



DEBRIEF

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Edited and Published By

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Inc.

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P.O. BOX 7139 Watson ACT 2602

ABN: 19 068 073 450/ISSN 2206-7337

FEBRUARY 2022



COVER STORY:

A NEW RETREAT FOR VETERANS

IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS OF TASMANIA

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Members,

Congratulations to all those members and also to other Vietnam veterans whose services were recognised in the 2022 Australia Day list of honours and awards. By our count 13 Vietnam veterans received the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) and a list of their names can be found on page 3. Apologies if we have missed someone.

The Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal has recently reported the results of its inquiry into recognition for members and families of members of the ADF who are injured, wounded or killed in or as a result of service. This is an important report and addresses a gap in Australia's system of honours and awards that has been filled from time to time by the government and sometimes by individual services, but with a lack of consistency.

The concept of this recognition has not always been supported by all veterans in the past, and that is true again for this inquiry. Nonetheless, the Tribunal has recommended to the Government that a system of recognition be introduced.

This edition of your magazine includes a copy of the Executive Summary of the report, which also describes the recognition proposed. It is recommended reading.

Your association made a submission to this inquiry and it has been summarised in the report, along with those made by other ESOs. So that you can read the summaries of these submissions a link to the report has been included below, or it can be accessed directly from the Tribunal's website.

Recently the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Andrew Gee, announced that there would be a series of commemorative events and related activities for the recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the cessation of the involvement of Australia in Vietnam. It is likely that the focal date for these events will be 11 January 2023, fifty years after the Governor-General made the proclamation.

I am sure that many veterans have expected that the 50th anniversary of the withdrawal from Vietnam may have been a cause of commemoration, as it should be. Due to the ageing of Vietnam veterans both anniversaries are important. While on a holiday in the Canberra region recently I met with senior officers from DVA to discuss the proposed commemorative events. It was a very good briefing during which it was explained what has been proposed.

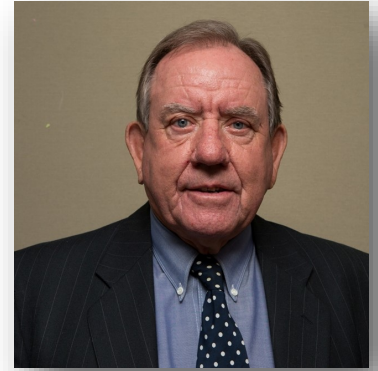
The good news includes that \$6m has been allocated to the department for various activities related to the anniversary of the cessation of involvement in Vietnam and Saluting Their Service grants are available for the anniversary of the withdrawal.

I expect that some of the \$6m will be made available for activities by veterans and ESOs through a grant process. Further good news is that the grants process will be direct with DVA and not through the Grants Hub.

As time for planning events is passing advice will be sought from the Minister as to when the details of the commemorative programme will be released.

The process of the Royal Commission continues. Requests from the Commission to DVA for documents and information have added to the workload of the department at a time when it is also focused on other departmental functions such as the preparation of budget papers, commemorative activities and responding to requests related to the forthcoming election.

Most veterans and their families consider that the most important function of DVA is the processing and resolution of claims for compensation made by members and ex-members of the ADF.



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NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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In the absence of commercial insurers, DVA is the provider of workers' compensation insurance for members of the ADF.

This function includes advice to veterans by advocates, the funding of the training and employment of advocates and delegates, and the swift consideration and resolution of claims for compensation and other entitlements.

This is the core business of DVA.

Despite the recent allocation of additional funds for claims processing, a backlog continues in this activity.

The advocacy system is also under pressure and discussions with ESOs re changes to the policy for advocates, mooted by the department some two years ago, are yet to be finalised.

Your association considers that these core business functions need to be protected from the other pressures that affect the department, and be funded to meet the demand, including meeting the benchmarks already set for the time taken to process and resolve compensation claims.

Best regards,

Max Ball

Australia Day Awards 2022 Congratulations

Congratulations go to the following people who were awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) on Australia Day 2022 for their service to Veterans and their Community.

235307 Ian Francis Ahearn 12 Fd Regt.

R59541 John Robert Bell HMAS Melbourne,

38152 Malcolm David Carson 2 Comp Ord Depot.

6709112 Malcolm James Cash, 4 RAR.

2795626 Robert Michael Freshfield, 1 ARU/HQ 1 ALSG.

4718571 Kenneth John Gillman, 3 RAR.

R66923 Edward Anthony Helm, HMAS Vampire/HMAS Sydney.

3793845 Joseph Bernard Lavery, 2 Tpt Pl RAASC,

39866 Brian John Milner, A and C Sqns 1st Armd Regt Light Aid Detachment.

219475 Raymond John Pearson, AATTV,

2790931 Peter Pioro, det 131 Div Locating Bty RAA.

Mrs Ann Elizabeth Pioro was also recognised.

4719382 David Hugh Stacey, 9 RAR;

R48638 Gary Thomas Taylor, HMAS Yarra.

COVER STORY

A NEW RETREAT FOR VETERANS

IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS OF TASMANIA

2 Galaxia Avenue, Dago Point, Lake Sorell, Interlaken Tasmania.

In December 2019, the Tasmanian Government, through an open tender process, advertised for organisations to take on the responsibility of transforming an existing under-utilised fisheries shack in the Central Highlands of Tasmania into a retreat for use by veterans and for those still serving in the Australian Defence Force.

VVAA-TAS submitted a detailed application to the Government and was successful in the bid.

The Tasmanian Government provided \$100,000 to VVAA-TAS to turn the shack into a family retreat and an agreement between the Crown Solicitor's Office & VVAA-TAS of a peppercorn lease at \$1 per year for 30 years, was signed.



Working bee at the Retreat. Pic: VVAA-TAS

Due to the incredible support received from the Tasmanian business community [donations involving financial, building materials & equipment] and many hours of voluntary labour from enthusiastic veterans, the project has been completed ahead of schedule, and to a much higher standard than was originally anticipated. A retreat that offers the veteran & his/her family a number of interesting outdoor activities, aligns itself with the commitment of the Chief of the Defence Force and the Chief of the Army to support Defence's wounded, injured and ill servicemen & women, which includes contemporary veterans.

The provision of a retreat is viewed as being therapeutic for all those using it. It provides a safe, relaxing, holiday retreat, in a pristine environment on the shores of Lake Sorell for individuals or for families to spend quality time together. This retreat offers the veteran, for example, the following relaxing activities;

Kayaking

Boating

Fishing (Trout)

Bushwalking

Picnicking

Mountain Bike riding

Details on how to book the retreat & cost per night are still being finalised, will be advertised in the next edition of Debrief.

Training Facility [Stage 2].

It has been an important vision of VVAA-TAS to establish a stand-alone facility, located on the same property site & title, adjacent to the retreat as a multi use facility. It is envisaged that the training facility would provide some accommodation as well as a large open area to allow round table meetings of 12-16 people with facilities to conduct power point presentations. The facility would be available to professional bodies such as Open Arms, DVA as well as other community-based organisations that specialise in a range of informative mental health well-being & family

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COVER STORY

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A NEW RETREAT FOR VETERANS IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS OF TASMANIA

orientated programmes.

Open Arms has been approached and is supportive of this unique facility, and welcomes the opportunity to present a variety of structured information sessions in the location, at the request of veterans.

A number of veterans have expressed their interest and enthusiasm for such a facility to be available to them, located, as it is, in a pristine setting. The Tasmanian Government endorses the concept and is supportive of this initiative, and has provided an additional \$100,000 to VVAA-TAS to establish the facility. This Training centre when completed in 2023/24 will form a unique veteran centric hub located as it is with the two Retreats [Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bush Retreat & the New Veteran's Retreat] nearby.



Rush to get to lock up stage before winter sets in.



Accomplished!



Vietnam Veteran Gary Graham, President East Coast Sub Branch works tirelessly to complete interior..



Great effort Gary ! The kitchen overlooking Lake Sorell is complete . What an achievement!



Stakeholders' update – Brisbane Hearings set a firm foundation for 2022

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide has recently finished its first hearing block in Brisbane and looks forward to engaging with stakeholders and the Defence and veteran community throughout 2022.

The Commissioners have been moved by the powerful lived experience stories of the witnesses who came forward to give evidence at the hearings. Through these insights, the Commissioners have established a firm foundation for further inquiries next year.

The Communications and Community Engagement Team is committed to working closely with key stakeholder and community groups, and to develop a dialogue to better serve the Defence and veteran community throughout the Royal Commission.

Our community engagement plan will be released next year, and we will develop communications materials and organise various stakeholder events to help explain the submission process and the alternative options for people to engage with the Royal Commission.

In the meantime, we have developed draft newsletter content and an FAQ-style interview with the Chair of the Commission, Nick Kaldas APM. You may find this material useful in any communication you have with your members and community. Please reply to this email if you would like a copy of these communications items.

We understand that there is a need for more engagement with stakeholders outside the formal Commission processes. As we work together next year, we welcome all opportunities to support the important work of your organisations to help our Defence and veteran community.

Importantly, if you would prefer not to receive emails of this kind in future, please accept my apologies. Just let me know and I will ensure we take your organisation off this email list.

We encourage feedback at all stages of the Commission and you can provide that via the Royal Commission email: dvsrsrc.enquiries@royalcommission.gov.au (include 'feedback' in the subject line).

The Commission also has a [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn page](#). We encourage you to share our content with your network, if you think it is appropriate, and engage with us across our social media.

In the meantime, we wish you a happy and safe break and look forward to working together in 2022.

Regards,

Bridie O'Sullivan Bridie.O'Sullivan@royalcommission.gov.au

Director, Communications and Community Engagement

Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide

Public Registration now open for Hearing Block 2 - Sydney

Community members are invited to register their attendance for the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide's second Hearing Block on EventBrite.

These hearings are open to the public and will also be webcast from [the Commission's website](#).

Due to COVID regulations and capacity limits, anyone proposing to attend the Public Hearing must pre-register

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/royal-commission-into-defence-and-veteran-suicide-37548571913>

Hearing Block 2 will be held at the Pullman Hotel Sydney Hyde Park from Monday 14 – Friday 18 February 2022.

Hearing Block 2 will have a focus of hearing directly from serving and ex-serving Defence members and their families, with a lived experience of suicide or suicide ideation.

Please be aware that these hearings may contain material and images that are triggering for some people. The public nature of the hearings also means that there may be people in military uniform, as well as military service providers in attendance.



Newsletter content: December 2021

Title: Royal Commission finishes its first hearings in Brisbane

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide held its first hearing block in Brisbane between 29 November –10 December 2021. Over the course of two weeks, the Commissioners heard from 67 witnesses, advocates and representatives as well as a host of representatives from support agencies and other organisations.

The Commission has been established to examine systemic issues and common themes that contribute to suicide and poor mental health outcomes among defence members and veterans.

The Chair of the Commission Nick Kaldas APM, is joined by the Hon James Douglas QC and Dr Peggy Brown AO to conduct the inquiry.

As chair, Nick Kaldas made a commitment to the Defence and veteran community.

