

CONTACT !



Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans
& Associated Forces Inc.

2024
Issue 3
September to December

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

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 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

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Contact Details for Qantas "Skippy Squadron" Association

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

Your Committee

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

Other Roles

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

2024/2025

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 12 December 2024 11:00am
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Committee Meeting	Thursday 13 February 2025 11:00am
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Committee Meeting	Thursday 13 March 2025 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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings to our far-flung members and families.

A few of the many changes in our Association this year beside the passing years taking a toll on all of us. Wendy our long serving office lady has moved from the mountains. She organised our last Memorial Day remotely which was a great success. Thanks Wendy.

Kim, our new office lady has taken over the roll and doing a great job. Kim works 1000hrs to 1400hrs every Thursday.

In closing I would like to wish all our members, families and supporters a merry and safe Christmas and New Year.

Cheers

Jack

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Here we are already in November 2024, and it feels like we just had Christmas 2023, time certainly flies.

Your Association has had a good 2024 with our very successful Fundraiser "Good Morning Vietnam V2" back in March, which the profits have been donated to Veterans and War Widows Groups, something we are very proud of.

We also had an excellent Memorial Day on the 18/08/2024 when Mike Carlton the media personality and Vietnam War Correspondent was the Guest of Honour. Mike gave a superb speech which touched us all.

A couple of things that may be of interest are:

Safety Watches can provide you with 24/7 security if you have a fall or blackout, they link into an emergency call centre. They can be provided through DVA by referral from an Occupational therapist. I've got one and it provides peace of mind. If you want more information, just contact me and I'm more than happy to assist you with it. BTW they also let you know your heart rate BPM and number of steps you walk and is a very accurate timepiece.

If you're an East Timor Veteran there is a Special Commemorative Coin and Certificate available for you, let Kim in the office know and she can arrange it for you.

Finally, I'd like to thank our President Jack Lake and our Treasurer Craig Terrey and all the Committee for their invaluable input, thanks to all of you.

I'd like to also show our appreciation to ALL Association members for your Loyalty to the Association and hope that you and your Families have an excellent and safe Christmas and New Year.

See you all in 2025.

Best regards

Chris

WELLBEING REPORT

Offsetting

Members often ask what is “offsetting”

Simply put, many veterans are eligible to claim under more than one Act for the same Service Related Disability, however it is not possible to “double dip” when receiving compensation; therefore one payment may be “offset”

The DVA Definition

Offsetting is the process of reducing one compensation payment in recognition of another compensation payment for the same incapacity or death of a veteran. The principle behind compensation offsetting is that a person should not be compensated twice for a veteran's incapacity or death, irrespective of whether they have eligibility from more than one source. If a person receives any award of compensation or damages from another source for the same incapacity, whether this be other statutory compensation or common law damages etc, there must be a corresponding reduction or offset applied to the amount of pension paid under.

Essentially, a person eligible for compensation from more than one source should not receive more than a person only eligible for the one source of compensation.

Additionally, claims and applications for an increase in Disability Compensation Payment that are lodged on or after 1 July 2004 which result in the payment of an applicable Above General Rate Disability Compensation Payment (an earnings-related pension) or allowance, will be reduced or offset by any lump sum payment received for permanent impairment under the

Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988 (DRCA).

This applies to lump sum compensation for any incapacity, irrespective of whether the incapacity included in the Disability Compensation Payment assessment is the same or different.

How does DVA decide whether compensation payments are for the same incapacity as my Disability Compensation Payment?

Under the VEA, incapacity is defined as the effects of an injury or disease, and not the injury or disease itself. Therefore, DVA looks at the particular effects of the two (or more) injuries or diseases for which compensation has been paid, and considers whether they are the same. For instance, you may have two distinct injuries to your right knee, one accepted under the VEA and the other arising after a motor vehicle accident. If the medical evidence is that effect of one injury cannot be distinguished from the effect of the other, then DVA will offset, despite the second injury being medically described in a different way when compensation or damages were claimed and paid from another source. Offsetting can also apply to later, non-service-related aggravations of service-related conditions.

John Fenton JP

Wellbeing Coordinator

ATDP3 Advocate

Padre's Corner

Hello Everyone,

At this time of year our hearts and minds turn to Christmas and the Christmas message. But what is the real Christmas message? Is Christmas the decorations we see in the local shops, decorations which in many cases have little to do with the real message of Christmas; is Christmas attending our children or grandchildren's end of year school or club activities; is Christmas attending the local Carols by Candlelight activities; is Christmas getting together with family or friends for a pre-Christmas or Christmas "feast" at home, in a park or at the beach.

