



DEBRIEF

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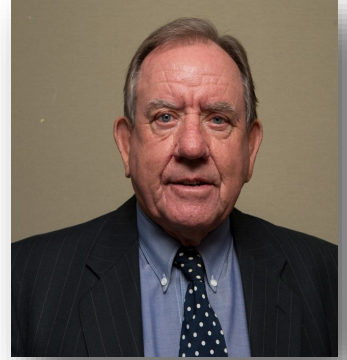
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COVER STORY: Sarawak, British North Borneo, 1965 soldiers of 3 RAR board a Belvedere helicopter to search for Indonesian infiltrators
Photo courtesy Minister Veteran Affairs (AWM1706.003)

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In my last report I advised that we had put to Minister Gee a proposal that Open Arms should become an independent agency within the Defence portfolio. We still wait on a formal reply from the Minister to our letter but I am pleased to report that DVA announced recently that a new Branch will be established in the Mental Health and Wellbeing Services Division of DVA.



Tentatively, this Branch will be called Mental & Social Health Programs and will be led by Dr Stephanie Hodson, the current National Manager of Open Arms, which will remain as a separate branch and continue with business as usual. A copy of the advice we received follows my report.

We are still of the view that further organisational change is required, and we continue to urge the Minister to seek independent advice on this matter.

Recently the Government announced its response to the recommendation of the Senate Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade References Committee that there be a modest increase in the TPI pension. Unfortunately, the Government has done no more than acknowledge the recommendation and an increase has **not** been announced. However, we are moving towards a Federal election and perhaps?

In departmental and ESO circles discussion often arises as to how Australian Military Compensation Laws can be simplified, including the concept of new legislation. I have written recently to Minister Gee acknowledging that military compensation law is by its nature complex and it is unlikely that a new Act will be “simple” and also that it will take some years to draft and finalise a Bill. Our view is that the focus should be on improving the existing Acts. In a recent statement the Minister seems to have endorsed that view.

Two major reports were released by the government towards the end of September and the members of ESORT were briefed at a special meeting.

Firstly, the Report by the interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention, Dr Bernadette Boss. This report is comprehensive and in excess of 400 pages in length and contains almost 40 recommendations, mostly directed towards the Australian Government. The National Executive has yet to consider the report and the recommendations.

Secondly, details of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide were also released. Your Association has since received from the Commission a “Notice to Give Information” seeking our views and opinions on some 13 topics. My view is that this is a practical and useful information gathering process and the Notice was distributed to State Branches seeking their advice. From responses received our report was submitted by the due date of 25th October.

Finally, on 20 October, a meeting of your National Council was held via computer attended by all Branch Presidents, members of the National Executive and the editor of Debrief. It was a successful meeting which laid the platform of many of our activities over the next few months. Thanks to our National Treasurer, Peter Fox, for organising the technical links and, while it was good to see and hear from all present, we sincerely hope that our meetings next year will be face to face.

Meanwhile, the members of the National Council and I hope that all members and their families are coping well with the varying restrictions placed upon us by our State Governments. It is a frustrating time for all.

With best regards,

Max Ball

National President

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Continued from page 2



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICES DIVISION

8th October 2021

The past 12 months has seen an increasing number of presentations from veterans and families seeking mental health and wellbeing support from the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

This has been particularly evident in one Division within DVA, the Mental Health & Wellbeing Services Division, which encompasses the Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling service, Coordinated Client Support providing case management and on-base services, and the Department's Communications capability.

To adapt and be better positioned to meet the changing needs of our veteran community, a new Branch will be established in this Division.

This Branch will tentatively be called *Mental & Social Health Programs* and will consolidate all of the Division's mental and social health programs as well as practice improvement, clinical governance, innovative research and pilots.

Additionally, the overall focus of the Division means Open Arms can work closely with the Triage and Connect team, which is the gateway to all supports under DVA's Client Support Program, providing a single access point for advice, assessments, and response to urgent, high risk, complex, or escalated client matters identified by internal DVA staff and external stakeholders.

Open Arms remains a separate Branch, proudly maintaining the legacy of its founding organisation, Vietnam Veterans' Counselling Service (VVCS). It will always be a counselling service focused on meeting the needs of the veteran community, which is different, but complementary, to the range of services offered by the broader Department.

Coordinated Client Support Branch will focus on case management support and on-base services.

Communications Branch will continue to provide professional external communications and media services to the Department and the Minister.

The consolidation of mental health and social programs, practice improvement, innovation and clinical governance into one branch will strengthen these functions, and also enable the two mental health and wellbeing service delivery areas to focus solely on working together to ensure that the Department can respond quickly and effectively to veterans and families at risk.

I am also very pleased to advise that Dr Stephanie Hodson has been selected to undertake an important role in the Department of Health, supporting the COVID vaccination drive. The role focusses on the messaging and media around the vaccination roll-out, which will allow Dr Hodson to combine her considerable skills and experience in mental health and communications. This is a temporary transfer, for three to six months. I congratulate Steph and wish her well in supporting Australia's return to a post-COVID state as soon as possible.

When she returns, Dr Hodson, who has been the National Manager of Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling for almost five years, will lead the new Branch. During Dr Hodson's tenure as National Manager Open Arms, she has led the service through a period of significant growth and transformation. In her new role she will continue the program of practice change and innovation in the Division and across DVA.

Continued page 4

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICES DIVISION

Continued from page 3

An Expression of Interest for the position of National Manager of Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling has been conducted and will be temporarily filled by the current Assistant National Manager – Ms Helen Braun. Dr Hodson's position will be temporarily backfilled by another member of the Open Arms team – Ms Rachael Farrell as Assistant Secretary Mental & Social Health Programs.

These changes will further improve the support to Veterans and their families within the mental health space and ensure that we are complying with best practice in treatment, policies and protocols.

Julie Pert

M.Psych (Clin), MAPS, MISTSS

Director Greater NSW

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling

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OPEN ARMS

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now for all veterans and families**



National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention

Announcement from Interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention

15 September 2021

To the veterans and members of the Australian Defence Force, families, friends, and others in the wider Defence community who have engaged with my work.

I am writing to let you know that my appointment as the interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention concludes today. It has been my very great privilege to engage with you in the course of this extremely important work.

Earlier today I handed the Report of my Independent Review of Past Defence and Veteran Suicides to the Australian Government. My report contains 39 recommendations to the Government about immediate actions that can be taken in support of efforts to prevent these tragic deaths by suicide in the Australian Defence and Veteran community.

I understand my Report will be tabled in Parliament, and referred to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (Royal Commission) to inform its inquiries. The Government will decide when the Report will be tabled. Once it has been tabled, the Report will be available on my website at nationalcommissionerdvsp.gov.au, where you will also be able to order a hard copy.

I want to especially thank everyone in the community, including families and those experiencing suicidality, who came forward to share their deeply personal experiences with me. The courage you have demonstrated has been humbling, and your insights have greatly enhanced this important work.

The Government has announced that subject to the passage of legislation, the functions and powers of an ongoing National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention will commence either after the Royal Commission concludes, or at an earlier point if recommended by the Royal Commission.

I hope that in due course we will see the permanent establishment of a National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention. In the meantime, if you are interested in doing so, I encourage you to engage with the Royal Commission. I am very pleased that the crucial task of inquiring into Defence and veteran suicide will continue through the Royal Commission.

Commissioner Nick Kaldas APM, the Chair of the Royal Commission, has asked me to give you the attached letter, and fact sheet, introducing you to the Royal Commission, inviting your participation, and setting out the legal assistance available to people who wish to engage with the Royal Commission.

More information about the Royal Commission is available on their website, which is accessible at defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au. If you have any further questions, you may wish to contact the Royal Commission at dvsr.enquiries@royalcommission.gov.au or by phone on 1800 329 095.

My revised reporting deadline of 15 September 2021, was set by the Supplementary Terms of Reference issued to me by the Government on 6 August 2021. These revised Terms of Reference are available on the Office of the National Commissioner website at nationalcommissionerdvsp.gov.au/publications/terms-reference-independent-review.

These Supplementary Terms of Reference ensure my work complements, but will not duplicate, the work of the Royal Commission. The earlier Terms of Reference provided by the Government on 8 December last year are also available on my website at the link above. Those Terms of Reference provide greater detail about the focus of the Review.

Again, I sincerely thank you for your courage and resilience in sharing your personal experiences, stories and insights with me. Again, it has been a privilege to work with you.

