



Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Victorian Branch Inc.

SUMMER 2021 EDITION



IN THIS ISSUE

- President's Report.
- Secretary's Report.
- Sub Branch news.
- Veteran Interest issues.



Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living

FSB-VIC



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	Sue McQUEEN OAM	5444 1871
Membership Officer		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	Maurie BENSON	Mob: 0417 588 886
Editor FSB-VIC		
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.

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Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living



There is not a lot to report given the on-going COVID restrictions that have virtually stalled all activities.

Some effort has continued with the Welfare Package and other projects which have been on the

back burner for some time.

Veterans have responded to a call for volunteers to participate in recordings of their recollections of their Vietnam experience. It is hoped this project can commence early in 2022.

Garden rehabilitation project work at the Austin Repat. has again slipped as other hospital works take precedence.

It is through a great deal of effort by the State Secretary that a State Council was held in Ballarat in November; venues had to be changed and other arrangements amended as COVID restrictions had changed over time. However, we were determined to conduct a face-to-face meeting, and I am delighted that all went well.

Much of our time has been taken up responding to requests from VVAA National for opinion on a number of papers for ESORT. Council will deliberate on several issues including taking a position in regard to the

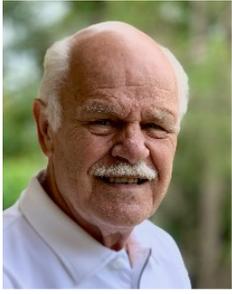
on-going Afghanistan investigations, the term “Veteran”, and a recently announced review of DVA practices focused on delivery of home and handicapped services.

Despite COVID, obligations to CAV remain, and Sub-Branch annual financial report forms have been distributed.

A number of welfare matters were attended to and I wish to make note of the exceptional work done by executive members and in particular the State Welfare Officer Kevin Hunter who has indicated that he will be standing down at the end of the year.

Bob Elworthy





With COVID restrictions easing life is looking a little brighter. It will be great to see the end of 2021 after having to endure the longest lock down anywhere. The lock down with all its restrictions, limited in a major way how we kept in touch and communicated with our Sub-Branches. Like many other

organizations we out of necessity managed to negotiate our way through all these restrictions.

Face to face meetings were out with ZOOM meetings in our case, the preferred method of getting together for State Executive, State Council and Sub-Branch meetings. The year started well and we were able to get together and meet for the State Congress AGM/Council meeting in Geelong February 20, 2021 before COVID returned with a vengeance.

The State Council meeting scheduled for June 26, 2021 in Moama NSW and hosted by Echuca Sub-Branch was, after 2-3 attempts and after it was obvious it could not go ahead, awarded to the Ballarat Sub-Branch. The State Council meeting was eventually held at the City Oval Bowling Club, Ballarat on 13 November 2021 after four to five attempts, a five months delay. We did in the end meet face to face in what was a great reunion and meeting for the delegates. Thank you to Echuca for trying, unfortunately the two State scenario was totally against you. To Ballarat Sub-Branch, all the work and determination you put in made it possible. You were fantastic, we finally made it so thank you.

This pandemic also played havoc with the 2021 Commemorative calendar. ANZAC Day managed to go ahead but with greatly reduced attendance numbers. Vietnam Veterans Day, Remembrance Day and Geelong Sub-Branch's Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Service at St Paul's Cathedral were all relegated to a live streaming service, as it was impossible to meet physically. Our Vietnam Veterans day streaming service was, as with the previous year well received. Congratulations to Maurie Benson, the organizer of this event for all the effort he put into the planning of a full-scale commemoration at the Shrine, which, at the very last minute had to be cancelled and replaced instead with a live streaming service.

Vales have been increasing in numbers year by year with another 33 veterans passing away this year, 2021. We are all getting older. To family, veterans and friends

of members who have passed we extend our deepest sympathy. 'Lest we forget.'

Throughout most of 2021, families, veterans and friends have been denied the opportunity to pay their respects for loved ones in the normal traditional way. Funeral homes generally have included live streaming services to allow those who were not able to physically attend due to the restrictions to at least view the service on line. We at VVAA are of the opinion we should find a way to honour those who have left us in 2020/21, maybe something along the lines of a Gravesite Vigil to honour those no longer with us. We can discuss this at our next State Council meeting in Swan Hill on 26 February 2022.

