



DEBRIEF

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Edited and Published By

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Inc.

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Vietnam War Memorial Wall Seymour Victoria

HONOUR THE DEAD, But Fight like Hell for the Living

NATIONAL PRESIDENTS REPORT

Another month into a year that holds the potential and the possibility of a lot of changes in the veteran community.

At the time of writing we are still formulating our response to the Governments productivity commission draft report into veteran services.

Drafts have been forwarded to state branches for their comments and points of concern and hopefully the sub branches are in a position to contribute to those comments.

We are also waiting for the release of the DVA scoping study into advocacy which has the potential to force a change of approach to that service we have provided for many years.

During January I had the opportunity to visit the V.V.A.A. Zac's Place while I was in Townsville with the Open Arms Counselling service discussing a mental health program pilot study.

I was impressed with the set up and was able to witness the speed and efficiency in the way the concerns of a homeless veteran were handled, congratulations to Peter Hindle and his team on the ground, your work and enthusiasm is impressive.



I also had an opportunity in Sydney to speak to a number of experienced advocates from various ESO's during an advocates training session, the enthusiasm shown reinforces my belief that the work done by volunteer advocates should not be underestimated.

There has been some discussion regarding the article in the January Debrief on advocacy authorisations and hopefully this has been clarified, the system is there to protect individuals and the association not make life difficult.

In this edition there is an invitation for our members to contribute to a book that is to be published under the working title of "Our Vietnam Heroes, stories from the battlefield."

I would encourage our members to support this project and add to our history in this way, they are not looking for long stories, short and to the point, tell your story or the story of comrades you respect and admire, they probably won't tell their own story but you can.

Ken Foster OAM JP
National President



A SERVICE FOUNDED BY VIETNAM VETERANS

DISCLAIMER—The material in DEBRIEF is in the nature of general comment only and neither purports nor is intended to be advice on any particular matter. NO persons should act on the basis of any matter contain in DEBRIEF without considering and, if necessary, taking appropriate professional advice upon their own particular

You and Your Pension

You and Your Pension is a guide provided to income support pensioners including service pensioners, social security age pensioners (paid by DVA), war widows and widowers who receive the income support supplement and recipients of the veteran supplement. The guide contains information about your benefits, rights and obligations.

As well as being available in an electronic version at www.dva.gov.au You and Your Pension is produced as a booklet and an audio version is available on Compact Disc.

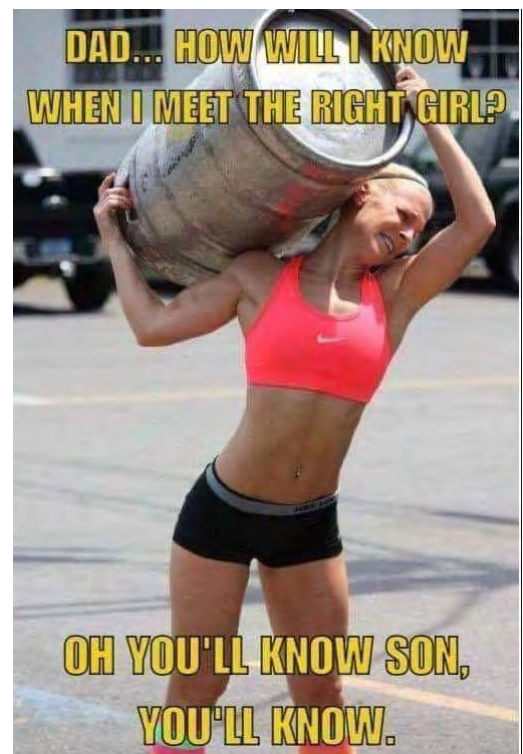
The internet version of You and Your Pension was reviewed for January 2019. Other minor updates occur at various intervals throughout the year. Over time this may mean the internet version and the printed edition of You and Your Pension may differ.

