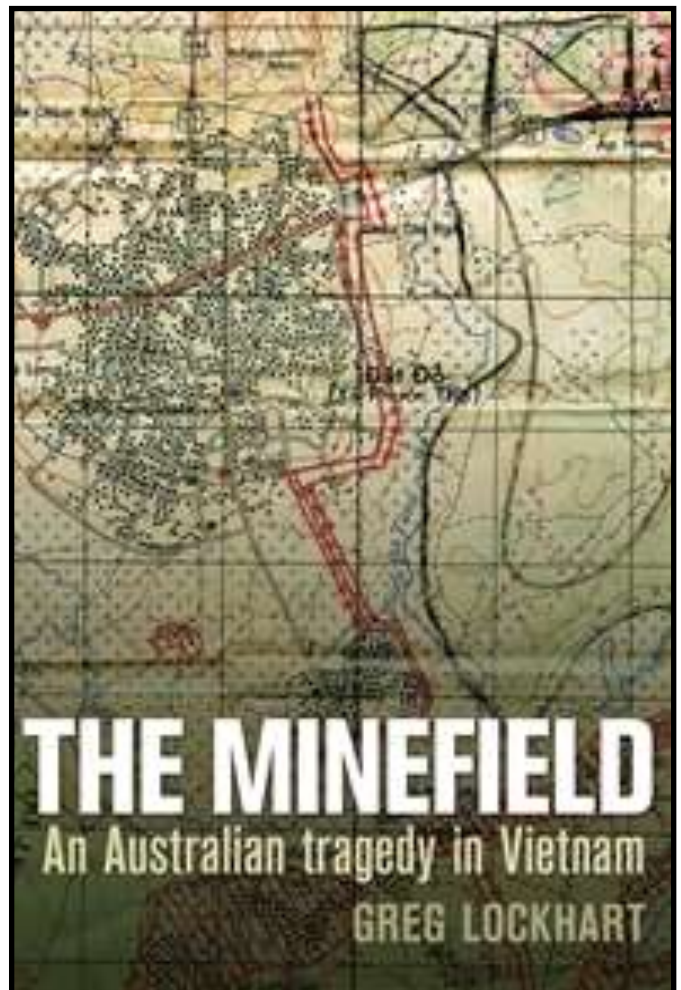
Officers and senior NCOs in 1 Field Squadron met to 'brainstorm' the problem [of clearing the minefield] before a second attempt was made in May. Various roller solutions were considered; however, heavy rollers fabricated from concrete-filled 44-gallon drums were unable to detonate mines in depressions in the ground. Lighter, more flexible rollers made of tyres or bladders filled with mastic, dirt or lead dust and pushed in front of a tank would very likely be ripped to shreds by the shrapnel from the exploding mines. Other methods were mooted. These included: burning the areas with napalm; bombarding the mines with mortars and artillery; burying the entire field; flooding the field with corrosive fluid; and using land clearing chain from one side of the field to the other pulled by bulldozers. But the massive cost and effort, plus the unlikely success or proven failure, eliminated all these proposals. ■

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.vvfaгранville.org

New Book

The Third Chopstick

By
Biff Ward

Remember Ray Fulton?

Ray, like many others, had a rough time in Vietnam. Like many others it took him years to overcome his demons. When he did, he became one of the great contributors to veterans getting something like justice.

He became a top pensions officer, then an appeals advocate, then reorganised and computerised the Granville office, increased our membership manyfold and toured sub-branches Australia-wide conducting acclaimed Pension Office courses (before such courses were reliably available officially).

He strongly lobbied DVA to remedy the many inadequacies in the Repatriation system.

There was never too much Ray could do for any veteran.

This book is partly about the author's intriguing encounters with Ray Fulton.

The book also gives an insight into the workings of the busy Granville office.

The book, *The Third Chopstick*, is highly recommended.

There follows an extract, a record of one of the author's many encounters with Ray. ■



Veterans' Champion,
'Rough Ridin' Ray Fulton

Extract from The Third Chopstick

“Graham Walker introduced me to a veteran called Ray Fulton and the three of us went to Chinatown for dinner. As we finished eating, Ray said to me, ‘So you want to know about veterans?’

‘Yes, I do,’ I said.

‘Vietnam fucked me up completely,’ he started. ‘Mad, I went, absolutely mad. I was violent, alcoholic. For seventeen years I was gone...’ He trailed off for a moment.

‘I tell you what,’ his eyes hooked mine, ‘when you’re lying in the gutter covered in spit and spew, the rest of you rushing about look pretty strange from that angle.’

I pictured myself with my sequin-covered briefcase and my shoulder pads, heading to a meeting. Oh dear.

‘I thought God was telling me the way,’ he went on. ‘I thought I had the answer and everyone else was mad.’

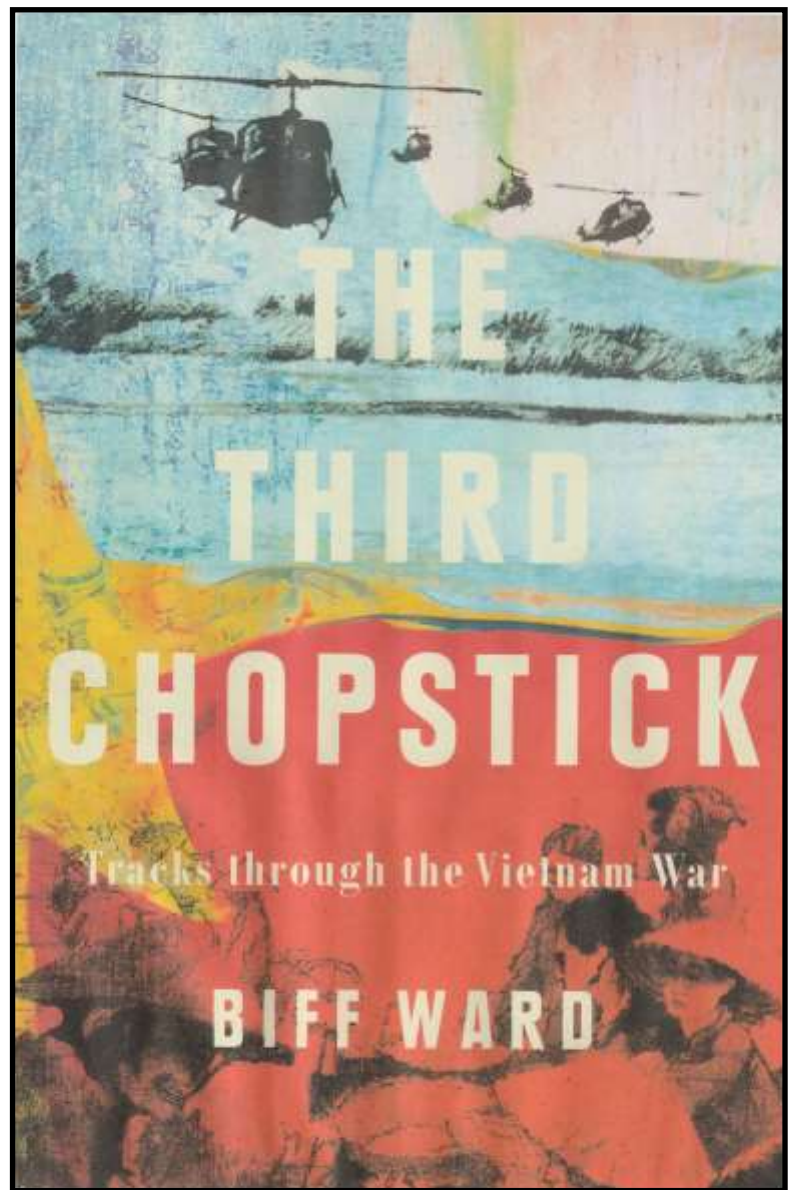
I was thinking, Here’s a right one. I’d interviewed a few veterans by then and had heard a lot of painful secrets, but not the gutter, not being really crazy.

‘I built a boat,’ he said, ‘and set out from Darwin. Aiming to die, I was. Somehow I’m still here,’ he guffawed.

He mentioned gaol and a psych ward, he talked of AA and beginning to get things together. There was nothing specific about his time in Vietnam, just spitting fury: a total fuck-up, insanity. His anguish was so ferocious, so blazing, that the clattering around us had completely disappeared.

Eventually, when he slowed a little, I asked about now. ‘How is it at this stage?’

‘It’s like this,’ he said, and leaned forward



to clear a space on the table. He placed his small white eating bowl, with its smears of soy and oil, in the centre. He lifted his chopsticks, one in each hand and laid them across the top of the bowl about an inch apart. Then he looked up at me, checking he had my full attention.

‘Imagine that this area in here,’ he said, his finger waggled between the chopsticks, ‘is normal life. You know,’ he flicked another look, ‘this is where people get born and grow up and get married or don’t, and have dramas and kids

and all that. They know other people and they go to work and live their lives. Right?’

I nodded.

‘Well, here,’ his voice rose in emphasis. ‘Here,’ he said, taking one of my chopsticks, ‘here’s where the veteran lives.’

He placed the third chopstick very precisely, parallel outside the others, same distance apart, so that there were now three chopsticks creating two equal spaces.

He wagged his finger in the newly created zone. ‘The veteran lives here, alongside but separate, see? He can see this life,’ he pointed back to the first space. ‘He can see what other people are doing, but he can’t join in. He doesn’t know the rules any more. It might look like garbage to him. It’s got no connection to what’s happening inside him, see?’

‘Yes,’ I was nodding. ‘Yes.’

‘Well, the secret is...’ He was getting louder. ‘The secret is for the veteran...for the veteran to work out how...’

My eyes were skipping back and forth from the three chopsticks to the pincer of his finger and thumb held way above his head. He was moving the pincer slowly down, closing in.

‘The secret,’ he said, ‘is to learn how to be here in his own stuff and at the same time, how to join in...’ And he whipped the middle chopstick away, high in the air, and held it triumphant, like a conductor on a crescendo. ‘That’s the trick. Remove the third chopstick!’ he crowed.

I stared at the space he’d created. It was double the area normal people inhabit. He put the third chopstick on the table and all three of us kept watching, looking down at the new space. I imagined people moving back and forth across the invisible divide, the society of awareness he’d created within the tiny bowl.

You can’t take the crap experience away from the veteran,’ he said. ‘It’d be bloody wonderful if you could!’ He cackled again. ‘But the veteran can learn to do some normal things...’

I cut in. ‘But you seem to be saying that it has to be one way, that the veterans have to do all the moving across...’

He interrupted me. ‘No one over here,’ his finger poking in the normal-land side, ‘even realises the third chopstick was ever there. They just think this guy is fucked or that one’s an idiot. They don’t know how to do it, how to step across.’

There was a beat and then he laughed. ‘The veterans mightn’t want them to, in any case. We’re fine!’ he mimed, saying, ‘You just stay over there. We’re all right. We’re hunky-dory over here!’

■ ■

We all laughed. I felt like crying too.

* * * * *

Biff has been a teacher, an antiwar activist, a women’s liberationist and an author. Her memoir, *In My Mother’s Hands* (Allen & Unwin, 2014), was short-listed for the NSW Premier’s Prize and other awards in 2015-16. She has been published in many anthologies and wrote *Father-Daughter Rape* on child sexual abuse in 1984.

She has taught creative writing in many community settings over several decades.

She is very proud of her membership of the Vietnam Veterans Federation, having originally joined in 1997.

Website: www.biffward.com.au



FOOTNOTE

The Third Chopstick is due for release on 7th April 22. Purchase details will be available by the time you receive this magazine at my website, www.biffward.com.au.

50th Anniversary

In 1972, the war was over for Australian troops

So what was the last Australian unit to leave Vietnam?

On 05 March 1972, Australian Forces Vietnam (AFV) was disbanded and the last Australian logistic units left Vung Tau. They were replaced by the small Australian Army Assistance Group (AAAGV). Australia's commitment in South Vietnam returned to a training role with Training Team (AATTV).

At this time the squad assigned to protect the embassy in Saigon was expanded to a platoon, which was designated the Guard and Escort Platoon.

On 17 December 1972, AAAGV was disbanded. The next day most members of it and the AATTV departed from South Vietnam.

