

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH



Current Items of Interest

11 August 2023

ACT GOVERNMENT COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE TO MARK THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR

Following is an invitation from the ACT Government to a commemorative service at *The Margaret Whitlam Pavilion* on Friday, 18 Aug, at 1430h.

Applications for tickets should be sent to OSV@act.gov.au by Tuesday, 15 Aug.

Please accept my apologies for the misinformation I provided in last week's newsletter.

Jim Gilchrist



Emma Davidson MLA
Minister for Disability
Minister for Justice Health
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Veterans and Seniors
Assistant Minister for Families and Community Services

Member for Murrumbidgee

On behalf of the ACT Government and the Ministerial Advisory Council for Veterans and their Families, I would like to invite you to attend a local event to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

This an opportunity for Australians to thank our Vietnam veterans for their service, their families and recognise those who did not return.

Day: Friday
Date: 18 August 2023
Time: 2pm to 4pm
Location: Margaret Whitlam Pavilion, National Arboretum
Forest Drive
MOLONGLO VALLEY ACT 2611
Dress: Where appropriate, members and families are welcome to wear uniform and full-size medals for the occasion.

The service will commence at 2pm, with afternoon tea to follow.

Please RSVP to the Office for Seniors and Veterans, Community Services Directorate by **Monday 14 August 2023** via osv@act.gov.au (including assisted accessibility and dietary requirements)

Yours sincerely

Emma Davidson MLA
Minister for Veterans and Seniors
4 August 2023

ACT Legislative Assembly London Circuit, GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601

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davidson@act.gov.au

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[emmadavidsonACT](https://facebook.com/emmadavidsonACT)

[emmadavidson](https://instagram.com/emmadavidson)

Information Seminars in August 2023

The Sub-Branch is having two (2) information seminars in late August this year.

Deafness Resource Centre:

The first information seminar is to be held between 10.00am and 12.00pm in Room 36 on the top floor (near the lift) of Grant Cameron Offices on Wednesday, 23rd August. The session is to be presented by Mr Joe Symons of the Deafness Resource Centre which is also located downstairs in the Grant Cameron Offices at Holder. The talk will entail what products that people can access such as visual, vibrating and audible smoke alarms for persons with hearing loss. Advice on “Konnekt” video phones. Information will also be given on what can be claimed from Department of Veterans’ Affairs

Right Sizing with Care and Decluttering:

The second information session will be conducted by Melissa Fressier. This session will be held between 10.00am and 12.00pm in Room 36 on the top floor (near the lift) of Grant Cameron on Wednesday, 30th August Many of our members, as they get older find that they no longer require many of the things that have been collected or purchased over the years. Also, people may need to reduce the size of the accommodation that they have. Some of our members have taken steps to declutter or find smaller and more practical accommodation to better suit their altered lifestyle. A talk will be presented allowing time for a question and answer session.

Each of the sessions will provide coffee and tea as well as a light lunch. The sessions perform two functions – inform people on practical solutions to issues as well as get people out to socialise and meet others.

There is no charge for each session, but we would welcome a donation towards the cost.

If you would like to attend one or both these sessions please contact the Sub-Branch 6285 1931. Room 36 can comfortably hold 25 people.

Peter Sutton

Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch - Welfare

Royal Commission Dead Line!

Tell your mates: Royal Commission deadline is fast approaching

People now have fewer than 70 days to lodge a submission with the Royal Commission examining the treatment of veterans and serving ADF members.

Submissions must be lodged by Friday October 13.

But there's good news: lawyers from the Defence and Veterans Legal Service are providing free assistance with the preparation of submissions to that enquiry.

This legal service has specialist lawyers in all states and territories, and it also assists the families of current and ex-serving people.

Importantly, its legal support is confidential and completely independent of all agencies - including ADF, DVA and the Defence Department.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide represents a major opportunity. It aims to right past wrongs and improve the treatment of current and future veterans and ADF personnel.

If you'd like to know more, call the Defence and Veterans Legal Service on 1800 33 1800 to chat about your options. You can remain anonymous if you wish to. All its services are free.

**Share your story
with the Royal
Commission into
Defence and
Veteran Suicide
by 13 October 2023**



For free and independent help with the preparation of a submission, call us on **1800 33 1800**



Legacy Centenary Torch Relay

Dear Friend,

This year, Legacy, that uniquely Australian organisation, commemorates the centenary of its formation in 1923 to care for the widows and children of members of the Australian Defence Force who died during World War 1. Our founders, returned soldiers, remembered the pledges they made on the battlefield to their mortally wounded mates that they would “look after your missus and kids’. This work has continued ever since with Canberra Legacy’s 135 active, volunteer Legatees currently caring in practical ways and financially, for 760 widows and 35 youth of school age or attending tertiary education. This results in an expenditure of about \$700,000 each year.

