

The Vietnam War

An overview of Australia's involvement



*'A presentation by veterans from the
Casey Regional Veterans Welfare Centre
and the Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club -
Gippsland Chapter'*



Ho Chi Minh

Vietnam's legendary freedom fighter, opposed French rule, fought the Japanese during WW2. Again fought with and defeated the French in a 9 year war. In 1955, begins his greatest battle in what the North call the 'American War'.



The threat of Communism

⌘ 1954 Geneva Accords

⌘ Vietnam is divided into North and South

⌘ 1955

USA sends 342 men to help reorganise & train SVN Army

⌘ 1954 - 1959

Hostilities & aggression against SVN Government intensifies

⌘ 1960

SVN calls for further aid and assistance



Ngo Dinh Diem

Australia enters the war

⌘ 20 Dec 1960

President Ngo Dinh Diem and Prime Minister Menzies meet

⌘ Aug 1962

30 advisers arrive in SVN to join US Army advisers

⌘ 1963

1st Australia soldier dies in SVN

⌘ 1964

Strength increased to 83 advisers
WO2 Kevin Conway AATTV, first Australian to die as a result of enemy action in South Vietnam



The war intensifies

⌘ November 1964

National Service introduced

⌘ 18 Dec 64

Australian Government offers ground troops to SVN

⌘ May 1965

1RAR deployed SVN

⌘ Sep 1965

56% of Australians are in favour of the war

⌘ Oct 1965

First demonstrations begin

13 Nov 1965

WO2 Kevin Wheatley is killed



WO2 Kevin Wheatley VC

Diggers do their duty

- ⌘ **1966**
1 ATF & 1ALSG formed
- ⌘ **May 1966**
1st national serviceman killed
- ⌘ **Aug 1966**
The Battle of Long Tan
- ⌘ **Nov 1966**
Poll finds only 37% approve of sending NS to Vietnam
- ⌘ **Apr 1967**
Maj Peter Badcoe is posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross



