

Gordon Traill CV

**32 Wingarra Drive Grovedale
VIC 3216**

DOB: 25/2/1956

Married to Shona (41 yrs) with four adult children.

Gordon is a retired soldier who served in the Australian Defence Force for 28 years. Throughout his career he held various Land Command appointments and instructional postings.

Joined the Army in late 1975 as a qualified chef and was posted to 5/7RAR

In May 1998 Gordon graduated from The University of Melbourne with a Teaching Degree whilst posted to an Instructors position within the Army.

In 2004 he saw operational service in Iraq and was later medically discharged from the Army in March 2006 due to his service in Baghdad.

During Gordon's time in Iraq he enjoyed keeping a photographic record of his deployment to show his family and friends. He also kept a diary of his time in Baghdad.

After Iraq Gordon found it very difficult for a number of years to become enthused about life due to his PTSD with Major Depression and skeletal injuries sustained in Iraq.

Ten years ago his wife Shona, encouraged him to return to photography to find something that he could become passionate about. He once again found his passion for photography which has helped him to live and deal with PTSD on a daily basis.

Using Art as a healing tool allowed him to join the Bellarine Camera Club (BCC). Since taking up photography, this has enabled Gordon to travel to the Solomon Islands (twice), New York and recently returned from Myanmar (Burma) working as a volunteer for an Australian NGO, Living Water Development. He documented the work they are doing in Myanmar supplying clean drinking water using their BIO Sand Filters through his images.

Gordon has recently taken up the challenge of being a visual artist (painting, drawing etc) during Covid 19. He try's to paint or research his next art project on a daily basis.

Experience

In addition to Gordon's own experience of the psychosocial impacts of his own conditions suffered through his service, he is a DVA qualified Welfare Officer.

Currently Vice President of TPI VIC, one of his roles is to apply for Grants for TPI VIC, he has been successful in obtaining funds for TPI VIC veterans and their families.

Lead photographer for the book by Michael Madden 'The Victoria Cross Australia Remembers'. This was a TPI VIC project in raising funds for the Association. TPI VIC wanted a veteran to be involved with the production of the book.

Represented Australia in the 1994 Australian National Culinary Team against the top eight food Nations in Singapore.

Competed and won medals at the Culinary Olympics in Germany.

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Former National Vice President with the Australian Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Veterans Association (APPVA) for four years.

Volunteer Veteran Peer Support Worker (6 years) with 'Uniting' a branch of the Uniting Church in Melbourne

He has facilitated photographic classes for Veterans and their families at the Geelong RSL.

Curated Art Shows for Veterans and their families at various sites around Melbourne and Geelong.

Currently a member of the Victorian DVA ESO round table representing TPIVIC.

Throughout Gordon's long and distinguished Army career he has demonstrated his leadership of men and women reaching the rank of Warrant Officer.

Gordon is also an Arts mentor for the Australian National Veterans Arts Museum encouraging veterans to heal through becoming involved with various Art forms. He once was a soldier, now he is a Veteran Artist.

Gordon is passionate about veteran issues, education of children of veterans especially with the Younger Veteran cohort, educating and talking with Younger Veterans (Male & Female) to get their perspective on family life and their needs after they have had multiple deployments. These are some of the reasons he applied for a Committee position at TPI VIC.

Creative and Teaching CV

Whilst in the Army, Gordon went to The University of Melbourne and completed a Teaching Degree.

1st place in the DVA Story Writing and Art Competition (SWAC) for Photographic Portrait.

1st place at the Veteran Corps Photographic exhibition at the Australian War Memorial for

Portrait, Open, Subject of Choice.

Short story “The Baghdad Golfer” published in “Soldier Tales” by Big Sky Publishing.

1st place at St Leonards (VIC) annual Art and Photography exhibition and Judges Merit.

2015 Long listed, Fremantle International Portrait Prize.

2015 Entrant in the Moran photographic award.

2015 viewers choice at DVA SWAC.

2015 entrant at the Centre for Contemporary Photography award.

2017 Lead Photographer for the Not for Profit book, **The Victoria Cross Australia Remembers**, which is about the 100 Australian VC recipients. All profits going to veteran welfare.

2018 Exhibiting Artist at the first veteran art exhibition at Australian Parliament House

2018 1st place in the DVA Story Writing and Art Competition for the story behind the VC book

2018 Short Listed Finalist for the Napier Waller Art Prize at the Australian War Memorial.

2018 Co-author/Photographer for **'UNCONQUERED our wounded warriors'** by Big Sky Publishing. The book features stories from the Australian and New Zealand teams that competed at The Invictus Games Sydney. Capturing images, stories of Soldiers, Sailors and Airforce veterans from 18 countries.

2019 Finalist for the Napier Waller Art Prize at the Australian War Memorial. Part of the 2019 exhibition, image acquired by AWM Art Department.

2019/2020 Speaker at various clubs around Geelong and Melbourne engaging with communities about Military life, the Arts and being an author.

2020 Started painting/drawing for the first time due to the Covid lockdown. He paints nearly every day now.

2020 Mentors and teaches a 22 year old Autistic Artist on a weekly basis.

A couple of other details about me:

I was deployed to Iraq in 2004 as part of Security Detachment 4 in Baghdad. I was out of the Army when September 11 happened. I was reenlisted as a WO2 within six weeks of that happening. I knew what going to Iraq meant as I was 48 at that time and it was like going to war with my sons who were the same ages of the Diggers with SECDET4. We all knew that Baghdad at that time was a 'Bad arse town'.

Being in a war zone was pretty crazy, but as you got used to things on the ground everything felt normal. It wasn't till you returned that things were definitely 'Not' normal in Iraq. My OC and my Cpl were salt of the earth guys and the Diggers making boardroom decisions on the streets of Baghdad were Australia's best.

My family was definitely impacted with my Iraq tour. My daughters at the time were in Primary school (Darwin) and our sons were at Uni, one in Melbourne and one in NZ. My immediate family saw the toll that Iraq took on me. Being out 15 years we are all still together and close which had a lot to do with my wife. Shona took the lead in raising the family as she did so many times during my career. Things could have gone pear shape after my discharge with PTSD.

I never thought I would be a professional photographer, author and artist. Be involved in a book about the Australian Victoria Cross recipients and co author and photographer of a book on the Invictus Games which were held in Sydney. Still married to my wife of 41 years and two sons, two daughters, Grandson and Granddaughter on the way. My wife suggested to me about 11 years ago that I do something that I could be passionate about just like I was with the Army, she suggested photography. I was also part of ANVAM artists that held the first exhibition of Veteran artists at Parliament House. I was short listed in 2018 for the Napier Waller Art Prize at the Australian War Memorial. In 2019 I was a finalist in the Napier Waller Art Prize. Be an Arts mentor for ANVAM. First Defence person to represent Australia in The Australian National Culinary Team in Singapore against the top eight countries in the world of Culinary Arts.

Everytime I think about the Baghdad Golfer. Steve was my Cpl in Iraq and was a mad golfer. I remember him getting mail and this

long cylinder package. Inside was a driver and heaps and heaps of golf balls. He set up a driving range in one of the spare floors of the building we occupied in the eight floor shell of a building. He made it with some scrap timber and shade cloth. One day we went to the roof and we always had to wear full gear up there ie: body armour, helmet etc. He started cracking balls off the flat roof which had a wall about one and a half meters high. He miss skewers a drive, the ball hits the wall and comes crashing straight back at him. It hits the only place he wasn't protected. Yep, straight in the "Goolies" (Nuts) and went down in a heap. Laughed so hard!!!!

If I had my time again I wouldn't change anything, I always knew I was going to be a soldier.