

THE EYES and EARS

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FSB Coral Balmoral - now 49 Years later – an update...



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01766.002

(Donor J. Dellaca)

The five soldiers on the left of the picture are (left to right): Gunner (Gnr) Wally Franklin; Gnr "Bluey" Piesley; Bombardier Nev Wortlehook; ?; Gnr John Dellaca; Gnr Ian Kennedy. The identity of the other soldiers is unknown.

Fire Support Base Andersen, Bien Hoa Province, Vietnam, 1968-05-12. Members of Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery, Royal Australian Artillery (RAA), waiting with their full kit to be taken by air to Fire Support Base (FSB) Coral, which was just being established in Bien Hoa Province. That night and the following day, FSB Coral would come under heavy attack from a battalion of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA).

The picture and words are courtesy of the Australian War Memorial (AWM).

TFAIO (attached to 12 Fd Regt Tac HQ)

Capt. Phillip Perrin, Sgt James Lawler, L/Bdr Peter Dealy, Gnr Alan Robb, Gnr Peter McKie, Gnr Robert Wilson

Radar

2/Lt Gordon Williams, Bdr/Sgt Keith Ayliffe, L/Bdr Francis Pepper, Bdr Colin Gordon, L/Bdr Ian Finlay, Gnr Walter Franklin, L/Bdr Iain Kennedy, Gnr Ian Amos, Gnr Murray Smaile, Gnr Gordon Malcolm, Gnr Dennis Dye, Gnr Kenneth Jones, Gnr John I'Anson, Gnr Alan McDonald, Gnr Anthony Coutts, Gnr Phillip "Doc" Sheedy, Gnr Victor Claxton, Gnr Brian Mitchell

Listening Posts

31E

L/Bdr Eric Marques, L/Bdr Neville Wortlehock, Gnr Geoffrey Blackwell, Gnr Michael Bohl, Gnr Gary Leplaw

31F*

Gnr John Dellaca, Gnr Ken Piesley, Gnr Stan Briggs, Gnr John Bayford

RAEME

Cpl John Strautins, Cpl Joseph McNeil, Cpl Stephen Palmer

Submissions can also be sent to Grahame Dignam at: sectreas131locators@gmail.com

*We've already found that Bob Billiards (who has added some Insights and Recollections a little later in this edition) was with 31F at Coral.

Now this lead us onto compiling the following after being made aware that there was a list put together by the 12 Field Regiment (Vietnam) Association – see the following link -

http://12fieldregiment.com/nominal_roll_vietnam.htm

However, this and the list supplied above had some inconsistencies which we hope we've been able to sort out by the list (yes, another list!) below -

Detachment 131 – FSB Coral Balmoral – May 1968

Sub Unit	Regt No	Name	Rank
Tac HQ	53105	Perrin, P	Capt
	28523	Lawler, J	Sgt
	4718307	Blackwell, G	Gnr
	2787728	McKie, P	
Radar	2783801	Williams, G	Lt – I/C
	217534	Ayliffe, K	A/Sgt – 2 I/C
	16875	Gordon, C	Bdr
	2785676	Amos, I	L/Bdr
	2412363	Finlay, I	
	216638	Pepper, F	
	4410991	Claxton, V	Gnr
	1733291	Coutts, A	
	2412366	Dye, D	
	1411285	Franklin, W	
	2787424	I'Anson, I	
	2786933	Jones, K	
	3791023	Kennedy, I	
	2785906	Gordon, M	
	511355	McDonald, A	
4719418	Sheedy, P		
Listening Post	3411983	Dealy, P	L/Bdr
	3790008	Marques, E	
	54941	Wortlehock, N	
	3781019	Bayford, J	Gnr
	2785702	Billiards, R	
	1411182	Bohl, M	
	1731999	Briggs, S	
	3791355	Dellaca, J	

	217182	Leplaw, G	
	5715343	Robb, A	
	5411587	Smaile, M	
	3791425	Wilson, R	
RAEME	18814	McNeill, J	Cpl
	18820	Palmer, S	
	2787174	Piesley, K	
	243346	Strautins, J	
38 Det Members			

**If there are still inconsistencies/inaccuracies could you please get back to me at:
Paul Dickson - 131eyesandears@gmail.com**

The following Supplementary Notes: Summary - Battle of Coral Balmoral DHAAT Inquiry was also supplied by **Keith Ayliffe**. The complete Submission was submitted to the DHAAT Inquiry on Friday, 16th June, 2017

Supplementary Notes: Summary - Battle of Coral Balmoral DHAAT Inquiry

Introduction: This set of supplementary notes is in support of the '*Submission for the Award of Unit Citation for Gallantry to all units and sub-units involved in the Area of Operations "Surfers" and "Surfers II" South Vietnam, The Battle of Coral Balmoral*'

Submission: The submission provides a narrative and an analysis of the Battle of Coral Balmoral. For conciseness, much of the information has been presented in summary form. It uncovers supportive information that was not available at the time of the Battle. Recommendations are made based on the 'merit', that is the quality, extent and outcomes achieved, of all who participated in the Battle.

Review and Analysis: This section provides a discussion of the material contained in the submission. It explains and analyses and links it to the Battle of Coral Balmoral. 'New material' in the submission is identified and discussed. Additional new material is presented and examined. Recommendations are made based on this material.

The sub-headings are:

Maladministration and Due Process/ Recognition and Injustice/ Integrity of the Awards System/New Information.

Comments and Examples. These are presented in the following sections:

War Diaries Vietnam: Radio Logs, Commanders Diaries, After Action Reports etc.