Sub-Branches have been busy throughout the year following up with welfare calls to members making sure everyone was OK. There have been food deliveries with Noble Park in particular delivering bread, buns and pies donated by a local bakery and then distributing these to their members and Vasey Care homes in Noble Park and surrounding suburbs. Assistance with doctor's appointments and pickup of medications has also been high on the agenda and luckily we have not to our knowledge had any COVID cases amongst our membership.

It is pleasing to see our Membership continues at a very steady level, consistently on par with the past four years or so. VVAA Victoria continues to maintain its very strong position within VVAA. However, as I mentioned before we are getting older and the ability of Sub-Branches to form committees to ensure the continuance of their Sub-Branches will from now on start to get a little more difficult. We have been very fortunate that although we continue to lose many good members we with the dedication and hard work of our Sub-Branch committees still manage to bring many lost members and some new ones back into the fold. We are getting older and it will get harder to survive as a Sub-Branch, so start directing your thoughts and efforts to your Closure Plan. We're not there yet; it is coming, so we must prepare for that eventuality.

Thank you everyone for your efforts and assistance in ensuring VVAA Victoria continues to be the strongest and most productive of all the Branches within the VVAA and as usual the Branch that leads the way.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a bright and a Prosperous New Year 2022.

George Skell

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2021

MARYBOROUGH

Our VV Day 2021 was a smaller than usual Service on Sunday the 15th which included a welcome and address to the significance of the day, Wreath laying, the Ode and Last Post and national anthem to conclude the Service.

On 18th August VV Day 2021 there was a Dawn Service held at the Memorial followed by the traditional trip to the cemetery where Poppies were placed on the graves of Victor Wagstaff KIA and other known Vietnam Veterans who have died since.

Last Service under lock down - hopefully.

Lee Turton.



Those that attended the Dawn service from left - David Olive, Garry Mayall, Lee Turton, Reg May, Ben Holscher and Peter Yuille.

New Diet Program



Ben Holscher and Peter Yuille at rear lay Poppies on Victor Wagstaff's grave.

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2021

MELBOURNE SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

Again, for the 3rd year in a row, the VVAA Victorian Branch annual Vietnam Veterans Day Commemoration Service at the Melbourne Shrine to be held on the 18th August 2021 was cancelled due to COVID restrictions.

A tough call not only for the Vietnam Veteran community who regularly gather there each year, but also considering the fact that the VVAA Vic Branch has been hosting that event for the past 31 years and was to have held the last full Service event before moving to a less formal gathering for future years.

Not to be discouraged we will try again on the 18th August 2022. Let's make the 2022 VV Day Service one to remember.

SUB BRANCHES ~ WHAT'S ON

GEELONG

Despite the restrictions imposed by COVID, members were able to participate in several ceremonies and events in the latter part of the year. It began with our



annual Vietnam Veterans Day on Sunday 15th August, held at our Memorial Park in North Geelong.

While the ceremony was low key the remembrance for fallen mates was no less special. This was followed by a lunch at the City of Geelong Bowling Club. There were similar ceremonies at Torquay and Portarlington. A great effort was made by our Camperdown group, under the direction of Alan Fleming. It was truly a community event.

In October the annual Vietnam Veterans Memorial Service was live streamed from St. Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne. Over 160 people watched the ceremony. We continue to promote this important memorial event and hope there will be continued support in the future by the State Branch and other VVAA Sub Branches.

Golf day at Queens Park was well supported and the day finished up with a BBQ lunch and presentations to the winners. Kevin Benson and Col Walters looked like real professionals on course.

During Veterans Health Week members were active playing tennis. Under the direction of Nigel Wilson the

players were put through their paces with heart rates raised and muscles stretched. There were magnificent smashes executed by Mick Hoare and



Les Fuller. All the practice sessions during the year (the tennis group play 3 times per month) paid dividends.

Each fortnight the Association holds its "Pay Day" lunch in various locations around Geelong. These are

important opportunities to catch up on news and enjoy each other's company over a delicious meal and glass of vino.

There is usually a raffle helping to raise funds for the Association. Neil Smith, our Wellbeing Co-Ordinator, does a great job organising these events.



A group also travelled to Phillip Island in early November to visit the National Vietnam Veterans Museum and other places of interest on the island.



