Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia
Victorian Branch Inc.

FSB-VIC

WINTER EDITION 2022

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Report
Secretary's Report
Sub Branch News
Vietnam Veterans Day 2022
Veteran Interest
Books
National Vietnam Veterans Museum
Veteran Support matters

Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living

VVAA Victorian State Branch

Executive

ABN: 34 750 672 219

State President	Bob ELWORTHY AM	Mob: 0402 106 262
State Vice President	Brendan KINCADE OAM	Mob: 0414 948 305
State Secretary	George SKELL	Mob: 0410 275 651
State Assistant Secretary **Membership Officer**	Sue McQUEEN OAM	5444 1871 Mob: 0400 821 457
State Treasurer	Bob GLAUBITZ	Mob: 0412 689 630
State Branch **Welfare Officer**	Kevin HUNTER	Mob: 0408 448 280
State Office Manager **Editor *FSB-VIC***	Maurie BENSON	Mob: 0417 588 886
State Branch **Executive Member**	Lindsay McQUEEN	5444 1871 Mob: 0488 068 880
Education Team	Jim DEWAR	Mob: 0417 160 700

VVAA Victorian Branch—State Office

Address: VVAA Victorian Branch
Anzac House
L3/4 Collins St
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Phone: (03) 9655 5588

Fax: (03) 9655 5582

Secretary: secretary@vvaavic.org.au

Office: office@vvaavic.org.au

Newsletter: editor@vvaavic.org.au

Web Site: www.vvaavic.org.au

Office Hours: 1000 - 1400 Hrs Monday–Friday
(Subject to volunteer availability)

MEMBERSHIP:
International &
Headquarters Branch
C/O CVVSC
PO BOX 820
BENDIGO VIC 3552

Victorian Sub Branch contacts:

Refer to VVAA Vic website above.

DISCLAIMER: *The material in 'FSB-VIC' is in the nature of general comment only and neither purports nor is intended to be advice on any particular matter. No person should act on the basis of any matter contained in 'FSB- VIC' without considering and, if necessary, taking appropriate professional advice upon their own particular cir- cumstances. The VVAA, the authors and editors expressly disclaim all and any liability in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by any such person in reliance, whether whole or partial, upon the whole or part of the con- tents of 'FSB-VIC'.*

A WORD FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

So, 50 years on from our end of the war and still going strong (ish!)

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service (VVCS)/Open Arms. It is interesting to reflect on the creation of the service and the effort expended by faithful and determined Vietnam veterans all those years ago to hold the Government accountable for the health conditions of many of the veterans. Their efforts basically forced the Government to create VVCS - a service created byVietnam veterans for Vietnam veterans. And now we have gifted the service to those who follow; Open Arms, a service created by Vietnam veterans, now for all veterans.

And to think that not so long ago one of the younger cohort of veterans said to me that the problem with Vietnam veterans is that they don't pay it forward! LOL. Probably owes his DVA compensation to a Vietnam veteran pensions advocate!

The Shrine of Remembrance on 18 August will be the site of our last big Melbourne-based Vietnam Veterans Day Commemorations Service. I reckon 2022 is a good year to bring it all to a neat close and to then revert to regional activities. VV Day 2022 will be very special, so I encourage everybody to get along - it promises to be a very fitting finale and a special way to honour our fallen.

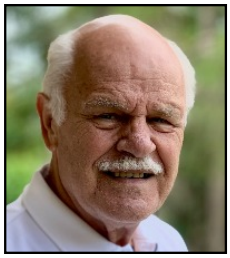
Projects, projects, projects! All have been on hold due to COVID, our delivery dates have gone out the window, but hopefully momentum can return and we can deliver some exciting projects this year. The refurbishment of the outdoor area at the Coral/Balmoral facility - The Furphy Garden - is scheduled to be officially opened on 17 August and will be another example of us "paying it forward" for future users of the Coral/Balmoral facility and staff to enjoy and spin yarns.

There is exciting news on the horizon for YOUR museum. New board members joined in May, Bass Shire Council approved the development application and the business end of a Herc arrived. I can still remember the ride home to Oz on a Herc; no expenses spared, box lunch with old curried egg sangas curled up at the ends, a dubious piece of fruit, my first-class seat, and rotating through the flight deck to have a durry. And as we took off, the loadmaster said something like "Have they found the Herc that left yesterday yet?"

50 years ago!

Enjoy the newsletter

Bob E



Who can believe we're already halfway through 2022 . In the six months gone we've laid to rest another eighteen of our mates that we know of.

May They Rest In Peace.

With our mortality in mind and an expected decline in membership in the coming years a review of our ***State Constitution, Closure Plan*** and our ***Priority Welfare List*** is already underway and was discussed at length at our State Council meeting back in February, and will be again at our State Council meeting in Echuca/Moama on 25 June 2022.

With Covid restrictions all but gone ANZAC day 2022 was as close to normal as possible and a truly successful event.

For the remainder of 2022 we continue to have a full calendar with the State Executive meeting monthly, a State Council meeting planned for Box Hill Sub-Branch planned for 29 October 2022.

Preparations for Vietnam Veterans Day this year is well advanced. This years commemorations will be the last of the major events of the Vietnam War. A very large turnout of members is expected as the VVAA Victoria Sub-Branches are expected to hold their local commemorations on or about the Sunday before the main event on the 18th August 2022, with assistance then of the VVAA Victoria Branch *(if needed)* will transport their members to the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance on the day.

Our VVAA Victoria website has served us well over the years. As it's become a bit of a dinosaur an upgrade to a more modern look with easier access was needed the new site is now up and running and can be accessed on: **vvaavic.org.au**

As we're now into the winter season it is a reminder to get your Cold & Flu injections and while you're at it your Covid booster shots too.

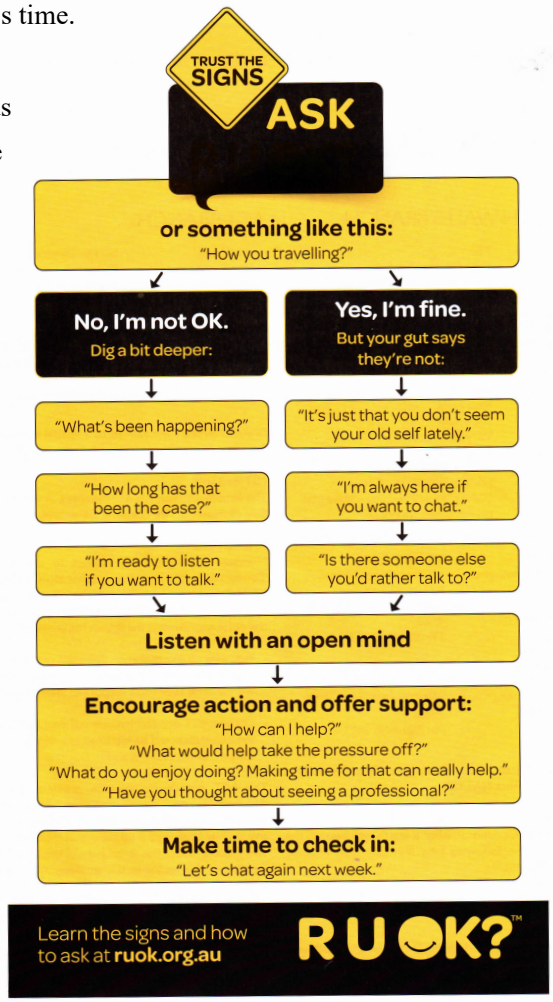
Stay safe and look after your mates; the economic climate doesn't look great at this time, the rising cost of fuel, utilities and food are looking to impact us all especially those amongst us who are not that well off. Sub-Branches are urged to conduct periodical welfare checks of their not so well off members.

