



ANZAC DAY

Melbourne 25 April 2016



Swanston Street 9 a.m.

AT "ROSCO'S"



Gavin Duncan, Klaus Cimdins



Geoff Lanigan, Tony Cooke, Brian Jones



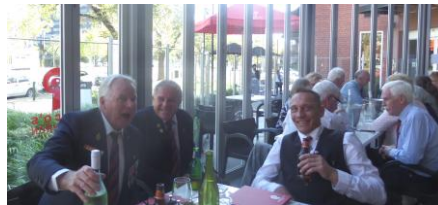
Pauline Smith, Sue Presgrave



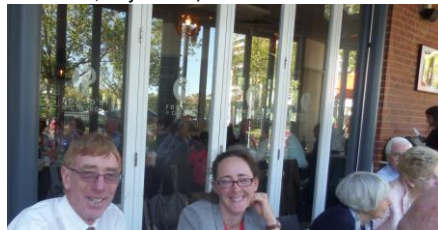
Nancy Birrell, Keith Bink, Bill Forrest



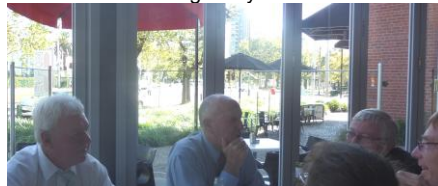
Peter Wynd, his daughter Rebecca, Allan
Tonkin



Noel Aldis, Ray Evans, Adam McCloud



Paul Heenan and daughter Lyn



Peter Everett, Ron Hollings, John Richards



Carol Duncan, Lyn Everett



John Watson, John Coward, Geoff Lanigan

AROUND AUSTRALIA

BRISBANE



Barry Broderick, Blue Hammond, Peter Lacey,
Bruce Sutherland



Andrew Hunt, Dan Penman, Terry Dex, Rus-
sell Johns



Zen Helinski, Warren Tilse, Bob Smidt

FRANCE



Sir Peter Cosgrove at the Somme battlefields

CONTENTS

ANZAC DAY PICTURES	1
PRESIDENTS REPORT	2
UPCOMING EVENTS	
LONG TAN DAY	
RARA (VIC) REG DINNER	
9RAR NOVEMBER	
ADELAIDE REUNION	
QUEENS BIRTHDAY HONOURS	
HONORS AND AWARDS – K Duthie	
BATTLE OF LONG TAN - SHAME	
VALE	
VETERANS FUNERALS	
VVAA/LONG TAN DAY	
DVA HEARING	
TRAVEL CONCESSIONS	
MEDICAL RESEARCH	
FUNNY STUFF	
MATESHIP	
9 RAR ASSOCIATION INFORMATION	

PRESIDENTS REPORT



Anzac day in Melbourne this year was held on a day in which it would not be possible to get a better day with respect to the weather.

We had a beautiful clear day and being a Monday, no smog evident. The Autumn leaves turning colour provided a picturesque back drop. The Dawn Service was again extremely well attended with about 40,000 people gathering at the Shrine. I had a slight problem in that I was of the view that the RAR were going to lead the march and when I arrived at the designated form up area all I could see were units marching up St. Kilda Rd, towards the Shrine as far as the eye could see and I therefore inadvertently thought I was late. Also, exacerbating my situation, our 9 RAR form up area was moved about 60 metres further back and in the mass of people our banner could not be seen. I then ran to try and catch up to 9 RAR and ran all the way to the Shrine before realising that I was not behind them but in front. I then ran back and joined them in the last hundred metres and one of the blokes said to me as I joined in "Hey Stan! You look like you've just run a four minute mile" I replied "If not bloody close to it".

Anyway, Our Anzac day gathering was a good turnout notwithstanding it being a long weekend. We enjoyed a lovely lunch washed down with a few beers and garnished with some great stories retold.

Some very good news over recent times was the success of "Operation Bring Them Home" which culminated in the remains 33 of our war dead buried on foreign soil being brought home to a large gathering of Vietnam veterans and family members. The occasion with full military honours at Richmond airbase closes another chapter in our military history

The other good news is the Government finally agreeing to award those 12 members of D Company 6 RAR who fought in the Battle of Long Tan who were not awarded the honours as recommended by their Company Commander, Harry Smith. Harry Smith has campaigned for 50 years to have these men honoured and he can now rest with the knowledge that the job is now done. Harry Smith has recently written a book titled "Long Tan" and I commend the book which provides a good insight into the whole affair. One would hope that the system of awards has had a major overhaul since then. Any system that is based on a ration quota has to be flawed at the outset.

It won't be long before we'll all have to turn our minds to Adelaide for the 50th birthday reunion of the Battalion to be held in November 2017. It would be great if Victoria is very well represented at this event which should by all accounts be a compulsory parade.

In the meantime, we have our normal gathering at the Shrine and lunch afterwards in November and your Committee would also like to see a good attendance. This is always a great day so please come along.

In closing, I wish you and your family all good health and look forward to seeing you next time around.

