

CONTACT !



Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans
& Associated Forces Inc.

2023
Issue 2
June 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

© 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: raafvansw@gmail.com

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	(02) 4757 1453
Committee Member:	Les Hogan	(02) 7252 3318
Committee Member:	Greg Meek	0447 536 694
Wellbeing Coordinator:	John Fenton	0412 679 802
Vietnamese Liaison Officer:	Jack Lake	0481 041 356
Association Padre :	Colin Aiken OAM RFD	0417 203 722
Website Manager :	Wendy Humphrys	(02) 7252 3318
CONTACT! Editor:	Wendy Humphrys	(02) 7252 3318

2023

Association Meeting Dates

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

Committee Meeting **Tuesday**
17 October

Committee Meeting **Tuesday**
14 November

Committee Meeting **Tuesday**
12 December

Please contact the office to confirm
 these meeting dates and times, as they
 may change.

Office Manager: Wendy Humphrys 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 as Christmas is not that far away.

We're trying to find a suitable date at the Royal Hotel for a Volunteers' Thank you Luncheon. As always it's for the wives/partners (correct team) as well. Probably late November.

Memorial Day went off well without any major dramas this year. Great to see so many familiar faces. The Royal Hotel looked after us well, as usual.

We may have a different programme next year, depending on what we can arrange in time. We are looking forward to it.

Cheers

Jack Lake

SECRETARY'S REPORT

WOW how quickly has 2023 gone? Now I know that time never varies but this Year has gone way too fast.

We have the NRL and AFL Grand Finals coming up & Daylight Saving starts next Sunday and once Daylight Saving starts and next thing it's Christmas.

Your Association has had a good 2023 & gearing up for our main fundraiser in 2024 , Good Morning Vietnam Version 2 in March 2024. If you saw the show in 2023 you'll know just how good this show is. We'll be keeping you all posted/informed as we get closer to the event but put Saturday the 09/03/2024 - 3pm at the Springwood Theatre Hub, in your diaries.

I'd like to thank our fellow committee members who always deliver the goods on behalf of all our members.

I'd like to take the opportunity to wish all our members the best for Christmas 2023 to have a safe and enjoyable holiday period.

We'll be closing the office from 14 December 2023 and reopening on 23 January 2024 and although the office will be closed we will still be available on mobiles and we'll check emails from time to time.

All the best from all of us to all of you.

Best regards

Chris

WELLBEING REPORT

Members,

As this issue of Contact is being distributed it is a timely reminder that “Veterans’ Health Week” is from 8th to 15th October.

The theme this year is “**Mental Wellness Matters**”

Whilst your Association is not hosting an event, it is important that each of us considers what we can do to improve our Mental Wellbeing. For example:

- * Healthy eating, if living alone consider attending a “Cooking For One” class
- * Undertake a wellness event such as yoga or leisurely walks
- * Become involved in art classes or other creativity activity
- * Animal therapy (RSL NSW support equine sessions in the Picton area)
- * Limit alcohol intake.

Some useful Contacts & sites:

Open Arms – Ph 1800 011 046

MoodGym – www.moodgym.com.au

MyCompass – www.mycompass.org.au Created by the Black Dog Institute

Red Six – www.redsix.com.au

Mens Health Peer Education – www.dva.gov.au/mhpe.htm



John Fenton JP
Wellbeing Coordinator

We are happy to report that John Fenton has recovered well from his heart valve replacement operation. He is keen to continue assisting Veterans.

If you have any wellbeing enquiries please phone John on 0412 679 802 or our office as follows:
Phone: (02) 7252 3318 or Email: secretary@bmvets.com.au.

Padre's Corner
REMEMBRANCE DAY 2023
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Shortly we will commemorate Remembrance Day, we will have an opportunity to remember honour and thank all those men and women who have served their Nation in the cause of peace.

One hundred and five years ago on the 11 November 1918 at 11am, guns fell silent on the Western Front. After more than four years, the First World War was finally over. But at a great cost on both sides. During the four years of the Great War, more than 330,000 Australian men and women had served, and 60,000 of them were killed. **Major Australian battles such as Fromelles, Pozieres, Bullecourt, Messines, Ypres, Villers Bretonneux, Passchendaele, Menin Road, Lone Pine, The Neck, Hamel., Amiens, Gaza, Beersheba, and of course Gallipoli, to name just a few, became part of our history and language.**

It was hoped that this war was to be the war to end all wars. Unfortunately, this was not the case. While Remembrance Day is not as widely commemorated today as we commemorate ANZAC DAY, Remembrance Day has been on the national calendar since 1919. Remembrance Day like ANZAC Day is an opportunity for every Australian to reflect on and remember those who have died in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations, and to acknowledge the service of our Defence Force personnel.

