

# Sit Rep

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*Sit Rep Editor- Peter Watson*



PHOTO BY 'PHOTORANGER'

**LAND PURCHASE FOR THE NEW MUSEUM**

**THE METHVENS — FOUNDERS AND VOLUNTEERS**



# NEW LAND ACQUISITION

by Kingsley Munday AM Chairman of the Board



The first step was to get our cornerstone investor, The Federal Government on board with a contribution of \$5m. The second step was to find the right location and acquire the right size land to meet our current and future needs.

To that end we started a process of looking at every block of land of 15 acres or more in size, to see if it fitted our requirements and we had some key tenets:

- It had to be in Bass Coast Shire
- It needs to be on the inbound side of road heading to the Island — this is because tourists don't stop when they are outbound.
- It needs to be at least 15 acres and preferably 20 acres to allow for suitable parking and turning circles for busses and caravans as well as allowing for run off roads into the site off the highway.
- We would consider buying 100—200 acres of farming land if that makes it easier for Council to approve—too much land isn't a problem and it will be cheaper to buy.
- We're dealing with Taxpayers money and so it must be demonstrable value for money.

There isn't a lot of land available on the Island and so we looked at about 14 properties on and off the Island.

An article in the local paper was very beneficial in fleshing out sellers and we were offered to buy 20 acres on the airport site along with a number of other potential sites. In our search we found it amazing that the pricing of land suddenly found a common seemingly elevated level. I guess that's a by-product of short supply in a small close-knit community. A very high consideration for us was the location of our current volunteers who are invaluable to this Museum, and so an Island location became a critical priority. Thus because we wanted to be on the Island, being on the inbound side of the road wasn't so critical. Often in life, time is your friend.

At a critical point late in our deliberations 100 acres of land became available directly opposite the airport and whilst the price was slightly more than we had budgeted, because of the size of the land, its value for money was compelling.

More importantly this large tract of land affords direct exposure off the highway, allows for long shallow run-offs and run-ons to the highway, provides a large expanse of land to build our Museum, provides substantial turning circles and parking for cars, busses and caravans, and allows plenty of space to provide the facilities and amenities we envisage along with back of house visible maintenance and storage.



## MORE FROM KINGSLEY ABOUT THE LAND

The land is bigger than we need so we may sub-lease some of it for farming. Before we finally settled on this block however, we needed to have a high degree of surety that we would be able to obtain approval for our intended use. To that end we engaged Town Planners "Tract Consulting" to review the three blocks of land we were considering as the top three picks from what was available to us. Tract considered all the Town Planning factors and whilst there can be no guarantee, it was their strong recommendation that the 100 acres at Churchill Road was the best option. We have therefore, on Monday 7th October, settled on the property at 24 Churchill Road as can be seen in the images.



I have already been asked what we'll do with the present

site and my answer is let's not get ahead of ourselves. Whilst we have bought the land we still need to raise \$30m to get to the end goal, and so we are only 14% into our journey—we need to stay grounded.

The current Museum will continue to develop over the coming years and in time it will either be retained as a storage or conservation facility or it may be sold, but that decision will only be made when we have the financial option of doing so.

In the meantime we are hoping to place a Hercules transport aeroplane on the new land

to draw more attention to the Museum and we hope to place a large billboard announcing the 'Future location of the National Vietnam Veterans Museum', all with council approval of course.

Throughout this process many people naturally have wanted to know how we've been progressing. Because of the commercial nature of the discussions we've had to play our cards close to our chest so that we didn't commercially disadvantage ourselves.

I am sorry we've not been able to tell everyone everything as we've gone along, but be assured your Board have achieved the best they possibly could from this.

Now that we've checked off stage 2 in our plan we are very focussed of Stage 3—getting money out of the Victorian Government in the next budget.

*Hope you all have a Merry Christmas and may your wishes come true for the New Year.....Kingsley*



## PRESIDENT BOB ELWORTHY AM

### SUMMER REPORT



Hello everyone and thanks for your on-going support of YOUR museum; what an exciting time to be on board. The museum is in a very exciting phase of its history, just as exciting in many ways now as it was when the first part of the museum was finally opened. Great change is in the air, and now more than ever we need a growing band of members to lend their support to the Board, staff and the wonderful band of volunteers. Can I ask all of you to take up the challenge to recruit just one member each? Imagine what a 100% increase in membership would mean! For those of you with membership that expires this year, I look forward to welcoming you back again along with new members in 2020.

Speaking of 2020, the Annual General Meeting of the Museum is set down for 10.00 a.m. on Wednesday 20 May at the museum. You will notice

that the Board has moved the AGM back by a couple of months to ensure that all of the relevant reports are available to members; holding the AGM in February was proving to be too difficult to manage. As a member, you are entitled to attend the AGM and participate in the meeting. More info on the AGM will be sent out in the New Year.