Yours sincerely

Dr Bernadette Boss CSC

Interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention

GOVERNMENT WELCOMES INTERIM NATIONAL COMMISSIONER'S PRELIMINARY INTERIM REPORT



Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash

ATTORNEY-GENERAL MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SENATE
SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Hon Andrew Gee MP

MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE PERSONNEL
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR CALARE

JOINTMEDIA RELEASE

29 September 2021

GOVERNMENT WELCOMES INTERIM NATIONAL COMMISSIONER'S PRELIMINARY INTERIM REPORT

The Australian Government welcomes the Preliminary Interim Report of the interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention, which has today been tabled in Parliament.

The interim National Commissioner, Dr Bernadette Boss CSC, commenced her work on the Independent Review of Past Defence and Veteran Suicides on 16 November 2020. This Report sets out the duties Dr Boss has undertaken to date, including preliminary findings and initial recommendations. It will form an important foundation for the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, which was established on 8 July 2021.

"On behalf of the Australian Government, I would like to thank Dr Boss for her significant effort in completing this valuable Interim Report and express my gratitude for the dedication of those involved," the Attorney-General, Michaelia Cash, said.

"Above all, we want to thank and recognise the defence members, veterans, family members, and others personally affected by a death by suicide, who came forward to share their stories and contribute to this important work. I acknowledge the difficulties and challenges which may be involved in sharing this lived experience, and I am grateful for their valuable contribution."

The Report examines issues related to ADF member and veteran wellbeing, mental health and suicide. The Report makes findings on prevalence, risk and protective factors, and highlights particular areas which require closer examination and change in relation to defence and veteran suicide.

The interim National Commissioner's wide-ranging activities included conducting 36 private meetings with individual families, defence members and veterans, and hosting 29 round tables with more than 150 ex-service and support organisations. The report also considers extensive information and documents produced by the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Department of Defence relating to policies, practices and information about specific cases.

"This Report will provide invaluable preliminary findings to Government in preventing future deaths by suicide in the veteran community, as well as areas of interest for the Royal Commission as it commences its own inquiries," the Attorney-General, Michaela Cash said.

Continued Page 7

GOVERNMENT WELCOMES INTERIM NATIONAL COMMISSIONER'S PRELIMINARY INTERIM REPORT

Continued from page 6

"I have read the report and discussed it with Dr Boss. I believe the report will make a significant contribution to current and future work being undertaken to improve veterans' services," the Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Minister, Andrew Gee said.

"I have no doubt the Royal Commission will also find it extremely useful and helpful," Minister Gee said.

"We won't be waiting until the conclusion of the Royal Commission to get cracking on reform.

"I have already directed the Department of Veterans' Affairs to overhaul and speed up the cumbersome claims processing system and harmonise the complex veterans' compensation legislation. That work is underway.

"Transition is of critical importance to our service men and women and their families as they move from military to civilian life.

"I have directed the Department of Defence to expedite the work of the Joint Transition Authority and its Implementation Plan.

"I have also already directed the Department of Defence to assess Dr Boss's recommendations about mandatory transition courses to evaluate how they could integrate with existing initiatives.

"I would like to thank Dr Boss for delivering this report. Her commitment to advancing veteran support and wellbeing is greatly appreciated."

The report is available at <https://defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au/>.

If you, or someone you know, need support, you can contact:

- Lifeline Australia – 13 11 14
- Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467
- Open Arms (current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families are able to seek this free and confidential support) – 1800 011 046
- ADF Mental Health All-hours Support Line (for current serving ADF personnel and their families) – 1800 628 036.
- Safe Zone Support (for current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families) contact 1800 142 072. When you call Safe Zone Support, you do not need to identify yourself if you do not want to.
- Beyond Blue – 1300 22 4636

Individuals wishing to contact or make a submission to the Royal Commission can do so at <https://defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au/> or contact:

- Email: dvsr.enquiries@royalcommission.gov.au
- Telephone: 1800 329 095, 9:00 am to 7:00 pm AEST Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays
- Post: GPO Box 3273 Sydney NSW 2001

MEDIA CONTACTS

Attorney-General - Guy Creighton – Guy.Creighton@ag.gov.au – 0438 815 302
Minister Gee - Ashleigh Weidmann – 0459 966 944

COVER STORY

31 August 2021

HONOURING OUR VETERANS WHO SERVED IN MALAYA AND BORNEO

Today is Malaya and Borneo Veterans' Day, when we pause to recognise and remember the 10,500 Australians who served in the Malayan Emergency and the Indonesian Confrontation.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said he encourages Australians to acknowledge the service and dedication of those who fought in these post-Second World War conflicts in the Malaya and Borneo regions.

"Only a few short years following the end of the Second World War, the Malayan Emergency began in 1948, lasting until 1960," Minister Gee said.

"The Malayan Emergency was declared following the murder of three European estate managers who were killed as part of the Malayan Communist Party's insurgency against the British colonial government. Australia's military involvement commenced in 1950 and continued with anti-insurgency operations in Malaya until 1963."

One key success of the conflict was a coordinated operation in July 1954 in Perak state. In an operation code named Termite, five RAAF Lincoln bombers and another six Lincolns from 148 RAF Squadron made simultaneous attacks on two communist camps. This was followed by drops of British paratroops, a ground attack, and a further bombing run ten days later. The mission destroyed a large number of guerrilla camps.

During 13 years in Malaya, personnel from the Royal Australian Navy, Australian Army and the Royal Australian Air Force played an important role in bringing the long-running communist insurgency in the region to an end.

The Indonesian Confrontation or *Konfrontasi* started in 1962, ending in 1966. This conflict was a small undeclared war fought between Indonesia and the newly federated state of Malaysia.

"The Confrontation was a dispute over whether the former British colonies of Sabah and Sarawak which bordered Indonesian provinces on Borneo, would become part of Indonesia or of the newly federated Malaysia," Minister Gee said.

"In 1964 Australian, New Zealand and British troops first became involved in the conflict.

"On 11 August 1966 Indonesia signed a peace treaty with Malaysia. The treaty recognised that the North Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak would continue to be part of the Malaysian Federation.

"This year marks 55 years since the end of the Confrontation and I urge all Australians to pause and remember the service and sacrifice of those who fought for our nation.

"Tragically, we lost 39 Australians during the Malayan Emergency, and 23 military personnel during the Indonesian Confrontation. Australia will never forget them and all who served in those conflicts. They made a vitally important contribution to restoring peace and security to our region."

You can learn more about the Malayan Emergency and Indonesian Confrontation on the Department of Veterans' Affairs [Anzac Portal](#). *Article from Media Release, Minister Veteran Affairs*



Left: Sarawak, British North Borneo, 1965 soldiers of 3 RAR board a Belvedere helicopter to search for Indonesian infiltrators.

Right: Soldiers of 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR), in the jungle north of Baling, near the Thai border, Malaya, 1960



VVAA HISTORY—KEL ROBERTSON

VVAA HISTORY DRAFTS - 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 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

Continued page 10

VVAA HISTORY—KEL ROBERTSON

Continued from page 9

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 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

Continued page 11

VVAA HISTORY—KEL ROBERTSON

Continued from page 10

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 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

Continued page 12

VVA HISTORY—KEL ROBERTSON

Continued from page 11

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 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 explore the context in which the Vietnam Veterans Action Association (the predecessor to the VVAA) was established, will review related community concerns about chemicals and revisit the Association's founding events.

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 Association. 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 vyhistory99@gmail.com. Readers who wish to take issue with the content of this article are urged to view the additional material and information on sources contained in the version with citations available from Kel. © Kel Robertson 2021.

MINISTER MATTERS



The Hon Andrew Gee MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel
Federal Member for Calare

MEDIA RELEASE

VIRTUAL COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AUSTRALIA'S LAST BATTLE IN VIETNAM

Australians commemorated the 50th anniversary of the last major battle fought by Australian troops during the Vietnam War on Monday 20 September 2021.

The 14-day Operation Ivanhoe, which included the 14-hour Battle of Nui Le, claimed the lives of six Australian soldiers and wounded 29 others. A New Zealand serviceman was also wounded.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel, Andrew Gee, said the planned commemorative service at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial in Canberra was held as a 'virtual' service and was available to all Australians via an online stream, as well as a national broadcast on ABC-TV.

"Unfortunately, current COVID restrictions prevent us physically coming together to mark this anniversary. However, a national virtual commemoration will ensure all Australians can unite to honour the service and sacrifices made by our Vietnam Veterans 50 years ago," Minister Gee said.

In September 1971, Australian forces were entering the final stages of the decade-long involvement in the Vietnam War, when enemy forces attempted to establish themselves in our Task Force's area of operations in Phuoc Tuy province, on South Vietnam's southern coast.

"Operation Ivanhoe was launched in the early hours of 19 September 1971 as a search and destroy sweep to prevent enemy forces gaining a foothold," Minister Gee said.