“We recognise that we are asking people to share their deeply personal stories – once again – and that this will be difficult for many, so, we will continue to provide support to those who come forward,” he said.

“At all times, this Royal Commission will strive to seek and hear evidence in a trauma-informed way. We will do everything we can to avoid further harm.”

The focus of the Brisbane hearings was on the stories of people with a lived experience of Defence and veteran suicide and suicidality. The Commissioners heard from multiple lived-experience witnesses who shared their personal or family story. Many of the witnesses provided their thoughts about how the system could better support the Defence and veteran community.

The Commissioners have acknowledged the courage of lived-experience witnesses who came forward to tell or re-tell their story, and want the community to know that counselling is available for anyone who would like to engage with the Royal Commission.

The Commission would like to hear from more people with lived-experiences to help inform the work of the inquiry and reminds people there are options for how they can contribute. Information about the [sub-mission process](#), appearing as a witness and applying for a [private session](#) is available on [the Royal Commission website](#).

Contact the Royal Commission:
Email: dvsr.enquiries@royalcommission.gov.au
Telephone: 1800 329 095, 9am to 7pm AEST Monday to Friday, excl public holidays.
Post: GPO Box 3273, Sydney NSW 2001
Website: defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au
Connect online: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Linked In

In early 2022, the Royal Commission will release its stakeholder engagement plan and invite further discussion about how best to assist the Defence and veteran community to engage with the Royal Commission to inform its findings.

The Commission will enter a Christmas shut-down period from Friday 24 December 2021 and will re-open on Tuesday 4 January 2022.

More public hearings will be held throughout 2022, with Hearing Block 2 starting in Sydney on 14 February 2022.

All hearings are recorded and livestreamed to the Royal Commission website, and recordings of the hearings can be accessed through the Royal Commission [YouTube channel](#).

The Royal Commission invites the community to engage with it on social media, via its [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn page](#).



Royal Commission
into Defence and Veteran Suicide

INTERVIEW WITH NICK KALDAS **CHAIR OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION**

Q. Nick, how will this Commission be different to the many previous inquiries and investigations that have come before?

Nick: We understand Defence members, veterans and their families may question whether this Royal Commission can lead to fundamental and lasting change. The Commission has heard there have been 57 previous reviews or inquiries into the issues we will examine, resulting in more than 700 recommendations. There is no doubt there have been serious roadblocks to making effective change in this area.



Nick Kaldas APM

But in contrast to previous inquiries, the Royal Commission's Terms of Reference provide us with powers to unearth issues not previously examined, to summons witnesses to appear before the Commission, and to require that individuals or organisations produce evidence for our consideration. This will give us greater opportunity to more comprehensively deal with the issues contributing to Defence and veteran suicide than ever before. But most importantly, we will be focussing on ensuring there is a mechanism for following up on our recommendations and findings, after the Royal Commission ceases to exist. We have heard from many that this is a crucial issue following previous inquiries, and we intend to do our best to address it.

We recognise that we are asking people to share their deeply personal stories – once again – and that this will be difficult for many. We know that some may be disappointed by previous experiences. At all times, this Royal Commission will strive to seek and hear evidence in a trauma-informed way. We will do everything we can to avoid further harm.

Q. What are the specific issues the Commission is investigating?

Nick: Commissioners James Douglas, Peggy Brown and I are being asked to examine, understand and expose all systemic issues and risk factors concerning Defence and veteran deaths by suicide. Some of those potential risk factors are:

- the recruitment process;
- service history, training and deployment;
- transition out of the ADF;
- access and quality of health care, wellbeing and support services;
- reporting, recording, holding and sharing of personal information.

The Commission will also be looking at:

- most importantly, Defence members' and veterans' experiences in accessing claims, entitlements, and support services from government
- the impact of culture within the ADF
- the role of non-government organisations
- protective and rehabilitative factors
- support services for families and others.

Our inquiry's Terms of Reference are broad and allow us to investigate any other matters we

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Royal Commission
into Defence and Veteran Suicide

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INTERVIEW WITH NICK KALDAS, CHAIR OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION

identify that may be of significance. This is why we are reaching out to people to ask them to come forward and tell us their story, so that we get the full picture, particularly for those with lived experiences.

Q. Why is speaking to people with lived experience important?

Nick: The Royal Commission has already heard from a number of people with lived experience of suicide who have come forward to share their story. We have been humbled by their courage in doing so. Their insights are already proving so invaluable. These deeply personal stories have given us a sombre snapshot of the breadth and depth of the problems that need attention from the Royal Commission, and will be used to inform our further investigations as we delve much deeper into the risk factors that contribute to the tragedy of Defence and veteran suicide.

Q. What's the best way for someone to tell their story to the Commission?

Nick: We would like to hear from more people with a lived experience, as well as those involved in various organisations, to help inform the work of the inquiry. There are different ways they can contribute. Information about the [submission process](#), appearing as a witness and applying for a [private session](#) is available on [the Royal Commission website](#).

Submissions can be as brief or as detailed as you wish and will be accepted until Friday 14 October 2022. Not all of the questions in the submission form have to be answered. Every submission is recorded, reviewed and will contribute to the work of the Royal Commission. But not everyone who makes a submission will be requested to appear at a hearing.

Q. What if someone wants to remain anonymous – can they still share their story?

Nick: A submission may be made anonymously and will still be reviewed by the Royal Commission. You don't need to provide contact details but if you don't provide contact details, we are unable to check details in your submission with you or provide you with appropriate support services, including counselling.

Q. What is the process for a private session?

Nick: A private session is a confidential meeting with a Commissioner/s where you tell them about your personal experience. Information provided in private sessions remains confidential, even after the Royal Commission has ended. You decide what you say and what you do not want to share. People with lived experiences are eligible to apply for a private session, which can happen by telephone, video link or in person. You are able to request a private session, but are also able to choose to make a submission.

Q. If someone makes a submission, will they be called to be a witness at a Royal Commission hearing?

Nick: Not everyone who makes a submission will appear at a hearing. People will be identified by Counsel Assisting as to whether they will appear as a witness and give evidence. Individuals identified to appear as a witness at public hearings will be contacted in advance and have the opportunity to discuss this with our counselling and support staff, and solicitors assisting.

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Royal Commission
into Defence and Veteran Suicide

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INTERVIEW WITH NICK KALDAS, CHAIR OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION

But before you make a submission, please note that the Commission cannot resolve individual disputes. It cannot fix or award compensation or make orders requiring a party to a dispute to take or not take any action.

Q. Is there legal advice available?

Nick: The Defence and Veterans Legal Service (DAVLS) is a free, national service that provides independent information and legal advice to assist ADF personnel and veterans, and their families, carers and supporters. To find out more phone: 1800 33 1800 (Monday to Friday). **Legal financial assistance** will be available to individuals and entities to help meet the costs of legal representation and disbursements associated with engaging with the Royal Commission.

Q. When do I need to seek Leave to Appear?

Nick: You *do not need* Leave to Appear if you provide a general submission; attend the hearing room or follow the live feed; appear before the Royal Commission to give evidence at a hearing as a witness; or attend a private session. A person or organisation may seek Leave to Appear if they wish to actively participate in the public hearing in a capacity other than as a witness, or have a legal representative participate on their behalf – for example instructing a legal representative to ask a witness questions.

For more information about Leave to Appear, download our [Leave to Appear Guidance Note](#).

Q. It's tough for many who have lived experience to engage with the Commission's work. Is there counselling support?

Nick: We know that thinking about matters that relate to the Royal Commission or getting in contact with us can stir up strong memories and emotions. Please reach out if you need support. Counselling through the Royal Commission will be available by calling 1800 329 095 (Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays) or by email at dvsrsrc.enquiries@royalcommission.gov.au.

Q. Where will the Commission be holding public hearings?

Nick: Public hearings will be held in Sydney, Canberra, Wagga Wagga, Townsville and Darwin, with further towns and cities to be announced in 2022. Planning is still on-going for these hearings.

Q. When will the Commission hand down its recommendations?

Nick: An interim report is due in August 2022 with the final report to be handed to the Government in June 2023.

Q. How can I keep up to date with what's happening with the Royal Commission?

Nick: All hearings are recorded and livestreamed to the Royal Commission website, and recordings of the hearings can be accessed through the Royal Commission [YouTube channel](#). The Commission also has a [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn page](#).

DEFENCE HONOURS TRIBUNAL

RECOGNISING THEIR SERVICE

The Report of the Inquiry into recognition for members and families of members who are injured wounded or killed on or as a result of service.pdf (defence-honours tribunal.gov.au)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conduct of the inquiry

1. On 20 January 2021 the Hon. Darren Chester MP, then Minister for Defence Personnel, gave a direction to the Tribunal to hold an inquiry into recognition for members and families of members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) who are injured, wounded or killed in or as a result of service. The terms of reference for the inquiry appear earlier in this report.
2. The inquiry was undertaken by the following Members of the Tribunal:
 - Mr Stephen Skehill (Tribunal Chair),
 - Mr David Ashley AM,
 - Rear Admiral James Goldrick AO CSC RAN (Retd),
 - Ms Josephine Lumb, and
 - Ms Jane Schwager AO.
3. The complexity of our task became apparent to us in the early stages of our inquiry. In response to representations from the veteran community, the issue of recognition for death, wounding or injury in or as a result of ADF service has been considered on a number of occasions. While this has resulted in the creation of some new initiatives, such as the bereavement pins issued by each Service, other proposals for medallion or emblematic recognition have been put aside for a range of reasons, most particularly due to the difficulty of establishing eligibility criteria that allow identification of those who deserve some further form of recognition, without causing further harm to the veteran or to the family of the veteran whose death, injury or wound falls outside the scope of those criteria.
4. The Terms of Reference for this inquiry gave specific direction to us to consult broadly. Consistent with this direction, we engaged in an extensive programme of consultation with the veteran and broader community concerning whether such recognition should be adopted, and if so, what form that recognition should take.
5. This consultation included a nationwide call for submissions, which generated 260 submissions from 222 individuals and groups. We then directly engaged with veterans, their families, veterans' organisations and other interested parties in a series of over 70 public hearings held over 11 sitting days. We also conducted research into past and present systems of 'like' recognition in Australia, the Commonwealth and other countries, and undertook a series of informal, private conversations with a wide range of individuals and organisations. This included fruitful engagement with the Department of Defence, the organisation which will ultimately have responsibility for implementing our recommendations if they are accepted by Government.
6. This consultation led us to the conclusion that none of the existing forms of recognition for death, wounding or injury in service provide an adequate personalised expression of the gratitude of the nation for the sacrifice that a veteran has made through their service, or that their family has endured as a result. Australia lacks but should have, an emblematic recognition of that sacrifice in a form that can be publicly worn in commemoration and with pride.
7. The most personal representations of a veteran's service, their merit, campaign and service medals, depict only their service and say nothing about the consequences they or their family may have endured by reason of that service. The overwhelming majority of those who made submissions regarded this as a major flaw in the current scheme of recognition, and we agree with this view.

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DEFENCE HONOURS TRIBUNAL

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RECOGNISING THEIR SERVICE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

8. We thus concluded that there should be a new form of recognition for those killed in or as a result of their service, and for those who are seriously wounded, seriously injured or who suffer serious disease in or as a result of their service. We also concluded that a new form of recognition, which complements the recognition provided to the veteran, should be provided to families.