Seems an old boss of mine from my Army days dropped into the museum recently. He gave me a call to say he was mightily impressed and also that the museum staff made sure he didn't leave without a membership form and before buying a picket! Well done team! He also noted that there was no info about the museum on Bribie Island where he lives, so he took a load of stuff with

him, and I immediately got onto the Queensland VVAA President to make sure that the museum profile was lifted.

Through the generosity of the Phillip Island RSL Sub-Branch, the museum now boasts a brilliant Vietnam War era timeline. The timeline provides a great starting point for visitors and informs readers of the key political and military events of Australia's involvement in Vietnam.

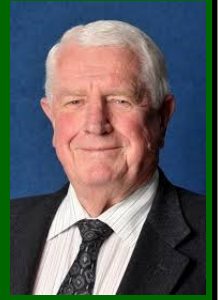


There is always something interesting to learn from the Vietnam War experience. Did you know that service personnel who were born in fifteen countries other than Australia fought under our flag in Vietnam? What stories some of them would have to tell.

They say time flies when you are having fun (and as you get older!), and boy this year has just flown by! May I take this opportunity to wish everybody associated with our wonderful museum a happy and Holy Christmas, and a safe and prosperous New Year.

*Warm Regards, Bob Elworthy*

## MEET BOARD MEMBER—BRIAN NORWOOD



Born in Sydney on 14th November 1941. On my 7th birthday in 1948, my father who was born in UK, very proudly announced to our family that Princess Elizabeth had given birth that day to her first child—Charles—who would one day become King of the British Empire. At that time it didn't mean much to me, but as I got older I used to boast to my friends and school mates that one day they would have a Public Holiday on my birthday. Seventy years later we are still waiting for that event.

When I was four my parents, elder sister and younger brother and sister (twins) moved to the very outer Sydney suburb of Caringbah, quite near the now thriving Cronulla beach area. This was to be closer to my mother's parents who had built a poultry farm there. In those days there was very little in the area, being mostly undeveloped bushland. I well remember that our house was only the second dwelling in a very long gravel street. There wasn't much development around home but we kids thrived on playing in the bush and running the ten minutes on the bushtracks to the bay to swim, catch fish and collect masses of oysters my mother loved so much. We ate really well—my grandfather had a small fishing boat and a seemingly endless supply of fish, he trapped rabbits, there was a regular supply of chicken and

eggs from the poultry farm and we had all sorts of home grown fruit and vegetables, Only problem is that all these years later I still don't want to eat any more plum, apricot or melon and lemon jam.

My early education was at the very small Caringbah Primary School and I was fortunate enough to win a spot at Sydney High School near the Sydney Cricket Ground for my five years of secondary education (but required 5 hours bus, train and tram travel each day to attend). When I successfully completed my Leaving Certificate there I was awarded a Teachers College Scholarship to train as a Primary School Teacher. But I decided I couldn't bear the thought of sitting for another two years in a room for the training, so I opted instead to accept an offer as a clerk in the Commonwealth Public Service, Department of Social Services. I also enrolled in a five year part-time Bachelor of Arts degree course at Sydney University and





## MORE ABOUT BRIAN NORWOOD.

Sport became an increasing part of my life, and my first rugby game was when I joined the Local Cronulla/Caringbah Rugby League club, and eventually I played for St George Rugby League, where I got 5 pounds a match, compared to the 6 pounds a week in the Public Service. I played 50 games in the lower grades with St George.

Being near the beach I also joined the Cronulla Surf Club and am still a member after 60 years, I am classified as a 'Veteran Member', which probably means "unwise to surf at your age!"



My work continued to improve and in 1966 I was offered promotion to the Head Office of Social Services in Canberra. This allowed me to sign a contract with the Canberra Rugby LC, but rugby did not last long for me as during my 10th game I injured my left shoulder badly.

In 1967 I took on a temporary 6 week assignment as Private Sec, for the Minister of Social Services, Hon Ian Sinclair. Amazingly I continued in similar positions for 8 years and saw 6 Prime Ministers come and go.

An opportunity as GM of the Australian Dairy Corporation, then a Federal Government Authority. I became involved in the export and joint marketing and processing facilities in many countries around the world, and was with the ADC until 1987. I have continued to be associated with Agribusiness with such groups as Elders Ltd, as Regional Chair plus a number of overseas companies involved in the food production/ export sectors.

Sadly my wife passed away almost 4 years ago, but my son and daughter spend a lot of time with me at my home on Clyde North, Victoria.

How have I become involved with the NVVM? I am not a Vietnam Veteran, and have never been in the armed forces. My contact with the Museum began when my wife and I met Gary and Joanne Parker when our sons both went to the same schools on Glen Waverley, where we all lived. When Gary and Jo moved to Phillip Island, we were introduced to the Museum when it was in San Remo, and we have a small place on the Island. I was very pleased to provide some assistance to the Museum and in that way met both Board members and some of the Vets. That enabled me to see what a significant role the Museum plays in providing support and comfort to our Veterans. I felt very honoured to be invited to become a member of the Museum Board two years ago and was proud to accept.

