

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH



Current Items of Interest

28 July 2023

RSL WV Sub-Branch Ordinary General Meeting on Tuesday 25 July.

During the OGM, Ross Smith OAM presented to Jim Gilchrist a board "Australia A Nation At War 1939-1945" commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. Also, Ross was presented with the OOWII "Perfection Medal".

Chris Jobson presented to Jim Gilchrist the "Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery Ubique Quo Fas Et Gloria Ducunt" plaque to add to those plaques at the front of the counter in the office.







During the coffee catch-up on Friday 28 July Jim Gilchrist presented to Bill Kelly AM the OOWII “ Meritorious Member Medal”.



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



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

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

Sergeant Ian Alford hall restoration

Dear Friends of 26 Battalion Association

I have received a fundraising request from the Longreach Scout Group to restore their Ian Alford Scout Hall and extend their current museum.

Longreach Scouts will be celebrating their 110th Anniversary on 30 Sep 2023 and they have had a very long connection with the 26th Battalion.

The scout hall is named after Sergeant Ian Alford from the 26th Battalion who died from wounds in Bougainville during WW2. His name appears on the 26th Battalion Honour Board that is currently on display in the Longreach Scout Museum.

As you may know, the 26th Battalion was formed in 1939 and raised in the districts surrounding Longreach, Queensland, under the command of Lt-Col H.W. Murray. In 1943 the 26th Battalion gained reinforcements from other States.

Although the 26 Battalion Association is not in a position to financially support this project, we will be donating a copy of Norm Turrell's book "Never Unprepared - A history of 26 Australian Infantry Battalion AIF 1939-46".

We recommend individuals give a tax deductible donation directly to the Longreach Scout Group. Details are on the poster attached. Please include "26Bn YOUR SURNAME" in the description.

The Scout Museum is also looking for physical memorabilia from WW2 that could be included in their museum. Please contact Longreach Scout Master, John Palmer, directly at palmbp@bigpond.net.au to make arrangements.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Kindest regards
Colin Block



LONGREACH
SCOUTS 2023

FUNDRAISING

The Longreach Scout Group celebrating 110 years in Service. Help us maintain and preserve our history & inspire our youth leaders of tomorrow.

DONATE IN CASH OR IN-KIND

We are seeking donations to restore our Scout Den and extend our current Scout Museum to showcase our 110-year Scouting history in Longreach.

PLEASE DONATE ANY AMOUNT

Longreach Scout Group

PO Box 381 Longreach Qld 4730
(07) 4658 1136
BSB: 034-194 Account: 180 454
Contact: palmbp@bigpond.net.au

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible





Australian Defence Force Retirees Association Inc.

No. A0108026R We represent the interests of Defence Force Retirees regarding their Superannuation

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

Email: admin@adfra.org

DFRDB UPDATE – JULY 2023

McKenzie v Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation [2023] FCA 396

Clinton has decided that, in all the circumstances, the risks arising from an appeal to the Full Court were too great.

Clinton's comments after reading the judgment in detail can be viewed by clicking on this link:

[McKenzie v Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation \[2023\] FCA 396 - Clinton McKenzie's Comments](#)

ADFRA's Objectives

The Federal Court outcome has not changed our objectives. We are still seeking:

1. The amendment of the DFRDB Act; to apply indexation increases to 100% of our *Defined Benefits*, and to cease *Defined Benefit* reduction, after commutation, when the commuted lump sum has been fully repaid;
2. The restoration of the rate of our *Defined Benefits* to a fair current value by applying *Fair Indexation* to 100% of our benefits from the date they became payable; and
3. The refund of *Defined Benefit* reductions which exceed the amount commuted.

The [Reduction of DFRDB Defined Benefits](#) is a 26-minute video presentation of the evidence which exposes the mistruths underlying Government policy on DFRDB and the benefit reduction measures that have been incorporated in the DFRDB Act to deny us our full entitlements. The video can be viewed by clicking on the link.

The presentation was prepared for the Hon Barnaby Joyce, who asked for more information about our issue. Copies have been sent to the Minister for Veterans Affairs and Defence Personnel, and Shadow Minister for Defence Personnel.

We have also submitted the presentation to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide.

We must drive our message home to the politicians whose predecessors put us into this position because they did not adequately scrutinize the DFRDB legislation before passing it into law.

Please send the video link to your local Member of Parliament and State/Territory Senators, with a Bcc to jghislop1937@hotmail.com, and ask for their support to have the situation remedied.

