

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2011

ROLE OF THE R.A.N. IN VIETNAM

The Tasmania Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia will host a special commemorative event highlighting the role of the Royal Australian Navy during the Vietnam War as it pays tribute to all servicemen who fought and fell.

Vietnam Veterans Day 2011 will be Thursday 18 August 2011.

ENDORSEMENT

The proposal to hold this event in Tasmania was endorsed by the full National Council of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia at its May 2010, National Congress.

BACKGROUND

The broad and varied role of the R.A.N. is little known and with exception of the Logistical Support tasks performed by HMAS SYDNEY, a general lack of awareness prevails both in the public domain and the Department of Defence. For those who were either directly involved in particular events or who were engaged in a variety of supporting roles, operational names such as SEA DRAGON, ROLLING THUNDER, STABLEDOOR, or the colloquial acronym EMU's, all have a particularly proud meaning. Inevitably and as the years begin to slip by with increasing rapidity, a valuable and important part of our heritage is gradually in danger of being lost.

While Vietnam Veteran's Day has been set aside in the calendar to remember and pay tribute to our fallen comrades, we must never lose sight of the fact that our losses were incurred across all the service arms.

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

Vice Admiral David Leach A.C., C.B.E., L.V.O., R.A.N. (RTD) has graciously accepted an invitation to attend the event as special guest speaker. VADM Leach, a former Chief of Navy Staff, is one of only two surviving Commanding Officer's of the DDG's HMA ships HOBART and PERTH, both of which were heavily engaged in North Vietnamese waters during the 1968 Tet Offensive.

VENUE

The city of Hobart will be the venue for the 2011 commemoration. The R.A.N. has been requested to consider facilitating a goodwill visit to Hobart of the FFG HMAS PERTH to coincide with the commemoration. The symbolic relationship of the two names and their association with the Vietnam War was an over riding consideration in determining the venue.

ATTENDANCES

A substantial interest has already been demonstrated towards supporting this particular event from interstate and local veterans even before a concerted publicity campaign has begun. Indications are already that upward of 200 will attend. Once promotion of the event begins in earnest through the various Associations and veterans networks, the number in attendance will increase substantially over current indications.

ORDER OF EVENTS

16 August 2011 – Arrivals commence. Free Day

17 August 2011 – Morning/Afternoon free, Formal Dinner with invited guests representing Ship's Associations, Clearance Diving Teams, and RAN Helicopter Flight (EMU's), and Veteran ESO's.

18 August 2011 – Commemoration Event – Commemorative Lunch - Dispersal.

TRAVEL & ACCOMODATION

We are currently endeavouring to negotiate discounted arrangements for both air travel and hotel accommodation in and around Hobart. Airport transfers will be arranged for those arriving by air to and from their accommodation, and event venues.

REGISTRATION

Early registration is strongly encouraged, and is open to all Vietnam Veterans, their wives and partners, irrespective of their Service Arm. This will help us with planning the logistics to ensure a comfortable and memorable stay in Hobart, and a successful outcome for the commemoration.

Where possible please include an email address with your registration details so that updates and information on travel and accommodation may be forwarded as they become available.

To Register, please contact either myself, or the Branch Secretary Mrs Ann Cash vvtassec@yahoo.com with your name and the names of those accompanying you together with your full contact details.

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