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## 2019 LEXUS MELBOURNE CUP

### TOUR NATIONAL SWEEP



The Victorian Racing Club (VRC) organises and holds the Lexus Melbourne Cup Tour. Now in its 17th year. The tour sees the 18-carat gold cup trophy visit various destinations in an effort to unite communities to raise funds for local causes.



Melbourne Cup winner, 1972 and 1980, Johnny Letts holding the 2019 Cup

The Tour visited more than 39 townships in all Australian States and 24 enterprises were given the opportunity of drawing a numbered ball from a barrel representing a barrier draw for this year's Cup. The enterprise with the

winning horse receives \$50,000.

On Sunday October 27, representatives of the VRC, including Johnny Letts, brought the Cup to the Museum and part of the Cup's Regional Tour Promotion.

Barrier 24 was drawn from the barrel by our General Manager, Phil Dressing, during the visit to the Museum.

Unfortunately for us, it was barrier number 23 that won this year, however it was nice to be included in the sweep. Our horse was Magic Wand and was considered a threat paying odds of \$24, but was severely checked ('inconvenienced' according to the Stewards Report) by a French horse from barrier 23.



Miniature cup and Lexus cap displayed at the counter of the Museum

Our race was lost in the first ten metres. Magic Wand finished 10th.

Interestingly, at the Museum we display the barrel from which the Nashos numbers and birth dates were drawn. The barrel is owned by the VRC.

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### FUTURE EVENTS AT NVVM FOR 2020

**Sat 22 Feb— Australian Army Band performs 'Back to Nam Again'**

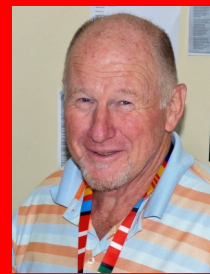
**Sat 4 April— Sisters & Misterys**

**Sat 9 May— Rock Away in May**

**Sat 30 May— The Spooky Men's Chorale**

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## GM PHIL DRESSING'S REPORT



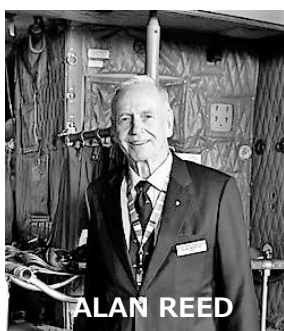
Just over six (6) weeks to Christmas. How the time flies.

**Staff:** Marian Brennan has stepped away from Collections administration. Bev Hodge, who had been assisting Marian has volunteered to assist with the recording of incoming collectables. Jo Knott resigned from Managing our Nui Dat Café and we're currently looking for replacements. Unfortunately our Café will not be operating for a short period of time. Apologies for the inconvenience.

**Vietnam Timeline:** By the time this Sit Rep hits the streets, our timeline display, funded entirely by the Phillip Island RSL, will have been installed. It provides a visual storyline of the critical points occurring during the Vietnam War. It will be a welcome addition to our presentations.

**Display changes:** In recognising the importance of altering our displays and exhibitions on a reasonably regular basis to

create the impression of a "new" perspective each time a visitor returns to our Museum, we have altered a couple of our displays. Air Vice Marshall Alan Reed's "Party



Suit", on loan from the RAAF Museum, Point Cook, has been added to his display. The wall mounted tank display is being renovated. A South Vietnamese flag with the signatures of those who survived the destruction of an APC they were riding on

when it hit a Viet Cong improvised explosive device (IED) is being added. The flag has been autographed by the Company Commander and immediate past Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove.

**Visitation numbers:** Visitor numbers for June, July, August and September were marginally down compared to the same time last year however, we have had 308 more visitors up to this point compared to the same period last year.

### **New Potential Acquisitions:**

**Major Tu's Dress Uniform:** The South Vietnamese ARVN/Rangers Association President, Andy Nguyen has donated Ranger, Major Tu's uniform to our Museum and assisted with the formal unveiling. The story of Major Tu and his cohort on the 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1975 the day South Vietnam fell to the communists, is a truly remarkable one and worth reading. We're awaiting an M16 from the Dandenong RSL to complete the mannequin enabling us to order an acrylic case in which to display the uniform.

**81mm Mortar:** Negotiations continue with Army Disposal Coordinator Major John Kerrison. Arising out of those discussions is the distinct possibility we will have our 81mm mortar returned to us for display.

**Avon Sabre:** The role of 79 Sqn's Sabres has now been formally recognized and thus a Sabre acquisition has taken a higher priority. Air Commodore John Meire Commanding Officer RAAF Heritage based at Amberley is investigating on our behalf.

**C130A Hercules:** Discussions with RAAF Point Cook Museum continue with regard to a plan to relocate the plane to our Museum.