Eye Witness Accounts:/ Recall of Events:/ On The Offensive:/ The Official History Volume

FSB CORAL, Australian Infantry: The paper by Tony Jensen in Australian Infantry No2

Cannonball: The Cannonball article 'First Battle of Coral' by Ian Ahern

Oral History: Coral Balmoral Oral History Project Leonie Jones

Substance A summary of facts and substance on the Battle of Coral Balmoral.

VIP Visitors to FSPB Coral and Balmoral: Visits by Australian and American Generals during the period 13 May to 31 May

Paris Peace Talks:

Intelligence: History of the 7 DIV NVA

FLT LT Roger Wilson: ANNEX 25

General Sir Philip Bennett's Coral Address May 2006:

Sub Units and Detachments:

Royal Australian Engineers:

News Reports: Australian Newspaper reports of the Battle of Coral Balmoral.

9 Squadron RAAF: The operations of 9SQ RAAF in AO Surfers.

Comparative Analysis - The Battle of Long Tan sets the benchmark for any consideration of retrospective grants of the UCG in respect of land battles fought before 1991. It sets a high standard for comparisons even if all battles are to be judged on their individual merits.

Unique Instances of Battle Events

Described below are examples of a number of events that occurred at the Battle of Coral Balmoral. It is events such as these that differentiates the battle making it stand out over and above other battles in Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

Socio Political backdrop

Australian socio-politics circa May 1968

Veterans Mental Health

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

The award of the UCG for this battle would be a tremendous boost to the mental health of every Battle of Coral Balmoral veteran.

Battle Of Coral Balmoral Main Points

A summary of the battle in 9 points.

SCOPE of the Battle of Coral Balmoral

A list of 12 points describing the range, extent and results of operations of 1ATF forces during the Battle of Coral Balmoral.

Quotations Two significant quotations from The Official History of the Vietnam War volume 'On the Offensive' McNeil and Ekins, p 349 and P390

Conclusions

The above notes provide a comprehensive review and analysis of the original submission to Defence Honours and Awards. These notes also provide in greater detail many explanations and **reasons why** the Unit Citation for Gallantry should be awarded to **ALL** who served with the 1ATF Force in AO Surfers and AO Surfers II in the Battle of Coral Balmoral May 12 to 6 June 1968.

The Australian effort had changed both the tactical and strategic situation in the area. This then satisfies the sufficient and most essential criteria for the awarding of the Unit Citation for Gallantry for ALL who served in the Battle of Coral Balmoral.

Watch this space for more.

. Insights and Recollections –

this is the first in the series pertaining to the Battle of Coral Balmoral.

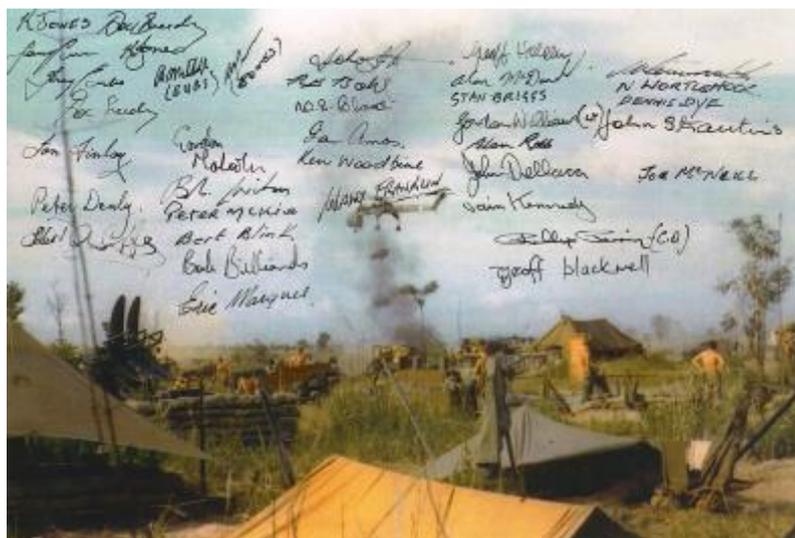
After some 49 years, we are hoping to gather **Recollections** and perhaps **Insights** from members of the Detachment who were involved, in some way or another in this monumental event. We are hoping that these memories will help to broaden our understanding and give us greater insights into the Detachment's involvement in South Vietnam.

This is the first in this series, which we start with recounts by **Bob Billiards**.

These Insights/Recollections are not based on official documentations, but memories which add another dimension other than the factual Reports recorded in the Australian War Memorial (AWM).

Insights and Recollections by Bob Billiards - Coral Balmoral, May 1968

With the lead-in story in this edition of *Eyes & Ears*, above, relating to the submission of "Supplementary Notes: Summary – Battle of Coral Balmoral DHAAT", Ed asked Bob Billiards for his Insights and Recollections to his activities around the time of the event.



The photo at left is at Coral and the ANKPQ1. The signatures of the blokes who were at the Coral reunion. Bert was at the reunion so we made sure he signed it. I think it may have been Keith Ayliffe's photo since it is a radar.