Is Christmas a time to heal shattered relationships? While these activities are important do they represent the real meaning and message of Christmas??

The Nativity narrative tell us that God became man to dwell among us, that the Christ Child was born of a virgin in a stable, that **Shepherds and Wise Men** came to worship him. That Angels as they worshipped the Christ child sang, **Glory to God in the highest and PEACE ON EARTH TO ALL.**

While at Christmas we remember the birth of Christ in a manger in Bethlehem, we remember also the Christmas message of the peace, goodwill and joy. Christmas is an opportunity to reflect on the fact that there are many Countries and families in our world that are not enjoying PEACE at this time and ask what we can do to help bring about PEACE in our world. Christmas is a special time to remember that we all have a part to play in seeking to bring peace to our world. Saint Francis of Assisi's prayer reminds us of this responsibility.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love,

Where there is injury, pardon

Where there is doubt, faith,

Where there is despair, hope,

Where there is darkness, light,

Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much

seek to be consoled as to console,

not so much to be understood as to understand,

not so much to be loved, as to love;

for it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

it is in dying that we awake to eternal life.



While we celebrate Christmas this year with our families and friends, I encourage you to remember those who are less fortunate than we are. The refugees, the homeless, the sick, the dying, those who are separated from families and friends at this time, particularly those members of our Defence Force who are serving overseas in the cause of world peace.

May I pray for us all?

This prayer was written and prayed by Apollo 8 Commander Astronaut Frank Borman on Christmas Day 1968, as Apollo 8 orbited the moon.

Give **us, O God**, the **vision** which can see **Your love** in the **world** in spite of human failure.

Give **us** the **faith** to trust **Your** goodness in spite of our **ignorance** and **weakness**.

Give us the **knowledge** that we may continue to **pray** with **understanding hearts**.

And show us what **each one of us** can do to set forward the coming of the day of **universal peace**. Amen.

I wish you and your loved ones, a very happy, holy and safe Christmas and God's blessings for 2025; to those who are not of the Christian faith, I wish you and your loved ones a happy and safe holiday season and New Year.

May God Bless you all

Colin Aiken

0417203722

Vales



John (Jack) Edward Chalker

28/06/1939 - 28/12/2023

Royal Australian Air Force
Rank: Sergeant

1/09/1960 - 1/09/80
Service Number A220831
RAS Number AF125118

Theatre of Operation: Malaya and Vietnam
Dates of Service Overseas: 62-64, 12/04/67-09/04/68

2 Squadron, Base Support Flight -1 OSU



John Ridout

08/08/1937 - 20/08/2024

Royal Australian Air Force
Rank: Warrant Officer

25/01/1954 - 30/01/1981
Service Number A216447

Theatre of Operation: Vietnam & PNG
Dates of Service Overseas: 12/06/1966-26/05/1967

1 Base Support Sqn, 36 Sqn, 37 Sqn

Barbara Woolley

07/11/1937 - 04/08/2024

Barbara was the wife of John Woolley a Life Member of the association, who passed away on 18th December 2021.

Barbara & John are greatly missed by the members of the association, who knew them for many years.

Lest We Forget



Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Day Service Sunday 18th August 2024



Mike Carlton AM
Guest of Honour



Jack Lake
Association President

Former ABC war correspondent Mike Carlton AM was the Guest of Honour at the Service and he delivered the main address.

Mr Carlton shared a story about recording radio messages from Australian soldiers in Vietnam for broadcast back home. While most of the messages were similar in their sentiments, he said one from a young soldier in a US military hospital in Saigon still haunts him "to this day". Lying in a room by himself, the heavily bandaged soldier from country Victoria had "plastic tubes looping from every part of his body", Mr Carlton said.

"[But] he made a special point in his message of telling his fiancé not to worry, that he was getting better all the time and he'd be back home in a month or so."

When he was out of the soldier's hearing, Mr Carlton asked the matter-of-fact American nurse what had happened to him.

"She said his balls were blown off by a landmine but he doesn't know it yet," he said to silence from the memorial day crowd.

"I don't know what happened to him," Mr Carlton added, "but I think of him a lot."

20-year-old war correspondent

Mr Carlton recalled arriving in Vietnam, "scared stiff", as a 20-year-old war correspondent with the ABC. He reported from the war over two periods - from 1966-1967 ("when we thought we were winning it") and later in 1970 ("when it was pretty obvious we weren't").

Mr Carlton described the Australian soldiers who fought in Vietnam as "ordinary young men who did extraordinary things".

While Australia's Vietnam War veterans "should stand proud", he said this wasn't always the case.

"For many long years the veterans of Vietnam felt Australia had turned its back on them... They were shunned and, in some cases, actively despised. It was cruel to bear because they had done all that was asked of them - all that and more. They deserve an honourable place in our national story."