Stan Sutherland

UPCOMING EVENTS

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY
THURSDAY 18TH AUGUST 2016,
10:45AM

SHRINE OF REMEMERANCE



The Vietnam War was Australia's longest military engagement of the 20th century. Almost 60,000 Australians fought in the war and

more than 500 lost their lives. Originally known as Long Tan Day, Vietnam Veterans Day is commemorated on 18 August every year. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, where 108 brave young men from D Company 6RAR resisted an attack of 1,500 – 2,500 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops. It would become one of the most extraordinary chapters in Australia's military history.

KEY TIMINGS

- 9.30am: Gunfire Breakfast near the Police Memorial, St Kilda Road
- 11am: Marchers Step off from Police Memorial
- 11.20am: Marchers approach the Shrine Forecourt
- 11.30am: Keynote address by Victoria's Governor The Honorable Linda Dessau AM
- 11.35am: Address by Victoria's Premier The Honorable Daniel Andrews MP
- 11.40am: Long Tan Cross site re-enactment
- 12 noon: Wreath laying on the Shrine Forecourt

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATION (VIC).

REGIMENTAL DINNER
FRIDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2016



The dinner is held at William Angliss – a TAFE institute located in the Melbourne CBD, Victoria, providing a specialist centre for training and vocational education in Hospitality, Tourism and Culinary Arts.

The 2015 dinner was a huge success; join the RAR Association for a night of fine dining, fine wine, great company and an outstanding guest

speaker in MajGen Hori Howard (Rtd).

Don't miss this one it's great value – **contact Editor for details.**

9 RAR NOVEMBER 2016 - REMEMBRANCE SERVICE & LUNCH

This will be held at the Shrine of Remembrance on Sunday 20th November at 12.00 pm. The Shrine will be represented by Life Governor Lt.Col Adrian Lombardo.

After the service we will retire to Rosco's Italian restaurant on St Kilda Road for an afternoon of fine food and wine and each other's company.

We will be asking members to pre pay bookings, as we have to confirm attendance numbers to the management of Rosco's. The Pre Booking Form can be located on the last page of the Newsletter, payment can be either direct online or by cheque, please do not send cash in envelopes.

The booking fee is \$20 per person, this will be refunded to you on 20th; if you do not show, you lose your deposit.

9 RAR NATIONAL REUNION - ADELAIDE 2017

The "official" reunion will begin on Monday 13th November 2017 with the anniversary Dinner in the Grand Ballroom at the Hilton Adelaide preceded by a cocktail function in the adjoining Balcony Gallery.



On the following day we conduct our Service of Remembrance at the "birthplace of the Battalion" Keswick Barracks. Following the service, refreshments will be available for purchase and a tour of Keswick Army Museum will be available.



On the Wednesday a "picnic" will take place at the Lake Breeze Winery in Langhorne Creek where food and beverages will be available for purchase. Musical entertainment will be provided during the afternoon. A coach will be available to transport people from Adelaide and return.



Unlike previous reunions we have combined the "Meet & Great" and Dinner. We have also split the Service from the Picnic (BBQ) as one is a dress up function, the other a "dress down" affair.

Prior to the reunions we have arranged for an optional visit to the Pt Pirie RSL home of the "Huey" where we will join RSL members for the Remembrance Day service followed by refreshments and a tour of the RSL museum. A coach will be provided, however some members may travel by car or in fact call in on their way to Adelaide if coming from that direction.



Optionally if Companies or Platoons want to organise their get-togethers on the Sunday we will assist them to put those in place.

A number of suggested post reunion "tours" will be promulgated for attendees to arrange themselves.

We will be organising a major raffle, auctions, sale of goods etc to raise funds and will be applying for grant funding which is available. The idea is to reduce the cost to each person attending significantly so that the cost of attending does not prevent them coming.

Apart from fund-raising and grant funding we have looked at the cost of catering for a meal, such as the BBQ lunch, as against organising food outlets to be onsite to provide a variety of food for purchase as chosen by the buyer. This way we don't have to guess how many may turn up.

Essentially the only upfront payment will be for the Dinner (which will include a 5 hour beverage package). Coach tickets and food purchase of one's choice are extra but people get to choose what they have.

Once a few loose ends have been tidied up the Reunion will be officially launched by email and snail mail.

We have looked at the positives and negative from previous reunions and have worked to using the good, avoiding the bad and staying away from the ugly.

The RAR principle will apply to the reunion – Remembrance, Affordability, Reflection.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

BRIG CHISTOPHER ANTONY FIELD, AM, CSC

For exceptional service to the Australian Army as the Chief Operations and Plans, Queensland Reconstruction Authority in 2011, and as the Chief of Staff of Headquarters Forces Command from 2012.

Brigadier Chris Field is the current Commander 3rd Brigade, at Lavack Barracks, Townsville, Qld. Brigadier Field previously served as commanding officer of **1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1 RAR), and with both 2/4 RAR and 2 RAR**

WO1. ANDREW LEONARD PLATT, OAM

For meritorious service as the Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant of the 2nd Commando Regiment, 1st Commando Regiment and the **5th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment**.