NB: Always check the Factsheets for recent information or changes that are yet to be included in You and Your Pension

1. Old People are easy to spot at sporting events; during the playing of the National Anthem. Old People remove their caps and stand attention and sing without embarrassment.
They know the words and believe in them.
2. Old People remember World War II, Pearl Harbor, Guadalcanal, Normandy and Hitler.
3. They remember the Atomic Age, the Korean War, The Cold War, the Jet Age and the Moon Landing.
They remember the 50 plus Peace-keeping Missions from 1945 to 2005, not to mention Vietnam.
4. If you bump into an Old Person on the sidewalk he will apologize. If you pass an Old Person on the street, he will nod or tip his cap to a lady. Old People trust strangers and are courtly to women.
5. Old People hold the door for the next person and always, when walking, make certain the lady is on the inside for protection.
6. Old People get embarrassed if someone curses in front of women and children and they don't like any filth or dirty language on TV or in movies.
7. Old People have moral courage and personal integrity. They seldom brag unless it's about their children or grandchildren.
8. It's Old People who remove their hats while eating in a restaurant in respect for the ladies and guests.
9. It's the Old People who know our great country is protected, not by politicians, but by the young men and women in the military serving their country.
10. This country needs Old People with their work ethic, sense of responsibility, pride in their country and decent values.

We need them now more than ever.

Thank God for Old People.



OUR MILITARY HISTORY

23 February 1967 Major P.J. Badcoe, VC, Australian Army Training Team Vietnam, originally of Adelaide, South Australia, leads an attack against Viet Cong troops - it was the first of three acts of bravery between February and April 1967 for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

2 February 1968 The 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, recaptured Baria after the Tet offensive. The effects of the Tet Offensive were felt most acutely by the Australians when the Viet Cong attacked targets around Phuoc Tuy's provincial capital, Baria. The attacks were repulsed with few Australian casualties, though the Communists suffered heavy losses.

24 February 1971 Captain J.J. Smith, MC and Bar, Australian Army Training Team Vietnam, performs the action for which he is awarded a Bar to his Military Cross in July 1971.

29 February 1972 HMAS Sydney arrives at Vung Tau On this voyage Sydney embarked 457 soldiers. HMAS Sydney made 21 voyages to Vietnam during the war.

We need your stories! A book on the war is in the works, thanks to a top Australian publisher.

And we need your stories, yarns, reflections, anecdotes and more to make it be the book we aim for. This book will tell the history of the war under the working title of *"Our Vietnam, Heroes, The People, The Stories & the facts"*

Any stories funny or wry, sad or sombre, offering insights, untold tales and thoughts that reflect what the 50,000 Aussies who went to Vietnam went through.

Many histories are told through the memories of top brass and we want a dinkum account that as near as possible captures the spirit of Vietnam Diggers as the war retreats from the memory of some people, but remains alive to so many others. We want to preserve those memories forever in the best way possible.

Send your stories to the Editor Debrief, aim for up to 1000 words, and they will be forwarded to the publisher.



APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE VETERANS' REVIEW BOARD

MEMBERS of the Veterans' Review Board (VRB) have been appointed by the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Ret'd), the Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester announced recently.

There will be 17 members of the Board appointed for a term of five years and two members reappointed until 11 November 2020 to mentor and develop the skills of the new appointees.

The 11 senior members appointed will be Mr Gary Barrow, Dr Peter Habersberger AM RFD, Mr Douglas Humphreys OAM, Ms Louise Hunt, Mr Christopher Keher, Mr Michael Kelly, Ms Hilary Kramer, Associate Professor David Letts AM CSM, Mr David Thomae, Ms Susan Trotter, Mr Leslie Young OAM.

Captain Steven Coghlan, Brigadier Alison Creagh CSC, Colonel Robin Regan, Commander Sophia White, Colonel Warwick Young will be appointed as the five services members.

Ms Mary Desses, Dr Bernard Hockings and Professor Robert McLaughlin will be appointed as the three members of the Veterans' Review Board.

"These appointments ensure the Board will have relevant experience suitable for deciding applications for review of decisions of the Repatriation and Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commissions," Mr Chester said.

"The members have outstanding experience and achievements in their fields and I am confident that each member will serve the veteran community with distinction in this important role.

"I congratulate all the appointees and look forward to their contribution to the important work of the VRB."

The VRB is part of the veterans and military rehabilitation and compensation determining systems. It is a tribunal created by Parliament to review decisions about disability pensions, war widows' and widowers' pensions, and attendant allowance under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* and rehabilitation, compensation and other benefits under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*.

Biographies of the appointees are available on the [VRB website](#).