"I can't determine any date that I got there. I think I was a reo at Coogee for "Bluey" Piesley who had an R&R trip booked. We flew from Nui Dat by Chinook to FSB Coral and then had to hitch a chopper ride to Coogee. Interesting and scary flight as I had my full kit and the huey was transporting water to Coogee. The load master said for me to get on, but the pilot held me back until he checked that he could rise off ground. He called me across and there was no room inside the cabin!!! I held onto the bar in the doorway and held on for life. He took off with me just about in the cabin and my pack and rifle poking out. We flew at treetop level for the couple of kilometres to Coogee. One of the frightening experiences there was from a Kiwi doctor who blasted me for not having my boots on as there were hook worms in the soil and they got into your body through your feet. I never took my boots off after that. When the tanks arrived in the area, we moved to Coral and were stationed with HQ company in the rubber plantation. Balmoral was set up with the 3RAR blokes and the centurions. I think we were on the Balmoral side of Coral and a for few nights we observed the tracer being fired into the air to point the NVA to their target. One night we were all sitting on the edge of the weapons pit and we thought that there was a big fire mission as the guns were behind us, as well as the ANKPQ1 radar. It was a bit hard to determine if it was going out or coming in until we were showered with twigs, leaves and other heavier stuff from the mortars landing in the housing estate behind us. At this stage, we all got into our pit and tried to hide in the overhead cover hole. It was built to hold two people and we had 4 in it! A bit dangerous to get to our own pits. From then on, we always checked the area behind us to see if it was ours or theirs. Just glad the radar was on that side of the rubber trees otherwise they could have been on our side. Being with the grunts, we all had to stand to every evening and in the morning. We had a grumpy WO there to keep us all on our

toes. Just glad I wasn't in the Infantry. I have a great deal of respect for them in what they had to do, and also having such WO's – definitely not anyway like ours.

There were several times that the grunts were standing to during the night and we saw the green tracer heading into the sky. Also saw the red tracer heading down as "puff" circled around to our right. General Westmoreland travelled around the base and no one shot at him and we weren't even given a stars and stripe flag to wave as he passed us. Another funny memory. We started to get a hot meal choppered in every evening and while in the line, there was a SVN interpreter and he was smiling, looking at me and talking to his Aussie counterpart who passed on the conversation that he didn't think Australia had people as young as me in the army.



Our sleeping quarters in the HQ company lines at FSB Coral. Must be my one with the rifle. Pablo was in the one behind mine. Mine was a bit lower than his, but it was dry. I think Pablo had an unintended bath on quite a few nights, so he was holding back the water from my trench, what a mate!



Another "sleeping quarters" photo, at right, with Nick Armstrong contemplating how we were going to set up overhead cover for our LP. That corrugated iron was for the roof.



HQ company lines – at left. It rained at least one day and the grunts decided to wash. We were more couth and washed at least weekly. An interesting story about the rain, we decided we would catch the rain on our hootchies and filled our 20L containers with rain water. The engineers were getting water from a well that they found and treating it, but there was an outbreak of tummy bugs and we were spared the ignominy of that complaint. The bloke with the pants on was in the same intake as me at Pucker and was in "C" company whose huts were behind ours, "A" company.

At right, the captured motor scooter. Very apt transport for a tankie! He was doing a recon for the path that General Westmoreland would take on his visit to the FSB





At left - John Basford's AR15, A captured AK47 (HQ Company infantry) and my trusty SLR (FSB Coral)

At right - the burnt APC after a tankie cleaning it set off a flare which started the fire. I arrived at Coogee the day after that incident, so about 21st May 68 Stan Briggs couldn't resist having a look!



I would have to sit with Pablo to remember any other events of my time there. It all seems to blend into one. I have a photo of another operation after Coral and I have no idea where it was. I think Pablo was there as well and also when we were heading back to Nui Dat with Geoff Jebb, Geoff Holden and another couple of blokes and we were mortared and fired on while waiting for the rest of the group who were all in APC's. Photo attached of the US FSB where we were set up. It was a very short operation.



The photo at left was taken from a US observation tower and I think we might have been looking over the Mekong into Cambodia waiting for the 120mm rockets to be fired into Saigon. Didn't hear or see one during the operation.

There has been so much written about this Battle, including "Tracks of the Dragon", which cover incredible detail. Initial planning and drama with some of the direction execution encompassed in the strength of the Australian Digger. **We're hoping that this is not the only submission in this series as there were a good cross-section of 131'ers with Alpha Radar, 131 RAEME WKSPS and two LP's – all having replacements during the period.**

. "Unknowns" - Here's the latest in the series...

Now here's one out of **Pete Fletcher's** archived album simply labelled "**Fletch on Op 67**" – fabulous!



But what the hell is it all about – where and who are amongst the blokes?

Ed's going  to have a crack at some names.

At left (on Pete's right), looking at Fletch is **John Blake**. Then standing far right is **Bob Bruce**. Sitting at right and also looking at Fletch is **Mick Habben**.

As for the rest, I really don't have a clue.

Can anyone chuck a lifeline?

. “Unknowns” - Answers from May’s Eyes & Ears...

Chris Chapple got in quick smart with response for the photo in last month’s *Eyes & Ears* –



“The missing name in the flower power pic is **Les Connell** (Dec’d). It was my idea to take the shot at Din Coh, there were 5 of us and we took it in turns to snap as doing a selfie was a bit complicated in those days. **Dave Reilly** took this photo as he is not in it, he is in my shot!!
Chris Chapple”

“Flower power at the monastery” - From left, **John Lucas, Richard Chaplin, Chris Chapple** and ?? - now **Les Connell**

. Oddities – they continue...

Ed – Did we ALL take a photo similar to these two?

Whilst going for a wander through the bloke’s archived photos I came across the one, at right, in **Bruce Irvine’s** collection and thought, hey, I’ve got one extremely similar! In fact, so much so it’s got to be the same tent (not sure when Bruce did Canungra – he commenced SVN on the same date as me, so I guess on reflection it’s a different tent) or one very close because of the dirt cliff in front!

