

Southern Highlands Vietnam Veterans'  
Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association  
**NEWSLETTER JULY 2016**

**VALE TONY MITCHELL**

The passing of Tony has had a huge impact on our members and their families. Our thoughts and prayers went out to Jean and family throughout the week. However, on Friday 22 we turned out in numbers to farewell him, and what a sendoff it was. The depth of Tony's character was brought out by the eulogies at his funeral: his love of family, his love of Rugby League, his leadership, his "can do" attitude, his love of life and fellowship, his commitment to supporting veterans, his disdain of authority, and for a big man, his very caring disposition.

In our Southern Highlands Vietnam Veteran community he will be very sorely missed, as will he be missed by the football community.

On behalf of our members I would like to extend sincere condolences to Jean and family in this trying time but would like to let them know that we also thought the world of Tony.

I would like to thank Ray McCann our Welfare Co-ordinator and his off-sider David Babbage for a job well done over the past months; John McDonnell, neighbour and staunch friend for his assistance to Jean and Tony and Judi and Bruce Bofinger for their support; Ray, David, John and Rick McCarthy for their hospital vigils.

Ray McCann's eulogy based on that which he delivered during the funeral service follows at page 4.

President, Phill Moscatt



**DINNER MEETING**

**Wednesday 3rd August at The Bowral (Bolo) Club**

1800h for 1830h

This dinner is a good way to kick off our 50 Years On commemorations.

Airconditioned comfort will provide respite from winter winds.

If you are coming - RSVP to Bob or Noeline by Monday 1st August

Ph 4862 3741

**LADIES VIP LUNCH**

Wednesday 17th August - 12 noon

The Vale, Cnr. Illawarra Hwy and Valetta St. Moss Vale

Please RSVP to Julia Billows Ph 4872 1727

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIONS

### VIETNAM "50 Years On" - A DINNER & SHOW

With only one month to go tickets are still on sale from the Mittagong RSL Club. At this stage we have sold about 110. However, we would like you to purchase tickets as soon as possible. We need another 90 to attend to break even.

Staring The Geoff Harvey Band with Johnny Spitz and special guest singer "Little Pattie". Featuring music of the 60's and 70's this will be a fantastic night. Three-course dinner will be served and guests are requested to contact the RSL Club if they have any special dietary requirements.

Tickets can be purchased at Mittagong RSL Club by phone 4872 6700, or on line [www.mittagongrsl.com.au](http://www.mittagongrsl.com.au) or in person at reception. When booking you can purchase a table of 10, or nominate whose table you would like to sit at. We will attempt to ensure that our members and other veterans get prime positions. Why not get a table together?

Full details are on our website at [www.shvva.com](http://www.shvva.com) in the **EVENTS CALLENDAR**.

### CERTIFICATES OF SERVICE

Framed Service Certificates of Appreciation are being prepared for all veteran members and a presentation ceremony will be held for members attending the dinner. Our artist friends are doing the design, frames have been ordered and service details of most members have been verified contact Norm Austin for information 4869 1772

### OPENING OF ART AND MEMORABILIA EXHIBITION

MONDAY 15TH AUGUST - 5pm to 6pm

Mittagong RSL Club - All Welcome

John Steed is working to get the memorabilia together and the artists are finalising the paintings. The official opening will be held to thank the artists and other contributors. Refreshments and nibbles will be provided and all members and friends are invited to attend.

The exhibition will run from Saturday 13th August to Saturday 20th August and aims at raising public awareness of the war in South Vietnam and Australia's involvement.

### VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2016

Wednesday 18th August

Our memorial service will be held at the Vietnam War Memorial in Settlers Park Bowral.

Veterans are asked to assemble between 3:00pm and 3:15pm on the Cherry Tree Walk where it meets Victoria Street (to the east of the memorial). All marching veterans will be provided with a "VIETNAM 50 Years On" bush hat and be requested to wear it whilst marching.