WO2. MICHAEL JAMES CARROLL OAM, (USA)

For meritorious achievement as the Company Sergeant Major of the Ready Combat Team and Operations Warrant Officer of the Ready Battalion Group, **1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment**.

ROSS TREVOR LANGFORD, OAM

For service to veterans, and to the community, includes: National President, **5th/7th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment Association (5/7 RAR)**. Collaborated with the Australian War Memorial in 2012 in organising the installation of a plaque dedicated to the 5/7 RAR at the Memorial.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

*This is an article by **Ken Duthie** from 3 RAR, I have no problem with it.*

Editor

The honours and awards for Australia Day/Queens Birthday 2016 have come and gone, surprise, surprise (as Gomer Pyle would say). Who are the recipients of the main awards? Let's look! Ex politicians on a generous pension, then taking up a diplomatic post (another Government salary), to this we add 'insult to injury' by giving them our highest award for doing their job and being paid to do so.

Doctors and professors on great salaries and receiving research grants to do that research, again doing their job and receiving the awards most of us are never likely to see.

Sporting identities, earning millions of dollars (cricket and tennis to name just two sports of high profile), again being rewarded for it! You hear these sports people often say "I play and do it for Australia". If that's the case why aren't they sharing their gains with the Australian people? These identities think nothing of pay-

ing for example, \$1,500 for a suit or dress, whilst (let's take tennis for an example), the linesmen/women or ball boys/girls (who volunteer), are given a cap or hat, shorts, trousers or skirt and polo top and they would love to be nominated for something. Some of these volunteers have been volunteering longer than the sports identities receiving the awards have been competing. Many of them in other volunteering areas fund some events out of their own pockets to ensure the event happens and are not looking for recompense.

It's time they created two divisions of Honours and Awards, one for the volunteers and contributors, another for the rich and famous, but equally distributing the Honours / Awards. The Honours and Awards system both civil and military must be due for an overhaul, given more transparency to selection and assessment criteria and peer group representation on the selection panel with a right of review or appeal by the nominee / or-animotion!

The Military Honours and Awards system is an excellent point in question. During the Vietnam War, a quota system was used, with not one Infantry Officer or soldier from the RAR being awarded the Victoria Cross for exceptional bravery or heroism in ten years of the conflict? It has taken from 1948 (birth of the Royal Australian Regiment), until 2010 (62 years) for any Officer or soldier to be deemed worthy as a recipient of the **Victoria Cross (6 RAR – Cpl Daniel Keighran VC)**.

There would have been many actions, engagements and acts of bravery or personal sacrifice worthy of nomination and sub-sequent awarding of a VC to a member of the Battalion from 1 RAR through to 9 RAR over that period.

That's my opinion anyway! What's yours?

BATTLE OF LONG TAN DECORATIONS SHAME

Article by Bruce Atkinson – ABC News
Updated 18 Aug 2015.

INTERVIEW WITH COL HARRY SMITH, SG MC CO D COY 6RAR

The Battle of Long Tan lasted just four hours on August 18 in 1966, but for Colonel Smith, Delta (D) Company's commander, the torment of his memories and a fight against those who managed the gallantry honours system has continued to haunt him for the past 49 years.

Immediately after the battle in which 18 Australian soldiers and hundreds of the defeated enemy died, Colonel Smith recommended 20 of his men for gallantry awards.

The recommendations were largely ignored.

Four were rejected on the spot, including a Victoria Cross for Sergeant Major Jack Kirby.

Of the 16 nominations remaining, half were knocked back and some of the remainder were downgraded. In it, he revealed his two immediate superior officers embellished the role they played in the battle to receive the highest gallantry awards at the expense of his men.

Colonel Smith said his commanding officer was nominated for a Distinguished Service Order — the second highest award behind a Victoria Cross — and a Vietnamese Medal.

He said the commanding officer claimed he moved out from Nui Dat and took over command and fought his battalion against an enemy regiment with success.

"He wasn't there and that is a rort," Colonel Smith said.

Colonel Smith also said the commander of the Australian Taskforce at Nui Dat received a Distinguished Service Order for his good service over time and personally directing the battle.

"For most of the time the battle was on, when the shit hit the fan, he went to his personal tent and didn't reappear until there was an argument about the helicopters," Colonel Smith said.

"It has been testified that is where he was, in his tent, probably ponder-

ing his career after he stuffed up in not passing on the intelligence about the enemy and he realised all hell was going to break loose on him."

Colonel Smith said the two men gave wrong accounts of their actions to the Australian commander who was not in Vietnam, but used their information for their citations for medals.

He only fully uncovered how and why his men did not receive proper recognition after 1996 when the 30-year Official Secrets Act expired and their version of events was revealed. Retired Major General John Cantwell, who was commander of Australian forces in the Middle East in 2010, and deputy chief of Army before that, agreed their actions were questionable.

He said there were "absolutely unforgivable failures of leadership and administration" when it came to medals for Delta Company 6RAR and some of the others who supported that battle.