It looks as though Bruce is accompanied by - top row – **Bob King, Murray Poustie (?), Barry Guzder and Nick Proskurin.** Then in front **Ron Evans and Bruce.**



I’m there, at left, with **Pete Fletcher, Al Adams** and I reckon it could **Max Troynar (?)**

Anyone else got similar ones at Canungra?

...Oddities from May’s Eyes & Ears –

Ed’s musings re: “Yes, I did do the odd very rapid trip to Melbourne (once in the very fast “~~Nissan~~” err “Datsun” – when did they become “Nissan”??). But before I went to SVN I was “car-less”. So at least I could sleep part of the way!”

...**Ernie Newbold** responded with – “P.06 again, I think that the fast Datsun that you mentioned was actually a Prince Skyline GT owned by **Gnr Gleason**, try the following

link, https://www.google.com.au/search?hl=en&site=img&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1413&bih=869&q=prince+skyline+gt&oq=prince+skyline&gs_l=img.1.1.0l10.2048.7623.0.11823.14.14.0.0.0.0.207.2806.0j4j10.14.0...0...1.1.64.img..0.14.2791.mXqRmxabiVE#imgsrc=wq7FQic9aRhYaM:&spf=1495654999966

Ahhh the photos! The memories!!

. Question Time, this time with an answer - finally!

Back in September, 2011 (*Eyes & Ears* Vol 9) we first raised the question regarding the following subject, now it continues –

The following has been copied from the following “Birthdays in the Battery” section.

26 June	LINDSAY MEAD	3790714	1945	27 03 1968	12 04 1968
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Lindsay, supposedly, only served 19 Days with the Detachment in SVN, and this is backed up by the following extract from the Nominal Roll which states –

“Official Duty (from 131st Division Locating Battery) 27 Mar 1968 12 Apr 1968”

Also, according to the Nominal Roll he was born in Benalla, Vic and was a Temporary Bombardier, obviously, a Nasho - there is no other record of Lindsay serving any other unit in SVN.

We then mulled over the following thoughts - would anyone from the 1968 SVN era remember Lindsay or even the reason for the 19 days “Official Duty” with the Det? Where did he serve? LP’s, Radar, Arty Tac, Survey or even RAEME??

...**Bert Blink** sent in the following which was taken from the Veteran Search Result -

Name: Mead, Lindsay Service No: 3790714 DoB: 26.06.1945 Rank: (Temp) Bombardier
Place of Birth: Benalla, Vic Corps: Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery National Service: Yes

Summary of Unit Name(s)	Start Date	End Date
Detachment, 131 Divisional Locating Battery	27/03/1968	12/04/1968
Vietnam Waters - 2300hrs to 2200hrs	08/04/1968	09/04/1968

23 hours “Vietnam Waters”? Now that’s curious.

...and **Ed** extracted this from another recent **Bert Blink** email –

“Hi, an aside: -

While printing some info I noticed Lindsay Maxwell Mead who served with the Detachment

(<http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/VeteranDetails.aspx?VeteranId=1250169>) in country for just 17 days (but this was in Mar/Apr 1968). No idea what the Unit “**Vietnam Waters 2300 hrs-2200 hrs**” means, he is the only Army person with this Unit reference? Bert”

...to which **Grahame Dignam** responds with – “Aahh, looks like 2 tours - First on ground then maybe as a passenger (Seconded) aboard a navy vessel accompanying cargo-radars etc??? Obviously, he was on Night shift!!!! Dig”

...**Bert** responds with – “Hi Grahame - No not two tours the “Vietnam Waters 2300 hrs-2200 hrs” was inside the 17 days. My guess was that he went on an operation, fell sick, evacuated to a Naval Vessel then to a shore hospital then home? Bert”

...now enter **Ernie Newbold** – “G’day Paul, the ABN website indicates that the business is registered in Vic, postcode 3193 and this postcode the suburbs of Beaumaris, Black Rock, Black Rock North & Cromer. This doesn’t mean that the Lindsay Maxwell Mead listed there is the same one, but it does narrow it down somewhat.

Hope that may be of some help. Regards, Ernie.”

... then **Ernie** again -

“G’day Paul, the entry for Lindsay Mead in “**Tracks of the Dragon**” shows him serving from 27 MAR 1968 to 26 APR 1968 which is different to what is shown in the Vietnam Nominal Roll.

The Vietnam Nominal Roll makes no mention of him being in “Vietnam Waters” from 8 APR 1968 to 9 APR 1968.

“Tracks of the Dragon” shows him as the only member of the battery to go to Vietnam on 27th March 1968, so we couldn’t ask anyone who might have travelled from Australia with him.

My guess is that “Vietnam Waters” was a term used by the Defence Dept. to cover mostly Naval or Merchant Marine personnel who were on board vessels off the coast of Vietnam.

A Google search for Lindsay Maxwell Mead shows that name as being in a family partnership with Valerie Millicent Mead for a business by the name of Abclene, registered in Victoria. A Google search for “Abclene” did not give a result.

Perhaps someone who was with the Detachment / Battery in March / April 1968 may read the next *Eyes and Ears* and give us some more info. Regards, Ernie.’

Now to the amazing discovery - Ed had a crack at phoning him on Wed 31.05.17 after a White Pages search...

