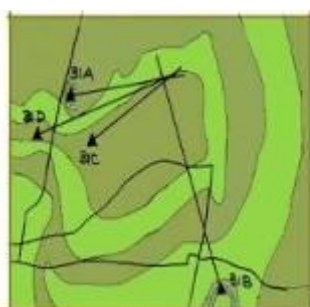
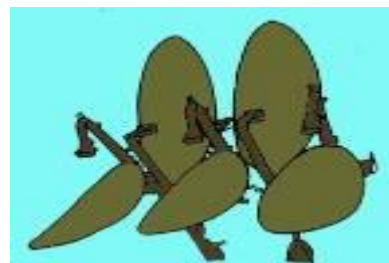
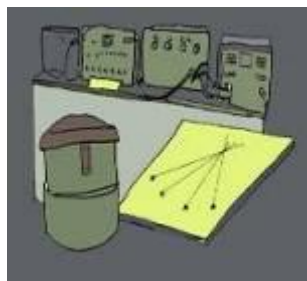




THE EYES and EARS

"FIRST PUBLISHED 22nd JULY 1967
in Nui Dat, South Vietnam"

Editor: Paul 'Dicko' Dickson

email: three-zero@hotmail.com

Vol. 4 No. 1 – 31/01/2011

Official newsletter of the **131 Locators Association Inc**
ABN 92 663 816 973

Supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs

Welcome back and to year 2011.



. **Allen Morley welcomes** us back- "Hi Paul Maybe it is a bit late, but I wanted to share Happy New Year greeting with the readers of *Eyes and Ears* for 2011. The attached photo echoes the same sentiments for 1968 from the Locators Lounge at Nui Dat. Best wishes Allen"

First up -

. Tet Offensive – timeline...

29 January 1968 Communist forces in South Vietnam launch what becomes known as the Tet Offensive, with concentrated attacks against every major city and regional centre. Although Tet costs the Communists 45-50,000 troops, it sows serious doubt in the minds of the Australian and American people and leads to major changes in government policy towards the conflict in South Vietnam.

01 February 1968 Tet comes to Baria, the capital of Phuoc Tuy province. A Company of 3 RAR and a troop of APCs fight a savage 24-hour battle to clear the town.

The following are some of the newspaper headlines on the mornings of the 30th and 31st January, 1968...



...at least the Melbourne “Age” gave it a banner heading – “Reds” is an interesting terminology!

Ed – it's interesting to reflect, and I am no historian or expert, but the 29th January, 1968 actually saw the commencement of the war we won. From what I can glean that by the end of May the North Vietnamese Army never mounted an all out attack again. Simply as I see it we had some major activities on our fledgling force in 1966, including Long Tan, and then in 1967 we consolidated our strengths and built a foundation that established ourselves on the onslaught in '68.

. **Bob King** has an interesting twist –



“Hi Paul - My memory of TET? I left Nui Dat the day before it started on R&R to Singapore. When the leave was over we went back to the hotel to wait our trip back to Viet Nam and we were advised that the country was closed to all air traffic, due to the conflict. We were taken to the British base in Singapore and were able to access more money from our pay book. We stayed 2 or 3 days then we flew back into Viet Nam landing at Tan Son Nhut Air Base. The pictures

attached show an air strike on the Hobo Woods. Arriving back at Nui Dat I was sent out to FSB Andersen on Operation Coburg. Regards, Bob.”

. **Barry Guzder** always comes in with an honest reply – “Hi Dicko! Well I think I remember Tet. I was down at 31D with the yanks when the shit hit the fan, started reporting firing, flares etc and then started to take incoming. Think I reported something to Bert Blink at Arty Tac. I rang Billiards down at the hooch to get some ammo up to the LP. He came what I thought was a long time later (abused him) then he told that the fire was so intense that he had been stranded down at the artillery director post! Anyway we both survived but he might have some more insight. Regards 5714500 B. Guzder (P.S. Keep up the good work for all us Locators)”



. **Allan Morley** – “Hi Paul I was newly returned to Australia by one day when Tet began on January 31, 1968. For me it was no more stand-tos. No more saluting and wearing greens (for a couple of weeks anyway). No more carrying an M-16 everywhere. No more long-drop 'hygiene' facilities. No more piddling little shower from a canvas bag. No more sleeping on a stretcher. No more sandbagged tent. No more ration pack Wednesdays in the mess. No more laundry runs. No more prickly heat.

