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VVA's Michael Keating describes the state of our magazine, *The VVA Veteran*:



“The first online-only issue of *The VVA Veteran* went live Monday, June 29. The online magazine is there for anyone and everyone, not just VVA members. There are no restrictions. No special passwords. No reservations. It's at www.vvaveteran.org

We will maintain the same bimonthly production cycle as we had planned for the print issues. The only difference is that the magazine will be available sooner because we don't have to allow time for printing and mailing. September/October will go live September 8, and November/December will be

uploaded November 16.

Meetings

The Chapter 120 membership meeting and elections will be tentatively held on Thursday, September 3, 2020 at 7:00pm in the Machinists Union Hall, 357 Main St., East Hartford.

The Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, August 27 at 7:00pm. Call the Chapter office for any changes in schedule. Chapter members are welcomed to attend.

Like most of you, I am a print person. I prefer sitting back and reading the magazine in an easy chair. The oversize *Veteran* worked especially well in that situation. But the economic crisis precipitated by the coronavirus pandemic has forced many changes at VVA, and the cost of printing, postage, and shipping couldn't be justified in the face of the loss of significant revenue.

Will we go back to print? It's hard to tell. I would like to see that happen, and I think most of you would like to see that happen. But for the time being we will concentrate on what we can do. There will be no break in the delivery of the magazine—albeit in an electronic format. We won't miss a single issue. The *VVA Veteran* is not going away.

Notice

If you have moved or changed your address, PLEASE notify us immediately. Call the Chapter office at (860) 568-9212, mail us at the address on the back of this newsletter or e-mail the Newsletter editor at cchapter120@aol.com.

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While we're at it, we'll work hard to explore the advantages available to us online that were unavailable in print. In this issue, you'll see more Membership Notes photos—images we previously couldn't include because of space limitations. And you'll see the first-ever video in *The Veteran*, Pennsylvania Chapter 862's Memorial Day ceremony. More book reviews: five in this issue. A pop-up map. And scores of links that refer you to coverage in previous issues, track the chain of letters, take you to books and outside articles of interest, and expand coverage beyond what any print magazine could ever provide. And if you really need a paper copy, hit “Print.”

I'm a print person, but I'm also a practical person. Online-only is the future—at least the immediate future—and my staff are committed to making it the best we can. So check it out. And when you're done, hit the “Tell the Editor” widget and let me know what you think. We have provided an online version of the magazine for better than a decade, but it's different now that it's the main show. We want it to be your show.”

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All Telephone Numbers are Area Code 860 unless otherwise noted	

Birthday Wishes

Birthday wishes go to our members born in July and August. May you have many more!

July

<i>Frederick E. Arnold</i>	<i>Glenn Beaulieu</i>	<i>Mary Beaulieu</i>
<i>Brian R. Brady</i>	<i>Dwight Burgess</i>	<i>Gary Chappell</i>
<i>William D. Chiodo</i>	<i>Hugo M. Ciaffaglione</i>	<i>Barry Dubofsky</i>
<i>Peter M. Heath</i>	<i>Ken Lewis</i>	<i>Peter Lund</i>
<i>James Pearson</i>	<i>Carlton A. Platt III</i>	<i>Eric J. Remkiewicz</i>
<i>John H. Siemer</i>	<i>James S. Tierney</i>	<i>Geraldine O. Traynham</i>
<i>Robert D. Venti</i>	<i>Charles R. Williams</i>	<i>Gerry Wright</i>

August

<i>Paul Blow</i>	<i>Tom Bothur</i>	<i>Wayne B. Burgess</i>
<i>William Cancelli</i>	<i>Frederick Dellaripa</i>	<i>Glenda A. Doughtie</i>
<i>Craig J. DuPrey</i>	<i>Linda A. Dusek-Ravenell</i>	<i>John C. Honor Jr.</i>
<i>Edward Keany</i>	<i>Richard E. Lee Jr.</i>	<i>Kenneth W. Mader</i>
<i>Philip Morneault</i>	<i>Tim L. Oslund</i>	<i>Philip Petricca</i>
<i>Stephen Robillard</i>	<i>James Scanlon</i>	<i>Werner Seidler</i>
<i>Kenneth Seymour</i>	<i>Daniel C. Thurston</i>	<i>Gary E. Waterhouse</i>
<i>Joseph S. Wilusz</i>		