"On 21 September 1971, soldiers from 4RAR/NZ's B and D Companies were engaged by North Vietnamese Army troops across two locations. B Company suffered heavy casualties in a mortar barrage, while D Company was involved in a 14-hour battle that was to be the last major engagement fought by Australian forces in Vietnam: The Battle of Nui Le.

"The Australians who served our nation in Vietnam did so with distinction, earning them the respect of our allies and enemies alike. That skill, courage and devotion to duty was exemplified by our troops in Operation Ivanhoe and the Battle of Nui Le.

"On the 50th anniversary of Operation Ivanhoe and the Battle of Nui Le, please join our Vietnam Veterans as they reflect and remember those they served alongside, those who were wounded and those who died."

The virtual service will be broadcast nationally on ABC-TV and streamed on Facebook by the Department of Veterans' Affairs at 10.30am (AEST) on Monday 20 September 2021. It will also be available on ABC iView.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Minister Gee office: 0459 966 944
DVA Media: 02 6289 6466

MINISTER MATTERS

SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

23 September 2021

I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to all those who have come together to restore the sanctity of Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance following its appalling use as a protest site yesterday.

We have witnessed our veterans and community members volunteering their time to remove discarded glass, bottles and other debris abandoned during the protest.

I would like to recognise and congratulate their community spirit in undertaking this clean up.

They shouldn't have had to do it.

Further, I extend a special thank you to all our veterans who have taken the time to visit the Shrine and assist with this important work. I know for many veterans this would have been heartbreaking and caused enormous distress.

Yesterday's events were shameful and denigrated our service men and women, veterans and their families. I hope none of us will ever see this sort of disrespect again.

All of our memorials should be above any form of protest as they stand timelessly to remind all Australians of those who have served and sacrificed for our nation.

The Shrine of Remembrance is a solemn place of reflection and commemoration and is recognised as such around Australia and the world.

All those who have given their time to restore the Shrine have done Victoria and Australia proud.

THIS IS HALLOWED GROUND

To walk up the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance forecourt, passing the Eternal Flame and the words "We Will Remember Them" cast into the stone, anyone visiting the Shrine for the purposes of reflection and remembrance cannot help but be affected by the grandeur and serenity of this sacred place. This is a place for hushed words and respectful conduct to honour the men and women who have served Australia in war.

This is Hallowed Ground, a place that is to be revered and honoured, a place that is inviolable, never to be infringed or dishonoured. But the mob who descended on the Shrine did just that. They dishonoured the memory of those for whom the Shrine was built, and in doing so insulted and disrespected every Victorian family for whom the Shrine is a special Place.

As a Vietnam veteran, I am appalled, angry and saddened, just as I know all ex-service members will be. The mob has sullied the memory of my fallen mates and the memories of all who have died in the service of our nation, and in doing so deserve to be treated with the utmost contempt. If there were any organisers of the mob, then you have made a serious mistake; your message, whatever it is, is lost, you have visited nothing but scorn on you and the mob.

What is disappointing, and a source of regret, is that many ex-service organisations, mine included, have not had the opportunity to conduct our commemorative events at the Shrine this year and in 2020, due to COVID restrictions prohibiting gatherings.

For those who took part in mob behaviour at the Shrine, shame on you. Climbing on our most sacred building, and chanting "Lest We Forget" to somehow try to justify your behaviour was your greatest insult. The Shrine is Hallowed Ground, no place for protest, no place for the mob.

Bob Elworthy AM

President

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia

Victorian Branch

SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

From: Ruth Clare <ruth@ruthclare.com>

Sent: Friday, 24 September 2021 8:23 AM

To: secretary@vvaa.org.au

Subject: Sharing my article about the protest at the shrine with your members

Hello,

I am a child of a Vietnam veteran and I wrote this article for The Age on the fact protestors have chosen the Shrine of Remembrance as the place for their demonstration.

Would love it if you would support me by sharing this etc. to members. Getting quite a lot of hate mail telling me my dad would be ashamed of me and that I am a disgrace.

Let me know if I can be of any assistance.

Best wishes,

Ruth

Ruth Clare

0409891381

www.ruthclare.com

T, F, I: @ruthclareauthor



OPINION

To Melbourne protesters: The Shrine is not for you



[Ruth Clare](#)

Writer

September 23, 2021 — 3.25pm

As a child of a veteran, it infuriates me that anti-vaccine protesters in Melbourne chose to demonstrate at the [Shrine of Remembrance](#) (and in fact, more broadly, that right-wing extremists of all persuasions have had a history of conflating their causes with events and spaces meant to honour veterans).

The Shrine is there to remember actual people, like my father, who served in the military.

The Shrine does not stand for warped ideologies or whatever it is that this group imagines about it that gives them the right to align with and stand on, as they describe it, the “sacred ground” that is the Shrine.



*Protesters gather at the Shrine of Remembrance
Credit: Jason South*

Continued page 16

SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

Continued from page 15

The Shrine is about remembering people who have died or been traumatically impacted by their war experience.

The Shrine is a solemn place where veterans and their families gather to think about all they have lost.

Protesting at this site is akin to dancing on the graves of fallen soldiers. I feel so deeply saddened for every veteran and veteran family that they have to witness people like these tainting their experience in this way.

I know a lot of people have not grown up in a family where military service has been part of their lives. But I did. For me, the Shrine is a place where I feel the grief of losing my dad when he was only 52 because his exposure to Agent Orange gave him the melanoma cancer that killed him.

It's where I spend time hating the stupid war that gave him [the PTSD that made him act out so violently to his family](#). It is a place where I indulge in the wishful fantasy of how our relationship might have changed if he had lived long enough to receive the psychological help he needed.



*A visibly upset man at the Shrine on Wednesday.
Credit: Jason South*

The Shrine is also a place where I think about all the serving members who are struggling with their own, often lifelong, mental health issues or have suffered injuries in the line of duty or been killed in service of our country.

RELATED ARTICLE

Protester in hospital with COVID as healthcare workers told not to wear uniforms

I do not like violence and I do not like war. But veterans, and this landmark that has been created to honour their service, deserve to be treated with respect.

Veterans are people who know what it is to make great sacrifices. They have taken bullets for their country.

No one in the crowd of people protesting about their right to put their own individual preferences about vaccination above doing something that is for the greater good, has the first inkling about the concept of sacrifice.

Not one of them has earned the right to stand on that sacred ground.

Ruth Clare is a freelance writer.



*Mounted police at the Shrine.
Credit: Jason South*

MINISTER MATTERS

MEDIA RELEASE

16 October 2021

VETERANS CLAIMS SYSTEM TO BE OVERHAULED

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee has announced the appointment of independent consultants to overhaul the Department of Veterans' Affairs' claims processing system.

Consultants McKinsey & Company will work with families who have lost loved ones to suicide, to formulate recommendations that will overhaul the system to better serve our veterans.

Minister Gee said the backlog of claims is unacceptably high which is delaying veterans and their families access to vital services and funding.

"One of my top priorities is to improve the claims processing system and cut waiting times for veterans and their loved ones, and as such, I have directed that this rebuild takes place as a matter of urgency," Minister Gee said.

"This is not another review.

"McKinsey will immediately examine how the Department can simplify the claims process, how it is currently processing claims, and identify how we can have a faster, more efficient and effective system for all veterans and their families.

"As part of this vitally important work, I have directed McKinsey to hold meetings with families of veterans who have suffered the tragic and devastating loss of a loved one, so that those rebuilding the system can gain a first-hand understanding of the impact of veteran suicide and the importance of a quick and efficient claims processing system.

"We can't wait for the Royal Commission to get cracking on this crucial reform.

"In the recent Budget \$98.5 million was delivered for hundreds of new claims processing officers for veterans which is welcome news. However, I don't want to see these officers dropped into an inefficient system, tangling themselves up in red tape.

"If that budget boost is to have maximum effect we need to make sure that the fundamentals of the claims processing system are right."

Karen Bird, who lost her veteran son Jesse to suicide, said she was eager to participate in the meetings, together with her lawyers who represented the family during the coronial inquest, and hopes that the feedback will provide clear direction on what is required to overhaul the claims processing system, making it a positive experience for veterans and their families.

McKinsey will deliver its action plan in December 2021. Minister Gee has reiterated that he wants to see immediate progress so that veterans and their families can receive the support they deserve and require.

"McKinsey will be tackling the issue with an independent set of eyes to ensure that claims are processed in a timely manner. I won't be waiting to action this roadmap," Minister Gee said.

