

**RAAF Vietnam Veterans
Association (Vic)
and
Air Force Association (Vic)
Vietnam Veterans Branch**



NEWSLETTER

September 2016

*Commemorating the 50th Anniversary
of the Battle of Long Tan*

www.raafvva.org.au

www.raafavic.org.au

NEWSLETTER of RAAFVVA and Air Force Association VV Branch

The official journal of RAAF Vietnam Veterans Association (Vic), a Sub-Branch of the VVAA Vic Branch Incorporated
(Reg. No. A0029247G. ABN 34 750 672 219)
and RAAF Association (Vic Div) Vietnam Veterans Branch – (ABN 96 091 342 304)

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EDITOR: RAAFVVA and RAAFA (Vic Div) VV Branch Committees

PUBLISHER: Geoff Rose

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi to everyone!

Well the 18TH August has been and gone and for those who attended, a most memorable day. We had all been warned that as part of the 2016 Long Tan commemoration events there would be a special Vietnam Veterans Day in Melbourne, and they were not kidding! From the gunfire breakfast, the march up St. Kilda Rd and then seeing the faces of so many school children it was just an amazing experience.

I have to admit that on a very important day in a very important year, and with perfect weather, I was disappointed with our number of attendees.

As is our normal procedure, after the Shrine program we went across the road to the Seasons restaurant for a buffet meal and a few convivial drinks. We had negotiated with the restaurant management for a change of menu and judging by the comments, the new menu was a success. The service by the restaurant staff was excellent and it was embarrassing to see the food that was left over due to the poor attendance. Some of the marchers did not follow up to the restaurant and the attendance was well below that anticipated. It was the first time in my experience that money supplied for drinks was only half used! The committee will have to seriously consider whether the 'after service meal' on ANZAC and VV Days is still viable.

You should be aware by now that Rick Holmes, our Secretary of nearly 11 years, has resigned. Rick had quite serious health problems and although we accepted his resignation reluctantly, we are buoyed by the fact that he is definitely on the mend and is back to dictating to everyone at committee meetings. At the last AGM Gill Coughlan offered to assist the Secretary and probably did not realise how soon that offer would be accepted, and what it would entail. Gill is doing a great job while she 'tip toes through the minefield' of being acting Secretary.

There are still a few events to come for the 50th Long Tan anniversary, including National Museum Day on Phillip Island on the 5th November and Seymour Family Race Day on the 19th November. See you there!

Good health.

Gareth Davis

President
RAAFVVA
AFA VN Branch



WELFARE REPORT AND RESIGNATION AS SECRETARY

All members,

I have tendered my resignation as Secretary of our two organisations, to President RAAFVVA and AFA Vietnam Branch.

I had "a bit of a turn" couple of months ago and subsequently was diagnosed with lung cancer. GP's, Lung Specialists and Thoracic Surgeon moved with great alacrity and a month later, here I am minus right quadrant of left lung i.e. 25 % of lung capacity.

At this stage they got it all plus 3 lymph nodes so no chemo or radiation.

There will be further ongoing monitoring. Consequently, I have resigned as Secretary of both organisations as for me, family comes first.

I will however, remain on the back bench of these committees to help where I can.

Assistant Secretary Gill Coughlan has taken over the role, so please treat her with respect and support her where you can.

I thank you all for your support over the past 10 years or so and wish you all well.

Rick Holmes



ACTING SECRETARY'S SNIPPETS



Hi All,

I am currently your Acting Secretary, who at the AGM this year, suggested it might be a good idea to have someone in training in case the wheels fell off!!! Well as you know the wheels did fall off, and our wonderful long serving Secretary of 10.5 years was forced to withdraw due to health issues. I didn't expect anything to happen this quickly but here I am attempting to pick up on some of Rick's work and thankfully, with the rest of the committee's help, things are happening.

I was very fortunate to be involved with the Graveside Services for the Vietnam Deceased Members in February and also attended the NGV for the tribute to those that lost their lives at the Battle of Long Tan. Five of us attended and it was an excellent night with outstanding food and entertainment.

Of course the most poignant service this year, in my opinion, was the service on the 18th August at the Shrine, and as usual our members did us all proud and flew the flag against a very strong breeze, well done gentlemen.

I have been TIP trained since, 2003; completing my most recent update course in Feb this year. If I can be of any help, my contact numbers and email details are inside the cover of this Newsletter.

Enjoy the sunshine and remember you use more muscles to smile than frown, so keep smiling.

Gill Goughlan

NOTICE BOARD

Monthly Luncheon

Next monthly luncheon is planned for **Wednesday, 21st September, 2016** at the Mail Exchange Hotel - 688 Bourke Street, City, (corner of Bourke and Spencer St's).



Generally, our monthly luncheons are planned for the third Wednesday of each month. However, dates, and any changes, will be posted on our website blog as soon as available.