Australia's Vietnam War' Website.
University of New South Wales Canberra
Vietnam.unsw.adfa.edu.au

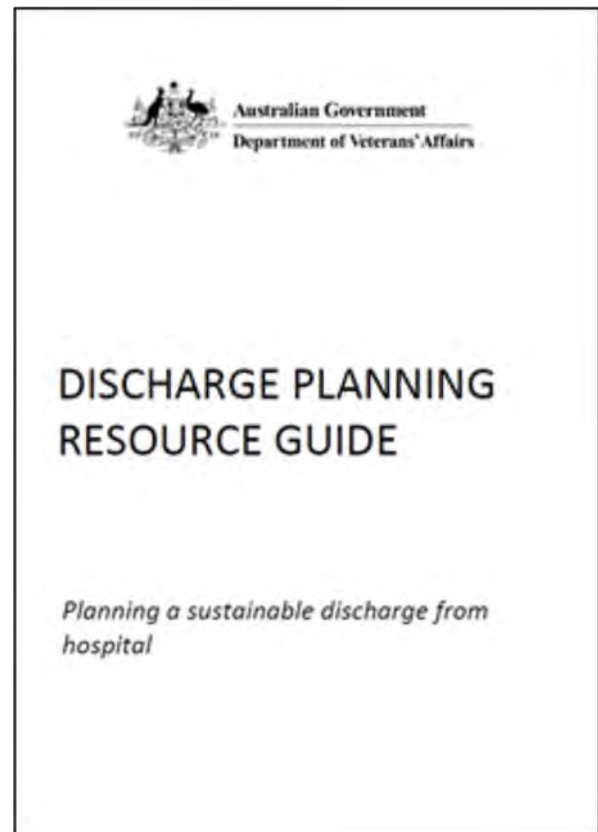
Discharge Planning Resource Guide

Cover Effective discharge planning optimises positive post-hospital physical and mental health outcomes for patients, reduces hospital readmission and improves patient independence.

DVA is committed to working with hospitals to facilitate the seamless transfer of Entitled Persons to their homes and communities.

In order to assist hospital staff and those involved in the discharge planning process, DVA has developed a Discharge Planning Resource Guide which provides information on a very broad range of health services available to DVA entitled persons.

- Discharge Planning Resource Guide (available on the DVA web site) www.dva.gov.au



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Notes on Repatriation in Australia and the Department of Repatriation

by

Max Ball

Introduction

The release of the Productivity Commission's Draft Report "A Better Way to Support Veterans" has prompted some critical comments from some members of the ex-service community. Many of these comments appear to reflect an instantaneous view that significant change is not required to the system of compensation and rehabilitation of veterans, or to the current administrator, the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

The purpose of these notes is to illustrate that the Australian system for rehabilitation and compensation for veterans (of what is now called the Australian Defence Force) has always been subject to change as the circumstances of the Australian community, economic and social, and of the Australian Defence Force, have also changed over time.

Repatriation in Australia and the Department of Repatriation

Soldiers who fought in the Boer War were not provided for under any colonial or new federal legislation. The Defence Act 1903 made provision for death or incapacity while on active service outside Australia. In 1909 this coverage was extended to injury or illness while on duty, but servicemen were excluded from the provisions of workers' compensation on the grounds of the potential size of any such liability.

In September 1914 the Government announced a limited scheme of war pensions, extended several times to include nurses, non-dependent wives and children, and mothers of dead soldiers. The new system was to encompass healthcare, compensation, soldier settlement, ("one of the great disasters of Australian rural history") and vocational training to help returned men find work.

In September 1917 a Repatriation Department was set up replacing the Australian Soldiers' Repatriation Fund. The Department had a national structure based on State Repatriation Boards and a federal Repatriation Commission designed to oversee the whole. Once the soldiers of the AIF were discharged from the army their rehabilitation and re-establishment into civilian life became the responsibility of the Repatriation Department.

In 1920 responsibility for war pensions and hospitals was taken over from the Departments of Treasury and Defence and the Repatriation Commission assumed the Department's administrative functions.

Following the disbandment of the AIF in March 1921 the Repatriation Department also took over the Army general hospitals, which became the Repatriation General Hospitals. However, it needs to be noted that the post-war functions of the permanent Army were essentially to staff, train and administer the militia. There was no concept of the permanent force having an operational or other capability, including an ongoing responsibility for the rehabilitation and compensation of its members.

Efforts were made to employ former soldiers in most staff positions of the Department, but this contributed to a disorganised administration as these men lacked administrative experience. During the interwar period there was a legitimate cause for dissatisfaction with the repatriation system, including over which conditions did or did not qualify for benefits.

Continued

Notes on Repatriation in Australia and the Department of Repatriation Continued

The Repatriation Commission comprised three returned servicemen and determined policy, prescribed by regulation the nature and extent of government assistance to veterans, decided how the Minister should be advised, and heard appeals, (presumably against its own decisions or those of its delegates). It seems that until 1947 the actual administration of the repatriation system was carried out by either the Commission or by other departments of the government.