The major commemorative event is the carriage of a torch around Australia by Legatees and Legacy beneficiaries. The torch started its journey in Pozieres on the 23rd of April and passed through London before arriving in Perth three months ago. I’ve volunteered to carry the torch part of the way as it passes through Canberra on Monday, the 28th of August. As you can see, I’ve received my torch bearers' uniform and am now in training!



The Torch Relay aims to raise \$10m for Legacy’s ongoing work Australia-wide with more than half of it having come already from donations and corporate support. Torch bearers have been asked to seek sponsorship for their participation so I’m writing to invite you to consider supporting Legacy in this way. If you feel inclined to do so, please go to the following website:

[Legs for Legacy - Ian Gollings](#)

With much thanks for supporting Legacy.

Cheers, Ian

OPEN ARMS

ONLINE GROUP PROGRAM SCHEDULE

JULY – DECEMBER 2023

MANAGING PAIN

2 x 90 minute online sessions (Instructor Led)

1230hr – 1400hrs AEST

Wednesday & Friday | 19th & 21st July
Tuesday & Thursday | 8th & 10th August
Wednesday & Friday | 30th August & 1st September
Tuesday & Thursday | 19th & 21st September
Wednesday & Friday | 11th & 13th October
Tuesday & Thursday | 31st October & 2nd November
Wednesday & Friday | 22nd & 24th November
Tuesday & Thursday | 5th & 7th December

RECOVERY FROM TRAUMA

2 x 90 minutes online sessions (Instructor Led)

1300hrs – 1430hrs AEST

Wednesday & Friday | 5th & 7th July
Wednesday & Friday | 26th & 28th July
Monday & Wednesday | 21st & 23rd August
Monday & Wednesday | 18th & 20th September
Wednesday & Friday | 18th & 20th October
Wednesday & Friday | 22nd & 24th November

SLEEPING BETTER

2 x 90 minutes online sessions (Instructor Led)

12.30hrs – 1400hrs AEST

Wednesday & Friday | 26th & 28th July
Wednesday & Friday | 16th & 18th August
Wednesday & Friday | 6th & 8th September
Wednesday & Friday | 27th & 29th September
Wednesday & Friday | 18th & 20th October
Wednesday & Friday | 8th & 11th November
Wednesday & Friday | 29th Nov & 1st December



Scan the QR Code to register your interest

UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY

2 x 90 minutes online sessions (Instructor Led)

1100hrs – 1230hrs AEST

Tuesday & Thursday | 4th & 6th July
Tuesday & Thursday | 25th & 27th July
Tuesday & Thursday | 15th & 18th August
Tuesday & Thursday | 5th & 9th September
Tuesday & Thursday | 26th & 19th September
Tuesday & Thursday | 17th & 19th October
Tuesday & Thursday | 28th & 30th November
Tuesday & Thursday | 19th & 21st December

DOING ANGER DIFFERENTLY

2 x 90 minutes online sessions (Instructor Led)

1300hrs – 1430hrs AEST

Wednesday & Friday | 12th & 14 July
Wednesday & Friday | 2nd & 4th August
Wednesday & Friday | 23rd & 25th August
Wednesday & Friday | 13th & 15th September
Wednesday & Friday | 4th & 6th October
Wednesday & Friday | 25th & 27th October
Wednesday & Friday | 15th & 17th November
Wednesday & Friday | 6th & 8th December

BLENDED MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Part 1: Self-paced eLearning

Part 2: 2 x 2.5hr online sessions (Instructor Led)

1300hrs – 1530hrs AEST

Wednesday & Friday | 19th & 21st July
Tuesday & Thursday | 29th August & 31 August
Tuesday & Thursday | 12th & 14th September
Wednesday & Friday | 25th & 27th October
Monday & Wednesday | 20th & 22nd November
Tuesday & Thursday | 12th & 14th December

In addition to the above online group programs, Open Arms also provides a range face to face of treatment programs and educational workshops.

To register your interest or for the most up to date information visit the Open Arms Website – [Programs | Open Arms](https://www.openarms.gov.au/programs)

OPEN
Veterans & Families
Counselling
ARMS

1800 011 046
OpenArms.gov.au



BEATING THE BLUES

A skills-based group program to help understand the situations and thinking patterns that contribute to depression, and identify strategies to help manage symptoms.

BUILDING BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

Building better relationships can help you rediscover what's important in your relationship, and rebuild a relationship with your partner.

