



VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

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JAMES BLUNDELL APPOINTED AMBASSADOR FOR VIETNAM VETERANS

The National President of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAA) Mr Brian McKenzie said today; during the Associations 26th National Congress in Sydney, entertainer and nine times Golden guitar and ARIA winner James Blundell was appointed as Ambassador for the Association.

James is donating his royalties from his latest single "Postcards from Saigon" toward the costs associated with the construction of the VVAA National Museum at Phillip Island in Victoria and the creation of the "James Blundell" Bursary which will directly benefit the sons and daughters of Vietnam veterans, he said.

Mr McKenzie said; the song 'Postcards from Saigon' depicts life experiences for many Vietnam veterans who were left with a feeling of betrayal and rejection after returning from the war. Unfortunately many disappeared as very confused young people, left to deal with experiences of war with very little support. However, over time, this Association, against adversity, took up the torch to ensure the needs of our particular veteran community were addressed, he said

During the presentation Mr McKenzie said; James is a great Australian and supporter of Vietnam veterans and their families and I urge veterans to rush out and get a copy of the single or the album 'Deluge' because you will certainly be able to identify with the theme of the song and the message it delivers. We see the release of 'Postcards of Saigon' as an opportunity to remember and celebrate the achievements of the Vietnam veteran community; he said

Mr McKenzie said; Vietnam veterans are a very close knit group who are proud of their achievements in robustly lobbying Government to focus on policy that addresses the needs of our families, now benefiting all veterans.

Our Congress was an outstanding success with a 'Future Directions' Forum, a day prior, a great lead in to the event. As a result of our deliberations, several projects identified at the Congress are already underway including the redevelopment of a number of administrative processes and the Constitution to take the Association into the future. In addition, several community projects and a number of other matters will be going forward to Government and the Department of Veterans Affairs for attention, he said.

Mr McKenzie said; I want to congratulate all National Council delegates and New South Wales State and Sub-branch members for making an outstanding contribution toward the success of the four-day event.

We have an abundance of very forward thinking and creative people and it's a pleasure to continue to lead such a progressive and enthusiastic team; he said.