

# *CONTACT !*



Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans  
& Associated Forces Inc.

2024  
Issue 2  
April to August

BMVAF express their thanks to Susan Templeman MP, Member for Macquarie, for her support to the Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans & Associated Forces Inc., particularly by allowing the BMVAF to use her Communications entitlement for the production of this newsletter.

# Contact Details & Meetings

**Patron: Brigadier Nerolie Irene McDonald**

© JOURNAL OF BLUE MOUNTAINS VIETNAM VETERANS and ASSOCIATED FORCES INC.  
 ABN 74 645 329 198 incorporating CFN 17276  
 RAAF VIETNAM ASSOCIATION and the QANTAS "SKIPPY SQUADRON" ASSOCIATION  
 and the BLUE MOUNTAIN NASHOS ASSOCIATION  
 THE ASSOCIATION FOR THOSE WHO SERVED IN ALL POST WORLD WAR II CONFLICTS

**Office Address:**

Blue Mountains Theatre & Community Hub, 104-108 Macquarie Road Springwood NSW 2777

**Postal Address**

Post Office Box 55 Springwood NSW 2777

**Contact Details for RAAF Vietnam Association (NSW)**

Graham Christian - Email: raafvsvansw@gmail.com

**Contact Details for Qantas "Skippy Squadron" Association**

Rene Herbert - Email: renelynne@live.com - Mobile: 0490 054 240

## Your Committee

<b>President:</b>	<b>Jack Lake</b>	<b>0481 041 356</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Chris McKay</b>	<b>0427 794 914</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Craig Terrey</b>	<b>0411 125 666</b>
<b>Vice President:</b>	<b>Roger Lawlor</b>	<b>0414 380 884</b>
<b>Committee Member:</b>	<b>Norm Fraser</b>	<b>0414 530 663</b>
<b>Committee Member:</b>	<b>Les Hogan</b>	<b>0413 313 152</b>
<b>Committee Member:</b>	<b>Greg Meek</b>	<b>0447 536 694</b>
<b>Wellbeing Coordinator:</b>	<b>John Fenton</b>	<b>0412 679 802</b>
<b>Public Officer:</b>	<b>Stafford Lowe</b>	<b>0415 635 058</b>

## Other Roles

<b>Vietnamese Liaison Officer:</b>	<b>Malcolm Campbell</b>	<b>(02) 4784 3455</b>
<b>Association Padre :</b>	<b>Colin Aiken OAM RFD</b>	<b>0417 203 722</b>
<b>Website Manager :</b>	<b>Wendy Humphrys</b>	<b>(02) 7252 3318</b>
<b>CONTACT! Editor:</b>	<b>Wendy Humphrys</b>	<b>(02) 7252 3318</b>

## 2024

### Association Meeting Dates

Meetings commence at 11:00am in our office at  
 the Blue Mountains Theatre &  
 Community Hub, Level 1,  
 Springwood NSW

Committee Meeting	Thursday 11 July 2024 11:00am
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Committee Meeting	Thursday 15 August 2024 11:00am
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Committee Meeting	Thursday 12 September 2024 11:00am
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Please contact the office to confirm  
 these meeting dates and times, as they  
 may change.

**Office Manager: Kim Myers Phone: (02) 7252 3318**

**Email: secretary@bmvets.com.au Web site: www.bmvets.com.au**

**Office Hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10:00am and 2:00pm**

## Wellbeing Support

**John Fenton JP, ATDP3 Advocate on 0412 679 802**

**Or**

**Our office on (02) 7252 3318**

**Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:00am to 2:00pm**

## ***SECRETARY'S REPORT***

It's nearly halfway through both Winter and the Year yet it only feels like last Christmas was a few weeks ago. Like all of you I'm looking forward to the Warmer weather.

I'm extremely pleased and proud that your Association has donated the below monies from the Funds we raised in our 2024 Fundraiser "Good Morning Vietnam Show Volume 2" that we presented back in March:

\$3000. Soldier On

\$2000. Springwood Hospital Veterans Palliative Care

\$2000. The Bravery Trust

\$2000. War Widows Association

\$2000. The Everyman's Trust

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\$11000. Total

All these recipients give great service to Veterans, and we're Honored to support them.