DOING ANGER DIFFERENTLY

Doing anger differently will help you to understand anger and manage it more effectively, so that it doesn't have a negative impact on your own, or others' lives.

MANAGING PAIN

This program will help you learn about pain and teaches you strategies and skills for effective pain management.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Mental Health First Aid is a two day workshop that teaches practical skills for helping a family member or friend who is experiencing mental health problems.

OPERATION LIFE: ASIST

The two day workshop aims to help you see, hear and respond to suicide signals. Preparing you to work with people at risk, increase their immediate safety and to get further help.

OPERATION LIFE: SAFETALK

In the safeTALK half day workshop you will learn how to become more alert to suicide prevention opportunities, and how to offer help.

PARENTING PROGRAMS

Parenting programs are tailored to the needs of attending veteran families, to help build strong and positive relationships between parents and their children.

RECOVERY FROM TRAUMA

This program will help you to understand the possible impact of trauma, and teaches you strategies and skills to help you to manage its impact on you and your family.

RELAXATION AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

Relaxation and stress management provides practical skills that can be used in everyday life to de-stress via mindfulness techniques.

RESIDENTIAL LIFESTYLE PROGRAM

The Residential lifestyle management program is designed for veterans and their partners who want to enhance their wellbeing and relationships.

SLEEPING BETTER

Sleeping better is an educational and skills-based group program to help you manage disturbed sleep.

STEPPING OUT

A two day program for ADF members and their partners who are about to, or have recently separated from the military.

UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY

This program will help you to understand anxiety and teaches you strategies and skills to reduce anxiety and associated stress.

NCF Members - Defence and Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy) Survey

The Department of Defence (Defence) and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) are working together to develop a new joint *Defence and Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy* (the Strategy). The Strategy will inform our joint approach to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of Defence personnel and the veteran community over the next five years. Hearing directly from members of our veteran community is a critical part of the development of the Strategy.

The purpose of this survey is to seek your insights to inform the development of the Strategy. It is an opportunity for you to have a say in what matters to you and help ensure the Strategy reflects the needs, priorities, and aspirations of the veteran community.

The survey should take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. It will close at midnight AEST on 28 August 2023. Further information on who can participate, consent, confidentiality and privacy is available in the link below and will be displayed prior to survey completion.

Please follow the link to complete the survey here:

[Qualtrics Survey | Qualtrics Experience Management](#)

If you have questions about the survey please email

MENTALHEALTHSTRATEGY@dva.gov.au.

Please share the survey with your networks.

Kind regards,

ESORT Secretariat

Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm unit Citation

Dear All,

You will recall that in September 2018 an application was made to Defence Honours and Awards that those members of the Army who served at Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral should be awarded the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation (the VCGPU or Citation).

After much correspondence the application was eventually denied by Army and I then appealed to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal. On 31 May 2022 the Tribunal advised me that it had;

Decided to recommend that all units and elements of the 1st Australian Task Force – Vietnam be awarded the VCGPU: and

Also recommend to the Minister that the Department of Defence be directed to consider whether there are any other units of the Australian Defence Force that should similarly be recommended to be awarded the VCGPU.

I am pleased to advise you that today I have received a letter from the Hon Matt Keogh MP, the Minister for Defence Personnel, that the Department of Defence has recently completed the necessary research required to identify the relevant units, and consequently individuals, who are eligible to apply for and receive the Citation. I also received my Citation in today's mail.

As soon as practical please draw the attention of your members to this welcome decision and to the following webpage on the Directorate of Honours and Awards website,

[Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation | ADF Members and Families | Defence.](#)

This page includes a further site, [List of Army Units eligible for the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation \(PDF 191.07 KB\).](#)

Information on making an application for the Citation, including those made by family members of deceased Vietnam veterans who may be eligible, can be found at

[Defence Medals Application Form | ADF Members and Families | Defence.](#)

With best regards,

Max Ball

Members may be interested in the following:

Dedication of the Keith Payne VC Rest Area

I am writing as the Chair of the Remembrance Driveway Council to provide notification of the dedication of the Keith Payne VC Rest Area, to be held in November 2023 at Pheasants Nest, NSW. The date has not yet been selected.

The Remembrance Driveway, linking Sydney to Canberra, comprises groves, memorial plantings and rest areas, has been a living memorial to veterans for almost 70 years.

Since 1995, a project has been undertaken with the naming of roadside rest areas after recipients of the Victoria Cross. This project has been undertaken with the strong support of Transport for NSW in the years since it was started.