I managed to connect with a somewhat startled/confused **Lindsay Maxwell Mead**, who lives in Beaumaris, Melbourne. It was an absolute fluke as he is the only Mead LM in Melbourne! I don’t think he could come to grips with why someone was calling him about being in SVN some 49 years earlier, especially as all the information I was quoting and enquiring about was totally false!!!

Anyway, to cut to the chase –

. he never stepped foot on Vietnam soil

. he remained on the HMAS Sydney as they were accompanying Infantry etc -

The following is a Wikipedia extract of the dates somewhat similar to the dates (well year anyway) on the Nominal Roll stating Lindsay was in SVN -

“Sydney’s seventh voyage began on 19 May from Brisbane, with 2 RAR and a company from 1st Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment —the first New Zealand infantry force sent to Vietnam.

Sydney and the destroyer escort Stuart reached Vũng Tàu on 30 May, where the troopship’s passengers were

offloaded by Chinook helicopters and replaced by 6 RAR. The ships left Vietnam on the same day, and arrived in Brisbane on 14 June."

Back to the phone conversation - Lindsay wasn't very forthcoming about a lot, but I did glean from him –

. that he didn't have anything to do with the Artillery, let alone 131

. He was a PT instructor, and yes, a Corporal hence being on board the Vung Tau Ferry.

. Yes, he was a Nasho and was born in Benalla.

And that's it - end of conversation, well, except he is well.

So, we'll clean-up our archives and maybe they can get some white-out for "Tracks of the Dragon"!

Ed also sent an email to the DVA (Nominal Roll) suggesting a correction

"Paul Dickson's enquiry

With regard to Vietnam War; MEAD, Lindsay Maxwell ,3790714

Email: 131eyesandears@gmail.com

The above veteran's details are incorrect. He did not serve with 131 Divisional Locating Battery RAA in South Vietnam. In fact, he did not serve in South Vietnam. He was a PT Corporal on board the HMAS Sydney on 30th May, 1968 when troops were off loaded."

They did respond with -

"Dear Paul Dickson,

Your feedback is appreciated and has been sent to the Nominal Rolls team.

The receipt number for your feedback is VW-2017-44078

Your comments are welcome and we thank you for bringing this to our attention.

If correction to the displayed data is required, please note that this may take some time and we ask for your patience.

In many cases, it is necessary for us to contact the appropriate Service record repository to obtain information and there can be a delay of several months before our enquiry is answered.

Your feedback is appreciated and has been sent to the Nominal Rolls team.

We will contact you again when we have further information for you.

Regards

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Nominal Roll Team"

...then they sent this –

"Dear Paul

Yes, Lindsay did not serve with Det 131 Divisional Locating Battery RAA in South Vietnam. He served as Army staff on the HMAS Sydney for the HMAS Sydney Voyage, that was allotted to Vietnam from 27 Mar 68 to 26 Apl 68, along with the Ship's crew.

His Unit was 131 Div Loc Batt serving on HMAS Sydney as a Physical Training Instructor for the voyage only.

This has been confirmed by Defence.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Taylor

Support Officer Nominal Rolls, Statistics & Data Integrity, Policy Branch

Department of Veterans' Affairs, Ph 1300 780 133, Fax 02 6289 6227

A simple phone call some 6 years ago could have wrapped all of this up there and then - maybe!!!!

. We continue in the outback...



Paul and Helen Dickson - 90 Days "camping" (read – "some of the time" – see below somewhere) in the USA and Canada...In 2007,

I'll abbreviate this to a few words as possible, otherwise we'll be here for yonks! I wrote some 33,377 words – thankfully all on a laptop.

During the next two months, our trip took us on and on criss-crossing the Rockies with a few diversions through Dakota, Wyoming Montana and so on, doing Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse Memorial, Badlands National Park etc on the way to Yellowstone NP along the way.

We soldiered on and eventually crossed the border into Alberta, Canada and the trip took us all the way to Prince Rupert in British Columbia, via some amazing/spectacular sparse landscape – snow, glaciers - where we caught a car ferry down to Vancouver Island. We kept on and got back into the USA travelling down the west coast of Washington State, Oregon and crossed into the top of California. We headed more marginally east and drove through a bit of Nevada and then Utah (drove onto Bonneville Salt Flats – couldn't resist).

As we headed back to Las Vegas we did Bryce Canyon (one of our favourites), Zion NP, Grand Canyon – the list is enormous and endless.

When concluded, we had travelled some 14,791km, taken 2,832 photos, visited 18 National Parks and several State Parks. We saw (stalked some) 32 bears (both black and grizzly), then so many other varieties the list is enormous – just so good to be up so close and in the wild. Plus, all the changes in the landscape – just amazing.

Would we do it again? In an instant. Driving in the US/Canada (some parts – depending on the weather) is just so easy and you can get all over the pace.

I hope this inspires some of you to get out amongst it and those that have, to drop us a line and let us share in your experiences.

“The Great Locator Photo Hunt” – Ed

At the time of scratching my head about this, there were 131 Locator Profiles archived on the Association's website – now that's a coincidence. However, since the “head scratching” exercise Bob Billiards has added about another 8 thankfully, plus some archived photos which were dug out.