Our final event for the year was our Christmas Lunch, with a very good attendance by members and their partners. We look forward to 2022 and hope it will offer greater freedom to be 'out and about'.

Vale 2021: Les Harris, Bruce Sampson, Denis Leworthy, Max Browne, Bill Slevin, Charlie Murdoch. May they rest in peace.

Rieny Nieuwenhof – President G & DVVAA

SUB BRANCHES ~ WHAT'S ON GEELONG

6th August 2021

GEELONGINDY.COM.AU NEWS



Vietnam veteran Reiny Nieuwenhof. (Pictures: Ivan Kemp) 245939_02

Veteran marks 50 years

Today marks 50 years since Portarlington veteran Reiny Nieuwenhof came home to the woman he married before leaving for Vietnam.

Mr Nieuwenhof married Jennifer Gaye just before flying to Vietnam after being drafted for national service.

He served six months in 131 Divisional Locating Battery using electronic listening posts and radar to track enemy soldiers from the Australian headquarters in Nui Dat.

"It's certainly something that you never forget," he said. "I was one of the lucky ones. For those who have suffered much worse than I through PTSD, those flashbacks cause them severe trauma to this very day."

Protesters confronted Mr Nieuwenhof and his comrades as they arrived at the airport on August 6, 1971, while returning from the most unpopular war in Australia's history.

"It didn't impact me – they were just making

a statement," he said.

Later, he and his wife reunited, after writing letters to each other while he was in Vietnam.

"It was pretty special," he said.

With Vietnam Veterans' Day coming up on August 18, Mr Nieuwenhof and others who served plan to sell badges beginning next Monday on Malop Street, outside Westfield.

The day commemorates the Battle of Long Tan, Australia's most costly battle in the Vietnam War.

The veterans will remain at their post from 10am to 4pm until August 17, dependent on Victoria's COVID-19 situation.

The funds raised go toward supporting veterans struggling with financial and psychological hardship.

"That's the whole point of the badge-selling," Mr Nieuwenhof said.

– Luke Voogt



SUB BRANCHES ~ WHAT'S ON

MELBOURNE WEST

Well, Melbourne West Sub-Branch held its first Committee Meeting since July. Seemed strange eye-balling each other rather than on a screen or speaking via a phone.

Due to changes and regulations regarding a COVID safe place for us to meet weekly, and given that no one wants to play “policeman” checking each member’s COVID-19 Digital Certificate and possibly have to turn them away, while perhaps knowing that they have one, we have opted out of utilising the Wyndham City Council’s Hoppers Crossing Community Centre where we have met for the last 7 odd years.

As from 17th Nov 2022 we will meet each Wednesday at the Hoppers Crossing Club, Cnr Mossfeil and Pannam Drives, Hoppers Crossing at 11.30am. Members can have a Senior’s Luncheon, or just a drink and a “yack” with their fellow vets and partners.

We have set 15th Dec for our Christmas Party at the Hoppers Club, but as the COVID Digital Certificate will be the main requirement, we will just have to wait and see how many we get turning up.

The current Committee are happy to “give it a go” again this year, which bodes well for us continuing as a viable Sub-Branch, especially as we are still well situated financially.

Our local RSL clubs are re-opening and Werribee RSL’s end of month Services Luncheon kicks off on 26th November, which we are all looking forward to, albeit with a reduced maximum of attendees to meet State Govt/RSL COVID regulations.

VV Day 2021 was a mirror-image of VV Day 2020. A blank mirror. Despite all our collective crossed fingers, we again had to settle for a “sneaky” wreath laying at Werribee Cenotaph by the Sub-Branch Executive.

While we were hoping to join one of our local schools for a Remembrance Day Service, the dreaded virus hit the school, so the only activity on the 11th Nov will be a single wreath being laid at Werribee Cenotaph.

With our AGM due in Feb 2022, and allowing for the Christmas break, our Activities Committee are looking towards March for our first outing, which hopefully will be the one we planed for earlier in the year but were beaten again by the virus.



From the Committee and Members of Melbourne West Sub-Branch, we wish you, one and all, a Very Happy Christmas and may 2022 by a much better year for all of us. Stay Safe, Stay Well!

Regards,

Glen Smith
President



SUB BRANCHES ~ WHAT'S ON

FRANKSTON

Hasn't this been another strange year, we all thought 2021 would be better than the previous year..... Wrong.

