

# VIETNAM

The decision to commit Australian troops to Vietnam came about as a result of fears resulting from Indonesian incursions into the newly formed Malaysian confederation of states together with the growing communist threat in South East Asia and increasing recognition that Australia should be seen to support the United States.

The initial commitment consisted of a team of military advisers, the Australian Army Training Team, Vietnam (AATTV) who arrived in Vietnam in August 1962.

The first deployment of Australian ground forces came in 1965, when the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR) and supporting troops were assigned to serve with the US 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade (Separate). Although highly successful, this assignment highlighted the difference between Australia and US tactics and equipment levels.

In March 1966 the Australian government announced its intention to create a single and relatively independent Australian Task Force with elements provided by New Zealand. This came largely as a result of political pressure from Washington, but it was also a sound military decision. The Task Force comprised up to three infantry battalions with supporting arms and services located at Nui Dat in Phuoc Tuy Province, with major logistics support at Vung Tau.

Conscription was introduced in order to provide staffing for the greatly expanded Army presence in South East Asia and almost half of those who served in Vietnam were conscripts.

*ANZAC Cottage restoration would not have been possible without financial assistance from:*

*WA Lotteries Commission  
Department of Conservation & Heritage  
Department of Veterans Affairs*

The Royal Australian Navy presence in Vietnam commenced with the Clearance Diving Teams and was later supported by the deployment of Australian destroyers operating with the US Seventh Fleet. The Navy also played a significant role in troop transport and logistics, as well as providing the highly regarded RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam.

The Royal Australian Air Force provided fixed wing support from 1964, helicopters for logistic support, troop movement and medivac facilities from 1966 and Canberra bombers based out of Phan Rang. Aircraft were also based at Ubon in Thailand and support was provided from Butterworth in Malaysia.

The Task Force withdrew in December 1971, while the AATTV members remained until December 1972. The last RAN vessel, HMAS Sydney departed from Vung Tau in February 1972, while the majority of RAAF personnel were withdrawn by August 1971.

Almost 60,000 Australian served in Vietnam. 501 were killed and about 2,400 wounded. Many continue to suffer as a result of that service.



Vietnam Veterans  
Association of Australia  
WA Branch Inc.

Telephone : 0424 368 670  
38 Kalgoorlie Street  
Mt Hawthorn WA 6016



# ANZAC Cottage



# AUSTRALIA'S FIRST GALLIPOLI MEMORIAL

The Anzacs had not yet left the gullies of Gallipoli when in October 1915, the Mt Hawthorn Progress Association formed a committee to build 'Anzac Cottage' (sometimes called 'Anzac House') at N° 38 Kalgoorlie Street, Mt Hawthorn, a developing suburb 3.1 miles (5 kilometres) north of Perth. The Association wanted to perpetuate the name 'Anzac' and build a monument that would be useful, providing a home for a wounded soldier who took part in the famous landing.

Members of the Progress Association started the fund - raising by contributing the large sum of 5 pounds each and the heavily timbered bush block was prepared by volunteer labour on Saturday, January 29<sup>th</sup> 1916, when about 30 men assembled armed with shovels, saws and axes, to clear the land. At 4pm the Ladies Patriotic Guild regaled the workers with afternoon tea. After this the last standing tree they called "Lone Pine" - was felled.

The following Saturday, February 5<sup>th</sup> seventy drays laden with donated building materials, formed a spectacular half mile (.8kilometres) procession through James Street, Perth, accompanied by about 150 men all on their way to the Mt Hawthorn building site.

Mrs. Roberts, the 'Soldiers Queen', headed the procession in her motor car, which also carried a Meters stove and copper, and was accompanied by two other decorated motor cars. Then came 20 drays of stone, 27 of bricks, 1 of lime, 3 of tiles, 12 of timber, 1 of cement and paints, 1 of scaffolding, 1 tiled grate, 1 large enamel bath, 1 of refreshments and 1 of sundries. Thousands viewed the procession as it proceeded to Mt Hawthorn and, on arrival at the building site was greeted by hundreds of enthusiastic men women and children.

On Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup> of February, the 'busy bee' construction of the house commenced at 3.30am and by 1pm the number of volunteer workmen on the site had reached two hundred.

Mrs Roberts the 'Soldiers Queen' ceremoniously turned the first sod. Hot dinners were provided for the workers, the Police Band provided the music and a local rifle club fielded the Honour Guard for the Governor and his wife Lady Barron, who laid the inscribed foundation tablet.

A crowd of thousands, it was claimed, dressed in their Sunday best looked on. Construction of the house was completed by 'bed time'. As the official souvenir booklet of the event put it, 'Mt Hawthorn was en fete...' all that day.

The festivities were repeated when the cottage was officially opened by the Premier and Mrs Scadden on April 15<sup>th</sup> 1916 and handed over to the returned Anzac the following day - a Sunday. There was more celebrating then, including bands, cadets and Girl Guides. A flag pole had been erected in the front garden upon which the Australian flag - bearing the motto 'Anzac' - was to be hoisted each Anzac Day at 4.30am, the time of the first landing at Gallipoli.

Anzac Cottage was to house a returned Gallipoli digger and his descendants for as long as they needed, to ensure that the cottage will remain for all time a monument to what Lord Kitchener has termed "A remarkable record of valour".



A private C.J.Porter and his wife Anne were the lucky couple granted the cottage, their good fortune deriving from private Porter's participation in the fighting at Gallipoli, where he had been wounded. Private Porter publicly declined the home, saying he did not wish to receive anything his comrades in arms could not have. But he was prevailed upon to accept the honour. Private Porter died in 1964, his wife Anne four years later, though some of his descendants did indeed live on in Anzac Cottage until 1971.



Private Porter

In 1991, the cottage passed into the hands of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia W.A. branch. In cooperation with the Mt Hawthorn Anzac Cottage Restoration Group and with a grant from the Lotteries Commission and the generosity of many donors, the VVAWA has restored the building as closely as possible to its original condition. The cottage is now the headquarters of the VVAWA. Local schools and other interested groups may visit the cottage.

Anzac Cottage has been classified by the National Trust, recognised by the WA Heritage Council and is included in the Register of the National Estate. As well as having outstanding local, state and national heritage significance, Anzac Cottage is one of the country's earliest World War 1 memorial - and perhaps the most unique of Australia's many war memorials.



The cottage when handed to Vietnam Veterans in 1991

"Anzac Cottage" - winner of the Municipal Heritage Inventory Award, 2003 Building Design & Conservation Awards