The rest area for the last surviving VC recipient from the Vietnam War, Keith Payne VC has been under development for several years. The Remembrance Driveway Council has been working with Transport for NSW and AMPOL, as the developer service centre and rest area at Pheasants Nest (northbound), NSW, to provide a rest area dedicated to Keith Payne VC.

AMPOL has advised that the development is now nearing completion and we are in the process of finalising a date on which to hold the dedication, with Keith Payne VC in attendance. Keith has been kept informed throughout the planning and development. As this will be a Vice Regal event, we are liaising with Government House for the Governor General to be available.

AMPOL has also redeveloped the southbound site at Pheasants Nest, where the Kenna VC Rest Area was located. The Kenna VC site was deconsecrated prior to demolition mid last year and will be rededicated to Kenna VC in a small ceremony following the Payne VC Rest Area dedication. AMPOL has been very supportive and are to be commended for their deep interest and reverence for the status of the VC and veterans throughout the planning process. The Kenna family members have been kept apprised of developments and will be in attendance on the day also.

I will keep you informed as the plan develops and when the date has been selected. However, I thought it important that we provide this information to you so that you may inform your own members.

Regards

Mick

Mick Burgess

Brigadier

Chair

The Remembrance Driveway Council

Ph: 0409 608 719



Australian Government Department
of Veterans' Affairs

A national commemorative service to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War will be held on 18 August 2023 in Canberra.

Tickets are now available for the national commemorative service to recognise all Australians who served in the Vietnam War.

To book your free ticket to attend the service, visit dva.gov.au/vietnam50



Australia remembers the Vietnam War

18 August 2023, Canberra

Tickets available:
dva.gov.au/vietnam50



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs



50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
END OF THE VIETNAM WAR
AUSTRALIA REMEMBERS 2023

Intimate, raw in places, sometimes shocking, always authentic. To those who would aspire to lead that part of the Nation's treasure, our men and women in military uniform, read this book.

Peter Casgrove, Infantry Platoon Commander, Vietnam - 1969/70

A most accurate and enduring example of Australian Infantry operations at platoon level; comparable in quality and impact to the classic *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

LTCOL Russell Linwood, ASM - Bibliographer Royal Australian Regiment Association

Dave's book is well worth reading and young officers would be well advised to get a copy and understand what makes a good platoon, commanded by a very good platoon commander.

Harry Smith SQ MC

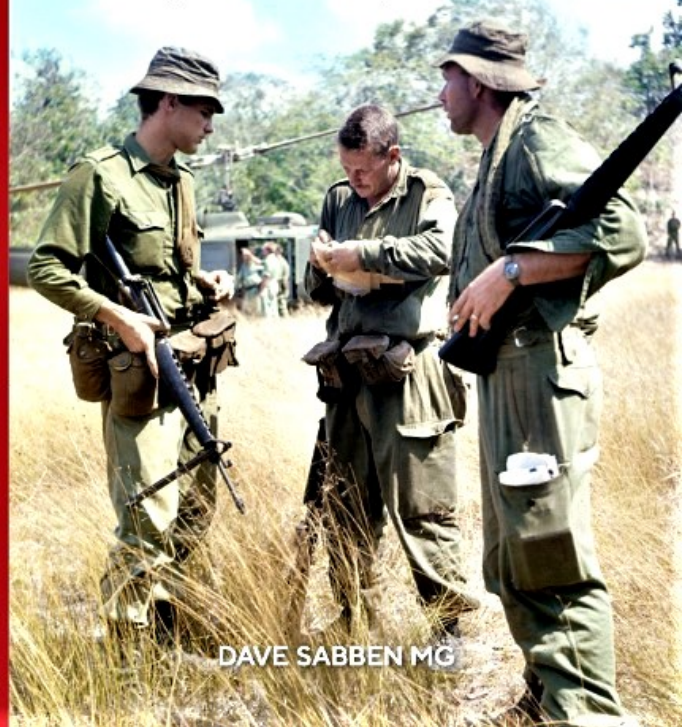


MENTIONS IN DESPATCHES

DAVE SABBen MG

MENTIONS IN DESPATCHES

An Infantry Platoon in Viet Nam, June 1966 - June 1967



DAVE SABBen MG

VIET NAM

We know about the politics that got us into and out of the 'war'. We know about the big battles: Long Tan, Coral, Balmoral, Binh Ba... We know about the social issues: conscription, drugs, moratoriums, the uneasy returns home... And we know about the legacy: the trauma, the PTSD, the divorces, the suicides...

But do we know what actually happened there? Do we know exactly what our soldiers did, day-by-day, week-by-week? Do we understand what they experienced? What they did? What they thought about what they did?