I vaguely remember reading the papers about the Tet offensive when back in Melbourne, but I was pretty desensitised about news from Vietnam. Cheers Allen”

. **Warwick Brooker** sent in the following, which originally was a bit longer than what follows, however **Ed** used a bit of cutting and pasting to put a piece together for the “Coming Home etc” article below. Anyway the following are Brooker’s reminiscences of his close shave with Tet...”G’day Dicko

I can’t remember the exact dates, but I was in Taipei for five days over the post-Christmas (67) / New Year (68) period. Not much to tell apart from bars, sight-seeing (yes, I actually went on a guided tour to get some culture!), more bars, bargain hunting, restaurants, bars again and a massive hangover on the morning Pam Am returned us to South Vietnam. I was the only Oz on the flight to Taipei (the flight back was too hazy to remember) and I may have received some special treatment to the Aussie eye fillet, probably the only Australian export beef I’ve ever tasted or ever will taste. It spoilt me for life.



Photo courtesy of Bruce Irvine

I can’t say the same for the Taiwanese food and beer, but one has to make do in unfortunate situations like that. On the morning of our departure, we artillerymen were very subdued, as we’d lost our mate Jimmy the day before. Also, Tan Son Nhat Airport had come under mortar/rocket attack early that morning – I guess many of us have a photo of a decapitated Hercules on the tarmac – and we half expected to be returning to Nui Dat. Our Qantas 707 would have turned back to Oz, but fortunately (for us) didn’t have sufficient fuel to do so. So we departed Vietnam pretty much as scheduled and arrived back in Sydney at the ‘normal’ time – around midnight. Brooker”

Ed – We received a couple of late items, so Tet will be continued in the next edition of Eyes & Ears, so feel free to add more before the end of February.

Heard and seen...

. **A moment in history to makes us all very proud...**

Big Ben a reminder of strength of the human spirit

January 24, 2011 Sydney Morning Herald



Selfless ...Corporal Ben Roberts-Smith with Quentin Bryce. Photo: Chris Moore

The VC recipient risked his life to save his mates, write Ben Harvey and Damien Murphy.

CORPORAL Ben Roberts-Smith remembers with great clarity little moments from the battle of Shah Wali Kot in Afghanistan.

He remembers lying on his back as Taliban bullets cracked around him and seeing leaves falling off the trees above him. It took a second to register that it was the rounds ripping the leaves off the branches as enemy gunfire swept back and forth.

Most of all he remembers coming face to face with two Taliban fighters, a split second before he shot them dead.

"I dropped down on my knee and for whatever reason he just wasn't fast enough," Corporal Roberts-Smith said.

Yesterday he was awarded Australia's highest military honour, the Victoria Cross of Australia, for his actions at Shah Wali Kot on June 11 last year.



Photo above of Roberts-Smith as he appeared in his school yearbook. Photo: unknown

He has previously been awarded Australia's third-highest military gong, the Medal of Gallantry, for his part in another action in Afghanistan's Oruzgan province in May 2006, making him the only Australian to have received both honours.

Generations of Australians have seen faces like his. All taut skin, thin-lipped and determined jaw, Corporal Roberts-Smith's face looks the very essence of the Digger drawn by war artists and filmed by photographers down the years.

But like 97 Diggers before him, he also played the part.

During an operation in Afghanistan one warm day last northern summer he drew fire away from his fellow Diggers by making himself an easy shot before single-handedly silencing two Taliban machine-gun posts.

The towering 32-year-old father of five-month-old twin girls and a young son was presented the Victoria Cross by the Governor-General, Quentin Bryce, at his Special Air Service regiment's home base, Campbell Barracks, in Perth.

"In these times of hardship and grief for many Australians, you bring our hearts to soar and you remind us of the strength and the endurance of the human spirit," she said.

The Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, said at the ceremony that while he exhibited humility, mateship, and love of family, Corporal Roberts-Smith was different. "He will always know, as we know now, that in the heat of battle he did not fail when mateship and duty called."

He was awarded the VC for actions as a patrol second-in-command with the Special Operations Task Group.

The investiture was also watched by his wife, Emma, the Chief of Defence Force, Angus Houston, and a host of other politicians and military brass.

Corporal Roberts-Smith stands about 200cm and is said to be the largest man in the SAS.

He hails from a prominent Perth family. His father is Len Roberts-Smith, the soon-to-retire head of the Corruption and Crime Commission. His younger brother, Sam, 24, who lives in Sydney, is a baritone in the Opera Australia Chorus which is performing Carmen.

Corporal Roberts-Smith was selected for the SAS in 2003 and has been deployed to Afghanistan five times since 2006. Shah Wali Kot is a district in the north of Kandahar province, the heart of the Taliban insurgency.

