

# Southern Highlands Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association

Website: [www.shvva.com](http://www.shvva.com)

CFN 23847



## NOVEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER



The Executive Committee would like to wish all members and their families a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous and Covid-19 safe New Year.

### DINNER MEETING

At last we can get together again. We have arranged dinner for:

**Wednesday 2nd December 2020**

**MITTAGONG RSL CLUB**

**Ironstone Bar and Dining**

**6 for 6:30**

However, as the Club is operating under strict Covid-19 regulations the format will be different. We have booked for tables of 4 and 6. On entry guests will be requested to "log in" and will be allocated a table at which they should remain seated during the dinner. Full table service will be provided. Swaps between tables can be arranged.

Overall the Club will be responsible for enforcing Covid-19 restrictions and guests must comply with staff requests.

**It is essential that you RSVP for this function as failure to do so will mean that you will not be admitted on the night.**

**RSVP to Ian Humby** on 0402 415 056 or [ianhumby@bigpond.com](mailto:ianhumby@bigpond.com) by

**12:00 noon on Monday 30th November**

### CORONA VIRUS

It seems that the Corona-19 threat is easing across the nation. However, we still need to stay safe and stay focused on our health and that of our families and friends. Don't forget we are here to help each other. Need assistance Please give Phill 48721727, Norm 48691772 or Ray McCann 0402 813 753 a call.

Remember the Vietnam Veteran's Counselling Service – well it has morphed into **OPEN ARMS** and offers a wide range of services to all veterans and their families:  
<https://www.openarms.gov.au>

## WHO IS ROD PARKER

For news about a local veteran, who has finally been acknowledged for his service, read this touching article in the Southern Highland News. Thanks go to members Ray McCann and Steve Spence for making this happen. Copy and paste this link into your browser.

<https://www.southernhighlandnews.com.au/story/7019143/war-veteran-recognised-more-than-six-decades-after-service/>

## COFFEE CLUB

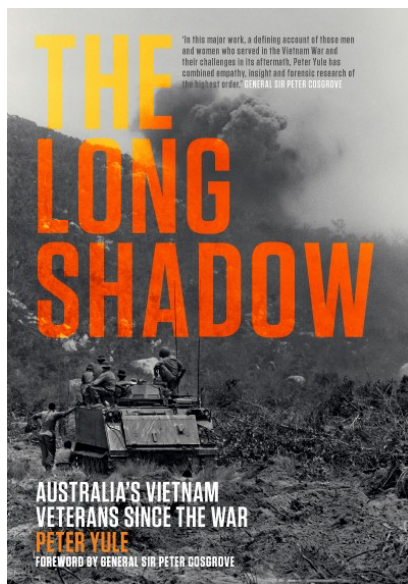
This initiative has been well received with numbers ranging from 3 to 12. It has provided an opportunity for members to get together and talk about surviving Corona and of course a wide range of topics – with a few “warries” thrown in. Just nice to have a chat.



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS - 2021

Notice will be posted out shortly. Although payment is due by 31st December, early payment would be appreciated so that we can send dues off to Head Office. We encourage payment by EFT but cheques are accepted. **Please do not forget to sign the form and return it in the enclosed envelope.** The original becomes our membership register and we have to copy it to Head Office to secure your VVA and Federation membership. If you do not receive a renewal notice please contact Norm Austin 0427 854 141.

Remember the money paid to the Association helps to provide services to all Vietnam Veterans, Peacekeepers and Peacemakers and with declining membership overall it is much needed to ensure the employment of permanent staff.



‘The medical and psychological legacies of the Vietnam War are major and continuing issues for veterans, their families and the community, yet the facts about the impact of Agent Orange, post-traumatic stress disorder and other long-term health aspects are little understood. *The long shadow* sets the record straight about the health of Vietnam veterans and reveals a more detailed and complex picture.

Profiling the stories of the veterans themselves, *The long shadow* takes a broad approach to the medical legacies, exploring the post-war experiences of veterans, the evolution and development of the repatriation system in the post-Vietnam decades, and the evolving medical understanding of veterans’ health issues.’

To a large extent this book chronicles the achievements of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia and the Vietnam Veterans Federation. It validates their fight for the rights of Vietnam Veterans in particular and all veterans who have since served Australia.

I really have only begun to browse the book which is a tome of almost 700 pages but at least two Southern Highlands Vietnam Veterans get a mention:

“Page 456 - Ray McCann (17 Construction Squadron, 1968-69) is the Welfare Officer of the Southern Highlands Vietnam Veterans’ Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association. Asked about the work of the Association He Explained:

“We’re reaching the stage now where some of the chronic diseases .... are emerging ... The Southern Highlands Veterans organisation has a current membership of 39, 25 of those are regulars who I know personally. Most of the cancers are prostate cancer ... there are nine cases there, three of the nine ... don’t have a good prognosis. One in those three has a very poor prognosis. And there are a couple of cases of head and neck cancers ... these are ones I do know of. We’re talking a very high percentage.”

Page 552 - Brian McFarlane(6RAR1966-67,; 1ATF, 1970-71) thinks that many servicemen found it traumatic when ‘Suddenly, they were taken away from that big enveloping family that was their rifle company, their battalion or whatever, or their section, platoon, and all these guys they’d made very close friends with, they’d been through hell with and suddenly they’re out on their own., back in some civilian job, where nobody understood what they were talking about if they opened their mouths, and the population was against them.’

## **MENS LUNCHEON’S**

Unfortunately, Covid-19 restricted luncheons this year hopefully we can get going again in the new year.

## HISTORY PROJECT

The Book Project has now morphed into the SHVVPPA HISTORY project with fresh terms of reference and the previous Committee with the addition of Jeff Andrews, history teacher at Bowral High. The focus is now on production of: –

1. The history of the Vietnam War Memorial and Cherry Tree Walk a printed and online book.

Work on the history of the War Memorial has progressed steadily. The grant from the Mulwarie Veolia Trust has been used to employ the Berrima District Historical & Family to review the historical documents of the now defunct Vietnam War Memorial and Cherry Tree Trust, which has prepared a comprehensive timeline.

After a lot of chasing, phone calls and visits we are getting close to collecting all of the available documentation on the concept, planning and construction of our Memorial in Settlers park. The last of the information will soon be collected from council archives.

The next task will be to put all of the information into an interesting narrative. Thousands of photographs will also be reviewed to decide on those for inclusion.

2. Video History produced by Bowral High School – Engaging with the Vietnam War – History Students Interview local veterans.

The arrival of Covid-19 meant that no interviews took place this year. However, two videos have been produced by teacher Geoff Andrew and with a view to enhancing them by adding photographs and other material, Norm took up the challenge to learn Apple's editing software Final Cut Pro X. Although this has been time consuming the initial results are very promising. We are pushing ahead to complete the first videos for viewing early next year.

In the meantime, it would be appreciated if participants could collect photos taken before, during and after their service in Vietnam, so that they can be integrated with their video. Norm will approach you individually when he is ready to produce your video.

## CHERRY TREE WALK

Phill has been in touch with Council staff who say that the contract for new trees will be finalised by the end of this month.

## REGULAR ACTIVITIES

**COFFEE CLUB.** Every Thursday at 10:00 in the Café at Mittagong RSL.

**WALKING GROUP.** Every Tuesday at 8.00 am - meeting at the Vietnam War Memorial, Bowral.

Norm Austin – Newsletter Editor, Secretary and Treasurer – 0427 854 141