Chapter/State News

Chapter Elections Postponed

Chapter elections for officers, directors and state council delegates are again postponed until at least September 3, 2020. We again ask our members to offer their time and enthusiasm in order to continue the good works that Chapter 120 is known for in the veterans' community. We need our members to offer their support, expertise, their ideas and their leadership to guide our organization down the right path to attain our basic goals – and establish new goals for our future. We are asking you, our members, to seriously consider running for these important positions.

We need your help – we need your leadership and ideas to guide Chapter 120 for the next two years.

Please contact our Election Committee (Leigh Lovering, Tim Siggia or Bill Chiodo) to submit your name for one of these positions. Help our Chapter continue our work to support all veterans and their families.

Positions open for candidacy:

Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer

Board of Directors: Five positions

State Council Delegates: Five positions

Elections Committee: Three positions

Receive "The Connection" by E-Mail

The monthly Chapter 120 newsletter, *The Connection*, is available by e-mail. Currently, 100 members receive the newsletter by e-mail, saving the Chapter over \$1,600 in printing and postal fees annually. The newsletter is available in Adobe format (.pdf), attached to your e-mail. If you wish to receive the newsletter via e-mail, please e-mail the newsletter editor at ctchapter120@aol.com



Chapter Members Passed On

In the last month, we have lost two of our Brothers – James Ashwell and Bradley Matthews. May they Rest In Peace.

James George Ashwell

Chapter 120 Life Member



James George Ashwell, 72, of Newington, CT passed away on Tuesday, June 2, 2020 at his home with his beloved wife Kathleen at his side. Born January 19, 1948 in Southington, CT, Jim grew up in Plantsville, CT in the Selah Barnes house (circa 1774). Jim graduated from Cheshire Academy and Valley Forge Military Academy & College in 1968. It was at Valley Forge where Jim's love of God and Country, strength and character, consideration

of others, and high sense of duty, honor, loyalty, and courage were fostered. Continuing a family legacy of military service, Jim enlisted in the United States Army and served with the Americal Division in Vietnam. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for Meritorious Achievement in Ground Operations Against Hostile Forces. Following his discharge, Jim began his professional career.

He became a certified member of the Professional Golfers' Association and worked as the Head Golf Professional at Indian Hill Country Club in Newington, CT. During his tenure there, he especially enjoyed working with the young golfers to develop their skills and to teach the rules and etiquette of the game. Jim spent 35 years in sales positions at Stanley Works, Butler Paper, Amstek Metal, and Gibbs Wire and Steel. He traveled throughout the country and worked tirelessly to promote good customer relationships and provide quality personal service. In his retirement, Jim was employed part-time at Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home in West Hartford, CT where he felt privileged to serve families and guests.

Additionally, Jim was an active member at Emanuel Lutheran Church in Hartford, CT where he and Kathleen were married on June 18, 1983. Jim served in many leadership capacities at Emanuel. He was a member of the Church Council for several years, including a term as President. He also served on the Board of Capitol Towers. His position as Head Usher was a natural fit for Jim. He never missed a Sunday to welcome churchgoers with a strong handshake, warm smile, and personal greeting. Throughout Jim's life he had a true passion for golf. He loved being out on the course as a caddy, player, coach, or spectator, and he considered himself lucky to attend several Masters Tournaments. One of his greatest joys was to be his niece's golf mentor during her high school and college years.

Jim's mission in life was to lift others up, and he instinctively knew how to connect with people and to make them feel special.

Jim made it a habit to carry American flag pins to hand out to any veterans he met. This was his way of thanking them for their service. He loved his family deeply and was always there to celebrate with them in good times and to support and sustain them in hard times. His positive and optimistic spirit never waned, and he will truly be missed by all. Jim lived a life of honorable service to our country, steadfast devotion to his wife and family, and utmost dedication to his church, his professions, and the game of golf.