On 18 December 1972 the Guard and Escort Platoon was redesignated the Embassy Guard Platoon. It comprised 24 former members of the AAAGV. These soldiers and the military attaché posted to the embassy were the last-remaining members of the Australian Army in South Vietnam.

The Guard Platoon was phased out over the first half of 1973. At the start of the year it comprised one or two officers and 25 other ranks. Reductions to the size of the unit occurred in March and April. The Platoon was disbanded at the end of June 1973; at this time it had a strength of six soldiers. Overall, more than 50 soldiers served with the Platoon during its existence. The Australian Embassy Guard Platoon, Saigon, was the last Australian Army unit to have served in South Vietnam. ■



The Australian Embassy took up a floor of the Caravelle Hotel in Saigon

In the next edition we shall publish the story of the platoon by one of its Platoon Commanders.

If any readers have photos of the Embassy Guard Platoon we would be grateful to check their suitability to include in the next edition's story.



Forty years on - Open Arms – the counselling service founded by Vietnam veterans, And now for all veterans

The VVAA, as we were known by back in the late 1970s, having set up our own counselling service at the Parramatta office with qualified volunteer counsellors, lobbied hard for government participation. This was the genesis of the Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service (VVCS). It flourished and grew and was renamed the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service. From its inception we have had to fight off Departmental attempts to completely consume this supposedly independent service. Its independence is essential.

Today the VVCS is known as **“OPEN ARMS” – ‘Veterans & Families Counselling’**. It’s efforts still championing the mental welfare of today’s soldiers, veterans, and their families. Open Arms provides counselling and support services to Australia’s military community. If you have served one day of continuous full-time service in the ADF you can call Open Arms for support. Open Arms also supports families, reservists and some peacekeepers. It proudly bears the banner ***“A service founded by Vietnam Veterans, now for all veterans”***.

Good men went down to lobby, men like Phil Thompson OAM (Decd), and win the battle they surely did. The first VVCS Centre opened in Adelaide on 21 January 1982, and Phil was flown there by the Government, to witness and speak at this giant step forward in recognising that Vietnam veterans were suffering.

Then followed a flurry in 1982, to get more VVCS Centres opening all around Australia. Sydney – 15 February;

Perth – 14 April; Hobart – 19 May. Then two more centres in June of 1982 followed – Darwin on the 11th and Melbourne on 23rd. A month later on 21 July VVCS Brisbane opened its doors.

In DVA’s own words; *“Since 1982, the service, now called Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling, has provided millions of free mental health counselling sessions and support to hundreds of thousands of serving and ex-serving members of the Australian Defence Force as well as their families.”* And in a further statement on the 40th Anniversary, the Minister for Veterans Affairs and Defence Personnel said, *“Today’s celebration is an opportunity for us to reflect on the achievements of the Vietnam veterans who founded the service, and celebrate a service that continues to evolve to meet the needs of veterans and their families.”*

“This year will be testament to the commitment of the Vietnam veterans who advocated for the establishment of a service that now boasts 35 outlets in every state and territory around Australia, and a network of more than 1300 mental health professionals,” said Open Arms National Manager, Dr Grant Pegg, on marking the occasion.

Sources within Open Arms advise that during 2021 more veterans and their families sought support from Open Arms than any time in its 40-year history. As demand has increased, the service has evolved to offer 24/7 free confidential crisis support, Peer Support, Care Coordination, Crisis Accommodation Support, Psycho-education Workshops, Group Treatment Programs, and online tools through an accessible website and mobile apps.

All this does not mean the veteran community must cease vigilance. It was not long ago that DVA began moving Counselling Centres into their own offices with a common entrance denying Counselling Centre clients’ privacy (and dissuading some potential clients from seeking help). Only a fight-back from the veteran community reversed this ill-advised change. It was another case of DVA giving priority to saving money over veterans’ welfare.



**NSW STATE BRANCH & BANKSTOWN SPORTS CLUB
ARE COMBINING ONCE AGAIN TO HOST THE SYDNEY
VIETNAM VETERANS DAY**

**COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE AND CELEBRATION TO BE
HELD IN THE SPORTS CLUB GRAND BALLROOM
THURSDAY 18 AUGUST 2022**

The event organisers and Bankstown Sports Club administration wishes to confirm that this event is subject to all NSW government COVID-19 related restrictions and regulations that are or may be in place at the time of the planned event. All intending patrons are advised that should the event be cancelled or postponed all monies so collected will be refunded in full. Should attendant numbers be restricted, those who prepay tickets in advance will have first preferences.

It is hoped that this major event will take place as planned and that we may all come together once more to share our memories and rekindle old mateships so long kept apart in extraordinary circumstances over the past few years. The usual itinerary of service will take place as before and we remind intending parties of the following:

0900hrs Doors open. Meet & Greet at the Grand Ballroom entry hall.

Bar opens 0900hrs to 1015hrs (at the discretion of management) and closed for the service.

1030hrs Memorial Service with Chaplain & Guest Speaker

(Service scheduled for approximately 40 to 45 minutes)

1150hrs Entrance to Grand Ballroom & function proper

A fully detailed itinerary and ticketing arrangements will be announced in our July issue of this publication and on our website as soon as possible. Visit <http://www.vvfa.org.au> after 8th July 2022 for information.

Ticket pricing, prepayment and holding practices are unknown at time of going to press, and we would ask that intending patrons withhold any enquiry until at least the 8 July 2022.

Any further enquiries can be made by contacting the Granville office on 02 9682 1788.



Our apologies to Alex for letting this letter go unpublished in our previous issue. However we thought it a very worthwhile inclusion as a commentary and critique of our efforts to bring the readers more of your favourite stories from veterans of all walks of life and services. And, we must add too that it is marvelous to note that a obviously sprightly nonagenarian of 93 still keeps an interest and surprisingly, an ex Intelligence Corps linguist WO reads our magazine.

Carry on, and feel free to write to us often, Alex.....Ed.

The Editor
Vietnam Veterans Journal

I wish to correct some erroneous assertions by Ray O'Brien in the 21 August issue of the journal.

Whether due to failing memory, the common tendency to knock Acorns, or inattention in class I cannot say. Suffice to say I was the Int WO2 colloquial Viet language instructor on the first two HMAS Sydney trips – and my memory at 93 years is still excellent! The classroom was hot with lots of background noise and it was a challenge to maintain class attention for the period of 40 minutes. It is significant that Mr O'Brien should allege he was never taught "Halt, drop your weapon etc." Included in EVERY class was the phrase "Gio tay len di" (phonetically "yer tie len dee!") followed by "Hay toi ban chet!", or I'll shoot to kill!"

As an AATTV vet I knew the priority of what to teach in the one period per platoon, so vital phrases included "What is your name? Which village do you live in? Which direction is it? How far away? Where are you going and why? Are there VC there? How many, with what weapons? Show me your identity papers, what are you carrying? And so on.

The only personal chit chat was for example, "Ten toi la" (my name is), "toi la binh si uc" (I am an Aussie soldier). "Chao (jow) ba/anh ong (omm)", "cam on (ern) thanks", "bao nhieu tien?" (how much?) etc.

To keep individual and collective attention I would promise each class that if they studied hard and practised each sentence orally, I would teach them a 'bonus' sentence of their choice – no prizes for guessing – "how much one time/night?", "You are very beautiful", "My American friend will pay!" Ban my toi se tra tien.

A number of personnel frequently approached me when we were both off duty with requests for extra vocabulary or clarification of some issues. I was happy to help.

Alex D Craig
Canberra
6 September 2021

Extract from *The Long Shadow*

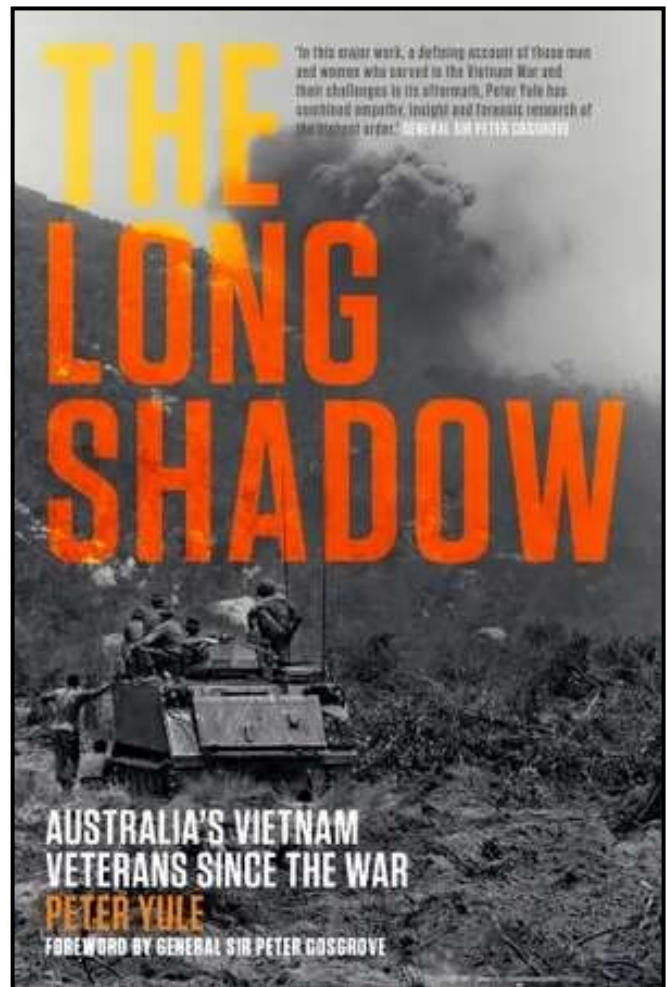
The Long Shadow

Australia's Vietnam Veterans Since the War

An extract from the book

'Graeme Killer, who became principal medical advisor to DVA in 1991, recalls that the department was not prepared for the mental issues that emerged among Vietnam veterans. There was little understanding of the scale of the problems or how best to help affected veterans. This was surprising because in the early 1980s when veterans had claimed that many physical and mental ailments were due to exposure to toxic chemicals, DVA had responded by arguing that the mental issues originated in mental stress. Apart from the establishment of the VVCS, however, DVA had done little to address veterans' mental health problems, possibly because some within the department believed they were no more real than the claims of chemical poisoning.

After a decade of paying little attention to mental health issues, DVA was subjected to heavy pressure from veterans' organisations to change its approach. This prompted Dr Killer to advise the department to send a team to America to investigate developments in the understanding and treatment of war-caused trauma. The visit opened the eyes of the DVA delegation to the progress that had been made in understanding and treating veterans' mental health problems and led to major changes in the departments' attitude and approach and the establishment of the National Centre for War-Related PTSD at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital. ■



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

Al Wood's R and R in Hong Kong (might be your story too)

Well, only 1 day to go now. The big day arrives tomorrow morning at 7:45am, when I fly out to Saigon from Luscombe Field on the first leg. Yesterday morning I got my pay all in order, & tomorrow morning, before I leave, I collect US\$685 'greenbacks' from the pay office. I just can't wait to get going.

It's Friday, and now it's the BIG day. We're off to Saigon, to connect onto our PAN AM flight to Hong Kong.

When we finally arrived at Kai Tak airport about 7:30pm, we're put through Customs,



And it's Hong Kong, here I come.