The Kohima Epitaph, which is read at most Remembrance Day Services in the United Kingdom, reminds us of the sacrifice made by many people over the years in the cause of world peace.

***"When you go home, Tell them of us and say,
 "For your tomorrow, We gave our today."***

May we their successors acknowledge and honour their service and sacrifice, **as we remember and pay tribute to all who have served in the Defence and Associated Forces and Organisations in the cause of peace. Thank you for your service.**

Remembrance Prayer

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we remember with thanksgiving those who made the supreme sacrifice for us during times of war. We pray that the offerings of their lives may not have been in vain. May grace enable us this day to dedicate ourselves to the cause of justice, freedom and peace and give wisdom and strength to build a better world, for the honour and glory of your name through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

May God keep you and your family safe and well.

Colin Aiken
 0417203722



Vales



Neville Batcheldor

27/02/1928 - 24/08/2023

Royal Australian Airforce
Rank: Flight Sergeant

19/01/1948 - 26/04/1968
Service Number A21329

Theatre of Operation: Manus Island / Vietnam
Dates of Service Overseas: 24/07/1967 to 24/10/1967
No. 2 Airfield Construction Squadron &
No. 5 Airfield Construction Squadron



Ross Burns

27/07/1927 - 26/07/2023

Australian Army
Rank: Warrant Officer

14/08/1945 - 27/07/1982
Service Number 21161

Theatre of Operation: Japan/Korea/Malaya/Indonesia/Vietnam
3rd Battalion RAR

Dates of Service Overseas:
28/09/1950 - 15/01/1951 (Korea)
1969 - 1970 (Vietnam)

Lest We Forget



Vales



Graham Glasson

22/07/1946 - 30/07/2023

Royal Australian Airforce
Rank: Squadron Leader

22/07/1963 - 1/07/1995
Service Number A44207

Theatre of Operation: Vietnam / PNG

Dates of Service Overseas: 25/02/1970 to 19/02/1971
9 Squadron, 38 Squadron

Graham was a highly regarded member of the association, having held Executive Committee roles and been the Editor of our Contact! newsletter, for many years.



Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Smith SG MC (Retd)

25/07/1933 - 20/08/2023

Australian Army
1952-1976
Service Number 6776



An extraordinary military leader who never stopped fighting for his men, to get more recognition for them, almost right up until he died.

He will be remembered as one of the most significant men of Australia's war history.

Lieutenant Colonel Harry Smith SG MC, who led his men through Australia's bloodiest battle of the Vietnam War, has died aged 90 on Queensland's Sunshine Coast.

As commander of Delta Company, 6RAR, it was his 108 men who on August 18, 1966, fought off thousands of Viet Cong (VC) forces as they advanced on the task force base at Nui Dat, in the Battle of Long Tan.

He received the Star of Gallantry and a Military Cross for his bravery and dedication.

Lest We Forget



Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Day 2023

Our Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Day Service, which was held on Sunday 13th August 2023, was well attended. Luckily the heavy grey clouds held onto their moisture during the Service, which commenced at 11:00am at the Springwood War Memorial.

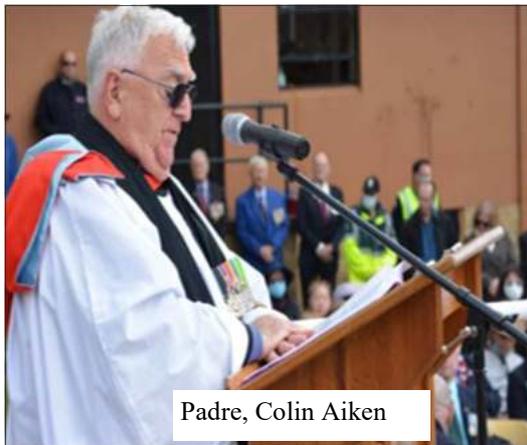
Our Association Patron, Brigadier Nerolie McDonald gave an excellent speech at the Service. She even spoke in Vietnamese, for a short time, which was appreciated by the many Vietnamese attendees.