In 1947 the Commission's staff were transferred to the public service and the Commission's Chairman became the Permanent Head of the Department. Branches were established in each State capital city and returned service personnel were represented by State Boards consisting of three paid members. Later these State Boards were disbanded.

By December 1975 the Department was given additional responsibilities and renamed the Department of Repatriation and Compensation.

On 5 October 1976 the government replaced the Department of Repatriation with an expanded Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Post World War II and Legislative Change

The repatriation system worked relatively smoothly for veterans of WWII and the post-war regular forces were covered by the Repatriation (Far East Strategic Reserve) Act 1957 for servicemen in Malaya, and the Repatriation (Special Overseas Service) Act 1962 for those engaged in 'warlike operations' and was used for veterans of the Vietnam War.

The provisions of these Acts were modified further by the Veterans Entitlements Act 1986 which, reportedly, streamlined the system and modernised the administration of repatriation.

More recently, the Parliament has introduced the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (SRCA), which was in turn replaced by the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988, (DRCA, which commenced operation on 12 October 2017), and then the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004, (MRCA).

This flurry of legislation seems to indicate that successive Parliaments have had difficulty in clarifying their policies towards rehabilitation and compensation for veterans, compounded, perhaps, by the public service being also either unable to create a clear vision on this issue, or being unable to articulate that vision successfully to the Parliament.

What does seem clear is that the recent acts have reversed the trend towards a simpler system of repatriation and created difficulties for veterans which have, in turn, culminated in a series of reviews including a major Senate Inquiry report (The Constant Battle: Suicide by Veterans). An outcome of that Senate report is the current inquiry by the Productivity Commission into the system of compensation and rehabilitation for veterans (Serving and Ex-serving Australian Defence Force members).

A constant in the changes of the legislation has been the retention of the concept of a Repatriation Commission (see the VEA 1986) and a Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (see MRCA). Statements by Parliamentarians and anecdotal evidence suggest that these appointments were retained as a result of suggestions made by veterans and veterans organisations.

The current department (DVA) has also retained the title of Deputy Commissioner for the senior departmental officer in each state, even though those persons are not "Deputies" to any appointment and there appears to be no legislative basis for the title.

Continued

Notes on Repatriation in Australia and the Department of Repatriation Continued

Observation

Change in the legislative and administrative arrangements for compensation and rehabilitation of veterans has been frequent, albeit with some constant themes. In many respects the veterans of the 1960's and 70's were not that far removed from their predecessors.

It is suggested that the circumstances in which younger, post-1990 generations are educated, socialise and consider their employment, and their expectations have also changed, perhaps to a greater degree than many older veterans comprehend.

It may well be time that the concepts and policies for rehabilitation and compensation, and the administrative structure for veterans benefits, need change to reflect the expectations of the millennials.

January 2019

Sources

The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History 1995

The Australian Centenary History of Defence, Volume 1, "The Australian Army"

Further reading: The Last Shilling: A History of Repatriation in Australia, (Clem Lloyd and Jacqui Rees)



AUSTRALIAN VETERANS'
CHILDREN ASSISTANCE TRUST

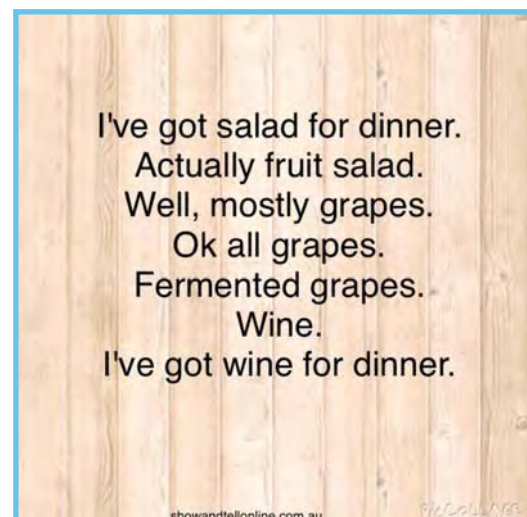
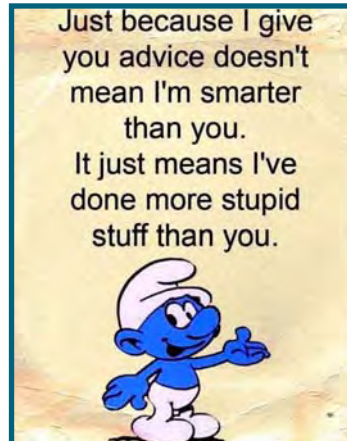
AVCAT scholarships are for the children and grandchildren of Australian Veterans to study at university or TAFE

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APPOINTMENT OF NEW OFFICE OF WAR GRAVES DIRECTOR

BRIGADIER Paul Nothard will take up the role of Director of the Office of Australian War Graves from 11 January 2019, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester announced recently.

