

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH



Current Items of Interest

19 August 22

MEETING NEWS

SUB-BRANCH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (OGM) 30 AUGUST 2022

Dear members,

A reminder that the next Sub-Branch OGM will be held at 1400 hours on Tuesday 30 August 2022 in the RSL Sub-Branch office in Holder.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Regards,

Greg



RSL
Woden Valley Sub Branch

Greg Kennett

Secretary

Woden Valley Sub-Branch

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Vietnam Veterans' Day.

Originally known as 'Long Tan Day', 18 August commemorates the Battle of Long Tan which took place in 1966. Eighteen Australians lost their lives and 24 were wounded, the largest number of casualties in one operation since the Australian task force had arrived a few months earlier.

Over time, Long Tan Day was adopted by Vietnam veterans as a special day of remembrance for all Australians who served and died during our ten-year involvement in the Vietnam War.

Some 60,000 Australians served in the Vietnam War between 1962 and 1972, 521 of whom died; almost 2,400 were wounded.

Today we remember all our Vietnam veterans of the Army, Air Force and Navy. We give thanks and pay our respects to the servicemen and servicewomen commemorated on the Roll of Honour, and to the survivors who came home.

Learn more: <https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/event/vietnam>

Image: Exhausted soldiers from 6RAR search for Viet Cong Forces on the day after the battle of Long Tan. 19 August 1966. Photographer: William Cunneen, CUN/66/0692/VN



RSL Woden Valley Sub-Branch member Sir David Smith passed away on 15 August 2022

Article from The Canberra Times

By Steve Evans

Sir David Smith, official Secretary to five governors-general, dies



David Smith reading the proclamation to dissolve parliament in 1975. Gough Whitlam is behind his right shoulder. Picture: Supplied

One of Canberra's most respected public servants has died.

Sir David Smith was the Official Secretary to five governors-general from 1973 to 1990, including Sir John Kerr in 1975 when he, as governor-general, dismissed the Whitlam government.

Sir David (as he then wasn't - he was knighted by the Queen at Balmoral Castle in 1990) was at the centre of one of the most dramatic episodes in the drama.

On November, 11, 1975, standing in formal dress on the steps of Parliament House, the public servant read the formal proclamation of the dissolution of parliament which included the words, "God save the Queen".

The ousted prime minister Gough Whitlam then went before the microphones and uttered the words which live on: "Well may we say 'God save the Queen', because nothing will save the governor-general'."

Mr Whitlam added: "The proclamation you have just heard read by the governor-general's Official Secretary was countersigned 'Malcolm Fraser', who will undoubtedly go down in Australian history from Remembrance Day, 1975 as Kerr's cur."

Later, David Smith and his boss were in Melbourne when their car was mobbed. He was injured when protesters smashed the window of the Rolls Royce. Sir John and Lady Kerr were safely in the back seat. David Smith was not.

The reports at the time said that dye, ink and smoke bombs "exploded across and around the car and police motorcycle escort".

"Demonstrators fought wildly with policemen and Sir John's car was diverted to a back entrance. There, 100 demonstrators shouted 'Sieg heil' and booed.

David Iser Smith was born on August 9, 1933 in Melbourne to Polish immigrant parents with the surname Szmirkowski which was then anglicised to Smith. According to family memory, the immigrants were greeted on the dock by an official who failed to pronounce the name and who said, "We'll have to call you Smith," and so Smith it was.

David Smith went to Princes Hill State School and Scotch College, followed by the University of Melbourne and the Australian National University.



Sir David Smith. Picture: Supplied



"Vice-regal car mobbed"

He started his career in the Australian Public Service in 1953. He was appointed Private Secretary to the Minister for Interior and Works from 1958 until 1963. He was then appointed Secretary to the Federal Executive Council which advises governors-general. He then became head of the Government Branch, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet from 1971 to 1973.

In retirement, he became a guide at Old Parliament House after parliament had moved up the hill and the old building had become the Museum of Australian Democracy.

This gave visitors a double-take in a room where film of the events on the steps of Parliament House in 1975 were playing on a loop, only for one of the central participants to appear in real life (though somewhat older).

"Sir David Smith was well-regarded, respected and knowledgeable. He was very generous in sharing his knowledge with visitors to MoAD," a spokesperson for the museum said.

He is survived by his wife, June, whom he married in 1955, and by their three sons.



Janette Howard and Sir David Smith celebrate Australia Day.



The Flowers of Peace Latest News

August 2022

Successful 'Changi Songbook' Recording

And, now to the publishing so that we can all share in the stories.

Well, what a month it has been. With thanks to The Street Theatre, Neil Pigot, Bill Risby, Tobias Cole, Andrew Goodwin, Miroslav Bukovsky, John Mackey, Colin Hoorweg, James Luke, Craig Greening and Tom Fisher we were able to record all 24 of the songs from the original 'Changi Songbook'. This cultural recovery and preservation project was performed over three days, with a small audience able to witness the recordings in the final session. Thank you also to Alex Sloan AM as MC and David Whitney as the Flowers of Peace host on the night. These songs have the capability now of being more widely known and we are hopeful they can become part of commemorative ceremonies. There is no doubt that songs like 'They've Taken my Old Pal Away' by Slim de Grey become embedded in your memory to such an extent that you cannot rid it. I find myself singing it now as I am typing this!