MAJ Peter Badcoe VC

Diggers continue the fight

⌘ May 1967

Morgan Gallup Poll finds 62% in favour of continuing the war

⌘ Oct 1967

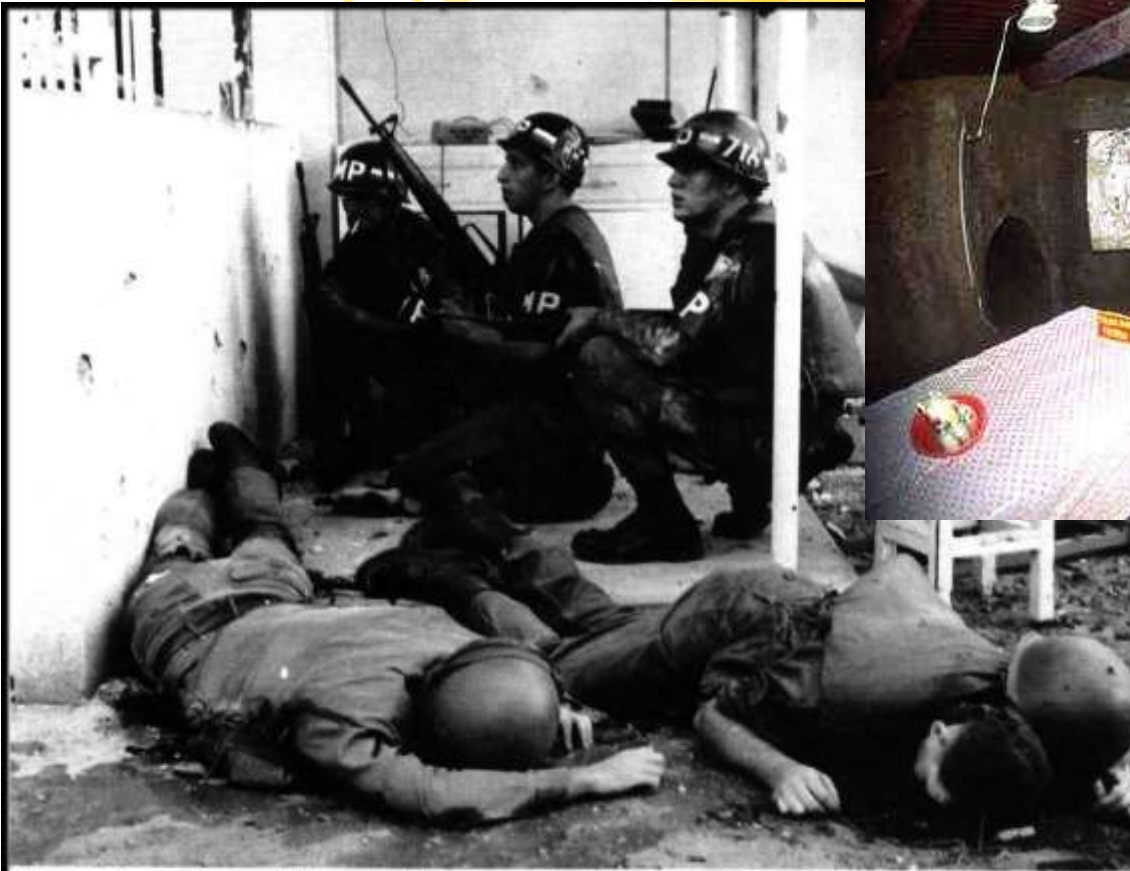
Australia increases commitment



TET Offensive 1968



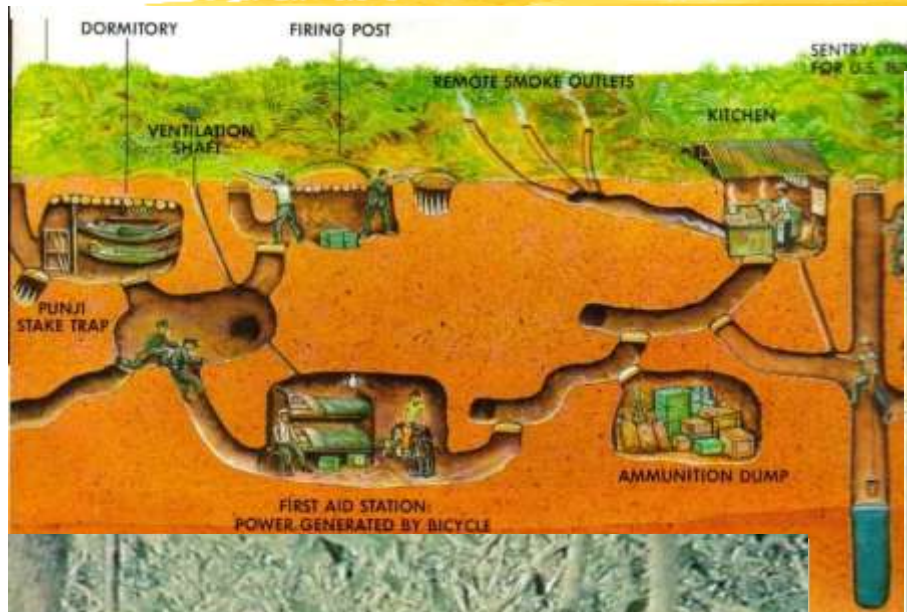
TET Offensive 1968



Three American military police kneel behind a wall at the entrance to the U.S. consulate next to the U.S. Embassy. In the foreground lie the bodies of two Americans killed in earlier fighting.