Frankston is like most of the metropolitan Sub Branches, due to the COVID-19 virus we haven't been able to do much at all this year.

I think most members and their families have found 2021 to be a difficult year.

Still following COVID rules and between lockdowns our coffee group managed to hold some group gatherings in member's garages, and now that it is over the guys are meeting back at the Frankston Naval club, usually having a cuppa and a sausage in bread. They are so happy to be back together again.

The committee has tried to keep in touch with most of the members either by email with jokes and what's happening details or via phone calls and snail mail.

Frankston members haven't been able to meet since May '21 and we will be having our first meeting on the 6th December. I think this will be a catch up rather than a formal meeting. Our new Patron Peta Murphy MP is coming along for her first time as our Patron.

While we were hoping to have a small ceremony for VV Day, we were restricted to a wreath laying by myself and my husband at the Frankston Cenotaph. It was very strange having no members or spectators at the Cenotaph; Remembrance Day was also quieter than usual. The local RSL held a small ceremony on site which was very nice, it was the first day of no number restrictions and it was so great to have such a large turn out



This will be my last article for FSB-Vic after 14+ years I have decided it's time to stand down and let some fresh blood take over.

On behalf of the Frankston members I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New year

Cheryl Myers OAM
Secretary

BALLARAT

VVAA Vic Ballarat Sub-Branch is continuing with a tradition dating back to the mid 80's where the St John of God and the Ballarat Base hospital maternity wings lightheartedly competed for the first baby delivered on *Vietnam Veterans Day*. (*between midnight 17th of August and midnight on the 18th of August*) The mother of the 'First Bay Born' receives a flower arrangement, a teddy (*Gender coloured*) and a framed certificate marking the occasion from the Ballarat Sub-Branch.

This year's first baby born was at the Ballarat Base Hospital at 0145 am and was a little baby girl, Samar Kaur Sandhu, both mother and daughter are doing well. Congratulations to all involved.



SUB BRANCHES ~ WHAT'S ON DIAMOND VALLEY ~ (DVIETS)

As with everybody in the Melbourne region, and to some extent or another, throughout the state, our activities this year have been decimated by COVID restrictions.

However, the upside is that we haven't lost any members due to the pandemic and further we have been touched only twice by the passing of our members. – we remember Ray Wescombe (August) and Reno Borg (November).

Groups of members have met for coffee etc as COVID permitted from time to time and have also stayed connected by emails and phone calls.

We were all incredibly happy to resume our Friday Meetings on 5th December and hopefully, the COVID restrictions will slowly disappear into the sunset.

We are deep into the planning stage for 2022 and, optimistically, our year and activities will resume back to 'normal' after the Christmas/New Year Break.

We wish State and all Sub-Branches and their members a safe and very happy Yuletide Season.



Peter Blackman
President
Diamond Valley



BE A MATE THIS CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a wonderful time to be with family and friends, and especially so this year as the easing of COVID restrictions means that the festive celebrations will be even sweeter. For most of us. The last two years have been traumatic for many of us in so many different ways; social isolation, living alone, health issues, the loss of a loved one or Vietnam veteran mate will have weighed heavily on some.

So Christmas might not be a happy time for some. Can I encourage us all as we prepare for our own celebrations to spare a thought for those members of our Vietnam veteran family who might be doing it hard this year, and for whom Christmas may not be a joyous time. Will you join me in being a mate and reaching out to those that you think might be doing it hard and could benefit from a call? Thanks.

And on behalf of Lyn and I, we wish you all a peaceful and Holy Christmas and a happy, healthy 2022.

Regards,

Bob Elworthy



Veterans MATES <https://www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/self-help-tools>

Veterans' MATES is the Veterans' Medicines Advice and Therapeutics Education Services program provided by DVA. It aims to improve the use of medicines and related health services in the veteran community.

To assist veterans and their families access important tools for mental wellbeing, **DVA's High Res SMART (Self Management and Resilience Training) tools** are available on the Open Arms website:

www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/self-help-tools .

On the following Page 12 of this Newsletter you will see an extract of the *Self Help Tools* available on the Open Arms website.

Responses to stressful situations

- Physical reaction
- Thoughts
- Emotions
- Behaviours

Further information is available on the Open Arms website or by direct contact with an Open Arms professional.



