

Pair hit campaign trail for VC recognition

'We're not giving up, we'll fight on'



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THE ongoing campaign to have one Latrobe war hero's bravery recognised with a Victoria Cross is set to become an election issue.

Ordinary Seaman Sheean's nephew Garry Ivory and Liberal member for the Senate Guy Barnett are both campaigning to have him belatedly awarded the Victoria Cross.

"The Teddy Sheean for a Victoria Cross campaign will now become an election issue, with petitions being collected up until September 14 this year," they said.

"We are asking the public to sign the petition right up to election day. We will not give up, we will fight on.

"We want the next government to reconsider our claims when in office after September 2013."

Ordinary Seaman Teddy Sheean is recognised for his heroic actions in giving his own life for his country in the Arafura Sea in 1942.

Born at Lower Barrington, Ordinary Seaman Sheean moved to Latrobe before enlisting in the Royal Australian Naval Reserve at 17 years of age.

When his ship, HMAS Armidale, was attacked on December 1, 1942 and Ordinary Seaman Sheean was ordered to abandon ship, he returned to his anti-aircraft gun and fired at enemy aircraft in total disregard for his own safety and life.

Strapped to his Oerlikon gun, he went down with the ship.

He was not yet 19 years old.

He was one of 13 servicemen nominated earlier this year for a posthumous Victoria Cross to be rejected by the tribunal.

Mr Ivory was quoted afterwards saying "the decision the tribunal made to me is the most disappointing and unjust thing that I have ever heard".

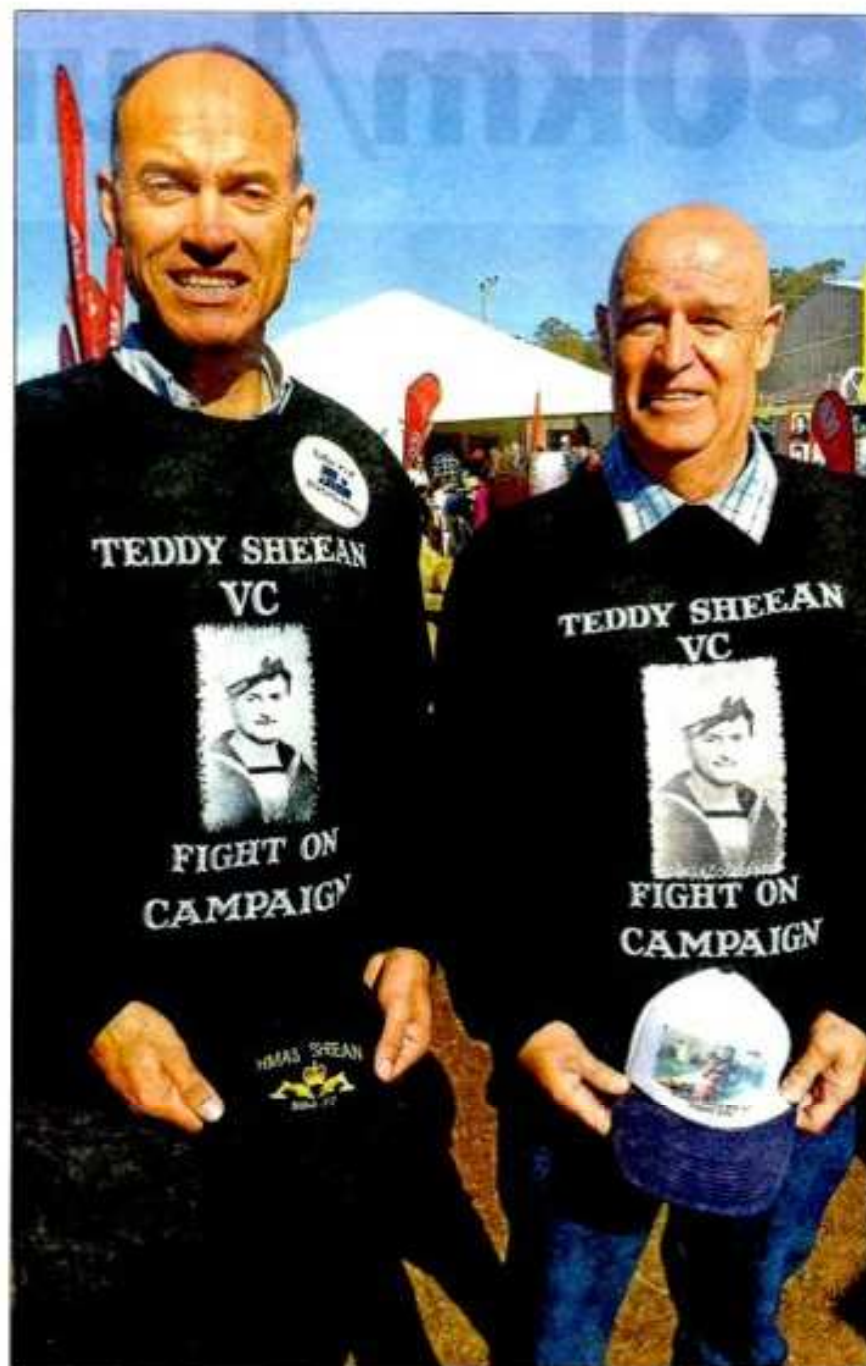
"We at the Teddy Sheean VC Award Fight team believe this is a grave injustice. Bravery such as that shown by Sheean should be appropriately honoured," he said.

Mr Ivory said he had been fighting for the Victoria Cross to be awarded to Ordinary Seaman Sheean for 22 years.

"We have collected over 3000 signatures already but we want more to send a message to the new government after September, whichever party is in office," Mr Barnett said.

"Our petition asks the tribunal findings be set aside and Sheean's bravery be reconsidered for a VC," they said.

■ People wishing to sign the petition can find it at www.change.org/petitions, via the Teddy Sheean VC Award Fight Facebook page or by contacting Mr Ivory directly at Teddy Sheean VC Award Fight, 3/34 Blamey Road, Punchbowl, Tasmania, 7249.



CAMPAIGN: Liberal Party member of the Senate Guy Barnett (left) and Ordinary Seaman Teddy Sheean's nephew, Garry Ivory, have taken up the Teddy Sheean for a Victoria Cross campaign as an election issue.