Then led by the Southern Highland Pipes and Drums we will march along the Cherry Tree Walk to arrive at the memorial, mount the catafalque party and guard of honour which will be provided by the Army Parachute School, in time for the flyover of Navy helicopters at 3:30 (precisely)

Guests are asked to arrive at 3:15 in time for the service to commence at 3:30. This is the time at which the the Battle of Long Tan began - 50 years ago.

Our Special Guest Speaker will be John Hopman, Col Rtd, Representative Colonel Commandant, Special Operations Engineer Regiment. Our School Speaker will be from Frensham and the RSL Rural Youth Choir will sing for us.

## PROMOTION AND PUBLICITY

As part of the promotion of VIETNAM 50 Years On we have been in touch with Claire Fenwicke a reporter with the Southern Highland News. To date we have had two articles published.

We recently received this request from her and would like to co-operate as much as possible:

"With the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan coming up this year, I have decided to write a couple of stories on the Vietnam War and vets in our area.

I was hoping you could pass on these questions so I can make an online gallery featuring Vietnam vets from the Highlands - both those who are still here, and those who have moved away or didn't make it back from Vietnam.

The questions are:

- Name:
- Where did you/they live:
- Age when enlisted:
- When did you/they serve in Vietnam:
- What role did you/they have:
- Outcome?

If those who answer these questions could also send me a photo - either of them during the war or a current shot - the photo would also accompany their answers.

If you know of anyone who would be willing for me to write a more in-depth profile, please let me know, and we can organise an interview time and place.

Thank you for your time, and please send me the answers as they come. It would be great if I could have them all (or as many as possible) by the end of the first week of August."

It would be fantastic if we could get a good coverage of Highland Veterans to participate. We are thinking of having a get-together with her to facilitate this. Please phone me, Phill Moscatt 48721727 ASAP if you would like to be involved in this project.

## OTHER SERVICES

Illawarra Vietnam Veterans will commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan on Tan at 11am on Sunday 14th August 2016 at 11am at the Vietnam memorial Flagstaff Hill Wollongong. After the service there will be a gathering and lunch at 4/3 Battalion, 91 Gipps, St Wollongong (where the service will be held in the event of rain).

Macathur Vietnam Veterans will hold a commemorative service to mark Vietnam Veterans day on Thursday 18th August at 10:00am at Mawson Park, Queen Street, Campbelltown.

## CHRISTMAS IN JULY - 6TH JULY - DORMIE HOUSE

This dinner was a great success. Twenty-six revelers braved the highlands winter weather to feast on a Christmas Dinner at Dormie House. Highlight of the evening was lucky door Christmas prizes. Thanks again to Bob and Noelene for organising the "gifts" and another very pleasant evening in the company of likeminded people.



## VALE 2786134 LCPL ANTHONY JOHN MITCHELL

We are deeply saddened by the death of our erstwhile member, Tony Mitchell, who passed away aged 70 years on 16 July 2016 in Bowral Private Hospital after a long and courageous fight with cancer. Our deepest sympathies go to his widow Jean, son Steven, granddaughter Molly and to the extended family on the untimely loss of a fine man.

Tony was farewelled at St John's Anglican Church Moss Vale on 22 July 2016 at a service attended by over 300 mourners. Footballers and veterans formed a guard of honour following an emotional and moving ceremony celebrating Tony's life and achievements. Some 50 veterans participated in the Veteran's Tribute and our President Phil Moscott laid a wreath together with the President HQ 1 ATF Association, John Verhelst. A wake was held at the Moss Vale Services Club.

Tony spent his early years in Junee NSW and was called up for National Service on 1 February 1967. He underwent basic military training at the 1<sup>st</sup> Recruit Training Battalion at Kapooka and was then posted to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Training Battalion at Ingleburn for further intensive training as an Infantry soldier. He arrived in Vietnam on 24 October 1967 where he spent one year on active service with an infantry platoon - the Defence and Employment Platoon (D&E Platoon) HQ 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Task Force.