## MORE FROM PHIL

**Centurion and Scorpion tank turret simulators:** Have arrived and await restoration

**F111 cockpit:** Procurement investigations continue.

**Cessna O-1 Bird Dog:** Colin Grey has negotiated the procurement of a Bird Dog from Queensland. These light planes were used as observation craft. The name Bird Dog arose as a result of a contest held



with Cessna employees to name the aircraft. The winning entry, submitted by Jack A. Swayze, an industrial photographer, was selected by a U.S. Army board. The name was chosen because the role of the army's new aircraft was to find the enemy and orbit overhead until artillery (or attack aircraft) could be brought to bear on the enemy. While flying low and close to the battlefield, the pilot would observe the exploding shells and adjust the fire via his radios, in the manner of a bird dog (gun dog) used by game hunters.

**Volunteer Program:** Denise Graham, a relatively new volunteer, has joined the Volunteer Program Administration Team looking after the registration of new volunteers joining our Museum. Heather Kramarev and Tricia Storr, with the assistance of Liz Fincher and Sonia Hogg, are administering the rosters. Lesley Argæet continues to induct new volunteers into our Museum. We now have ninety (90) active

volunteers registered.

A number of volunteers participated in a Volunteers Focus group Meeting. Whilst we think we are communicating well amongst our workers, improvements can always be made and a number of actions are being implemented.

**Training of Staff and Volunteers.** Better Impact continues to be further explored to have a complete understanding of how the program works and what benefits we can obtain from it.

**Education/Multi-Purpose Room:** Currently under construction off-site. Expected installation date is the 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our Mates associated with the Museum.

And thank you to all whom have helped at the Museum this year.

.....Phil



## SOUTH BOSTON VIETNAM MEMORIAL

The South Boston Vietnam Memorial sits in the M Street Park in South Boston, Massachusetts. Everyone listed on the monument had come to the park sometime during their childhood. It is thought to be the first Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the country. The idea for building the monument came while some friends had gathered to remember three of their friends who had been killed in 1968 while serving in Vietnam. It was the tenth anniversary of their deaths. The three were part of a group of six friends that joined the military together. The surviving

build a memorial. The memorial was built with funds raised from the community and \$30,000 donated by the City of Boston. It was designed by Harry Carroll and dedicated on



**M STREET PARK BOSTON**

friends began to reminisce about other members of the community that had given their lives in Vietnam. By the time they had done, they had counted 25 fallen friends. In remembrance to their friends, they decided to

September 13 1981. The guest speaker at the dedication was James Webb, an officer Ton Lyons had met in Vietnam. Also, in attendance were the Governor, Mayor, a Senator, a Congressman and several military officials. The Memorial is rededicated every fall as the family and friends of these men gather and remember their lives and the sacrifices they all made and let all know that they did not die in vain.



The Americans lost 58,195 in the Vietnam War, 58,187 men and 8 women, 150,000 were wounded and 1500 remain still missing. The South Vietnamese lost between 200,000 and 250,000, with 40,000 being civilians. Australia lost 521 of which one was the military nurse Barbara Francis Black.



# AUSTRALIAN ARMOUR AND ARTILLERY MUSEUM—CAIRNS

Peter Watson



In the words of Rob Lowden, MD of this museum, “we are dedicated to the collection, preservation, restoration and display of Armoured vehicles and Artillery from the 1800’s to the present day. Our collection includes armoured vehicles and artillery from both world wars with particular focus on WW11”. Currently the collection consists of over 150 items, many of which will not be found anywhere else in Australia. We are constantly on the lookout for additional pieces of equipment that will make our museum a richer experience for those visiting.

The Australian Armour and Artillery Museum opened to the public on Saturday 6th September 2014. The museum is privately owned and is the largest of its kind in the southern hemisphere.”

Your editor had an occasion to visit this museum recently, with a son-in-law and a grandchild in tow, we all really liked what we saw, and especially a 6 year old boy. One display that intrigued us was a ‘play board’ equipped with small tanks, field guns, soldiers both standing and lying down. The idea is that a child can crawl into the middle of the display, stand up and move the pieces all over the place, do mock battles and military advances, or to blow up a bridge. Other kids can stand around the outside and defend what is happening.

Particular attention by the editor, was to search for tanks and artillery items that featured in the Vietnam War era. Plenty was

displayed including one or two items we don’t exhibit in Newhaven.

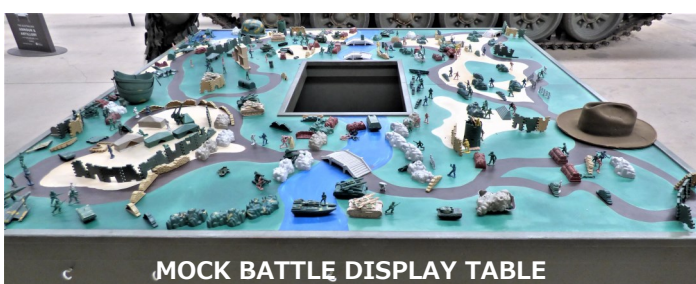
For extra money there are tank rides and shooting areas where a visitor can fire, small arms, at some targets. Also a lot of effort has gone into re-building various tanks from rusty shapes into efficient looking items with many of them able to be driven.



