

## NATIONAL WAR DOG MEMORIAL

The memorial at The Bluff, Alexandra Headland, on Queensland's Sunshine Coast is the first War Dog memorial in Australia and is classified as the National War Dog Memorial.

This was an initiative of the Vietnam Veterans Association of the Sunshine Coast. Under the direction of Vietnam veteran Ian Atkinson, VVAA Sunshine Coast branch was granted council approval to erect a monument to the 11 tracker dogs that served with the Australian Army during the Vietnam War.

The memorial is located in a small park overlooking the Pacific Ocean and was dedicated on 7 April 2001.

The memorial is constructed of a sandstone block approximately 1.4 metres high featuring a carved profile of a Labrador dog. The carving was created by Vietnam veteran and stonemason Dick Meisenhelter. At the base of the monument is a drinking trough where local dog owners can water their animals while walking their dogs.

The inscription reads:

WAR DOG MEMORIAL  
DEDICATED TO THE AUSTRALIAN TRACKER DOGS  
THAT SERVED IN SOUTH VIETNAM  
1967-1971.

THEY DID NOT RETURN FROM THE WAR  
CAESAR, CASSIUS\*, JANUS, JULIAN, JUNO, JUSTIN,  
MARCIAN, MARCUS, MILO, TIBER, TRAJAN

\*Died on active service

Down jungle tracks, through shot and shell  
Ears pricked high, keen sense of smell  
Our tracker dogs with care and poise  
Alert to ambush, foreign noise  
Never whimper, whine nor bark  
Their service honoured with this plaque  
No medals pinned to hairy chest  
They stayed behind, they were the best.  
ALL GAVE SOMETHING, SOME GAVE ALL  
THOSE WHO KNEW YOU, WILL NEVER FORGET YOU

Plaques have since been added to the memorial in recognition of active service in Malaya, Borneo, Singapore, Somalia, Bougainville, East Timor and Solomon Islands.

**Australian Army Trackers & War Dogs Association**