Now to the point of this rant – there are some 45 Profiles with no semi-recent “head'n'shoulder” photos to welcome the reader, instead just an Arty badge! **This will not do!!**

So, it's now time to name and shame those “badge blanks” – Dave Auld, Steve Boutlis, Charles Brewer, Robert Buzacott, Ged Carroll, Brian Campbell, Don Chalmers, Craig Cook, Dave Dougherty, Ron Evans, Ian Finlay, Les Falkai, Jim Fitzgerald, Barry Fountain, Mick Habben, Peter Hopper, John l'Anson, Peter Jackson, Russ Jackson, Geoffrey Jebb, Mike Jenkins, Ted Jux, Iain Kennedy, John Lochore, John Lucas, Harry Lynus, Ron Mason, Ian McMillan, Max McPherson, Johan Molenkamp, Robert Morrison, Andrew Opie, Peter Pettiford, Peter Piore, Jeff Reid, John Richmond, Ray Smith, Andrew Straume, Peter Suckling, Kevin Thornton, David Troedel, Graham Williams, John Wilson, Rob Wilson and Ken Woodbine to round it off.

C'mon fellas we need photos – hey everyone's mobile takes a photo so just snap and send – you'd better put a name to it though, please?

Mail Call...

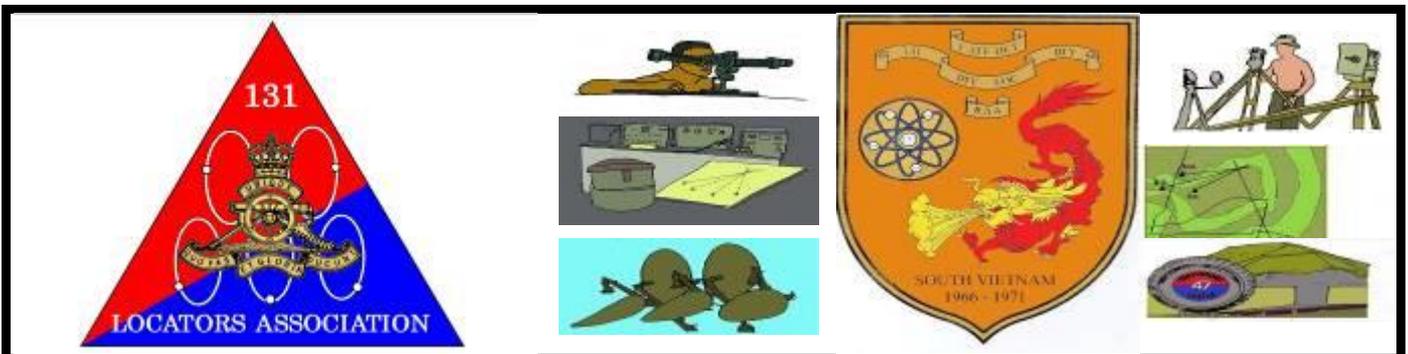
. **Allen Morley** thought the following article was worth sharing...would be a good way to include a ferry trip and some fish and chips down on Manly beach (I can feel that soft sand between the toes now!) -

“While doing some family history work I came across the following in the SAG publication *Descent*. It may be of interest for some of our members.

THE SYDNEY HARBOUR FEDERATION TRUST: Runs an Oral History program and is seeking to interview those who lived or worked at any of the following sites: Cockatoo Island and Snapper Island; The School of Artillery or North Fort at North Head; Military personnel from Woolwich Dock, Georges Heights, Chowder Bay and HMAS Platypus or Lighthouse Keepers and their family from Macquarie Lightstation. We would love to hear from you, so we can capture the memories and stories, official and unofficial, of these unique sites. To discuss being interviewed by one of our Volunteer interviewers, please contact: Catherine Enright, Tel: 02 8969 2112 or

email: catherine.enright@harbourtrust.gov.au

Cheers Allen'



Committee members:

President – Allen Morley, Vice President – Bert Blink, Treasurer/Secretary – Grahame Dignam,
 Public Officer – Victor Danko, Webmaster – Bob Billiards, Research Officer – Ernie Newbold,
 Designs and Development Officer – Nick Proskurin, Eyes & Ears Editor – Paul Dickson
 General members – Ian Amos, Ged Carroll, George Lane.
 Regional Representatives: ACT – Bert Blink, Qld – Terry Erbs, SA - Geoff Blackwell,
 Vic – Alan Adams, WA - Barry Guzder
<http://www.131locators.org.au>

A few well chosen words of wisdom from the Sec/Treas –

"If you have had a busy year, now is the time to check your 131 Locators Assn membership is current. Email sectreas131locators@gmail.com to check. Grahame"

Presidential perambulations

Earlier this month I travelled to Canberra on a wintry day. A warning came on the car screen that it was 4C with a snowflake symbol. A bit south of Goulburn the reading dropped to 2C. I had been invited to a commemorative plaque dedication ceremony at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) by my nephew. The purpose was recognition of service and sacrifice by members of the Australian Army Training Team Iraq. My nephew was a Captain on the training team on its second rotation.

The turnout was good and the weather was kind taking into account the season of the year. It was a typical army arrangement where they had the audience looking into the sun when it would have been so easy to set up the other way. Brendon Nelson, the AWM Director, welcomed everyone, then the service proceeded quite quickly with no extra-long speeches. Following the service, I returned to Sydney just in time for the evening peak hour. Coincidentally, the number of servicemen in the Training Team over five years was 480, not so different from our Detachment numbers in South Vietnam.

I checked our 131 Detachment plaque and it is still in great condition.
 Allen



. Upcoming Events Calendar –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday, 18th July, 2017 at 1100hrs
 Venue: Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club, 26 Humphries Rd., Canley Heights Ph (02) 9604 9975 and for directions - <http://www.canleyheightsrsl.com.au/contact-us/> You're all welcome

. Pertinent Points – extracted from the 131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday, 20th June, 2017 at 1105hrs...