The reception area where we bought our tickets, is designed like a track laying tank and Dennis, the person there, hails from Victoria and had a Dad whom served in Vietnam in ‘68-‘69 with REAME.



A well found and equipped museum that is also trying to educate and advise visitors about how our nation had been involved and assisted in the various wars. The displays show not only our equipment but German, Russian, French, USA and the armourment of many other countries.







## REMEMBRANCE PAGE



**Ronald E Field**, 22 of Lawson NSW, spent his boyhood in the Blue Mountain towns of Hazelbrook, Lawson and Katoomba, and he was a railway station assistant before he



enlisted in 1962. His family said he was proud to wear the uniform. He served in Malaya and then went to Vietnam in June 1965 with the first Australian troops being sent

there. The private with 1RAR was shot in the throat by a sniper in the Ben Cat area of Phuoc Tuy Province on 9th October 1965. He had been in Vietnam for 129 days and his service number was 214479.

**Christopher Clark** 20, from Campelltown NSW, was born in Derbyshire England and was a timber worker before enlisting in 1963. The 1RAR stretcher bearer was killed in a booby trap bomb blast at Ben Cat, Binh Duong Province on 8th January 1966. South Vietnam's Prime Minister, Air Vice Marshall Nguyen Cau Ky, wrote to his father saying: "Christopher has died a hero to defend this

country against Communism aggression as the war enters a decisive phase". He had been in Vietnam for 220 days.



**James L McQuat**, 21 came from Dalwallinu Western Australia and was a farmers son. He went to school in Rocky Gully and Swanbourne High School before he had tried butchering and then abandoned it for the rural life. He was called up on 29 January 1969 and posted to C Company, 8RAR. The private



rifleman died when ambushed and shot by the VC, 10 minutes after midnight on 30 April 1970 during Operation Nudgee in Phuoc Tuy Province. His

service number was 5716533

## BELL SIOUX 47



The Bell 47 is a single rotor single engine light helicopter manufactured by Bell Helicopter. It was based on the Bell 30 prototype, which was the company's first helicopter design by Arthur M Young. The 47 became the first helicopter certified for civilian use on 8 March 1946. More than 5,600 Bell 47's were produced, including those under licence by Agusta in Italy, Kawasaki Heavy Industries in Japan, and Westland Aircraft in the UK.

Early models varied in appearance, with open cockpits or sheet metal cabins, fabric covered



and/or open structures, some with 4 wheel landing gear. Later model D and Korean War H-13D and E types settled on a more utilitarian style. The most common, the 47G introduced in 1953, can be recognized by the "soap bubble" canopy, exposed welded tube tail boom, saddle fuel tanks and skid landing gear. This is the model on display at the Museum.

Engines were Franklin or Lycoming vertically mounted piston engines of 178 to 305 HP. Seating varied from two to four in later models.

The 'Telecopter' was a Bell 47 rented by a television station in Los Angeles, and outfitted with a TV camera and made the world's first flight by a TV news helicopter on 3 July 1958. The station could not receive a signal from the helicopter so, John D Silva, the inventor of the system, climbed out onto the skids while in the air to adjust the transmitter. Thus it was the next day when the first successful TV news flight was made.

The Bell Sioux 47's were operated in Vietnam by the Australian Army Aviation Corps under the jurisdiction of 1st Australian Task Force by Recce Flt 161. 161 Recce 'Possums' flew



over 72,000 hours during the 6 years they operated mainly from Vung Tau with a minimal number of aircraft. Our Sioux's details are: A1-406 and it was delivered to Australia 3 November 1965 and although it did not go to Vietnam it was used for Army aviator training to 1973 before going to Wagga in 1977. Later it appeared at the Army Aviation Museum, Oakey, QLD, before being on a semi-permanent display at our Museum in 2006.



## BATTLE OF NUI LE—21 SEPT 1971

The **Battle of Nui Le** was the last major battle fought by Australian and New Zealand forces in South Vietnam. It was fought between elements of the 33rd Regiment of the North Vietnam Army and B and D Companies of the 4RAR/NZ Battalion during part of Operation Ivanhoe.



After finding sawn logs near a rubber plantation, which suggested that the enemy had fortified a bunker system. B and D Company moved forward to attack these fortifications. First contact with the bunker system caused the death of one Australian from a rocket-propelled grenade and wounded four others.

At 1400h D Company was ordered to search and destroy the bunker system which had been softened up by air strikes earlier in the day. The North Vietnamese let the Australians advance some 50 metres into the bunker complex before attacking. 11 Platoon, suffered 3 killed and two wounded. Many of the grenades thrown by the North Vietnamese did not explode, thus reducing casualties. This was fought hand to hand as the Centurion tanks of the 1st Armoured Regiment had

previously been withdrawn from Vietnam. 12 Platoon was also pinned down and could not move forward.