9. Being mindful of the complexity of our task, and having particular regard to the issues put to us in submissions from the veteran and broader community and identified through our research, we adopted a set of guiding principles which informed both our conclusions and our proposal, which is summarised below and set out in full in Chapter 13. Should these recommendations be accepted, we believe these principles should also be adopted by those who would be trusted with implementing the new forms of recognition.

- any new scheme to recognise those injured, wounded or killed in or as a result of service should be compassionate, but not so extensive as to recognise every death of, or wound or injury to a veteran so that it thereby becomes simply a “participant’s award”
- the process of seeking recognition and establishing eligibility should not provide any increased incentive for further ill-health, should do no further harm to veterans or families and should, so far as possible, promote wellness and rehabilitation;
- the eligibility criteria should be transparent. They should be as clear as possible and made readily and publicly available;
- the eligibility criteria should, so far as possible, rely on objectively observable facts rather than subjective judgement;
- where eligibility criteria necessarily rely on subjective judgement, this should be, as far as possible, the judgement of a qualified professional;
- the scheme should be predictable, repetitively consistent and equitable in its application; • the scheme should, so far as possible, be capable of timely and administratively simple processing;
- the eligibility criteria should be expressed, as far as possible, in readily understood language so that potential applicants have the opportunity to make a rational self-assessment of whether or not it is worthwhile making an application;
- the physical form of each new item of recognition should be of a design and quality commensurate with the solemn nature of the sacrifice it commemorates;
- there should be a simple, timely and readily accessible avenue for resolution of any disputes about eligibility;
- conferral of recognition should render the Commonwealth subject to no legal liability beyond that to which it would otherwise be subject; and
- any new form of recognition should be consistent with and maintain the integrity of the present Defence honours and awards system.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

10. We recommend the institution of the following new forms of medallic and emblematic recognition:

- a) a Memorial Clasp – to be posthumously awarded to a member of the ADF or a veteran who dies in or as a result of service. The Clasp is to be attached to the Australian campaign or service medal most relevant to the circumstances in which the death occurred and bearing, at the discretion of the veteran’s family:

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DEFENCE HONOURS TRIBUNAL

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RECOGNISING THEIR SERVICE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- the date of death; or
 - the date of the incident leading to death; or
 - no date;
- b) a Gratitude Clasp – to be awarded to a member of the ADF or veteran who is seriously wounded, seriously injured or suffers a serious injury in or as a result of service. The Clasp is to be attached to the Australian campaign or service medal most relevant to the circumstances in which wounding or injury occurred and bearing, at the discretion of the veteran (or family where posthumous recognition is sought):
- the date of wounding or injury; or
 - where multiple dates of wounds or injuries have been recognised, the number of such events recognised; or
 - no date;
- c) a Memorial Star – A full size brooch-like emblem of a uniquely Australian design that recognises the sacrifice of the family of a member of the ADF or veteran who dies in service or whose death is service related;
- d) a Gratitude Star – A full size brooch-like emblem of uniquely Australian design to recognise the sacrifice of the family of the member or veteran who has suffered a serious wound, serious injury or serious disease in or as a result of service; and
- e) for veterans awarded the Gratitude Clasp, a lapel pin of separate and appropriate design for everyday wear at the discretion of the veteran.

Recommendation 2

11. We recommend that the Memorial Clasp, the Gratitude Clasp, the Memorial Star and the Gratitude Star be accompanied by a scroll, issued under the authority of the Governor General, to commemorate the sacrifice of the member, veteran or the family, as applicable.

Recommendation 3

12. We recommend that the proposed new forms of recognition be available retrospectively, to recognise death, serious wounding, serious injury or serious disease that is or was brought about in or as a result of service after 2 September 1945.

These medals tell a story



They were awarded to an Australian veteran who:

- served in the ADF for at least four years;
- completed active service in Iraq from 18 March 2003.

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DEFENCE HONOURS TRIBUNAL

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RECOGNISING THEIR SERVICE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- served in the peacekeeping force in the Solomon Islands from 24 July 2003; and
- completed active service in Afghanistan from 28 July 2006.

But it's not the full story

That's because these same medals could equally be owned by any of:

- a veteran who had retired in full health after a full military career.
- a veteran who had fully, or only partly, recovered from the trauma of an imminently life-threatening wound or injury suffered on duty.
- a veteran who had suffered a less immediately threatening wound or injury but was, perhaps much later, affected by an ongoing serious disability of gradual onset; or
- The grieving parent, widow or other family member of a veteran who had died in the course of serving their country.

Should Australian military medals tell more of the veteran's story?

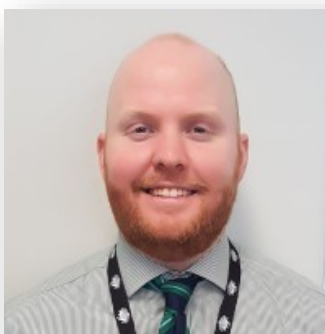
That's one of the questions we seek to answer in this report.

Copy this link into your browser to view the complete report:

[The-Report-of-the-Inquiry-into-recognition-for-members-and-families-of-members-who-are-injured-wounded-or-killed-in-or-as-a-result-of-service.pdf \(defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au\)](#)

OPEN ARMS
Veterans & Families Counselling
A service founded by Vietnam veterans
now for all veterans and families

OPEN ARMS—NEW NATIONAL MANAGER



Dr Grant PEGG

Dr Grant Pegg is a registered medical practitioner and holds a Bachelor of Applied Science from the Queensland University of Technology and a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery from the Australian National University. He worked in allied health as a radiographer before undertaking post-graduate medicine. Clinically, Grant has predominantly worked in General Practice and inpatient and community mental health, in rural and regional Queensland.

Most recently Grant worked in public health roles within the Commonwealth Department of Health. In the last 18 months he has led the area within the Therapeutic Goods Administration responsible for the evaluation and approval of COVID-19 vaccines and treatments as well as other prescription medicines. Prior to this, he was responsible for the regulatory aspects of post-market monitoring of medicines, clinical trials and special access to unapproved medicines.

Grant is passionate about placing people at the centre to positively build workplace and service culture with a client focus.

Grant has a close connection and understanding of the needs of Veterans and their families through his brother, who is currently serving with the Royal Australian Air Force.

MINISTER MATTERS

REMEMBERING THE FALL OF AMBON, 80 YEARS ON

MEDIA RELEASE

3 February 2022

REMEMBERING THE FALL OF AMBON, 80 YEARS ON

Today we remember and honour the service and sacrifice of the 1,100 Australian soldiers of 'Gull Force', 80 years on from the fall of the island of Ambon, in present day Indonesia, during the Second World War.

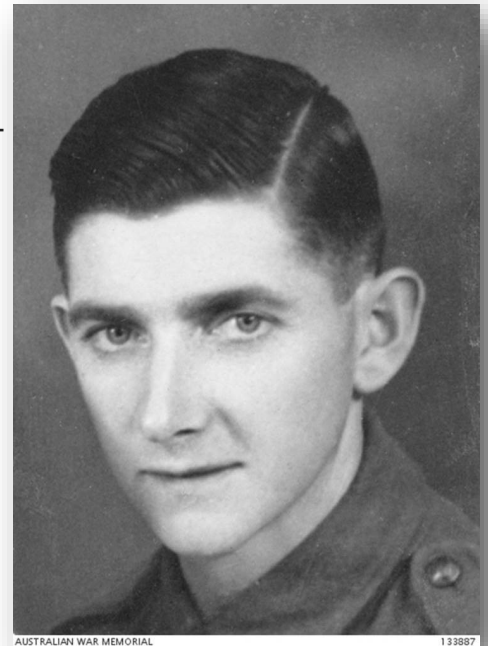
The Australians landed on Ambon in mid-December 1941 to support Netherlands East Indies troops defending the strategically important Bay of Ambon and two airfields at Laha and Liang.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said the Australian troops fought with distinction, despite being ill-equipped and without air or naval support.

"When the Japanese landed on the island on 30 January 1942, the offensive was swift and the battle at Ambon was short-lived, before the Australian contingent was forced to surrender on 3 February," Minister Gee said.

"In the defence of Ambon the main part of Gull Force suffered 15 casualties, and 309 officers and men who were at Laha were either killed in action or in mass executions which took place later in the month. Almost 800 Australians were taken prisoner.

"There were a number of examples of exceptional courage shown by the Australians, including the actions of 29-year-old Private William Thomas Doolan, a driver with the transport section of the 2/21st Battalion.



William Thomas DOOLAN. Pic: AWM

"Private Doolan was part of a reconnaissance patrol that encountered the attacking Japanese forces and, armed with hand grenades and a rifle, he stayed behind to hold the enemy off long enough to enable his comrades to withdraw.

"His bullet-riddled body was found some time later and, after the surrender, the Japanese allowed the Australians to bury William, and later erect a cross to mark his grave.

"After the war, William was reburied in the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery located on Ambon, and the cross his mates made to mark his original resting place was donated to the Australian War Memorial, where it remains a part of the collection to this day.

"Ambon is another reminder of the horrors faced by so many taken as prisoners of war during the Second World War.

"Australian and Dutch prisoners were subjected to brutal treatment



The cross erected to mark the grave of William Thomas Doolan on the island of Ambon, now part of AWM collection

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MINISTER MATTERS

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REMEMBERING THE FALL OF AMBON, 80 YEARS ON

and many suffered malnutrition. One prisoner noted they were treated like slaves.

“Over half of those captured on Ambon died in prisoner of war camps by the time the war was over.

“Australia remembers the men of Gull Force with pride, and we pay our respects to all those who suffered and gave their lives, as well as their families.

“Their courage and sacrifice in the face of overwhelming odds should never be forgotten.”



Officers of the 2/21st Battalion take a break in Darwin before embarking for Ambon in December 1941. Many of these men later died in captivity. Photo: AWM

To learn more about the Fall of Ambon visit the Department of Veterans' Affairs [Anzac Portal](#).

DIA CONTACTS:

Minister Gee office: 0459 966 944

DVA Media: 02 6289 6466

Office of the Hon. Andrew Gee, Canberra ACT.

MINISTER MATTERS

UNKNOWN HMAS SYDNEY II SAILOR NAMED AFTER 80 YEARS

19 November 2021

Eighty years after the Australian warship HMAS *Sydney* (II) sunk off the West Australian coast, the only body recovered from the tragedy has now been identified.

New DNA evidence has confirmed Able Seaman (AB) Thomas Welsby Clark from New Farm in Brisbane as the previously unidentified sailor.

The *Sydney* sank on 19 November, 1941 following an intense battle with the disguised German merchant raider HSK *Kormoran*, about 120 nautical miles (222 km) west of Steep Point, WA.

AB Clark is believed to be the only sailor to have made it to a life raft after the ship went down.

Despite surviving the battle and the sinking, he tragically died at sea in the life raft. His remains were found near Rocky Point on Christmas Island nearly three months later.

