

Sit Rep

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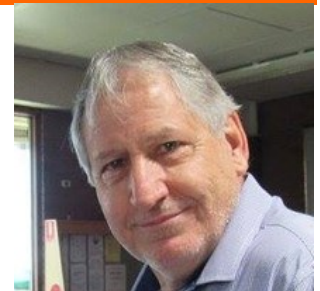
LOSS OF A MATE

REMEMBER TWO PEOPLE

PICS PAGE

A word from the
President of Friends
Bob Elworthy AM

BOB AND KINGSLEY HAVE VISITED A VETS MUSEUM IN THE USA



Hello fellow supporters of the National Vietnam Veterans Museum. Your museum is unique; built by Vietnam veterans to honour the service and sacrifice of those who served and suffered during the Vietnam conflict, dedicated to telling the Vietnam story through the eyes of the veterans and families and committed to educating and informing future generations - it is a story that must be told and preserved.

I am delighted to report that Kingsley Munday, Chair of the Museum Board of Directors has been acknowledged for his wide ranging community work and commitment to the Museum with the award of the Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the Australian Day awards. I am sure you join me in congratulating Kingsley on his deserved award, we are fortunate indeed to have him involved.

Recently, Kingsley and I made a trip to visit the US Vietnam War Museum which has been established on land at Weatherford, about 60 kilometres from Dallas/Fort Worth in Texas, and attended a

fund raising event for the museum. Very much a work in progress, the museum concept was started in 1999 by a group of US Vietnam veteran helicopter pilots and is based around a small visitors centre - a building which was formerly located at the ranch of George W. Bush when he was the US President - and outdoor features including an Honour Wall, Garden of Reflection and various equipment displays. The Chairman and I made a number of good will presentations to the museum including a Vietnam era Aussie digger, VVAA flag and plaque. It is hoped that our museum and the US museum can forge a worthwhile and beneficial relationship moving forward.



*Kingsley wearing a hard hat in the US
Looks good Huh*

The Chairman and Museum General Manager, Mr. Phil Dressing addressed VVAA Victorian Branch State Council on future directions for the museum, including a bold plan to extend the size and profile of the museum.

Cheers, Bob

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NVVM



FLAWED THEORY

On the mezzanine floor at the east side of the Museum is an interesting display giving some details of the 'Domino Theory' that was the cause of the Vietnam War and the involvement of Australia. The words by Geoffrey Jones, Vietnam Vet of 1968, are interesting to say the least, and not necessarily the views of everyone. Worth a look next time you visit the Museum

ROCK AWAY ON LABOUR DAY

A vibrant energy took over NVVM Monday 13 March 2017 with the second Rock Away on Labour Day. The bands, Rockhouse, and The Shedows rocked the Museum with music from the '50's, '60's and '70s. The Vung Tau room was



transformed into a Rock 'n' Roll hall, with 'Gatha Rockers giving dancing demonstrations, all frocked up and looking lively. Spectators took to the dance floor with abandon and let loose. The bar was a popular addition this year, with a cold beer welcome after an energetic jive. Jess Geyer, a 13 year old student from Wonthaggi Secondary School, amazed everyone with her talent when she sang several songs

pertinent to the Vietnam War including the iconic Khe Sanh, by Cold Chisel and Travelling Soldier by The Dixie Chicks. She is a true talent in the making and impressed the veteran musicians with her voice and musical ability. There was a constant coming and going of visitors who were enjoying the public holiday by listening to some great music. Those who didn't dance enjoyed the whirling skirts and fancy footwork of 'Gatha Rockers and other more experienced Rock 'n' Rollers. Watch this space for 2018 when the Museum will again come alive to the sounds of Rock & Roll.



REMEMBRANCE PAGE



CATHY WAYNE

Cathy Wayne was the stage name for Aussie singer Catherine Anne Warnes, who was visiting Vietnam in 1969 to entertain troops at the US Marine camp. She had just finished a song at the NCO's club when she was shot by a 22 bullet; it hit her in the chest and she died at the scene in



the arms of her fiancé Clive Cavanagh, a drummer in the band. The shot from a pistol equipped with a silencer was allegedly fired by US Sgt James Killen, who it is thought was aiming for his commanding officer Major Roger Simmons. Killen was dishonourably discharged and originally convicted of unpremeditated murder, served two years of his sentence in the US; however, at a second hearing, he was cleared of the charge and released.