The bodies of the three killed Australians could not be recovered, and orders were given to pull back, which under heavy fire did not happen till 1600hrs. Just when the sun was setting. the ANZAC forces ran into another NVA force, with the commanding officer of 11 Platoon, Gary McKay being hit twice by a sniper in the shoulder. The bunker system was later found to be the 33rd Regiments HQ.

Being dark now it was difficult for the Forward Observer to use his map or compass, and unable to speak to the Company Commander, meant that artillery fire was falling within 25m of the company as more NVA forces joined the battle. At 2100h the North Vietnamese disengaged from the battle just as the Australians were running out low on ammunition.



*We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.  
For he today that sheds his blood with me.  
Shall be my brother.*

Australians killed were: Keith Kingston-Powles, 24 QLD, Roderick Sprigg, 21 WA, James Duff 21 Vic, Ralph Niblett 22 Vic, and Brian Beilken 21 WA.



# BOOK REVIEW—ANSWERING THE CALL

By **BOB GRANDIN**

*"There's a bend in the road at Long Tan", I said, 'we're behind enemy lines, turn back east, quickly'. I had been scared before but now I was terrified.*

In 1966, Bob Grandin was a Royal Australian Airforce helicopter pilot stationed in Vietnam. This book is written from the logbook he kept while working in Nui Dat, and is a fascinating look at life during the war—the dangers, the challenges, and the mundaneness.



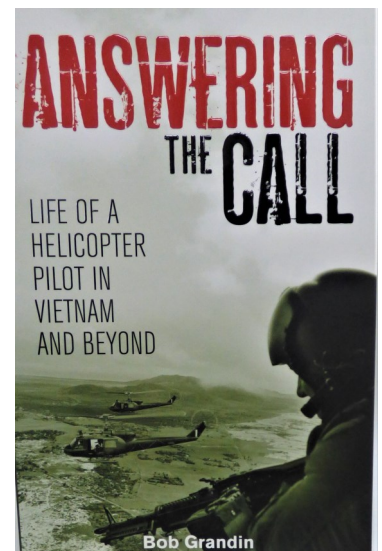
On 18 August he was co-pilot on a 9 Squadron Iroquois 'Huey' helicopter, that flew over the enemy to resupply desperate soldiers engaged in battle at the Long Tan rubber plantation. Enduring extremely poor weather conditions

and enemy fire, the critical role played by Bob and 9 Squadron in the battle, contributed to the success of this operation.

The narrative of his war experiences are interwoven with stories of life after Vietnam. Revealing the difficulties he faced back home, the impact of the war on his psyche and relationships, and his struggles with PTSD.

A collection of Australian newspaper articles saved by Bob's father feature throughout, giving further insight into how important helicopters were in Vietnam, and also how the press reported the war to the Australian public.

Answering the Call, provides the unique perspective of a wartime helicopter pilot and is an important addition to Vietnam War history.



## WHAT'S NEW AT NVVM

Recently the café at the Museum has been equipped with new chairs and tables they seem very comfortable and look really good and professional . We were lucky to get these tables and chairs, which came from Phillip Island Nature Parks, ( The Penguins}, as they had no further use for them.



Another area that was in need of attention was the seating in the Sound and Light show. We had some seating that whilst OK, had framework encroaching into the walking area between the rows. There have been many people that have almost tripped in that location and the new chairs avoid that problem, plus allowing us to use that seating



in other situations should such arise. It makes the Sound and Light show more accessible and kinder to those of us whom are getting on in years. There had been a grant, which was organised to buy these, by Sandra Mounsey, the wife of Graeme whom we see every Tuesday. Sandra knows how and where to apply for grants, and this is far from being the first time she has arranged such for the Museum.

One of the most expensive costs in running the Museum is lighting and electricity, and as most of you know, a few years ago the State Government allocated some funds which we used to install solar panels on the roof. This has worked very well, but inside the main display area we had some mercury vapor lights, that although expensive to run, were starting to deteriorate and not emitting as much light as when new. New LED lights are being installed and you can see in the pic, David,

installing one of the new lights, he was assisted by Don. In the low RHS of the image you can see the effect of the brighter LED's.



Hopefully these will save as much as two thirds of the Museum's lighting costs.





# MUSEUM OF FLIGHT—SEATTLE

**The Museum of Flight** is a private non-profit air and space museum in the northwest US. It is located at the southern end of King County International Airport, in the city of Tukwila, just south of Seattle. It was established in 1965 and is fully accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.



**Jim Mattis**

General Jim Mattis, USMC (Ret) and 26th US Secretary of Defense was the keynote speaker at the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park at the Museum of Flight earlier this year. Since it opened over Memorial Day weekend, thousands of guests have visited this powerful place to reflect and remember.

The Memorial Park features ionic centrepieces like the Museum's restored Boeing B-52G Stratofortress and a statue of a returning airman, providing a serene setting for the community to finally 'welcome home' a generation of veterans who bravely served the USA half a century ago.