Jim Hislop OAM

ACT Budget information for Veterans

The ACT Government has provided the following information for you.

“The 2023-2024 ACT Government Budget was handed down last night. Full details of the Budget are available here [Home - Budget 2023-24 \(act.gov.au\)](#) and a spotlight on Veterans is available through the social inclusion statement here [Social Inclusion Budget Statement \(act.gov.au\)](#)

The following key areas of focus for the Budget will have important impacts for Veterans and their families:

Cost of Living

The ACT Government is delivering a number of new and expanded measures to provide further cost of living relief to Canberrans. Full details on the cost of living initiatives are here [Cost of Living Budget Statement \(act.gov.au\)](#)

Housing

The ACT Government has an ambitious housing agenda and is investing an additional \$345 million to continue delivering a comprehensive package of housing measures. Full details on the housing package are here [Budget-2023-24-Housing.pdf \(act.gov.au\)](#)

Health, including mental health

The ACT Government will continue to invest in delivering more health services for Canberrans with a \$540 million healthcare package, which includes \$30 million to expand mental health services. Details on the health package can be found in the [ACT Budget at a Glance 2023–24](#)

Education

The 2023-24 Budget delivers the biggest ever investment in early childhood education and \$52 million in additional funding for skills and training. From 2024, all Canberra families will be able to access one day a week of three-year-old preschool. Details on the education package can be found in the [ACT Budget at a Glance 2023–24](#)

Veterans portfolio initiatives

While many of the above packages will have the benefit of supporting ACT Veterans and their families, we are pleased to let you know of the following standalone, dedicated initiatives through the Veterans portfolio. Information on these initiatives is included in the [Social Inclusion Budget Statement \(act.gov.au\)](#) and can be cross-referenced with the [2023-24 Australian Capital Territory Budget Outlook \(act.gov.au\) \(p128\)](#) [Budget-Statements-G.pdf \(act.gov.au\) \(p22\).](#)”



Military super – a new tax offset

Good afternoon,

I wrote to you in February with information about the *Douglas* decision. I'm reaching out again with an update about the new tax offset that is now available for veterans who are paying more tax because of the decision.

The *Veteran's superannuation (invalidity pension) tax offset* (VSTO) ensures veterans and their beneficiaries do not pay more tax because of the *Douglas* decision.

Below is an article about the VSTO you can share with your networks and include in your communication channels.

I would really appreciate it if you could spare the time to let me know if and how you used the information provided, or if you have any feedback.

Kind regards,

Simeon

New tax offset for some veterans affected by the *Douglas* decision

Veterans who are entitled to the new *Veterans' superannuation (invalidity pension) tax offset* (VSTO) will have their affected tax return/s amended by the ATO and be issued an amended notice of assessment.

The ATO advises that veterans do not need to do anything different. Include your military invalidity pension payment amounts in your tax return at question 8 'Australian superannuation lump sum payments', and they will do the rest.

The *Veterans' superannuation (invalidity pension) tax offset* (VSTO) removes the additional tax some veterans would pay because of the *Douglas* decision. The *Douglas* decision covers invalidity pensions paid to veterans under the MSBS (Military Super Benefit Scheme) or DFRDB (Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits) scheme that commenced on or after 20 September 2007.

The ATO is sending letters to veterans who are entitled to a VSTO amount greater than \$0 and have lodged their 2020–21 and/or 2021–22 income year tax returns. They are advising that they are amending their tax returns to apply the new tax offset.

When you lodge tax returns in the future, the ATO will treat your invalidity pension as a super lump sum. If you are entitled to a VSTO amount, the ATO will calculate it for you and apply it to your tax return.

The ATO says it is committed to amending prior year tax returns as quickly as possible.

You can get the latest information about the *Douglas* decision and the VSTO on the ATO's website at [Military invalidity pensions – Douglas decision | Australian Taxation Office \(ato.gov.au\)](https://www.ato.gov.au/military-invalidity-pensions-douglas-decision)

Simeon
Public Relations
Australian Taxation Office



Topics include:

- Creating shared meaning through values and rituals of connection
- Understanding emotions behind your partner's life dreams
- Managing conflict positively, and Adopting a positive perspective.



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

By concentrating on what works well, this program will help you strengthen your relationship, and enhance the resilience of individual partners and the relationship as a whole.