"Any reasonable person who looks at what occurred in terms of the distribution of honours and awards after that battle would have to raise real doubts about who got what medal and for what reason," he said.

"It's pretty obvious that senior officers who weren't involved in the fight look after themselves and sprinkle them and their mates with high awards."

Cooks and postal staff working behind the lines received awards while those on the front line missed out.

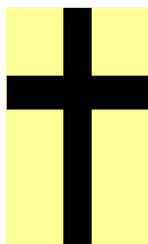
Only one medal could be awarded for every 250 soldiers and one Mentioned in Despatches given out for every 150 soldiers during a six-month period irrespective of the amount of action they saw.



COL SMITH RECEIVING HIS MC
All photos supplied by Col Smith

There are some very good "U Tube" clips on the internet on the Long Tan battle. **Editor**

VALE



**AT THE GOING DOWN
OF THE SUN, WE
WILL REMEMBER
THEM
"LEST WE FORGET"
OUR FALLEN AND
DEPARTED COM-
RADES**

JOHN MALONEY
SVN 1968 – 69, 4 RAR Malaysia 1966.
Passed away 11 April 2016.



(Black & White action picture: J Maloney on the left in Malaya with 4 RAR doing village search – Courtesy AWM)

John was an original member of A Coy 4 RAR and served in Malaya & Borneo in 1966)

Those who attended the Gold Coast reunion will remember that it was John's son, WO2 Mathew Maloney that provided the Catafalque Party for our remembrance service,
Alan Price
President 4 RAR Association QLD.



**DONALD EDWARD
REILLY**
SVN 1968 – 69, Pay
Clerk, C Coy.
Passed away 8 April
2016.



**JOSEPH "JOE"
GEORGE SZABO**
SVN 1968 -69, 9PI
C Coy
Passed away 23
May 2016

LESLIE "LES" SMITH
SVN 1969, D Coy.
Passed away 18 March 2016



**LARRY "WACKA"
WAKEHAM**
SVN 1968 - 69, 12PI D
Coy
Passed away 9 July
2016



**EDWARD "TED"
PAVEY**
SVN 1968 – 69,
5PI B Coy
Passed away 8
July 2016

VETERAN FUNERALS "HOW DO YOU FEEL"

This email was addressed to John James, President RARA (Vic) from Bill Williams ex 1RAR SVN.

**LEONARD "MICK" SYDNEY
MICHALOWSKY**
1 RAR and 8 RAR SVN.

Funeral service 21st July 2016
held at Altona Meadows.

As you know I attended Mick's funeral and conducted the RSL service and gave a eulogy regarding Mick's service, I served with Mick in 1 RAR, 7 RAR, the funeral was well attended by at least 170 family and friends.

Mick served in A Coy 1RAR 1965/66 and was involved in the action that claimed the first Australian MIA in Vietnam of Gillson and Parker and was also involved in the action that claimed the lives of Cpl Frank Smith and L.Cpl Thomas Ross who were both returned from Terendak early last month for reburial in Australia. Mick also served a second tour of Vietnam with 8 RAR this time in much safer surrounds of Admin Company. It was great to see the 8 RAR sash on the coffin.

The disappointing part of the funeral for me was that only **two other** Vietnam veterans attended, it just goes to show if you have not obtained a high public profile in the veteran community no matter what you did during your service you tend to be forgotten quickly.

We tend to turn up in large numbers for the better known members with numerous members coming forward to speak about the mem

bers' service, even when they did not serve with him and in some cases not even from the RAR. The ordinary Digger who did the hard yards is considered not worth the effort in some cases, I consider this is a bad reflection on the RSL and the Vietnam veteran community in general.

If I had not offered my help to the family, a member of the Altona RSL would have conducted the RSL service, he is not a Vietnam veteran or a veteran and did not serve in the RAR, he has no idea what it is like to be in action and carry out the tasks a Infantry soldier in the field on Operation, how and the hell could he pay due respect to a man like Mick and have any idea regarding Mick active service and his Army service of 27 years.

I consider where possible a member of the Regiment who has served with the member or at least in the members unit should conduct the RSL service and give the eulogy, this practice would also depend on the member wishes and the member's family. How possibly can a Vietnam veteran or non veteran who has not served in RAR speak about the service of a Infantry Officer or soldier on active service, he will speak about the actions but will have little or no knowledge of what actually happened, just what has been written and what others had passed on to him for the eulogy.

At the service I met Mick's son who served in the RAR and also in 1RAR, I also meet Mick's grandson who is serving in the Regiment with 2RAR in Townsville he was granted compassionate leave to attend his Grandfathers funeral, the Michalowsky family of three generations have given close to 40 years service to the Royal Australian Regiment and their Country not bad for a family who migrated from Poland after the War.

It was very pleasing for me that numerous members of the Michalowsky family and friends came forward and thanked me for my eulogy and how I explained Mick's service in the Army of 27 years ,they told me Mick had explained very little if anything about his Vietnam service or his Army service in general.

It was a honour and a privilege to say goodbye to a ordinary Digger Mick Michalowsky, and tell his family and friends about his service to the Royal Australian Regiment and his Country.