On the morning of June 11 a group of SAS and Afghan National Police were sent in US Black Hawk helicopters to Shah Wali Kot to hunt a senior Taliban leader. Corporal Roberts-Smith and three SAS soldiers came under a torrent of fire from three Taliban machine-guns and found themselves unable to move.

"There was very limited cover. The boys were just face down," Corporal Roberts-Smith said.

"I was lying on my back at one point trying to fire back and I am looking back at one of the boys and I am thinking 'bloody hell, look at the fire racking up around him'."

The corporal made the decision to rush forward to the wall from where the Taliban were firing.

"I just thought I am not going to wait to get hit," he said.

There were four Taliban in the position. As he made the dash two turned and fled back into a mud hut a few metres behind. "I got up - they were moving - I was moving, it was all happening at once," he told The West Australian.

As he rounded the wall he found himself about three metres from two Taliban who were still pouring fire on his mates. They saw him but were too slow. He shot them dead in quick succession at close range.

"Every single guy in that troop at some stage was fighting for his life," Corporal Roberts-Smith said. "There were a lot of brave men doing a lot of brave things."

At the end of the battle the senior Taliban commander they had come for lay dead, as well as many other insurgent fighters.

Emma admits she is frightened when she hears the details of what her husband did, but knows there is little she can do to stop him going into combat again.

"I don't particularly want him in that situation again but I know I can't stop him," she says. "I am glad I don't know about it most of the time."

. Flood Disaster –

The following are some responses and photos sent in by the blokes after an email went out-

Brian Hackett – “Hi Dicko thanks for enquiring I live at Kirra and Kenny Mac lives at Banora Point so we well out of it again thanks cheers Wirey”

Peter Fletcher - “Happy New Year Dicko,

We are doing fine in Wamberal on the Central Coast - fortunately a long, long way from all of the dramas that the Queenslanders are having at the moment.

Hope you are well. Cheers, Fletch”

Ian McMillan - “Hi guys Thanks for your concern. We are ok but very lucky. We just need to help others cope now. Once again thanks. All the best to you all Ian & Barbara McMillan”

Allen Keeble gives us a firsthand report –



“We are just coping, but other people are much worse than the wife and I.
These photos are from an area approx. 50km north of Brisbane - Bellthorpe Range Rd. Caboolture Area Queensland.
Regards Allen Keeble”



David Troedel – “Hi Paul,

The clip below is a very good one, showing the build up that swept the cars away in Chalk Drive.

We live in Toowoomba but up on a hill and had no worries except that fresh food is hard to get as the supermarkets are sold out.

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/1463787/Clip-shows-speed-of-Toowoomba-flooding>

Regards David”

. **Andrew Opie** – “Thank you for your concern, but the Gold Coast has been remarkably free of any real problems. Andrew”

Bill Taggart (1/83rd) sent this out to the blokes in his group – “Some of you have asked about our Aussie mates and how they are faring with the serious flooding currently going on in Australia. I asked all our Aussie members and, thankfully so far, none of them seem to have been seriously affected. If anyone wants to help, it has been suggested that donations can be made to the American Red Cross to be forwarded to the Aussie Red Cross for “Flood Relief”. Our Aussie mates want you to know that they appreciate our concern.”

Ed – Ernie Newbold relied with – “Thanks for your concern and interest. The worst of the flooding in the state of Queensland has passed and the cleanup has begun. Paul Dickson has put out a call to everyone on his mailing list to find out how the guys who live in the flood affected areas are coping. They haven't had flooding like this since 1974.

Looking on the bright side, it is lucky that the flooding has occurred during our summer, it would have been much worse if the weather was cold.

Many parts of Australia have been in drought conditions for the last ten years. Old Bushmen in the country say that it always takes a big flood to end a big drought. So the drought is now officially ended and the farmers can look forward to some good years after this.”

Ed - And yes we do thank our Yank mates for their concern

. ANZAC Day Accommodation -

Graham Dignam forwarded on some mail from Ken McNamara with regards to AD Accommodation in Sydney and I forgot to mention it in the December edition of E&E's – this is a repeat of an email I sent out very late December – here's the extract from Grahame's email -

“On a more pleasant note, I received the following note from Major Mac (I could have the wrong Mac here but I won't let that spoil the story) who suggested that “out of towners” should book their accommodation early due to the Easter and Anzac holidays being in conjunction. I thought it would be worthy of a mention in the next edition of E&E.”

Ed – this is not only relevant to Sydney, but all major centres, hey and don't forget that it'll be Easter Show time in Sydney as well!