"McKinsey will provide recommendations with clear milestones and deliverables that can be tracked, measured and monitored by the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Australian Government at three, six, 12, 18 and 24-month intervals.

"The Australian Government is currently supporting more than 336,000 veterans and their families and we're committed to ensuring they have the support they need, when and where they need it.

"Our veterans have served our nation with courage and distinction and we must give them the best possible care and support. They deserve nothing less."

If any veteran or their family member has information that will help this process, I encourage them to get in touch by emailing office.ministergee@dva.gov.au.

MINISTER MATTERS

29 September 2021

ANNUAL AIHW REPORT HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR VETERAN SUPPORT

The Australian Government has today received a report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) into the rate of suicide among serving and former-serving members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

The Report outlines that of the almost 373,500 men and women who have served over the past 36 years, tragically 1,273 have taken their own lives in the last two decades.

This report builds on previous editions by expanding the cohort analysed from those with at least one day of ADF service since 2001 to those with at least one day of service since 1985.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said the report highlights the long term nature of the issue of veteran suicide and re-affirms the need for Australia to give our veterans and their families the best support possible.

"My priority is putting veterans and their families first, and making sure they are getting the services they need, when and where they need it," Minister Gee said.

"While there has been important national progress in addressing the issue of veteran suicide such as free mental health treatment for life, there is clearly much more to be done and we can't wait for the conclusion of the Royal Commission to get cracking on it.

Overhauling the claims process

"I have directed the Department of Veterans' Affairs to make the speeding up of claims processing as well as reducing the backlog a matter of utmost urgency so that we can make sure our veterans receive the necessary financial support and wrap-around services.

"To this end I have also directed that the Department overhaul the veteran claims processing system and accelerate the appointment of independent consultants to deliver a plan, and yield results within three months of their work being provided to the Australian Government.

"This work will include three-monthly milestones, and deliverables that are veteran centric and draw upon international best practice for implementation.

"It will include an examination and assessment of the claim forms and processes used to brief and engage external medical advisers and specialists.

"This will expedite the claims process and identify inhibitors so our veterans and their families can receive timely payments.

"It will also make sure that the \$98 million allocated to addressing the claims backlog in the May budget is used as effectively as possible.

Joint Transition Authority

"The transition from military to civilian life is one of the keys to addressing this issue which means the work of the Joint Transition Authority (JTA) is of critical importance and I am keen to see it fast-tracked.

"I've directed the Department of Defence to provide me with detailed options and a proposed timeline to speed-up the JTA Implementation Plan to ensure that we provide better support to our ADF members and their families as they transition from military to civilian life.

Harmonising legislation

"Veterans' legislation has long been cumbersome and confusing for veterans to understand.

Continued page 19

MINISTER MATTERS

ANNUAL AIHW REPORT HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR VETERAN SUPPORT

Continued from page 18

“I am focused on the issue of structural and legislative reform and have also instructed the Department of Veterans’ Affairs to create a roadmap to harmonise the three Acts dealing with veterans’ compensation and rehabilitation.

“This report once again highlights the unacceptably high rate of suicide in the Defence and veteran communities, and the importance of the work of the Royal Commission.

“Suicide doesn’t just affect the individual, it is deeply traumatic for loved ones, families and whole communities. Our nation needs to do everything it can to prevent it.”

This is the fourth annual monitoring report of its kind, and expands on earlier work by including historical records of members with at least one day of ADF service since 1985. Previous research dated back to 2001.

The AIHW report is available at www.aihw.gov.au.

STATEMENT ON NEW SECURITY PARTNERSHIP & NUCLEAR-POWERED SUBMARINES

16 September 2021

The announcements of Australia’s new security partnership with the United States and United Kingdom, and that we will be working with them to build nuclear-powered (not nuclear armed) submarines in Australia, is the most important defence initiative of our time.

We know that the security outlook in our region is changing quickly. We owe it to our children and grandchildren to ensure that the decisions taken today provide them with the highest possible safety and security.

History has taught us that the best way to meet threats is to be prepared.

When World War Two broke out, in almost every respect Britain and Australia were not ready.

However, there was one technical innovation that was to prove critical. When hostilities commenced Britain had developed the world’s best fighter plane in the Spitfire, and it was to prove decisive in the Battle of Britain and in preventing a German invasion.

The French submarine deal has now been scrapped. We shouldn’t mourn its loss.

By the time those submarines came into service, they would have been technologically obsolete.

Future generations would not have thanked us for passing them down to them.

With so much coastline to defend, and so much uncertainty in the Indo-Pacific, Australia can’t afford to gamble with something as crucial as our national security.

Nuclear-powered submarines are the best technology available.

This is the right decision for Australia, our national security, and for future generations.

MEDIA CONTACTS:
Minister Gee office: 0459 966 944
DVA Media: 02 6289 6466

MINISTER MATTERS

24 August 2021

MR STUART SMITH APPOINTED DEFENCE ENGAGEMENT COMMISSIONER

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee today announced the appointment of Mr Stuart Smith AO DSC as Defence Engagement Commissioner.

"Following a distinguished military career spanning 37 years rising to the rank of Major General, and post service employment as the State Disaster Recovery Coordinator in Queensland, I'm pleased to announce Mr Stuart Smith has been appointed as Defence Engagement Commissioner, to lead the Repatriation Commission's engagement with the Australian Defence Force (ADF)," Minister Gee said.

"Mr Smith has been acting in the position since August 2020. During this time he has worked closely with Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to strengthen cooperation and outcomes for our veterans.

"In particular, Mr Smith works with many ex-service organisations to discuss support for serving veterans and the delivery of programs that enable veterans and their families to secure meaningful employment once they transition.

"Over the past year, he has also worked closely with the Joint Transition Authority to establish a framework for transition support and services."

Mr Smith has actively engaged with Defence leaders, ex-service organisations, veterans and Defence personnel. He has undertaken roundtables and visits to Defence bases around the country to listen and grasp a fuller understanding of the ADF experience.

In 2012 Major General Smith was appointed Commander Joint Task Force 633, responsible for Operation Slipper and Australian forces operating in the Middle East.

"During my period of command in Afghanistan six Australian soldiers were killed and three were wounded in action," Mr Smith said.

"I have been working hard to ensure the support for those veterans and their families affected by service has been synchronised between Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

"With the rapidly changing situation in Afghanistan and many veterans reflecting on their service, getting that support to where it is needed has never been more important."

Minister Gee said he warmly welcomed Stuart Smith's appointment.

"With a deep professional understanding of the ADF and extensive public and private sector experience, I am positive Mr Smith will continue to contribute highly to the close cooperative relationship between the Repatriation Commission and the ADF to better support Defence personnel, veterans and their families," Minister Gee said.

For further information visit the DVA website [Defence Engagement Commissioner Stuart Smith](#).

MEDIA CONTACTS:
Minister Gee's office: 0459 966 944
DVA Media: 02 6289 6466

DVA TV

Launch of DVA TV

I am thrilled to advise that DVA has launched its newest communication channel to provide updated information, support and recognition to the Defence and veteran community.

[DVA TV](#) will publish a wide variety of video content to a YouTube Channel dedicated to veterans and their families, about DVA's services and the support that is available to them.

Content on DVA TV will range from guides to accessing support, such as how to use MyService, to capturing and sharing commemorative services, showcasing individual stories of service and posting important announcements from the department.

DVA TV will provide overviews and insights into the services available to the veteran community, including support for families, mental health programs, financial assistance and claims support, transition stories and messages of hope such as the positive impact programs such as the Psychiatric Assistance Dogs Program is having on veterans' lives.

We are keen to ensure that DVA TV provides informative videos on what you want to know more about in the ex-service community and I welcome your suggestions for future content. Please either contact the ESORT Secretariat with your ideas or feel free to email suggestions to the Communications Branch at communications@dva.gov.au.

We hope DVA TV will have a positive impact and help to empower veterans and their families to be the best they can be.

Don't forget to [subscribe to the channel](#) to be notified of new content!