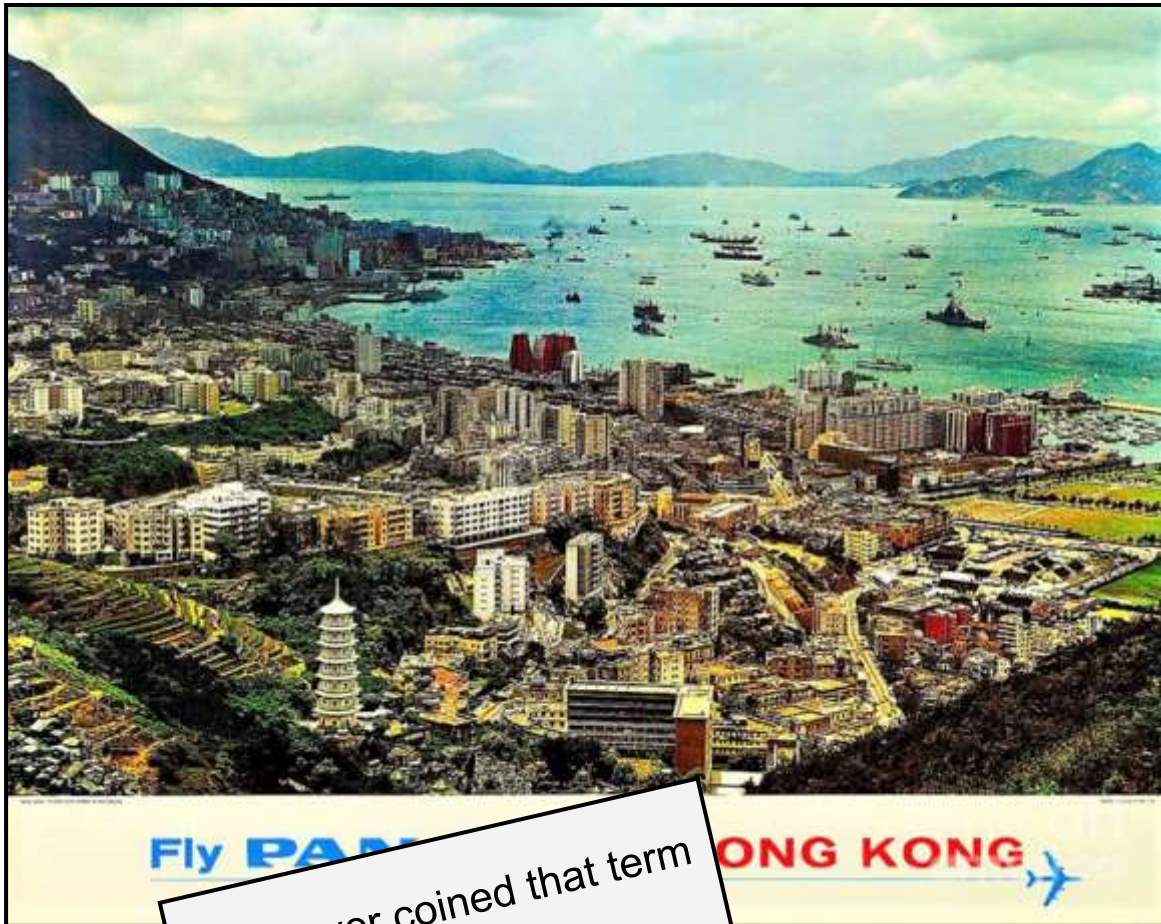


R & R Transit Centre-Tan Son Nhut. (Aussies on left, US on right)

followed by a briefing on our R&R, then taken by coach to our hotels. How lucky it was that we had 3 adjoining double bedrooms at the *PARK* Hotel in Kowloon, a Kiwi, name of Ray Hooper (RNZ Artillery) from down Dunedin way, another Aussie based in Vungers, & myself, with adjoining bathroom & lounge, & all costing just US\$60 each of us for the 5 nights.

The racket we kicked-up at nightfall when we got back from the bars, discos, hotels & other

(Continued on page 41)



“Whoever coined that term
R&R, (Rest &
Recreation) ?!?! HA ! They
MUST be joking”

points of
night life.
Most ‘life’
started to
wain around

2am, & back we’d go to the *PARK*, turn-on the AKAI stereo tape-recorder I’d bought, break-out the drinks, & off we’d go again. Come mid-morning next day, we crawled out of bed, had a hot shower to pep us up again, & away we go for another day. Over the 4 days there, I went on 2 tours, one of Hong Kong Is. & another of Kowloon & the New Territories, this tour taking me to within about 1 ½ miles of the Red China border, where we could look-down on the boundary river & see a high barbed-wire fence on either bank, & away in the distance the occasional sentry towers of the Reds. Through the binoculars I bought (about the largest one can buy 25x70’s) I caught sight of people working in the fields in the

distance, etc. It was all quite an experience, looking into Communist China. Most of this tour, apart from Kowloon, comprised driving through rural

China, including a walled village some 400 years old, we were told. It was complete with a moat, etc, & was built to ward-off bandits in the old days.

Our other tour was of Hong Kong Is, & of a slightly more modern nature, including a simply breathtaking view of the entire city from Victoria Peak, about 1500 ft. above the city. We went to the top up a scenic railway, which was pulled by cable up the mountain-side. I found that Both Hong Kong Is. & Kowloon, are completely surrounded by high mountains. For lunch, we stopped on the other side of the island, at the *Repulse Bay Hotel*, & there we had a terrific

(Continued on page 42)

smorgasbord. We simply gorged ourselves, & even carried stuff back aboard the bus for our tea that night.

Other places we visited included the Tiger-Balm Gardens & the Chinese-junk infested fishing town of Aberdeen. These were both much better trips than one could describe in words, so like the rest of my R&R, I just cannot put in words just how much I enjoyed it. When my mates back at the 'Dat' asked me how it was, all I could say was a terribly frustrated 'terrific', & left it at that. I've just got to return here someday, perhaps with my Kiwi mate Ray Hooper, who says he's also coming back here, maybe next year. If not, then on my own. Besides, there's still so much gear I want to

buy, but don't have the money or the time. I'd previously said that I arrived here with US\$685 in my pocket. Well, I was flat-broke, (actually still had \$1 remaining,) with 1 day to go, but with me keeping my other 2 mates in food, drink, etc. for a day or so previous, that didn't help much. I did however buy some gear, like a \$230 tape-recorder (with cartridge taping in it's side. This Akai recorder would cost between \$600 & \$700 back home in Aust.), a set of stereo headphones, 2 cartridge tapes of Nancy Sinatra (one of my favourites), a watch for myself (with an inbuilt alarm even), a set of binoculars, a microscope for my younger brother Graham, a tailor-made suit & vest (just \$42), a set of tailor-made slacks, a T.M. shirt, a pair of shoes, & jewellery for my favourite

lady-friend back home in Oz.

On another matter, our evenings were also kept VERY busy indeed. We plied the bars, including the *Golden Dragon* & the *San Francisco* Bars, both conveniently close to our hotel. We

discovered these on our second evening, & swiftly made friends with a couple of young local lasses. Mary at the *Golden Dragon* soon 'cottoned' onto Ray, & Ruby in the Carnarvon Rd. *San Francisco Bar* 'befriended' me. These 2 young ladies were more than helpful in assisting us to swiftly spend our funds during the nights remaining, & asked if they could accompany us back to our hotel rooms for a close inspection. How could we have refused such a request ? I soon discovered that Ray consumed alcohol at a



My R&R home for next 5 nights.

faster rate than I while in the bars, & so, by the time we returned to our hotel rooms in the evening, these ladies assisted to help him into his bed, then, with nowhere else to go at such a late hour, they asked if they could both spend their nights in my room with me? The room was multi-bedded, so I readily acceded to their request for the next couple of nights & played host to them, & by the time the following mornings had arrived, Ray would apparently be up & showered, whilst I was still rather somewhat fatigued though. Not sure why? Mary & Ruby would then disappear 'til nightfall while we shopped or toured about, & this routine would all be repeated over again.

Came our final morning, (Wednesday), &

(Continued on page 43)



after drinking & carousing the night away, I found myself out front of the nearby San Francisco Bar at first light, & shouting out for Ruby to come on outside, "I want to marry you". I reckon I must've got about 15 hours total sleep over those 5 nights, quite taxing really.

So it's off to Kai Tak by coach pickup this morning, & aboard our PAN AM return flight back to Saigon. When we arrived there, we had to stay the night at the US airbase before flying back to Nui Dat the following morning. You should've seen the party that night in the Yank canteen, between the transiting Aussies & Kiwis, & the Yanks. There was a 'Noggie' band from Saigon playing, & the cans just kept piling higher & higher. Dancing followed, especially my Kiwi mate pretending to do a Maori Haka. The Yanks were rapt, & the Afro-Americans amongst them were all up dancing. They're simply fabulous once they get going. Everyone was going wild, singing, swapping

uniforms, etc, & I reckon now, that the Yanks do truly believe that we're 'wild colonial boys'. Actually though, I think we were just trying to draw-out our disappointment at having completed our R&R, no matter where.

When I got back to the 'Dat', I finally had to 'front-up' on 2 charges which I'd been riding for a month or so. I had to front our O.C. of Support Co. ('Sharky' Sullivan) on the Friday morning, & was found to be 'Not Guilty' on these 2 charges, but was found to be Guilty on a substitute charge, - Not being in my sub-unit area at 'bed-check'. That was a 'water-tight' one though. I just couldn't get off that one. Penalty was to be 7 days CB & yet another \$10 fine. I get off the first 2 days CB though, as V Coy is on a beach-party at Vungers, & I'm 'on their wire' of a night until their return to camp.

Whoever coined that term R&R, (Rest & Recreation) !?! HA ! They MUST be joking. ■



AVCAT & VVPPAA NSW SCHOLARSHIP NEWS



We are proud to present the following achievements of our scholarship funded recipients, and their 2021 academic acknowledgements in their fields of endeavour. Proudly, we also acknowledge the completion of studies for Emily Hespe, and wish her well in her future as a performing artist and actor. A great achievement.

We also wish our continuing recipients all the best as they move forward in their chosen studies during 2022, and introduce our newest scholarship recipient,

Scholar Update – *Graham Walker AM Scholarship 2021*

Emily Hespe – Bachelor of Performance (Deans Scholar)

University of Wollongong

Course Completion: December 2021

Emily has again earned results at a distinction level in her last semester at university. She is delighted to have graduated and is in rehearsals for two plays. She now joins the AVCAT Alumni.

2021 Annual Review: 3 Distinctions, 1 Withdrawn

Previous Reviews:

2021 Mid-Year Review: 4 Distinctions 2020 Annual Review: 3 Distinctions; 1 Pass 2020 Mid-Year Review: 2 Distinctions 2 Credits 2019 Annual Review: 3 Distinctions; 1 Credit 2019 Mid-Year Review: 2

Distinctions; 1 Credit; 1 Satisfactory

Thank You Note

To (The) *Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association of Australia*, Thank you for the remainder of your support as I close my studies at the University of Wollongong and this stage of my academic journey. From the beginning, your financial support has allowed me the freedom to focus on my studies and produce results and works that I am proud to call my own. As we all hopefully see 2022 as the year our freedoms are granted for travel and mingling, I will see this year as my year of growth in the performance industry. In 2022 I am already rehearsing for two productions in Wollongong, with a profit share show scheduled in January at the Flight Path theater in Marrickville. It is my studies that have earned my place in these productions and for that, I say thank you for your investment in my future. I wish all of your families health and happiness in the New Year and hope to be involved further with your organisation in the future. Thank you very much, Emily Hespe

Scholar Update – *Phil Thompson OAM Scholarship*

Jin Ju Redding – Bachelor of Nursing

University of Tasmania

Course Completion: December 2023

Jin Ju has achieved outstanding academic results. Jin Ju has completed her first practical nursing placement and is determined to improve her academic results to an even higher standard this year.

2021 Annual Review: 2 High Distinctions; 1 Distinction

2021 Mid-Year Review: 2 High Distinctions; 1 Distinction

Thank You Note

Dear VVPPAA and AVCAT, One year of university has passed and what a wonderful year it has been. Consisting of new friends, acquiring nursing knowledge and wisdom, and the ambivalent exponential tension of exams followed by the instantaneous aftermath of relief. Additionally, I have completed my first work placement based in a rural aged care facility. It was an insightful experience, and the aged care

community was very affable and kind. I got to learn, understand, and practice communication skills, considering a person's situation, practical skills, person-centred care, and methods of dignifying people in both palliative and non-palliative care settings. I have completed my second and third trimester of the Bachelor of Nursing and accomplished the following units: - Anatomy and Physiology for Health Care 2 (High distinction) - Nursing Practice 1 (High distinction) - Foundations of Nursing. 2 (Distinction) - Pathophysiology for Health Care 1 (Pending results) - Primary Health Care 1: Introduction to Primary Health Care (Pending results) My goals for next year are to achieve 90% or over in my units and train my critical thinking skills in a clinical setting. Moving on, I want to express my appreciation for your lovely support in my studies this year. With your financial support, I have been able to pay off a whole year of tuition in 2022. This has provided a lift from financial stress and the burden of debt. Furthermore, it has provided the opportunity to focus more on my studies. Thank you for being a part of my journey into this big world. Wishing you all a brilliant break, the merriest of Christmas, and joyful new year. Take care, Jin Ju Redding.