**The Memorial**

In the words of Jim Mattis:

**"In war you were good soldiers, and in peace you have been wonderful citizens. You Vietnam Vets made America a better country".**



**The B52G**



## RAAF BASE—RICHMOND NSW

At the RAAF Base Richmond NSW, is the home of Squadron No 37 operating medium tactical airlifts using Lockheed Martin C—130 Hercules aircraft. The squadron has seen active service flying transport aircraft during



World War 11, the Vietnam War, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the military intervention against ISIL. It has also supported humanitarian and peacemaking operations around the world including Somalia, East Timor, Bali, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines.

On 27 September 1965, Minister for Air Peter Howson announced that No 37 Squadron was to be re-raised to operate 12 Lockheed C-130E Hercules transport aircraft that had been purchased by the Federal government. The new aircraft would allow the RAAF to support Australian deployments in South East Asia while continuing to meet its domestic duties. In February 1967 the Squadron began its

long range missions in support of the Vietnam War, including aero-medical evacuations conveying wounded soldiers back to Australia, generally via RAAF Base Butterworth, Malaysia. Initially both the C-130A and E models were employed for such evacuations, but only the C-130E's were assigned to this task from May 1967, as they offered more comfortable conditions and were capable of flying directly between South Vietnam and Australia if required.

The Squadron transported the last Australian



**LOCKHEED C-130**

forces out of Vietnam in December 1972, following the governments decision to withdraw from the conflict.



The Squadron was also involved in Operation Babylift, when C-130 Hercules aircraft were used to take orphans and abandoned babies and children in April 1975 from Vietnam to Australia.



# THE NATIONAL SERVICE

## ALCOVE

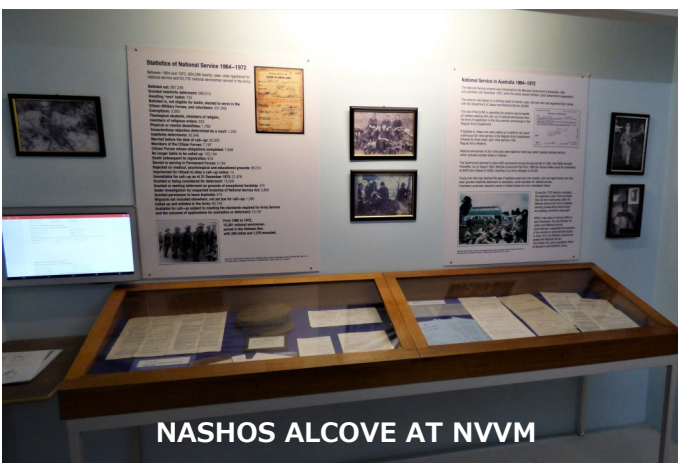
The National Service scheme was introduced by the Menzies Government in November 1964 and operated until December 1972, when the newly elected Whitlam Labor Government suspended it.

The scheme was based on a birthday ballot of twenty-year-old men who had registered their names with the Department of Labour and National Service (DLNS).

The role of the DLNS in operating the scheme was to handle all matters dealing with the call-up of national servicemen from the time of registration to the time service commenced in the Regular Army Supplement. If balloted in, these men were called up to perform two years continuous full-time service in the Regular Army Supplement, followed by three years in the Regular Army Reserve.

eighteen years and nine months, and men aged twenty who had been granted indefinite deferment or exemption, could volunteer for national service. Volunteers could also request to serve in limited duties of a non-combat nature.

During the 1972 election campaign, the Australian Labor Party promised that 'all men



National servicemen on full-time duty were liable for what was called 'special overseas service' which included combat duties in Vietnam.

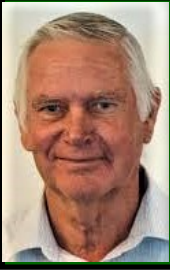
The Government planned to raise 4200 servicemen during the second half of 1965, then 6900 annually thereafter. But in August 1965, Menzies announced that from 1966 the annual intake would be maintained at 8400, two intakes of 4200, resulting in an Army strength of 40,000.

Young men who had reached the age of

imprisoned under the National Service Act will be released, pending prosecutions discontinued and existing convictions expunged'.

Within a few days of winning office in early December, the new Minister for Labour and National Service, Lance Barnard, suspended the operation of the scheme by administrative action. In July 1973, the Whitlam Government passed the National Service Termination Act, giving legislative effect to Barnard's administrative action.

In the Museum we also have the ballot marbles and the barrel from which they were drawn. 804,286 twenty year olds registered, 63,735 served in the Army, 15,381 Nashos went to Vietnam, 200 were killed and 1279 wounded.



## JOHN AND KRISHNA METHVEN

### NVVM FOUNDERS



I grew up in a small country town in Victoria and attended Upwey state school and Upwey High School. Sport was very much my go, being involved in athletics, Aussie Rules football and cricket. I had two older sisters, both of whom excelled at school. My eldest sister, Barbara, actually jumped years and entered Melbourne University at age sixteen. It apparently was expected that I would continue the academic feats of my sisters, but no one told me, and after a couple of average years the teachers lost interest in me, except for the Sports master.