Mr Chester congratulated Mr Nothard on the appointment saying his highly experienced career as an Army officer would prove invaluable in his new role.

"Mr Nothard has more than 30 years of experience in the Australian Army with his most recent appointment as the Deputy Commander Joint Task Force 633 in the Middle East," Mr Chester said.

"He has had an impressive military career demonstrating strategic leadership in complex and difficult environments including roles in logistics, transport operations, fleet management, career management and personnel policy.

"Mr Nothard holds a Bachelor of Professional Studies, a Masters of Management and a Masters of Strategic Studies.

"He is a Graduate and Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and is an Executive Director on the Board of the Army Amenities Fund. I look forward to working with him."

Mr Nothard said he was excited to take up the role of Director of the Office of Australian War Graves and looking forward to draw upon his defence knowledge and experience to acknowledge and recognise those who have served and made the ultimate sacrifice for Australia.

"Australia has a long-standing commitment to remembering our war dead and I am honoured to have been given responsibility for this important task," Mr Nothard said.

Mr Chester thanked the outgoing Director, Ken Corke, for his work over the past three years.

"Mr Corke has done an outstanding job during his tenure with the Office of Australian War Graves during a very significant period leading up to the Anzac Centenary," Mr Chester said.

"On behalf of the Australian Government and the ex-service community, I sincerely thank Mr Corke and wish him all the best for his future."

Mr Nothard was awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross in 1999 and in 2008 was made a Member of the Order of Australia for exceptional service for senior officer management in the Australian Army, Commanding Officer of the 1st Combat Service Support Battalion and as the Commander of the Force Level Logistic Asset in the Middle East Area of Operations.

RAAF TRADES. Ground Mechanical Engineer (GME) Fitters.

Compare your service with the current trades



Fitter and Turners (Ground Mechanical Engineer (GME) Fitters) can be equated to civilian Fitter and Turners; but that's where the similarity ends. As an Air Force Fitter Turner you are not just involved in workshop maintenance activities but also in the maintenance of motor vehicles, materials handling equipment, refuelling equipment, diagnosis and rectification of faults in mechanical, electrical and hydraulic systems and the testing and servicing of Ground Support Equipment, workshop plant and machinery. This includes the manufacture of GSE, tools, jigs, dies, fixtures, and gauges and the repair and modification of selected motor transport components. Fitters Turners are also employed on duties that include the on-going maintenance, repair, modification and refurbishment of Aircraft Arrestor Systems, Small Arms Weapons and responsible for the operation of the ground and aviation fuel installations. Advanced training may be available in the manufacture, modification and refurbishment of selected aircraft components using conventional and computer numerical controlled (CNC) machines.

Working Conditions.

The working environment for GME personnel varies according to the equipment being used and the area of operations. Areas of operations may include workshops (MEOMS) Force Element Groups (FEGS) supporting Squadron activities, Headquarter (HQ) Units, training establishments, and field deployments within Australia and overseas. Generally, work is performed in fully equipped workshops that offer protection from adverse environmental conditions and provide the relevant support equipment necessary to accomplish a particular task (hoists, power/air tools, etc). However, due to the inherent nature of the mustering, combined with the unique nature of the Defence role, GME personnel may, on occasion, find themselves exposed to various uncomfortable working situations. Such situations can include working outdoors, inclement weather, working at heights, cramped or awkward working positions, confined working spaces, poor light conditions, dirt, grease, noise, vibration, and fumes emitted from aircraft and vehicles.

RAAF TRADES. Ground Mechanical Engineer (GME) Fitters. (continued.)**Hazards.**

Inherent hazards exist associated with employment in the Ground Support Equipment (GSE) environment that are a potential source for personal injury. Such injuries could range from minor cuts to serious injuries inflicted by machinery, plant and equipment, skin and/or eye damage from chemicals, fuels and lubricants, electrical shocks and burning or scalding.