An even dozen was a fairly standard turn up for the June luncheon. We all enjoyed good company, tasty food, relaxing drinks and welcoming atmosphere. Only downside was news that John and Carolyn Smith have decided to 'pull up stumps' from Geelong and head to their new property at Taree, on the north coast of NSW. We wish them best of luck for their new life, and just like to let them know, that now, we'll all have a nice place to visit for our holidays!

Going overseas? Our member, Dan Nebauer, offers discounts to current and ex ADF members. Dan specialises in Asian travel, but his experienced staff can cater for all your international or domestic travel needs.

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Ask Dan about the 10% discount offered to all serving or
retired members of the Australian Defence Forces.

*Dan served in the RAAF for 25 years, including a tour of duty
with 35 SQN 'Wallaby Airlines' Vung Tau from '67 to '68.



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The Victorian Branch of the
Vietnam Veterans Association
of Australia Inc.



Invite YOU to a
Non-Denominational
Service of
Thanksgiving and
Commemoration at
St Paul's Cathedral,
MELBOURNE

Wednesday 5th October 2016
at 10:00am



St Paul's Cathedral
Together transforming our City and Diocese



OUT AND ABOUT



The 41st Anniversary of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Day

**Held at Footscray RSL, Sunday, 19 June 2016
by
Vietnamese Veterans Association of Victoria Inc**

RAAFVVA was honoured to receive the invitation below from Mr Cong Minh Nguyen, President of the Vietnamese Veterans Association of Victoria.

“The Vietnamese Veterans Association of Victoria Inc. respectfully invites you to its ceremonies commemorating the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Day.

The event includes Military Services, Laying of Wreaths and some short speeches from the VIP guests then conclude by light refreshment with music entertainment.

This occasion is a good opportunity for reunion for the men who once were soldiers, especially those Australian Veterans who had ever fought side by side with us in the Vietnam War. I, therefore, would be honoured to receive you on the day.”

More than 350,000 Republic of Vietnam soldiers sacrificed their lives together with over 64,000 from allied forces (521 Australian). Thousands of soldiers missing in action during the Vietnam War are still unaccounted for.

The Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Day commemorates and honours all soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom.



Some veterans from the VNAF are pictured above.



The Colour Guard represents all Branches of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (Navy, Air Forces, Ranger, Airborne, Marines, Special Forces, Army).



It is truly outstanding how the Vietnamese Community have adopted and warmly embraced Australia and Australian values. There is always a willingness to include Australian Vietnam Veterans in official functions and ceremonies. Gratitude and enthusiasm to support our veterans are demonstrated by ongoing generous donations to the National Vietnam Veterans' Museum at Phillip Island and regular participation in VVAA organised activities.



**Victorian Branch
Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia
Vietnam Veterans Day Commemorations
Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance
18 August 2016**

***Commemorating the 50th Anniversary
of the Battle of Long Tan***

In the presence of
Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau AM
Governor of Victoria
and
The Honourable Daniel Andrews MP
Premier of Victoria

*The Victorian Branch acknowledges the support of the Victorian State Government
for our 2016 commemorations program without which today's service at the
Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance would not be possible*



Honour the Dead, but Fight Like Hell for the Living



Melbourne provided perfect weather as spectators lined the extended route along St Kilda Rd to cheer and wave at Vietnam veterans marching to the Shrine. Some 45 RAAFVVA/AFA VN Branch members gathered behind our banner as representatives of the RAAF's participation in the war.

Due to timing of the special 50th Anniversary events and extra marching distance involved it was decided not to conduct our usual VV Day service at the RAAF Vietnam Plaque. However, on behalf of all our members, Rick and Golda Holmes, accompanied by Gill Coughlan and Neil Morgan did attend the plaque to place a wreath, and to remember.





