

# The Great Debate: Conscription and National Service in Australia 1912-1972

## CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

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This one day conference examines the history, politics, controversy and experience around the periods in Australian history when compulsory military service was introduced. The conference will look at particular at Universal Military Training, introduced in 1912, conscripted cadets to 1929, the great Conscription debates in Australia and at the Front during 1916 and 1917, the introduction of National Service between 1951 and 1959, and the most controversial period of conscription, during the Vietnam War between 1965-1972.

This impactful conference will have plenty of insights and intriguing commentary from a highly informed and relevant range of historians and social observers both for and against conscription as a tool of Australian governments at war.

## CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

### Saturday 30 May 2015

8.30 – 9.00am

#### **Conference Registrations**

Tea and coffee on arrival

9.00 - 9.15am

#### **Welcome - Colonel Marcus Fielding (Rtd)**

Conference Chair and MHHV Inc. President

#### **Opening Remarks - Major-General Jim Barry,**

**AM, MBE, RFD, ED (Rtd),** Patron MHHV Inc.

Introduction of Keynote Speaker

### **SESSION ONE |**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

9.15 - 10.00am

#### **Keynote Speaker**

#### **Reflections on Conscription in Australia**

**Hon. Tim Fischer, AC GCPO**

Former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and  
former National Serviceman

10.05 – 10.45am

#### **Paper: Australia's Boy Soldiers: Conscripted Cadets, 1911–1929**

**Dr Craig Stockings**

Associate Professor, School of Humanities and  
Social Sciences, UNSW Canberra at the Australian  
Defence Force Academy

10.45 – 11.15am

Morning tea

## SESSION TWO |

## THE GREAT WAR

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**Session Chair:**

**Dr Jim Wood, Colonel RFD Rtd,**  
Vice-Patron MHHV

11.15 - 11.55am

**Paper: Billy Hughes and the politics of  
conscription**

**Chris Berg**

Senior Fellow, Institute of Public Affairs

12.00 - 12.40pm

**Paper: Voices from the front: Albert Jacka  
VC and the conscription debate**

**Dr Michael Lawriwsky**

Author of *Hard Jacka and Return of the Gallipoli  
Legend*

12.40 - 1.30 pm

Lunch

## SESSION THREE |

## THE COLD WAR AND VIETNAM

**Session Chair:**

**Major Earle Jennings AM RFD ED**

President, National Servicemen's Association of  
Australia

1.30 – 2.10pm

**Paper: From the Cold War to Vietnam:  
National Service to Conscription**

**Mark Dapin**

Author *The Nasho's War: Australia's National  
Servicemen and Vietnam* and PhD Candidate  
UNSW@ADFA

2.15 – 2.55pm

**Paper: From Scheyville to Vietnam: my  
conscript experience**

**Dave Sabben, MG**

Author *Through Enemy Eyes*

2.55 - 3.25 pm

Afternoon Tea

## **SESSION FOUR |**

## **THE GREAT DEBATE**

### **Session Chair:**

#### **Dr Noel Turnbull**

Adjunct Professor in the School of Media and Communications, RMIT University and former National Serviceman

3.30 – 4.10 pm

#### **Paper: The Long Ripples of Vietnam Conscription**

##### **Rafe Champion**

Independent scholar in philosophy and social theory

4.15 – 5.00 pm

#### **Panel: Conscription: The Great Debate**

**All Speakers**, moderated by **Dr Noel Turnbull**

**5.00 – 5.10 pm**

#### **Close of Day**

##### **Colonel Marcus Fielding**

President, MHHV Inc.