BILL WILLIAMS
1 RAR SV 1965 - 66

Reply from John James

Thank you for your thought provoking report. I fear, unfortunately, we will be seeing more and more Vietnam Veteran infantrymen's funerals as the years pass. It would be a great help if you and Doug could put your heads together regarding how we can better ensure there is proper representation at services.

The points you have made about the RAR and those who have served (and are serving) in its ranks not being properly recognised adds, significantly, to the debate at our last committee meeting.

As we discussed, **the vast majority of the population (including politicians and the media) do not know the difference between an infantryman and an instrument fitter.** This, in some way, reflects your concern regarding Long Tan Day becoming Vietnam Veterans' Day with the RAR (with the exception of 6 RAR) relegated to the position of a mere participating body.

In my view, the RAR should be at the head of VV Day activities in acknowledgement of having had by far the largest commitment to the war, doing most (but not all) of the dangerous work and bearing, clearly, the highest casualties. If more politicians and media understood this, then we would not have the problem and warriors from fighting battalions would not be considered mere participants. It would also differentiate VV Day from Anzac Day, where protocol rules. For us, protocol does not get a look in on the battlefield.

The issue of raising the profile of the infantry (and other combat corps) is something we in Victoria see as important.

Our head body the RAR Corporation agrees and this will be an agenda item at the next AGM in September 2016.

Unfortunately, I will be overseas at

the time of this year's RARC meeting to contribute to the debate. However, Peter Fraser and Klaus Cimdins will be there to represent Victoria. I am confident they will pursue the issue with vigour.

JOHN JAMES

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY / LONG TAN DAY

Highlighted in red is an extract of an email I received this week regarding Vietnam Veterans Day/Long Tan Day as Secretary/Editor of the RARA (Vic).

"Regarding Vietnam Vets Day, it is the domain of the VVAA"

MY VIEW

"Bullshit"

Long Tan Day was started in Melbourne by ex members of 6 RAR, I suspect in the late 70's and over the years it grew to encompass all Vietnam veterans who attended to commemorate those who served and died in Vietnam. Back then I think most vets would have regarded the service as the domain of 6 RAR.

Long Tan Day was renamed by Bob Hawke in 1988 after highly successful "Welcome Home Parade" held in Sydney by Vietnam Veterans in October 1987.

The service at the Shrine in Melbourne was still known as the Long Tan Day many years after Bob Hawke's proclamation.

I would imagine that members of 6 RAR would have been extremely disappointed with the change of name, I must admit I would not have been happy if I were a member of 6 RAR.

Long Tan has a meaning to the ex Vietnam vets, they understand that 18 Australian infantry soldiers lost their lives in a battle and in turn inflicted huge casualties on the enemy.

I personally do not think the name should have been changed. If Bob Hawke wanted to have a Day to honour all veterans, he could have selected the day the 1 RAR was sent to Vietnam in May 1965 by Bob Menzies or when the 4 RAR the last battalion left Vietnam in December

1971, but then how many veterans would have turned up.

Long Tan Day was just such an easy target for a rebranding by the government.

ANZAC is an acronym formed from the initial letters of the **Australian and New Zealand Army Corp**, which landed in Gallipoli on 25 April 1915.

Maybe "Hawkey" could have also considered renaming ANZAC Day to say **ANZON** Day an acronym for **Australian and New Zealand and Other Nations**. This name change would have ensured we were politically correct because we would not offend other non - Australian veterans that march on ANZAC Day. I wonder how this would have gone down with the RSL and Australian public.

In regard to the order of march/service; it was originally **Long Tan Day**, held on 18th August; **6 RAR** should always be the lead group, irrespective of the views of the VVAA.

This day was never intended to be an ADF/Government event, where the protocol for order of service is Navy, Army and Air Force.

This day belongs to those who died in the Vietnam conflict – which is mainly the bloody Australian Army.

The order of march put in place by the VVAA for 2016 is:

- 6 RAR
- VVAA
- RAN
- RAR & Other Army
- RAAF

I must admit as an ex 3 RAR and 9 RAR rifleman, I have a problem as to which units/soldiers the VVAA is representing. It's not the RAR and I doubt if it is any of the other front line combat soldiers that served in SVN.

In 25 years from now I reckon most of us from the Viet war will be dead, however the RAR, RAA, RAAC, RAE, RAASC and their associations will continue on.

What will happen to the VVAA, maybe they will they rebrand?

The Australian death casualties in Vietnam from 1/6/1963 to 15/7/1972 amounted to 521, these were made up of:

ARMY: -	
• 6 RAR	50
• All other RAR	278
• Tunnel Rats	35
• AATTV	35
• APC & Tanks	22
• Artillery	14
• Other infantry	9
• SAS	5
• All other army units	<u>49</u>
	497
• RAN	7
• RAAF	<u>17</u>
	521

Of the 3,129 WIA's in SVN, 3,025 were represented by the Army and 48 and 56 respectively by the RAN and RAAF. Bill Williams advises me that he thinks the RAR component of the WIA was in the order of 2,600.