Scholar Update – *Tim McCombe OAM Scholarship*

Harrison Saunders – Bachelor Politics, Philosophy & Economics

University of Western Australia

Course Completion: December 2023

Harry has had a successful year at university and has made his semi-professional soccer debut. He also participated in AVCAT's pilot mentorship program and worked with his mentor to set and achieve goals.

2021 Annual Review:

Previous Reviews: 3 Distinctions; 1 Pass

2021 Mid-Year Review: 1 Distinction; 2 Credits; 1 Pass.

Thank You Note

To the Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers & Peacemakers Association of Australia. I'd like to preface by thanking you from the bottom from my heart for giving me the chance to have this scholarship. This scholarship has enabled me to fund my academic adventures as well as teaching me fiscal responsibility as I learn to live independently. This is something I will always hold dear. This year has been a roller coaster, learning to live by myself has been a big step and has taught me a lot about myself. I made my semi-professional soccer debut this year which has also been a big step. Next time I write to you I hope I will be more set in my studies and have learnt a lot more about myself and my family history. I'd love to learn more about the organisation so please feel free to get in contact. I hope this letter found the group well - stay safe and have a good day. Kindest regards, Harry.

Scholar Update – *Graham Walker AM Scholarship 2022*

And introducing our newest recipient to the above scholarship with the completion of Emily Hespe's graduation.

Nathan Miller – Bachelor of Social Work

Flinders University Adelaide SA

Nathan's bio and course details will appear in a later edition of this Newsletter.

We wish them all a very successful outcome to their studies and into the future.

William Roberts OAM JP
VVFA National President
VPPAA NSW Snr Vice President
AVCAT Director

Vietnam Veterans' Stories

From letters diaries and memories

Here we have Part 2 of the story of HMAS Sydney
from another one of the crew, John Ingram

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

Part 2

The second of many parts.



Underway replenishment from HMAS SUPPLY: Banner reads “Good luck 5 & 6 RAR and RAAF”

*At sea SYDNEY replenished her **escorts** every few days with furnace oil, distillate and potable water while she, the SYDNEY, required a “big suck” from an obliging allied forces oiler at least weekly. These oilers were the SUPPLY, when available, or a British RFA (Royal Fleet Auxiliary). However, this was a rarity after Britain withdrew her armed forces from the Far East generally from 1969/70. Thereafter oilers from the USNS were commonly used for fuels and potable water.*

Voyages to and from Vietnam were shrouded in secrecy with few officers onboard aware of the actual route. We kept well clear of merchant shipping lanes and, whenever possible, distant from land for fear of being spotted. Changes in course were common and our escort/s changed station frequently. We knew we were being monitored by submarines and ELINTs (intelligence gathering ships) of non-friendly countries (read the Soviet Union and China) prepositioned in, or approaches to, the South China Sea.

On Voyage 2 SYDNEY and her escorts went to the second highest level of shipboard security upon departure from Seeadler Harbour with all doors, hatches and scuttles closed. This made the SYDNEY a hell hole of quite unbearable and unrelenting heat. In addition, we were required to wear protective clothing to limit the personal injury liable from an explosion or fire, including mortar and gunfire or missile attack. We were also required to carry at all times cumbersome gas masks for instant fitment.

When venturing outside the “gas citadel” one’s body had to be completely covered. On re-entry to the “citadel” we had to be “decontaminated” for chemical, biological or nuclear radiation reasons. While this was a safety precaution and, in hindsight, never required in a real-life situation, we didn’t know that in 1966. It was to accustom us to the routine of “inconvenience” which even included immersing footwear in a white lime solution to neutralise any contaminants.

While this routine posed a very real hardship on the ship’s company the skipper, Captain Synnot, couldn’t afford to take any chances with such a valuable cargo of lives and equipment. I had initial reservations and frequent grumbles but these dissipated when I considered the fate of our illustrious forebear, the cruiser SYDNEY, tragically lost with all 645 officers and men in 1941 at the hands of a deceptive German armed raider, the KORMORAN, masquerading as a friendly allied tramp. Consequently, for days on end one had to pacify angry sailors and soldiers that this “inconvenience” was in their best interests.



In later voyages high states of damage control and battle preparedness were not instituted until the night before entering the declared threat zone. At anchor off Vung Tau the ship had to be at the highest state of Damage Control commensurate with the loading/unloading task. If the program permitted, or the threat level dictated, SYDNEY and her escort/s would proceed to sea overnight rather than remain exposed to the very real risks associated with being at anchor close to shore in a hostile environment. This was not an option exercised during my six return deployments to South Vietnam in the SYDNEY.

40 mm Bofors gun crew in Defence watch. Note dispersed ammo boxes



SYDNEY’s quarterdeck awash en route to Brisbane

My departmental day duties would occupy at least 10 hours, seven days a week. In addition, every night at sea I’d have a four-hour watch in DCHQ (Damage Control HQs) deep in the bowels of the ship beneath the waterline. There were occasions when the few Seaman/ Executive Branch officers were either too exhausted from their bridge watch-keeping duties as OOW (Officer of the Watch) or were required elsewhere in their “Part of Ship”. I’d then put on my Seaman “hat” and perform the duties of OOW on the bridge “driving the ship”. My assistance as OOW was more often sought when sea conditions were most uncomfortable and sea sickness prevalent.

My “Action Station” was OIC of the aft casualty clearing station (ACCS), otherwise known as the Wardroom (officers’ mess). The theory was that in combat anyone wounded in the after half of the ship would be brought to the ACCS where I’d perform “triage” by assigning a degree of priority and direct the wounded to SBAs (Sick Berth Attendants) who’d treat wounded personnel. For this task I’d undergone a Navy sponsored one day St John’s Ambulance course in which I’d learnt very basic first aid!

SYDNEY carried one medical officer (in this commission the fine Surgeon Lieutenant Sam Sakker MBE). His post was the Sick Bay with just several beds and a basic operating “theatre” in the forward half of the ship. Seeking Sam’s professional advice in the event of a serious incident involving casualties was a big ask indeed. I was permitted to inject pethidine (I’d practised injecting skills on an orange) and I’d learnt to suture and dress wounds. Apart from some first aid kits all the rest was left to me and my imagination including the use of dining tables as pretend operating room tables and lounges as beds for victims. Mercifully in the SYDNEY we didn’t have any cause to use the ACCS in combat for I feared the outcomes.

Good healthy and tasty food is extremely important in the Navy. Sailors will endure extended hardships at sea providing they are fed well and often. SYDNEY had vintage (1940s era) galley equipment in all three galleys and bakery but the equipment was reliable, albeit manpower intensive. Refrigeration was the ancient “Brine system”, more effective in cold northern Atlantic waters than the Pacific. In theory, we could maintain 30 day’s endurance of perishable food items which required some form of cool/cold or dry storage, including a very significant array of medical stores ranging from surgical packs to condoms.

We fed 1000 men four times daily in all situations and sea states. Complaints were never raised nor did we ever run out of food. There was always enough quality, well prepared food for everyone. Sailors and soldiers could eat as much or as little as they wished, the menus were varied and the bakery was functioning around the clock producing the best breads and delicacies imaginable. Ships in company, especially from the USN and USNS, would request bakery items. In Vung Tau harbour we were able to gift freshly baked breads and rolls to the RAN Clearance Diving Team, US Marine Corps and South Vietnamese Navy personnel assigned to harbour and ship protection. These were prized “currency”!



HMAS SUPPLY refuelling SYDNEY & DUCHESS concurrently at 18 knots and 30 metre spacing. Underway replenishing could take a demanding 4 hours. Note minimal wake from the SYDNEY while DUCHESS has completed a “big suck” & is powering away to resume escort station. ■

Part 3 of the story of HMAS Sydney in the next edition.

The Willow

A new novel by

Robbie Freia

'The Willow covers the period from the 1950s to the 2000s. It is a story of an "average" Australian, Joe, and his family. Joe lives his life in Western Australia and travels around that state. His journey highlights an evolving society and the impact of war, specifically on Australian Vietnam participants and their families.'

Joe is called up for National Service and ends up serving with an infantry battalion in Vietnam.

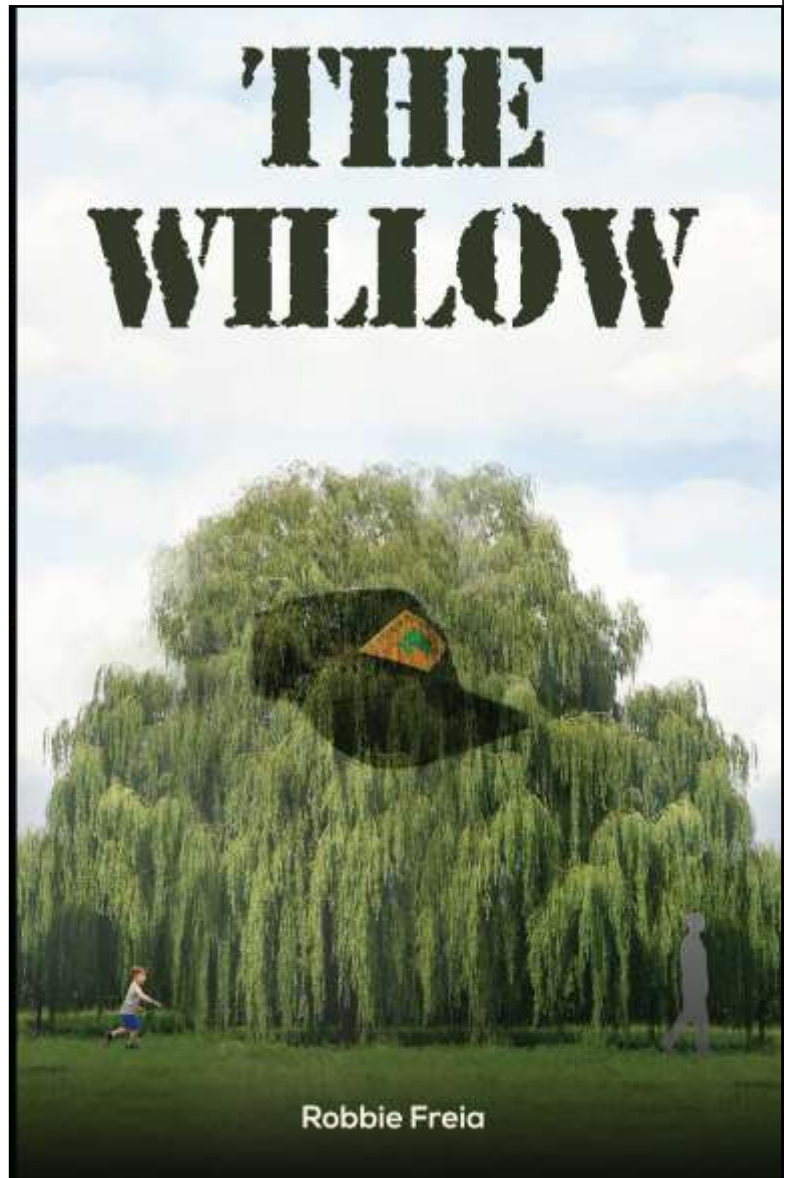
He is blown up on a booby trap and returns to Australia suffering trauma as well as physical wounds.

He has trouble fitting back into society.

The book does a good job of describing Joe's disintegrating life. It follows the loss of his family and his travels trying to clear his confusion.

Joe's main sadness is of his son's rejection and the story follows his efforts to rekindle that relationship.

It is a story that many readers will recognise.



The author Robbie Freia is donating a percentage of each book sale to the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia.

The Willow is available at :
robbiefreiathewillow.com.au (signed by author);

Petersen's Bookstore, Hastings;
Farrell's Bookshop, Mornington;
 Online via Austin Macauley, Barnes & Noble and Amazon.

