

Media Release

The Hon Shaun Leane MP
Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy
Minister for Veterans



Thursday, 18 August 2022

MUSEUM TO HONOUR AUSTRALIAN VIETNAM VETERANS FOREVER

Victorians today will pause to reflect upon the sacrifices made by the tens of thousands of Australians who served in the Vietnam War.

Six decades after Australia became involved in the Vietnam War, Victorians pay respect to the 60,000 Australians who served for more than a decade including 3,000 who were wounded and 521 who lost their lives.

To ensure these sacrifices are immortalised, the Andrews Labor Government is investing \$10 million to help deliver a new purpose-built site to house the National Vietnam Veterans Museum on Phillip Island.

The investment will support the museum to modernise its exhibitions, increase visitor capacity and improve visitors' understanding of the Vietnam War and its impacts. It will also enable the museum to better engage with the veterans' community and its volunteers.

Today marks the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan in 1966, where Australian soldiers fought one of their fiercest battles of the war at a rubber plantation near the village of Long Tan.

In the battle, Delta Company, 6th Battalion the Royal Australian Regiment, were heavily outnumbered by an enemy force of more than 2,000. They held fast for four hours – supported by artillery fire from the Nui Dat base – before reinforcements arrived.

The battle led to the greatest loss of life on a single day for Australians during the conflict, killing 18 soldiers.

This unprecedented investment will honour those lives lost, those who survived and the lasting impacts on families, carers and veterans in our community.

The government is also investing \$200,000 in the Supporting Those that Served program – funding of \$50,000 will ensure that the stories and history of Vietnam Veterans will be digitally recorded, with \$150,000 in grants for ex-services organisations to provide wellbeing support.

Today, veterans, war widows and current defence members can travel for free on public transport, including V-Line services, to the Shrine of Remembrance service and local commemorative services.

The Labor Government has provided more than \$200,000 to support Vietnam Veterans Day commemorations from 2019 - part of a broader four-year commitment to provide \$1 million to the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia's Victorian Branch to support the welfare of its members.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Veterans Shaun Leane

"We will never forget the sacrifices made by the thousands of Australians who served in the Vietnam War. This investment will preserve and honour those sacrifices so future generations will never forget."

"I encourage all Victorians to reflect on their experiences on Vietnam Veterans Day, whether at the Shrine of Remembrance or a local service."