Have a great remaining six months of 2022 and we look forward to seeing you all at the Shrine in a couple of month's time.

Regards

George

If you have seen this dog please lettuce know.



VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION
VICTORIAN BRANCH Inc.

ANZAC House
L3, 4 Collins St
MELBOURNE
VIC 3000
Em: office@vvaavic.org.au

Vietnam Veterans Day

Thursday 18th August 2022

Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance

- 60th Anniversary - Members of the Australian Army Training Team arrive in Vietnam.
- 56th Anniversary - Battle of Long Tan.
- 50th Anniversary - Withdrawal of the last Australian Combat Troops from Australia's area of operations in South Vietnam.

0930 Hrs	Gunfire Breakfast.
1030 Hrs	Marchers gather at Northern Forecourt for 1100 Hrs step off.
1100 Hrs	March step off.
1300 Hrs	Formalities conclude.

Service includes Vietnam era entertainers.

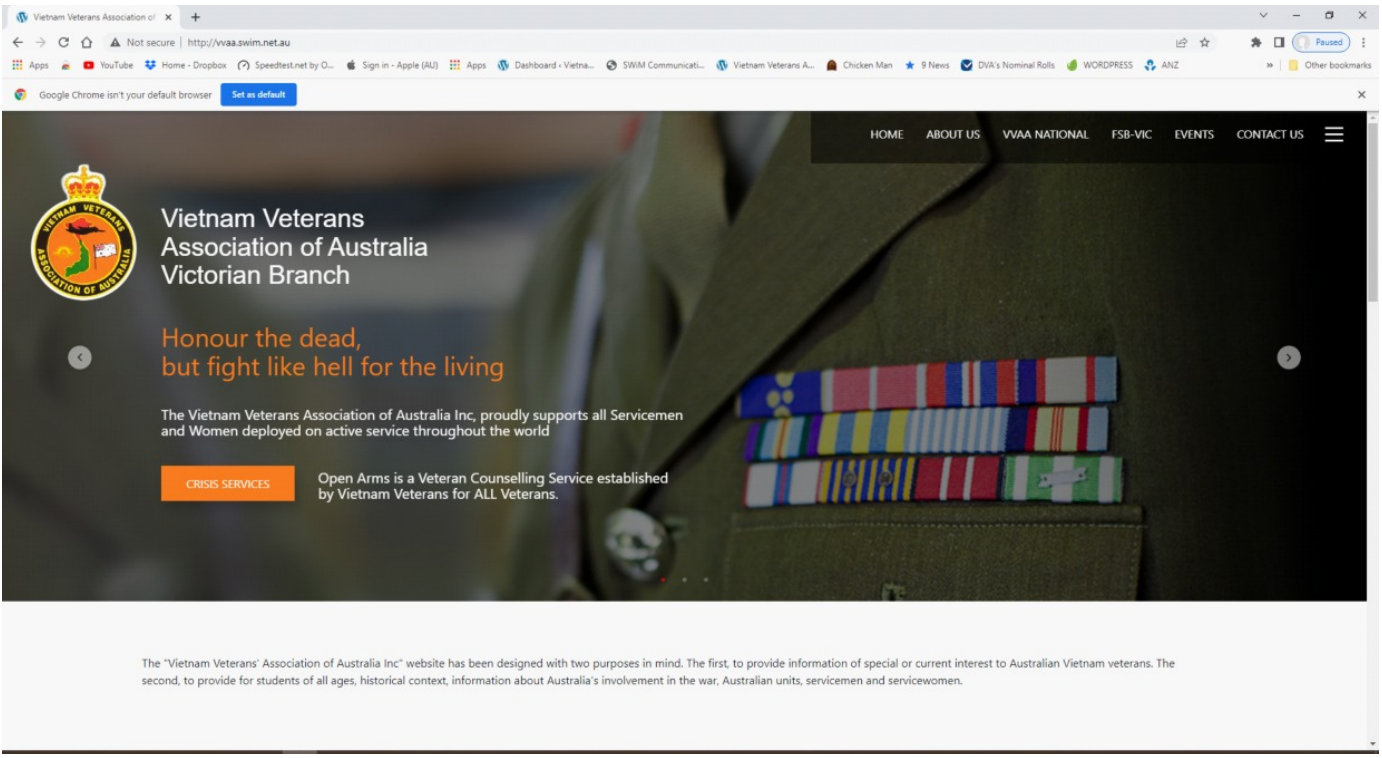
Enquiries to VVAA Vic

Maurie Benson
Commemorations Manager
Mob: 0417 588 886
***Email*: office@vvaavic.org.au**

Honour the Dead but Fight Like Hell for the Living

VVAA Victorian Branch launches new upgraded website

www.vvaavic.org.au



- A fresher more modern look.
- Easier to navigate.
- More up to date veteran news items.
- Current government veteran notices.
- Direct links to locations.
- Direct communication links.
- Links to important veteran sites.
- Provides important research material.

MELBOURNE SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE - 1968 VIETNAM TET OFFENSIVE

On Sunday 30th January 2022 the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance commemorated the 54th anniversary of the 1968 Vietnam TET Offensive at their Last Post Service.

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, Victorian Branch (VVAA Vic) Commemorations Manager Maurie Benson was privileged to lay the wreath and deliver the Ode.

VVAA Vic and Maurie have a long history of involvement at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance, in particular Vietnam Veterans Day conducted each year at the Shrine on the 18th August each year.

ASM RECOGNITION FOR RIFLE COMPANY BUTTERWORTH MALAYSIA

Minister for Veterans's Affairs, Minister for Defence

7 April 2022

"The independent Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal will re-examine the issue of medallic recognition for Australians who served with Rifle Company Butterworth in Malaysia between 1970 and 1989.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said the Government had listened to the concerns raised by many veterans who had served on Rifle Company Butterworth deployments.

"The Tribunal will consider whether these Australian veterans should receive the ***Australian Active Service Medal*** for their deployment to Malaysia," Minister Gee said

"The issue was looked at by the Tribunal more than a decade ago, and a view was taken at the time not to recognise their service as "***warlike***".

"The New Zealand Government recently broadened eligibility for the New Zealand Operational Service Medal for veterans who served in Malaysia and Singapore between 1959 and 1974. Given this, and the concerns raised directly with me by the veteran community, it is timely that this issue is re-examined."

MELBOURNE WEST

To date, it has been a much better year than the previous two, although it can change so suddenly with this insidious Covid and its ability to easily morph into new strains.

Our weekly Get-together at the Hoppers Club on Wednesdays regularly sees 15 to 20 members gather for some good socialising and a nice luncheon. It's a nice change for the few members who kept the previous BBQ/Sausage Sizzle style of gathering going, as just turning up and enjoying the camaraderie and meal without setting up, cooking and cleaning as well.