The infantry have the toughest job in the Army. And the toughest job in the Infantry is that of a machine gunner. Tony was a machine gunner, selected no doubt because of his size, physical strength and courage.

At Fire Support Base CORAL in May 1968, Tony's platoon was pinned down by enemy fire when a North Vietnamese Regiment managed to penetrate the Australian base and overrun a nearby mortar platoon and artillery gun area. The set-piece battles at CORAL and BALMORAL left 25 Australian soldiers dead and almost 100 wounded. In a separate incident, Tony's best mate – the No 2 on Tony's machine gun - was killed. These traumatic events had a lasting impact on Tony's life.

Tony typified the larrikin Australian soldier – brave and resourceful but with little time for mindless authority or bullshit. Back in base, he ran Crown and Anchor nights on the sly and was seen to light cigars with \$10 notes as he celebrated his last night in Vietnam.



Tony's service didn't stop when he left the Army – he continued to serve the sporting and veteran community. He was heavily involved as a Rugby League player, administrator and coach in both St Marys and Moss Vale. He was a foundation member of the Southern Highlands Vietnam Veterans' Association and served separate terms as President and Vice President. Over many years, he hosted monthly billiard nights for veterans at his own home where he generously stored the Association's property assets. Tony was a doer – he just hopped in and did things. There was no need to ask. We will miss him terribly.

Rest in Peace Tony, your duty is done.

Ray McCann



This is the next installment from our Welfare Co-Ordinator, Ray McCann.

## PLANNING AHEAD ISSUE 4 – AGED CARE

### Introduction

*Planning Ahead Issue 4* provides outline information on aged care. At some stage, many of us will need support services, either in our own home or in a Residential Aged Care (RAC) facility. We need to prepare now for such a contingency by knowing what options are available and where to turn for further information. Where we choose to live will be influenced by our state of health and financial situation. Prepare now!

### Living in Your Own Home

For most people, living independently in their own home as they age is what they want. But sometimes they might need help with daily tasks that they can no longer manage at home on their own. The *Commonwealth Home Support Programme* or *Home Care Packages* are available for such people. These services are subsidised by the Commonwealth and provision is subject to an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) report. Your local hospital or doctor will be able to put you in touch with the local ACAT service.

DVA administers a similar program for veterans –Veterans' Home Care (VHC). See DVA Fact Sheet HCS01 for details of services, eligibility and contacts.

### Moving to a Retirement Village

Moving to a retirement village is an investment decision as well as a lifestyle decision. Shop around and seek expert legal and financial advice before signing a contract. You need to be aware that in many cases you will not own the unit you live; rather you will have rights to occupancy only. Common types of arrangement include loan and licence, leasehold, strata and community, rental, and company title. Further advice is available in the *Seniors Guide* at [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au)

### Residential Aged Care (RAC)

Those with care needs that cannot be managed at home, even with home care services, may need to move to residential aged care, formerly known as Hostels (Low Level Care) or Nursing Homes (High Level Care). Under current policy, RAC facilities are required to implement an 'Aging in Place' strategy so that residents don't need to move as their care needs increase. This policy is subject to vacancies in the facility; so aging in place might not be possible in all cases.

Entry in to residential aged care is subject to ACAT assessment and a Centrelink/DVA Assets and Income Assessment. Fees include a **Refundable Accommodation Deposit** and a **Daily Accommodation Charge**. You may also be liable for a **Means Tested Fee**. The deposit can be significant (starting at \$400 000 for a single room). It is possible to reduce the deposit by paying a greater daily charge (ie trading off). Be aware that the deposit is refundable when you depart the facility – this should be a consideration in your estate planning and you need to think about whether you might prefer to pay a higher deposit.

### Further Information

Comprehensive information can be found on the **My Aged Care** website [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au) or by calling the My Aged Care contact centre on 1800 200 422. Those with a White Card or Gold Card can seek support through DVA – please refer to the relevant DVA Fact Sheets at [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au)