

Vietnam War



1962 - 1973

Introduction

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Defining the Vietnam War

The following is an excerpt from *The Oxford Interactive Encyclopaedia*:*

Vietnam War - name generally given to that part of the civil war in Vietnam after the commencement of large-scale US military involvement in 1964.

Guerrilla activity in South Vietnam had become widespread by 1961, in which year President Ngo Dinh Diem proclaimed a state of emergency.

Continued communist activity against a country perceived in the USA as a bastion against the spread of communism in south-east Asia led to increasing US concern, and after an alleged North Vietnamese attack on US warships in the Gulf of Tonkin in 1964, President Johnson was given congressional approval (Tonkin Gulf Resolution) to take military action.

By the summer of 1965 a US army of 125,000 men was serving in the country, and by 1967 the figure had risen to 400,000, while US aircraft carried out an intensive bombing campaign against North Vietnam. Contingents from South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and Thailand fought with the US.

Although communist forces were held temporarily in check, the war provoked widespread opposition within the USA, and after the Tet Offensive of February 1968 had shaken official belief in the possibility of victory, the bombing campaign was halted and attempts to find a formula for peace talks started.

US policy now began to emphasize the 'Vietnamization' of the war, and as increasing efforts were made to arm and train the South Vietnamese army, so US troops were gradually withdrawn. Nevertheless, US forces were still caught up in heavy fighting in the early 1970s and the bombing campaign was briefly resumed on several occasions. US troops were finally withdrawn after the Paris Peace Accords of January 1973, but no lasting settlement between North and South proved possible, and in early 1975 North Vietnamese forces finally triumphed, capturing Saigon (the capital of South Vietnam; renamed Ho Chi Minh City in 1976) on 30 April 1975.

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Australian Involvement as quoted by the [Australian War Memorial](#)

The Australian government dispatched the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1 RAR), in June 1965 to serve alongside the US 173rd Airborne Brigade in Bien Hoa province.

The following year the Australian government's concern grew to the point where it felt that, if Australia were involved in the conflict, its presence should be both strong and identifiable. In March

1966 the government announced the dispatch of a taskforce to replace 1 RAR, consisting of two battalions and support services, to be based at Nui Dat, Phouc Tuy province. Unlike 1 RAR, the taskforce was assigned its own area of operations and included conscripts who had been called up under the National Service Scheme, introduced in 1964. All nine battalions of RAR served in the taskforce at one time or another before it was withdrawn in 1971; at the height of Australian involvement it numbered some 8,500 troops ...

... From the time of the arrival of the first members of the Team in 1962 some 50,000 Australians, including ground troops and Air Force and Navy personnel, served in Vietnam; 520 died as a result of the war, and almost 2,400 were wounded.

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Medal Information

[Australian Service Medals \[post WWII\]](#)

[Medal Mounting: Australian Medals & Frames](#)

Forums: Vietnam War & Military

[Britian's Small Wars Message Board](#)

[Photographs From Vietnam: Message Board](#)

[Platoon 245 Message Board](#)

[Vipers Wolfhound & Veteran Message Board \[USA\]](#)

Book and Publications

On-line Publications

[Agent Orange ... what is it?](#)

[Recalling the Vietnam War: a US perspective](#)

[The Australian Veteran and Vietnam Experience](#)

Historical Records and Official Publications

[Australian War Memorial Databases](#)

[Maps: Areas of Operation](#)

[Vietnam Veterans' Memorial War Records \[Worldwide\]](#)

Sound, Video and/or Moving Image

AWM : Film Database

Aerial Drop in Vietnam, F/O Barrie Ward, 07 Nov 1967, min 34 sec.

[Accession Number: F02718]

Summary: Caribou transport aircraft of No. 35 Squadron, RAAF supported by Iroquois helicopters of No. 9 Squadron RAAF rushed urgently needed supplies to the First Australian Task Force who were on a search and destroy operation aimed at Viet Cong logistics in Phuoc Tuy Province. Troops from the 2 RAR and 7 RAR took part in the operation in a coastal strip area known as Cape Ho Tram. This item shows Caribou, starting, taxiing take off, crew during flight and dropping supplies by parachute. No. 9 Squadron RAAF helicopters are also shown landing stores and winching stores down to troops in jungle.

AWM : Sound Database

Major Jan Frith interviewed by Harvey Broadbent about her service in Vietnam as an Australian Army Nurse, 31 Min. [Accession Number: S00418]

Paperback and Hardcover

Cross-Fire by [Peter Haran and Robert Kearney](#)

Vietnam: The War Comes Home by [Thomas A. Bass](#)

The Vung Tau Ferry by Rodney Nott and Noel Payne

Further Reading

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