TET Offensive 1968



Diggers continue the fight

⌘ Mar 1968

US soldiers massacre of civilians at My Lai village

⌘ May 1968

⌘ The Battle of FSB Coral & Balmoral



Diggers win VC's



WO2 Ray Simpson VC



WO2 Keith Payne VC



May 1968

WO2 Ray Simpson is awarded the Victoria Cross



May 1969

WO2 Keith Payne earns the AATTV's fourth Victoria Cross



Sep 1969

Ho Chi Minh dies in Hanoi, aged 79

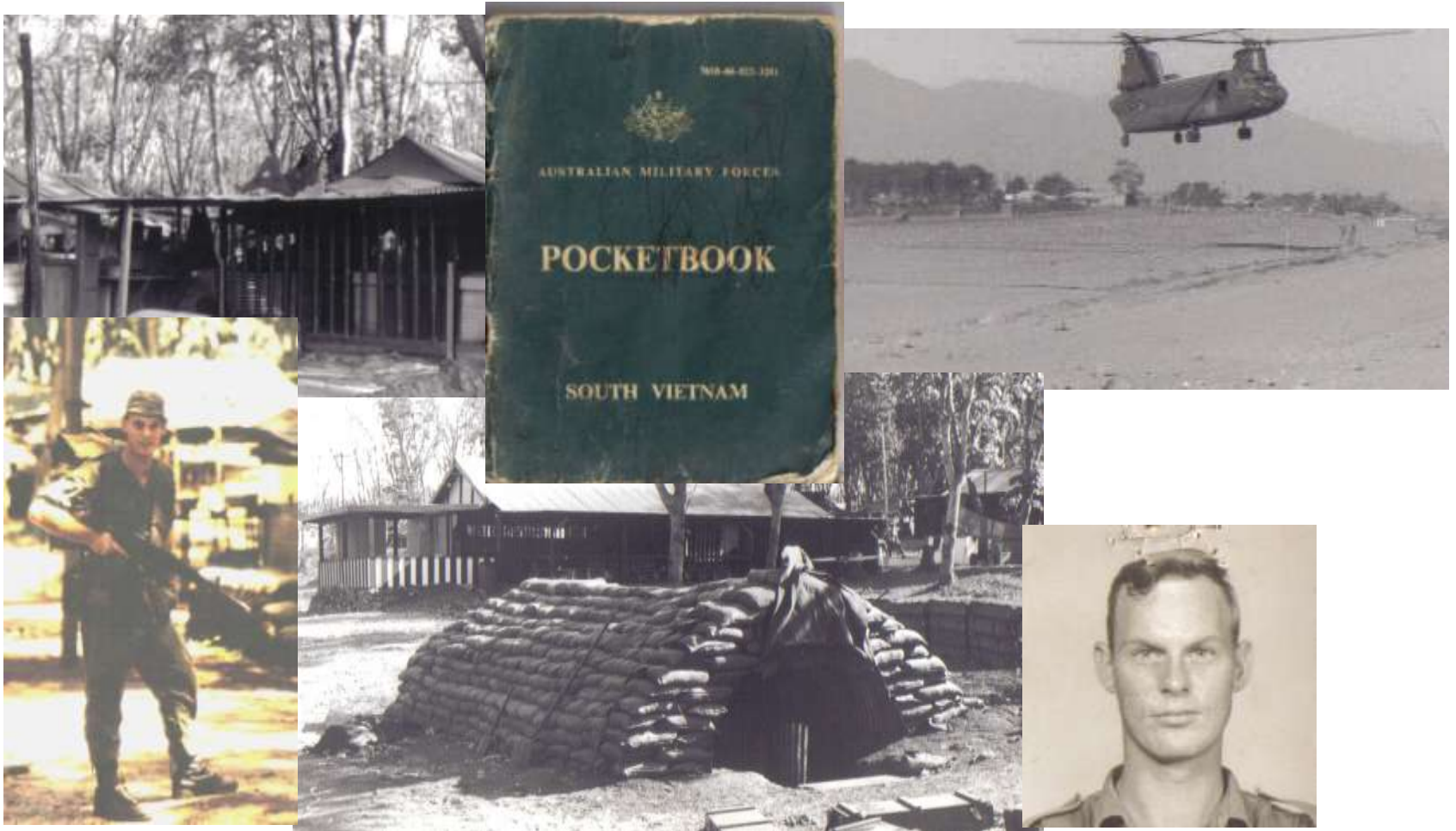


1969

Army peaks with 7,000 personnel in Vietnam



Daily life of a Vietnam vet



Daily life of a Vietnam vet



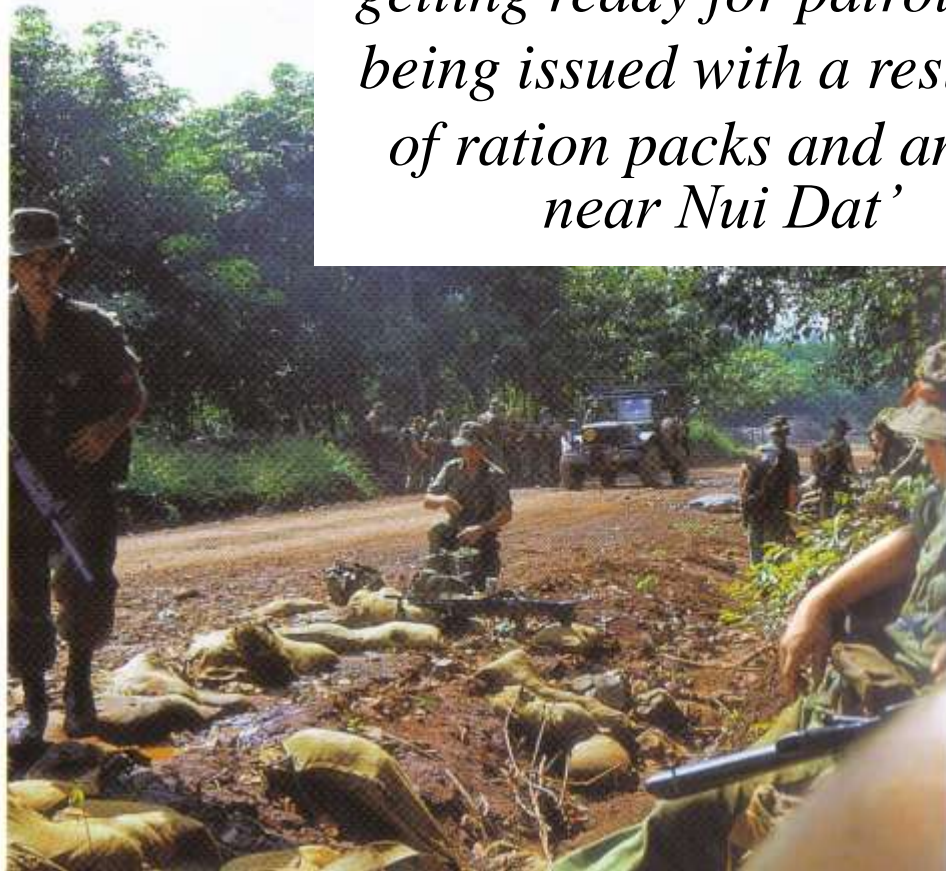
Daily life of a Vietnam vet



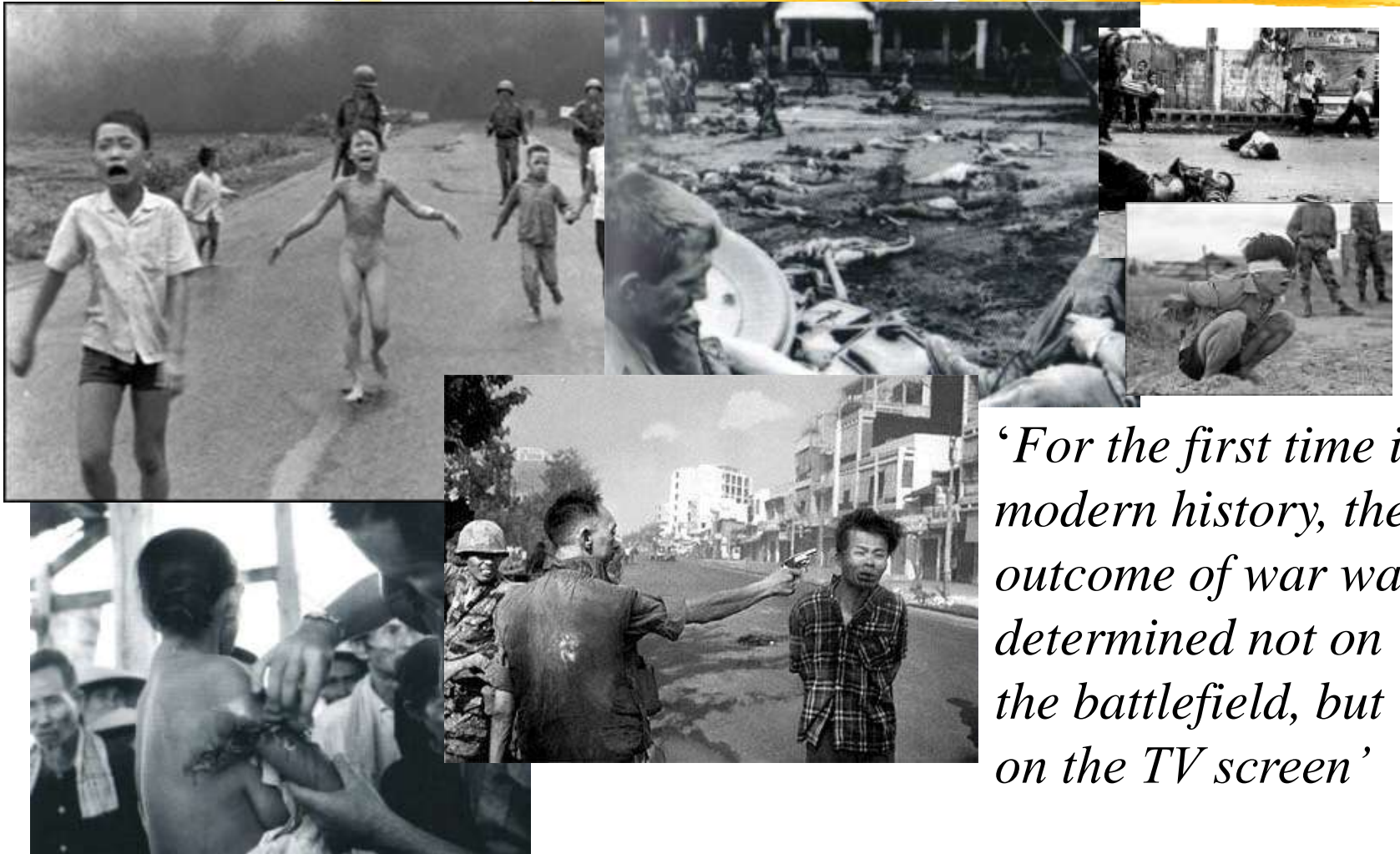
Daily life of a Vietnam vet



'Members of 5RAR and 3RAR getting ready for patrols and being issued with a resupply of ration packs and ammo near Nui Dat'



The nightly news