Date: 1st & 2nd August

Time: 9:30am-4:30pm

Location: Woden, ACT

To register for the Building Better Relationships Group Program, call 1800 011 046 or visit OpenArms.gov.au and search for 'relationships'

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 Cosgrove, 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

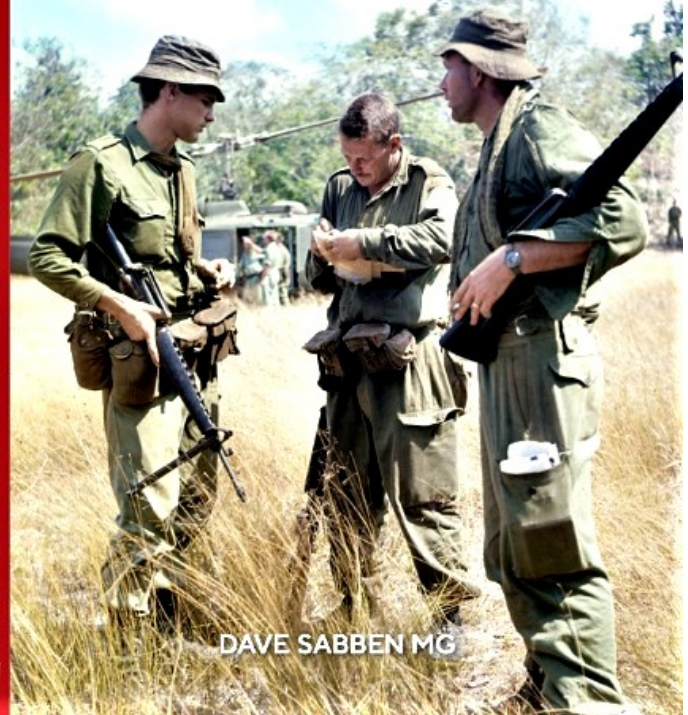


MENTIONS IN DESPACHES

DAVE SABBen MG

MENTIONS IN DESPACHES

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

400+ A4 pages - 500+ images - quality 'coffee table' book
\$82 + postage

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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 (LOTU).

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.

The Flowers of Peace Latest News

June 2023

Peacekeeping Symphony update and request for help please

Dear Friends

We are writing to ask for your support and assistance to realise the next concert – the *Peacekeeping Symphony* planned to be premiered on National Peacekeepers Day - Thursday, 14 September 2023 - at Llewellyn Hall, Canberra.



We received some unfortunate news of late regarding our two major government grant sources who have supported us in the past, but not on this occasion. This has left a large hole in our budget and we are uncertain whether we can still produce a concert telling the story of our nation's peacekeeping efforts over the past 75 years.

We have faith that if we can raise funds from other sources in a very short period of time, that we will still be able to forge ahead. We are writing to you in the hope that you share our conviction that we should be seeking peace over war. Each of the major works we have produced ends with music of reconciliation and peace, so as to lighten their load of those burdened with trauma, and their families. All these works are intended to help those harmed to heal. Those who witnessed the recent *Vietnam* and *POW Requiems* will remember them as memorable and moving occasions.

Through music, text and images, the *Peacekeeping Symphony* will recognise the rich and diverse contributions of Australian peacekeepers as far afield as Indonesia, Kashmir, the Middle East, Cyprus, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, Bougainville, East Timor, Solomon Islands, and elsewhere. This concert created over the last year, consists of 24 works in total, and includes a large component of 'world' music. The first half consists of the *Peacekeeping Songbook* and the second half, the *Peacekeeping Symphony*, written by our finest composers for our leading soloists.



Our concern is that all the commissioned music which has already been written will not have an opportunity to be performed if this concert does not go ahead.

We have launched a [tax deductible donation drive](#) (via the Australian Cultural Fund) that will help to perform this concert and enable it to be recorded. We have set a modest target, but need ten times this amount realistically which we are seeking from philanthropic sources. Sadly, there is no other way of raising this shortfall.

Any gifts large or small are greatly appreciated.

Thank you so very much for your generous consideration of this request.

Chris, Jo and the Flowers of Peace team

[Learn more or donate now](#)

[Artist Project: 'Peacekeeping Symphony' \(australianculturalfund.org.au\)](https://australianculturalfund.org.au)

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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14/27 Mulley Street
HOLDER ACT 2611**

62851931

**admin@rslwoden.org.au
Visit us on the web at
www.rslwoden.org.au**

**Office hours are
9am-3pm Mon-Fri**

PS.

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