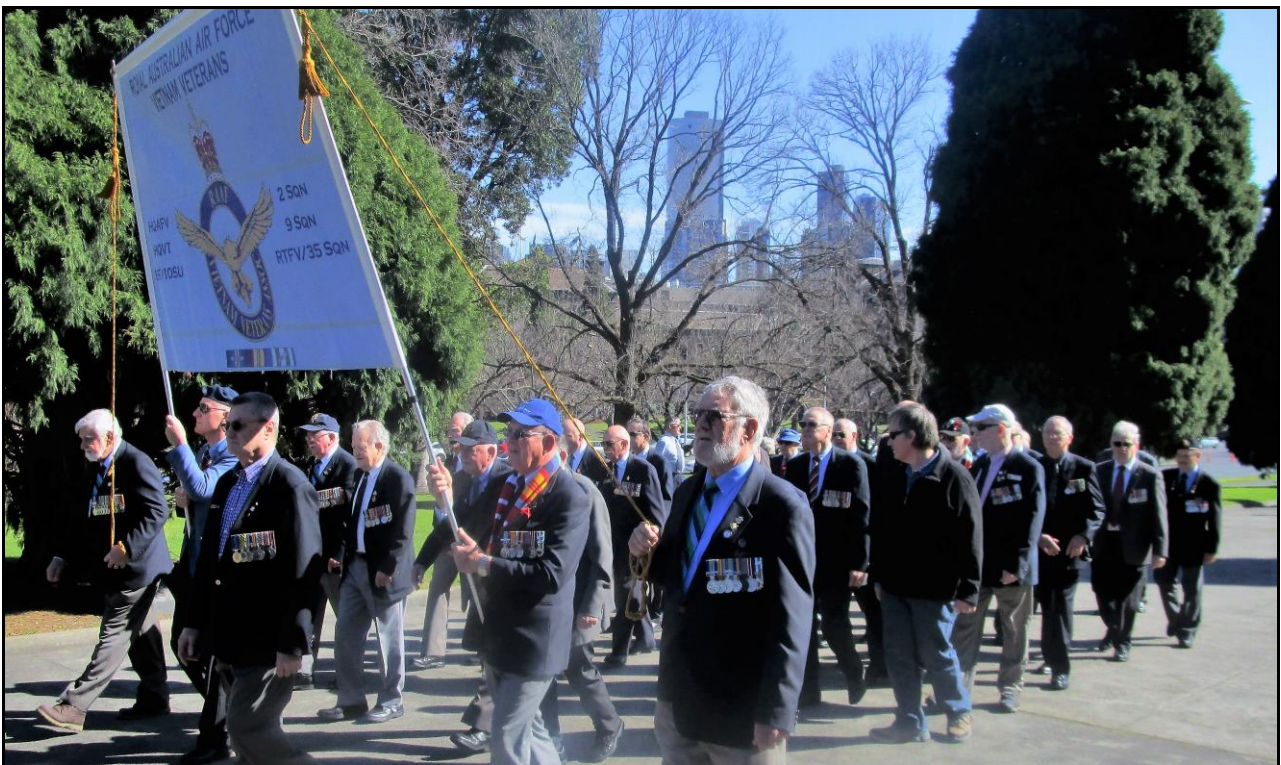
Gareth's Report has summarised most of the activities, so I have included, over the next few pages, a selection of photographs to depict those activities and portray some examples of the camaraderie and many other emotions that were experienced on the day.

Having greatest impact was the sight of 521 small white crosses, each affixed with a knitted red poppy and small Australian Flag. The full name and Service Number of one of our 521 fallen was typed on each cross.