Does the order of march/service appear somewhat skewed or am I just imagining all of this?

Please note these are my personal views and do not represent the views of the 9 RAR Association (Vic).

DVA HEARING AIDS

READERS QUESTIONS



I am wondering if any Veterans have a problem with the current Hearing Services Program.

I visit Repat. in Melbourne twice a week and if the subject of hearing comes up all Vets agree that the hearing aids funded by DVA/Dept of Health are next to useless.

I wasn't aware before having my hearing tested that all audiologists are not equal - I have language processing problems since having a stroke (my wife is helping me write this).

I have now used my Hearing Test Voucher using a Hearing Service that was more interested in selling a high end hearing aid than getting the test right.

It's difficult to understand why Veterans hearing health needs are not being met directly by DVA

Roger Cheal, Vic

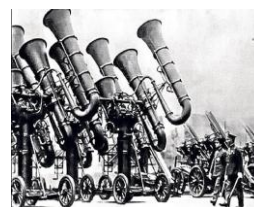
I have just gone through this exercise and found it to be very frustrating.

Doug McGrath, NSW

I have over the years, heard of many complaints against the system.

I have been looked after by "Hear Link" in Melbourne since 1983, when I received my first set of hearing aids.

My latest set, are very good, they are a "Siemens" brand. I have heard some suppliers in Melbourne are



trying to sell "up market" models to DVA Veterans

Allan Tonkin, Vic

THE GOVERNMENT POSITION

As from 23 December 2015, whether a DVA patient's hearing loss is due to disease, excessive exposure to loud noise, ageing or some other reason, DVA patients with a **Gold card or a White card with hearing loss as an accepted condition** can access a range of services and resources through the Australian Government Hearing Services Program. Eligibility includes:

- Fully subsidised hearing assessments and fitting of hearing aids, if required;
- Access to the latest digital hearing technology;
- Fully subsidised assistive listening devices;
- Repair and annual maintenance of fully subsidised hearing devices and the supply of batteries; and
- On-going clinical review and support.

To access the Australian Government Hearing Services Program for the first time, patients should see their general practitioner (GP). Without a GP referral, the patient's audio logical assessment is not paid for through the OHS.

Editor's comment

So if you do not have a Gold Card or the White Card with hearing loss as an accepted condition then you're

most likely screwed for the time being.

However your plight has not been ignored, Ted Radford, the President of the Defence Force Welfare Association Victoria Branch Inc., has taken up the fight. He has written to Ms Letitia Hope, the Assistant Secretary of the DVA in Canberra putting forward a case that all veterans should be entitled to free hearing aids provided the request is supported by specialist doctors.

If any member wishes a copy of Ted's submission please email me and I will send it to you.

Ted is a retired Air Vice Marshall and no doubt has heard all the weasel words on offer from our politicians and their stooges.

HIGH ABORIGINAL PRISON RATES LINKED TO HEARING LOSS

*By Jacqueline Krynda from
www.newmatilda.com*

Aboriginals often begin to lose their hearing as a child, because of repeated ear infections. Aboriginal children are 50 times more likely to contract middle ear infections during infancy than non-Aboriginal children.

Chronic ear disease occurs wherever there is poor nutrition, overcrowded housing, and limited access to medical care. It's common around the world for people in disadvantaged conditions.

An estimated 74 percent of Aboriginal children go on to develop a permanent hearing loss in adolescence and adulthood. At school, hearing difficulties increase the likelihood of delayed speech, problems learning to read and isolation from other children. All this contributes to Aboriginal children leaving education early, finding it difficult to find a job, and, ultimately, ending up in trouble with the law.

If hearing loss does go undetected, the first time it usually becomes an issue is in interactions with police. A common problem is that a deaf offender has misunderstood and reacted incorrectly to a police instruction when they are being stopped or searched.

These problems are often repeated again in court, especially in

noisy and fast-paced criminal trials in the Local and District Courts. In some instances, hearing-impaired defendants will act oddly during court proceedings, speaking too loudly and at the wrong time or withdrawing into themselves.

If a deaf defendant is sent prison, being unable to hear adds another layer of isolation. Common complaints from prisoners documented in the 2010 Darwin and Alice Springs prison study included; "I can't hear them officers and I get in trouble" and "I don't understand that court fella."

There is currently no comprehensive hearing screening for Aboriginal defendants at court or Aboriginal inmates entering prison anywhere in Australia.

Time and cost is why governments are not providing more screening or treatment. The major governmental response to lobbying on this issue in 2010 was the Commonwealth transferring the funding responsibility for these services to the States and Territories, thereby evading the issue.

The issue is also not simply about criminal justice but also about Aboriginal health care more generally. Rates of ear disease seem to be on the rise, and have been recently labelled "a massive public health problem needing urgent attention" by the World Health Organisation.

Hearing loss is the missing piece of the puzzle in why Aboriginal disadvantage is so hard to address. While it remains missing the rest of the picture won't make sense.