Thanks also to the many donors who have given generously to have enabled the recordings and we ask if anyone is still willing to support this project, that we need to still raise the funds to now master the recordings and publish the works. We need an additional \$3,000 to realise this. You can donate now via the: [Australian Cultural Fund](#) and obtain a tax deduction receipt.

To get a sense of these songs, I want to share this story with you. Slim de Grey composed this work after he tried in vain to join his pal, who had just been informed that he would be taken to Sandakan, along with approximately 6,000 others. Slim was not allowed, because his work on the AIF Concert Party was deemed to be essential in keeping up morale. As we now know, as only six survived the Sandakan Death March, one wonders what the outcome for Slim would have been if he was permitted to go with his pal. Please enjoy this two minutes of rehearsal time of [They've Taken my Old Pal Away](#) by Neil and Bill.

Donate now to the 'Changi Songbook' next steps

[Artist Project: Record and fully notate the 'Changi Songbook' \(australianculturalfund.org.au\)](#)



'POW Requiem' tickets on sale now

Tickets are now live for this once in a lifetime performance on Saturday, 29 October 2022, Llewellyn Hall, ANU School of Music, Canberra. Join us to witness a truly memorable concert featuring Greta Bradman, Andrew Goodwin, Riley Lee (shakahachi), Canberra Symphony Orchestra and guests, musicians from the Australian Defence Force, ANU Chamber Orchestra and Choirs when we will remember WWII Prisoners of War, primarily those captured in Asia, and their fight for freedom.

Chris Latham OAM, Director of the Flowers of Peace talks about his vision for this concert in the link below...

Book your seats now

[POW Requiem tickets | Llewellyn Hall | Ticketek Australia](#)

Director's vision

[POW Requiem - Flowers of Peace Director's vision - YouTube](#)

Re-live the 'Vietnam Requiem'

With Vietnam Veterans' Day 2022 upon us, at last we can offer you the opportunity to re-live the concert. The options are DVD or USB. Direct download will be coming soon. Both Act 1 and Act 2 are included, along the speeches from the Sunday performance. This concert recording has been made at cost and we have included trackable postage to ensure the contents do not get wet nor lost. After ordering, you can expect delivery approximately 10 days thereafter. We will keep you informed via email of progress with the despatch date.

What a treat this concert was. May you enjoy it over and over again.

Please keep your Program Guides handy when watching the video as it gives the facts and stories behind each of the movements in the Requiem. If you do not have a Guide you can download a copy [here](#).

Buy your copy now

[Music and art to help heal trauma \(flowersofpeace.com.au\)](#)



The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide has today provided its interim report to Government. The report is published on the Royal Commission's website <https://defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au/...>

The government is carefully considering all of the recommendations in the report and have committed to providing a full response in due course.

If you, or someone you know in the Defence and veteran community, is in need of support please contact [Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling](#) on 1800 011 046. Open Arms provide military-aware counselling support free of charge, 24/7





You are not alone, support is just a phone call away.

Our number one priority is supporting the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families.

There are a range of support numbers available for veterans.

[Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling](#) is available 24-hours a day, 7-days a week on 1800 011 046.

Safe Zone is free, anonymous and confidential and is available 24/7 for current and former serving Australian defence personnel on 1800 142 072.

The Defence All-hours Support Line is a confidential phone and online service for current serving ADF members and their families, available on 1800 628 036.

Families of serving personnel can also contact the Defence Family Helpline on 1800 624 608.

These organisations are staffed by people who understand the military experience and are there to support ADF personnel, veterans and their families.

OPEN
Veterans & Families
Counselling

ARMS

1800 011 046



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SUPPORT**

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**Defence
All-hours
Support Line**



1800 628 036

1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)
Advice, claims and support services

THE EDDISON DAY CLUB

“ Although only very few volunteers and members of the Eddison Day Club have over the past few months, at times only two, been coming to the Canberra Irish Club on a Friday for lunch, we had been hoping that more would venture out and attend. The latest wave of COVID-19 infections from the new variants are increasing the cases in the ACT and the states. The Canberra Irish Club has informed us that they have not reported any cases in the last few weeks. We had, a few weeks ago, four of the lunch attendees test positive. Although it is not readily definitive that these cases were infective at the Canberra Irish Club, it has made them and others hesitant to return. As mentioned before, we can't expect to have guest speakers or entertainers come with so few being there in the audience.

Following consultation with several of the now inactive management committee, it is clear that there is not a great prospect of many people returning in the immediate future due to the rapid increase in cases of COVID-19 everywhere. The only solution is at present to keep up the 'phone calls by those members and volunteers, to the small group that they were assigned in March 2020 after the first closure. If we can maintain regular contact with these people, they feel less isolated. There is regular contact by other groups, within the Club, outside of those groups. We also think that it is also important that those who do attend on Friday for lunch do not feel that they have been neglected if there is nobody there to greet them.

The Eddison Day Club is an integral and long-term section of the welfare area of the Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch and it would be a shame for it to disappear.

Regards

Peter Sutton

Vice President Welfare



Woden Valley Sub Branch





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.

Please note that the Eddison Day Club is currently meeting on only a very casual basis for lunch at midday Fridays.



Contact Us

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

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Office hours are
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PS.

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