. **Kevin Browning** sent the following email a new book release - **Biography - The Last Knight** by Bob Lowry -

“Would you be so kind as to advise all your members and associates that Bob Lowry has completed a biography of General Sir Phillip Bennett (CO 1RAR at Coral SVN 1968) is now available from Big Sky Publishing and will be in the bookshops in the next two weeks.

Title: The Last Knight: a biography of General Sir Phillip Bennett AC KBE DSO, Big Sky Publishing, Sydney.

Among many other things Bob was a secto with 102 Bty Regards Kevin”

. **George Lane** sent in a couple of photos which create some interest...



These were taken in 2006 when 20th STA became a Regiment and also the Menz Club was christened.

On the left are - Jim Fitzgerald, myself, Geoff Lock standing, Merv Nairn, Ged Carroll, Dave Doyle Menz Club in the background 20 STA Regiment Qld. Then on the right are - Ged Carroll, Jim Fitzgerald, Dave Doyle, Merv Nairn and myself.

It was a great day



. **Ernie Newbold** being ever vigilant submitted the following cutting from the Sydney Morning Herald...

Long Tan's unsung heroes to get day in court

David Ellery

HARRY SMITH is again leading his soldiers from the Battle of Long Tan, this time taking their fight for battlefield honours to court.

The lieutenant-colonel, who has been campaigning for 14 years to have his men appropriately honoured, said the recent recognition of a tribunal set up to examine the Long Tan awards controversy in 2008 as a statutory body under the Defence Act had opened the door for a class action on behalf of 11 of his men in the Federal Court.

A key issue is the claim that high command manipulated the awards system to favour officers over the men who actually fought in the battle.

It is understood two highly placed senior counsel have already offered to take the case pro bono.

Colonel Smith, now 78, said his men had been denied their medals and bravery awards by the senior command's perception that Vietnam was not a "real war" and an honours system that was manipulated in favour of the higher ranks.

Of the 726 awards given out in the 10 years Australians served in Vietnam only 22 medals had gone to privates, he said.

"Many more went to major-generals, brigadiers, colonels and lieutenant colonels far from the action."

He believes the Federal Court will reverse previous decisions by a succession of Defence inquiries and appeal hearings to deny the medals and commendations he had recommended.

The colonel, who led 108 Australian soldiers against an estimated 3000 Vietcong regulars on August 18, 1966, is particularly

passionate about the case of Second Lieutenant Gordon Sharp.

Lieutenant Sharp, a national service officer shot and killed while directing artillery fire to protect his men, was put forward for a Mentioned in Dispatches.

At the same time Colonel

Senior command's perception was that Vietnam was not a 'real war'.

Smith's recommendations were refused, a postal officer at Vung Tau, a rest and recreation area near Saigon, was Mentioned in Dispatches for "good administrative procedures", he said.

A sticking point in previous

inquiries has been the absence of the recommendations filled out by Colonel Smith - then a major - the day after the battle.

He believes senior officers had torn up his citations and replaced them with others of their own.

Long Tan is now recognised as one of the Australian Army's greatest feats of arms.

Colonel Smith said his men, who fired 10,200 rounds of ammunition in the three-hour battle, killed between 1200 and 1500 Vietnamese soldiers with the aid of intensive artillery and air support.

While Colonel Smith is reluctant to publicly criticise his former commanders, there is little doubt any court action will focus attention on the two Distinguished Service Orders awarded to senior officers who did not take part in the firefight.

. **ANZMI – Australian & New Zealand Military Impostors.**

Ed - In December I received about 9 emails concerning a report the ANZMI (Australian & New Zealand Military Impostors) had done on one of our Det members – I am not going to mention the bloke's name, but just wish to highlight the website and the work this group does.

Their aim is clearly explained in the piece following which I cut and pasted from their website -

"Often called by the derogatory term "wannabe" these are men and women who may or may not have served in the armed forces, but who fraudulently misrepresent themselves as having served; often in a theatre of war by their words and actions, and by wearing of medals and other accoutrements to military service to which they have no entitlement."

The link to their site is - <http://www.anzmi.net/>

It's a very interesting site to browse and reflect on – the list is incredible – the work they do is invaluable.

. **94th Locating Regiment RA** – now here's a turn up for the books...

Ernie Newbold forwarded me this - "G'day Paul, are you aware of the existence of another Locating web site?

Use the link to have a look if you don't already know about it. Regards, Ernie.

<http://www.duffy-eu.com/94loc/index.htm>"

Ed – so I sent them an email to say g'day...though I haven't heard back as at time of publishing.