TRAVEL CONCESSION WITHDRAWAL FOR DISABLED VETERANS AND WAR WIDOWS

I'm sure if you have travelled on **Great Southern Railways** you would join me in thanking their staff for the service they and their predecessors have provided to the uniformed Servicemen and women, Veterans and War Widows of Australia since the Second World War. We have had our Commonwealth Concessions withdrawn they are faced with losing their livelihood.

Courtesy of the Coalition Government the effective date for withdrawal of concession over Com-

monwealth Railways tracks 1st July 2016, election eve.

Most affected by these changes are Disabled Veterans and War Widows and their Carers..

As an example the Perth to Adelaide single TPI fare rises from **\$644 to \$1,280.**

GREAT SOUTHERN RAIL CEO CHRIS TALLENT

Concession fares will rise and services on The Ghan and Indian Pacific trains will be halved as GSR prepares for an expected 20 per cent downturn in passenger numbers.

GSR chief executive Chris Tallent said \$9 million in funding from the Federal Government that subsidised the travel costs of pensioners, veterans and seniors taking the train journeys would end by July next year.

Although the company would still offer a 20 per cent discount to concession passengers, Mr Tallent said the company was expecting fewer people to take the rail journey. A company spokesman confirmed the drop in demand was expected to be 20 per cent.

GSR currently operates 13 to 14 double-weekly services from Adelaide to Darwin during the Dry Season.

"At this point we are looking to withdraw those services and continue on with a firm weekly service on the Ghan, albeit with longer trains potentially to cater for increased demand on those services," Mr Tallent said.

About 40 to 50 per cent of travellers on the Ghan and Indian Pacific routes currently receive some benefit, with 95 per cent of them getting a 30 per cent reduction in fares.

This will be such a significant cost impost that many veterans will not be able to undertake the train trips that they had perhaps planned for many, many years.

The company said, as an example, the fare for a sleeper for war veterans on the Indian Pacific would increase from **\$83 to \$689 for journeys from Adelaide to Broken Hill.**

Mr Tallent said he was "disappointed" but agreed it was not the Federal Government's job to subsidise pensioners' trips.

"The veterans represent about 2 to 3 per cent of the business," he said.

Mr Tallent said the company would provide a "20 per cent discount to all eligible concession card holders in next year's schedules" before the full increase is introduced.

FEDERAL LABOR SAYS CUTS WILL IMPACT LOCAL TOURISM.

Federal Opposition transport spokesman **Anthony Albanese** said Government should never have slashed the funding. "These cut-backs will mean less jobs and have a particular impact on local tourism," he said.



Photo: The Ghan train service will be reduced to once a week after government cuts. (ABC News: Robert Herrick)

"The impact for regional tourism if these cuts aren't reversed will be devastating, devastating for jobs."

Mr Albanese said Prime Minister Tony Abbott should have told South Australians what he planned to do so as his cuts would inevitably cause job losses at GSR, which employs about 400 people, mainly in Adelaide.

GSR was formed in 1997 after the privatisation of government-owned Australian National.

Subsidies of up to 55 per cent for pensioners and 88 per cent for war veterans were built into the privatisation arrangements.

GSR operates the Overland, which travels between Adelaide and Melbourne; the Indian Pacific, which travels between Sydney, Adelaide and Perth; and The Ghan, which travels between Adelaide and Darwin.

Mr Albanese said these services, which make multiple stops in regional centres, pumped \$100 million a year into regional Australia, boosting local communities and creating jobs.

The Federal Government said it was now up to state governments to

provide subsidies for pensioners and veterans.

But South Australian Attorney-General John Rau said it was unlikely the State Government would step in.

"It's not an expectation I have that the state would, in effect, assume another expenditure on this particular Commonwealth program rather than commit money to police officers or public health or public transport or something of that nature," he said.

Northern Territory Chief Minister Adam Giles said the reduction in services would not severely damage the Territory's tourism industry.

Mr Giles said while the loss of visitors arriving by rail was regrettable, it was getting easier for people to visit the Northern Territory.

"It's always a challenge for any government in terms of looking at how to subsidise travel, there are a range of opportunities to be able to get to the Northern Territory and recently we've seen Virgin Airlines come to Alice Springs and having more of a presence between Adelaide and Darwin," he said.

"That's presenting an opportunity and now more tourists are coming here."

RSL SA PRESIDENT

BRIG. TIM HANNA

Brigadier Tim Hanna, said the price hike would deter veterans from making long-planned journeys.

"We know that many veterans use train travel to understand their military heritage and to revisit battle sites, particularly in The Ghan services," he said.

"Train travel remains a very safe and, until now, affordable way for veterans to travel to the country and to remember those that they've served with.

"This will be such a significant cost impost that many veterans will not be able to undertake the train trips that they had perhaps planned for many, many years."

COUNCIL OF THE AGEING SA

CEO JANE MUSSARED

Said the price rises could mean pensioners spend less time with loved ones. "Seniors and older people will start to make different decisions," she said.

"They'll review what's possible for them, they will be less likely to travel around Australia, they're less likely to see families and friends and then themselves becoming isolated."