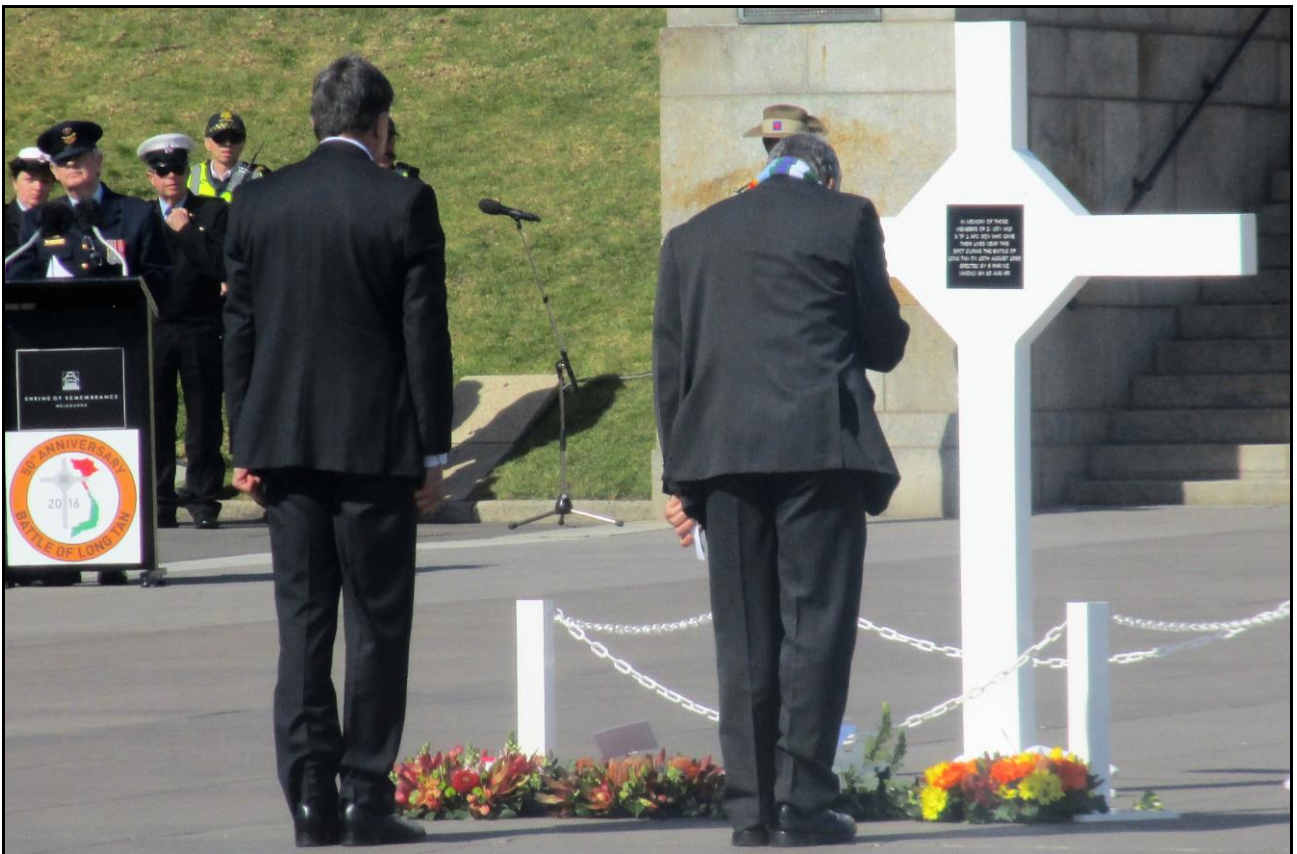


Other memorable aspects were the re-enactment of 6 RAR's first service at the Long Tan Cross and a fly-past of two Cessna (FAC) Bird Dogs and a CAC Winjeel aircraft. Finally, included are two pages scanned from the 50th Anniversary program, titled "Long Tan and The Vietnam Experience – What Today is All About". Written by Bob Elworthy, this is a very moving piece where Bob speaks from the heart and captures what it really is all about, and what it really means, to anyone who was there.









An emotional Bob Elworthy AM, President VVAA Vic, bowed his head low after placing a wreath at the Long Tan Cross replica.



Long Tan and The Vietnam Experience - What Today is All About

Today we mark the 50th anniversary of the magnificent victory by Australian diggers from D Coy 6RAR and three Kiwi's-108 men in all - against overwhelming odds at the battle of Long Tan. It was Australia's most costly day and a defining time of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. As well as Long Tan, what was the decade long Vietnam War experience like for those who lived it?

It's the team - first in, last out- spread across South Vietnam. It's about training and fighting with the ARVN and Montagnards. It's four VC's and all the other bravery awards, it's about the many selfless and brave acts of Australian sailors, soldiers, airmen and nurses that went unacknowledged. It's 1RAR, experienced jungle fighters alongside the US 173rd Airborne.

It's about places and events that evoke strong memories: Coral/Balmoral, Binh Ba, Hat Dich, Binh Gia, Dat Do, Xuyen Moc, Rung Sat, Phan Rang, Dong Da, Duc My, Bien Hoa, Courtenay Rubber, the Nui Thi Vi's (the Warbies) the Long Hai's, the Nui May Taos, the Horseshoe, Nui Dat, Vung Tau, Op Crimp, Op Hammer, Op Bribie, TET 68, the barrier minefield. It's the hundreds of smaller violent bloody actions fought up close that are etched in the memories of those who were there.

The Vietnam experience is about Battalions of regs and nasho's indistinguishable one from the other, burdened like pack mules, constantly patrolling, constantly seeking the enemy, cordon and search, ambushes, living rough, fighting hard. It's men with torches going down tunnels, it's disarming mines and being mangled by mines. It's SAS shadows, unseen for days. It is about centurion tanks fighting house to house or bashing through the jungle in support or APC's spiriting grunts. It's artillery fire missions hitting targets out of sight and air strikes.

It's jungle beasts; mosquitoes, ticks and lice, scorpions and spiders, leeches and snakes. It's heatstroke and red dust, it's monsoonal rain and unbearable humidity. It's uniforms rotting away and boots falling apart, crotch and foot rot, prickly heat, the trots and drips. It's paludrine tablets and short arms inspections, shared PIX magazines on the thunder box, it's blowflies fogging the lines and planes spraying God only knows.

It's HMAS Sydney and her cargoes of men and materials, Australian ships on the gun line, navy divers and pilots and Second World War LST's chugging up the Mekong. It's Canberra bombers, Huey slicks and gunships, Wallaby airlines and Hercs, and Kiwi's flying Bristol Freighters. It's dust off choppers, Vampire pad, and the doctors, dentists and nurses working miracles. It's medics holding a hand as a mate slips away, it's chaplains providing spiritual support and last rites. It's RAAF casevac and medivac flights and Ubon support. It's Army Cessna's, Sioux and Porters.

It's plant operators, truck drivers, artificers, signalmen, mechanics, map makers and storemen. It's about resupply, battle field recovery, ingenuity in keeping the machines of war in action. It's cooks and jack rations, pay clerks, and Q wallahs. It's psyops winning the hearts



Honour the Dead, but Fight Like Hell for the Living



and minds, Chieu Hoi programs, the Playboy Club, POW's and interrogation. It's secret diggers stalking enemy radios. It's civil aid, digging wells, Southern Cross windmills spinning over paddies, soldiers giving up their time to escort doctors and nurses to villages, its building orphanages and schools and handing out clothes and comforts sent by wives and families. It's Aussie SEATO doctors and nurses.