Jim is survived by his wife Kathleen Wilson Ashwell, his sister-in-law Ella Ashwell, and his father-in-law and mother-in-law Irving and Elaine Wilson. He is also survived by his sister-in-law Kathryn LaPointe and husband Thomas, his brother-in-law James Wilson and wife Pamela, and his brother-in-law John Wilson and partner Patricia. In addition, he is survived by his nieces Erika Corredine and husband T. J., Kirsten LaPointe and husband Daniel, Anne Hadley and husband Garrett, and Amy Wilson. Jim was predeceased by his father William Henry Ashwell and his mother Eleanor Ferguson Ashwell. He was also predeceased by his brother William J. Ashwell and his beloved niece Stephanie Ashwell.

A private graveside service will take place at Cedar Hill Cemetery. If circumstances permit, a memorial service to honor Jim's life will be held at a later date. Donations in Jim's memory may be made to Valley Forge Military Academy & College, Development Office, 1001 Eagle Road, Wayne, PA 19087 or a charity of the donor's choice. Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home, West Hartford has care of arrangements. For online condolences, please visit www.taylorandmodeen.com.

Bradley Gordon Matthews

Chapter 120 Life Member



Bradley Gordon Matthews, lifelong resident of Plainville and husband of Martha "Marty" (Blashke) Matthews, passed away after a brief illness on his 73rd birthday, June 20, 2020. Born in Bristol, he was the only son of Gordon and Marie (Resch) Matthews.

Brad was a 1966 graduate of Plainville High School, and earned his Associate's Degree from Tunxis Community College. He married his childhood friend, Marty in 1969, just six months prior to being drafted into the US Navy.

Brad proudly served his country during Vietnam on the USS Tripoli, receiving an honorable discharge in 1973. His patriotism, service, and support to his fellow veterans continued throughout his life as a life member of Vietnam Veterans of America, the VFW Post 574, American Legion Post 33, and the Disabled America Veterans of which he later became a travel consultant and coordinator. Rarely seen without his "shiny shoes" and Vietnam hat and jacket, he was also a member of the

USS Iwo Jima LPH and Blue Water Navy Associations. His other hat was that of a fireman, as a volunteer EMT and firefighter for the Plainville Fire Company for over 30 years.

Brad worked in the IT community for 35 years, and at the age of 55, he switched gears and hit the open road as a tractor trailer driver for Coast to Coast Express. Upon retiring, he volunteered his time transporting veterans as a driver for the V.A. and D.A.V., quickly making friends with each trip.

A car enthusiast, he enjoyed watching NASCAR and attending car shows throughout New England showcasing his Mustangs, or embracing the peace and serenity of fishing.

He will be missed by all who were blessed to know him for his selflessness and generosity, leaving his family and countless friends with many cherished memories. In addition to his wife, Marty, he leaves his sons, Patrick and his wife, Julie and Michael and his wife, Erin. He was the much loved "Gump" to his grandchildren, Felisha, Michael, McKenna, Kelsey, Sean and Connor and his great-granddaughter, Mileena. He also leaves his sister-in-law, Anne Fitzgerald, many nieces, nephews, extended family and dear friends, along with his adored four legged companion, the family dog, Murphy.

Brad may be remembered with contributions to the VFW Post 574, 7 Northwest Dr, Plainville, CT 06062 or to the charity of the donor's choice. Family and friends may gather in celebration of Brad's life on Thursday, July 2, 2020 from 4-7 p.m. at Plainville Funeral Home, 81 Broad St, Plainville. Words of remembrance will be shared at 7 p.m. followed by military honors. Please attend in accordance with face covering and social distancing guidelines. For online expressions of sympathy, please visit www.PLAINVILLEFUNERALHOME.com

POW/MIA News



The National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum

The National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum is located on 26-acres in Northeast Florida at the former Naval Air Station Cecil Field, Master Jet Base (1941-1999) currently known as Cecil Commerce Center.