For quite a number of years Werribee RSL has put on a Services Luncheon on the last Friday of each month (except April) so since the building was storm damaged in February, they have been unable to use the extended rear dining area where we would gather for the luncheon. Also, to date they have been unable to secure any interested company to undertake the roof repair/replacement and until that is done, they cannot have the collapsed ceiling fixed. End result is no Services Luncheon, possibly for several more months. Luckily for the RSL club they can continue to trade and run their Bistro as the overflow area is not often needed.

In the meantime, to give our members a meeting place we have started running our own "End of Month" luncheon at the Hoppers Club. The last three have seen between 36 and 40 members turn up and enjoy some socialising, together with a nice meal. We will continue doing this until Werribee RSL is back up and running.

March was a slow month but we managed to get in a bus trip on 17th March. We re-visited Fort Queenscliff and carried on from our previous visit in 2019. Spent some time at the "disappearing gun" and the museum and were well guided with extensive info from the Fort Guides. We again lunched at Port Arlington Golf Club (as nice as before) and dropped in at Van Loon's Nursery for afternoon tea before heading home. All up, a very enjoyable day.

April started slow, building to a hectic week of Anzac commemorations. Sunday 24th April, our Secretary Ray Matthew led our Sub-Branch in the Werribee RSL Pre-Anzac Day March to the Cenotaph (below) as I had a previous engagement. The Dawn Service at the Cenotaph on Anzac Day was very well attended by Werribee locals.

Tuesday 26th April a group of the Sub-Branch (below) attended an Anzac Day service at Thomas Chirnside Primary School with whom we have had a good relationship for over 18 years. We are standing in front of a memorial and a Lone Pine (seed from Turkey) planted in 2004 by our members.

The following day, 27th April, myself and 4 members attended a small service at The Grange P-12 College where I again addressed the students. The service was very well run by senior students and we were treated to a morning tea afterwards.

April was rounded out with our End of Month luncheon at the Hoppers Club which was attended by 38 members and guests on the day.

May has been reasonably quiet with only our Wednesday gatherings at the Hoppers Club and our End of Month Luncheon on 27th May (coming up).

We are preparing for Badge Week 2022, however getting places in some Shopping Centres is becoming more difficult. We managed to get through the last few years without any member seeking welfare assistance, but with the way the economy is heading, it could put some pressure on Sub-Branches in general. We still have sufficient merchandise from 2019 so we are hopeful of reducing that, because we, like other Sub-Branches, are starting to seriously consider our future.

To all our fellow members of the Victorian Branch, stay safe and stay well.

Regards, Glen Smith, President

DIAMOND VALLEY ~ (DVIETS)

Our 2022 AGM saw a change of the guard with President Peter Blackman deciding to step down after 12 years at the helm, and Treasurer Mick Pignatelli also calling it a day after 17 long years in the roll (Mick duly received a Life Membership of the Victorian Branch for services to the Branch) …warm gratitude and congratulations go to both Peter and Mick for services rendered. John Boniface also decided not to nominate for committee and his multiple stints on the committee, and as a past President, were gratefully acknowledged.

Stepping into the fray came Bill Little (President), Duncan Duke (Vice-President, and Dudleigh Morse (Treasurer, plus Paul Vaughan and Larraine Criss joined Alan Comben (Secretary), Terry Barnes and Margie Van Poeteren onto the committee for 2022.

In the first six months of the year, we have enjoyed the Friday Meetings rotating through local RSL's (Epping, Greensborough, Montmorency-Eltham, and Watsonia); monthly outings as organised by Margie van Poeteren and including trips to Williamstown, Living Legends in Greenvale, Shepparton, the Kilmore Races (to view the heavy rain n sleet), and off to Bendigo to visit the Elvis Collection with all trips thoroughly enjoyed by the travellers.

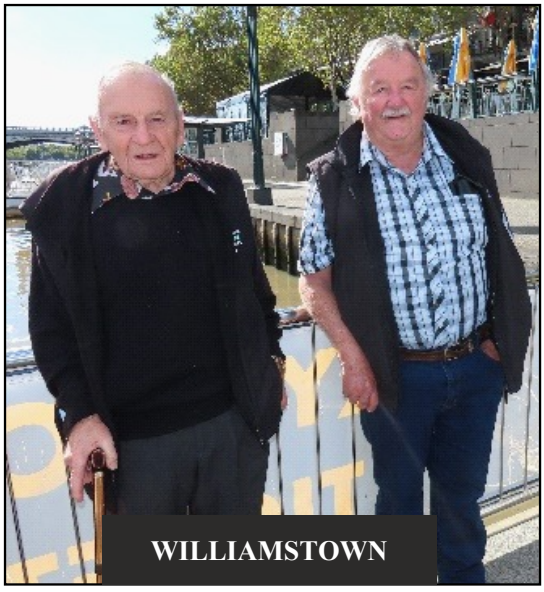
We look forward to a similarly enjoyable 2nd half of 2022.

Bill Little

President

DViets.

AGM



WILLIAMSTOWN

LIVING LEGENDS

KILMORE RACES

MARYBOROUGH

The sub Branch is travelling well with wood raffles up and running showing a huge increase in sales. From word of mouth it has been due to us not being around during the two years of lock downs and so forth.

A few travelled by bus to the Bendigo R.S.L. for lunch on the 15th May and were joined by Sue and Lindsey McQueen as our guests for the lunch and a very good day was had by all, by the sound of the chatter on the bus for the trip home.

Some of the girls enjoying Wacky Wednesday with Judy Turton being host for the day and all having a turn as host and location.

How the table has turned with us dropping the girls off and then picking them up later. What started as a coffee get together to wine and beverages.

SWAN HILL

Swan Hill sub-Branch recently had a quilt donated to them by the mother of a Somalian & East Timor veteran.

We decided to arrange for the framing, which cost us nothing, and we approached the Swan Hill RSL to have it mounted in there.

This was achieved and on the 17th. May we hosted a lunch for the Donor and the framer.

Pictured are the Donor Mrs. Margaret Ansell and Sub-Branch president Harold Heslop.

Harold Heslop OAM JP

President VVAA Swan Hill

FRANKSTON

This year has started slowly for the Vietnam veterans

We had our AGM in February followed by a welcome back dinner

In March some of our wandering members took their vans down to Yarram for a week of entertainment and by the look of the photos I think they all had a mighty fine time. In April our members did their first Bunnings sausage sizzle in over 2 years and again by all accounts they had a lot of fun. We will be doing another in October.

Pearcedale primary school asked for a speaker to attend an Anzac Day service that had been all researched and organised by the students. Mark Kinder and Cheryl Myers OAM attended the service and were very impressed by the work done by the students. The wreaths in the picture were all made by the students in the morning before the service. Anzac Day was held in 2 locations this year; at the Frankston RSL and the Frankston Naval club

Any Veteran or partner is more than welcome to come along to a meeting for any information please contact the President Kelvin on 0432473039 or the Secretary Cheryl on 0409962545

BENDIGO

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE DINNER

This I believe is a special moment in time

The reaching out of one generation of Veterans of War to another!

We have very much in common having served our country on active service in war zones, leaving behind family and friends to put our lives on the line ,to take part in military action to prevent the subjugation of people by oppressive and ideological extremists opposed to democratic freedoms and we returned to an ungrateful nation.

The inspiration for this dinner came about when we Vietnam Vets were exposed to news film footage of the chaos and terror experienced by the people of Afghanistan as they tried to gain access to aircraft to take them out of their living hell!