It's drinking QANTAS Skippy flights dry on RTA, entertainers, Salvo's and US Red Cross girls. It's R&R in Hong Kong or Singapore, The Caravelle in Saigon, The Grand in Vungers, R&C at the Badcoe Club, the street of bars, heppo rolls, its white mice and MP's. It's downing VB in steel cans and goffas in the unit boozier. It's 365 and a wakey and short time calendars. It's the PX, and MPC, perfumed mail, shared food parcels from home and Dear John letters. It's trying to hear Radio Australia to get the footy scores. For new arrivals it's the Hoa Long Dance or the Dat Do dogs.

On the home front, it's political intrigue and public indifference, the Draft, Save Our Sons, conscientious objectors, street protests, union boycotts and university student support for the enemy. It's highly edited war grabs on TV, and the latest fashions taking priority over reports of digger casualties. It's about the families and loved ones supporting their men, it's the dreaded telegram, it's repat hospitals, physically and mentally shattered lives. It's joyous and not so joyous homecomings. It's about apathy, and rejection, and it's the ultimate betrayal by the stroke of a pen in Paris that condemned the South and its people, and devalued Vietnam veteran sacrifice and service.

Above all else it is about the Australian service men and women. It's about boys who became men, it's about their skill, determination, courage, bravery, endurance, good humour, ingenuity, compassion and loyalty- the very same attributes assigned to the first ANZAC's. It's about bravery finally recognized 50 years on. It's about mates then and mates now, long after the shooting is over. It's about pride and finally finding peace and recognition. It's about the 521 who are now at rest in their rightful places. It's closure at last for families and mates, and it's about all those who served, suffered and have since passed on.

Today is about remembering Long Tan and the entire Vietnam War experience, and ensuring that Vietnam War history and the Vietnam veteran legacy are remembered and honoured.

Bob Elworthy AM

President, Victorian Branch VVAA



*"The well-being of history lies in its telling,
For unless it is broadcast across the generations it is lost"*

Dr Michael McKernan



Honour the Dead, but Fight Like Hell for the Living



DID YOU KNOW

Here's something else that happened 50 years ago! (apologies for the size of writing)

Page 6

RAAF NEWS

October, 1966

MAGAZINE

He Calls The Shots

A RAAF pilot has made more than 200 combat missions as the eyes of the daily airstrikes against the Viet Cong in South Vietnam.

He is Wing Commander Vance Drummond, AFC, of Hackett, Canberra, who is on attachment to the United States Air Force in Vietnam, flying his tiny Cessna "Bird Dog" aircraft named "Snoopy" in search of targets for the USAF fighter-bombers to blast.

"Bird Dog" is the code-name for the Forward Air Controllers (FAC) who range over the Vietnamese jungles, sometimes only at tree-top height, looking for the tell-tale signs that the Viet Cong are there.

Not only do the FACs ensure that the Viet Cong are there, but make doubly sure that no friendly troops or civilians are likely to be hit by the airstrikes which result.

Target Area

No target is attacked until the FAC has verified it as legitimate. He must check the target against maps and information supplied from the ground controllers, pass the information back to base, and then wait and guide the fighters into the target area which he has described on his radio, or perhaps marked with smoke bombs.

When the attack is over, he must then observe the result

and report on the success of the operation.

Wing Commander Drummond was sent to Vietnam to study tactical air control techniques. His first few weeks were spent at the TAC centre at Saigon Airport, but now, at his own instigation, he regularly flies with the "Bird Dog" controllers in a more practical field of study.

The FAC spends a lot of time in the air. One hundred hours a month is the time officially allowed, and most of the pilots reach this limit without fail. An average flight lasts about three hours, usually up to the limit of the fuel of the "Bird Dog".

For most of this time the FAC is ranging the countryside checking on what is going on in his area of responsibility. The Viet Cong know by now that the small silver "Bird Dog" aircraft are out looking for them, and they usually try to keep low. Others naturally resent the watching aircraft and do their best to destroy it with ground fire.

Wing Commander Drummond only sees members of the RAAF when he lands at Vung Tau about once a month to pick up his pay and mail. He has a rare job among the Australians, and regards it as an honour and an opportunity to show that the RAAF air-

crews are equal to the exacting task of calling the shots.

Wing Commander Drummond, who has a wide background of operational flying, is one of the RAAF's most experienced fighter pilots. He served in Korea with No 77 Squadron, and was taken prisoner-of-war by the North Koreans.

● Right: Wing Commander Vance Drummond checking his armalite automatic rifle before another "Bird Dog" mission.