The original POW/MIA Memorial, located just south of the Chapel of the High-Speed Pass, was dedicated to those Naval Aviators stationed at NAS Cecil Field during Vietnam and Desert Shield/Storm eras. This area is often referred to as Hero's Walk & Freedom Trees. The "Vietnam War Memorial" was originally dedicated on September 11, 1973 by the families and service members who wanted to ensure these brave men would never be FORGOTTEN. A pavilion with a stage area, a metal

starburst display of aircraft, and a granite base seal of this former Master Jet Base were located at the end of the Boulevard amongst the Pines. This area was often used by the base for recognition services and ceremonies.

A driving force behind establishing the original memorial was Mary Hoff, wife of MIA pilot LCDR Michael G. Hoff. Mary was also instrumental in developing the POW/MIA flag, now a congressionally approved National Ensign. Besides the American flag, this is the only other flag authorized to fly over the White House and the only other flag that can fly on the same Flag staff as the American flag. Undoubtedly, this flag has become a very important symbol for the POWs and MIAs, their families and friends, and the enduring cause that they will never be FORGOTTEN. The establishment of the POW/MIA Memorial at Cecil Field will result in the country's only nationally recognized Memorial for all missing military personnel.

Please visit The National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum at: <https://www.powmiamemorial.org/>

On The Hill



Tester, Boozman Introduce Legislation to Expand VA Benefits for Vietnam Veterans

U.S. Senators Jon Tester (D-Mont.) and John Boozman (R-Ark.) introduced the Forgotten Vietnam Veterans Act on June 25 to expand wartime benefits to veterans who served in the Vietnam War and have been ineligible for assistance because of differences between the war era dates at the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Currently, DoD recognizes the Vietnam War era as November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975 while VA recognizes the Vietnam War era as February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975. This discrepancy has prevented members of the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) from qualifying for wartime veterans benefits like the veterans pension. MAAG is a designation for U.S. military advisors sent to other countries to assist in the training of conventional armed forces and facilitate military aid, and more than 3,200 MAAGs served during the Vietnam War.

"As a nation, we have an obligation to ensure that the men and women who served in Vietnam are properly recognized—and honored—for their sacrifices," said Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member Tester. "Our bipartisan bill will alter the federal government's timeline to reflect our country's official involvement in the Vietnam War, rightfully extending

wartime benefits to veterans previously excluded from receiving the benefits they deserve.”

“Expanding the VA’s statutory definition of the Vietnam War era will ensure MAAG veterans are eligible for benefits they earned,” said Boozman. “Our legislation will correct the error that has prevented them from receiving benefits they are rightly due.”

The legislation is supported by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), The American Legion and Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA).

“More than 3,000 veterans served in Vietnam from November 1, 1955 to February 27, 1961, ten of whom were killed in action,” said Matthew Doyle, Deputy Director National Legislative Service of VFW. “However, veterans who served in Vietnam prior to February 28, 1961 are not considered wartime veterans and likewise are ineligible for certain VA benefits. The VFW is proud to support this legislation, which would change the statutory definition of Vietnam veteran to include those who served in the Republic of Vietnam beginning on November 1, 1955.”

“This legislation, when enacted into law, will make right an historic wrong,” said John Rowan, National President and CEO of VVA.

Veterans Affairs News



Advocates Seek Reversal of Policy that Denies Agent Orange Claims to Guam, American Samoa, Johnston Island Veterans

Military-Veterans Advocacy, a Slidell, Louisiana based veterans’ advocacy group, has reacted to a denial of their request for rulemaking to cover veterans exposed to herbicide on Guam, American Samoa and Johnston Island. The letter, signed by Mr. Paul Lawrence, Under Secretary for Benefits, claimed that herbicides sprayed on the central pacific islands were commercial rather than tactical herbicides. In a letter to VA Secretary Wilkie dated June 8, 2020, MVA Chairman of the Board and Director of Litigation CDR John B. Wells (USN, Ret.) addressed the reasons for the denial and asked that the Secretary overrule Lawrence and grant the rulemaking request.