We are only able to do this with the Support of you our Members and the local Blue Mountains Community.

The next event coming up which is our most important is Memorial Day/Vietnam Veterans Day on Sunday the 18th of August in Springwood. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. This is the Day we commemorate the Battle of Long Tan and Honour all who served in Vietnam.

Stay safe and Warm and your Association is always here when you need us.

Photo left to right

Jack Lake, President BMVVETS

Chris McKay, Secretary BMVVETS

Wendy Bowman, Treasurer Springwood Hospital Auxiliary

Graham Wass, President Springwood Hospital Auxiliary

Roger Lawlor, Vice President BMVVETS

Craig Terrey, Treasurer BMVVETS



Best regards

*Chris*

## ***WELLBEING REPORT***

### ***My Service***

I continue to encourage our members to utilise their MyService account through MyGov.

Modernising DVA's ICT is one of the top priorities and a focus of the Royal Commission's Interim Report.

Recent enhancements to MyService are making it easier for veterans and families to lodge claims and access support and services.

For the vast majority of DVA claim types, you are now:

- prompted to provide the information needed to support a claim at the time you submit it;
- notified, through the MyGov inbox, if DVA need further information about your claim, along with a Task to complete that helps you to provide the additional information required; and
- given enhanced options to upload documents to your claims, including any 'Other' documents you might like to add up until determination, and view details of your documents and claims.

This means you can now view up-to-date information and provide all documents via MyService for all claims, whether submitted through MyService or other channels, reducing the need to send that information by email or post.

Authenticated MyService users who require help with a claim or have other DVA questions, will also be able to specify their preferred date and time window when submitting a request for a call back.

John Fenton JP  
ATDP3 Advocate

## Padre's Corner

Greetings from the Channel Islands The Channel Islands are a group of scattered islands in the English Channel, most are closer to France than the UK. As I write this my wife and I are visiting the two largest Islands within the group, Jersey and Guernsey. Unfortunately, we missed out on the Liberation Day Celebrations which were held on the 9th of May.

The islands were occupied by the World War II. The only part of the UK that was occupied by the Germans during WWII.

The British Government demilitarised the islands in June 1940, leaving the local administration to continue government as best they could under military occupation.

Before German troops landed, between 30 June and 4 July 1940, a major evacuation had taken place. Many young men had already left to join the Allied Forces, of these 794 failed to return. 6,600 out of a population 50,000 left Jersey, while 17,000 out of 42,000 left Guernsey. Thousands of children were evacuated with their schools to England and Scotland.

During the occupation, the Royal Navy blockaded the islands from time to time, particularly following the Invasion of Normandy in June 1944. Many sacrifices, both personal and communal, were made during the occupation. There was considerable hunger in the final months of occupation when the Islanders were close to starvation. Intense negotiations resulted in limited humanitarian aid being sent via the Red Cross, leading to the arrival of Red Cross parcels via the SS Vega in December 1944.

The German occupation of 1940–45 was harsh in other areas; over 2,000 islanders were deported by the Germans to Germany and some Jewish Islanders were sent to concentration camps.

There was little formal resistance movement in the Channel Islands on the scale of that in mainland Europe. This has been ascribed to a range of factors including the physical separation of the islands, the density of troops, up to one German for every two Islanders, the small size of the islands precluding any hiding places for resistance groups, and the absence of the Gestapo from the occupying forces. Moreover, much of the population of military age had already joined the British Army. Any form of resistance was quickly put down. There was however a great deal of passive resistance.

One indication of passive resistance by islanders was when the bodies of 21 sailors and marines from the sunken HMS Charybdis were given a funeral with full military honours.

About 5000 Islanders attended the funeral and laid 900 wreaths. This was enough of a demonstration against the German occupation, that all further military funerals were closed to the Islanders.

Another example of the Islanders passive resistance is still commemorated today. During the German occupation of Jersey, a stonemason repairing the paving of the Royal Square incorporated a V for Victory under the noses of the occupiers. This was later amended to refer to the Red Cross Ship Vega. The addition of the date 1945 and a more recent frame has transformed it into a monument, which is used annually for a National Liberation Remembrance Service.