Training in Safe Working Practices, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are provided to afford protection and guidance for personnel working in hazardous areas.

Physical Effort.

The use of tools normally associated with the trade will usually be encountered on a daily basis. On occasions, heavy and awkward objects must be manoeuvred in and around confined spaces; therefore, a high level of physical co-ordination and manual dexterity is essential. Overall, a high level of accuracy and speed of movement is required in most tasks, particularly when operating machinery or machine tools.

Contact with Others.

Continual contact with Service and civilian personnel is encountered in this trade. Normal communication and co-operation skills are required to avoid workplace friction and to maintain effective working relations. Additionally, Defence maintains a defined rank structure in order to maintain discipline and provide managerial oversight. Therefore, protocols are in-place that need to be understood and respected.

Trade Criticality.

The duties of a Fitter and Turner tradesperson are critical to the operational effectiveness of the RAAF. The trade performs a critical role in exercising judgement to ensure continued integrity of selected aircraft, motor vehicle components, and ground support equipment.

Handling of Classified Documents and Equipment.

Engineering tradespeople may be required to handle classified documents and equipment

If you would prefer to have this publication emailed directly to you please forward your email address to the National Secretary at secretary@vvaa.org.au.

Fr Thomas Harold Shanahan

A Catholic padre who served a total of 391 days with the troops in Vietnam has been farewelled at St Nicholas Catholic Church in his home town of Tamworth NSW.

The death of Fr Thomas Harold Shanahan saddened a wide cross section of the communities he served during his 62 years as “a priest for the people of God”.

In 2013 Fr Tom Shanahan was honoured with the Order of Australia Medal for his “service to veterans and their families and to the community”.

Fr Tom knew at the age of 18 that he wanted to be a priest and his special gift meant a great deal to the many parishioners and Vietnam veterans he served. He was born at Tamworth on October 1, 1932 and ordained at St Nicholas Church on July 24, 1956. After serving in parishes around the Armidale diocese for 10 years, Fr Tom was appointed Chaplain to the Australian Military Forces (Service No: 216768), a posting he held for four and a half years, and included his service in Vietnam.



Although Fr Tom went out on missions with the troops, he never carried a weapon and was soon withdrawn when there was enemy contact. He also said Mass for the troops and visited orphanages, where he helped the Sisters with their English.

Returning to Vietnam 40 years after he had served as a chaplain, Fr Tom said in an interview with the Namoi Valley Independent, that he had been “overwhelmed at the sense of peace and joy that filled the lives of its people, especially the children”.

He said that it was wonderful to see “that children were once again allowed to be children and not mini soldiers”.

After returning twice to Vietnam, Fr Tom accompanied a group of 19 to Nui Dat for the Long Tan Memorial service in 2010. Four Vietnam veterans travelled with the group, including two who had never returned since the war. Fr Tom said the veterans had all been very pleased to see how settled the country was and how different life was for the people.

The group attended the commemoration service at the Long Tan Cross replica on August 18, 2010, where Fr Tom offered prayers for the veterans and the Vietnamese people. Fr Tom said the veterans who “were never going back” had returned with a sense of healing when they saw the chaos of war replaced by peace.

After resuming civilian life in 1970, Fr Tom was posted to Narrabri and then Wyallda as parish priest. Before his war service he had been in Gunnedah, Armidale and Inverell. In 1982, his priestly journey took him to the Barraba-Bingara parish until 1998 when he retired to Tamworth but still continued his chaplaincy work with the RSL.

He was president of the Tamworth sub-branch of the RSL for three years. This role included speaking on behalf of the War Widows Guild or Remembrance Day as well as Vietnam Veterans Day and counselling veterans returning from the war zones. In 2010 Fr Tom was honoured with life membership of the Returned and Services League of Australia.

When the diamond jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood came around, Fr Tom was presented with the Papal Medal by Bishop of Armidale Michael Kennedy.

Fr Tom died peacefully at Nioka, Tamworth Regional Hospital on December 22, 2018, at the age of 86.

St Nicholas’ Church was filled to overflowing for the funeral Mass, with the RSL forming a guard of honour. The Mass, concelebrated by Bishop Kennedy and diocesan clergy, on January 2, 2019, was followed by interment in the Lincoln Grove Memorial Gardens Cemetery, Tamworth.



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs
Men's Health Peer Education

Men's Quick Health Check and Health Information Guide

See how you manage your health and wellbeing with this quick quiz.

A "Yes" answer scores 1. A "No" answer scores 0.