“Lawrence's dismissal of herbicides as commercial rather than tactical is a distinction without a difference,” Wells wrote. “The Government Accounting Office (GAO) noted in a 2018 report that both commercial and tactical herbicides contain the chemicals 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D which combine to make the deadly dioxin 2,3,7,8-TCDD.

“It is not the label assigned,” Wells added, “but the chemical composition of the herbicide that wreaks havoc on the human

body. Veterans exposed to that herbicide who have manifested a covered disease or disability should be covered.”

Wells said evidence shows herbicide use on Guam from 1958 through 1980. Pertinent documents have been provided to the VA.

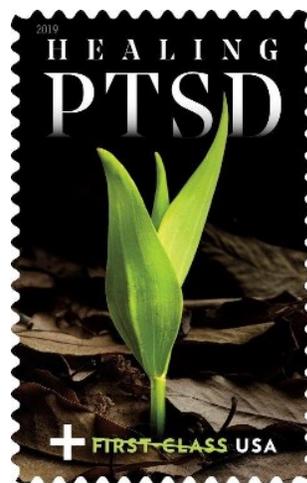
Although Lawrence admitted in his denial that leaking barrels of Agent Orange herbicide were stored on Johnston Island, he claimed that coverage should be denied because civilian contractors rather than military personnel maintained the leaking drums.

In his letter to Wilkie, Wells scoffed at this reasoning noting that the island was only 241 hectares or less than one square mile of area. Wells wrote that “civilians and military shared common areas including latrine and shower facilities, recreational facilities, a common laundry, dining hall, chapel etc. In these close quarters, cross-contamination between civilian and military would have been rampant.”

Wells also submitted an affidavit from Dr. Wayne Dwemychuck, a noted Canadian environmental scientist and Agent Orange specialist who has confirmed this analysis.

Wells closed his letter with a request for Wilkie to overrule Lawrence and a promise to commence litigation by mid-July if this did not occur.

VA receives funding from the US Postal Service for PTSD research



The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today (June 26), during national Post-traumatic Stress Awareness (PTSD) month, VA’s National Center for PTSD will fund more research about PTSD.

This is thanks to the proceeds from the Healing PTSD semipostal stamp, which was issued in December 2019 by the U.S. Postal Service.

More than 7 million stamps were sold from December 2019 to May, garnering upwards of \$717,000 which have been disbursed to VA.

“Thanks to the millions of Americans who purchased the Healing PTSD stamp, VA will continue to study, create awareness, educate and develop policies which better the lives of Veterans with PTSD,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “The stamp not only raises awareness about PTSD but will provide funding for needed research and education about trauma and PTSD treatment.”

Anyone who has seen or gone through a traumatic event, such as war, sexual assault or a serious accident, can develop PTSD.

As a result, they may experience problems sleeping, trouble concentrating, recurrent dreams about the trauma, intense reactions to reminders of the trauma, disturbances in relationships and/or isolation. However, PTSD can be treated.

VA offers personalized effective treatments for PTSD including talk therapy and medication. During PTSD Awareness Month and all year round, VA encourages Veterans to find out more about PTSD and treatment.

This initiative is aligned to the President's Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End a National Tragedy of Suicide (PREVENTS), a nationwide plan to raise awareness about mental health, connect Veterans and others at risk of suicide to federal and local resources.

For more information about PTSD, visit www.ptsd.va.gov.



VA paid \$23.8M in overtime to process backlogged claims. Staff weren't working on claims for half of it

For years, the Department of Veterans Affairs signed off on millions of dollars' in staff overtime to tackle a backlog of community care claims. But a watchdog investigation found staff weren't working on those claims half the time.

Congress and the presidency have continued to expand veterans' ability to seek care in their communities, paid for by VA, for years. And over those years, the backlog of claims has piled up.

Backlogged community care claims increased from more than a quarter million in 2016 to 988,000 in 2018. In 2019, the backlog reached more than 1.3 million.

While staff increased the number of claims they processed each year, the total claims filed continued to grow, while veterans, lawmakers and advocates put increasing pressure on the department to bring the backlog down and prevent veterans from being charged for their care or, in some cases, denied care.