Guest of Honour Brigadier Nerolie McDonald



President, Jack Lake with Battle of Long Tan Veteran, Terry Ryan



Padre, Colin Aiken



Master of Ceremonies, Dick Adams OAM



Battle of Long Tan Veteran, Terry Ryan and the two ladies who kindly assisted him with laying 18 poppies at Springwood War Memorial, to represent the 18 Australians killed at the Battle of Long Tan

Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Day 2023 - Cont.



Army Cadets



Air Force Cadets



The Salvation Army Band



Audience Members at the Service



Invictus Games - Dusseldorf 2023



“Invictus” means “undefeated.” The term embodies the fighting spirit of the participating men and women, as well as their motivation to move on with their lives, to gain a new place in life, and to not let themselves be defined by the trauma they have suffered.

Through the power of sport, the Invictus Games support the recovery and rehabilitation of participating servicemen and women. At the same time, we want to create a broader understanding as well as respect for all people who serve their country and especially honour those who have paid their commitment to our freedom with their mental and physical wellbeing. This also includes the relatives and friends of the competitors – the “Family & Friends”, who have often made the decisive contribution to the recovery of our wounded soldiers. They are as integral to the Invictus Games as they are to the lives of the athletes.

The Games were launched on 6 March 2014 by Prince Harry at London's Copper Box arena, used as a venue during the 2012 Olympics. Having seen a British team competing at the US Warrior Games held in Colorado in 2013, Harry wished to bring the concept of a similar international sporting event to the United Kingdom.

The Games were held from 9th to 16 September 2023.

The 31-strong Australian Invictus Games Dusseldorf 2023 team was excited to compete in Dusseldorf with the support of over 80 of their family and friends.

Flight Sergeant Nathan King and Able Seaman Taryn Dickens were co-captains of Team Australia.

Read Flight Sergeant Nathan King's story on the next page.....

Invictus Games Dusseldorf 2023

FLIGHT SERGEANT NATHAN KING
Invictus Games Dusseldorf 2023 Competitor

ADF service: I joined the Royal Australian Air Force in 1996. I have spent the majority of my career supporting the C-130 Hercules Aircraft and deployed to the Middle East Region in 2004 and 2006.

Current occupation: Aircraft Technician

Home town: Penrith, New South Wales

Current town: Penrith, New South Wales

Competing in: Athletics, sitting volleyball and swimming

What is the nature of your injury or illness?

Following complications from a damaged thigh playing soccer, I suffered compartment syndrome in my left thigh resulting in skeletal muscle breakdown. I was in intensive care for six weeks. I lost two muscles in my left quad which required extensive operations and skin grafts. I have restricted movement in my left leg.

What role has sport played in your rehabilitation? It has helped to re-focus my training to assist my rehabilitation. I have met a whole bunch of inspirational people I wouldn't have otherwise had the opportunity to meet.

Sport background: I have played soccer my whole life. I represented Air Force and Australian Defence Force teams, but I like having a go at all sports.

What is your greatest achievement to date? I'm proud of my family. They are tough, resilient and kind.

Why did you apply for the Invictus Games? I competed in Invictus Games The Hague 2020. The experience and the exposure was great. I want to compete in Dusseldorf to mentor the new competitors, push myself further, inspire my community and demonstrate what I can do by 'overcoming adversity'.

What will success look like for you at the Games? Just to get there and experience it again is going to be great. But the benchmarks have been set from The Hague, so I need to at least beat those. I am adding the 100m run to my program, so to cross that line will be my gold.

What does unconquered mean to you? Overcoming adversity, don't let it beat you, get on with your life and strive to always lead from the front.

Congratulations to Flt Sgt Nathan King, son of member John King OAM.

Nathan & his team mates won Gold in the 4x50 swimming relay at the Invictus Games in Germany. Nathan now has a full trophy cabinet adding Gold to the Silver and Bronze he won at the previous Invictus Games in The Hague in 2022.



Life Members

Congratulations to Vice President, Roger Lawlor and Committee Member, Greg Meek , who were made Life Members of the Association at the Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 12th September 2023. They were nominated by the President, Jack Lake and unanimously accepted by all the Committee members in attendance. They were both, thanked and acknowledged for their time and dedication to the association, over many years.