	Yes	No
Are you a non-smoker?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you visited your GP in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you had your blood pressure measured in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you had your waist measured in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you had your cholesterol levels measured in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you had your blood sugar levels measured in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you spoken to your GP about bowel health?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you had a bowel test in the last three years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have at least two alcohol-free days per week?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you spoken to your GP about prostate health?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (or 75 mins vigorous) each week?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you had your skin checked in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you eat at least two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables every day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you happy in general, and not too stressed or worried?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOTAL		<input type="text"/>

Score: 14 ▶ Are you sure?? You deserve a medal!!
 11 - 13 ▶ Very Good
 9 - 10 ▶ Not Bad
 Less than 9 ▶ Maybe it's time for a chat with your Doctor

For the under 50s, health checks are important but are recommended on a two to three yearly basis unless you have been diagnosed with a health condition.

For further information on Men's Health Peer Education, please phone 133 254 (metro) or 1800 555 254 (country) and ask to speak with the DVA MHPE State Coordinator, or visit the MHPE website <http://www.dva.gov.au/mhpe.htm>



Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust



What we do

AVCAT is a national independent charity dedicated to providing tertiary education bursaries and scholarships to children and grandchildren of veterans who are in situations of hardship and financial need.

How we do it

AVCAT has awarded over 2500 scholarships since it was founded in 2003. Scholarships are funded through effective and ongoing partnerships with ex-service organisations, the Federal Government and individual donors.

Success

AVCAT is proud to say that 86% of sponsored scholarship recipients have graduated in the past five years. This is far above the national average of 64%*.

(*Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2018)



OUR VISION

Through the power of education we transform lives.

A scholarship provides much needed financial assistance and a pathway to a life with greater possibilities.



Open Arms, Veterans and Families Counselling.

24 hours a day across Australia for crisis support
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DFRDB UPDATE - January 2019

For those who have not seen Herb's latest videos or did not fully grasp the detail, contact Herb at <https://www.adfra.org/>

So far, we have received only an automated response from the Attorney General to say it has been forwarded to Minister Chester's Department. Before we can progress it to the Commonwealth Ombudsman, we are obliged to wait for a reply.

After the referral of our cause, by Maj Gen David Ferguson AM CSC, to journalist Sam Buckingham-Jones of *The Australian*, an article featured on page 3 of that publication on 14 Jan 2019. Our sincere thanks go to David Ferguson. It goes to show what is possible when our senior officers stand up for us and use their influence.

While there are many ex-service organisations (ESO), we are led to believe as many as 1500, the Alliance of Defence Service Organizations (ADSO) has regular direct access to Minister Darren Chester. But ADSO has only 18 affiliated ESOs of which; a leading member is the Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA).

However, ADSO and DFWA represent a raft of issues. Their policy objectives in relation to DFRDB are no longer relevant, and it is unclear if they intend to represent our concerns.

Until we have a united voice on DFRB/DFRDB/MSBS, we are an easy target for rejection. Like Herb and myself, many of you are members of ex-service organisations, and we ask you to consider what is your organisation doing for you? Is your local branch interested? Are they taking the matter up with State and National bodies? Are their National bodies affiliated with ADSO?

We continue to be a conduit for DFRDB matters and are continuing our research to strengthen our case. We have established our web site <https://www.adfra.org/> as a forum for all military superannuation grievances and encourage all who are disaffected to register.

While we are aware of concerns raised by MSBS recipients, neither Herb nor I are experts on the subject. We need MSBS recipients to register on the web site and express those concerns. We can then help to compile them into formal presentations.

Regards,

Jim Hislop

YOUR ACTIVITIES REPORTED IN DEBRIEF

States and sub branches are encouraged to contribute reports on their activities, particularly an opportunity to let others know what is happening in your area.

Email text in Word or photos in JPG to the editor at www.debrief@vvaa.org.au

ADVOCACY CORNER.**ACCREDITED ADVOCATE REGISTER**

The Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) is pleased to announce the launch of the Accredited Advocate Register (AAR) on **Thursday 24 January 2019**. The AAR replaces the existing Directory of Advocates located on the [ATDP website](#) and provides veterans and their families with a quick and easy way to identify and contact ex-service organisations (ESOs) which have accredited advocates in their area.