CAF Squadron In Bush Survival Exercise

In snake infested territory 30 miles south of Townsville men of No 22 "City of Sydney" Squadron recently "survived" a crash landing "behind enemy lines".

Led by Squadron Leader Dave Paul, a DFC winner in the Second World War and now a Bondi Detective Sergeant of police, they stayed in the bush for 48 hours.

For many of the newer members of the Squadron, this exercise proved realistic . . . as the area is tough and the going hard.

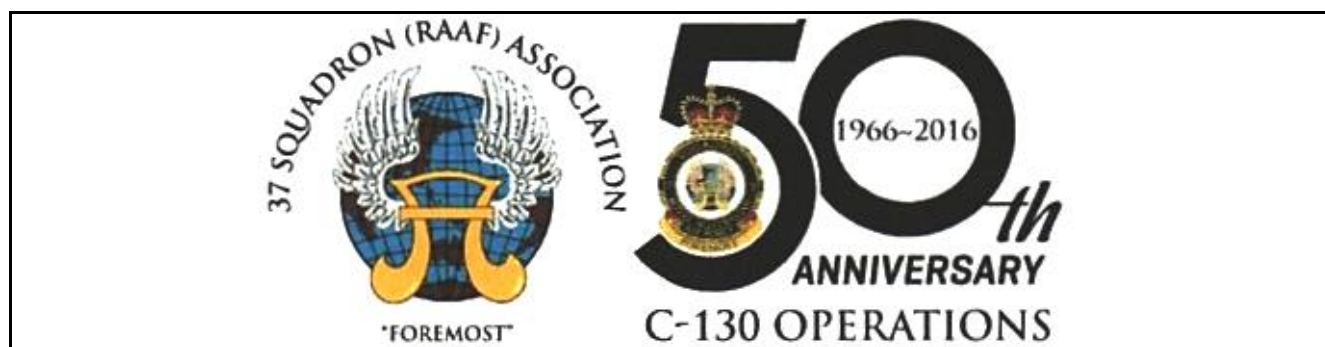
The men were warned to watch out for snakes.

Much of the exercise involved the men hacking their way

AVIATION ART COMPETITION

An art competition for paintings on aviation subjects is being conducted by the Royal Australian Air Force.

...and, something else!



Unfortunately, not enough space in this edition, but more on this article in the December issue.

...Would you believe 45 years ago?



Gunship crew 1971

Flight Lieutenant Nick LeRay-Meyer and his helicopter gunship crew are at the rearming point at the Task Force base at Nui Dat.

The picture **above** is part of an exhibition 'Behind the Wire', detailing veterans' stories and images from the Vietnam War and is on display at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance, until 23 October 2016.

The picture at **right** is part of a photo on p12 of this Newsletter and was taken as Nick was mingling with other RAAF veterans prior to forming up for the Vietnam Veterans' March on 18 August.

Comparing the pictures, Nick has not changed much. He just looks a little more experienced.

Nick has been heavily involved with RAAFVVA, being President from 2008 to 2010 and is also a past Board Member of RAAFA.

Thank you for your service Nick.



HEALTH and WELFARE

From: **Peter Bright** <peterbright8@bigpond.com>
Date: Sat, Aug 20, 2016 at 11:33 AM
Subject: **CONCESSIONS FOR VETERANS LIVING IN VICTORIA**

Ladies/Gents

Following website provides information on concessions available to Veterans living in Victoria.

<http://factsheets.dva.gov.au/factsheets/documents/CON02%20Concessions%20in%20VIC.pdf>

HEARING ENTITLEMENTS

Your executive has serious concerns that Veterans are paying out thousands of dollars for hearing aids for no good reason.

Under the DVA contract, Vietnam Veterans holding a gold card or a white card for hearing loss are entitled under the Veterans' Entitlement Act (VEA) to hearing aids from a range of more than 200 units, one of which will suit the needs of the Veteran without the Veteran having to outlay any money, let alone the thousands being asked for by some hearing aid suppliers.

At the VVAA we hear stories that Vietnam Veterans are being convinced to spend \$4,000.00, \$6,000.00 even \$10,000.00 for hearing aids after being told the Government will only give you a cheap hearing aid that "probably won't work for you." Whereas the supplier has "this terrific model" that does everything you need and it will only cost you "whatever", and you can pay it off ("and we

have an easy payment plan") or you can put it on your credit card (at 20% + interest).

Be very aware you are entitled, under the VEA, to demand the hearing aid that suits your requirements from the 200 odd units that range from the basic to the top of technology at no cost to you. If your provider hasn't a unit that suits you in stock then demand they get it in. You always have the option of going to another service provider, one who will supply you with hearing aids that suit your needs without you paying any money.

If you are in any doubt, contact your local Veterans' Area Network (VAN) office or Hearing Services Australia, but above all, do not sign any forms that might be a contract that commits you to spend many thousands of dollars unnecessarily.