DNA samples collected from his body in 2006 have been extensively tested over the past 15 years and revealed both mitochondrial DNA, passed from mother to child, and Y chromosome DNA passed from father to son.

Research facilitated by the Sea Power Centre – Australia has successfully identified two living direct relatives.

Minister for Veterans Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said the formal identification was a significant development in *Sydney*'s story and an historic moment for Australia.

"To finally learn Tom's name, rank, service number and home town, 80 years after he was lost is truly remarkable", Minister Gee said.

"It says a lot about Australia that, despite the decades that have passed, our nation is still working so hard to identify those lost in war and ensuring we honour the sacred commitment to remember them.

"I know this is a terribly sad time for Tom's family. Like his brave shipmates, he died defending Australia, our values and way of life. His family should be immensely proud.

"The Office of Australian War Graves has agreed that next year Tom's grave in Geraldton War Cemetery will be marked by a new headstone bearing his name. He will be 'unknown' no longer.

"By identifying Tom, our nation honours all those who lost their lives in HMAS *Sydney* (II).

"His story helps Australia understand the immense sacrifice made for our country and also the loss and grief that is still felt by the descendants of those who perished on that day.

"Today our nation also extends its deepest sympathies to the descendants of the 644 other crew members who were sadly never recovered after that infamous battle.



Able Seaman (AB) Thomas Welsby Clark. Pic: AWM

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MINISTER MATTERS

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UNKNOWN HMAS SYDNEY II SAILOR NAMED AFTER 80 YEARS

“They gave their lives protecting our nation and fighting tyranny, and by ending the threat posed by the *Kormoran* they undoubtedly saved many other Australian lives.

“At this time we remember them and all of the 39,000 Australians who lost their lives in the Second World War.”

Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Mike Noonan said AB Clark was just 21 years old when he died and was representative of the many young lives lost in the battle.

“Of *Sydney*’s total complement of 645 men no one survived. This included six Royal Australian Air Force members, eight Royal Navy personnel and four civilian canteen staff. Eighty-two officers and sailors were killed in *Kormoran*,” said Vice Admiral Noonan.

“We revere the service and sacrifice of all who perished.

“Solving this World War II case involved specialists in DNA analysis, forensic pathology and dentistry, ballistics, anthropology, archaeology and naval history. I commend the combined effort spearheaded by the Sea Power Centre to confirm AB Clark’s identity.

“The Australian Federal Police National DNA Program for Unidentified and Missing Persons was instrumental, as were the Australian National University, Australian War Memorial, University of Adelaide and University of Sydney, not to mention Able Seaman Thomas Clark’s family.”

“His long voyage is complete, may he Rest in Peace.”

Dr Leigh Lehane, (a retired academic) was surprised and saddened to learn her Uncle Tom was the unknown sailor.

“To be quite honest it was a bit upsetting,” she said.

However, she said establishing the truth was important.

“I am so grateful for the many, many people, well over a hundred, who helped ascertain the truth about his identity,” Dr Lehane said.

She was born in July 1941, the month before her Uncle Tom joined *Sydney*. According to a family story he met his new niece on a final visit to Brisbane.

“He came and held me as a little baby. That’s a very pleasurable thought because I don’t think anyone else is alive now who knew Tom sort of eye to eye,” Dr Lehane said.

Imagery of AB Clark and HMAS *Sydney* II can be found at: <https://images.defence.gov.au/S20213532>

Footage is available at: https://innovatehub.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/mediahub/EqjOEYRt8ghDuXV_coAbN3wBCCwfU4lAjzWDuh0RBbTzIw?e=1o6AKM



Australian Defence Force Retirees Association Inc.

No. A0108026R

We represent the interests of Defence Force Retirees regarding their Superannuation

www: <https://www.adfra.org/>

Email: admin@adfra.org

FEDERAL COURT HEARING—31 JANUARY 2022

Today's short hearing of Clinton McKenzie's matter in the Federal Court took an unexpected but positive turn from ADFRA's perspective. Justice Perry recognized the potential significance of the outcome of the matter for a large number of former members of the Australian Defence Force, their widows, widowers and dependent children and orphans. Accordingly, her Honour issued an order requiring the Federal Court Registrar to attempt to arrange Pro Bono legal assistance for Clinton.

One remarkable aspect of the hearing is that Counsel for the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) said that the issues in dispute affected only a few hundred people. Clinton clarified that the issues affected tens of thousands of people, which seemed to be a revelation to CSC's Counsel.

To be clear: Clinton is not making any argument based on members being misled about the effects of commutation. Clinton is arguing that, properly interpreted, the DFRDB Act does not have the effect of permanently reducing the rate of commuted retirement pay. Clinton is arguing that the reduction only lasts until a member reaches the age on which the applicable expectancy of life factor in Schedule 3 of the DFRDB Act is based.

If the Court accepts that argument, the previous apology given by the Commonwealth for failure to provide adequate information about how the DFRDB Authority and the CSC were going to permanently reduce commuted retirement pay (and commuted Class C invalidity pay) will have been unnecessary. The necessary apology will instead be for not administering the system in accordance with the law, quickly followed by payment of the pay unlawfully withheld beyond a member's Schedule 3 life expectancy.

We are under no illusion that there are strong arguments for the DFRDB Authority's/CSC's interpretation. However, the judge will ultimately decide the correct interpretation.

Members should rest assured that they are not at risk of losing anything as a consequence of Clinton's Federal Court action. If the DFRDB Authority's/CSC's interpretation prevails, nothing will change. Our commuted pay will continue to be permanently reduced as a consequence of commutation, in accordance with the DFRDB Authority's/CSC's usual practice. That would be a disappointing outcome which – sadly – would merely confirm that the generous scheme used to entice us into and remain in the Defence Force was deliberately less generous than was marketed to us at the time.

In any event, the most significant and important fight for us remains the indexation methodology which continues to result in the inexorable reduction in the buying power of our entitlements.

One practical matter that has become obvious is how difficult it can be to utilize video conferencing technology (Microsoft Teams) used to stream the Court hearing. It was evident that quite a number had difficulty obtaining and/or accessing the link to the hearing and some who were successful made unintended virtual appearances in Court today. Fortunately, they were not too disruptive, and Justice Perry was lenient.

Nearer to the date of the next hearing, we will organize an 'anyone can join' Teams Meeting to enable members to master the technology. Clinton is happy to make himself available to field any questions members may have. We will circulate a link to the meeting at the appropriate time.

The next hearing in Clinton's matter is a case management hearing on 28 February, so that the judge can get an understanding of how preparations for resumption of the 'main' hearing are going. We will keep members updated.

Jim Hislop OAM President

VVA HISTORY DRAFTS

PART 4 EARLY STEPS IN NSW and VICTORIA

KEL ROBERTSON

Previously: Part 3 in this series, published in December 2021 edition of Debrief, traced the events leading to the founding of the multi-state Vietnam Veterans Action Association in January 1980, making reference to key events in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. This article looks in more detail at events resulting in state organisations in Victoria and New South Wales, noting that some resources on these events couldn't be accessed because of covid-related travel restrictions.

There was an almost typical way in which foundation events unfolded in each of the States and Territories, with a veteran (and, perhaps, family members) coming forward to tell their story in the media (but particularly in newspapers, which were very widely read at the time). They'd then ask other veterans or their families to make contact. More often than not, the key individual later announced an intention to form an organisation to press for an investigation into defoliant-related harms and to obtain appropriate compensation for affected veterans and their families. In cases following the 20 December 1979 announcements by Bernie Szapiel and Holt McMinn that an association would be formed (see Part 3), the stated aim was, typically, to form a local Branch of that organisation.

The earliest approach to the media by any Australian Vietnam veteran about possible defoliant harms was one by NSW resident Gray Adams in November 1978. This followed the publication of an article in the Sydney Sunday Telegraph about illnesses suffered by US Vietnam War veterans, birth defects in their children and a proposed study/survey of Vietnam veterans, including Australians. Within days, John Kerin (who had been approached by a veteran and whose then and previous electorates included a significant number of constituents likely to have served in Vietnam) asked a series of important questions in the House of Representatives about veterans' defoliant exposure.

Even at this early stage, contact with the media had useful consequences.

Victorian Events

The veteran who agitated most in the media in the following year was a Victorian, Bernie Szapiel. After a lengthy article appeared in The Herald on 12 March 1979 reporting the commencement of legal proceedings by US veterans against the manufacturers of herbicides used in Vietnam, Szapiel came forward. He was quoted as saying that, even though news coverage of herbicide exposure in Yarram in Victoria had made him suspect a link between his debilitating illnesses and herbicide poisoning, he'd only made "a tangible connection" after reading the article about US veterans in The Herald. Importantly, RSL National President Bill Keys is quoted as saying that Szapiel was the first veteran "he knew of who believed he might have been affected" and that the RSL would be supporting his case.

Two months later, in the Melbourne newspaper, The Age, Szapiel was the named one of three veterans said to be preparing compensation claims for ill health caused by 2,4,5-T exposure in Vietnam.

Then, on 14 December 1979, after a few more newspaper reports on defoliant exposure, on related illnesses among US veterans and on US legal action, Szapiel featured in a story in The Australian which included an arresting photograph of him, his wife, Senia, and son, Nicholas. In this arti-

VVA HISTORY DRAFTS

PART 4 EARLY STEPS IN NSW and VICTORIA

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KEL ROBERTSON

cle he provided more information on his symptoms. His stated focus at this time was on gaining recognition of his illness (and the illnesses of others) as war-caused conditions, for repatriation purposes. According to Dux and Young, in Agent Orange: The Bitter Harvest, it was this article which resulted in Szapiel prompting McMinn to tell his own story, and that resulted in McMinn taking a more public role, including being interviewed multiple times on TV.

When the next article featuring Szapiel appeared 4 days later in The Age, the National President of the RSL, Bill Keys, had ambitiously taken upon himself the role of the Repatriation Commission in concluding that “medical evidence that Agent Orange caused illness was not strong enough for Mr Szapiel and other veterans to claim compensation.” This article otherwise included enough of Szapiel’s address for other veterans to find him in the phone book (as they soon did).

Two days later, on 20 December, it was reported that Szapiel and McMinn were trying to establish an association (see part 3 in this series). Public developments such as Bill Keys’ waning support (see previous paragraph) and the failure of initial repatriation claims (in tandem with the insistence of the Minister for Veterans Affairs that the repatriation system was the only means of determining whether veterans had incurred harm) were important factors in the decision to form a Vietnam veterans’ organisation. They, together, pointed to the need for a different way of securing support and compensation. The call by an official of the Regular Defence Forces Welfare Association for an investigation, and widespread support from the media confirmed, for Szapiel and McMinn, that they were on the right path.

However, the knowledge that other veterans and their families were experiencing difficulties able to be attributed to defoliant exposure was the key impetus; this knowledge made it clear that collective action was both possible and warranted. The media exposure that Szapiel achieved (in part because journalists were keen to personalise the emerging story about veterans’ defoliant exposure) and the publishing of the street and suburb where he lived, enabled early knowledge of others to be acquired. In the same way, the announcement by Szapiel and McMinn of their intention to form an Association (and the coverage of this story in a national and various State newspapers) encouraged concerned veterans in various states and territories to make contact with Szapiel, resulting in the important, previously discussed, interstate gathering of veterans at the Szapiel home on 4 January 1980.