Attendees were: Allen Morley, Bert Blink, Grahame Dignam, Ernest Newbold, George Lane, Ian Amos, Merv Nairn, Terry Westerway, Gordon Malcolm, and Joe Kaplun

Welcome: Chairman, President Allen Morley, opened the meeting at 11.05am and thanked those who were present , those who travel intrastate to attend and invited guest **Joe Kaplun, President LSTAA Sydney**

Financial Membership is currently ...128, plus Associates 2, Affiliates 7. Total 137. Lapsed 21 members

Presidents report.

Allen advised: He had received a message from Terry Erbs, President LSTAA SE Qld Branch requesting expressions of interest and individuals preference for 2018 Reunion Venue and date (12/13th October 2018. **A decision will be made based on the results so please reply ASAP (RSVP is 01/10/2017).** As some at the meeting did not receive the original we will re-send to our members to ensure all Locators are advised. A copy of the advice appears on our website.

Allen has received advice from the Commemorative Grants Team of the official Acquittal of the Saluting their Service Grant we applied for covering the 2016 ANZAC DAY and the unveiling of the Plaques and ANKPQ1 Radar in 20STA Gallipoli Barracks Enoggera Qld.

Locating and Association future.

Allen invited Joe Kaplun, President LSTAA Sydney, to address the meeting to gain a clearer picture of what the future may hold for our Association and how we best prepare ourselves to negotiate the paths available to us.

Joe had been integral to the re-positioning of the Locating Artillery Association to the LSTAA where the power and administrative control were closer to those Serving Army members at 20 STA. These are the soldiers who would be in need of the Associations' comfort and guidance at a later time in their lives. The exposure to the Association now would make for an easier transition to the Association at the end of the soldiers' army career.

Joe covered a multitude of scenarios and contingent concerns which, we as an Association will need to address. Allen will draw together the various issues and a working paper will be produced which may point the way forward for us.

Public Officer Report. Vic is travelling to Europe and will return after the August meeting.

Webmaster Update. Bob is travelling to Tasmania on family business and will publish web results on his return.

Radar Moves. Ron Mason has been informed by Museum contacts that the plan is to display the Radar inside the Museum which is the best possible outcome. The refurbishment will be undertaken by the Museum staff after they complete restoration of an existing project) see here <https://vietnamvetsmuseum.org/node/aircraft-restoration>

. Radar ops to be canvassed for suggestions how/what should be included in Radar display.
 . This Assn will look to acquire a CURTA mechanical calculator for inclusion in the general Det 131 DLB display. Also check out a revolving photo display showing the radar in various FSB positions.

Photo Album project. This project is continuing -

This major undertaking will represent all Locators who served in SVN and to achieve its aim we require the help of all vets. Unlike the photos that appear in *Eyes & Ears* which are reduced in size, we will require **BEST POSSIBLE QUALITY** photos that will make the final cut. This project will represent the entire period of 131's involvement in the SVN conflict and will be a heritage item so each photo will need a full description.

The committee is requesting the BEST pictures you have of Orderly Rm, Tpt Office. RAEME and Radar and LP sites (showing different modifications over time): Equipment used- Bearing Boards, Sound Ranging, Sensors etc. incl. details of how, when, where and why. (Radar. Starlight scopes, firearms, Transport modes {vehicular, airlift by chopper etc): Aircraft used for deployments to FSBs and in close support roles bird dogs, etc

Pics of the US Arty guns in support units 1/83rd and 2/35th: pics of liaison with ARVN personnel and positions.

We will be looking for help from Personnel from each year/Corp to help with names and position identifications to ensure accuracy.

We need YOUR INPUT!

General Business

Merchandise – a review has been conducted and we are in urgent need of a re-supply of Association Caps. We are also lacking tee shirts on the larger size consequently we will issue a SPECIALS email reminding all of the existing stock and available sizes and seek expressions of interest.

. web Performance...

If you've got more photos that you want added, just send them to: - Paul Dickson – web Photos three-zero@hotmail.com – BUT DON'T FORGET TO ADD TITLES/NAMES ETC.

. Birthdays in the Battery...July –

JULY	Name	Regt No	YOB	SVN In	SVN Out	Comments
1	STEPHEN FOWLER	217186	1948	16 09 1968	17 09 1969	
2	PETER O'DONNELL Sgt.	213115	1941	24 03 1970	05 11 1970	
3	BRUCE FOWLER	2795238	1949	16 12 1970	29 07 1971	
4	GEORGE WEARN Capt.	2251140	1937	05 08 1968	20 08 1968	133 Div Loc CMF
7	PETER JOSCELYNE	2792023	1945	03 06 1970	17 12 1970	
10	BILL FINLAY	37818	1944	20 05 1966	01 05 1967	
10	ROBERT PELHAM	55342	1949	16 11 1968	19 11 1969	
10	REX ARNOLD	424096	1949	16 12 1970	29 05 1971	