MENTAL HEALTH: go to www.dva.gov.au and select Health and Wellbeing

At Ease is DVA's portal to online mental health information. It provides self-help tools and information to support mental health and wellbeing and is a gateway to websites and free mobile apps about stress, PTSD, alcohol management, resilience and suicide awareness and prevention. The portal also links to a wide range of mental health resources for health professionals and GPs for effective assessment and evidence-based treatment of veterans.

For help, information or to check eligibility for the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) contact VVCS on 1800 011 046 or visit the VVCS website.

For additional information, go to:

- Veteran Mental and Social Health Strategies
- Factsheet HSV99 - Mental Health Support (HTML)
- Mental Health Treatment and Support brochure is now available.
- Start the Journey Back to Good Mental Health video
- Mental Health private hospitals

HELP A MATE BE SAFE *know the signs*

Suicide is an ever present risk facing veterans and their families and causes great anguish and pain when it occurs. Moreover, suicide attempts are often the most visible and extreme signs of deeper mental health concerns. Many of us are frightened by the possibility that people close to us may feel suicidal and shy away from it, not noticing or ignoring suicide clues and not talking to people about their feelings and thoughts.

Current and former serving members of the Australian Defence Force are some of the most resilient people in the country but their mental health can suffer, just like the rest of the population. Many veterans, both older and more recent, have been through extraordinary experiences in their Defence Force career and, either as a direct result of these experiences or because afterwards post-military life seems to lack meaning and importance, some come to feel that they don't have a future.

Such feelings can also develop with changing life situations, such as the loss of a family member, retirement, financial problems, discharge from the Defence Force or physical illness; many factors can affect ability to cope. Changes in everyday behaviour, losing interest in things previously enjoyed, taking less care of themselves than usual and engaging in risky or self-destructive behaviours can all be signs of a person at risk.

Many people with thoughts of suicide signal their distress and invite help. These signals can be missed, dismissed or avoided – leaving people with suicidal thoughts more alone and at greater risk.

Maybe you are concerned about the welfare of a mate or a family member or you know someone who is doing it tough, but you don't know what you can do. Perhaps someone close to you is doing or saying things that worry you but you are afraid to raise your concerns with them in case it causes embarrassment or anger.

There is help at hand. Operation *Life* is a key part of the Department of Veterans' Affairs' (DVA) contribution to the National Suicide Prevention Strategy for the veteran community and part of this strategy is *safeTALK*, a half-day workshop that provides members of the veteran community with information to recognise those who may be considering suicide as an option and to connect them with appropriate helping services. *SafeTALK* workshops are free, run by Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) for all members of the veteran community.

SafeTALK can provide some important "know how" to recognise when a mate or family member needs help, and the skills to help them. *SafeTALK* looks at:

- why suicide alertness matters;
- how open, direct talk about suicide can increase safety;
- common barriers to helping; and
- basic helping steps.

Participants in *safeTALK* workshops strongly support their value in increasing their ability and confidence in dealing with those showing signs of suicidal behaviour.

So, enrol in a *safeTALK* workshop and help a mate to be safe.

To register or find out more about *safeTALK* and other Operation *Life* workshops, contact the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) during business hours on

1800 011 046 or visit the following websites:

<http://at-ease.dva.gov.au/>

www.dva.gov.au/health_and_wellbeing/health_programs/vvcs/Pages/index.aspx



THE PADRE'S PAGE

GOD HEARS AND ANSWERS



In times of trouble it is easy to wonder if God hears us. God does hear our prayers, and he carries us through our difficulties.

Since God is more moved by our hurt than our eloquence, He responds. That's what fathers do.

That's exactly what Jim Redmond did. His son Derek, a twenty-six-year-old Briton, was favoured to win the four-hundred-meter race in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. Half way into his semi-final heat, a fiery pain seared through his right leg. He crumpled to the track with a torn hamstring.

As the medical attendants were approaching, Redmond fought to his feet. "It was animal instinct", he would later say. He set out hopping, pushing away the coaches in a crazed attempt to finish the race.

When he reached the stretch, a big man pushed through the crowd. He was wearing a t-shirt that read, "Have you hugged a child today?" And a hat that challenged "Just do it." The man was Jim Redmond, Derek's father.

"You don't have to do this," he told his weeping son. "Yes, I do", Derek replied. "Well then", said Jim, "we're going to finish this together."

And they did. Jim wrapped Derek's arm around his shoulder and helped him hobble to the finish line. Fighting off security men, the son's head sometimes buried in the father's shoulder, they stayed in Derek's lane to the end.

The crowd clapped, then stood, then cheered, and then wept as the father and son finished the race.

What made the father do it? What made the father leave the stand to meet his son on the track? Was it the strength of his son? No, it was the pain of his child. His son was hurt and fighting to complete the race. So the father came to help him finish.

God does the same. Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the one who hears it and not the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference.

God wants us to pray to him without getting bogged down in proper words and phrases. Forget the fancy words and eloquent phrases. Don't get caught up using the right prayer words. Pour out your joys, fears, concerns, and requests.