News on US developments prompted individual veterans like Szapiel to make links between defoliant exposure and their or their family members’ medical conditions. The early support of scientist John Evans (an important participant in later events) confirmed those links. However, it wasn’t inevitable that these connections would result in the formation of an organisation in Victoria or, for that matter, elsewhere at this time. The knowledge that other individuals and families were experiencing difficulty was undoubtedly critical.

Szapiel was soon after quoted as saying that the new organisation had its origins in the inactivity of the RSL but, even though developments might have followed a different path if Keys and the National Executive, or even Bruce Ruxton, the Victorian RSL President, had been more supportive at this pre-Christmas stage, there were, as argued above, more factors in play than the attitude of the RSL. The remarks about the RSL by both Szapiel and McMinn in this initial period are significant, though, because they point to their deep disappointment in Keys and

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VVA HISTORY DRAFTS

PART 4 EARLY STEPS IN NSW and VICTORIA

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KEL ROBERTSON

the National Executive (who might have been expected to support Vietnam veterans' request for investigation of the effects of herbicide exposure, notwithstanding their obligation to the broader veteran community). This disappointment was doubtless greater for Szapiel who had thought, earlier in the year, that the RSL believed there to be a link between defoliant exposure and his illnesses; he'd believed, too, that the organization was going to offer him "every support". The rapid morphing of Keys' approach from firm support on 14 December ("There now appears to be more to this than meets the eye ... and something more specific should be done about it by the Government") to a 'watch and wait' approach on 18 December ("If a connection with Agent Orange was established, the RSL would use that evidence to put a case to the Department of Veterans Affairs), doubtless magnified this disillusionment.

The next evidence of Victorian developments was the inclusion of a contact address, indicating some level of local organisation, in a 16 January 1980 notice in east coast newspapers. This advertisement asked people in Victoria, NSW and Queensland who'd been affected by servicemen's chemical exposure in Vietnam to contact the relevant State-based element of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association.

Following that, the first public meeting of Victorian veterans took place at Anzac House on 2 February 1980, apparently at the invitation of Victorian RSL President Bruce Ruxton, who *appeared* to be more supportive of the Action Association than his Federal counterpart. This meeting was reported as being attended by more than 200 veterans and their wives but no clear or detailed account of what took place has been discovered by the author. An *intention* to ratify a constitution and to decide on a strategy was reported, but any useful detail on outcomes was neither included in the Tasmanian accounts (which focussed on John Evans' announcement that 86 million litres of defoliant had been used in Vietnam) nor included in the only Melbourne account (which focussed on a conditional statement of support from Bruce Ruxton and on positive responses from an Action Association spokesman). Despite the over-excited response of the Association spokesman – excused, perhaps, by the fact that Ruxton endorsed the payment of compensation "if there was any possibility that Agent Orange had caused birth defects" – it's likely that a Victorian organisation was formally established, with office bearers elected or appointed, and with a constitution at least foreshadowed.

By the time the first known edition of "Action", the newsletter of the Victorian Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Action Association, was distributed a couple of months later, Garry Hamilton was State President, a major social event had been held, and veterans Tim Hirland and Dirk Van Neuren – both trained social workers – were providing (unspecified) welfare assistance via an "action line" staffed by Billie Mannion.

NSW Events

According to the journalists Dux and Young, NSW veteran Jim Wares saw the same 14 December 1979 article on Szapiel in The Australian that had resulted in McMinn being motivated to 'go public'. Wares, they said, had a suspicion that herbicide exposure was responsible for his young son's deformed hand and, on seeing the Szapiel story, called The Australian for further information. An article on Wares and his son, accompanied by an extraordinarily touching photo, ap-

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VVA HISTORY DRAFTS

PART 4 EARLY STEPS IN NSW and VICTORIA

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KEL ROBERTSON

peared on 17 December. Appearances on TV shows of various sorts followed, as did further newspaper articles. The initial article which, as before, personalised the issue of herbicide harms, in this case did something more significant; it brought the issue of birth defects among veterans' children to centre stage. Wares conceded, in words that would later be repeatedly quoted: "When I was called up and ordered to go to Vietnam, I wasn't keen on it, but I went anyway. If as a result of that, people like me have deformed kids, it's up to the Government to do something."

While appearing in the media to draw attention to the plight of veterans' children with birth defects, Wares was apparently being contacted by veterans and others concerned about the health impact of herbicide exposure. Bob Gibson, later to be a key figure in the NSW Branch of the Association, was the subject of a story in the Sydney Daily Telegraph on 24 December 1979 in which he recalled spraying Agent Orange and in which he detailed the rashes on his head and upper body. At about the same time, Gary Adams was interviewed (details not known) about the failure of the Repatriation Commission to identify the cause of rashes he'd suffered for the previous decade.

On 26 December, the day before the inaugural NSW veterans meeting, the focus was back on Wares in The Australian and on moves to establish an organisation in NSW. Wares stated that 30 veterans had contacted him in the previous week. He outlined a broad range of health problems brought to his attention, mentioned the groin rash that seemed to be the common veteran factor and referred to a "frightening" incidence of miscarriages among wives. (These details, along with the information which Wares said was supplied by wives – details of their husbands' rages and their children's deformities - enabled other affected families to at last rationalise their circumstances and identify with others in similar circumstances.) Wares stated that veterans would be asked to complete a survey so that detailed information could be supplied to the Government, with the aim of having a CSIRO committee undertake an investigation.

The initial NSW meeting took place at Castle Hill the next day, seemingly premised on the undisputed assumption that the establishment of an organisation was necessary. The meeting was attended by 9 veterans, 4 wives, and one other person. Attendees introduced themselves and explained their family circumstances. Discussion followed on the name and aims of an Association, necessary research, the identities of people who might aid the cause, and whether an RSL Sub-branch could provide legal and financial assistance.

The aims that were decided on went beyond finding out about the use and after-effects of wartime herbicides, and beyond the securing of compensation for exposed veterans, their wives and their children. They included investigation of the health of all Vietnam veterans and of the benefits available to them and their children. They further included stopping the use of the relevant chemicals in Australia while an investigation of the employment and impact of those chemicals was carried out.

The meeting had an eye to the steps needed to establish itself as a legal entity and noted that organisations were being established by McMinn in Melbourne and by John Harper in Brisbane. Affiliation with other State organisations (and with any New Zealand organisation) was discussed, as was the limiting of interactions with the media (until such time as a committee was elected and could ensure that proposed contacts were to the advantage of the Association). The appointment

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VVA HISTORY DRAFTS

PART 4 EARLY STEPS IN NSW and VICTORIA

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KEL ROBERTSON

or election of Committee members was postponed until the next meeting, to be held some time after Wares' proposed attendance at a gathering in Melbourne (presumably the inter-state one of 4 January at Szapiel's home).

On 3 January 1980, The Australian reported on Wares' NSW data gathering exercise, noting that child deformities in a group of 50 veterans appeared to be above the national rate. In the same paper, a few days later, Wares responded to the call by Veterans Affairs Minister Evan Adermann for veterans to promptly lodge claims. Wares remarked that the (now) 70 veterans in the NSW group hadn't previously been familiar with Agent Orange (implying that it would take some time for their claims to be prepared and flow through the system). He added that the group was "putting together the facts and figures that the Repatriation Commission should have put together years ago." On 8 January, both Wares and Gibson were quoted in a catchup article in The Age.

Wares, by himself, attended the small 10 January meeting in Melbourne (referred to in part 3) at which (or on the periphery of which) national positions were, it seemed, apportioned.

When, exactly, the next NSW meeting was held, and office bearers were elected or co-opted is unclear. However, an undated progress report to members of the Queensland Branch (with content indicating that it was written in February 1980) refers to a NSW meeting of 30 January. It may be that this was the gathering at which a committee was formed and officials were either elected or appointed, noting that the influential Queensland lawyer, Bill McMillan, wrote to Wares as President of the NSW Branch on 1 February 1980 and to Adams as Secretary of the NSW Branch on 7 February.

Note: Only a handful of Association records from January and February 1980 are present in the VVAA Papers at the Australian War Memorial. As a consequence, it's necessary to rely on newspaper reports to track developments. Some newspapers, like The Australian, reported frequently on related events and provide important clues on the development of State Branches. Other newspapers, like the Sydney Morning Herald, took little or no notice of local developments. Newspaper reports nonetheless remain the most reliable source of information on the very earliest state and territory-based events.

The next article in this series will attempt to chart early events in other States and Territories.

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. The aim of "VVAA History Drafts" is to inform readers about progress made with the Association's history and encourage people have who have extra information to contact the writer. Readers who have additional information about matters mentioned in this article or who would like a copy of the article with sources cited, can contact Kel at vyhistory99@gmail.com. Readers who wish to take issue with the content of this article are encouraged to first view the extra material and notes on sources contained in the version available from Kel.

OUR VETERANS

Colonel Francis Adrian Roberts MG OAM (Rtd)

Adrian's Story

<https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/stories-service/veterans-stories/adrian-roberts-story>

Adrian Roberts was born at Midland Junction in Western Australia on 11th October 1939, the eldest child in a large family. When Adrian was young, his father was in Europe serving as an RAAF navigator and bomb aimer. He returned to his young son a 'total stranger' but over the years he had a strong influence on Adrian, instilling in him a strong ethos of service.



*Pic: Francis Adrian Roberts
MG OAM*

In 1959 Adrian joined the Citizen Military Forces, serving in the Light Horse. At the same time he was studying at Teachers' College. Although he had begun working as a teacher, and having recently married, in 1962 Adrian was selected to attend Officer Cadet School at Portsea and chose to devote himself to Army life. He later remembered his time at Portsea as both 'the hardest year of my life' and the 'happiest of my memories'.

As a Second Lieutenant, Adrian continued his training in the Armoured Corps. By the mid-1960s he and his wife, Gillian, had two children. In 1965 he was posted to the newly raised 1 APC (Armoured Personnel Carrier) Squadron, beginning another period of intense training before being posted to Vietnam in April 1966.

Among historians of the Vietnam War, Adrian is perhaps best known for his courage and leadership during the Battle of Long Tan, for which he received a Mention in Dispatches, but his service during that conflict encompassed far more. He went on to finish his first tour with the 3rd Cavalry Regiment and in 1971 returned to Vietnam as a member of the highly respected and much decorated Australian Army Training Team Vietnam, serving with the 1 ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) Armoured Brigade in the northern part of South Vietnam before joining US Special Forces in training Cambodian troops.

Adrian returned to Australia, and Portsea in April 1972, this time to work as an instructor for 'three wonderful years'. He remained in the Army for the next sixteen years, serving on a range of postings, including stints at Staff College in England, a period in the Office of the Chief of General Staff and further time in the Armoured Corps. In 1980 he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and two years later took command of the Army's Armoured Centre. By 1984 Adrian had been promoted again, to Colonel. He left the Army in 1988 to return to teaching, only to find the profession much changed from that which he had known in the early 1960s. Nevertheless he found that teaching gave him 'a real sense of achievement' and over the years he has taken great pleasure in meeting those who he taught in schools or in the Army and hearing of their achievements. That, he said, 'would be the most rewarding part of my working life, whether army or civilian.'