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs



My plan for using the DVA High Res SMART tools



Scan here for High Res

There are four main ways that you might respond to a stressful situation. Each type of reaction can be helped by these tools. Fill in the below plan and practise these tools to help build resilience and mental wellbeing.

Which tool?	How will this tool help me?	How much time to complete?	How often?
Physical reactions			
<input type="radio"/>  Controlled breathing	This tool will assist you to slow your breathing rate and manage physical reactions to stressful or difficult situations	1 minute	For example: <input type="radio"/> 1 to 2 times a day <input type="radio"/> 2 to 3 times a week
www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/self-help-tools/show-all-tools/physical/controlled-breathing			
<input type="radio"/>  Guided grounding	This tool will help you focus on your surroundings and the present moment	2 minutes	<input type="radio"/> 1 to 2 times a day <input type="radio"/> 2 to 3 times a week
www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/self-help-tools/show-all-tools/physical/guided-grounding			
Thoughts			
<input type="radio"/>  Stop and swap thoughts	This tool will help you stop and swap your thoughts if a negative or unhelpful thought is causing you distress	5 to 10 minutes	For example: <input type="radio"/> 1 to 2 times a day <input type="radio"/> 2 to 3 times a week
www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/self-help-tools/show-all-tools/thoughts/stop-and-swap-thoughts			
Emotions			
<input type="radio"/>  Distraction	This tool will offer you ideas for distracting yourself to provide a temporary break from overwhelming emotions and thoughts	5 to 10 minutes	For example: <input type="radio"/> 1 to 2 times a day <input type="radio"/> 2 to 3 times a week
www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/self-help-tools/show-all-tools/emotions/distraction			
<input type="radio"/>  Being calm	This tool will assist you to develop an attitude of calm and learn to adopt a calm attitude to life to help with stress management	3 minutes	<input type="radio"/> 1 to 2 times a day <input type="radio"/> 2 to 3 times a week
www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/self-help-tools/show-all-tools/emotions/being-calm			
Behaviours			
<input type="radio"/>  Enjoyable and rewarding activities	This tool gives you ideas for enjoyable and rewarding activities you can do to boost your mood and balance the impact of stress	5 to 10 minutes	<input type="radio"/> 1 to 2 times a day <input type="radio"/> 2 to 3 times a week
www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/self-help-tools/show-all-tools/behaviours/enjoyable-and-rewarding-activities			

VETERAN SUPPORT

VICTORIA'S POWER SAVING BONUS - \$250.00

Are you eligible for the **POWER SAVING BONUS**?

Have you applied?

Through the Victorian Government, a \$250 POWER SAVING BONUS is available to households with at least one concession card holder including DVA Pensioner concession Card and Gold Card.

Visit website:

<https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/search?collection=delwp-meta&f.Type%7CY=&query=power%20saving%20bonus>

to apply.

The process is simple, you will be required to submit a copy of the relevant concession card after which you will be provided with an application number and directed to a site to complete the application process. You will need a copy of an electricity bill to find your smart meter number which has to be included in the application.

DVA - CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

“As we approach the end of what has been another challenging year for all Australians, I’m writing to thank you for your time, contribution and dedication to supporting veterans and families during what continues to be unprecedented times.

In addition to COVID-19, the veteran community has faced many unique challenges, including the Afghanistan withdrawal and commencement of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. Your ongoing support and commitment to working collaboratively with the Department in the pursuit of supporting those who have served and their families is very much appreciated and acknowledged now, as it is every year.

DVA will continue to provide support during the holiday season. Notwithstanding, and in line with previous years, some services will not be open from Christmas Day 2021 to 3 January 2022 inclusive, including: DVA’s Veterans’ Access Network (VAN) offices; the DVA General Enquiries phone line and email; and Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling centres.

Please note: the Open Arms and Safe Zone counselling phone lines will remain open 24/7 throughout the holiday period. DVA staff will also be available to process transport requests for medical treatment on 29, 30 and 31 December 2021. Pension payment and incapacity payments dates will remain the same.

Please visit the [DVA website for further details.](https://www.dva.gov.au/vic)

I wish you and your family, your team and members a safe and relaxing holiday season.

I look forward to working with you in 2022 to deliver for the Victorian veteran community.

