



## Commemorative Fund supports Vietnam Veterans' Day

**The idea of commemorating the Battle of Long Tan in South Vietnam began over a few beers.**

Shortly after those beers Chris Gunn (a veteran of Whiskey 1 Company) and a small committee began to organise and spread the word about the event.

Chris was encouraged to find that the commemoration was so well supported.

“There were 125 veterans and family members registered.”

By August 2021, everyone was in Rangiora ready for the event the next day — then the bombshell hit, says Chris.

“That night the whole country went into lockdown. The RSA was not permitted to open, so there was no alternative but for everyone to go home.”

All those who had registered were contacted and refunds were offered, but the overwhelming response was to keep the funds intact and try again in 2022.

The decision to hold over funds and try again the following year proved to be a good one.

**“Registrations for the commemoration improved. Over 70 New Zealand veterans, others from Britain, Australia, South Africa and the USA were now planning to attend.”**

The Vietnam Veterans' Day Commemoration included a parade at the Rangiora Cenotaph followed by a lunch and afternoon live entertainment at the RSA in Rangiora and an evening meal at the Spitfire Restaurant.





Chris Gunn and Pat Duggan at the commemoration

Chris thought that the event was very upbeat.

“The mood was exuberant, the joy in meeting old comrades. There was a sense of great satisfaction as they had finally been able to come together and celebrate their shared involvement in serving New Zealand.”

The Veterans’ Affairs Commemorative Fund provided funding for this event. If you’re planning a project, reunion or event that recognises veterans’ sacrifices, visit our website to see what we may be able to help with.

More information about Commemorative Project Contribution (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/a-z/commemorative-project-contribution/>)

You can read more stories and updates in the Summer 2022 edition of the Veterans' Affairs Magazine.



 Read the Summer 2022 Edition of the Veterans' Affairs Magazine [PDF, 9.7 MB]  
(<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/assets/VA-News/VA-News-2022-Edition-4-Summer.pdf>)

Date  
29 December 2022

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