Adrian, to borrow his own phrase, now lives in 'quiet retirement.'

<https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/stories-service/veterans-stories/adrian-roberts-story>

Vietnam War Service

Unit Name	Start Date	End Date
1st Armoured Personnel Carrier Squadron	30 Apr 1966	15 Jan 1967
A Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment	16 Jan 1967	03 Mar 1967
Australian Army Training Team Vietnam	28 Apr 1971	19 Apr 1972

Sadly, Adrian Roberts passed away on December 29 2021

OUR VETERANS—AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

CONGRATULATIONS MALCOLM JAMES CASH OAM

Malcolm was born on the 14th February 1945 in Sydney during the war while his Father, Keith, was in the Air force. His Mother's name was Stella Cash nee Gearing from Mathinna and Launceston.

Malcolm's Wife is Ann, nee Death, from Fingal and their Boys are David, Adrian and Bradley.

Malcolm attended school at Mowbray Heights Primary School, Mathinna Modern School, Queechy High School and Launceston Technical College.

Malcolm probably gets his charitable nature from his parents who seemed to be always doing something for others. His mother played football with 7LA in 1937 and vigaro for Tasmania qualifying her to organise a ladies football team and vigaro team at Mathinna in the 60s. Both parents were church leaders.



Malcolm James CASH OAM.

Pic: VVAA-TAS

Malcolm was a Prefect at High School and now an organiser of the School Reunions 60 years on. At Queechy, Malcolm rose to the rank of Sergeant in the Air Cadets which made things easy while doing National Service training. The boxing he did at the Mathinna Youth Club and with his brothers helped also.

From the first year at the Railway, Malcolm joined the Railway Welfare Committee, called the Railway Institute. Malcolm has taken on the jobs that demanded the highest dedication to helping Railway workers and their families for over 59 years. At the time when the Institute included members in South Australia, Malcolm was President over all. Malcolm is a life member and remains the General Secretary of the Tasmanian Railways Institute Inc. Malcolm has the responsibility of overseeing monthly sporting and social activities for over 300 families. He also organises the maintenance of 7 Railway Institute holiday homes, even doing most of the work himself. The fully furnished houses are rented to members for \$60 per night. Even interstate Railway Institute members have reciprocal rights with each other's holiday homes. Ann and Malcolm do the bookings. Malcolm was made "Life Member" of the "Tasmanian Railways Institute" and the "Australian National Railway Institute"

When Malcolm's 3 boys went to the Mowbray Heights Primary school, Malcolm became active in the "Parents and Friends Association" so intensely that he was awarded Life Membership.

Also at that time Malcolm ran the "Mowbray Little Athletics", building equipment, scheduling training and coaching athletes.

When the boys were at High School, Malcolm took on President of the P & F there and even taught simple surveying as an elective. He also played a large role in a school project competing against other schools in manufacturing and selling an item. The group won first prize with the manufacture of a Tasmania shaped wooden clock and sold over a hundred at a good profit for its shareholders.

From 1991, Malcolm has been closely involved in the Newnham Neighbourhood Watch, being the Area Co-ordinator for a few years and Secretary for the remainder to this day.

On retirement, Malcolm joined the "Veterans Support Group" mowing lawns and doing home maintenance for elderly veterans and widows. This lead to being a member of the Vietnam Veterans Association, from Sub Branch committee person, to the State Secretary. Because of his

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OUR VETERANS—AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

Continued from page 26

MALCOLM JAMES CASH OAM

knowledge in management and practical skills, Malcolm was elected to manage the 5 bedroom Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bush Retreat, where veterans and their families take “time-out”. Malcolm is a “Life Member” of both, the Vietnam Veterans Launceston Sub Branch and the Tasmania State Branch.

For the years 1997 and 1998, Malcolm was a member of the North Launceston Football Club Board holding the Membership portfolio, writing their Newsletter and working as barman for events and game day. From this experience, he has volunteered behind the bar at the Launceston RSL ever since.

Also on retirement, Malcolm took up golf and was soon running the Tasmanian Taxi Golf Club through to running the Australian Championships. Malcolm is a “Life Member” of the Tasmanian Taxi Golf Club and the Australian Taxi Golf Club.

In closing, Malcolm always advises that, without his Wife Ann’s contributions, he would not be able to carry out half of his service to Veterans and the Community.

South Coast Register

JANUARY 26 2022

Ray Pearson's OAM

Ray Pearson's passion to help widows in the ex-servicemen's community remains high.

The Basin View resident's passion and drive see him getting an OAM for service to veterans and their families as part of the Australia Day honours list.

His work with Legacy, helping widows and their families, is deserving of an award.

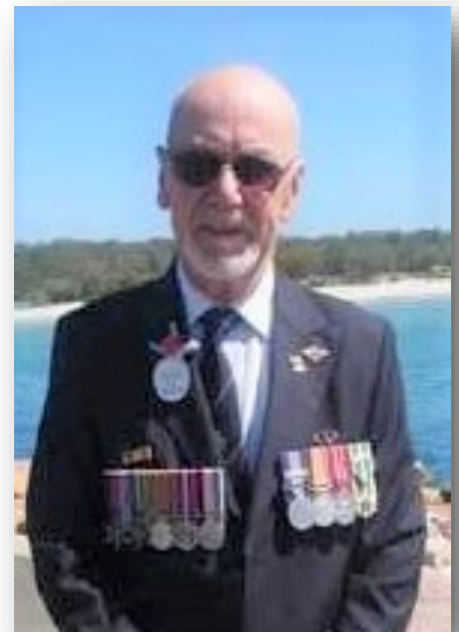
He has been part of Legacy in the Nowra area and greater South Coast for 20 years.

"I still get a buzz when a widow calls me and says the Department of Veteran Affairs has granted her a pension," he said.

"I hope I don't ever lose that enthusiasm."

Respected Shoalhaven resident Rod Simpson encouraged Mr Pearson to get involved with the local community.

Mr Pearson was not always keen to link with groups like Legacy or the Returned Servicemen's League [RSL].



Raymond Pearson OAM

Continued page 28

OUR VETERANS—AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

Continued from page 27

South Coast Register

From 1971, when he came back from Vietnam, until 2001, Mr Pearson felt society had let him and many other veterans down.

He alienated himself from the ex-servicemen's community.

His attitude changed when he joined the Vietnam Veterans Association Jervis Bay Sub Branch and found them to "be a great bunch of blokes".

He was the association's president, from 2005-2007.

"All that somehow [his community involvement] helped heal the wounds," Mr Pearson said.

"I thought I could sit here at home or get out there and do something."

His current role with Legacy, meanwhile, sees him looking after the welfare of a group of young widows and their children.

Mr Pearson gets "great joy" from helping them get school uniforms, laptops and pocket money.

He laughed when he first received a call about the award.

"The first time I started to hear about all this was roughly in October and I thought it was a crank call - I really did," he said.

"The lady on the line said 'I assure you this is not a crank call'.

"I am still at a loss regarding who nominated me."

He does suspect his wife Denise may have played a role in his nomination.

Mr Pearson is honoured and thankful to receive the award.

His list of achievements includes:

- Legacy Club of Wollongong and South Coast Inc Immediate Past President, since 2020. President, 2018-2020. Vice President, 2016-2017.
- Member, National Conference Organising Committee, 2017.
- Nowra Legacy Group Chair, 2009-2013. Secretary, 2014-2017, and 2008. Sergeant at Arms and Junior Vice Chairman, 2003-2006.
- Special Needs Dependent Coordinator, South Eastern Region of NSW, 2005-2007. Welfare Officer, since 2004.
- Legatee, since 2002.
- Huskisson RSL Sub Branch, Returned and Services League of Australia Welfare Officer, since 2017.



Ray & wife Denise

Memories of my hero dad

He was infuriating but he cared for his patients like his troops



ANDREW MILLER

I coast down Alma Street, Fremantle, past the semi-retired hospital, wind the window down, and the fragrance of the old man hits me in the face: Old Spice and Benson & Hedges arm-wrestling with aniseed Stimorol chewing gum.

We would drive there on a Sunday afternoon when I was 10 years old in the two-litre manual pop-top Kombi van, duck in through the kids' ward, past the aquarium, through a series of heavy doors and neon lino hallways, with a zoo of sleeping trolleys and odd machines, then up the stifling stairs.

Sometimes he would take me to the creaking jarrah-panelled Blue Room, where doctors used to grab a meal while debating cryptic cases, and say "back in a minute", only to disappear until after dark.

He would bounce back, and give me a run-down of the operations that would be done tomorrow as we made our way home.

I remember the buzz of the VW boxer engine and lighting his cigarette for him — it was the 70s — and I recall feeling the full focus of a distracted man.

We drove past the Burt Street Artillery Barracks towards Canning Highway. Flash back to snare drums rattling, soldiers marching out saluting, my father static at the front, white painted rocks framing the parade ground.

He went away to Vietnam in 1970, as the aproned lady across the road from us in Como learnt when she barged in, crying.

She knew the army doctor lived there, but he was off trying to fix some frightened boy in another world.

Her builder had dropped a plate glass window on his leg, severing the artery, and he was bleeding out in suburbia while his mates were stepping on

landmines in mud near the First Australian Field Hospital at Vung Tau.

The hometown roles of those who serve are not filled by anyone else while they are gone; they're just gaps, missed opportunities.

Even today's sci-fi video phones can't put you in two places at once.

My mother had three young kids to care for; the honours for domesticity back then, as now, were all implied. No medals for those who stayed at home, just work.

Then eventually it was "over" and suddenly someone with opinions and damage came back to the house; if they came back.

There are varying degrees of trauma, none easily measured, but for veterans it is often undiagnosed, untreated and, after that war, exacerbated by a nation that did not welcome them home — "There were no

V-Day heroes in 1973". The only time Dad would be drawn into even a brief rant was when he saw politician moths flocking to the peri-dawn ANZAC ceremony lights on the TV. Vietnam vets waited 14 years after the end of the war before taking part in significant numbers in the march. Many others spent the rest of their lives keeping their service a secret.

He didn't want anything from Anzac Day, he said he never got shot at, and he resented the way the government treated those who did.

He had no shortage of medal-ware himself, worn with brothers-in-arms at bittersweet mess-hall dinners where moist-eyed officers drank to the memory of impossibly young men whom they saw die, unsure for why.

Suddenly we were older and I saw a spit-polished Colonel Ian Charles Miller attend

Government House in the heat-haze of 1985 to receive his "Medal of the Order of Australia, Military division, Army, for service as Director of Medical Services, 5th Military District".

On a visit to the incredible Australian War Memorial in Canberra in 2015, down past the real helicopter in the Vietnam display, I was surprised to see him again — in black and white up on the wall thus:

"At the dust-off at Vung Tau in 1970, standing over a young patient with blast wounds, wet gauze over their eyes under the oxygen mask, supine as the medics fire up the X-Ray machine, nurse in the foreground; intravenous fluids, stethoscopes and pressure bags ready for rapid resuscitation on the rail. If low on O-negative they would take fresh hot blood from anyone with a compatible dog-tag and pump it in fast. War is all about blood. The army doctor's protruding tongue-tip is the signature that this injured soldier has the full focus of a distracted man."