This book will take you into an average Infantry Platoon for a 12-month 'Tour of Duty' in the year the Task Force base was set up.

It will take you from the early days - June 1966 - when a bare rubber plantation was occupied in the middle of an enemy controlled province, and a new operational base established.

Hundreds of soldiers endured getting six two-hour sleeps every three days for weeks on end. In between those sleeps, they patrolled with heavy kit in dust-dry or monsoon-wet (but always-dangerous) conditions to clear the enemy from their own bases. And when not on patrol, they were digging pits, trenches, command posts and latrines. When not on patrol or digging, they were clearing the undergrowth and erecting barbed wire fences.

And when they did sleep, it was on groundsheet under plastic 'hoochies' without lights and always with a weapon within reach. Showers were rare but mildew was everywhere. Food was mostly out of ration cans; feet were rarely out of boots.

It was only later, when the base was a little more secure, that tents and stretcher beds became available. Then the pace did slacken, but only slightly. One- and two-day patrols gave way to one- and two-week operations, as they cleared further out from the Nui Dat base.

ORDER NOW

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or specific delivery instructions. Or you can order
your book(s) now and pay later.

In either of these cases, please email:
dave@sabbenmidbook.com

Once your order is received, we will contact you
before posting to ask how you would like the book(s)
endorsed by the author. In this case, your
phone or email contact details will be required.



DAVE SABBen MG

David Sabben was born in Suva, Fiji in 1945 but moved to Australia in 1958 to attend High School in Sydney, where he boarded through to Leaving Certificate in 1962.

Aged 20 in 1965, Dave volunteered for the first intake of Australia's National Service scheme. He applied for officer training and completed the first course of the Scheyville National Service Officer Training Unit (1OTU).

In January 1966 Dave was posted to 6RAR in Brisbane and appointed commander of 12 Platoon. 6RAR was sent to Viet Nam in June 1966. Dave served the full 12 month tour and was a platoon commander at the Battle of Long Tan for which he was recommended for a Military Cross (MC) but that award was downgraded to an MID. In 2008, the award was upgraded to a Medal for Gallantry (MG).

After returning to Australia in 1967, Dave was discharged from his National Service obligation but served a further four years with the CMF, attaining Captain rank. He resumed his civilian career first in Sydney and then Melbourne, finally working as a Project Manager in the computer (IT) industry.

Dave retired in December 2004 and has spent his retirement mostly writing. He lives on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria with his Melbourne born wife, Di.

AVCAT Scholarships

Hello,

Applications for AVCAT scholarships open soon.

Scholarships | Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust (avcat.org.au) including the Long Tan Bursary | Department of Veterans' Affairs (dva.gov.au) are tertiary scholarships for the children and grandchildren of Australian ex-serving veterans. Scholarships are \$4000–\$6000 per year, for up to three years.

Applications open on 18 August 2023, Vietnam Veterans' Day, and close at midnight AEDT on 31 October 2023.

Apply online at Australian Veterans & Children Assistance Trust (avcat.org.au)

Applicants must be:

- Enrolled or planning to enrol in a full-time course for one or more academic year's duration at a university, TAFE, or RTO in 2024
- The child, stepchild, foster child, or grandchild of an Australian ex-serving veteran
- An Australian citizen or permanent resident

In receipt of, or eligible to receive, a means-tested Commonwealth educational payment – Youth Allowance, ABSTUDY, Austudy or Veterans' Children Education Scheme (VCES) in 2024

The Long Tan Bursary is sponsored by the Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs. View the complete list of AVCAT Scholarship sponsors Sponsors | Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust (avcat.org.au)

Find information about scholarships, the application process or scholarship eligibility at Australian Veterans & Children Assistance Trust (avcat.org.au)

Spread The Word

Share on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#), hang a [poster](#), hand out a [flyer](#), or drop [this notice](#) into your newsletter.

Kind Regards

Len Russell

CEO AVCAT

Find Out More : [Scholarships | Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust \(avcat.org.au\)](#)



**COFFEE CATCH UP
EVERY FRIDAY 10-12**

Members and guests are welcome to join us for a chat and enjoy freshly brewed coffee & cake with former service mates. Every Friday from 10 to 12 in The Corey Room, Level 2A, of the Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley Street, Holder.

The Eddison Day Club will continue to meet for a lunch each Friday at noon until we can once again meet at a reinvigorated Day Club.

Come and join us for lunch.



Contact Us

Give us a call for more information
or access to our services

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Visit us on the web at
www.rslwoden.org.au

Office hours are
9am-3pm Mon-Fri

PS.

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