The end of the occupation came after VE-Day on 8 May 1945, with Jersey and Guernsey being liberated on 9 May. The German garrison in Alderney manned by SS troops held out until 16 May, and it was one of the last of the German Forces to surrender.

The first evacuees returned on the first sailing from Great Britain on 23 June, but the people of Alderney were unable to start returning until December 1945.

We can learn a lot from the example of the people of the Channel Islands, during their period of Occupation. Their courage, sacrifice and caring for one another, their patriotism and love of their country and their faith in God. All of these are still important aspects of their individual, communal and national life today, are an example for all of us today.

To all who served, thank you for your service, courage, loyalty and sacrifice in the cause of peace.

We pray that God will continue to bless the people of the Channel Islands.

Colin Aiken  
0417 203 722

## ***Annual General Meeting***

The Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans & Associated Forces Inc.  
2023 Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday 2 April 2024 at 11:00am at the  
Blue Mountains Theatre & Community Hub, 104-108 Macquarie Road, Springwood NSW

The new elected Committee is as follows:

### **Your Committee**

**President:** Jack Lake  
**Secretary:** Chris McKay  
**Treasurer:** Craig Terrey  
**Vice President:** Roger Lawlor  
**Committee Member:** Norm Fraser  
**Committee Member:** Les Hogan  
**Committee Member:** Greg Meek

### **Other Roles**

**Wellbeing Coordinator:** John Fenton  
**Public Officer:** Stafford Lowe  
**Vietnamese Liaison Officer:** Malcolm Campbell  
**Association Padre :** Colin Aiken OAM RFD  
**Association Patron:** Brigadier Nerolie McDonald

Congratulations to all the elected Committee Members.

*Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Day Service Invitation*

**Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans  
& Associated Forces Inc.**



*cordially invites you to attend our*

**Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Day Service  
On Sunday 18 August 2024**

*The Service*

*at Springwood War Memorial,  
Buckland Park, Springwood  
will commence at 11:00am &  
will be followed by a social function  
at the Royal Hotel, Springwood.*

*Guest of Honour - TBA*

*Jack Lake, President &  
Chris McKay, Secretary*

**Please RSVP by 8 August, with the number of attendees  
& if you wish to lay a tribute at the Service  
Important: For catering please let us know if you wish to attend the lunch  
and if you have any special dietary requirements.**

**Phone: Office (02) 7252 3318 or  
Email: [secretary@bmvets.com.au](mailto:secretary@bmvets.com.au)**



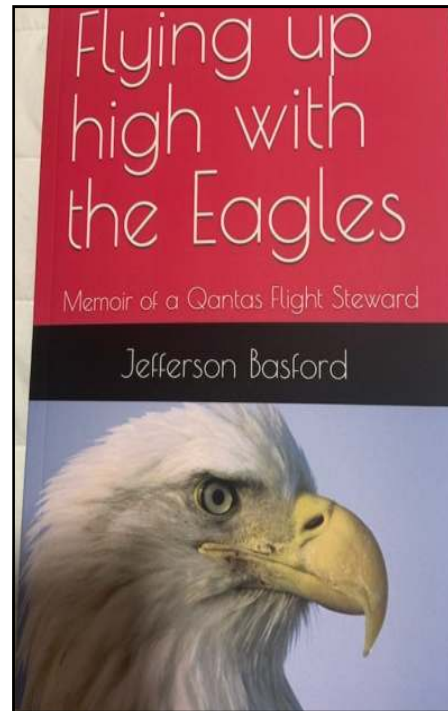
## ***Book Written by member Jefferson (Jeff) Basford***

### ***"Flying up high with the Eagles".***

It is a memoir of my life leading up to being employed by Qantas, I operated on a lot of Qantas Charter flights, into and out of Vietnam, All that is in the book.

Regards ,  
Jefferson Basford

***Jeff's book is available on Amazon***



## ***Qantas "Skippy Squadron"***

The Skippy Squadron also known as the Red Tailed Rats was made up of the Qantas Crews who crewed Qantas aircraft into war zones during the Vietnam War.

