

131 Locators Association Inc



President's Report for FY 2015 – 2016

I am pleased to present the President's Report for the financial year 2015-2016. This period represents our fifth full-year of operation and shows a continuing growth in all aspects of the Association's activities.

The Association remains financial, viable and, sustainable for the foreseeable future as the financial report illustrates. The ageing of our members remains our limiting factor. Many of the early Nashos have celebrated or will celebrate their 70th birthdays and others will do so within a year or two of this meeting. Contact with those who served in the Detachment and those who served at Holsworthy remains incomplete, although there has been some success with new contacts in recent years.

The reporting period saw a highlight anniversary for the Pioneers, the first group to be sent to SVN 50 years ago. These Gunners paved the way for others of us who followed as part of the 131 Detachment operational status.

The Association website, www.131locators.org.au continues to give us both a web presence and a defined identity. Bob Billiards has continued as our Webmaster, providing an essential role in doing so. Thankyou Bob.

The site statistics which are regularly reported in *Eyes and Ears* demonstrate the ongoing interest in our activities. Some of the contact source countries are unusual, and the days of access are interesting.

Eyes and Ears, under the editorial overview of Paul Dickson, appears monthly, and still delivers editions of 16-18 pages. I believe that the size and frequency together are major measures of our Association's success. Members' contributions illustrate that we are recording more of relevance from our military past for both history and information. The June 2016 edition was the 94th in this new series, so the big century of editions will occur around AGM time. And most fortunately, previously "missing" copies of the two previously AWOL volumes from Nui Dat in 1967-68 did surface during the year. Hence we now have a full complement of *Eyes and Ears*.

A range of other activities, meetings, reunions and events were part of the year's program.

Highlights for 2015-2016 were:

- A further twelve editions of *Eyes and Ears*; extremely well done Dicko and your enthusiasm is infectious. A sincere thanks to all of our contributors for stories, photos and some history, without which we would have a very thin monthly newsletter
- a major turnout of 131 Veterans at the 50th Anniversary celebrations at Enoggera in combination with our descendants 20th Surveillance and Target Acquisition Regiment around Anzac Day 2016
- we dedicated a 131 Locators Association plaque celebrating the Detachment role in SVN along with a plaque listing all those who served in the Detachment in the Enoggera barracks area; the Surveillance and Target Acquisition Association unveiled a restored radar
- a Committee meeting was held at North Fort where one of the surviving radars was inspected and various manuals discovered in the site library
- production and publication of seven locator profiles; we need more to be submitted to assist our recording of 131 history
- at the end of June 2015 there were 146 members of the Association, which represents a slow, but nevertheless meaningful growth
- a 131 paver was installed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Path in Geelong, Victoria during May 2016
- we launched a range of 131 Locators association polos and t-shirts during 2016
- regular Committee meetings to manage the Association and the involvement of Regional Representatives to help spread the load
- contributions from former Detachment OCs setting out their recollections of their time in SVN are being published in *Eyes and Ears*
- national Anzac Day march attendances and social follow up in each State
- attendance at national Vietnam Veterans' Day events on August 18th, and
- an ongoing growth in material, photos and stories on the website.

A special mention for the Committee members for making things happen for the Association. Bert Blink undertook the role of Vice-President and is generous of his time in attending our Committee meetings, driving from Canberra each month.

Grahame Dignam, Treasurer/Secretary, has been the 'araldite' for the Association's financial arrangements, records and operation of the membership database. Ernie Newbold, Nick Proskurin other Committee Members – Vic Danko (Public Officer), Ian Amos, George Lane and Ged Carroll are all acknowledged for their ongoing involvement and support.

Our regional representatives provided local overview and contributed to our planning program. I thank Bert Blink (ACT and doubling up as a Committee member), Al Adams (VIC), Geoff Blackwell (SA), Barry Guzder (WA), Stuart Sporn (NT), Terry Erbs (QLD) and forward scouts in rural Victoria, Ron Mason and Rieny Nieuwenhof, for their collective contribution. A note of appreciation to our Honorary Auditor, Jim Fitzgerald, for again keeping us on the financial straight and narrow.

Sadly the names of more of our number have now been etched onto the Association Honour Roll. Lest we forget them.

Allen Morley
October 2016