More information about the book and its author are at: robbiefreiathewillow.com.au , and have a look at the video about *The Willow* on Utube: <https://youtu.be/TrG3HM5Xpt8>

NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME

If you joined the military under the age of 18 years and you were sexually abused before you turned 18, you may be eligible for compensation

This is the information on the National Redress Scheme. Of course, Defence or ex-Defence employees, their spouses or dependent's, can also go to the Defence Force Ombudsman at the Commonwealth Ombudsman for complaints specifically about Defence. Easier to contact online but the phone number is 1300 362 072 between 10.30am-3pm.

National Redress Scheme Phone: 1800 737 377

The National Redress Scheme provides support to people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse.

The Scheme:

- acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions
- holds institutions accountable for this abuse, and
- helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling, a direct personal response, and a Redress payment.

The Scheme started on 1 July 2018 and will run for 10 years.

NB: not every organisation has signed up to the Redress Scheme, so check on their website first: www.nationalredress.gov.au

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

When He Came Home

By author and journalist
Dianne Dempsey

Australian Scholarly
Publishing, 2021

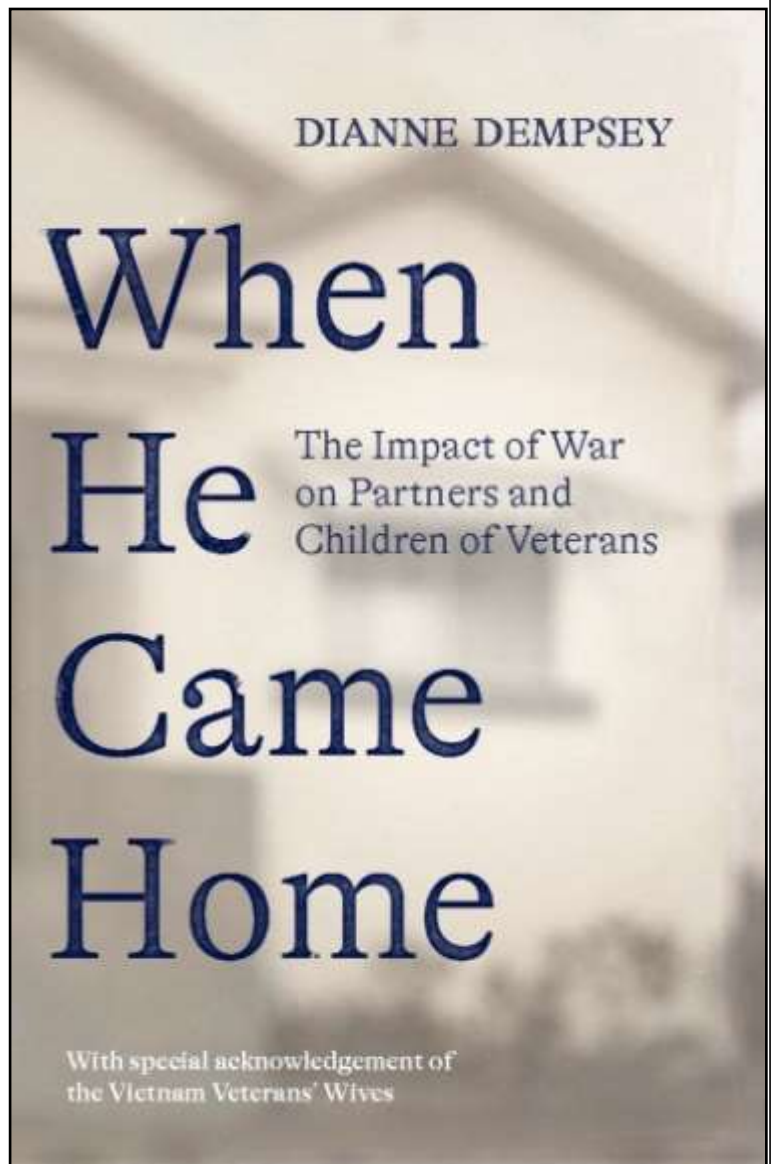
The book “*When He Came home*” gives us insight into the strength, resilience, determination and love that a person can have for their partners/spouse.

These are some of the stories of how families coped with the homecoming of traumatised veterans. Even though there are thousands of stories that could be told, I feel this excellent book gives an excellent representation of what families of war veterans can go through.

I felt sad when reading about the families, but then I felt angry again.

What this book demonstrates is that nothing much has changed over a long period of time.

Gail McDonell OAM, PhD
Australian Families of the Military Research
Foundation



To order your copy please email, order online or telephone.

*Australian Scholarly Publishing PTY LTD
Post to: P.O. Box 299, Kew Vic 3101*

<https://scholarly.info/book/when-he-came-home/>

T: +61 3 9329 6963 E: enquiry@scholarly.info

PSK FINANCIAL SERVICES ARTICLE

New super rules to benefit older Aussies and low-income earners

Budget 2021 superannuation enhancements passed by Parliament

The Federal Parliament recently passed new legislation that will bring into effect changes to super.

The changes were first proposed in the May 2021 Federal Budget and are set to benefit people in their 60's and 70's, as well as low-income earners.

The following changes will come into effect from 1 July 2022:

- Partial removal of the work test for those aged 67 to 75.
- Non-concessional contributions bring-forward age limit increased to age 75.
- Downsizer contribution eligibility reduced to age 60.
- Increase in the maximum First Home Super Saver Scheme withdrawal amount to \$50,000.

Removal of the monthly minimum threshold for Superannuation Guarantee (SG) contributions. Some of these amendments require supporting regulations (or amendments to existing regulations) to become effective. These regulations are yet to be introduced.

1. Partial removal of the work test for those aged 67 to 75.

Please note that enabling regulations will be required to give effect to this measure.

The existing work test requires you to be in paid work for a minimum of 40 hours over a consecutive 30-day period during a financial year before you're able to make voluntary super contributions.

The work test and the work test exemption will no longer be required from 1 July 2022 for individuals aged 67 to 75 who make or receive salary sacrifice or non-concessional contributions.

The work test and exemption will still be required for individuals in that age range who wish to claim a tax deduction for their personal contributions. Under the new rules, the work test can be met in any period in the financial year of the contribution. This is different to the current rules, where the work test must be met prior to contributing.

If you've made a contribution and have not met the work test, you will be ineligible to claim a tax deduction for the contribution. The contribution will be classified as non-concessional and will count towards your non-concessional contribution cap. The existing upper age limit on making voluntary contributions (within 28 days of the end of the month where the member reached age 75) remains unchanged, with the exception of when making downsizer contributions.

2. Non-concessional contributions bring-forward age limit increased to 75 years.

The cut-off age for accessing the bring-forward rule will be increased from 67 to 75 years. This means that many individuals aged 67 to 74 years (inclusive) who were not previously able to bring forward non-concessional contributions cap amounts due to their age, may now do so from 1 July 2022.

Existing restrictions on the full availability of bring forward contributions will continue to apply to people with a total super balance over \$1.48 million.

3. Eligibility age for downsizer contributions reduced to age 60.

Individuals aged 60 or older (no upper age limit) at the time the contribution is made can now make downsizer contributions from 1 July 2022. The maximum downsizer contribution amount of \$300,000 per eligible person and other eligibility requirements are unchanged.

4. The maximum First Home Super Saver Scheme (FHSSS) withdrawal amount increased to \$50,000.

The FHSSS is a scheme that allows first home buyers to save part of their home purchase deposit in the concessional taxed superannuation environment. The maximum FHSSS withdrawal amount will be increased from 1 July 2022 from the current limit of \$30,000 (plus notional earnings, less tax) to \$50,000 (plus notional earnings, less tax).

5. Minimum monthly threshold for Superannuation Guarantee (SG) contributions removed.

From 1 July 2022, there will no longer be a minimum monthly threshold for an eligible employee to qualify for SG contributions. This means that even where an eligible employee earns less than \$450 in a calendar month, there is now an obligation on the employer to make SG contributions.

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

Paul Messerschmidt of PSK Financial Services Group Pty Ltd trading as PSK Private Wealth ABN 24 134 987 205 is an Authorised Representative of PSK Advisory Services Pty Ltd - AFSL 234656. Any advice included in this document has been prepared without taking into account your objectives, financial situation or needs. Before acting on the advice, you should consider whether it's appropriate to you, in light of your objectives, financial situation or needs

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.



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

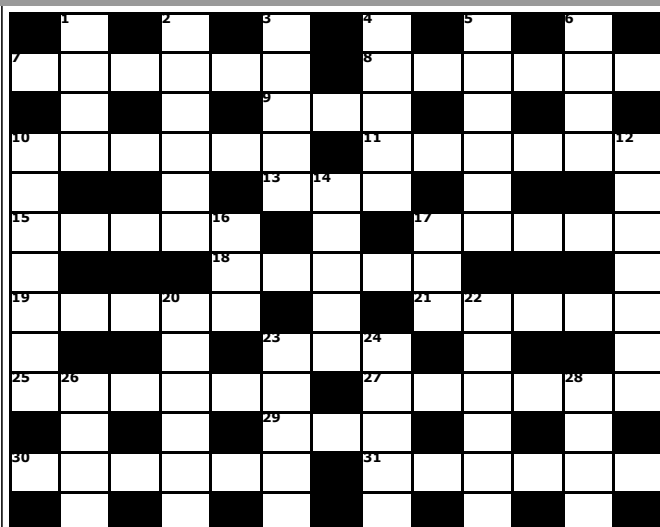
Eligibility Criteria includes Australian residency, child or grandchild of Australian ex-serving veteran, full-time tertiary student in 2022 at uni, TAFE or a registered training organisation, in receipt of or eligible to receive Centrelink payments including Youth Allowance, ABSTUDY, Austudy or an accepted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

CROSSWORD CORNER



ACROSS

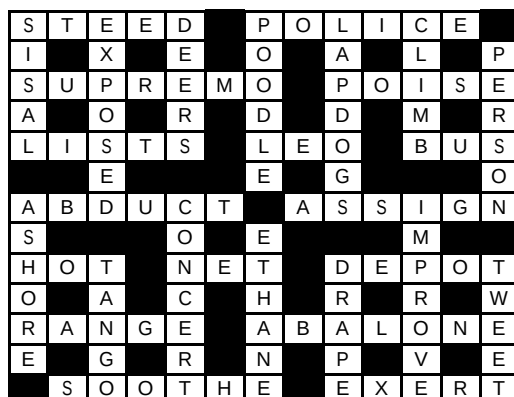
7. Martial art
8. Gas
9. Actress -Gardner
10. Bed linen
11. Rented
13. Rubbish dump
15. Qld resort
17. Started
18. Lift
19. Unaware, taken -
21. Peace pact
23. Prefix
25. Partner
27. Season
29. Decay
30. Astrological signs
31. Revised

DOWN

1. Way
2. Tags
3. High meal
4. Skin on head
5. Oil
6. Peace bird
10. Summer shoes
12. Castle gaol
14. Cooler
16. Bible vessel
17. Gamble
20. Relative
22. Sell to public
23. Bird seat
24. Consumed
26. Poke
28. Mild

Solution next issue

DECEMBER 2021
SOLUTION



THE UNKNOWN COMIC

Snippets from the past...

March 2002

The golfer stood over his tee shot for what seemed like an eternity. He looked up, he looked down, he looked up, measuring the distance, gauging the wind speed and direction. He looked up yet again. Finally, his exasperated partner cracks up. "What's the flamin matter? Will you hit the bloody ball!!!"

The golfer answers, "My missus is up there at the clubhouse, watching. I want this to be a perfect shot." His partner looks back at the clubhouse, then says to his mate, "Forget it, cobber. There's no way known you'll hit her from here."

March 2012

A helicopter was flying around above Canberra when an electrical malfunction disabled all of the aircraft's electronic navigation and communications equipment. Due to the clouds and haze, the pilot could not determine the helicopter's position. The pilot saw a building on a hill, flew toward it, circled, and held up a handwritten sign that said 'WHERE AM I?' in large letters. People in the building quickly responded to the aircraft, drew a large sign, and held it in a building window. Their sign said 'YOU ARE IN A HELICOPTER.' The pilot smiled, waved, looked at his map, determined the course to steer to Canberra airport, and landed safely. After they were on the ground, the copilot asked the pilot how he had done it.