It was tragically reminiscent of the scenes of chaos and terror seen at the US Embassy in Saigon with people fighting to gain access to the asylum of the US embassy and get out of the country; both scenarios evoked similar heartbreak among our war veteran communities.

What did you achieve in your efforts to secure a democratic system? it may appear that you achieved little; however you have let the genie out of the bottle; by exposing the population of Afghanistan to 20 years of democratic freedoms and the rights of women, only time will tell the measure of success of your efforts.

The Vietnam Veteran community has been appalled by the treatment of you as a veteran group by politicians, media, academics, bureaucrats and small elements of the general public.

As a Veteran who was conscripted into the Army 1966 -1968, I watched the tide turn from widespread political and community support for the war to one of rejection and vilification of its veterans. On my return in 1968 I was confronted with Moratoriums with over 100,000 people protesting against the war in the streets of Melbourne.

Both of our cohorts have experienced the withholding of gratitude for our efforts which can be reasonably described as betrayal, a feeling experience with many layers that evoke many other powerful negative feelings, anger, hurt, suspicion, mistrust, grief, sadness and depression.

So where to from here? There is a real danger in the future regarding the manner in which governments and its bureaucrats will support veterans of war as they age and their needs for meaningful compensation arises.

The Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia is very concerned with where the direction is headed! The broadening of the term veteran as being a person who has spent one day in the armed forces effectively dilutes the status of a Veteran of War!

Many aspects of this include the maintenance of the Gold Card, status of war widows, and access to the DVA, already seemingly dysfunctional.

Where is the RSL in all this? I would suggest the demands from its broad base as a peak body, its commitment to its commercial interests, War Veterans, Service veterans, Affiliates and social members leads to a lack of focus on advocacy and the vital aspects of Health and Well Being of War Veterans.

On observing the RSL at a state level there certainly appears to be a lack of inspirational assertive leadership, committed predominantly to the welfare health, wellbeing and advocacy for veterans of war!

The Veterans of the Vietnam conflict had to form their own association to bring about proper acknowledgement of serious issues that the Governments of the day were ignoring!

Agent Orange poisoning and identification of PTSD as a compensable disease were two key areas which were previously denied by both Governments and its bureaucrats were forced to accept for compensation.

There lies a serious challenge ahead for how you as a group of war veterans will ensure that your special status as war veterans will be guaranteed in terms of economic, health and welfare support as you age.

On behalf of the Vietnam Veteran community we wish good health and happiness in your lives and we:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

HONOUR THE DEAD BUT FIGHT LIKE HELL FOR THE LIVING

Paul Peno OAM

President VVAA Bendigo Sub Branch

NOBLE PARK

ANZAC Day at Noble Park RSL.

Noble Park Sub Branch continues to distributine food drops to local veterans on Thursdays and Sundays.

The Welfare Office is open for appointments Mondays and Thursdays.

Cheers.

Ray McCarthy

President

Anzac Day football - Noble Park v Berwick

Presentation to Chair and CEO of Sandown Greyhound Racing Club ot the Anzac Day Cup.

VICTORIA'S FREE TRAVEL VOUCHER SCHEME

Free travel vouchers

Every Seniors Card holder receives free off-peak travel vouchers each year in the mail to use on public transport in Victoria.

Each voucher can be exchanged for either: a V/Line off-peak daily ticket (going out and back on the same day); two V/Line off-peak single tickets (going out on one day and back on another); a 1 Day Travel Pass for travel in Zones 1 and 2.

Vouchers must be exchanged at least 24 hours before you intend to travel and cannot be used during morning or afternoon peak periods.

For more information, visit the Public Transport Victoria's Free travel vouchers WEBPAGE or call 1800 800 007.

Medical experts in London today were asked if it is time to ease the COVID lockdowns.

Allergists were in favour of scratching it, but Dermatologists advised not to make any rash moves.

Gastroenterologists had a sort of a gut feeling about it, but Neurologists thought the government lacked the nerve.

Obstetricians felt certain everyone was labouring under a misconception, while Ophthalmologists considered the idea short-sighted.

Some Pathologists were heard to say, "Over my dead body!" while Pediatricians said, "Oh, grow up!"

Psychiatrists thought the whole idea was madness, while Radiologists could see right through it.

Surgeons decided to wash their hands of the whole thing and pharmacists claimed it would be a bitter pill to swallow.

Plastic Surgeons opined that this proposal would "put a whole new face on the matter."

Podiatrists thought it was a step forward, but Urologists were pissed off by the whole idea.

Anaesthetists thought the whole idea was a gas, and Cardiologists didn't have the heart to say no.

In the end, the Proctologists won out, leaving the decision up to the ***** politicians!***

I have a pencil that used to be owned by William Shakespeare.

But he chewed it a lot.

Now, I can't tell if it's a 2B or not 2B.

Before my surgery, the anaesthetist offered to knock me out with gas or a boat paddle …

It was an ether / oar situation.

APOD stands for Australian Partners of Defence.

Run by veteran families, for veteran families.

Website :https://apod.com.au/about/

APOD is an Australian owned and operated organisation founded by veteran families, for veteran families.

Since 2012, we have been working with businesses of all sizes to deliver exclusive offers to serving Australian Defence Force personnel, reservists, allied forces, veterans and their immediate family members.

We understand the sacrifices made in the name of service and have been committed for over 8 years to creating the bridge between businesses and the Australian defence community for those organisations that want to say thank you for your service.

APOD's mission is to make providing benefits and recognition to our members simple and rewarding for businesses and to provide our members with easy access to local and national discount offers across all industries, not just travel and leisure.

Partnered with Department of Veterans' Affairs

In partnership with the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), we are now able to extend membership access to all Veteran Cardholders, through a DVA subscription to APOD.

This means that you receive free access to thousands of offers through the APOD program whilst DVA continues to provide this benefit to all Veteran Cardholders.

Enjoy all of the benefits of being an APOD member, including savings on everyday shopping, accommodation, experiences, gift cards and special offers.

Two easy ways for Veteran Cardholders to sign up:

1. New DVA Cardholders can sign up through MyService. Simply tick the box to subscribe to APOD when applying for your new Veteran Card. You'll get an email from us with instructions to verify your email address and create a password so you can log in to the APOD website.

2. Existing DVA Cardholders can sign up through the APOD website. You will need to have your Veteran Card ready to provide your DVA File Number and name exactly as it appears on your card to automatically authenticate your free APOD access.

COUNTRY PUMPKINS - FRESH PICKED

COUNTRY PUMPKINS is a South Coast NSW Band that has recently released an album called **FRESH PICKED**.

The title song is an epic tale of innocence, tragedy and redemption based around Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

The album can be purchased from **www.scobie.com.au** and a promo can be viewed on ***youtube*** at:

https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=457588522324789

An Infantry Major was about to start the morning briefing to his staff.

While waiting for the coffee machine to finish its brewing, the Major decided to pose a question to all assembled.

He explained that his wife had been a bit frisky the night before and he failed to get his usual amount of sound sleep.

He posed the question of just how much of sex was "work" and how much of it was "pleasure?"

A Captain chimed in with 75-25% in favour of work. A Lieutenant said it was 50-50%.

A 2nd Lieutenant responded with 25-75% in favour of pleasure, depending upon his state of inebriation at the time.

There being no consensus, the Major turned to the Private who was in charge of making the coffee. What was his opinion?