The AAR is a user-friendly online resource that provides a search facility for clients. Some of the benefits of the AAR include:

- ♦ Providing the flexibility of a number of search methods for advocates including by postcode, physical location and organisation
- ♦ As an on-line search tool it allows veterans and their families a convenient way to find local ex-service organisation details quickly and easily
- ♦ Enabling ESOs to self-manage their listings of accredited advocates and ESO contact details in an efficient, accurate and secure way; and
- ♦ Supporting ESOs and advocates to ensure advocates' knowledge remains current by recording their status in respect to the ATDP's Continuing Professional Development program.

A link to the AAR will be available on the [ATDP website \(www.atdp.org.au\)](#) from Thursday 24 January 2019.

If you have any feedback or would like further information please contact ATDP Communications at: ATDP.COMMUNICATIONS@dva.gov.au

Members wishing to represent the V.V.A.A. as welfare or compensation advocates are reminded that **to be protected by the Professional Indemnity insurance** provided by the association they need to have a written authority from the national registry (not their branch or sub branch) to represent the V.V.A.A.

These authorities expire in May each year and renewal procedure is detailed in the V.V.A.A. Administration Handbook Policy AP 001 which is available on the V.V.A.A. web site or from your sub branch secretary.

**HAVE YOUR SAY— LETTERS TO DEBRIEF ARE WELCOME**

The subject matter should be generally of interest to Vietnam Veterans and their families. Brief, to the point letters have a better chance of publication. Photographs should be of good colour, quality and subject matter, in jpg or similar format. Text should be submitted in Word format with minimum formatting. Vietnam Veteran writers must identify themselves by name, state, Vietnam Unit and Tour dates. Email: debrief@vvaa.org.au

REUNIONS

HEADQUARTER COY, 1ST AUSTRALIAN LOGISTIC SUPPORT GROUP and it is held in BALLARAT,

from the meet and greet on the 8TH NOVEMBER
2019 till the 11TH NOVEMBER 2019

for ACCOMMODATION AND REUNION DETAILS
contact TONY BROWN on 0428852736 or
email on tony11raye13@bigpond.com.

30 Terminal Sqn Reunion Townsville 2019

16-18 August 19

An event to get all past and present termites
together in a fun and relaxed atmosphere to
share the trials and tribulations of being a ter-
mite (and possibly some tall tales)

Craig Ingram
Unit 5 28 lowth St Rosslea Qld 4812
0407173321
craingram@westnet.com.au

HMAS Duchess Reunion 2019

Notice, Venue and Dates

Registrations are now called for the 9th reunion of HMAS Duchess Crew, to be held at Hotel Grand Chancellor, Ade-
laide, over the weekend 29th to 31st March, 2019.

Full cost will be \$200.00, which includes Friday night light meal or cocktail service (yet to be decided), Saturday night
dinner and Sunday brunch, with a certain amount of dry till Friday and Saturday night. Deposit of \$50.00/head for
prospective attendees to be paid 31st December 2018, balance of payment by 15th February, 2019. Phone or email
for registration form and details to Bruce Bowmaker Ph **0403243795**, or email littlefish.in@bigpond.com.

VETERAN FRIENDLY RETREATS

Future listing of these facilities should be available on the various VVAA State branch web sites
and these can be accessed through the web site www.vvaa.org.au



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THE WAR WIDOWS GUILD OF AUSTRALIA

"We all belong to each other. We all need each other. It is in serving each other and in sacrificing for our common good that we are finding our true life."



A strong part of the Guilds History is the origins of its Logo.

The kookaburra was adopted as the Guilds Logo from its early inception and remains today.

The Kookaburra is also present on all War Widows' Guild Badges.



Presentation of Granite from the Wall in Washington DC

From the pen of Kingsley Munday AM Chairman of the NVVM Board of directors

I've just arrived in Seattle after a week of travelling on the East Coast with snow, rain and wind.

The presentation at the Wall yesterday by Jim Knotts, President & CEO of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Foundation was beautifully done, and we had Brig. Gabriel from the Australian Embassy along with some of his army & embassy staff to also receive a piece of the granite for the AWM. We laid a wreath and a lone trooper played Taps.

The weather in DC was a little colder than it is in Australia right now and you'll see that from the images which I'll send in a more detailed report when I'm back Jan 31.

I will also receive a link shortly so everyone can view the presentation which was video'd and I'll forward this on.

Needless to say my luggage is a little heavier for the return and I look forward to presenting the piece to Phil on Feb 20.

Thanks again to Marcus for facilitating this – it was a very special occasion but more importantly the gift of the granite from the VVMF to the NVVM is the beginning of a strong link between us.