"I knew it had to be Parliament House, because they gave me a politically correct but completely useless answer."

And today's pearler...

The most terrifying sound heard by a Nuclear Physicist?
"OOPS!"

Worth Checking Out

Extract from an article by Dr Trish Batchelor
Acting Chief Health Officer
Department of Veterans' Affairs

7 July 2020

On another topic I received an interesting letter from a Vietnam veteran a couple of months ago. He was pleased to let me know that he had finally managed to cure himself of the parasite *Strongyloides stercoralis*, which he had contracted when serving in Vietnam. I understand that about 20 years ago DVA ran an education campaign on *Strongyloides*, however given how long ago that is I thought it could be useful to revisit the topic.

The disease caused by this parasite, known as Strongyloidiasis, has been described as 'the most neglected of the neglected tropical diseases', with up to 370 million people being infected worldwide. *Strongyloides* is a parasitic



worm which is contracted through skin contact with infected soil. The parasite is found in tropical and subtropical regions of the world, including northern Australia. In fact, some remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have up to 60 per cent of their population infected. Vietnam veterans are a recognised risk group, with a study published in 2015 showing that from a group of 309 Vietnam veterans tested in South Australia, 11.6 per cent had a positive blood test result.

Strongyloides is an unusual parasite in several ways. One is that it has an 'auto-infective' cycle meaning that the parasite can self-reproduce and remain persistent in an infected person for many decades after they have left the area where infection occurred. Incredibly, just one remaining female parasite can result in continued infection.

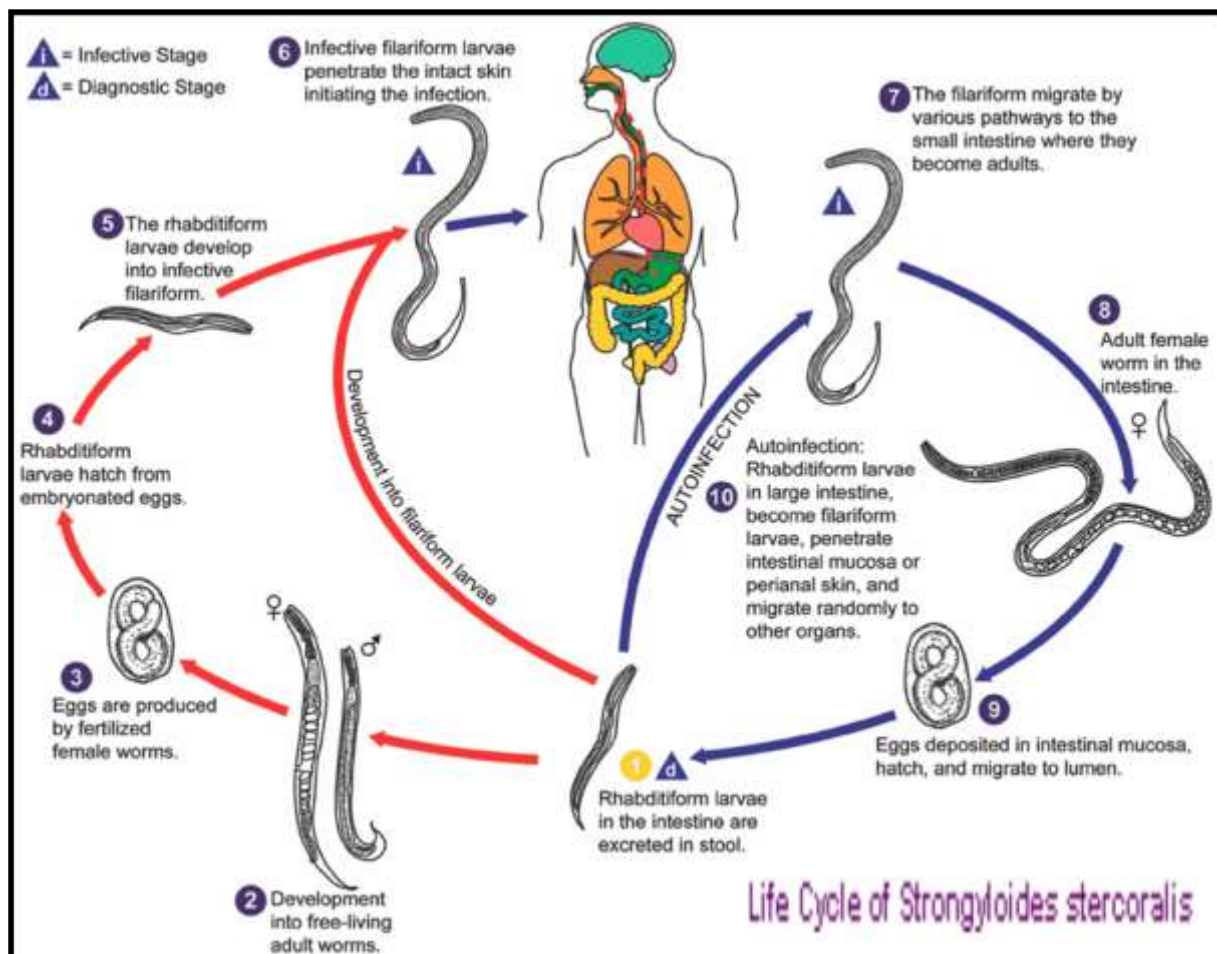
A serious issue, and the main reason we are concerned about diagnosing the parasite, is that many people will have no symptoms at all, but can develop a severe, over-whelming and even fatal infection if their immune system is significantly compromised. Typically, this occurs as a result of medications like chemotherapy, prednisolone or other immunosuppressing drugs.

If people have symptoms they are varied and often intermittent, making diagnosis difficult. Some of these symptoms include intermittent diarrhoea, upper abdominal discomfort, and a characteristic rash called 'larva currens' (a type of rash that looks like linear hives) that comes and goes.

The good news is that these days *Strongyloides* is relatively simple to diagnose and treat. The best test is a blood test checking for antibodies, which has essentially replaced stool testing due to the high likelihood of a false negative result.

Treatment is with an anti-parasitic drug called Ivermectin, which is available on the Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS). Current protocols recommend two doses given 1-2 weeks apart. The blood test should be repeated after 6-12 months, with repeat treatment if it remains positive. It is my practice to refer patients to an Infectious Disease Physician if the test remains positive after two cycles of treatment.

If you are a Vietnam veteran, or have served at any time in the tropics and were not tested after your deployment you may have been exposed (note testing is now routine in the Australian Defence Force post deployment to the tropics) and should discuss testing with your GP. As one recent medical article stated — 'Strongyloides, if you don't look, you won't find'.



REUNIONS & NOTICES

Special notice

Please be advised that reunions are subject to restrictions that may be imposed from time to time by health authorities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We advise that anyone wishing to attend any of the advertised reunions listed should first contact the event organiser at the contacts given.

April 2022

Reunion D Coy 2RAR SVN
1967/68

Date: 23 Apr 2022

All members are invited to attend the reunion from Saturday 23 April until Tuesday 26 April 2022. Includes ANZAC Day commemorations in Terang.

Contact Brian Humphrey,
telephone 03 5592 1979.

Reunion details

Location: Terang, VIC

Contact details

Name: Gordon Hurford

Email: ghurford@iprimus.com.au

2RAR/ANZAC Battalion 1967-68 Reunion

Date: 23 Apr 2022

All members who served in Vietnam are invited to attend the reunion from 23 - 26 Apr 2022.

Contact Brian Humphrey 03 5592 1979 or Gordon (below).

Reunion details

Location: Terang, VIC

Contact details

Name: Gordon Hurford

Email: ghurford@iprimus.com.au

All that served on Bougainville

Date: 25 Apr 2022

All that served in Bougainville - meet & greet and renew friendships.

Reunion details

Location: Glasshouse Mountain RSL, QLD

Contact details

Name: Dean

Email: dean9@live.com.au

May 2022

Collins and Walton 40th intake - 50 Year Reunion

Date: 23 May 2022

Details are available at the website and also on www.facebook.com - HMAS Leeuwin, 40th Collins & Walton Intake, 1972-73. All 40th intake members welcome.

Reunion details Location: Bribie RSL, Bribie Island, QLD

Contact details

Name: Glenn Murch

Email: murchglenn1@gmail.com

Website: <https://collins-walton-40th.org>

June 2022

Royal Australian Engineers Explosive Detection Dogs 50 Year Reunion

Date: 18 Jun 2022

18-19 June. Saturday, meet and greet at 1400 hrs; Sunday, Dog Kennels 1000 hrs.

Reunion details

Location: Ingleburn RSL and SME Holsworthy, NSW

Contact details

Name: Colin 'Smiley' Matthews

Email: matthews.35@bigpond.com

October 2022

Navy Cooks, Chefs & Stewards, Centenary 2022 Reunion

Date: 7 Oct 2022

7-9 October 2022. Former, serving and Reserves are invited to attend the reunion and celebrate 100 years of professional training at HMAS CERBERUS over the Journey. For all details and registration, please email David (below) or ex WOSTWD Dave Stevenson (djstevenson7@bigpond.com).

Reunion details

Location: Melbourne, VIC

Contact details

Name: ex CPOCK David Speed Dwyer

Email: davidgdwyer@hotmail.com

RAAF Airman Aircrew Association 25th Anniversary

Date: 21 Oct 2022

21-22 October 2022. Meet & Greet, 21 October and dinner, 22 October. To register, visit the website.

Reunion details

Location: Caloundra, QLD

Contact details

Name: Grendell "Skip" Antony

Email: theantonys@optusnet.com.au

Web <http://airmanaircrew.com.au>

If you are one of the persons listed as a contact for any event included on the Reunions & Notices pages, please contact VVFA Head Office via phone or email if the information we provide has changed, including cancellations.

November 2022

55th Birthday Reunion of 9 RAR (67/73)

Date: 10 Nov 2022

10-14 November 2022. All those who served in the Battalion are invited to attend. The event will be centred around Mooloolaba/ Maroochydore. Please ensure your postal/email address is up to date with your state secretary.

Reunion details

Location: Sunshine Coast, QLD

Contact details

Name: Kevin Lynch

Email: kevannlynch@hotmail.com

HQ1ATF Association

Date: 18 Nov 2022

18-21 November 2022. For detailed itinerary, contact John.

Reunion details

Location: Capital Country Holiday Park, ACT

Contact details

Name: John Verhelst

Email: jeverhelst@gmail.com

Anyone wishing to advise of a Reunion, or add to a Wanted Known list, should contact VVFA Head Office via vvfanatsec@vvfa.org.au

Remember that our Newsletters are published each April, July and December, however we are able to add to our website lists at any time.

March 2023

Headquarters & Headquarters Company 1st Australian Logistic support group (1 ALSG)

20-25 March 2023.

For more details and accommodation, contact Tony.

Reunion details

Date: 20 Mar 2023

Location: Broken Hill, NSW

Contact details

Name: Anthony (Tony) Brown

Email: tr4950@optusnet.com.au

April 2023

RAADC 80th Shin Dig

Date: 22 Apr 2023

Open to all past, present, family and associated friends of our outstanding Corps. The venue and accommodation is at the same place! Golf day on Friday 22 April 23 for those keen. Pop up spit roast on the Saturday event itself. And Sunday you can enjoy walking the Portsea Barracks at your leisure. Reaching out to members not on Facebook as many have already locked in the date.

Reunion details

Location: The Portsea Camp, VIC

Contact details

Name: Sonia Thompson

Email: sonithompson1@gmail.com

We take care that all contact addressee and addresses are as copied from notices supplied. However, should you encounter an address that appears incorrect we ask that you double check your entry detail before alerting us to the error.

NOTICES

NSW BRANCH AGM
WILL BE HELD AT OUR
HEAD OFFICE, 8 MARY ST.,
GRANVILLE NSW 2142
10:30AM WEDNESDAY
11 MAY 2022

ANY COVID RESTRICTIONS
AND REQUIREMENTS
INCLUDING PROOF OF
VACCINATIONS EXISTING
AT THE TIME WILL BE
ADHERED TO

YOU ARE ADVISED TO
BRING A MASK IN CASE
REQUIRED.