Between 1965 and 1972 Qantas flew civilian charter flights from Sydney to Saigon, carrying approximately half of all Australian service personnel sent to the Vietnam War. These flights were given various nicknames, the most common being "Skippy Squadron", but they were also called "Champagne Flights" and the "Red Tail Rats".

More than five hundred Qantas staff crewed, maintained, serviced, and coordinated Skippy Squadron flights. There was no shortage of volunteers to fly or service the Boeing 707s, even though it was understood they would be going to a war zone.

During the Vietnam War Qantas Boeing 707 jets and crews, were regularly used to supplement the RAAF's transport force, carrying reinforcements and equipment to-and-from Saigon. VH-EBI 'Winton' operated the first Australian troop charter to Tan Son Nhut Airport, Saigon, on 31 May 1965.

1:95 scale model of  
Qantas Boeing 707-138  
V jet VH-EBI 'Winton'





## ***IMPORTANT DATES & NOTICES***

### **Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Day**

Our Vietnam Veterans' (Battle of Long Tan) Memorial Day event will be held on

**Sunday 18th August 2024 at 11:00am at Springwood War Memorial.**

It will be a Service followed by refreshments at the Royal Hotel.

Your official invitation is included in the this newsletter.

### **Membership Renewal**

The Committee has requested that membership fees be paid for no more than one year, at a time. So that is only \$10:00 for the year.

If you are unsure of your membership status please contact the office.

### **Year of Membership**

Your *Membership Year* is printing on the top right-hand corner of your envelope, if the Contact! newsletter is posted to you. Your membership is up to 31 December of that year. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

A Renewal of Membership Form is on the last page of this newsletter.

### **Email Address**

If you have not already done so please advise us of your email address and let us know if you would like the Contact! Newsletter emailed instead of posted to you.

This will greatly assist us, to reduce postage costs in the future.

### **Contact! Newsletter Items**

If you have an item that you would like included in the Contact! newsletter please email it to [secretary@bmvets.com.au](mailto:secretary@bmvets.com.au)

**Please Note**

The Committee has requested that membership fees be paid, for no more than one year at a time.

**BLUE MOUNTAINS VIETNAM VETERANS & ASSOCIATED FORCES INC.**  
 (ABN 74 645 329 198 CFN 17276)  
**PO BOX 55 SPRINGWOOD NSW 2777**  
**Phone: (02) 7252 3318**                      **Email: secretary@bmvets.com.au**

## MEMBERSHIP/ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL APPLICATION

Please renew my membership/associate membership of the Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans & Associated Forces Inc.

Surname:.....

Given names:.....

Address:.....

Town:.....State:.....Postcode:.....

Home phone number.....Mobile:.....

Email:.....

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY NOTES THROUGH THE POST**

Annual Membership Fee: (BMVV&AF Inc.) \$10.00	\$
Association Logo Car Sticker \$2:00 each	\$
Membership Badge \$10:00 (plus \$5:00 postage if applicable) Total \$15:00	\$
Pens \$5:00 each (plus \$5:00 postage if applicable) Total \$10:00	\$
Cap (with Logo) \$20:00 (plus \$10:00 postage if applicable) Total \$30:00	\$
Polo Shirts (with Logo) \$30:00 (plus \$10:00 postage if applicable) Total \$40:00	\$
Donation	\$
I enclose a cheque/money order or have deposited into the account for TOTAL	\$

**Payment Details**

**Cheque or Money Order** – please make the cheque payable to  
 Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans & Associated Forces Inc. and forward to the above address  
 OR

**Direct Credit** - BSB: 032-837 (Westpac Bank Springwood NSW) Account Number: 138817

Account Name: Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans and Associated Forces Inc.

Reference: "your name or membership number"

**Please Note: Please don't forget to include 'your name or membership number' as the reference.**

I agree to be bound by the rules of the Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans & Associated Forces Inc.

SIGNATURE:.....DATE:.....

*Office Use Only*

Direct Debit/Receipt number:.....Date:..... Membership details updated.....

Remarks:.....Membership card:.....