Dad was sent to boarding school in Edinburgh at the age of five and saw his parents a handful of times again before he was 18, when his POW father was liberated from the Japanese.

He cared for his patients as if they were his troops; his last calculated clinical decision was choosing not to receive another blood transfusion. His fighting days were done.

He could be difficult, argumentative, infuriating and proud. And tender.

If this sounds a bit like a love letter, maybe it should, maybe it is.

Dr Andrew Miller is president of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists and past president & board director AMA WA. His views are not those of any particular organisation.



Dr Ian Miller at the field hospital dust-off, triage and operating theatre.



If low on O-negative they would take fresh hot blood from anyone with a compatible dog-tag and pump it in fast. War is all about blood.

MORE OPINION
PAGE 37

POEM

A LONG POEM WORTH READING

He was getting old and paunchy
And his hair was falling fast,
And he sat around the Legion,
Telling stories of the past

Of a war that he once fought in
And the deeds that he had done,
In his exploits with his buddies;
They were heroes, every one.

And 'tho sometimes to his neighbors
His tales became a joke,
All his buddies listened quietly
For they knew where of he spoke.

But we'll hear his tales no longer,
For ol' Joe has passed away,
And the world's a little poorer
For a Veteran died today.

He won't be mourned by many,
Just his children and his wife.
For he lived an ordinary,
Very quiet sort of life.

He held a job and raised a family,
Going quietly on his way;
And the world won't note his passing,
'Tho a Veteran died today.

When politicians leave this earth,
Their bodies lie in state,
While thousands note their passing,
And proclaim that they were great.

Papers tell of their life stories
From the time that they were young,
But the passing of a Veteran
Goes unnoticed, and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution
To the welfare of our land,
Some jerk who breaks his promise
And cons his fellow man?

Or the ordinary fellow
Who in times of war and strife,
Goes off to serve his country
And offers up his life?

The politician's stipend
And the style in which he lives,
Are often disproportionate,
To the service that he gives.

While the ordinary Veteran,
Who offered up his all,
Is paid off with a medal
And perhaps a pension, small.

It is not the politicians
With their compromise and ploys,
Who won for us the freedom
That our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger,
With your enemies at hand,
Would you really want some cop-out,
With his ever-waffling stand?

Or would you want a Veteran
His home, his country, his kin,
Just a common Veteran,
Who would fight until the end.

He was just a common Veteran,
And his ranks are growing thin,
But his presence should remind us
We may need his likes again.

For when countries are in conflict,
We find the Veteran's part,
Is to clean up all the troubles
That the politicians start.

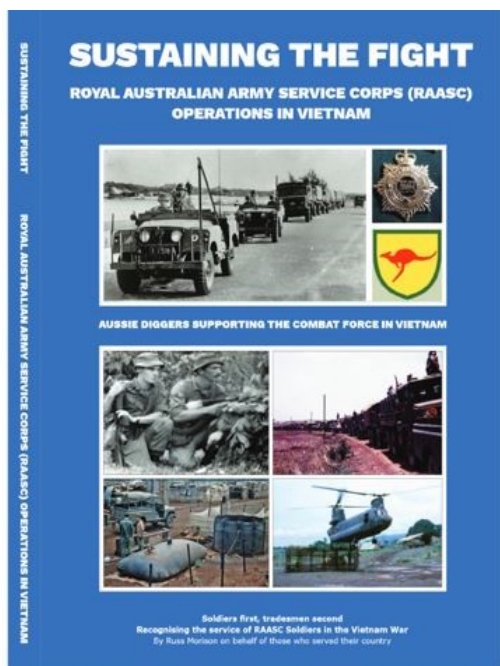
If we cannot do him honor
While he's here to hear the praise,
Then at least let's give him homage
At the ending of his days.

Perhaps just a simple headline
In the paper that might say:
"OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING,
A VETERAN DIED TODAY."

Author 'Unknown'

BOOKS

SUSTAINING THE FIGHT



SUSTAINING THE FIGHT-RAASC OPERATIONS IN VIETNAM

This book reflects the work of the Royal Australian Army Service Corps (RAASC) Companies and those 4000+ unit members who served in the Vietnam conflict-who delivered the much-needed ammunition, water, fuel and food etc that allowed our combat troops to pacify Phuoc Tuy province. Includes over 200 photos of each subunit in the 1st Australian Task Force and the Australian Logistic Support Group in Vung Tau.

Even though intelligence reports indicated the Viet Cong D445 were very active in the province, our men sustained the resupply effort as our combat force expanded its outreach into controlling what was once the enemy's territory.

Many a combat unit digger was very pleased to see that our men had their back, and the book includes some patrol reports where our logistic personnel deployed to replace infantry units, and other personal stories reflect stories not previously told of life as an RAASC soldier on active service in a war zone. For the Veteran and non-veteran alike, a great read, most importantly remembering those who served, and 240 pages in full colour.

The author, Russ Morrison, served with 25 Sup Pl in Vietnam from May69-Apr70. and spent two thirds of his career in the regular Army, and the remainder as a ex-military public servant with RAAF and Navy.



Peas, Beans and Bullets was published in 2019 and comprised 120 pages of full colour material including photos, and sold for \$30 plus postage.

Sustaining the Combat Force-RAASC Operations in Vietnam was published post Covid 2021 and comprises 240 pages including over 200 photos, RAASC Corps units, full colour and an article on the Australian Army Training Team of whom some of our members were a part and also includes a nominal roll of all senior NCO-WO-OFFR posted to RAASC Corps units.

QTY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	TOTAL
1	Sustaining the Fight-RAASC Operations in Vietnam	\$39.00	\$39.00
			0.00

Email order to dabblers2@hotmail.com and pay by using Electronic Funds Transfer.

Account: R. Morrison, Defence Bank
BSB: 833205 Account: 2048 9342

Please enter your name as the Reference so you can be identified.

Subtotal	39.00
Sales Tax	0.00
Shipping & Handling	\$13.00
Total Due	\$52.00

Comments or special instructions:

Thank you for showing interest in this, my second self published book. Please credit the above account and email me your name and address and I will send the book promptly to the address you nominate.

I am keen on producing a third edition which fills the gaps in our RAASC service in South Vietnam in due course and depending on the level of interest. I am keen to hear from you further if you have photos and stories of your deployment that are not covered in this latest book including AFV Saigon.

I don't suppose you have any Corps journal type material that reflects the period after we deployed ie late 70 onwards. I am trying to get something together for Book 3.

Russ (Canberra ACT)

A SENSE OF HUMOUR REQUIRED...

Can't say UK Civil Servants have entirely lost their sense of humor:

"Lt. Colonel Robert Maclaren retired from the British Army in 2001 after a long fulfilling career. On the day that he retired he received a letter from the Personnel Department of the Ministry of Defence setting out details of his pension and, in particular, the tax-free 'lump sum' award, (based upon completed years of service), that he would receive in addition to his monthly pension.

The letter read,

"Dear Lt. Colonel Maclaren,

We write to confirm that you retired from the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards on 1st March 2001 at the rank of Lt Colonel, having been commissioned into the British Army at Edinburgh Castle as a 2nd Lieutenant on 1st February 1366. Accordingly your lump sum payment, based on years served, has been calculated as £68,500. You will receive a cheque for this amount in due course.

Yours sincerely,
Army Paymaster"

Col Maclaren replied;

"Dear Paymaster,

Thank you for your recent letter confirming that I served as an officer in the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards between 1st February 1366 and 1st March 2001 – a total period of 635 years and 1 month. I note however that you have calculated my lump sum to be £68, 500, which seems to be considerably less than it should be bearing in mind my length of service since I received my commission from King Edward III.

By my calculation, allowing for interest payments and currency fluctuations, my lump sum should actually be £6, 427, 586, 619. 47p.

I look forward to receiving a cheque for this amount in due course.

Yours sincerely,
Robert Maclaren (Lt Col Retd)"

A month passed by and then in early April, a stout manilla envelope from the Ministry of Defence in Edinburgh dropped through Col Maclaren's letter box, it read:

"Dear Lt Colonel Maclaren,

We have reviewed the circumstances of your case as outlined in your recent letter to us dated 8th March inst. We do indeed confirm that you were commissioned into the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards by King Edward III at Edinburgh Castle on 1st February 1366, and that you served continuously for the following 635 years and 1 month. We have re-calculated your pension and have pleasure in confirming that the lump sum payment due to you is indeed £6, 427, 586, 619. 47p.

However,

We also note that according to our records you are the only surviving officer who had command responsibility during the following campaigns and battles; The Wars of the Roses 1455 -1485 (Including the battles of Bosworth Field, Barnet and Towton) The Civil War 1642 -1651 (Including the battles Edge Hill, Naseby and the conquest of Ireland) The Napoleonic War 1803 – 1815 (including the battle of Waterloo and the Peninsular War) The Crimean War (1853 – 1856)

Continued page 33

A SENSE OF HUMOUR REQUIRED...

Continued from page 32

(including the battle of Sevastopol and the Charge of the Light Brigade) The Boer War (1899 - 1902).

We would therefore wish to know what happened to the following, which do not appear to have been returned to Stores by you on completion of operations:

9765 Cannon

26,785 Swords

12,889 Pikes

127,345 Rifles (with bayonets)

28,987 horses (fully kitted)

Plus three complete marching bands with instruments and banners.

WE have calculated the total cost of these items and they amount to £6,427,518.119.47p. We have therefore subtracted this sum from your lump sum, leaving a residual amount of £68,500, for which you will receive a cheque in due course.

Yours sincerely”

VALE

COLONEL FRANCIS ADRIAN ROBERTS MG OAM (RTD)

From: TPI Federation

Sent: Wednesday, 29 December 2021 1:33 PM

Subject: Passing of a Long Tan Veteran

It is with deep regret that I advise that the ACT TPI Association past President and Federation Directors, Colonel Francis Adrian Roberts MG OAM (Rtd), passed away this morning at Fred Ward Gardens, Curtin.

Adrian was the ACT TPI Association Vice President from 2000-2004 and President from 2005-2007 of our Association. He was also the Federation Director for the ACT TPI Association from 2005-2007. He was awarded a Life Membership in 2004.

Adrian's War Service is fairly well known, especially as a Long Tan Veteran, but it is also reflected on the DVA Anzac Portal <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/stories-service/veterans-stories/adrian-roberts-story>. In July 2021 Adrian recorded his recollections of the Long Tan Attack in 3 parts:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSwaPiLkv-A>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlpNzBiQGxE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtTAkVc0gKQ>

VALE



*It is with great sadness we announce the passing of
3793565 Graham Francis SHARD
on 8th November 2021*

*Graham served in Vietnam with
Headquarters, 1st Australian Task Force
1/4/1970 to 31/3/1971*

*We extend our deepest sympathies to family,
veterans and friends of the late
Graham Francis SHARD.*

'MAY HE REST IN PEACE'



VALE

James Patrick (Paddy) Duffey

14 April 1945 – 16 January 2022

Dearly loved husband of Helen (dec). Much loved father to Ben and Kirsty. Grandfather to Abigail, Chloe and Sofia.