In closing, knowing that the holiday season can be a difficult time for some in our community, please remind your members that if they or someone close to them needs support, ring Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling on [1800 011 046](tel:1800011046) or Safe Zone Support if they wish to remain anonymous on [1800 142 072](tel:1800142072). Both services are confidential.”

VETERAN SUPPORT

VICTORIA'S FREE TRAVEL VOUCHER SCHEME

Victoria's free public transport voucher program is changing significantly. **From 1 January 2022**, Victorian residents will no longer receive free travel vouchers. **The program has moved to an 'opt-in' program**, with eligible DVA clients now having to register with Public Transport Victoria (PTV) to continue receiving free travel vouchers annually.

You can [register online for free travel vouchers](#) or in person at a PTV Hub. Register by 31 July 2021 to receive your 2022 vouchers in September/October 2021. If you register after 31 July 2021, you will receive your vouchers in the following year's mail-out. You only need to register once and the vouchers will be mailed to you each year, provided you remain eligible.

If you have already registered through PTV's other eligibility categories, such as a Senior or Carer, you don't need to register again. This is because the free voucher scheme has been streamlined, which means all eligible customers get access to the same entitlement, regardless of your concession category.

As part of the new voucher program, PTV is phasing out peak-free travel vouchers. However, eligible DVA clients who previously received one peak voucher per year will now be eligible for two or four off-peak vouchers annually (depending on where you live — metro or regional).

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.

VETERAN INTEREST

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.

SLR to return to British Army



DVA TV SERVICES

From Liz Cossin, Secretary DVA - For distribution

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Regards, Liz

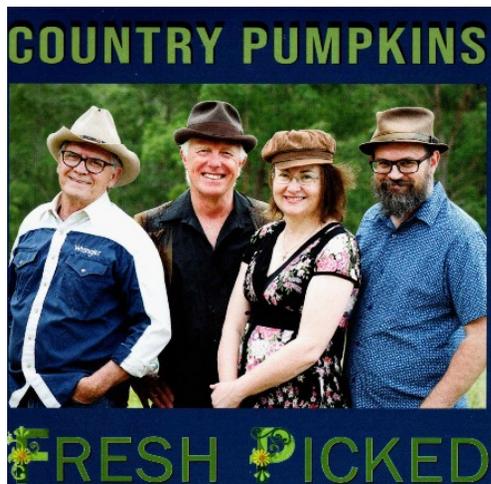
COUNTRY PUMPKINS - FRESH PICKED

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](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=457588522324789) at:

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



1. Fresh Picked	5.20
2. A Cultivated Man	3.15
3. Once Upon a Pumpkin	3.25
4. Take All of My Love	3.46
5. Give the Sticker the Flick	1.36
6. Mirrabooka	2.59
7. Toongabbie Girl	4.05
8. Redbank Creek	3.17
9. Messed the Mosaic	3.11
10. Eureka!	2.57
11. Hear His Call	3.22
12. Johnny Dozer Driver	3.35

The Country Pumpkins are: Rick Bamford on lead guitars, lap-steel, dobro and lead vocals, Daniel Ostrosko on drums, Michelle Scobie on acoustic bass and lead vocals plus Graham Scobie on acoustic guitar, mandolin, harmonica and lead vocals.

For a full listing of songwriters, musicians and singers on each song please go to www.scobie.com.au or use this QR Code



Contact Graham Scobie: 0409 225957, graham@scobie.com.au or www.facebook.com/countrypumpkinsband

Produced by Richard Cooke at www.sanctuarysound.com.au and mastered by Kimmo Vennonen at www.kvp.net.au

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.



NOVEMBER 5, 2021 BY [RAY PAYNE](#)

Dasher: The Kevin Wheatley VC Story

I'm just reaching out about a terrific book 'Dasher' written by author Michael C Madden is the story of one of our national VC treasures. Michael has made it his mission to bring Kevin Wheatley, VC's story; and we are so very proud to have published this really amazing, big hearted story.