Even though the backlog continued to grow, VA added only about 10 claims processors in 2017 and 2018, or VA called on contracted support staff to help.

Leaders in the VA Office of Community Care encouraged employees for years to use overtime to make up for a lack of staff and mounting claims, according to a new report from the VA Office of the Inspector General.

But leaders didn't establish a policy for use of overtime or required staff to exclusively use overtime for claims processing.

In 2017 and 2018, supervisors approved more than 677,000 overtime hours totaling \$23.8 million. But in an audit of the claims system, investigators found that \$11.6 million of that overtime was not spent on processing the backlog of community care claims.

"Leaders did not effectively ensure their staff used overtime primarily to process claims," the report read. "There was no evidence of claims processing production or activity in the ... claims system (for) almost half of the total overtime paid."

Investigators took a sample of 45 employees and found that 16 of them received more than \$10,000 in overtime for hours when they did not process a single claim or complete any other claims-related work.

Leaders did nothing to mitigate "the risk of overtime abuse," the report said, and the audit showed claims processors averaged "only an estimated 3.7 claims decisions per hour," about a quarter of the 13-claims-per-hour standard.

And, of all the claims processed during those overtime hours, investigators found that only 60 percent were backlogged claims.

Supervisors weren't sure what staff was working on during those overtime hours, according to the report.

"Even though leaders encouraged employees to process backlogged claims during overtime, supervisors said they occasionally approved overtime to process backlogged mail," investigators wrote in the report. "Supervisors were not always able to identify what work the staff did accomplish on overtime, such as answering phone calls, assisting claimants in person, scanning incoming mail, and processing outgoing claim decision letters."

Investigators said the use of overtime "presented a high risk for fraud and abuse" and the office had no strategy for reducing the claims backlog "without depending on overtime."

The Office of Community Care planned to put in place a more automated system in 2020 expected to reduce manual claims processing, investigators said, but recommended leaders put in place clear policies and controls to prevent abuse of overtime.

Investigators also recommended leaders review employees' overtime to determine whether they should be disciplined.

VA leaders including Veterans Health Administration executive in charge Dr. Richard Stone, agreed with investigators' recommendations and provided a plan to address them, saying they recognized "the impact that misuse of overtime could have on veterans and providers" and said they were reviewing a list of employees for disciplinary action and establishing a system to monitor overtime.

From ConnectingVets.com

One year later, Veterans Affairs has approved 17,400 Blue Water Navy claims



One year after Congress and the president passed into law a measure to grant Veterans Affairs benefits to sailors who served on ships off the coast of Vietnam, VA has granted about 17,400 claims.

The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act required the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide disability benefits to veterans who served in the waters off of Vietnam. The measure was just one more provision in a decades-long fight to guarantee the same benefits to nearly 90,000 Navy veterans who served in the waters offshore of Vietnam that their land and brown-water comrades were already entitled to after potentially being exposed to Agent Orange.

Since then, the department has received 58,336 Blue Water Navy disability claims, VA Press Secretary Christina Noel told Connecting Vets.

As of May 31, 23,735 of those claims have been processed. And of those that have been processed so far, the Veterans Benefits Administration tracks 17,401 claims granted or about 73 percent of the claims processed so far.

Both the House and Senate passed the bill granting Blue Water Navy vets benefits unanimously and the president signed it into law last June.

About a week after the president's signature codified those benefits, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie delayed all claims processing until Jan. 1, 2020. That stay effectively stalled the benefits many aging and ill veterans thought they had finally gained with the passage of the bill in Congress.

Pleas from veterans, their families and advocates over the following months rendered no change or response from VA, and those who reached out to the president received no response.

At the time, Wilkie said the department was "working to ensure that we have the proper resources in place to meet the needs of our Blue Water veteran community and minimize the impact on all veterans filing for disability compensation."

Veterans were allowed to file their claims, but they were not processed until Wilkie's stay lifted on Jan. 1, 2020.