SEE THE AGENDA
NOTICE/S AS PUBLISHED
ELSEWHERE IN THIS
NEWSLETTER



“One day we’ll all be
laughin’ at this cockup over a
beer at some flamin’
reunion”.

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
VVCS



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.

Do you wish to become a member? All you need to do is to complete the following information and send it to the State Branch of your choice as listed on page 63 and you will be sent an application form.

PREFERRED BRANCH/SUB-BRANCH

--

SURNAME

FIRST NAME

SECOND NAME

--	--	--

STREET ADDRESS

--

SUBURB/TOWN

STATE

POST CODE

--	--	--

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

OTHER PHONE

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EMAIL ADDRESS [PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY]

--

SIGNATURE

DATE

--	--

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

NATIONAL HEAD OFFICE (VETERANS SUPPORT CENTRE)

VVFA HQ National President: William (Bill) Roberts OAM JP Email: vvfanatpres@vvfa.org.au
 PO Box 170, (8 Mary St.) National Secretary: **Ron O'Connor JP** Email: vvfanatsec@vvfa.org.au
 Granville, NSW 2142 Tel: 02 9682 1788 Fax: 02 9682 6134 Web: <http://www.vvfa.org.au>

NEW SOUTH WALES VETERANS SUPPORT CENTRE

VVPPAA NSW Inc.
 8 Mary St PO Box 170
 Granville NSW 2142
 Ph: (02) 9682 1788
 Fax: (02) 9682 6134
www.vvfagranville.org
secretary@vvfagranville.org
 President: Frank Cole
 Secretary: **Ron O'Connor JP**
 Hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1600

CENTRAL COAST
 PO Box 505 Ettalong 2257
 Ph: (02) 4344 4760
 Fax: (02) 4344 5467
vietvetsgosford@bigpond.com
 President: Alan Ball
 Secretary: Eric Daniel
 Hours: Mon, Wed 0930-1330

CENTRAL WEST
 7 March St
 Orange NSW 2800
 President: Lindsay Wright
 (02) 6362 5959
 Secretary: Tony White
 (02) 6366 9664
knocker6@bigpond.com

CLARENCE VALLEY
 PO Box 137
 Grafton 2460
 Ph: (02) 6649 4186
 President: Ron Shoebridge
 Secretary: Lorraine Burt
nswpva@skymesh.com.au
 Hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1700

EUROBODALLA
 28 Emmott St.
 Moruya 2537
 Ph: (02) 4474 2362
 Mob 0419 201 788
 President: Tony Herbert
 Secretary: Helen Kop
eurobodallavietnamveterans@yahoo.com.au

GREAT LAKES
 Unit 3, 80-82 Kularoo Drive
 Forster, 2428
 Ph: 0480 283 744
vvaglforster@gmail.com
 President: Graham Kelly
 Secretary: Paul Dawson
 Hours: Mon & Thur 1000-1300

**HASTINGS MANNING
MACLEAY**
 PO Box 5330, 22/35 Merrigal Rd.,
 Port Macquarie 2444
 Office Ph: (02) 6581 5230
 Or (02) 6581 5509
 Fax: (02) 6581 5509
hmmvvpaa@bigpond.com
 President: Bill Wagner
 Secretary: David Barnes
 Hours: Mon-Fri 1000-1400

ILLAWARRA
 Legacy House 96 Market St
 Wollongong NSW 2500
 Ph: (02) 4228 6774
vietnamveteransillawarra.org.au
vvaill@aapt.net.au
 President: Ian Birch
 Secretary: Pam Bowmaker OAM
 Hours: Tue, Wed, Fri 9:30-12:30

MUDGE & DISTRICTS
 Inglis St, Railway Station
 PO Box 511 Mudgee NSW 2850
 Ph: (02) 6372 7740
 President: Ken Atkinson
vvfamudgee1@bigpond.com
 Mb: 0428 246 147
 Secretary: Renee Lamshed
 Ph: 0433 073 387
 Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed 9:30-3:30

NEWCASTLE & HUNTER
 15 Tyrell St., PO Box 288
 Wallsend 2887
 Ph: (02) 4951 2666
 Fax: (02) 4951 2633
nclvets@bigpond.net.au
 President: (Acting) Paul Jones
 Secretary: Dave Hansen
 Hours: Mon, Thu 0900-1300

RIVERINA
 PO Box 7120
 Wagga Wagga NSW 2650
 President: John Ploenges
 Ph. (02) 6922 9766
 Secretary: Ralph J Todd
 Ph. 02 6926 6276
 Email: ralphtodd@bigpond.com

SHOALHAVEN
 PO Box 3229
 North Nowra NSW 2541
 President: Clyde Poulton
 0412 642 848
 Secretary: Carl Robinson
shoalhaven.vietvets@gmail.com

**SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS
BOWRAL MITTAGONG MOSS
VALE**
 PO Box 900, Moss Vale NSW 2577
 President: Phillip Moscatt
 Mb: 0420 864 133
 Secretary: Norman Austin
 Mb: 0427 854 141
shvvppa@gmail.com

**SOUTH WEST SLOPES
VIETNAM VETERANS INC.**
 3 Thomas Street
 Junee 2663
jc18746@bigpond.com
 Ph: (02) 6924 1924
 Mb: 0408 296 765
 President: John Curtis
 Secretary: Barbara Curtis

WENTWORTH-COOMEALLA
 Raymond Deed Veterans Retreat
 PO Box 397
 Dareton NSW 2717
 President: Michael Chopping
 Ph: 0481 306 854
 Secretary: Sheryl Browning
 Ph: 03 5027 4447
rdveteransretreat@iinet.net.au

ZONE REP: FAR SOUTH COAST
 Gary Berman
 Bega RSL SB
 Mob: 0409 888 248
gandsberman@bigpond.com

VIETNAM VETERANS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

FULL STATE AND SUB-BRANCH LISTING

QUEENSLAND

VVF Queensland Branch Inc.
18 Leagues Club Drive
PO Box 2817
Nerang Business Centre
Nerang Qld 4211
Ph: 07 5578 2233
Fax: 07 5578 2822

State President: Peter Handy JP

Mbl: 0448 195 050
president@vvfqld.com
State Sec/Treas: Peter Cameron
OAM
Mbl: 0408 276 044
treasurer@vvfqld.com
www.vvfqld.com

VVF Brisbane/Gold Coast of
Australia
Regional Sub-Branch Inc.
18 Leagues Club Drive
PO Box 368
Nerang Qld 4211
Ph: 07 5502 2836
admin@vietnamveterans.net.au
President: Andy Bryson
Mbl: 0424 476 027
Secretary/Treasurer: Peter Cameron
OAM
Mbl: 0408 276 044

VVF North Queensland Branch
Inc
Veteran Support Centre
TOWNSVILLE
PO Box 280, Hyde Park
JC Butler Bldg
1 Charters Towers Rd
Townsville, 4812
Ph: 07 4772 4655
vethelp@bigpond.com
President: Barry Martin OAM
Secretary/Treasurer: Chris Mills
OAM RFD

ACT STATE BRANCH

VV&VF ACT Inc
9 Burkitt Street, Page. 2614
Veterans Support Centre Belconnen
Ph: 02 6255 1599
office@vscact.org.au
www.vvfact.org.au
President: Ward Gainey JP
Secretary: Robert West

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

VVF South Australia
Branch Inc.
The Yerbury Centre
Unit 1, 31-39 Norfolk Rd
Marion SA 5043
Ph: 08 8296 2411
Mon – Thur 1000 – 1500hrs
vvfsa@tpg.com.au
http://vvfsa.org.au
President: Mal Thiele JP
Secretary: Mike Hainsworth

SA ZONE REPS

BROKEN HILL
Des Kennedy
M: 0412 458 054

MILITARY MUSEUM

BUBLACOWIE
Welfare Officer: Chris Soar
0448 994 561/0428 377 287
Ph: 08 8853 4379

REPS

ALICE SPRINGS AREA
Alan Wilkes
KATHERINE AREA
Scott Landers

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Contact SA Head office for Northern
Territory contact details.
Contact Granville Office for future Darwin
Outreach Programs

TASMANIA

VVPPF
Tasmania Branch Inc.
ALL PENSION ENQUIRIES TO
DENNIS HANMER OAM
NSW HO 02 9682 1788

VICTORIA

VVF Victorian Branch Inc
ALL MAIL TO: P.O. Box 167
Newcomb 3219
OFFICE: ‘The Annex’ NO MAIL
PLEASE:
Barwon Health
Myer St, Geelong 3220
Ph 03 4215 2421
President: John Arnold
johnarnold@iinet.net.au
Secretary: Iris Cargill JP
Mb 0488 053 973
ICARGI@barwonhealth.org.au
Mon - Wed 0900 -1400

VIC SUB - BRANCHES

GRAMPIANS
Secretary: Ron Jensen 0409 023 487

*Respite Housing For Veterans in
need*

Bowder Veterans Housing
160 Coppards Rd Whittington 3219.
03 5248 0996

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

VVFA WA Branch
30 Cornish Ave
Woodvale WA 6026
Ph 08 9409 6682
vvfawabranh@bigpond.com
President: Milton Kirk JP

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 61 and mail it, or email a copy, to the address indicated.

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
VVPAA 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
VVPAA NSW Branch
PO Box 170
Granville NSW 2142

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

MERCHANDISE FOR SALE

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
1101	NSW PLAQUE	\$ 50.00	1401	LAPEL PIN RAN	\$ 5.00
1103	NSW BADGE	\$ 10.00	1402	LAPEL PIN ENSIGN	\$ 5.00
1104	NSW PATCH	\$ 14.00	1403	LAPEL PIN ARMY	\$ 8.00
1105	NSW STICKER	\$ 6.00	1404	LAPEL PIN RAR	\$ 8.00
1106	NSW PEN	\$ 7.00	1405	LAPEL PIN RAAF	\$ 8.00
1108	NSW STUBBY HLD	\$ 8.00	1406	LAPEL PIN CROSS	\$ 8.00
1109	STUBBY HOLDER	\$ 10.00	1500	STICKER TWIN REG	\$ 7.00
1110	VVFA PAD/PEN	\$ 6.00	1501	STICKER REGULAR	\$ 7.00
1111	VVFA GREEN CAP	\$ 22.00	1502	STICKER NASHO	\$ 7.00
1112	VVFA BLUE CAP	\$ 22.00	1503	STICKER DAMN PROUD	\$ 5.00
1113	VVFA WHITE CAP	\$ 22.00	1504	STICKER LOVE LEAVE	\$ 5.00
1114	VVFA BLACK CAP	\$ 22.00	1505	STICKER PROUDLY	\$ 5.00
1115	PLATE SURROUND	\$ 12.50	1506	STICKER SUPPORT	\$ 7.00
1116	PLATE SURROUND	\$ 12.50	1507	STICKER TWIN NASHO	\$ 7.00
1117	VVFA PEN/TORCH	\$ 6.00	1508	STICKER SUPT NAVY	\$ 7.00
1124	KEYRING VVFA	\$ 6.00	1509	STICKER NAVY VET	\$ 7.00
1125	KEYRING NAVY	\$ 8.00	1510	STICKER SUPT ARMY	\$ 7.00
1126	KEYRING ARMY	\$ 8.00	1511	STICKER ARMY VET	\$ 7.00
1127	KEYRING RAR	\$ 10.00	1512	STICKER SUPT RAAF	\$ 7.00
1128	KEYRING RAAF	\$ 8.00	1513	STICKER RAAF VET	\$ 7.00
1129	KEYRING VVFA	\$ 9.00	1514	STICKER AFGHAN	\$ 5.00
1130	LANYARD	\$ 10.00	1515	STICKER IRAQ	\$ 5.00
1131	BANGLE	\$ 5.00	1516	STICKER SOMALIA	\$ 5.00
1201	THE MINEFIELD	\$ 45.00	1517	STICKER TIMOR	\$ 5.00
1301	BUCKLE RAN	\$ 35.00	1518	STICKER SUPPORT	\$ 5.00
1302	BUCKLE RIBBON	\$ 35.00	ALL ITEMS ARE FOR SALE ON OUR WEBSITE, (www.vvfagranville.org/ecommerce/index.php). AND AVAILABLE FROM OUR GRANVILLE OFFICE AND SOME SUB-BRANCHES. PHONE TO CHECK CURRENT STOCK AVAILABILITY. THE IMAGES OPPOSITE ARE COMPOSITE ONLY AND ACTUAL DESIGN MAY DIFFER ACCORDINGLY DEPENDING ON SUPPLY AVAILABILITY AT TIME OF ORDERING. THE WEBSITE ALSO HAS FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT OUR PRODUCTS AND WE ENCOURAGE VISITORS TO USE THIS FACILITY BEFORE CONTACTING THE OFFICE. All proceeds go toward our Scholarships for the children and grandchildren of veterans.		
1303	BUCKLE RAR	\$ 35.00			
1304	BUCKLE RAA	\$ 35.00			
1305	BUCKLE RAE	\$ 35.00			
1306	BUCKLE RAAC	\$ 35.00			
1307	BUCKLE RAAF	\$ 35.00			
1308	BUCKLE RAAMC	\$ 35.00			
1309	BUCKLE RAASC	\$ 35.00			
1310	BUCKLE RAEME	\$ 35.00			
1311	BUCKLE RAS	\$ 35.00			
1312	BUCKLE RAAOC	\$ 35.00			