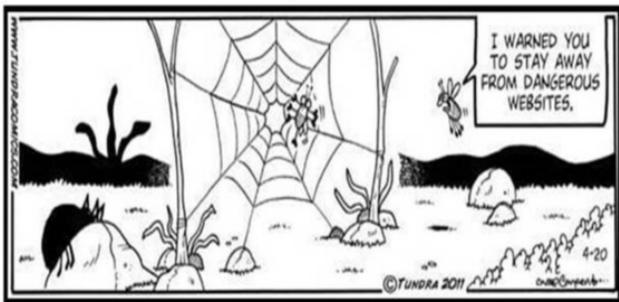
Big Sky Publishing is thrilled to be publishing *Dasher: The Kevin Wheatley VC Story*, (November 2021) and to have sold Audio rights for the book to Wavesound, Australia. Kevin 'Dasher' Wheatley VC is one of the most extraordinary characters in Australian history, and although he is one of the most famous Victoria Cross recipients of all time, his story has never been fully told. Until now

Please find additional information below. Would you be interested in interviewing Michael Madden on this wonderful Australian hero?

Points of Interest

- Kevin 'Dasher' Wheatley VC is one of the most extraordinary characters in Australian history.
- One of the most famous Victoria Cross recipients of all time, his story has never been fully told. Until now. Foreword was written by Keith Payne VC
- **After 56 years the Wheatley family will finally receive Dasher's American Silver Star award** – to be presented by the Governor-General on 14 December, American Embassy, Canberra
- Trailer can be viewed [here](#)

“As a champion of great Australian authors and stories, Big Sky Publishing is very proud to be bringing Kevin 'Dasher' Wheatley's remarkable story to life in audio and paperback. It stands as a poignant example of the valour, comradeship, sacrifice and tragedy of war which will have broad appeal.” Said Denny Neave Director at Big Sky Publishing.

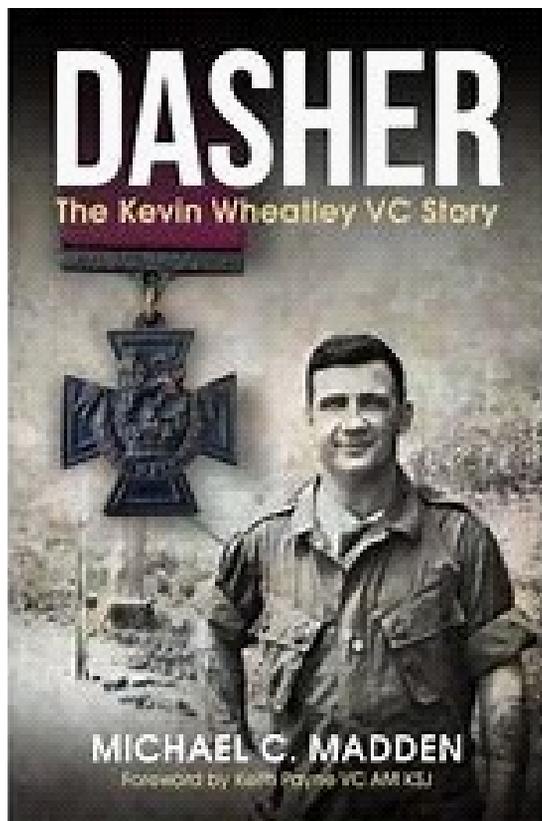


'Dasher' was written by author Michael C. Madden with the support of the Wheatley family, friends and those that fought with him. Foreword was written by Keith Payne VC and on the 14th of December, the Governor-General will finally, 56 years after his many acts of heroism, award Dasher's family with the international award of bravery, the American Silver Star at the American Embassy in Canberra. The publication date for the book is 4 November 2021

Everyone who met the man has a Dasher Wheatley story of larrikin behaviour, outstanding soldiering, stunning valour, or all three. It is our great pleasure to have his story published in paperback and audio for people everywhere to discover this amazing man.

Madden's previous title 'Australia Remembers – Victoria Cross' was extremely well received within Australia and internationally. Michael is a supporter of a number of charities and his royalties for this title were donated to the TPI Victoria for their members, families and the veteran community.

Big Sky Publishing focuses on Australian Authors and Australian Stories supporting emerging authors and illustrators across adult and children categories.



Call Sign VAMPIRE

The inside story of an Australian Field Hospital during the Vietnam War.

Call Sign VAMPIRE The inside story of an Australian Field Hospital during the Vietnam War

ISBN: 978-0-646-83599-0

Published & Distributed by 1st (Aust) Field Hospital Association Inc.

