



MEDIA ALERT

Vietnam Veterans' Day

This Vietnam Veterans' Day is the 40th anniversary since a memorial cross was raised in Vietnam by the men who fought in the Battle of Long Tan.

Vietnam Veterans' Day is commemorated on 18 August, the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. On 18 August 1969, three years after the battle, the men of 6RAR/NZ revisited the site to commemorate the battle and their fallen mates.

The cross site has become a central place of significance for Australian veterans returning to Vietnam on pilgrimages.

During the Battle of Long Tan, 108 Australian and New Zealand soldiers fought a pitched battle against over 2,000 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops in a rubber plantation not far from the small village of Long Tan.

The Australians prevailed, but only after fighting in torrential rain for four hours. They were nearly overrun, but were saved by a timely ammunition resupply, accurate artillery fire from the nearby Australian base, and the arrival of reinforcements by armoured personnel carrier. Eighteen Australians lost their lives and 24 were wounded, the largest number of casualties in one operation since the Australian task force had arrived a few months earlier. After the battle the bodies of 245 enemy soldiers were found, but there was evidence that many more bodies had been carried away.

The Battle of Long Tan has been re-enacted in a short film in the Memorial's *Conflicts 1945 to today* galleries.

What:	Vietnam Veteran's Day
When:	Tuesday 18 August
Interviews:	Now available with historians

Further information:

www.awm.gov.au/blog/tag/battle-of-long-tan/

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