Product images



ALL PROCEEDS FROM SALES OF MERCHANDISE BENEFIT THE CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDEN OF VETERANS



VVPPAA NSW

MAIL ORDER FORM

TO: Admin Manager
PO Box 170
Granville NSW, 2142

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TOWN:

STATE:

PC:

PHONE:

ALT PHONE:

EMAIL:

ITEM N ^o .	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:

NOTICES ABOUT OUR MERCHANDISE AT GRANVILLE

NOT MANY LEFT NOW, LAST CHANCE!

LIMITED SPECIALS ONLY WHILE STOCKS LAST

ALSO AVAILABLE ON LINE

<http://www.vvfagranville.org/ecommerce/index.php>

MOST ARE RUN OUT STOCKS FROM SUPPLIERS WHO HAVE CLOSED DOWN

WE REQUEST THAT YOU CONTACT THE GRANVILLE OFFICE TO CHECK AVAILABILITY BEFORE ORDERING, AND RE-SELLERS SHOULD ASK FOR A FURTHER DISCOUNT IF BUYING IN BULK ONLY. OR USE THE ORDER FORM OPPOSITE.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE \$
3301	BUCKLE VETERAN	15.00
3302	BUCKLE VET RAR	15.00
3120	TIE BAR VV	10.00
3130	KRING SYDNEY	8.00
3133	KRING ARMY AVI	8.00
3134	KRING RAE	8.00
3135	KRING RAA	8.00
3140	KRING RAAC	8.00
3141	KRING RAEME	8.00
3401	PIN RAR	8.00
3402	PIN MAP REGULAR	8.00
3403	PIN MAP NASHO	8.00
3404	PIN MAP VETERAN	8.00
3406	PIN VIETNAM VET	8.00
3407	PIN SLOUCH BRNZ	8.00
3408	PIN SLOUCH COL	8.00



ALL ITEMS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE ON-LINE SHOP, (www.vvfagranville.org/ecommerce/index.php), AND AVAILABLE FROM OUR GRANVILLE OFFICE. PHONE TO CHECK CURRENT STOCK AVAILABILITY. THE IMAGES ABOVE ARE COMPOSITE ONLY AND ACTUAL DESIGN MAY DIFFER SLIGHTLY. AND REMEMBER, ALL PROCEEDS GO TOWARD THE FUNDING OF OUR SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN OF A VETERAN.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.



Last Post



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
R63120	OS	RJ	MCGINLEY	HMAS SYDNEY	14/7/21	22/8/44
R63809	LEM	A	WHITE	HMAS SYDNEY/VENDETTA	19/9/21	20/8/47
R59994	NAM	RA	BURT	HMAS MELBOURNE	8/6/21	4/12/42
R62968	LEMW	WJ	BULLOCK	HMAS BRISBANE	6/7/21	22/5/43
R62003	OS	JV	COLE	HMAS DUCHESS/DERWENT	8/6/21	22/11/45
R107106	OS	RP	O'GRADY	HMAS VENDETTA	29/11/21	8/1/53
R103887	OS	KG	ROSEVEAR	HMAS VENDETTA/TORRENS	3/9/21	26/6/50
R96176	OS	D	HARDY	HMAS PERTH	14/2/22	26/9/51
54548	CAPT	FA	ROBERTS	1 APC SQN/ ASQN 3CAV/		
	(Colrtd)		MG OAM	AATTV	29/12/21	11/10/39
51199	WO2	AJN	DODDS	AATTV	11/10/21	5/3/31
2149242	CHAP4	AW	LEVY	HQ 1 ATF	7/21	1/12/27
1200402	CPL	DP	YAU	HQAFV/DET1DIU/1ALSG	9/8/21	17/10/43
215961	CPL	AE	HOARE (WRIGHT)	1 FD HOSP	4/1/22	8/6/47
34768	CAPT	JN	SALTER	HQAFV - ARMY	14/7/21	21/2/32
2793894	CPL	GR	LINWOOD	32 SMALL SHIPS SQN	7/12/21	29/1/49
2794419	LCPL	RC	GRENFELL	1 FD SQN	5/8/20	22/12/48
216375	SPR	LE	SCHMEIRER	1 FD SQN	9/1/22	1/9/43
1736119	SIG	FG	GOODCHAP	104 SIG SQN	29/12/21	3/1/49
2788784	GNR	DG	JOHNSON	1 FD REGT	26/10/21	25/10/47
2790114	GNR	RA	CLARKE	1 FD REGT	19/1/22	27/8/47
5716649	GNR	FJ	EDWARDS	4 FD REGT	11/2/22	18/11/48



Last Post



Number	Rank	Intl	Surname	Unit	DOD	DOB
215674	PTE	RJ	OLDMAN	2 RAR	17/7/20	12/8/44
35767	WO2	AG	CUNNINGHAM OAM	3 RAR	28/12/21	3/6/27
365503	PTE	ML	DICKSON	3 RAR	23/11/21	7/12/49
216793	CPL	DF	SYMINGTON	4 RAR	16/2/22	7/10/48
2174592	PTE	WR	BARNETT	1ARU/3 RAR/ 5 RAR	2/2/21	26/5/48
2781393	PTE	WJ	MURPHY	5 RAR	25/2/22	17/245
15374	WO2	PL	HEALY	3 SAS / 8 RAR	12/1/22	29/8/40
3795952	PTE	WD	PATTERSON	1ARU / 8 RAR	27/2/22	22/5/47
6709401	PTE	JT	WATSON	1ARU/5 RAR/8RAR	28/12/21	15/9/45
2789987	PTE	CJ	RUGE	1ARU/4 RAR/9 RAR	6/8/21	13/10/47
A224271	LAC	WF	SALZMANN	35 SQN	11/1/22	10/3/49
A11707	SGT	BA	HUEY	2 SQN	UNK	12/9/30
A13771	SGT	WAV	THOMAS	RAAF CENTRAL BAND	27/7/21	4/6/28
LONG TIME SUPPORTER						
411459	FLLT	C	MOIR	24 SQN – WW2	20/4/21	19/11/21

But each one, man by man, has won imperishable praise!

Each has won a glorious grave - not that sepulchre of earth wherein they lie, but the living tomb of everlasting remembrance wherein their glory is enshrined.

Remembrance that will live on the lips, that will blossom in the deeds of their countrymen the world over. For the whole earth is the sepulchre of heroes.

Monuments may rise and tablets be set up to them in their own land, but on far-off shores there is an abiding memorial that no pen or chisel has traced; it is graven, not on stone or brass, but on the living heart of humanity. Take these men for your example. Like them, remember that prosperity can be only for the free, that *freedom* is the sure possession of those alone who have courage to defend it. Pericles

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**

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

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

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

TYRES

BRIDGESTONE

Tyres & Complete Auto Servicing.

10% discount to members (not current specials)

223 Woodville Rd
Merrylands NSW
02 9897 1002
Mon-Fri 8—5
Sat 8:30-12:30

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

Stand out from the crowd!

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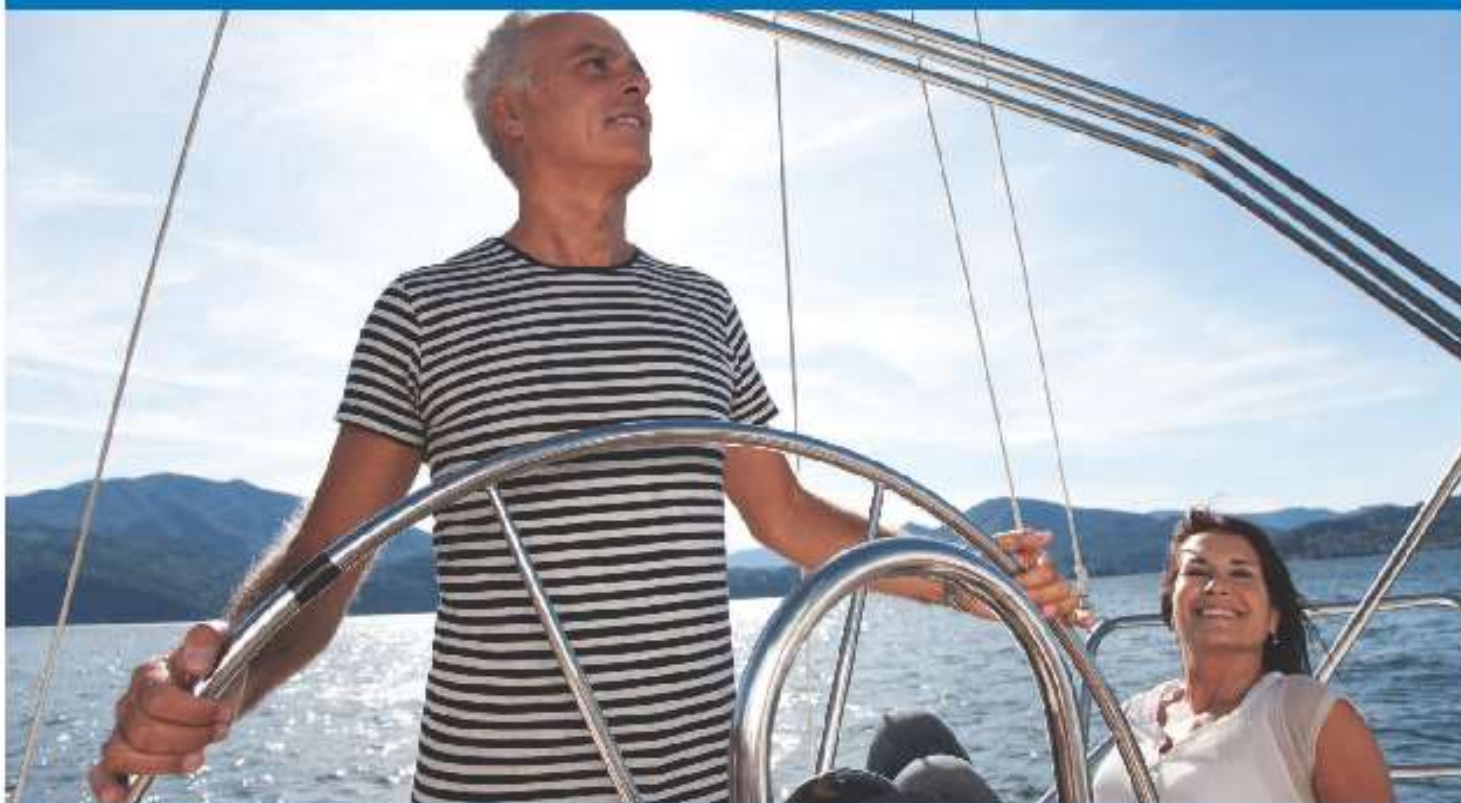
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