He hears and will aid and comfort you – for he has promised never to leave you or forsake you.

With all best wishes. As ever, George G, (Rev) George G. Ashworth, OAM RFD

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE (some for the Women)

When Grandma Goes To Court

Lawyers should never ask a Mississippi grandma a question if they aren't prepared for the answer.

In a trial, a Southern small-town prosecuting attorney called his first witness, a grandmotherly, elderly woman to the stand. He approached her and asked, 'Mrs. Jones, do you know me?' She responded, 'Why, yes, I do know you, Mr. Williams. I've known you since you were a boy, and frankly, you've been a big disappointment to me. You lie, you cheat on your wife, and you manipulate people and talk about them behind their backs. You think you're a big shot when you haven't the brains to realize you'll never amount to anything more than a two-bit paper pusher. Yes, I know you.'

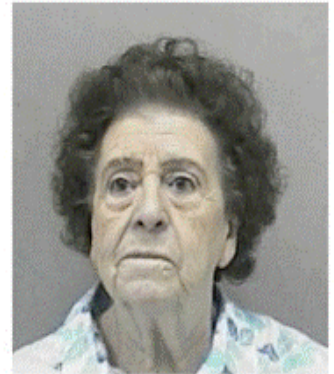
The lawyer was stunned. Not knowing what else to do, he pointed across the room and asked, 'Mrs. Jones, do you know the defense attorney?'

She again replied, 'Why yes, I do. I've known Mr. Bradley since he was a youngster, too. He's lazy, bigoted, and he has a drinking problem. He can't build a normal relationship with anyone, and his law practice is one of the worst in the entire state. Not to mention he cheated on his wife with three different women. One of them was your wife. Yes, I know him.'

The defense attorney nearly died.

The judge asked both counselors to approach the bench and, in a very quiet voice, said,

'If either of you idiots asks her if she knows me, I'll send you both to the electric chair.'



A police officer called the station on his radio. "I have an interesting case here. An old lady shot her husband for stepping on the floor she just mopped."
"Have you arrested the woman?"
"Not yet. The floor's still wet."

Stress Reliever Girl: 'When we get married, I want to share all your worries, troubles and lighten your burden.'

Boy: 'It's very kind of you, darling, but I don't have any worries or troubles.'

Girl: 'Well that's because we aren't married yet.'

A newly married man asked his wife, 'Would you have married me if my father hadn't left me a fortune?'

'Honey,' the woman replied sweetly, 'I'd have married you, NO MATTER WHO LEFT YOU A FORTUNE!'

**TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS TO VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION
VICTORIAN BRANCH INC. AND AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA
WELFARE PATRIOTIC FUNDS**

DONATIONS

Donations made by members of the RAAF VVAA Victoria Sub-Branch or the Vietnam Veterans Branch of the Air Force Association Victoria are tax deductible. Donations made to either Association Sub-Branch/Branch must indicate the gift is specifically for welfare. (Renewal membership forms allow members to note their donation is for this purpose).

Donations received on this basis must be used for the welfare and support of veterans, and receipts will be issued for all donations over \$2.00 received. All money gifted for welfare purposes is welfare/veteran support directed, with your Associations and State Government accounting requirements strictly adhered to, and subject to annual audit.

If you wish to adopt either/both Associations as your family charity, just make your cheque donation payable to the preferred Welfare Patriotic Fund. For the RAAF VVAA Sub-Branch, forward your cheque to the Sub-Branch Treasurer. For the AFA Vietnam Veterans Branch, forward the cheque direct to the Association Office Manager, PO Box 1038, Hawthorn BC, Vic 3122. Your tax-deductible receipt will then be promptly returned. Remember, even the smallest donation is appreciated.

BEQUESTS AND LEGACIES

Making a Will is recommended, and is good asset planning. It provides you and those for whom you care with financial peace of mind, ensuring security for your family, and enables bequests to be made to Charities/Associations representing your on-going interests.

Bequests and Legacies are gifts of specified identified possessions or specified amounts of money gifted to an individual, group of people, or a charitable Organization or Association. Please consider the Vietnam Veterans Branch or Sub-Branch of your member Association as a preferred charity. Remember, it is possible that at some future time assistance sought from your Association will be for the benefit of yourself or your family.

VVCS - VETERANS and VETERANS FAMILIES COUNSELLING SERVICE

(A Service Founded by the Vietnam Veterans)

Normal Hours: 8640 8700

Crisis Line (after hours) 1800 011 046

DVA VICTORIA

Normal Hours: 133 254

Country/Regional: 1800 555 254

In Hospital or Convalescing at Home?

Like us to know about it and/or have someone to visit to assist or just chat?

Name:.....

Address:.....

Preferred Contact details:.....

Post or Email your request to the Secretary or give him a call on 9317 7304 and we will try and arrange a visit on your behalf.