Regards,

Liz

Liz Cosson AM CSC

Secretary

Department of Veterans' Affairs

T: 02 6289 6735 Ext: 616735

E: Liz.Cosson@dva.gov.au | E: Secretary@dva.gov.au

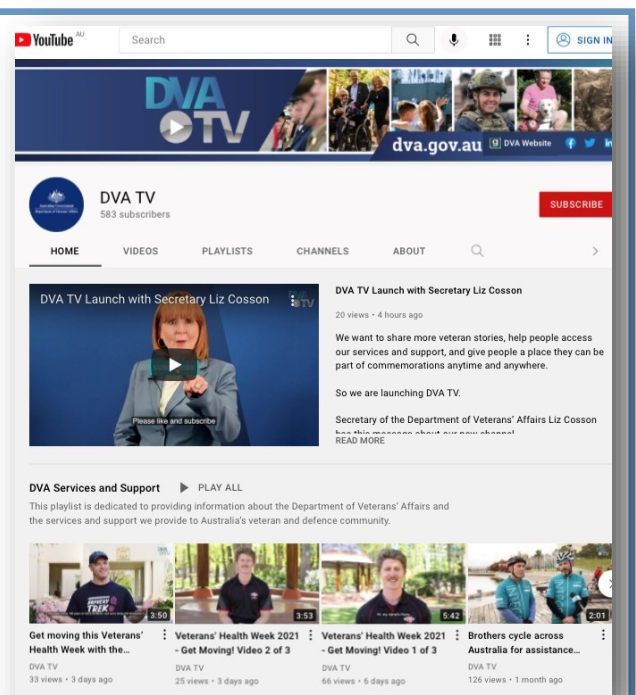
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Click on **SUBSCRIBE** and a selection of YouTube sessions will be display for viewing.



VETAFFAIRS

Disability Pension changes

2 August 2021

From 1 January 2022, pending passage of legislation, the DVA Disability Pension will be removed from the income test for Social Security payments.

This will simplify the way income support payments are calculated, indexed, and administered by DVA and Services Australia. The initiative will exempt the Disability Pension from the *Social Security Act 1991* income test and the rent assistance test under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.

As part of these changes Disability Pension will be re-named 'Disability Compensation Payment' to better reflect the nature of the payment.

The Defence Force Income Support Allowance (DFISA) will no longer be paid because the Disability Pension will not reduce income support payments from Centrelink and Age Pension from DVA. These payments to affected Disability Pension recipients and their partners may increase.

DVA Disability Pension will no longer affect the Rent Assistance of Service Pension, Income Support Supplement and Veteran Payment recipients.

This means that Disability Pension recipients and their partners may receive increased Rent Assistance payments, or receive Rent Assistance for the first time if they are renting privately.

DVA will contact you towards the end of 2021 if you may become entitled to Rent Assistance to invite you to update your accommodation details so that your Rent Assistance is calculated on up to date information. You can update your details online using [MyService](#) via myGov. If this is not possible, you can contact DVA via phone 1800 VETERAN or email. You will need to provide evidence of the rent you pay.

Rent Assistance is payable to Service Pension, Income Support Supplement and Veteran Payment recipients who pay rent of more than the rent threshold of, as at 1 July 2021, \$125.80 (singles) and \$203.60 (couples combined) per fortnight.

You cannot receive Rent Assistance if you live in state or territory government public housing.

If you or your partner already receive Rent Assistance with a Family Tax Benefit payment from Services Australia, you will not be eligible for Rent Assistance from DVA as well.

Free Entry to Australia Zoo on 2021 Sunshine Coast Veterans Day

Thursday 18 November 2021, Australia Zoo

1638 Steve Irwin Way, Beerwah QLD 4519, 9am – 5pm

Entry to Australia Zoo will be free for veterans, plus one guest each all day. Veterans will simply have to show their Veteran Lapel Pin, White or Gold Veteran Card, or other proof of service to get free all-day entry to the Zoo. This year the Federal Minister for Veterans Affairs Andrew Gee will join local service men and women in touring the Zoo on the day and we will be keen to hear their feedback. There is no need to book, and I would urge as many veterans as possible to come along and take the opportunity to reconnect after a difficult year of social isolation for all of us.

There will also be the opportunity for Sunshine Coast RSLs and other veterans' organisations to have a stall at the Zoo on the day alongside my own. If you would be interested in taking up this opportunity, please contact my office here on **07 5493 5556** or andrew.wallace.mp@aph.gov.au.

Thank you for your help in spreading the word about 2021 Sunshine Coast Veterans Day. You can find out more information at: [Australia Zoo and Sunshine Coast MP to help Sunshine Coast Veterans reconnect after a tough year - Andrew Wallace MP](#) and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below.

Andrew Wallace MP, Federal Member for Fisher The Edge, Unit 11 (L2) 10 Lake Kawana Boulevard, Bokarina QLD 4575, T 07 5493 5556, E andrew.wallace.mp@aph.gov.au

W www.andrewwallacemp.com.au / F <https://www.facebook.com/wallace4fisher/>

Beijing Hotel Brochure

A friend went to Beijing recently and was given this brochure by the hotel. It is precious. She is keeping it and reading it whenever she feels depressed. Obviously, it has been translated directly, word for word from Mandarin to English

Getting There:

Our representative will make you wait at the airport. The bus to the hotel runs along the lake shore. Soon you will feel pleasure in passing water. You will know that you are getting near the hotel, because you will go round the bend. The manager will await you in the entrance hall. He always tries to have intercourse with all new guests.

The Hotel:

This is a family hotel, so children are very welcome. We of course are always pleased to accept adultery. Highly skilled nurses are available in the evenings to put down your children. Guests are invited to conjugate in the bar and expose themselves to others. But please note that ladies are not allowed to have babies in the bar. We organize social games, so no guest is ever left alone to play with them self.

The Restaurant:

Our menus have been carefully

chosen to be ordinary and unexciting. At dinner, our quartet will circulate from table to table, and fiddle with you.

Your Room:

Every room has excellent facilities for your private parts. In winter, every room is on heat. Each room has a balcony offering views of outstanding obscenity!.. You will not be disturbed by traffic noise, since the road between the hotel and the lake is used only by pederasts.

Bed:

Your bed has been made in accordance with local tradition. If you have any other ideas please ring for the chambermaid. Please take advantage of her. She will be very pleased to squash your shirts, blouses and underwear. If asked, she will also squeeze your trousers.

Above All:

When you leave us at the end of your holiday, you will have no hope. You will struggle to forget it.

GOD BLESS OUR TROOPS!!! (USA)

PHOTO OF THE YEAR

While the other young women are complaining because the gov't won't pay for their welfare!!!
God bless our troops!!!



You'll never see this picture on the front of Time Magazine, or any other magazine.

We see lots of pictures of wounded male veterans but women vets get wounded and maimed too.

You may need to take a second, closer look though.

The first thing I saw was a bunch of beautiful smiles..

Study this picture again. Let the story it tells sink in.

These women and many others, as well as their male comrades, paid this price for our freedoms.

And they did it for less than what welfare recipients are paid!!!

DID YOU GET THAT?!!?

There is more patriotism and class in those 11 ladies pictured than the majority of Congress and the White House combined!!!

And a HECK of a lot more than those over-paid athletes who choose to "take a knee" when the National Anthem is played!!!

They risked these injuries (or death) FOR YOU and ME, AMERICA !

Submitted by Ted McEvoy <tedmac015@faafawa.net.au>

STORIES

MAHENDRAPARVATA—THE LOST CITY OF THE KHMER EMPIRE

After 1,200 years in oblivion, the lost city of Mahendraparvata has been brought to the light by French and Australian archaeologists in the thick Cambodian jungle of Phnom Kulen Mountain. The mysterious city mentioned in ancient stone inscriptions is located about 40 km northeast of Angkor Wat temple, a UNESCO World Heritage site in Siem Reap province.

The existence of the city has been known for decades, but much of it lay concealed by forest and earth. It was uncovered by an archaeological expedition led by Jean-Baptiste Chevance of London's Archaeology and Development Foundation and Damian Evans from the University of Sydney in 2012, who followed the trail of a 1936 expedition by French archaeologist and art historian Philippe Stern. With the help of an airborne laser-scanning technology called LiDAR, researchers were able to explore the soil and subsoil of the impenetrable jungle. They found a centrally planned urban area with a network of major thoroughfares that divide a central zone. It appears to be the first large-scale "grid city" built in the Khmer world, with an area initially estimated at about 40-50 km². Mahendraparvata is well aligned and comprises a system of smaller-scale land parceling that subdivides city blocks within the grid. The ruins show remnants of small shrines, mounds, and ponds; a large-scale water-management system with dams and an unfinished reservoir; a distinctive spatial arrangement of a royal palace and pyramid/temple; and other infrastructure elements that are unique to all other known Khmer Empire capitals, such as mysterious ten-foot-high mounds arranged in geometric patterns whose meaning and function remain elusive.