. **Jeff Evans** picked up on an email by **Brian Cleaver** in last month's E&E's and sent his to him...

"Hi Brian,

I picked up your request for info on Coral etc from our Newsletter. I was not well enough to address the question then, and now, when I re-read it, I see you were looking for information which could be used 'sometime in November'.

Are you still interested?

Regards, Jeff Evans"

...**Brian replied** with..."Hi Jeff, I am Flying out on Tuesday 4th January to continue the search for the 42 NVA Soldiers who were KIA at Balmoral on 28yh May 1968. I will be working together with Col. Dodds, Australia's Military in Hanoi, the Vietnamese Govt and the Vietnamese Peoples Army's MIA Division.

If you have any information at all regarding the 42 MIA's at Balmoral, or, the 30+ missing NVA at Coral, please forward it to me at this same email address. All information helps put the pieces together. I am very eager to see what you have.

Best regards, Brian."

...**Then Jeff** got back with some really interesting info...

"Hi Brian,

Sorry, but I have nothing on Balmoral; there were no 'gunners' based there.

For Coral, Lex McAuley tells us that there was a mass grave was right next to the LZ. In "The Battle of Coral", McAuley relates the tale (on p186 of the hardback) of Lt John Crossman, hitching a ride from Vung Tau to Coral on a Chinook, and he has a really bad case of dysentery. As soon as the chopper lands at Coral, Crossman runs a few metres from the back door to drop his trousers and relieve him. He says, "I wonder what all the soldiers thought of me, because right alongside there was a trench into which they were throwing the bodies of the NVA killed in the attack". This was the **morning of 16 May 1968**, after the second attack. (Have just spoken to Bob Lowry, told him this story of Crossman, and he said the problem with LZ's was that there were three or four, and they did 'move' as the base expanded and other units arrived.

1. Logic says this has to be a second mass grave; I can't see anyone reopening a prior mass grave to add to it, nor leaving it open for future kills to be added. (Both Bob Lowry and Ian Ahearn confirm this was the second grave near the Chinook LZ.)

2. The guy who oversaw the burials at Coral was most probably MAJ John Keldie, but he passed away some 6-7 years ago. So, John Crossman may be of assistance - I have a friend trying to track him down, and will get back to you if we can find him.

3. I know several of the members of 102 Bty who may be able to shed some light on the subject of one/two burial sites. (Just spoke to Ian Ahearn, who was the GPO, and he says he gave all his info to the previous Attaché, including Grid Reference to the first grave, but he can't pinpoint the second, other than to say it was in front of A Coy, 1 RAR, and that the gunners loaned them the bulldozer to dig the hole.)

I note your interest in a 'senior officer', despatched from Australia to 'oversee burials'. In my research for a book I am writing on the gunners, I have read some 30+ books, and I have not seen any reference to someone being dispatched to 'oversee burials'. It just does not make sense. It might make better sense to have someone on staff at 1ATF to oversee burials, **IF** we were into recording the site, the number of bodies, the time and date, the grid ref, etc. But I don't think we were that organised, otherwise you would have been able to access these records, surely?

I did not realise (but should have); that your investigation has been going on for three odd years, so my few words is not going to contribute much.

However, I wish you luck with it all. Best regards, Jeff Evans"

...**Ed couldn't** help himself and got this off to **Jeff**

"Jeff, A very interesting reply, though I am a bit confused by your opening statement to Brian as to "there were no 'gunners' there".

Can you clarify that for me please? Paul"

To which Jeff replied -

"Hi Paul, Balmoral was not a 'Fire Support' Base as it had no gun battery in place. It was a 'Patrol Base' for the battalion, with their mortars (four only), and four Centurion Tanks in support. And they had their gunner Forward Observers with them, but no guns.

When the Battalion established Balmoral, the guns remained at Coral; hence, 'there were no gunners there'. Jeff"

...**Jeff finished with this to ED...**

"This effort, of finding NVA mass graves or smaller, has been going on for some three years now. There are US Vets Associations also doing the same thing - attempting to help the Vietnamese find their Missing in Action - the estimate is 300 000 missing. Jeff"

Ed – this is the part I love about E&E's – getting interesting topics discussed.

. **Ed – regrets** I have had a few, now I can add one more...

Back in November's issue of E&E's – "Birthdays in the Battery" - I made a point that **Allen Morley** drew the short straw by being born in Victoria to which his "thin skin" took offence and he retorted with this...