JOHN HALL

The last soldier to die in Vietnam was Staff Sergeant John Hall 243015. Born in Teralba NSW in 1940, John was a regular with 12 Field Regiment and served in Vietnam from 24 February 1971 until his death at 31 years old on 27 October 1971. Joining the Army at 16 years old, when he finished his school certificate at Newcastle Boys High School, to make the services his career. He served two tours in Malaya, where he married his wife Jenny. He was visiting a 'watering hole' in Vung Tau and unfortunately got into a argument with some Vietnam Nationalists

who murdered John. Little information is available about what happened from then, but his name is located at 4 in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War



MY VIETNAM

BY STEPHEN LEWIS

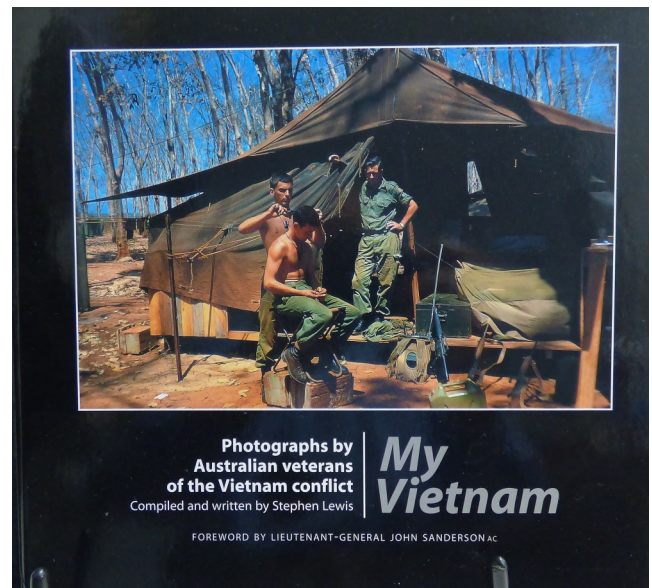
My Vietnam is a pictorial journey through the cameras of over 80 Australian veterans of the Vietnam conflict, Australia's longest continuous military commitment.

The images within are as diverse as the photographers themselves and the tasks performed by those 50,000 plus who served during this period.

The photographs have been selected for their pictorial value and human interest. They intentionally do not seek to dwell on any of the darker aspects of the conflict, and it is intended that they portray a side of military life few may have been associated with, the 'first television war' as the conflict is most frequently described.

Stephen Lewis served as a 9th intake National Servicemen between July 1967 and June 1969.

His tour of duty in South Vietnam was at Nui Dat with Headquarters Battery 12th Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery, from October 1968 until the unit's return to Australia in March 1969. Since 1973 he has run a successful graphic arts pre-press business in Adelaide, South Australia.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS AT NVVM

- April 23 Songs from Miss Saigon performed at NVVM by Wonthaggi Theatrical Group
- May/June New Exhibition—History of NVVM to celebrate 10 years at current site.
- May 7 Locals Open Day, free access for Bass Coast residents. Wonthaggi Woodcrafters, face painting. Our Action Station, Mini golf.
- 20 May The Bards Bite Back—matinee and evening performance, 'He's dead' he's cranky, he's funny, he's back.' The play features Shakespeare's songs and text and comic skits. Tickets \$35, \$30 concession.
- 11 June Antiques Fair, set to the style of Antiques Roadshow with a panel of specialists to assess your 'treasures'.

VALE GARY PARKER

It is with great sadness that we have to report about the loss of long standing NVVM board member Gary Parker. His efforts in helping the



Museum started in 2005/06 when he first moved to Phillip Island. Becoming a career soldier Gary did a

plumbing apprenticeship and was then allocated to RAE. Later he was accepted at the Officer Cadet School Portsea and graduated as a Second Lieutenant in December 1965; he was the 1000th graduate from that facility. He served in Vietnam towards the end of the war, about 1971; being promoted to Lieutenant by then, he was mentioned in dispatches. He left the Army with the rank of Major.