‘For the first time in modern history, the outcome of war was determined not on the battlefield, but on the TV screen’

Anti war movement grows

⌘ 1970

Huge anti-war demonstrations take place across the world

⌘ Jun 1971

About 110,000 demonstrate in State capitals

⌘ 1971

Government begins troop withdrawal

⌘ 1972

Labor wins office
ends conscription
brings troops home



Australia withdraws

⌘ **Jan 1973**

US announces cease-fire agreement

⌘ **Mar 1973**

Last US troops leave Vietnam

⌘ **Jun 1973**

Embassy Guard leaves SVN

⌘ **Jan 1974**

North Vietnam ignore cease-fire

⌘ **Apr 1975**

The final evacuation of Australian Embassy personnel from Saigon

⌘ **30 Apr 1975**

Saigon, Capital of South Vietnam falls to the communists



The casualty lists



⌘ **North Vietnamese**
1.1 million

⌘ **South Vietnamese**
250,000

⌘ **Vietnamese civilians**
4,000,000



The casualty lists

⌘ American troops

58,000 American soldiers dead

⌘ Other Countries.

5,000 lost lives

⌘ Australians

519 dead



Coming home



'For many veterans, homecoming was a demoralising experience'

Welcome home

‘For many veterans the parade was a good time for a reunion, for others it was the psychological welcome home they needed’



Our Vietnam veterans



Current issues

- ⌘ Suicides
- ⌘ Alcoholism
- ⌘ broken marriages
- ⌘ divorces
- ⌘ deformed children



- ⌘ Effects of Agent Orange
- ⌘ Mental illness such as PTSD (Flashbacks and acute anxiety disorders)
- ⌘ medical illnesses that include bowel conditions, skin conditions, heart, kidney and eye problems, and many others



Now and the future



*Operation
Sumatra
Assist,
Operation
Anode,
Operation
Catalyst,
Operation
Spire,
Operation
Slipper,*