



National Patron  
RADM Noel Ralph AD  
DFC RAN (Ret)

# VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA® VICTORIAN BRANCH INC.

ABN 34 750 672 219

## 50th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE



*"The well being of history lies in its telling for unless the story is transmitted across the generations it is lost" Michael McKernan*

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Of The Battle Of Long Tan

### VVAA VICTORIAN BRANCH PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR 2016

#### TO COMMEMORATE THE 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN

##### Introduction:

Vietnam Veterans will commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan on 18 August 2016. This is significant anniversary for Vietnam Veterans and the Victorian Branch (the Branch) will conduct a number of activities during the year to mark the occasion, and to commemorate the service and sacrifice of all Vietnam veterans during the Vietnam War.

The activities will provide the opportunity for Vietnam veterans and their families, Vietnamese veterans and the Victorian Vietnamese community, the wider ex-service community and the people of Victoria to come together to acknowledge and commemorate the service and sacrifice of Vietnam Veterans by participating in the activities.

#### **1 Proceeding Commemorative Quilt July 2015 to June 2016**

The Victorian Vietnam Veteran Association members and partners are creating a commemorative quilt featuring all 28 Sub-Branches for a touring display in 2016 and presentation at Civic Reception before being laid up at the National Vietnam Veterans Museum (NVVM).

#### **2 Proceeding History Competition November 2015 – May 2016**

In consultation with the Victorian History Teachers Association, a history competition for years 9 and 10 Victorian secondary school students, modelled on the Premier's Spirit of ANZAC Competition will be held. The topic relates to the Vietnam War and the ANZAC spirit. The winning entrants will have the opportunity to travel to Vietnam on a guided tour, including attendance at the Long Tan commemorations on Vietnam Veterans Day 2016

#### **3 Planned Involvement in Vietnamese Community TET Festival February 2016**

Cooperative involvement with the Vietnamese community during the TET festival.

#### **4 Proceeding Gravesite Commemorations Sunday, 21 February 2016**

A simultaneous commemorative ceremony will be conducted across the State at the gravesite or memorial of 98 Vietnam Veterans who died on active service and are interred in Victoria. Australian made national flags are being sourced, and the partners of Vietnam Veterans are making hand knitted poppies for the event. Next of Kin will be invited to attend the commemorations.

#### **5 Proceeding VetRide March 2016**

A commemorative cycle ride from Victoria to the National Vietnam Veterans National Memorial in Canberra. Other states will also be involved with smaller groups riding to Canberra. It is proposed that the Victorian group will start from a site significant to Vietnam veterans. The riders will join up in Canberra for a ride through the capital where it is planned that the ride patron The Hon Tony Abbott, Prime Minister of Australia will join the group for a ride to the Australian War Memorial. The Victorian route will include visits to locations where soldiers trained before being deployed to Vietnam. Younger veterans will be invited to participate.

<b>6 Proceeding ANZAC Day 2016</b>	<b>25 April 2016</b>
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Vietnam Veterans to lead the ANZAC Day march in Melbourne.

<b>7 Proceeding Civic Reception</b>	<b>15 June 2016</b>
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It is proposed that a Civic Reception be conducted to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is proposed to announce the history competition winner, and display the commemorative quilt. A Vietnam War inspired musical composition will be performed and other Vietnam War related activities will occur. Members of the Vietnamese community will be included.

<b>8 Proceeding Vietnam Veterans Day</b>	<b>August 2016</b>
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A special commemorative event at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance.

Re-enactment of the placing of the Long Tan Cross in Vietnam in 1969. White crosses for the 521 who lost their life on active service are being made by Vietnam veterans and will be placed on the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance along with a hand-made poppy and national flag. Invitation list will include the Governor of Victoria and the Victorian Premier, senior US and NZ consular staff and other VIP's.

<b>9 Proposed AFL Themed Match</b>	<b>August 2016</b>
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Approaches have been made to the AFL to consider conducting a Vietnam veteran themed match at the MCG close to Vietnam Veterans' day. Significant support from AFL clubs and Vietnam Veterans who have played VFL football has been received.

<b>10 Proceeding Church Service of Thanksgiving, St Paul's Cathedral</b>	<b>5 October 2016</b>
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A non-denominational service at the Cathedral (Melbourne)

<b>11 Proceeding National Vietnam Veterans Museum Open Day</b>	<b>November 2016</b>
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Community open day at the Museum to include dedication of plaques, dedication of chapel bell from Vietnam, presentation of commemorative quilt and opening of exhibits. Vietnamese Veterans and Vietnamese community involved.

<b>12 Proceeding Family Day Seymour Racecourse</b>	<b>November 2016</b>
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Family day for the wider Victorian based Vietnam Veteran community to close the year.  
Activities for all ages included

**Notes:**

1. The Vietnam Veteran community are making all the poppies and crosses to be used during the gravesite commemorations and at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance. Australian made flags will be sourced.
2. In addition to the events, the Victorian Vietnam Veterans Education Team will be conducting educational tours and presentations across the State during the year as has been their practice for the past 15 years.

**Enquiries to: Ken Baker (Chairman, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorations Committee)**  
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