His involvement in the Museum was just before the time when we were negotiating the land for the present site and, he was involved in the Buy-a-Brick campaign raising some much needed funds. In fact he looked after the Museum in the shop on Phillip Island Road while the new building

was being completed. Joanne, his wife, also got involved with the Museum, spending many hours at a computer.

As editor of Sit Rep, I was fortunate enough to be a volunteer at the Museum at the time Gary took over as CEO, when we became an independent body. I had always found him to be one of the best fellows to be associated with, and if any question needed an answer he was always ready to help or advise on what to do. During his illness I telephoned him a few times and saw him once in Wonthaggi Hospital and each time he was so happy to be in touch with someone from the Museum. He said, at one stage, "people don't know what to do and seem afraid to call" but even though the body was failing his brain was the same understanding fellow that we had all known. He was even able to make a joke or two about his condition.

You may have seen in the Remembrance area of the Museum, a small display of when he was leaving for Vietnam, which shows his Dad saluting him as he was boarding the 'plane. Well, Gary, we all salute you for the work you put in at the Museum, your most friendly personality, and we wish Joanne, our best condolences.



NVVM IN PICS

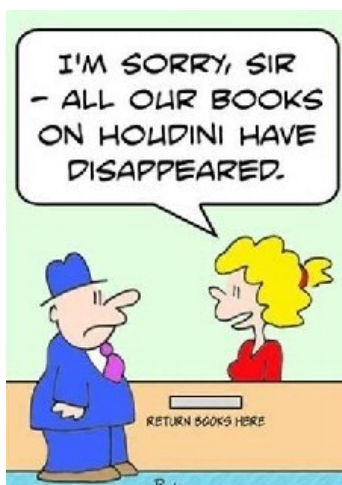


1 TRACKER AT NIGHT, 2 CARIBOU BEING DISSASSEMBLED,
3 CARIBOU AT NEWHAVEN, 4 TANK MODEL DISPLAY,
5 NURSES CITROEN, 6 CORA & BOB AT RECEPTION,
7 NEW PAINT ON HUEY

MEET VOLUNTEER GAIL WADE

Born in Sydney and being the daughter of a Lieutenant of the 2/27 Australian Infantry Battalion WW2, and with Librarian qualifications, Gail has become the ideal person to look after not only the Museum Library but the registration and cataloguing of all the items we have.

On leaving school Gail wanted to be a nurse, but she wished to get married before the end of her training.



Rules then did not allow that, so she worked in geriatric homes for 9 years. Then with small children she went to the University of Sydney, taking out a

BA in Library Science. Her first work in this area was at Westpac Bank in 1988 and later, after a job move, she became Library Manager at the CBA IT Department, which later became the company EDS.

Getting fed up with the corporate world she sold up, moved to Tuross Head NSW and built a house there with her eldest son. Work in those days included the operation of a video store for 3 years then as a local real estate agent.

With other children now living in the Melbourne region, she moved to Selby in the Dandenong Ranges where she worked as a bookkeeper for 4 years before visiting Phillip Island and falling in love with the easy living style here and decided to move down.

Having 2 cousins who were in the Vietnam War, and wanting to learn more about our times in Vietnam, she saw an advertisement in 2011 requesting a volunteer librarian for the Museum and now we thank her so much for the work she puts in here.

Some four years past, at the Museum, she met, fell in love with Geoff Wade, another volunteer, and whoopee, they got married two and a half years ago, congratulations to you Gail.



MESSAGE FROM PHIL DRESSING GM



Here we are in April already and it seems such a long time ago that I wrote for the Summer edition of SITREP.

Cheree Dyson, our Admin Manager retired on Friday 13th March after nearly 8 years of service to the Museum. Cheree's replacement, Elizabeth Fincher commenced with us on 27th March and we warmly welcome Liz to our Museum.

John Methven has decided to take a step back and retired from the curating position and we are now looking at our options. John will retain his position on the Board.



BERNADETTE

We welcome Mary Bourke and Bernadette Becker who are assisting to catalogue and photograph as many Museum items as possible in readiness for

our accreditation, we hope to have in place by February 2018.