Passed away on the January the 14th 2022

Now peacefully resting.

Esteemed and respected

Member of the Retired Police Association of Tasmania

The funeral was held on 24 January 2022 at the Mornington Funeral Home

Vietnam War Service

Veteran Details

Name	DUFFEY, James Patrick
Service	Australian Army
Service Number	6708281
Date of Birth	14 Apr 1945
Place of Birth	TOOWOOMBA QLD AUSTRALIA
Rank	Private
National Service	Yes
Corps	Royal Australian Infantry Corps
Honours	None for display

Unit History

Unit Name	Start Date	End Date
5th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment	06 May 1966	03 Jul 1966

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 March to 7 March 2022

Capital Country Holiday Park

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

Email: bookings@capitalcountryholidaypark.com.au

Web: www.capitalcountryholidaypark.com.au

2022 REUNION PROGRAM

Thursday 3 March 2022

1400 Onwards. Arrival at Capital Country Holiday Park (CCHP) for welcome and registration.

1800 Onwards: Evening BBQ at the Mess Tent - CCHP

Friday 4 March 2022

Breakfast own arrangements.

1030 HQ1ATF Association Members meeting at Mess Tent - CCHP.

1300 Coach tour of Canberra visiting some of the major sites, including: Australian War Memorial, National Museum of Australia, Parliament House, National Gallery of Australia and the National Portrait Gallery.

1800 Group dinner

Saturday 5 March 2022

Breakfast own arrangements

0930 A coach will depart CCHP for the Canberra Outlet Centre (Fyshwick) shopping mall (canberraoutletcentre.com.au) returning to CCHP about 12 noon. Alternately you may wish to further explore the Canberra region. Or enjoy a few drinks and lunch with mates at CCHP. Lunch, own arrangements.

1515 A busy afternoon and evening. Gentlemen, medals please. Coach transfer to Duntroon House, Royal Military College for afternoon tea hosted by the PMC.

1630 Travel onto Anzac Parade for our Commemorative Service at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Our own Padre, Arthur Fry, from Caloundra will again officiate.

1730 Continue by coach to Old Parliament House (Museum of Australian Democracy) for cocktails and our bi-annual Commemorative Dinner. Music by the RMC Military Band.

Continued page 36

Sunday 6 March 2022

Breakfast own arrangements

At leisure until 1700.

1700 Cocktails at Mess Tent CCHP.

1800 Informal dinner (no ties, no medals) at Mess Tent CCHP. Kel and Mel will entertain us again.

Monday 7 March 2022

From 0800 Farewell “self serve” BBQ breakfast at Mess Tent CCHP

The participant cost will include all meals as indicated above, wine and beer where possible with dinners, touring and transport as indicated. The participant cost is \$200 for members and \$200 for partners, plus an additional \$40 for member’s membership fee for the period, October 2020 to September 2022. For other family members and friends, the reunion cost is \$240 per person. Children’s prices on request.

To obtain our special rates when making reservations at the Capital Country Holiday Park (CCHP), please quote “HQ1ATF Reunion October 2022”.

DIRECTIONS TO CAPITAL COUNTRY HOLIDAY PARK.

47 Bidges Road, SUTTON NSW 2620

Capital Country Holiday Park is located just off the Federal Highway, on the ACT border. Canberra Airport is some 8 KM from the Holiday Park. There are taxi’s and mini buses available to get you to the Holiday Park. If driving to CCHP, take the Federal Highway to the Eaglehawk turnoff and follow the Federal Highway Service Road about two KM until you reach Bidges Road – the Holiday Park is 200 metres up this road on your left side. (NOTE: if you drive to Eaglehawk Holiday Park nearby, you have the WRONG place).

Now if you are a little soft and need a hotel, the IBIS STYLES Eaglehawk is two km from the CCHP.

REGISTRATION FORM ON NEX PAGE>>

1ALSG HQ & HQ Coy



Headquarters & Headquarters company
1st Australian Logistic support group (1 ALSG)
to be held from the 20th March 2023 till the 25th March
Broken Hill NSW.

For reunion and accommodation details contact
Tony Brown reunion coordinator
email tr4950@optusnet.com.au or phone 0428852736

REUNIONS



HEADQUARTERS 1ST AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE SOUTH VIETNAM 1966 - 1972

REGISTRATION FORM: REUNION: 3 – 7 March 2022

Surname:			
First Name:			
Address (please include Post-code):			
Preferred name on badge:			
Wife / Partner Name attending			
Any dietary requirements!			
Home Phone:		Mobile	
Email:			
Reunion Cost Members	\$200 per member	\$200	
Reunion Cost Wife / Partner	\$200 per partner		
Reunion Cost Others	\$240 per person		
Membership Fee: November 2020 to October 2022	\$40 per member	\$ 40	
Donation (optional)			
TOTAL			
PAYMENT DETAILS: Cheque payable to:- HQ1ATF ASSOCIATION , and mail to PO Box 328, GLADESVILLE NSW 1675 Or EFT: BSB: 082697 HQ1ATF Association Account: 188667746 Please reference your name			
<u>What do I get for my money?</u> <i>Welcome BBQ., Dinner, Commemorative dinner, Final night dinner, Farewell breakfast, Coach travel, tour of Canberra, Tour to factory outlet shopping centre.</i>			

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO:

John Verhelst, HQ1ATF ASSOCIATION

Post to: PO Box 328, GLADESVILLE, NSW 1675, or

Scan and email to: jeverhelst@gmail.com



21 ENGINEERS SUPPORT TROOP ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS



RESCHEDULED REUNION

29th August to Friday 2nd September 2022

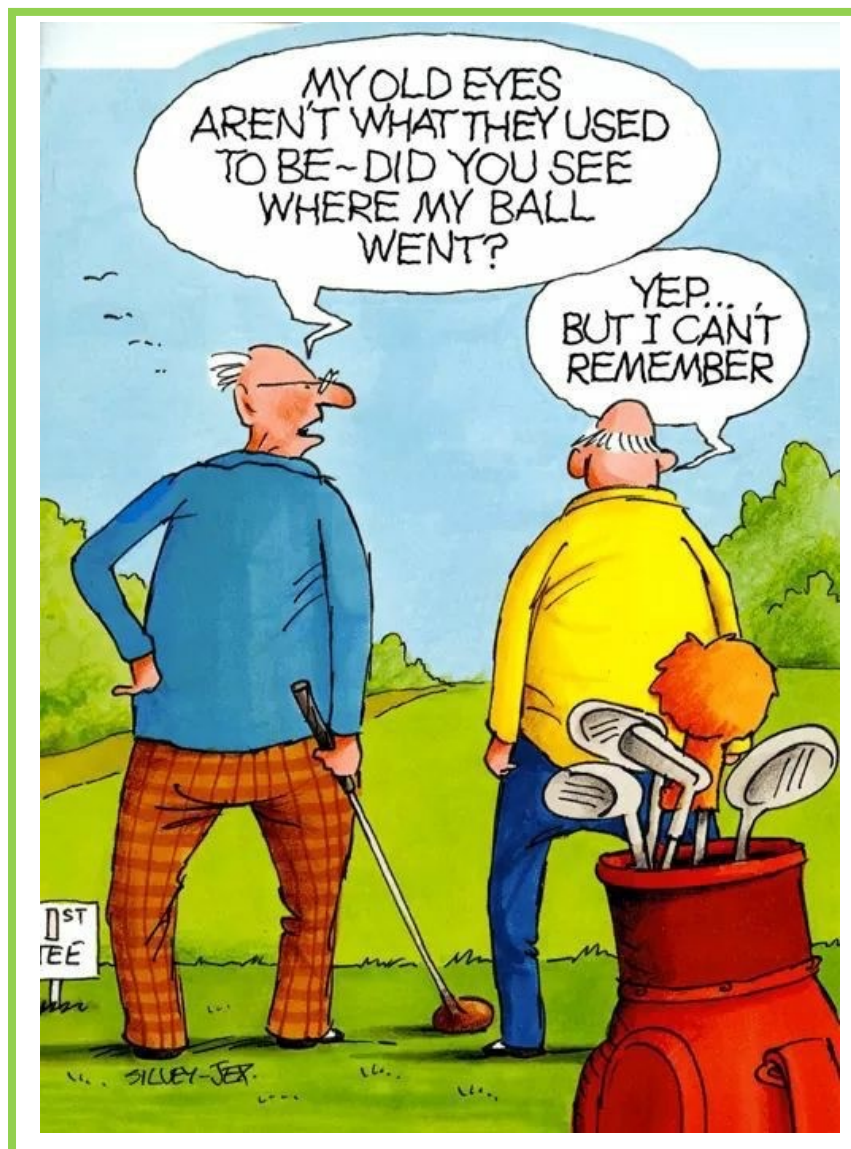
Tuncurry Bowling Club

on the pro-

21 EST Committee

For information
gram contact the

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



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.



OPEN
Veterans & Families
Counselling
ARMS

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

SUPPORTING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

At Open Arms your wellbeing is our business.
We offer free:

confidential counselling for individuals, couples
and families
group programs
transition workshops
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, where possible, 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



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.

As well as demonstrating your high regard for NVVM and its work, Friendship brings you:

- ♥ Free admission on all visits to the museum.
- ♥ 2 free guest passes per year.
- ♥ 10% discount on admission cost for immediate family.
- ♥ 10% discount in NVVM shop & Nui Dat Cafe.
- ♥ Exclusive "Friends" only private viewing & events.
- ♥ Regular newsletters.
- ♥ Discounts for guest lectures, film nights, conference and other special events.
- ♥ Single vote at AGM.

Office Use Only

Membership Number

Payment:

	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year
Individual	\$35 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$65 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$95 <input type="checkbox"/>
Concession	\$25 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$45 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$65 <input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$70 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$130 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$190 <input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate	\$200 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$350 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$500 <input type="checkbox"/>
Life: Aged 60 yrs+			
Individual	\$800 <input type="checkbox"/>	Concession \$600 <input type="checkbox"/>	
Life: Aged under 60 yrs			
Individual	\$1200 <input type="checkbox"/>	Concession \$800 <input type="checkbox"/>	

Direct payments can be made to:
NVVM Ltd Trading Acct
Bendigo Bank BSB 633 000
Account: 149738577

Primary Members Details (please print)

Company name:

Title: Surname

First Name/s:

Address:

State: Postcode:

Email address:
@

Phone:

Signature:

Date:/...../.....

Immediate family in Friend's household.
 (Please provide given name and surname).

.....

.....

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.

Post: Friends of NVVM Association
 PO Box 318
 San Remo VIC 3925

Email: office@vietnamvetsmuseum.org

phone: 03 5956 6400

Website: www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org

25 Veterans Drive, Newhaven, Phillip Island VIC

☐ Cheque ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Card holder's name:

Card number:

Expiry date:/...../.....

Signature:

Date signed:/...../.....