Without any hesitation, the young Private responded, "Sir, it has to be 100% pleasure." The Major was surprised and, as you might guess, asked why?

"Well, sir," said the Private, "If there was any work involved, the Officers would have me doing it for them."

The room fell silent.

THE SLR RETURNS

SLR due to return to the British Army!!!

After 35 years out of circulation, the famous Self Loading Rifle is due to return to service for British Army Troops.
The SLR-A2, a 7.62mm weapon, will feature a modernised rail system and extended 30-round magazine.

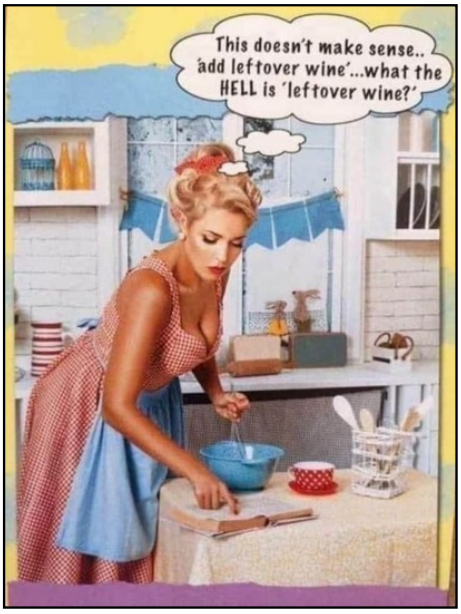
This change comes after years of continuous failings of the Army's current weapon system, the SA80, which was found to be much less powerful.

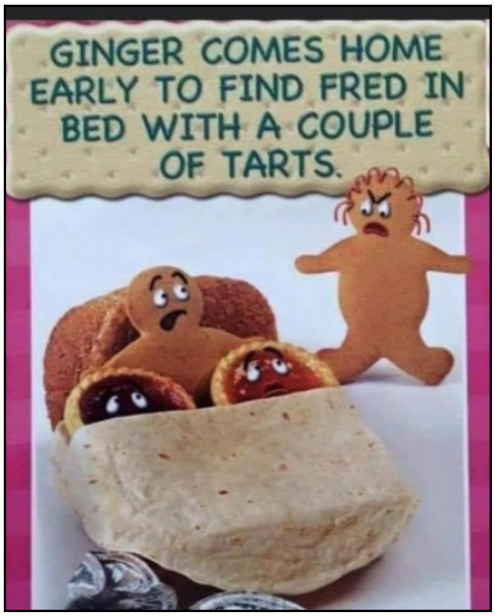
"We had a major issue with stopping power with the SA80" said Lt Gen Ian Wallace, Deputy Director of Defense Armaments, "The weapons system was simply not powerful enough to put down the enemy. With the new SLR-A2, you can guarantee that it will not fail with that task."

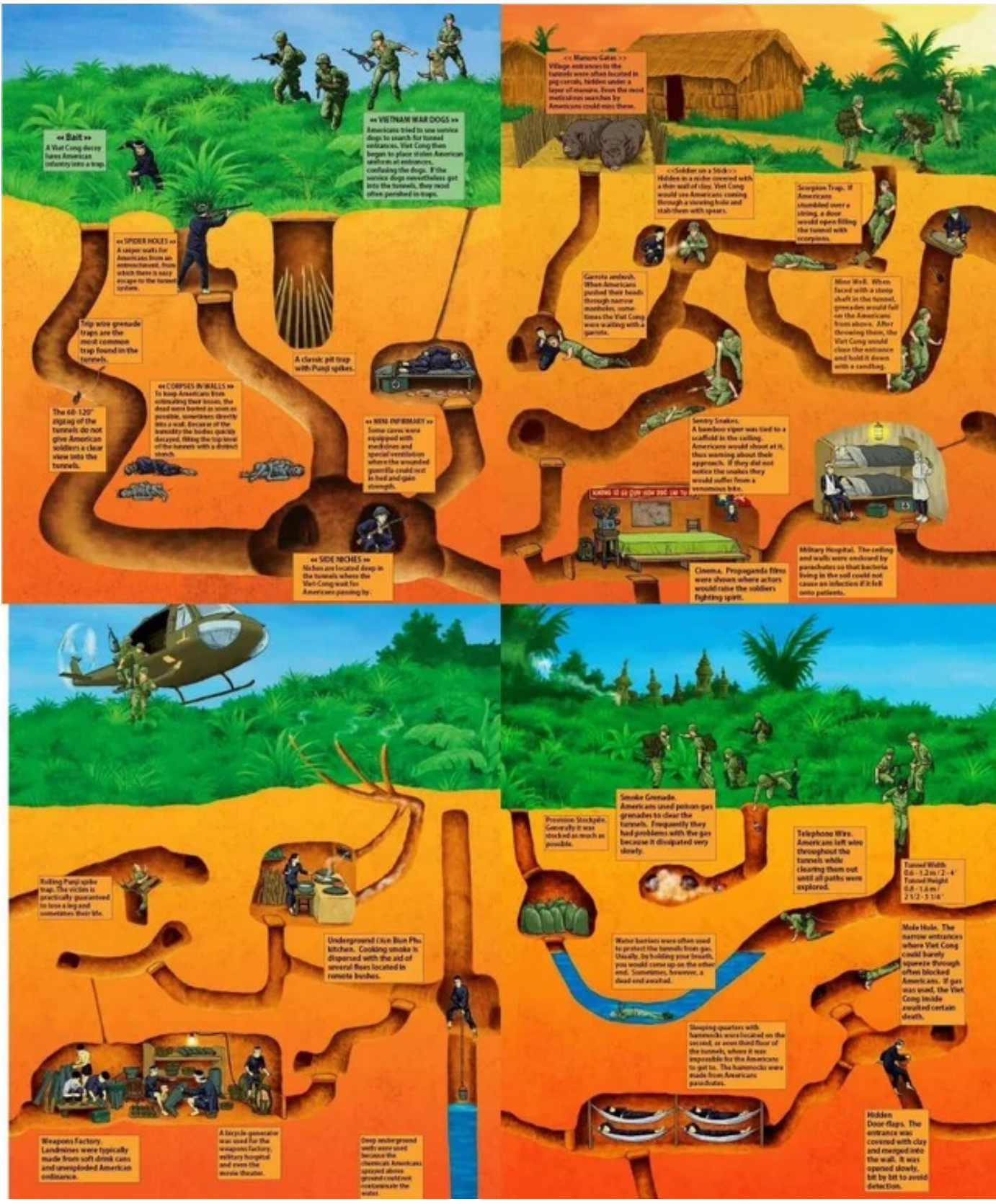
While there is no current date announced for its integration, the news of the SLR's return has been met with approval by both serving soldiers and veterans alike.

"It's good to have a real man's weapon back in the army" said Gary Lavelle, 64, formerly of the Light Infantry.

Some questions have been raised by critics about the weapon system, with claims that the current generation of soldiers may struggle with the recoil from a larger calibre.