It comes as no surprise that our Museum has once again run out of room. Without the generosity of the heliport site landowners, we would not have the use of the front carpark and nowhere to locate the Tracker or Caribou. A sub-committee has been formed to negotiate the procurement of land on the existing airport site upon which to accommodate a purpose built National Vietnam Veterans Museum. A plan is in place to raise the funds over the next ten years. We have met with the local councillors and politicians from both sides of State Government bringing them up to speed with our expansion plans. To their credit, all expressed support and the next step is to inform the Federal Government. Financial contribution requests will follow shortly.

Financially, the Museum finds itself in a little better position than last year. We had an average January and February, but March appears to indicate a better result with more group bookings including schools that enhance the result.

I'll take this opportunity to wish each and every reader a safe and *Cheers Phil*

THE TET OFFENSIVE— LONG DIEN

During the TET Offensive a fight for Baria was developing and some Viet Cong were moving on nearby Long Dien. Some five kilometres to the east, 3RAR's D Company were sent to the village in armoured personnel carriers on 3 February 1968. South Vietnamese troops had been fighting there since attacks began and an Army of the Republic of Vietnam Ranger Battalion were forced to withdraw under heavy fire. The Aussies arrived to a series of what the Official Historians called 'minor contacts', but which the Battalion history described as 'heavy sniper fire' as they moved towards the market place. By next morning, with the market place secured, the Australians continued to come under heavy fire. 12 Platoon were engaged in a sharp encounter at the village sawmill but managed to overcome the resistance when 11 Platoon joined the fight. Later in the day 11 Platoon suffered 3RAR's first combat death when they were sent to clear remaining pockets of enemy resistance. The next day brought isolated contacts, but the worst of the fighting in Long Dien was over and

D Company returned to Nui Dat on the afternoon of 6 February.



SOLDIERS OF 7RAR EXAMINE THE RUBBLE OF HOUSES AT LONG DIEN

HUEY RE-PAINT

Some months ago Colin Grey and his team re-painted the Huey helicopter in the dress of its time in Vietnam, drab olive he says is the correct name for the colour. Just recently a contractor was engaged to create and adhere new decals to it, so here is a pic of the result.

Well done Colin and the workshop team.



MORE THINGS OF INTEREST

MANY MOONS PRESENTS:

The Bard Bites Back

*A comedy by David A. James
with Graham Pitts*

*He's dead, he's cranky, he's funny and he's back
– William Shakespeare*

Venue: National Vietnam Veterans Museum

Date: Saturday 20 May 2017

Cost: \$35, concessions \$30

Featuring: Andrew Gray,
Adrian Mulraney & Annie Stanford

Director: Wolf Heidecker

Musicians: Lisa Jacques &
the Macduff Jazz Quartet

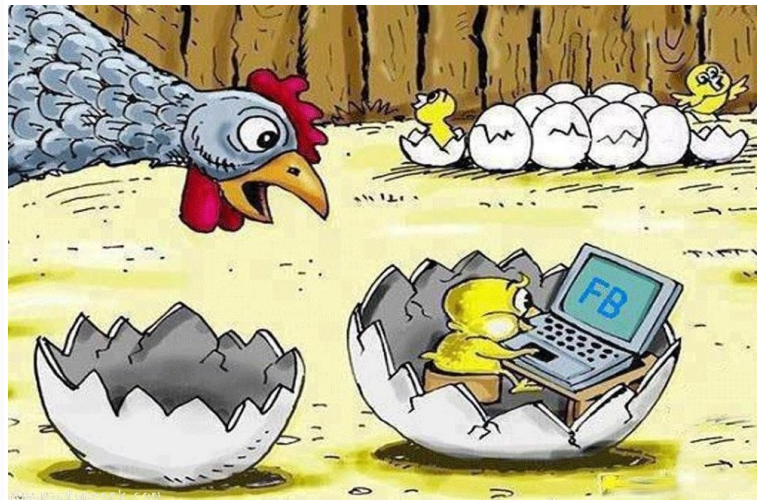
*"This is a brilliant play and I wish I had been
alive to see it." — Sir Francis Bacon*

Booking details: Matinee 2pm; Evening Performance 7pm

Bookings must be made online at
www.vietnamvetsmuseum.com



Find us on
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The Vets Museum in Weatherford, Texas where Bob & Kingsley visited