Dad died of Hodgkin's disease when I was 17. I left school after year ten. By this time, we had shifted to Olinda in the Dandenong Ranges. I had been working part time while I was at school, manning a local telephone exchange from 8pm to 8am on a casual basis. You were not supposed to sleep but after about 9pm, it was only emergency calls that came in occasionally so I could drift off and let the ringing wake me. At 8am I would catch the school bus from Olinda to Upwey.

My first full time job was rotary hoeing. I had an old Red Indian motor bike, with a side car that I had dismantled and put flat boards on, and I would run the Howard rotary hoe on and ride around hills doing jobs. The fact that I did not have a licence was irrelevant.

I married Krishna in 1961 and we are still married today. I joined the Army in March 1962 and was posted to Signals Corp where I was trained as a Telegraph and Cypher mechanic. I was then posted to 3 Sig Regt until entering Portsea in June 1963. After graduating in June 1964 I was posted to 3 L of C Sig Squadron. In 1965 I was seconded to 7 Bn RAR and was one of the 9 foundation members. I had a year as a platoon Commander and then two years as the Regimental Signals Officer, including the Battalion's first tour of Vietnam. I was then posted to 2 Sig Regiment as the Adjutant for the next 3 years and then to OCS

Portsea as the Corp instructor. Prior to taking up the posting, I resigned my commission.

Krishna and I purchased a Sports Centre in Sunshine, Vic, for two years and then sold it. We then travelled around NSW and Queensland for a year before taking up employment with BP Australia as the Manager of South West Queensland. One of the reasons I got out of the Army was that in the first 10 years of my marriage, I was away nearly seven of them. After 2 years with BP, I found that I was doing the same thing, so I resigned and returned to Victoria.

I established a Landscaping and Earth Moving business which I ran for nearly 20 years. Krishna and I also ran a residential Conference centre in the Yarra Valley. I also Coached a number of football and cricket clubs and was involved with school councils, ending up as Chairman of the Maroondah Board of Education, with over 120 schools involved. I was lucky enough during this time to receive the Citizen of the Year for the Shire of Upper Yarra.

In 1986 health problems forced me to retire. I then became involved with voluntary Advocacy and Welfare work for Veterans as a level 4 Pension officer. I have been a Legatee for 30 years and am currently the Manager of Advocacy Training for Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania for ADPT (Advocacy Training and Development Program). I have been involved with the Vietnam Veterans Association and served three terms as National President.

Founder and current Curator of the National Vietnam Veterans Museum at Phillip Island, Victoria where we get up to 20,000 visitors a year.

*John Methven*

In 2000 John was awarded the OAM.





## MORE FROM JOHN AND KRISHNA

Krishna's background goes back to ancestors living on Flinders Island. With a 'don't know how many greats' grandfather, was named Mannalargenna. However she grew up and was educated in the Latrobe Valley and played quite a lot of hockey. Krishna was heavily involved in the formation and running of the Museum earlier, and has even found time to devote herself to both World Vision and Legacy.



THE MOBILE MUSEUM

The Museum started out as mobile unit, firstly in Victoria and then they were requested by the

Department of Veteran Affairs to complete a six week tour of Australia to promote services available to veterans. John says: 'This was hard work carting a two tonne trailer by Land Rover across the Nullarbor with a 35km head wind'. Then it was a small factory in San Remo followed by a shop on the main road.

They raised \$700,000 from grants, donations, and fundraising to create the present building. John mentions: 'The only time I thought 'what I had



THE FACTORY MUSEUM

done?' was when the first hanger arrived in pieces on three semi-trailer loads from Melbourne.

At no time in the 8 or 9 years of Museum development was anybody paid any money. All this was done on a voluntary basis and initially the Museum needed 10 people as 'members' and they only had 9. Being a good and honest Aussie, John found a way round this and registered one, Jack Methven as the 10th body

needed to meet the regulations. Jack was their dog!

John and Krishna went every day to the Museum doing most of the work themselves, but gradually a few more 'Vets' came on the scene and as of



MUSEUM ON THE MAIN ROAD

today there are some 90 odd volunteers.

In recent years it has become necessary to employ three people. We have a GM, admin and a sales ladies, Liz in admin and in sales, Sonia, arranges for coach groups, Battalion Associations, schools and others to visit the Museum.

Whilst John and Krishna are not so much involved now, it is amazing how many times we see either or both at the Museum and their experience and knowledge is invaluable to the success of the Museum. John and Krishna have 4 children and 10 grandchildren.

Thank you John and Krishna for your dedication and effort, to give us something that is recognised around the world. You can both be proud of your achievement.



THE MUSEUM TODAY



## THE WORK NEVER FINISHES



Lots and lots of pickets with names on them, what a great promotion