	" "			29 05 1971	16 09 1971	Ind 161 Recce Ft.
11	JOHN JAGGARD	4721862	1949	03 03 1971	02 08 1971	131
	" "			02 08 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
12	NEVILLE ATKINSON	1733449	1947	08 11 1968	05 11 1969	† 14.12.96
13	DEREK GRIFFITHS					† 02.04.05
13	ALASDAIR GOUGH	2105130	1947	27 03 1970	04 03 1971	
14	EDMOND DOUST Sgt.	53111	1939	04 05 1967	02 04 1968	† 26.12.14
14	FREDERICK KRUIWINK	6708867	1945	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
15	IAN EARLE	3166824	1951	19 08 1970	10 12 1970	131 / 4 Fd Regt.
	" "			11 12 1970	23 06 1971	33 Dental Unit
16	GEORGE ADDISON WO2	2410040	1930	16 04 1969	16 04 1970	† 27.12.12
18	KEITH AYLIFFE Sgt.	217354	1941	18 12 1967	03 12 1968	131
	" "			08 07 1971	24 07 1971	HQ AFV
18	ALAISTAIR McLEAN	312524	1947	21 02 1969	21 02 1970	
18	JOE KOCKA	1202703	1951	20 08 1970	29 07 1971	
19	MAXWELL McPHERSON	3795560	1947	27 11 1969	05 11 1970	
21	GRAHAM WILLIAMS	2789698	1947	03 06 1969	25 03 1970	
21	WILLIAM SLAPE	44464	1950	22 12 1969	17 12 1970	† 12.05.12
21	WILHELMUS Van ZETTEN	3794919	1947	17 03 1970	17 12 1970	
21	PETER SUMMERS	3796803	1948	09 11 1970	09 06 1971	
22	JOHN HOMER	5717596	1949	17 03 1971	02 08 1971	131
	" "			02 08 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
23	DAVID DODD	2790139	1947	03 06 1969	04 06 1970	
25	WILLIAM DOYLE	4719912	1947	17 12 1968	04 01 1969	4 Fd REGT
	" "			05 01 1969	28 11 1969	131 † 05.09.78
25	JOHN SMITH	610231	1949	16 11 1968	12 11 1969	
25	RALPH PEARCE	2794949	1949	17 03 1971	04 08 1971	131 † Unknown
	" "			04 08 1971	02 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
28	MALCOLM MUSGRAVE	214359	1943	03 06 1969	04 06 1970	
29	RICHARD EDWARDS	218595	1949	03 06 1970	14 05 1971	
30	KEITH HOLLOWAY	15851	1943	20 05 1966	10 10 1966	

*Above colour background coding explanation – Red – financial Locator, Yellow – located Locator, Black – passed Locator, Blue – honorary Member, White – NOT Located Locator.

Ed – 8 blokes not highlighted could be reduced. There are a heap of blokes in the 1969-70 era that should be looked for – let's make it a project – please? How about **Bruce Fowler** (lived in Sydney), went over with **Rex Arnold**, **Kevin Geoghen**, **Des Bury**, **Hilton Holloway** and **George Wearn** on 16th December '70? Now there's a start.

. **Locator Profiles** – we've now archived 139. Ed – 150 could be a target?

. **Located...**

Have a look at the Association's web site - <http://www.131locators.org.au> – you might find some lost mates or get in touch with us and see if we can for you.



131 Locators Association is always on the lookout for new financial members. With the establishment of the web site we continue to be burdened with the ongoing cost of maintenance etc and we need to be able to support this effort equally.

So, if you're a non-financial Associate receiving emails and the *Eyes & Ears* regularly you could bite the bullet and email **Grahame Dignam:sectreas131locators@gmail.com** and he could forward you the relevant forms to join - Memberships are available for 1 year or longer deposit a DONATION direct (add your name) to the associations account at

"A/c Name: 131 Locators Association Inc. Bank: Westpac, Kingsgrove NSW BSB No: 032 166 A/c No: 264133"

Hope we hear from you?

Website: <http://www.131locators.org.au>

- . Other related sites...
- . Artillery Surveyors 131 Div Loc Bty...



ARTILLERY SURVEYORS 131 DIV LOC BTY

“Elements of 131 came wandering in from the bush” (A quote whose origins are lost, yet the sentiments expressed will not be lost on many who served with 131 Div Loc Bty SVN.)

This website seeks to make contact with the Artillery Surveyors of 131 Div Loc Bty. We welcome your relevant contributions of photos, insights and observances so we might endeavour to expand 131 Artillery Surveying Vietnam record, beyond this window. Please use the [contacts page](#) for details: <http://www.artillerysurveyors131.com.au/> <http://www.artillerysurveyors131.com.au/operations/coburg.html>

- . Locating, Surveillance & Target Acquisition Association...



LOCATING, SURVEILLANCE & TARGET ACQUISITION ASSOCIATION

The Eyes and Ears of The Battlefield



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL COMPANY www.artilleryhistory.org

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia
Honour the dead, but fight like hell for the living



Website link - <http://www.vvaa.org.au/>

Website link - <http://www.dva.gov.au/Pages/home.aspx>

- . VETERAN'S AFFAIRS WEBSITE

The Dept of Veteran's Affairs has launched a new mental health initiative to assist veteran's experiencing the affects of mental illness and their families. Providing information and fact sheets about understanding mental illness, links and contact information for accessing support, and online resources for health professionals, this website focuses on helping veterans identify early warning signs of mental illness to effectively manage their mental illness and seek treatment. For more info or to access, please visit www.at-ease.dva.gov.au

- . 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery...



Dedicated to the men of the 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery who served in Vietnam from 1966-1971. We left Fort Sill in October 1966 for Vietnam. We originally were at Bear Cat, Nui Dat and Xuan Loc. We later were in many other locations in Vietnam. We also welcome our Australian and New Zealand Allies to whom we owe so much. It is also dedicated to those members of the 1/83rd who did not return. We will never forget their sacrifice. Website: <http://www.1stbn83rdartyvietnam.com>



The Royal New Zealand Artillery Association
<http://www.rnzaa.org.nz/>

Editor contact email: 131eyesandears@gmail.com Ed – Paul 'Dicko' Dickson

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