President, Jack Lake presenting Roger Lawlor & Greg Meek with their Life Membership Badges



Greg Meek (left) & Roger Lawlor (right)

Article from Terry Dinneen

Introduction

When I first read Bill Parry's books earlier this century this particular article did not resonate as much as it does now.

My two grandsons are within a year or two of the young VC that Bill met in the bamboo. It's not very hard to transpose the circumstances and imagine either of them as an eleven-year-old VC.

We have a lot to be grateful for in this country.

Terry Dinneen

The other incident that I will relate occurred whilst out on patrol. We had stopped for the night and set up camp in a bamboo grove. I wanted to have a crap so I left the camp and went to a grove of bamboo about 30 metres from the camp. I pushed my way into the grove, they grow in circles, and I proceeded to unbuckle my webbing and drop my trousers. As I was squatting, and directly opposite me squatting, evidently also obeying his call of nature, was a very young Viet Cong (I would say about 10 or 11 years of age). We saw each other at the same time. He was trying to cock an old tubular sub-machine gun much covered in rust and dirt. He was not having much luck. I was carrying my Armalite, which was cocked and I pointed my rifle at him.

It was then he started to cry. He held out the burp gun and placed it on the ground. By this time, he was crying copiously. Keeping my rifle on him, I pulled up my trousers, went across to him and retrieved the burp gun. After a few minutes of trying to figure it out, I removed the bolt (firing Mechanism) and put it in my pocket. I squatted down and said to him "VC". He said, "Yes". He then took out of his pocket a picture of an ARVN soldier and said "Brother". He knew a little English. He then took out a packet of South Vietnamese stamps of different denominations, the sort you would buy in a tourist shop. He gave me the stamps and the photograph telling me to keep them. I searched his pockets and there was nothing in them. I gave him a packet of cigarettes and told him to go. All the time he never stopped crying. In height, he only came up to my waist.

Before he left, he gave me a hug. He said "No more VC". I still think about it if he kept his word and went home or if he went back to being a VC. I know one thing, he would have had some heavy explaining to do to account for the loss of his burp gun. I let him go, I guess out of respect for his brother, perhaps or his age, I don't know. I still have the unopened set of stamps and the photograph of his brother. Three days later, I threw the bolt of his weapon in a muddy creek. As for the gun, it is probably still where I dropped it.

I never mentioned anything about this matter to the rest of the platoon. I knew what his fate would be if the South Vietnamese Military Police got hold of him.

Article from member Allan "Shorty" Moffatt OAM

I don't know how but I was invited to the Commissioning of the USS CANBERRA into the US Navy and held at Garden Island - cant remember whether I voted Democrat or Republican??

The weather was so cold even the sun was out - I have not worn this overcoat for so long but decided I would take - GLAD THAT I DID.

The Service was brilliant and only the Yanks could do it. MIND BOGGLING

Anyway you may have seen some on TV media , they were all there ABC/ Channel 7/ Channel 9.

I did not serve in Vietnam,

My Service is

1957-58 Malayan Emergency - HMAS ANZAC

1965-66 Indo-Borneo Confrontation HMAS SNIPE

and then to those new Attack Class Patrol Boats



Facts about USS Canberra

United States (US) Navy ship, the USS *Canberra*, was commissioned in Sydney on 22 July 2023, becoming the first US vessel to be commissioned in Australia.

Australia hosted representatives from the US Navy active fleet at HMAS *Kuttabul* in Sydney for the historic event.

The USS *Canberra* is an Independence-class littoral combat ship, with proud links to Australian industry, having been designed by Australian shipbuilder Austal Limited in Fremantle, Western Australia.