"Dear Ed

I notice from **Birthdays in the Battery** (E&E November 2010) that you disparage my call-up state of origin, suggesting that this meant I copped the proverbial short straw. Elsewhere in the same publication you refer to being below the [Queensland] legal drinking age when you were transported to Singleton in 1966. In progressive Victoria the legal drinking age was eighteen at that time. And to boot, before my call up I worked at Carlton Brewery. Because 20 year olds always obeyed the Queensland drinking laws, I ask rhetorically, who exactly drew the short straw? A grovelling retraction will suffice in view of your libellous claim.

Cheers Allen Morley"

Ed - Well much to my chagrin on being enlightened I dug up out of the web the following review –

“This review paper is in response to the letter dated 01 October 1998 by Margaret Norington Director Health Advisory Unit NHMRC.” –

- and I have cut and pasted a very telling point -

“Here in Australia we lowered the drinking age from 21 to 18 in Western Australia on July 1, 1970 while the corresponding date for **Queensland was February 18, 1974**. In South Australia the drinking age was lowered from 21 to 20 years with effect from December 19 1968, and then to 18 years as from April 8, 1971. A similar two stage process occurred in Tasmania, with the 20 year drinking age becoming effective as from September, 1967, and the 18 year limit as from January 22, 1974. By contrast, New South Wales has had an 18 year drinking age since 1905, **Victoria since 1906**, and the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory since approximately 1929.”

Ed – ever thankful for NOT being born there, I should have moved to Victoria sooner rather than later!!

. Who said Christmas was dead? The following email from Grahame Dignam shows the spirit of Christmas is still alive and well...”Dicko

I sent a Xmas card to Mook*, as besides the Army, we share a history of employment with the Aust Tax Office - He much longer than I.

I felt he needed some "MAN LOVE" and it seems Steve Boutlis thought the same. Anyway I have attached the heartfelt reply from the "Master Grinch" below and it shows his attitudes are softening.

Regards Dig”

* for “Mook” read Ron Evans – SVN 1967-68

...then Mook’s reply went like this...

“Sent: Thursday, 23 December 2010 1:20 PM

To: Grahame Dignam; Steve Boutlis

Subject: Ba Humbug!!

Only two persons in the whole world were game enough to send me a XXX card. Yep - you two.

I know you only did it to annoy me but you didn't quite succeed. It is nice to be remembered. Love to you both. Mook”

Ed – mates **do** make a difference!

. Ian Amos –

“Hi Paul,

Happy new year to you - Sorry for not replying sooner, I have been on holiday in New Zealand since Christmas Eve, had a great time with all my family. Attached is a photo of one of the smaller snapper waiting to be caught in the Bay of Islands.

Regards

Ian”

Ed – Now, that is a fish!

Is that a rod or is Ian just so excited about having his photo taken and thinking about the b-b-q that night?



. Familiar look-a-likes continue...



Ernie Newbold sent this comparison in -

“G'day Paul, Attached is a photo that was taken recently at a committee lunch meeting just prior to Christmas.

Do you think that the person on the left bears any resemblance to Lance Corporal Jones of Dad's Army fame?

Perhaps it is just my imagination but I thought that there may possibly be some family connection or it could possibly be the moustache.

What do you think?

Happy New Year Regards, Ernie.”



Ed – I think there’s more to come in this segment!

. **Ed sent Allen Morley** the following email including a photo with regards to Holsworthy... **“Subject: Mr Fitness!!”**
“C'mon Allen - couldn't you get excited amongst that group even with your Hawk socks on?
OK now can you tell me who's in the group with you?? I know 7 of them - no I don't know the obscured bloke!
It's a corker of a photo. Paul”



Allen replied - “Paul - A long time ago at Holsworthy ...I had forgotten the Hawthorn socks.
But look behind me - a bare chested Ernie! Bob Retrot too in the pic. The others I just do not remember.
Thanks for the reminder. Cheers Allen”

...then he adds...”Paul - Have a look at the various runners. My recollection is that at basic training we were given white sandshoes which in army mentality of course had to be blackened. Some of those worn at the time of the photo are black but others, mine included, are white. Another mystery? Allen’

Ed had a crack at – “My guesstimations are - Left to right - don't know?, Max Troynar, Bob Retrot, Mouse Baker, don't know, Hawk's #1 supporter, Ernie N, can't see, Geoff Blackwell and Nick Proskurin.

John V is not in the photo - strangely enough I do remember the 2 other blokes but can't place them - I'll put it in Feb's E&E's and see how we go.”

then Ed insanely added – “Now from where you're all standing, where was the small parade ground where we mustered for reveille? I had a feeling the hut I was in ran in the other direction to the one in the photo.”