Meaning "Mountain of the Great Indra," the name Mahendraparvata refers to the sacred hilltop site known today as Phnom Kulen. A devilishly difficult plateau to access, it served as one of the last bastions of the Khmer Rouge, who occupied the area from the early 1970s until the late 1990s and left landmines dotted all over. Archaeological evidence reveals that the site dates back to the late eighth to early ninth century, which is centuries before archeologists thought such organized cities emerged in the Angkor area. Mahendraparvata was one of the three capitals (along with Amarendrapura and Hariharalaya) of Jayavarman II, the first king of the Khmer Empire who ruled from 802 to at least 830, marking the beginning of the Angkor period. Predating Angkor Wat by about 350 years, the once-mighty metropolis is immediately recognizable as Angkorian. It is also identifiably "urban" with a development of urban form that is totally unique in the Khmer world. Chevance speculates that Phnom Kulen may have been a site of worship and pilgrimage throughout the Angkor period, while local paleobotanical records suggest extensive and intensive human land use from the eighth to 12th centuries AD.

Similar to the ancient Khmer capital Koh Ker, evidence reveals a unique and intricate network of earthen dikes, which seem to be designed for a purpose other than irrigated rice agriculture. This ambitious, unfinished project's unseen scale and layout appears to be an enormous, remarkably early experiment in formal urban planning.



Continued page 26

STORIES

Continued from page 25

MAHENDRAPARVATA—THE LOST CITY OF THE KHMER EMPIRE

Considered part of the medieval urban fabric of Angkor, the area offers unparalleled insights into understanding the historical trajectory of Angkor and the Khmer Empire, one of the most advanced civilizations in Southeast Asia. The ruins are a prototype for water management with vast artificial lakes and for high-density urban centers that would later become typical of the Khmer Empire and a defining feature of the low-lying Angkor floodplains

© Digital art by Ming Fan On the beaches edges and coastal strips where the sands are not completely fixed, the vegetation consists of bushes or small steppes where low or creeping grasses grow in groves, including species endemic to the Pacific: varieties of Asian crab grass (*Digitaria barbata*, or cheekbone grass), devil's thorns (*Tribulus terrestris*, goat's head, devil's eyelashes or bindii), varieties of life plants (*Kalanchoe pinnata*, the leaf of life, also called *siempre vivo* by the Spanish) and other plants characteristic of coastal areas.

The heights that dominate the coasts are dotted with *dodonaeas* (*Dodonaea viscosa* or hopbush) and crown-flowers (*Calotropis gigantea*), known in Sanskrit as the *Arka*, with lavender blooms loved by Shiva that decorated the perimeters of Hindu temples and whose white sap was used to poison arrows. *Leonotis* (*Leonotis nepetifolia*, also known as soldier's pompom, lion's ear or tail, wild dagga, or Christmas candlestick), sea ferns (*Lygodium salicifolium*) and varieties of white magnolias also flourish in the heights. Palm groves are located in the southern part of the dune, especially in Thien Trung.

Above the coastline on inhabited dunes or in depressions where the water table is close, appears arid meadows or small groves with prickly pear bushes (*Opuntia ficus-indica*, the opuntia or Indian fig), crown of thorns (*Euphorbia milii* or *Paliurus spina-christi*, crown of Christ or thorn of Christ), Ravan's moustaches (*Littoral spinegrass*, herbaceous with bushy tuft), pandanus (*Pandanus schmidtianii*, or *baquois*), dragon-trees (*Dracaena cambodiana*), varieties of *Rubiaceae* with delicate white flowers, and a variety of love vine (*Cassytha filiformis*).

Further inland, in the dune northwestern sector, the sands create a barrier that provides shelter for an ancient maritime forest (Doc Ham protected zone). The maritime forest is nearly impenetrable except for a few uncertain paths. An inhospitable area with low, collapsed undergrowth, filled with thorns and lianas with sharp claws. There are Chinese banyan (*Ficus microcarpa* or Indian laurel, a locally bushy tree), many varieties of thorny lianas, species of false rattan (*Flagellaria indica*) and impassable curtains of bamboo.

Until the 1950s, tigers, panthers, elephants, wild buffalos, and rhinoceros roams the dune woods, turtles prospered on the coast, while whales, dolphins, and shark-whales cruised the open sea and the Siamese crocodile frequented the marshes and adjacent rivers. Currently, wild boars, monkeys, deer, and wild cats can still be spotted. Local peculiarities favor reptiles, which are divided into a dozen species including bloodsucking lizards (*Calotes versicolor*, the changing lizard), giant butterfly lizards (*Leiolepis guttata*), kukri snakes (*Oligodon macrurus*) and king cobras (*Ophiophagus hannah*). Fish ripple in the central lakes pure waters, including anabas, catfish, and carps. Numerous bird species nest in the woods, in the meadows, or on the coastline rocky spurs. The most notable are the grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*), the sea eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*), the Indian lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*, characterized by its alert chirping, sometimes called *did-he-do-it* bird or *pity-to-do-it*-bird), the barn owl (*Tyto alba*) and the red-backed woodpecker (*Dinopium javanense*).

The area was once called *ghul pron* (great dune) by the Panduranga kingdom Chams. From their ancient capitals of Bal Hanön (the citadel of Song Luy) and Parik (Phan Ri) in the northwestern and northern foothills of the dune, they organized annual processions to Bau Ba and Bau Ong lakes (the woman's and man's lakes), where a temple once stood.

The enchanting great dune sands still hold untouched areas suitable for exploration and breezy journeys. As Antoine de Saint-Exupéry wrote in *The Little Prince*: "I have always loved the desert. We sit on a sand dune. We see nothing. We hear nothing. And yet something shines in silence"

© Photo credit: William Patino

AROUND THE STATES—WA

VETERANS HEALTH WEEK 18th LONG TAN REMEMBRANCE DAY GOLF CHALLENGE ALTONE PARK GOLF COURSE

WINNERS

Best Vietnam Veteran pair	-Bruce Dalby & Bob King	Net 65
Best gross score	-Walter Aramakutu & Brad Corunna	Gross 65
Best net score	-Michael Taylor & Kristin Thornton	Net 59.75
Second	-Graeme Haywood & Rob Spraggon	Net 62.5
Third	-Rob Ballinger & Gary Meyers	Net 63.5
Fourth	-Akos Gyarmathy & Peter Randolph	Net 64
*NAGA	-Max Ball & Mike Tolson	Net 78.25

*NAGA is Not A Golfers Arsehole



*Pre game briefing by
organiser Peter Fox*

Tee off



*Supervising Max
and Kevin's BBQ
skills*



AROUND THE STATES—WA

VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY 2021—JENNACUBINE WAR MEMORIAL

Jennacubbine Progress Association Inc.

Secretary. C. Broadhurst, PO Box 272, GOOMALLING WA 6460

The purpose of the JPA is to protect the rich, local history of the Jennacubbine district and to promote the community in such a way that its history and character is not lost.

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (WA Branch) Inc

President

Richard Williams OAM

38 Kalgoorlie St

Mt Hawthorn WA 6016

23rd August 2021

Dear Richard,

On behalf of the Jennacubbine Progress Association, I would like to sincerely thank you for attending our Long Tan Service at the Jennacubbine War Memorial.

As you know, we did not go ahead with the Lexus Melbourne Cup Tour due to COVID implications, which was also part of the day, however, that was not going to deter us from going ahead with our Long Tan Service held at 3pm.

Your presence and address to the gathering was very much appreciated. We were honoured to have you amongst the five Vietnam Veterans who came to the service and pleased that you all accompanied the community members to the hall for afternoon tea. It was pleasant and comforting to see good conversations happening there.

Thank you also for emailing the links to the Camaraderie Generation youtubes. I have watched a few and have forwarded them onto our members. I think it very much fits in with the motto...

Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living.

Thank you once again,

Cherie Broadhurst
Secretary



AROUND THE STATES—WA

VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY 2021—GNOWANGERUP

On 18 August, we commemorate Vietnam Veterans' Day on the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan in 1966. We remember the sacrifices of those who died and say thank you to almost 60,000 Australians who served during the 10 years of our involvement in the Vietnam War.

A West Australian soldier killed in action during the Vietnam War, David Raleigh Webster, who paid the supreme sacrifice, is laid to rest in the Gnowangerup Cemetery.

A poppy tribute, provided by the Vietnam Veterans Association Australia WA, was placed on his grave site by Shire President, Mrs Fiona Gaze



AROUND THE STATES—WA

VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY 2021

Jennacubbine War Memorial



Marinko Tomas Memorial—Nannup



AROUND THE STATES—WA

VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY 2021

ALBANY WA



AROUND THE STATES—NT

VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY 2021

Banka Banka Station—Outback Northern Territory



G'day.

I thought you all might like to know that this morning I conducted the first ever VV Day service at Banka Banka Station where we stayed last 3 nights. That's about 630 Kms north of Alice Springs, and is a camp site for tourists. Had about 25 people there and a man with Last Post and Rouse on his laptop, played through the station's little boom box. At last minute another older man runs up with a national flag on a short pole he used for his caravan.