From the Service Rep's Desk



The VA Is Now Offering Remote Hearing Aid Adjustments

The Department of Veterans Affairs has developed a smartphone application that allows veterans to receive remote hearing aid

orientation and adjustments from the privacy and safety of their homes.

The Enterprise Remote Tuning of Hearing Instruments (ERTHI) program allows veterans with VA-issued hearing aids to utilize a specialized application that lets them connect their hearing aids to their phone via Bluetooth technology. This enables virtual interaction with an audiologist to ensure the hearing aids have the appropriate settings to support full functionality. The audiologist can see how the hearing aid is working and help the veteran make necessary adjustments.

Hearing aids should have their settings checked and adjusted as necessary every six months. However, many VA audiology appointments have been canceled, or at least delayed until the end of summer as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. The new app allows veterans to get their hearing aids adjusted to allow for optimal performance without having to wait to make an appointment and visit a VA audiology clinic.

Hearing loss is a common issue for veterans, with more than 1.2 million veterans receiving VA compensation for it. Loss of hearing can have major impacts on an individual's emotional, cognitive and even physical well-being.

Because of this need and recent events, the VA sped up the rollout of the virtual adjustment option and use of the smartphone app.

Dr. Rachel McArdle, director of the VA Audiology and Speech Pathology Program Office, said, "Being able to hear has an incredible impact on how individuals interact with the world around them. This program enables us to help our patients get the most of their hearing aids in the safety of their own home."

Check with your local VA audiology office for more information.



Australian Vietnam Veterans' Day 2020



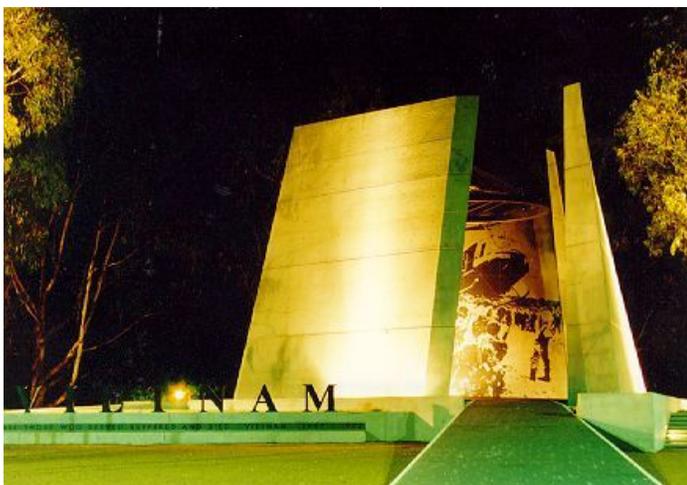
The Vietnam War was Australia's longest military engagement of the 20th century. Almost 60,000 Australians fought in the war and more than 500 lost their lives. Originally known as Long Tan Day, Vietnam Veterans Day is commemorated on 18 August every year.

This year marks the 54th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, where 108 brave young men from D Company 6RAR resisted an attack of 1,500-2,500 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops. It would become one of the most extraordinary chapters in Australia's military history.

The Battle of Long Tan took place in a rubber plantation not far from the small village of Long Tan and is widely known as one of the fiercest battles fought by Australian soldiers, who faced wet and muddy conditions due to torrential rain and the loss of their radios.

In 1969, veterans of 6RAR installed a memorial cross and held a service at Long Tan to commemorate the battle.

Over time this day – August 18 – became synonymous with all those who served and died in Vietnam, and in 1987, Prime Minister Bob Hawke announced that Long Tan Day would be known as Vietnam Veterans Day.



Australian Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Newsletter articles/ stories/photos

Any articles, stories and/or photos submitted for the newsletter must be received by the "cut off" date for any given month. Photos must be accompanied by text which describes the event, names, dates and any other pertinent facts so our readers understand the story behind the photo(s). The newsletter editor will announce the "cut off" dates at each Chapter meeting. The "cut off" date for our September 2020 newsletter is 21 August 2020. Due to space availability, the editor reserves the right to include or not include photos for a given month.

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Welcome Home



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