Mr Carlton said the families who waited at home during the war also "bore a burden".

"I always think on occasions like this we should not forget the families who watched and waited. They too have a great place in our national story."

Suffered 'nameless horrors'

With many Vietnamese at the memorial day service, Mr Carlton's address pointedly addressed their losses as well.

"We should pause to think of the Vietnamese people who suffered nameless horrors for many, many years - and that applies to both sides, those on the north and the south as well," he said.

Dignitaries including Blue Mountains MP Trish Doyle, Darren Rodrigo representing Susan Templeman MP, Federal Member for Macquarie and Blue Mountains Mayor Mark Greenhill, laid tributes at the ceremony along with representatives from service organisations, other organisations, schools and a Battle of Long Tan Veteran, Mr Terry Ryan.

Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Day Service



Terry Ryan, a Battle of Long Tan Veteran, was assisted by two Vietnamese attendees, to lay 18 poppies at Springwood Cenotaph, representing the 18 Australians killed in the battle.



Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Day Service



Will Frederick from the Lithgow Highland Pipe Band, who played a lament at the Service

Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Day Service



The Salvation Army Band.
Thank you to the all band members
who have performed so well at our
Service for many years

The many military vehicles on display with their owners, as well as volunteers who assisted on the day.
We thank them for their time and effort in supporting our Memorial Day Service again this year.



FROM THE MOUTHS OF CHILDREN



NUDITY: I was driving with my three young children one warm summer evening when a woman in the convertible ahead of us stood up and waved. She was stark naked! As I was reeling from the shock, I heard my 5-year-old shout from the back seat, ‘Mom, that lady isn’t wearing a seat belt!’

OPINIONS: On the first day of school, a first grader handed his teacher a note from his mother. The note read, ‘The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents.’

TOMATO SAUCE: A woman was trying hard to get the tomato sauce out of the bottle. During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer the phone. ‘Mummy can’t come to the phone to talk to you right now, she’s hitting the bottle’.

MORE NUDITY: A little boy got lost at the YMCA and found himself in the women’s locker room. When he was spotted, the room burst into shrieks, with ladies grabbing towels and running for cover. The little boy watched in amazement and then asked, ‘What’s the matter, haven’t you ever seen a little boy before?’

POLICE # 1: While taking a routine vandalism report at primary school, I was interrupted by a little girl about 6 years old. Looking up and down at my uniform, she asked, ‘Are you a cop?’ ‘Yes,’ I answered and continued writing the report. ‘My mother said if I ever needed help, I should ask the police. Is that right?’ ‘Yes, that’s right,’ I told her. ‘Well, then,’ she said as she extended her foot toward me, ‘would you please tie my shoe?’

POLICE #2: It was the end of the day when I parked my police van in front of the station. As I gathered my equipment, my K-9 partner, Jake, was barking, and I saw a little boy staring in at me. ‘Is that a dog you got back there?’ he asked. ‘It sure is,’ I replied. Puzzled, the boy looked at me and then towards the back of the van. Finally, he said, ‘What’d he do?’

ELDERLY: While working for ‘Meals on Wheels’ delivering lunches to elderly people, I used to take my 4-year-old daughter on my afternoon rounds. She was unfailingly intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs. One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely turned and whispered, ‘The tooth fairy will never believe this!’

DRESS-UP: A little girl was watching her parents dress for a party. When she saw her dad donning his tuxedo, she warned, ‘Daddy, you shouldn’t wear that suit.’ ‘And why not, darling?’ ‘You know that it always gives you a headache the next morning.’

DEATH: While walking along the footpath in front of his church, our Pastor heard the intoning of a prayer that nearly made his collar wilt. Apparently, his 5-year-old son and his playmates had found a dead bird. Feeling that a proper burial should be performed, they had secured a small box and cotton wool, then dug a hole and made ready for the disposal of the deceased. The Pastor’s son was chosen to say the appropriate prayers and with great dignity he gave his version of what he thought his father always said: ‘Glory be unto the father, and unto the Son, and into the hole he goes.’

SCHOOL: A little girl had just finished her first week of school. ‘I’m just wasting my time,’ she said to her mother. ‘I can’t read, I can’t write, and they won’t let me talk!’

BIBLE: A little boy opened the big family Bible. He was fascinated as he fingered through the old pages. Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible. He picked up the object and looked at it. What he saw was an old leaf that had been pressed in between the pages. ‘Mum, look what I found,’ the boy called out. ‘What have you got there, dear?’ With astonishment in the young boy’s voice, he answered, ‘I think it’s Adam’s underwear!’