Authors: Rodney Searle, Denise Bell, Paul Danaher, Gregory Anderson

Enquiries: book@callsignvampire.com.au

Physical Details: Hard Cover with dust jacket, encased in a burgundy presentation sleeve embossed with the Fighting Bat

Logo • Weighs over 2kg • Pages: 280 (High Quality) • and hundreds of photos • Size: approx 30cm square

RRP: \$149.99 plus postage

Call Sign VAMPIRE, the inside story of an Australian Field Hospital during the Vietnam War is an insight to the

world of medicine at war told with a mix of operational facts, personal accounts from those that served as well as the patients who passed through the doors of the hospital. Images add great visual depth and tell a story that words cannot.

This book provides a window into the frenetic world of a military hospital in a war zone. an environment where time was of the essence and life often hung in the balance.

The story begins with a brief background on the war and includes an overview of both 2 Field Ambulance, and 8 Field Ambulance, and the trials and tribulations they encountered in the lead up to the 1st of April 1968 when 1AFH was raised.

The next 15 chapters detail the flow of patients through the hospital beginning with Field Medics to Dustoff, where we acknowledge the service of the medics in the field, the helicopter pilots and the medics who flew with them.

"This helicopter that came out of nowhere was a saviour, wasn't it? It was a bird from heaven."Kevin Wigg

Our story continues with Vampire Pad to Triage, Theatre, Wards, Doctors, Nurses, Medics, Outpatients, Psychiatry, Pathology, Xray, Physiotherapy, Pharmacy (incl 1Fd Med & Dent), Dental and Chapter 16 Medevac.

From chapter 17 we journey into the workings of other areas of 1AFH, and its subsidiary partners, such as the Red Cross, Chaplains, HQ & Admin, Admissions and Discharge, Q store, 1Fd Hyg, Transport, Catering, Messes, Boozers,

Entertainment & Sport ending with Pack Up and Return to Australia. Interspersed through the book are "Insert" chapters beginning with "It Wasn't Always Australians We Cared For.",

"Graham Edwards AM", "Medical Civil Action Program" "Poetry & Art" and the "Supply Chain."

The book finishes with an Honour Roll of all who served with 1st Australian Field Hospital and its co-located units.

A long time in the making, we think this book has captured the essence of daily life at the 1st Australian Field Hospital.

Every chapter is interconnected, each and every person an important cog in the mechanism that kept 1st Australian Field Hospital running on a day-to-day basis.

DUST-OFF

A.E.S.C. was the “*Aeromedical Evacuation Support Cell*” and was used mainly by helicopters as soon as they had a wounded, injured or sick person aboard.

Their **CALL SIGN** became “*Vampire*” and they were commonly referred to as Dust-off choppers.

This alerted every one of their situation and they then had priority over all other aircraft.

“*Vampire*” moved patients, under medical supervision, to and between medical facilities and all injured or wounded personnel were airlifted to Field Hospitals within an hour of their incident.

Helicopters that carried out rescues of wounded or injured earned eternal respect of all service personnel.



Veterans Wellness Programs

DVA Pays

for the clinically necessary treatment

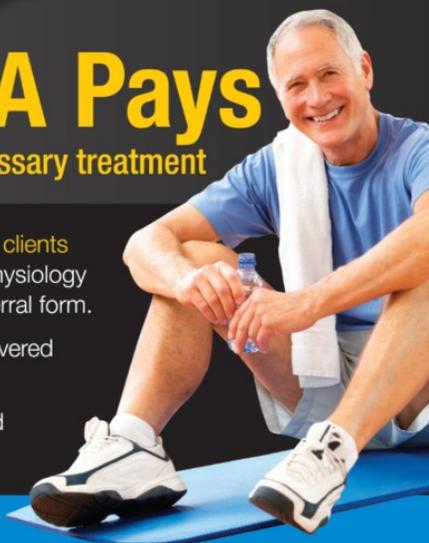
Entitled Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) clients may be referred for clinically necessary Exercise Physiology treatment by their General Practitioner on a valid D904 referral form.

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.

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Book a Group Visit

Disabled Access

All visitors have access to our museum and are able to view all of our exhibits.

Entry into the museum is **wheelchair accessible**. We also have disabled toilets and disabled car parking. A **lift to the Exhibitions Levels** has also been installed making it easy for the elderly or disabled visitors. Wheelchairs and walkers are available for use.

All carers - entry FREE.

For information on how to plan your trip to the Museum - [click here](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION

Go to the NVVM website

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



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