Also played harps and sang a few songs around fire pit last 2 nights for free beer.

The crowd feedback was heart warming.

Have a great VV Day everyone.

Cheers,

Frank

Dr Francis Donovan OAM

Banka Banka Station is located in the Northern Territory, 100 kms north of Tennant Creek along the Stuart Highway.

The historic cattle station was the first operational pastoral lease in this region, and a supply camp during WWII.

BOOKS

From: Garry <garry@crabtreehouse.com.au>

Sent: Saturday, 14 August 2021 10:35 AM

To: secretary@vvaa.org.au

Subject: Book royalty donated I'm glad you appreciated my offer

Dear Sir

My name is Garry Willmott I'm a Tasmanian based author of twenty books. www.gswillmott.com

My latest book is titled "Caught Between Two Worlds" It is predominately set in Vietnam.

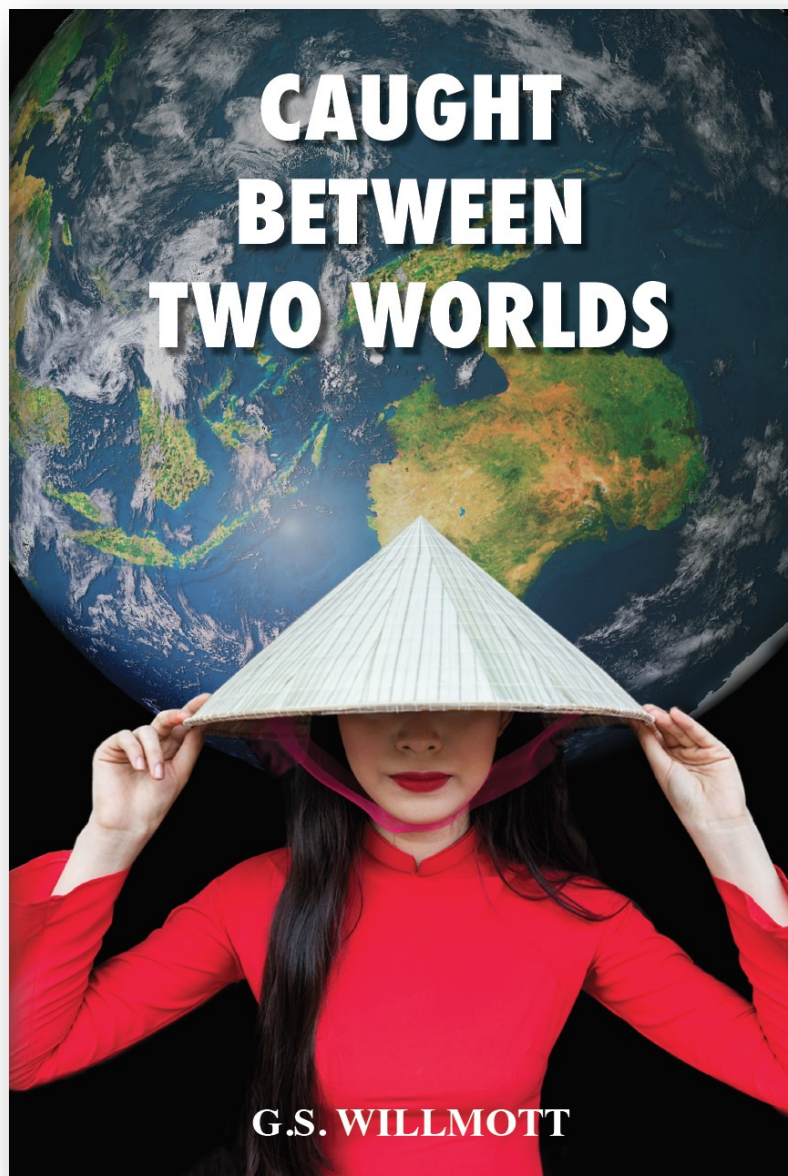
I asked two vets to read it both were moved by the story and highly recommend it.

I am writing to you to make the offer to donate 20% of my royalties to your organisation.

I was not a coscript, my birthday was not called.

Garry

garry@crabtreehouse.com.au



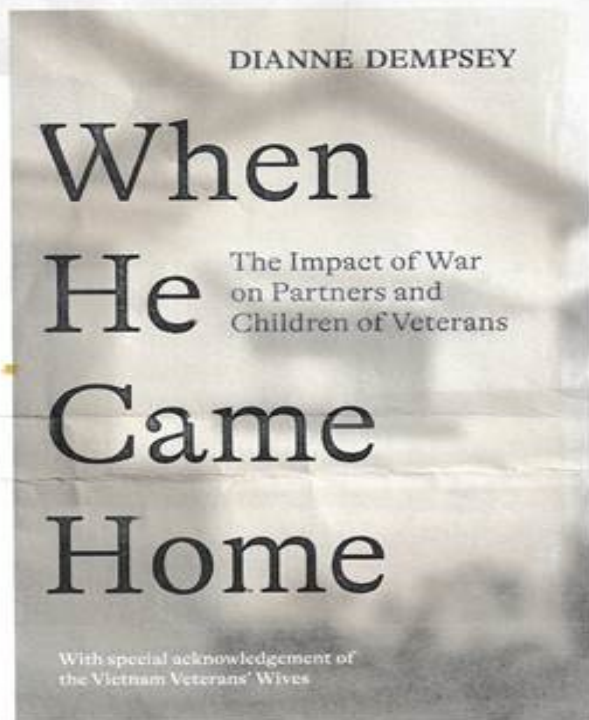
Review: A compelling story about the destiny of an Australian soldier in the Vietnam war. As a returned Vietnam veteran, it brought back many vivid memories of my time there. Beautifully written and well researched with thought to detail, captivating and difficult to put down, not knowing what was about to happen next. Thoroughly recommend this as an excellent read on the life of an amazing Aussie soldier. - David McQuaid.

BOOKS

From: walkergf@iinet.net.au <walkergf@iinet.net.au>
Sent: Friday, 9 July 2021 10:06 AM
To: 'VVAA president' <president@vvaa.org.au>
Subject: When He Came Home

Dear Veterans and Families,
Here is a book that does justice to the experience of our families.
It is a book about what it was like for them when we came home.
It relies on both quotes from many interviews and thorough research.
The book is a perfect companion to The Long Shadow and is highly recommended.

Graham Walker
National Research Officer
Vietnam Veterans Federation



Format: Paperback
Released: July 2021
Price: £29.95
ISBN: 978-1-922454-66-9

WHEN HE CAME HOME The Impact of War on Partners and Children of Veterans Dianne Dempsey

When the Vietnam War veterans returned home to Australia, neither the veterans nor their partners were aware of the atrocious psychological harm with which they had been afflicted. Post-traumatic stress disorder had not yet been recognised and as the men fell victim to terrible moods and illnesses, they capitulated to their pain and isolated themselves and their families.

With great courage and without recognition, veterans' wives held their families together in the face of government and community indifference and did so for decades.

When He Came Home is a belated recognition of these women, and it also focuses on how the issues of PTSD and suicide affect veterans who participate in contemporary conflicts. Told within an informed historical context and employing intimate narrative interviews, this important book examines the unexamined: how so many families have been brought to their knees and how such suffering can be prevented.

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VALE



*It is with great sadness we announce the passing of
215236 Bruce William SAMPSON
on 25th August 2021*

*Bruce served in Vietnam with
110 Signal Squadron 17/1/1968 to 14/1/1969*

*On behalf of VVAA Victoria we extend our deepest
sympathies to family, veterans and friends of the late
Bruce William SAMPSON.*

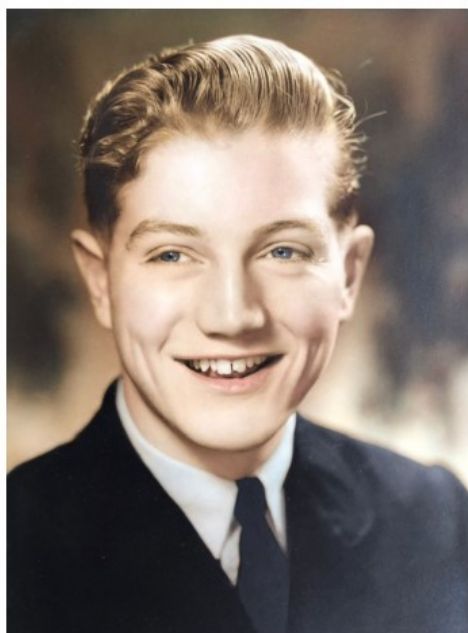
'MAY HE REST IN PEACE'