«« Bait »»
A Viet Cong decoy lures American infantry into a trap.
«« VIETNAM WAR DOGS »»
Americans tried to use service dogs to search for tunnel entrances. Viet Cong then began to place stolen American uniform at entrances, confusing the dogs. If the service dogs nevertheless got into the tunnels, they most often perished in traps.
«« SPIDER HOLES »»
A sniper waits for Americans from an entrance/exit, from which there is easy escape to the tunnel system.
Trip wire grenade traps are the most common trap found in the tunnels.
A classic pit trap with Punji spikes.
«« CORPSES IN WALLS »»
To keep Americans from estimating their losses, the dead were buried as soon as possible, sometimes directly into a wall. Because of the humidity the bodies quickly decayed, filling the top level of the tunnels with a distinct stench.
The 60-120° zigzag of the tunnels do not give American soldiers a clear view into the tunnels.
«« MINI-INFIRMARY »»
Some caves were equipped with medicines and special ventilation where the wounded guerrilla could rest in bed and gain strength.
«« SIDE NICHES »»
Niches are located deep in the tunnels where the Viet Cong wait for Americans passing by.
«« Manure Gates »»
Village entrances to the tunnels were often located in pig corrals, hidden under a layer of manure. Even the most meticulous searches by Americans could miss these.
«« Soldier on a Stick »»
Hidden in a niche covered with a thin wall of clay, Viet Cong would use Americans coming through a viewing hole and stab them with spears.
Scorpion Trap. If Americans stumbled over a string, a door would open filling the tunnel with scorpions.
Garrote ambush. When Americans pushed their heads through narrow manholes, sometimes the Viet Cong were waiting with a garrote.
Mine Well. When faced with a steep shaft in the tunnel, grenades would fall on the Americans from above. After throwing them, the Viet Cong would close the entrance and hold it down with a sandbag.
Sentry Snakes. A bamboo viper was tied to a scaffold in the ceiling. Americans would shoot at it, thus warning about their approach. If they did not notice the snakes they would suffer from a venomous bite.
Cinema. Propaganda films were shown where actors would raise the soldiers fighting spirit.
Military Hospital. The ceiling and walls were anointed by parachutes so that bacteria living in the soil could not cause an infection if it fell onto patients.
Rolling Punji spike trap. The victim is practically guaranteed to lose a leg and sometimes their life.
Underground Cu Chi Bun Phu kitchen. Cooking smoke is dispersed with the aid of several flues located in remote bushes.
Weapons Factory. Landmines were typically made from soft drink cans and unexploded American ordnance.
A bicycle generator was used for the weapons factory, military hospital and even the movie theater.
Deep underground wells were used because the chemicals Americans sprayed above ground could not contaminate the water.
Provision Stockpile. Generally it was stocked as much as possible.
Smoke Grenade. Americans used poison gas grenades to clear the tunnels. Frequently they had problems with the gas because it dissipated very slowly.
Telephone Wire. Americans left wire throughout the tunnels while clearing them out until all paths were explored.
Tunnel Width 0.6 - 1.2 m / 2 - 4' Tunnel Height 0.8 - 1.6 m / 2 1/2 - 5 1/4'
Water barriers were often used to protect the tunnels from gas. Usually, by holding your breath, you would come up on the other end. Sometimes, however, a dead end awaited.
Mole Hole. The narrow entrances where Viet Cong could barely squeeze through often blocked Americans. If gas was used, the Viet Cong inside awaited certain death.
Sleeping quarters with hammocks were located on the second, or even third floor of the tunnels, where it was impossible for the Americans to get to. The hammocks were made from Americans parachutes.
Hidden Door-flaps. The entrance was covered with clay and merged into the wall. It was opened slowly, bit by bit to avoid detection.

JANUARY 26, 2022 BY RAY PAYNE - VETERANWEB.

The other side: The Vietnamese communists and 'the American War'

JANUARY 26, 2022 BY RAY PAYNE

The other side: The Vietnamese communists and 'the American War'

The Americans and their allies saw the Vietnam War as part of a struggle against international communism. Those on the other side, however, thought of themselves more as nationalists fighting against foreign invaders and colonialists. The war against the United States was, therefore, seen by many Vietnamese as another in a series of conflicts for independence dating back almost a thousand years.

Vietnam was ruled by China for almost a millennia before gaining independence in the tenth century. During the centuries that followed the Vietnamese repelled three invasions by the fearsome Mongols and resisted further Chinese attempts to regain control, finally defeating a vast invasion force sent by the Chinese Ming Dynasty in the fifteenth century. Following this victory, Vietnam itself began to expand southwards at the expense of Champa, a kingdom whose remnants were ultimately incorporated into Vietnam by the early nineteenth century.

Further Vietnamese expansion was halted only by the French, who forcibly established themselves as colonial masters at the end of the nineteenth century. French colonial rule was in turn interrupted in 1940 when the Japanese invaded Vietnam. The Vietnamese endured terrible hardships during the Japanese occupation, which lasted until the end of the Second World War in 1945.

After the war the French tried to regain control of Vietnam despite local and world-wide anti-colonial sentiment. Eight years of war followed before the French were defeated by the Viet Minh, or the League for the Independence of Vietnam, led by Ho Chi Minh who became president of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam). The Vietnam People's Army existed within the Viet Minh movement and lasted until the Vietnam War and beyond. Between 1946 and 1972 the Vietnam People's Army was commanded by General Vo Nguyen Giap, Ho Chi Minh's military strategist since the early 1940s and a veteran of the struggle against the Japanese. Much of the credit for the defeat of the United States and before them the French has been given to Giap, a brilliant but ruthless commander who was prepared to expend as many lives as were necessary to achieve victory.

Ho Chi Minh, was a communist. But in the early stages of the Vietnam War he instructed his lieutenants to make sure the Vietnamese people understood that they were fighting for Vietnam, not for communism itself. In a critique of continuing United States aid to the South during the final period of the war, General Giap commented that 'even when they withdrew their troops they would still continue to transform Vietnam into a new colony of theirs.' And when Saigon fell to the Vietnam People's Army in 1975, Giap spoke publically of Vietnam's 'tradition of fighting against foreign invasion.'

The Vietnamese thus thought of the Americans as they had of the French, the Japanese, and the Chinese, as colonialists who sought to occupy their country. They called their struggle against the most recent invaders 'the American War'.

The Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army the word "Viet Cong " was first used in the late 1950s. It appeared in South Vietnamese newspapers as an abbreviation of cong san Viet Nam, which simply meant "Vietnamese communist. " Many of the original Viet Cong were from the south of the country, they had gone north after 1954 when Vietnam was divided. There they received political and military training before being sent back to the south.

In the 1960s American soldiers began referring to the Viet Cong as the VC and, more colloquially, as 'Charlie', which derived from the phonetic alphabet's rendering of the letter C in VC. The slang term 'Charlie' quickly came to include all communist forces. According to the Vietnamese themselves, however, the Viet Cong were part of the North Vietnamese Army or Vietnam People's Army, commanded by General Vo Nguyen Giap. The Viet Cong based in South Vietnam included both guerrilla and regular formations, with even the guerrillas possessing a regular-army structure. In addition, the Viet Cong consisted of a 'main force' of permanent troops, as well as cadres for recruiting and 'organising' South Vietnamese peasants.