...which started the following outpouring...

.Kim McGrath - Paul,

“The photo is taken at the end of Hut A11 (background left) with the Guardroom in the background right. The Gun Park is visible in the distant background. There was a hut running at right-angles to A11 that would be just out of camera on the left.

Ubique, Kim”

. Keith Ayliffe – “G'day Paul

Firstly Happy and prosperous New year to you.

Firstly a photo of 131 board at Xmas Vietnam 67 I meant to send it earlier.

secondly Holsworthy, Like a couple of other long termers I became very familiar with it, I have long ago forgotten how many times I walked the place doing guard duty and found out where to keep warm during winter. The lines that many Vets would remember formerly belonged to "A" Bty. 131 occupied them from about 1966 through to 1980 when they moved to Brisbane. I have attached a couple of photos taken by Bob Wilson (I think about 1967)

In Bob Kings Photo Directly behind the Group is the Regimental Guard House, where I'm sure some would have done their guard duty.

The building to the Left is the first of 131 lines.

Sorry to say Allan plan is way off however there was a training oval about where he put it.

Now Keith has a puzzle regarding the 2 blokes in the photos following...

I'll leave it to your members to see if they can identify the two people posing in the photos below?



Best regards Keith”

. David Troedel -

"Hi Paul,

Attached is my memory of the lines when I joined 101 Battery, 1 Fd Regt in November 1958.

I was in hut 1 and the huts around it I can remember well.

I cannot remember the hut layout between Charlie Troop & the Oval would have been Delta Troop & BHQ.

The guns were somewhere down by the oval.

In 1973 I again was in Holsworthy as 132 Div Loc Bty did a camp with 131 Bty and I was in hut 3.

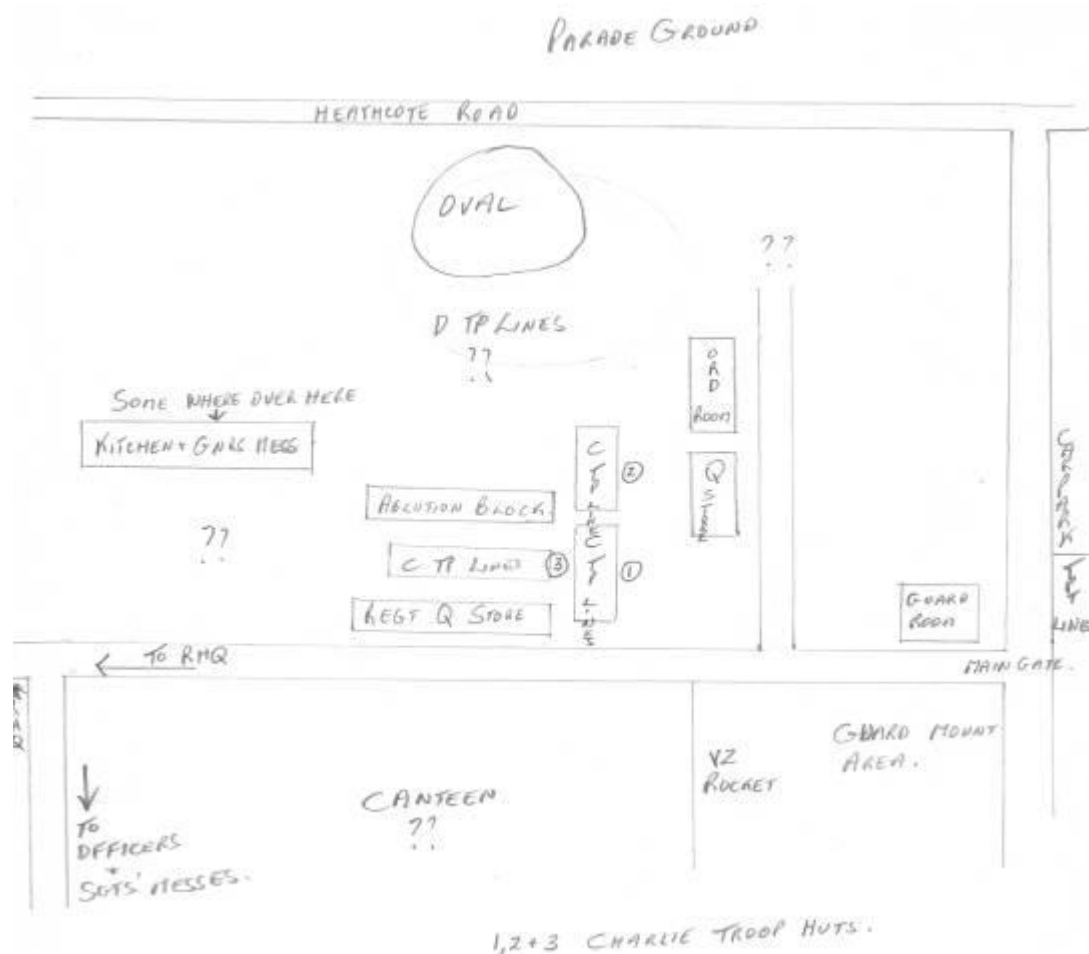
I remember a combined guard mount of 131 & 132 and most of the guard were Bdr's.