VALE

GPCAPT (Retd) Colin Raymond Anthony Ely

24 January 1934—4 September 2021



SERVICE HISTORY

23Mar49 - Enlisted in the RAAF as a Radio Apprentice

No 3 Radio Apprentice Course	23Mar49
Air and Ground Radio School	08Feb52
No2 Aircraft Depot, Richmond	18Sep52
Aircraft Research and Development Unit, Richmond Detachment	14May53
Base Squadron Laverton	11Feb58

01JAN60 - Commissioned as ENGRAD

Officers Training School, Point Cook	14Feb60
RAAF School of Radio, Ballarat	11Apr60
Melbourne Telecommunications Unit, Frognall	27Jun60
Headquarters Support Command Melb (TELENG Project Officer)	23Jul62
RAAF Point Cook, Base Radio Officer	11Mar64
Base Squadron Butterworth, Malaya – Assistant Base Radio Officer	09May66
RAAF School of Technical Training Wagga - Training Instructor	26Nov68
RAAF London - RAF Staff College, then Engineering staff RAAFLON	04Jan71
Headquarters Support Command - Tech Spares Assessing staff	17Jan74
No. 1 Aircraft Depot Laverton, Commanding Officer	11Jan77
RAAF Support Unit Canberra (including posting as Director Telecommunications Engineering)	05Feb79 – 02Jul84

03JUL84 - Retired as Group Captain

Over the next ten years, Col undertook two years of further studies and then worked with ASIO in Canberra.



*It is with great Sadness
we announce the passing
of*

218527 Richard (Barney) Bigwood

on 26th September 2021

*Barney served in Vietnam From
26th November 1968 to 5th December 1969
with various units in the
Royal Australian Regiment*

*On behalf of VVAA St Marys Outpost we extend our
deepest sympathies to family, veterans and friends
of the late Richard (Barney) Bigwood*

MAY HE REST IN PEACE



REUNIONS



HEADQUARTERS 1ST AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE SOUTH VIETNAM 1966 - 1972

HQ1ATF ASSOCIATION REUNION

In Memory of our D&E losses at Long Khanh (12 June 1971)

CANBERRA 3 to 7 MARCH 2022

RESCHEDULED DATES

Capital Country Holiday Park

47 Bidges Road, SUTTON NSW 2620 Ph:(02) 6230 3433

Email: bookings@capitalcountryholidaypark.com.au

Web: www.capitalcountryholidaypark.com.au

Due to the ongoing Corona Virus situation our 2020 Reunion of Headquarters 1st Australian Task Force / D & E Platoon (Nui Dat, South Vietnam 1966-1972) has now been rescheduled to 3-7 March 2022 and will still be held at the Capital Country Holiday Park which is located just off the Federal Highway, some eight km north east of Canberra.

Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war from 1965 – 1972 has had a lasting impact on all the servicemen and women who served there. HQ1ATF and its sub-unit Defence and Employment (D&E) Platoon, the longest continually serving Infantry Platoon in South Vietnam, served from 1966 – 1972 and encountered much enemy action during those years.

Each two years HQ1ATF Association holds a reunion and the rescheduled 2021 event will remember 50 years since we closed the gates of Nui Dat. It is anticipated that some 70 Veterans and 60 wives/partners (a total of 130 people) will participate in the four day event. The reunion is an important part of the Association's efforts in the healing process which is achieved through the continual networking of members and also importantly their partners and carers. With objectives to improve health and well-being and to reduce social isolation, the reunion plays a significant role.

The Commemorative Dinner will be held on Saturday 5 March 2022 at the Old Parliament House (Museum of Australian Democracy). The dinner will be preceded by a Memorial Service at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Anzac Ave, Canberra.

For details contact: John Verhelst: 0437212121 or jeverhelst@gmail.com www.hq1atf.org

REUNIONS

1ALSG EX-VIETNAM - 8-13 NOVEMBER 2021 HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

1st Australian Logistic Support Group—*Ex-Vietnam*

The reunion will be from November 8, till November 13, 2021 and will be held at:

Lake Hume Discovery Park,

33 Boathaven Road, Ebdon VIC 3691 via Albury/Wodonga

For details of the Reunion and Accommodation Bookings

Contact Tony Brown on:

Mobile: 0428 852 736

Email: tr4950@optusnet.com.au



21 ENGINEERS SUPPORT TROOP ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS



RESCHEDULED REUNION

29th August to Friday 2nd September 2022

Tuncurry Bowling Club

For information on the program contact the 21 EST Committee

Contact Ian (below), Phil Hicks 0414 761932 phil.hicks@gmail.com or Stan Monkley 0411 506787 stan21est@gmail.com. Contact Ian McLean (0412 431297) jaim@hotmail.com.au

Website: www.21est.org

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VETERAN FRIENDLY RETREATS



Some VVAA State branches have retreats on their websites.

Under the current COVID restrictions, check before you travel



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MERCHANDISE

VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA ST MARYS' OUTPOST SUB-BRANCH



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DESCRIPTION	COST	QTY	TOTAL
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DIRECT DEPOSIT - BSB:082799 ACC:799039554 Please add name to Bank Reference	TOTAL		\$
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POSTAL ADDRESS:			
	STATE:		POST CODE:
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Orders can be emailed to vietvet@tpg.com.au or posted to Secretary,
VVAA St Marys Outpost PO Box 3049 South St Marys NSW 2760

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VETERANS & THEIR FAMILIES



**SAFE ZONE
SUPPORT**

**FREE ANONYMOUS
COUNSELLING LINE
CALL 1800 142 072**

Safe Zone Support is a free and anonymous counselling line, for veterans and their families – call 1800 142 072 (available 24/7).

This service provides access to specialised counsellors, with an understanding of military culture and experience.

The service offers care without the need for individuals to identify themselves or be concerned that their call will be recorded.

This line has been created for vulnerable cohorts of veterans and their families which might not otherwise seek mental health care.



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Veterans & Families
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ARMS

A service founded by Vietnam Veterans now for ALL Veterans and their Families. 1800 011 046

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We offer free:

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and families
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peer networks
suicide prevention training
education, self-help resources, and more...

**To get support or find out more
call or visit:**

1800 011 046 | OpenArms.gov.au

OPEN ARMS

Veterans & Families Counselling

**> A service founded by Vietnam veterans,
now for all veterans and families**

OUR HISTORY

Recent research has identified a loss of records from our associations past. If anyone has copies of VVAA. National Congress minutes prior to 1996 please forward to:

president@vvaa.org.au or secretary@vvaa.org.au

TELL OTHERS ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES

VVAA States and sub branches are encouraged to contribute reports on their local activities for publication in Debrief.

Don't miss this opportunity promote your group; it may give others ideas of what they can do for, and with, members and their families.

The preferred method is to attach to an email the article in Word format and photographs in JPG format for better quality, to debriefeditor@gmail.com

Has your Email Address Changed?

Please advise your new email address to the VVAA National Secretary at secretary@vvaa.org.au.

NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM

25 Veterans Drive, Newhaven, Phillip Island VIC 3925
www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org.au

Membership enquiries welcomed—application form next page



AUSTRALIAN WAR WIDOWS Incorporated

(formerly War Widows Guild of Australia)



*“We all belong to each other.
We all need each other.
It is in serving each other
and in sacrificing for our common good
that we are finding our true life.”*

A strong part of the Guilds History is the origins of its Logo. The kookaburra was adopted as the Guilds Logo from its inception and remains today.

The **kookaburra** was the mascot of the 7th Division of the 2nd AIF, commanded by Mrs Jessie Vasey's husband, Major-General Vasey.

More information on www.warwidows.org.au

DEBRIEF DEADLINE

The deadline for articles to be included in DEBRIEF is the first day of every **even** month.

When submitting articles with photographs, to achieve the best print quality please include the photographs separately in JPG or similar format.

Also identify each photograph i.e., Photo 1 – SA President laying a wreath; Photo 2 – Cenotaph gates etc.

Debrief Editor: debriefeditor@gmail.com

NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP

Become a Friend of NVVM

Office Use Only

Membership Number



The Friends of NVVM program unites people committed to supporting the mission of this unique museum: to remember, interpret and understand the experience of Vietnam War veterans and the enduring impact of the war on society.

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- ♥ Exclusive "Friends" only private viewing & events.
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Concession applies to veteran card holders, full time students & pensioners, does NOT include Senior Card. Benefits as per individual member.

Family allows for 2 adults and up to 4 children. Benefits as per individual member.

Corporate allows for four adults and up to 10 children. Benefits as per individual member.

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San Remo VIC 3925

Email: office@vietnamvetsmuseum.org
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