Rather confusingly, the Viet Cong often called themselves the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam in order to maintain the appearance of being a nation-

JANUARY 26, 2022 BY RAY PAYNE - VETERANWEB (CONT'D)

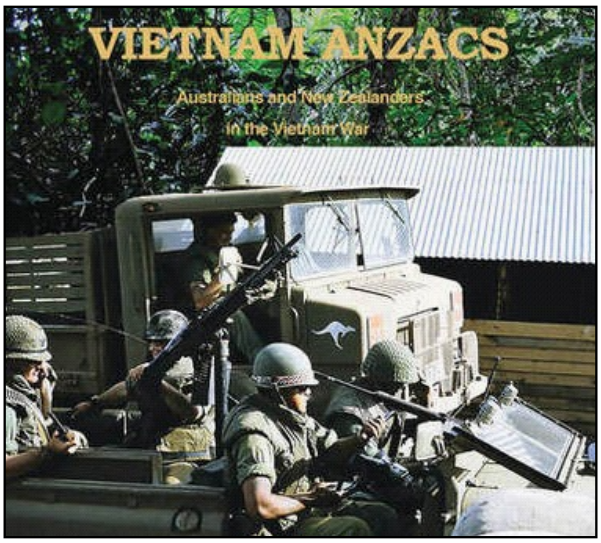
The other side: The Vietnamese communists and 'the American War'

alist, southern-based movement, rather than a communist and North Vietnam-controlled organisation. Communist propaganda therefore played a part in creating the impression that the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army were separate entities.

The Americans in turn usually thought of their Vietnamese foes as being either Viet Cong guerrillas or North Vietnamese regular troops. Although this distinction between guerrillas and conventional soldiers does not entirely reflect how the Vietnamese either thought of themselves or operated, it became widespread. This perception also determined how most westerners understood – and continue to think about – the communist forces in the Vietnam War.

The Viet Cong fought as guerrillas or regular soldiers according to the circumstances. In 1963 they won a notable victory at Ap Bac in a set-piece battle with South Vietnamese forces. But, perhaps inevitably, the Viet Cong are better remembered for guerrilla-style operations such as ambushes, sabotage, and assassinations conducted against the Americans and their allies. At times the Viet Cong also engaged in extortion and inflicted terror on South Vietnamese peasants, and there is evidence of Viet Cong massacres of local Catholic and Montagnard communities.

The Vietnam War was an impossible Task for the Free



World forces, given the political restrictions imposed on their conduct. Hanoi's National Liberation Front had been in place since 1946, controlling the loyalty of the peasants through a combination of political ideology, torture, murder, assassination and abduction. Hanoi's Tet Offensive launched in 1968 was meant to result in the general uprising of the countryside. This did not happen, and none of Hanoi's military objectives were achieved. On the political front, however, the West was surprised at the strength and violence of Hanoi's offensive. What the US military-led forces failed to deal with was the political nature of Hanoi's struggle. This, together with an inept Saigon Government and poorly-led South Vietnamese armed forces, resulted in a communist victory in 1975.

Within Phuoc Tuy Province and along the Province's northern borders were D445 VC Battalion, 274 and 275 VC Main Force Regiments and 33 (NVA) Regiment. These Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army units were well armed, well led and highly motivated. Facing these elite enemy units was the 1st Australian Task Force (1st ATF). Five designated ANZAC battalions passed through 1st ATF from 1968 to 1971 and, within these five battalions, there were nine New Zealand rifle companies.

VIETNAM ANZACS recognises the contribution of our ANZAC battalions during this most unpopular and brutal war. Each ANZAC battalion did its part to seek out and destroy the enemy within the TAOR. They faced the finest VC and NVA Main Force Regiments, battling them in the towns, villages, rubber plantations, jungle and in the M16 mine-infested VC sanctuaries and Secret Zones. The ANZACs courage in these face-to-face encounters was proven time and time again. These soldiers answered their Governments' call and did their nations proud.

The book is written in the same style as Tony's first book, *Jungle Green Shadows,* published by John Douglas Publishing in 2019. There are hundreds of maps, photos and diagrams to help the reader understand the many operations and battles fought in Phuoc Tuy Province and the northern border areas. The book also contains a glossary of terms, a list of those New Zealanders who served there on active service and a list of those who became casualties.

VIETNAM ANZACS is not a glorification of war nor does it seek to make a political statement. It simply tells the story of the ANZAC battalions, and particularly their New Zealand rifle companies, in Vietnam.

Publishing Date: 18 August 2021

Price: $86.00

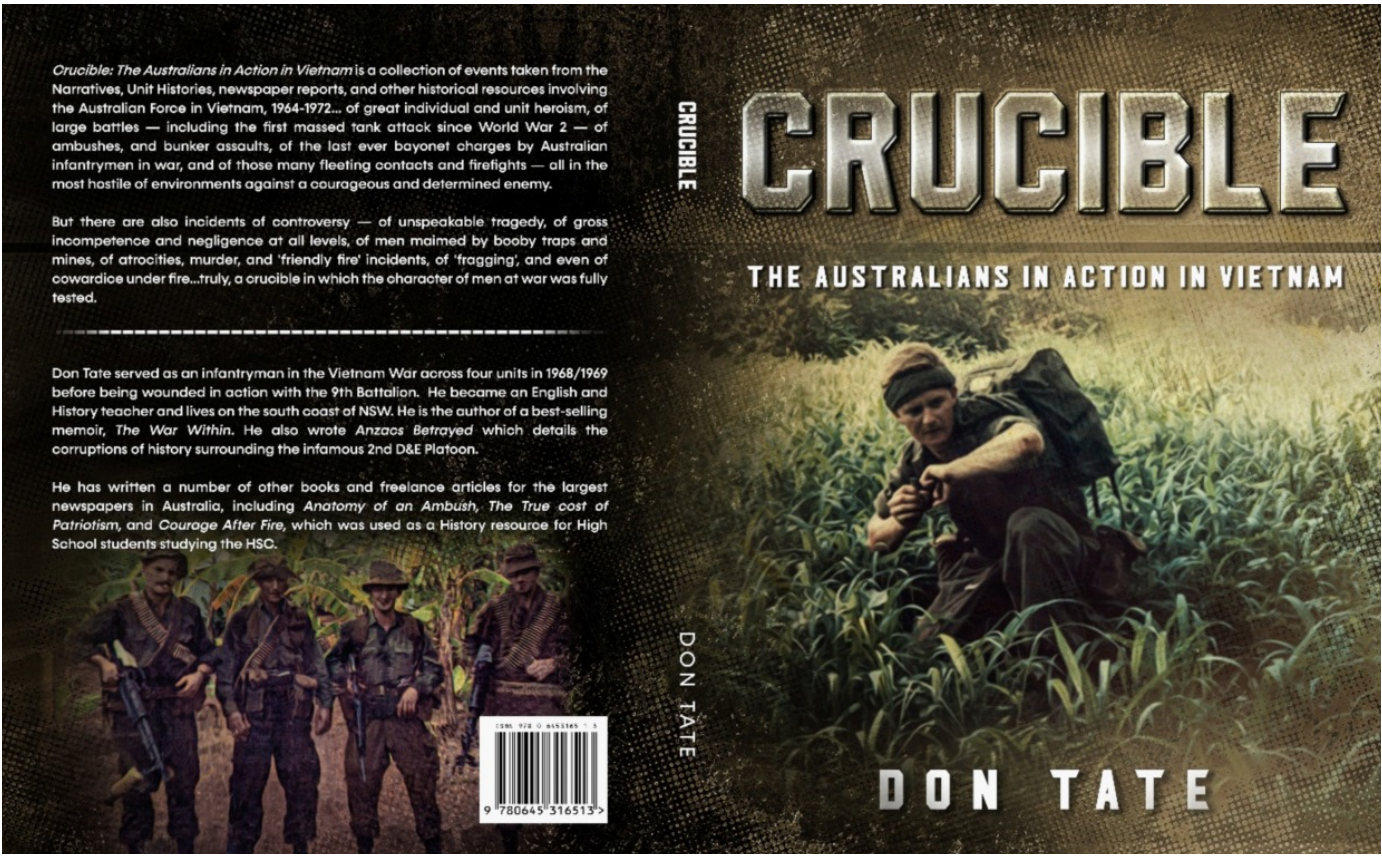
Size: 200mm x 260mm

Extent: 431 Pages

Illustrations: 350 coloured & B/W (approx).