Will former politicians forego the same concession paid out of the public purse to help the nation's bottom line – like the "Life Gold Pass" for instance? Well when that was muted a few years ago the former PMs threatened to take the Australian public to court for breach of contract. One rule for them another rule for us.

MEDICAL RESEARCH

Vietnam Veterans

The Australian War Memorial Council has commissioned an independent history that will document and analyse the medical legacies of the Vietnam War. My colleague Dr Peter Yule of the University of Melbourne will write the history; it will be ready for publication by the end of 2019.

The commissioned history will examine the development of various medical issues experienced by Australian veterans, with a particular focus on the health effects of exposure to herbicides, as well as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). During the four-year project, we will interview a wide cross-section of veterans of the Vietnam War.

I have been engaged by the Australian War Memorial to conduct interviews with Vietnam Veterans in Victoria and Tasmania.

The focus of the history will be on the health concerns of veterans and Peter Yule believes the best way to find out about these concerns is by talking with the veterans themselves. Peter emphasises that the voice of the veterans must be heard.

I am writing to ask if you would publicise this project; and to ask if you or any of your members would agree to be interviewed for this project

I can be contacted by email, or by phoning me on 0427 042 753.

With many thanks and best regards

Dr Fay Woodhouse

Interviewer for Victoria and Tasmania, AWM Medical Legacies of the Vietnam War Project

Honorary Fellow, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne
Phone: 04270 42753
Email : flw@unimelb.edu.au
www.hindsightconsulting.com.au

If you would like to help please contact Fay - Editor

FUNNY STUFF

My drinking problem



DARWIN AWARDS FOR STUPIDITY **Number 1**

The Ann Arbor News crime column reported that a man walked into a Burger King in Ypsilanti, Michigan at 5 A.M., flashed a gun, and demanded cash. The clerk turned him down because he said he couldn't open the cash register without a food order. When the man ordered onion rings, the clerk said they weren't available for breakfast. The man, frustrated, walked away.

Number 2

When a man attempted to siphon petrol from a Winnebago parked on a Seattle street by sucking on a hose, he got much more than he bargained for. Police arrived at the scene to find a very sick man curled up next to a motor home near spilled sewage. A police spokesman said that the man admitted to trying to steal petrol, but he plugged his siphon hose into the Winnebago's sewage tank by mistake. The owner of the vehicle declined to press charges saying that it was the best laugh he'd ever had

MATESHIP

From Allan Braby in Townsville.

Lads



I have a good mate called Gary Mayer who was Lt Cosgrove's sig in Vietnam; in fact he was with him when Lt Cosgrove won the MC. As we all know Lt Cosgrove is now

General Sir Peter Cosgrove and seemingly a good bloke at that.

But my mate Garry, who know resides in Maleny in the Queensland hinterland, has a battle with cancer and all efforts to halt the dreaded killer are near exhausted.

Last weekend he got a call from his old skipper saying that he was in Brisbane and would like to drive up to Maleny for a cuppa.

And he did just that. An unmarked BMW with 2 Fed coppers abroad followed by a 4 wheel drive with more Feds made the trip up and a fair bit of bullshit was relived over the cuppa.

About 2 hours later, the General was on his way back to Brisbane for the VIP flight to Canberra.

Now is that a fair dinkum good bloke or what????

9RAR (VIC) ASSOCIATION INFORMATION PAGE

VICTORIAN DIRECT ON LINE BANKING DETAILS



9 RAR Association (Victoria) Inc.
BSB 633-000
A/C No. 154877450

Make sure you identify your payment with your Name or Telephone number.

If paying by Cheque or Money Order, please send to:

The Secretary
9 RAR ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC
PO BOX 6213, FRANKSTON VIC 3199

9 RAR ASSOCIATION (VICTORIA) INC.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 2016

PRESIDENT: Stan Sutherland

stanley.sutherland@bigpond.com
02 6027 1266

VICE PRESIDENT: Bill Forrest

wf0377@bigpond.com. 03 9819 5357

SECRETARY

TREASURER Klaus Cimdins

EDITOR

kcimdins@bigpond.com 03 9770 1074

MEMBERSHIP Geoff Lanigan

geoff.lanigan@lancivil.com.au
03 9558 4380

9 RAR ASSOCIATION REP

Allan Tonkin

allantonkin150@gmail.com 03 9366 1153

Please cut out or send the form below to Klaus Cimdins: PO Box or email address.

9 RAR ROSCO ACCEPTANCES **20 NOVEMBER 2016**

MEMBER NAME

PARTNER NAME

OTHER'S ATTENDING

\$20.00 PAYMENT PER PERSON TO BE MADE TO: 9 RAR ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC:

PAYMENT EITHER BY:

CHEQUE \$ _____

OR

ON LINE \$ _____

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM TO THE 9 RAR POSTAL ADDRESS FOR RECORD KEEPING

AWARD UPGRADES 9 RAR

With the end of Vietnam War list the OC A Coy Maj W McDonald had his MID upgraded to a Medal of Gallantry and 2nd Lt Geoffrey Locke was awarded and Commendation for Distinguished Service.