

**Message from the Office of the State Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Issue 86 (9 November, 2010)**

Please find below a message from Bill Denny AM, Director, Veterans SA for your information, distribution and possible use in newsletters, and on "Veterans" themed radio programs.

Remembrance Day – Lest We Forget

Veterans' Affairs Minister, Jack Snelling is encouraging all South Australians to re-engage with the custom of observing one minute's silence at 11am on Thursday, 11 November to commemorate the service and sacrifice of our armed forces and civilians in times of war.

"We commemorate Remembrance Day in this fashion because at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918, the guns fell silent to end World War I," Mr Snelling said.

"Some concerns have been expressed that in recent years the custom of the 'one minute's silence' at 11am appears to have waned, with several approaches made to Veterans SA after Remembrance Day last year suggesting that the acknowledgement be reinstated.

"I'm asking all South Australians, wherever they are at 11 o'clock Thursday morning, to just stop what they'd doing for one minute, to pause and reflect on the commitment made by those men and women who served in times of war.

"I'm also asking all Chief Executives in the public service to arrange this formal acknowledgement of Remembrance Day within their own government departments this year.

"I also encourage all South Australians to wear a poppy tomorrow as a symbol of remembrance and new life."

Mr Snelling will lay a wreath at the site of the Battle of Long Tan in Vietnam on Friday, 12 November in memory of those who fought in that conflict.

"Long Tan was the defining battle of the Vietnam War for Australia," Mr Snelling said.

"Their victory was so comprehensive that the North Vietnamese never again attempted a major attack against Australians in Phouc Tuy province, nor did they attempt any significant attack against the Australian base at Nui Dat," Mr Snelling said.

Mr Snelling will also visit the recently opened Phong Phu kindergarten at Nui Dat - a current project of the Australian Vietnam Volunteers Resource Group.

He also announced the re-appointment of former South Australian Governor, Sir Eric Neal as Chairman of the Veterans' Advisory Council for a further two year term.

Sir Eric is an Honorary Life Member of the R.S.L. of Australia, a former patron of Legacy, a former Honorary Air Commodore of the City of Adelaide Squadron of the R.A.A.F., and a former Honorary Colonel of the Royal South Australia Regiment.

Commemorative Tour of the Northern Expressway's Hamel, Tobruk, Kokoda, Kapyong and Long Tan Bridges

Veterans will recall that in June this year, Premier Mike Rann announced that some of Australia's most famous military battles will be honoured along the Northern Expressway.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Jack Snelling M.P. has invited over 300 South Australian veterans and their guests to be part of the commemorative tour and bridge naming ceremony. Veterans will have the opportunity to see the five expressway interchanges and join the Premier to view the interpretive signage near Kapyong Bridge, where he will take the opportunity to officially recognise the new bridge names.

Kokoda Trail 68TH Anniversary Commemorative Service

Minister Snelling was pleased to attend the Kokoda Trail 68th Anniversary Commemorative Service at the Kokoda Trail Memorial Obelisk, Doxiadis Reserve, St Agnes on Tuesday, 2 November.

Minister Snelling is grateful to the Tea Tree Gully Sub-Branch of the R.S.L. for the invitation and was delighted to meet Kokoda trail veterans Mr Bert Ward and Mr Wally Garrett who served with the 2/27th Battalion, the only South Australian unit to fight on the Kokoda trail.

On 2 November, 1942 the Kokoda Airstrip was re-occupied. The capture of Kokoda, New Guinea, and its airstrip enabled the Australian advance across the Owen Stanley Range to continue.

A copy of Minister Snelling's speech at the event is attached.

This Week in Australian Military History

Did you know that?:

On 11 November, 1941 the Australian War Memorial was opened in Canberra. At the time the memorial to honour the sacrifices of the First World War was ready to open, Australia had been involved in the Second World War for over two years.

For more information about any of the items mentioned, please contact Simon at Veterans SA on 8226 8541.