Binding: Cased & Dust Jacketed

ISBN: 978-0-9951219-2-8



Perhaps your members might be interested in my new book (***Crucible: the Australians in Action in Vietnam***) which contains 370 matters taken from the Vietnam War.

(Front and back covers, attached)

The individual pieces involve the greatest heroism and acts of bravery; tragedies; misadventure; and even matters of great contention. (See attached sample pages)

More than 400 veterans across all branches of the Service are named. (See the Index attached)

I am the author- a fellow veteran (ex-infantry, 4RAR, 2nd D&E Platoon; and 9RAR) wounded in action in July 1969, and am a retired English/History teacher.

I believe most veterans will find this a compelling record of the war- the stories behind the statistics, if you like.

It retails for $35 (which includes the packaging and postage) anywhere in Australia.

Books can only be purchased in three ways:

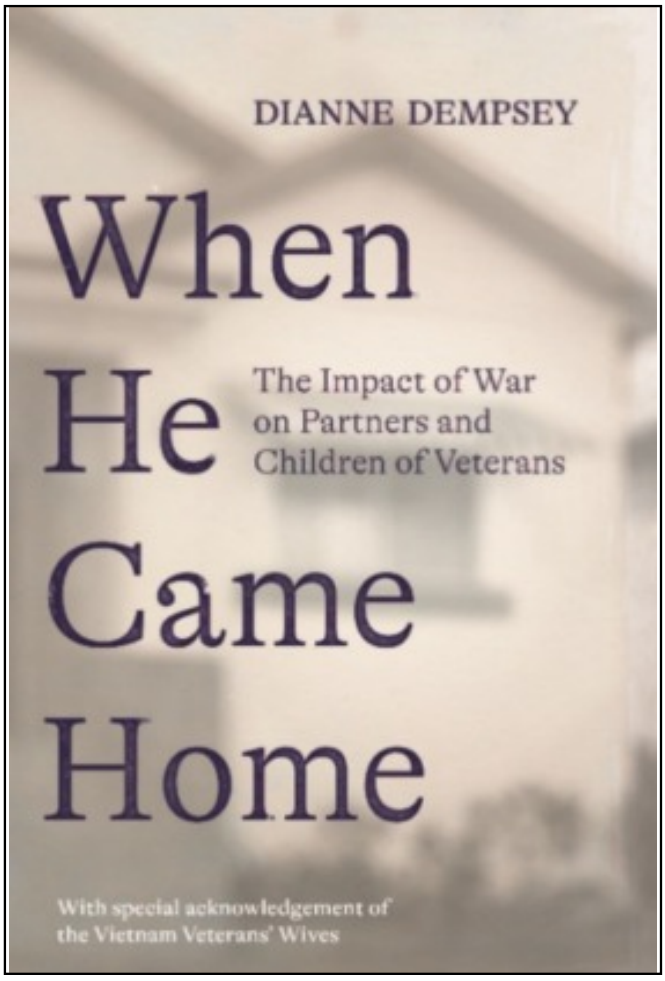
- by direct email contact with me at: warvet_69@yahoo.com;

- or if you are on **Facebook**, by messaging me at: 'DONALD WILLIAM TATE'

- or by phone, at 0242562658

Best Regards

Don Tate



porary conflicts. Told within an informed historical context and employing intimate narrative interviews, this important book examines the unexamined: how so many families have been brought to their knees and how such suffering can be prevented.

"So exciting to have the book out there. Here I am at the Bendigo RSL Subbranch War Memorial where we did the first launch on Vietnam Veterans Day. (August 18)

So pleased to have the support of Vietnam Veterans' Association. Their president, Paul Penno, very kindly spoke to the book.

The next launch was held at the Vietnam Veterans Museum on Phillip Island. (August 20th)

Particular thanks to Krishna Methven and her husband John Methven and the staff at the museum who so generously catered for the event and looked after us."

Dianne's new book is now available through Bendigo Dymocks.

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

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

When He Came Home is a belated recognition of these women, and it also focuses on how the issues of PTSD and suicide affect veterans who participate in contem-

To order your copy *please email, order online or telephone Australian Scholarly Publishing.*

https://scholarly.info/book/when-he-came-home/
T: +61 3 9329 6963 E: enquiry@scholarly.info

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

Format: Paperback
Released: July 2021
Price: $29.95AUD

ISBN: 978-1-922454-66-9

The Best Exercises for Seniors

Water aerobics. In the past years, water aerobics have become an extremely popular form of exercise among all ages, but in particular to seniors. ...

Chair yoga

Resistance band workouts

Pilates

Walking

Body weight workouts

Dumbbell strength training

Veterans Wellness Programs

DVA Pays
for the clinically necessary treatment

Entitled Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) clients may be referred for clinically necessary Exercise Physiology treatment by their General Practitioner on a valid D904 referral form.

Gold Card Holders are entitled to clinically necessary treatment covered by DVA's health care arrangements for all health conditions.

White Card Holders are entitled to clinically necessary treatment for an accepted disability ie: an injury or disease accepted by DVA as caused by war.

Start today and experience the benefits...

✓ Increase mobility and balance ✓ Reduce and manage age related illness ✓ Assist with the managment of chronic health conditions, back pain, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, diabetes and more

✓ Exercise Physiology, Occupational Therapy, Dietetic & Physiotherapy services available.

✓ Operating out of Gym & Aquatic facilities, also with the option of home visits.

NJF Exercise Physiologists

VICTORIA
NJF operates out of numerous locations, call to find your nearest location.

1300 890 507 or 0449 713 472
E admin@njfwellness.com.au

njfwellness.com.au

national vietnam veterans museum

SUPPORT YOUR MUSEUM

SUPPORT YOUR MUSEUM

Become a Friend of NVVM

Office Use Only

Membership Number

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

As well as demonstating 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.

Payment:	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year
Individual	$35 ☐	$65 ☐	$95 ☐
Concession	$25 ☐	$45 ☐	$65 ☐
Family	$70 ☐	$130 ☐	$190 ☐
Corporate	$200 ☐	$350 ☐	$500 ☐
Life: Aged 60 yrs+ Individual	$800 ☐	Concession $600 ☐	
Life: Aged under 60 yrs Individual	$1200 ☐	Concession $800 ☐	

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: ...../...../.....

A service founded by Vietnam Veterans

Beating the blues

Building better relationships

Doing anger differently

Managing pain

Mental Health First Aid

Operation Life: Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

Operation Life: Suicide alertness for everyone (safe TALK)

Recovery from trauma

Residential lifestyle management program

Sleeping better

Stepping Out

To REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM
or
If you need NEED ASSISTANCE

Call *OPEN ARMS*

Ph: 1800 011 046