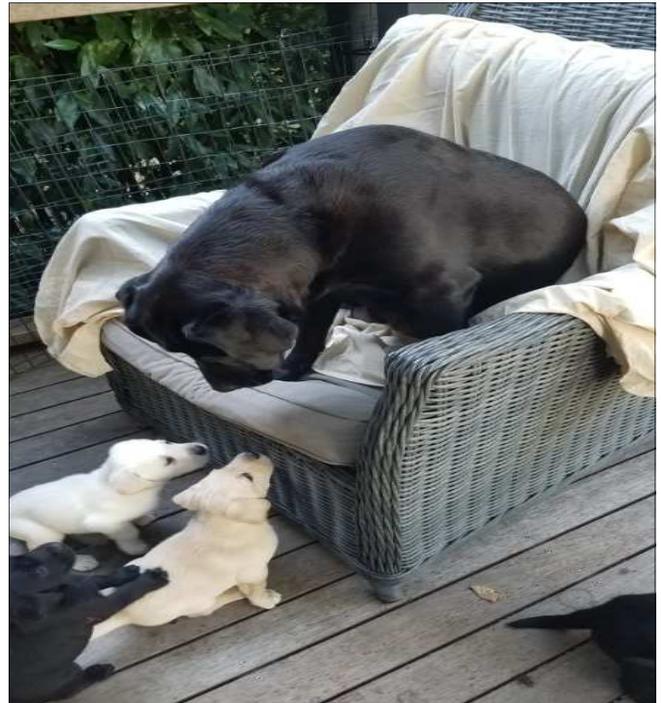
Final Update of Guide Dog, Daina

In July Daina gave birth to the “Q” litter six black, three yellow, five male and four female, all healthy. This is her fourth and final litter and she will now retire to live out the rest of her life with Karen and me. In her career as a guide dog breeder, she has presented Guide Dogs with thirty two great little puppies.

Though I don’t know where all the pups have ended up, I do know that a couple are now working guide dogs, and a couple are working therapy dogs, while half of them are still with their puppy raisers. I have found this whole experience a lot of work, but most rewarding.

I thank those in our association and the Springwood Hub for their support.

Craig Terrey



2023 MID-YEAR RAFFLE WINNERS

The raffle was drawn on Sunday 9 July 2023 at the Royal Hotel in Springwood .

Congratulations to the following winners:

1st Prize of \$1500.00 Prepaid MasterCard
Ticket Number 13874, Adrian from Lawson NSW

2nd Prize of \$600.00 Prepaid MasterCard
Ticket Number 21812, Sue from Yellow Rock NSW

3rd Prize of \$400.00 Prepaid MasterCard
Ticket Number 14555, Lynette from Katoomba NSW



The association wishes to thank all our members who supported this raffle by purchasing tickets as well as all the volunteers who sold tickets at the various stalls.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Office Closure & Reopening

The office will be closed from Thursday, 14 December 2023 and
Reopening on Tuesday, 23 January 2024

Year of Membership

Your *Membership Year* is printing on the top right-hand corner of your envelope, when 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 assist us to reduce postage costs in the future.

**Good Morning Vietnam:
Music from the Vietnam War Era -
Version 2 Live in Concert!
on Saturday 9th March 2024**



From the creator of ***Good Morning Vietnam, Music from the Vietnam War Era – Live in Concert*** comes the much-anticipated sequel, ***Good Morning Vietnam, Music from the Vietnam War Era – Volume 2!***

With even more hits of the 60s and 70s to groove along to... songs like *Born on The Bayou, Ring of Fire, Long Cool Woman in a Black Dress, All You Need Is Love, Reflections, Chain of Fools, House of the Rising Son, Imagine, Friday On My Mind, Most People I Know, Sunshine of Your Love, Turn Turn Turn, Get Together, Hold On I'm Coming, Smiley...*and many more!

The *Good Morning Vietnam, Music from the Vietnam War Era* team once again expertly deliver authentic and true to form renditions of songs by *Creedence Clearwater Revival, The Four Tops, Dianna Ross, The Hollies, The Beatles, Johnny Cash, The Byrds, Cream, The Doors, The Rolling Stones, Jefferson Airplane, Ronnie Burns, The Kinks* and more from a huge array of iconic artists from the era!

Good Morning Vietnam, Music from the Vietnam War Era – Volume 2 continues to pay tribute to our veterans while delivering popular music that shaped an era and defined a generation.

Good Morning Vietnam, Music from the Vietnam War Era – Volume 2 proudly supports Guitars for Vets Australia, with \$1 from every ticket sold being donated to their incredible guitar program.



Come and join us for another incredible afternoon of music and memories.

This special fundraiser for the Association will be held next year at the Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub in Springwood NSW.

Tickets will be available to purchase on Hub website soon.

Photos taken at the previous Show this year, at the Springwood Theatre, with a full house of very appreciative audience members.

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. for.....year/s

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 x.....year/s	\$
Membership Badge \$10:00 (plus \$5:00 postage if applicable) Total \$15:00	\$
Association Logo Car Sticker \$2:00 each	\$
Pens \$5:00 each	\$
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 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:.....