One thing I remember about that stay was a stupid Bdr from 132 Bty who wanted to post a letter before the first parade and was going across to the Post Office in greens & slippers. I told him he was stupid and threatened to charge him but he went anyway and was stopped by the guard when he tried to go out the gate. I cannot remember his name now but he got out of the CMF when we returned to Melbourne.

We used to do a weekend guard in 1958-59, mount Friday Night and dismount Monday morning and the unlucky 3 had to man the gate all day until the guard mounted again Monday night. I did a few of these so remember the guard room well. I was amazed by the Bundy clocks around the lines that the guard had to punch during their rounds in 1973.

Hope this helps a bit

Regards David"



Brian Campbell – "Looks like Gnr Laurie Gallop in the green singlet that's all I know Regards Brian Campbell"

. Bert Blink – "I can certainly name 4, Left to right (1) Max Troynar (2) Leigh Baker (3) Ernest Newbold

(4) Nick Proskurin Bert"

. Ernie Newbold – "G'day Paul,

The photo (below) appears to have been taken outside one of the first 131 Bty huts that you came to inside the front gate, note the small cannon pointing towards the Guard House at the front gate to Kokoda Barracks.

I have added an identifying letter above each of the people in the photo to aid as a reference point and listed names as I remember them.

The person identified as "E" appears to be an N.C.O. in charge of the group (note tattoos and Mickey Mouse watch)

We used to parade on the roadway outside the orderly room on the eastern side of the barracks out of sight to the left in this photo.

Should you require any modification to the photo narration please let me know?

The fire alarm and the cannon are positive landmarks to the location.

The tree to which the rope is attached is a Red Ironbark.

Unfortunately I am unable to see the detailed map as the Word document appears to be a later version to what I can read. Regards, Ernie.'



Ed – Bless Ernie he even named the tree type – you've got to love him!!

. **John Richmond** – “Hi Paul I have just had a quick look at the map.

From my memory there are a number of huts missing -

1 The Battery Admin and Q (if memory serves me right the Q stores had three buildings - BQMS Office and Tech Store, Armoury and Clothing Store and finally the bedding Store) both ran at right angles to those that are currently shown.

2. There were two huts just on the edge of the oval (1 of them was the barracks we had during our DP3 Corps Training

3 The one that was shown as Another Hut was a I think C Troop

Sorry I cannot give you a graphic picture as I remember it, my computer doesn't have the facilities

All the best John Richmond”

. **Barry Guzder** – “Dicko, I think the blokes are from the left 2 Max Troynar, 4 Mouse Baker 2 PTI's Ernie Newbold then hidden face, Geoff Blackwell and Nick Proskurin. Regards Barry Guzder”

. **Warwick's Quiz...**

Q. What calibre mortar? **A.** By comparing the size of the fins to the floorboards one should figure out it is 82mm, common Soviet issue. It's too small for the 120mm

Q. What would be a bearing to the base plate? **A.** A bearing of about 10 o'clock from the centre of the fins would suffice.

Here are some replies – and seriously “time” does weary them!!

Steve Boutlis being “Surveyor-speakish” –

“Dicko, the answers to Warwick's crater analysis are so simple, Mate.

1) It was a mortar of very good caliber as it hit its target.

2) The bearing to the base-plate was exactly 180 degrees *from that of the base-plate to the target*.

Jeeeee! Give us Surveyors something hard, Warwick!

Cheers, Boots.”

...Boots sent in some additional explanatory notes after a query from **Ed**... “Bloody Yank spell-check! It did not like “calibre” so it substituted “caliber” for it. Being a very impressionable old man, I accepted Mr. Gate's version because I could not be bothered to check with Mr. Oxford.

It should read: 1. it was a mortar of very good calibre, as it hit its target.

Calibre = merit, ability, competence, proficiency, capacity and quality.

In other words, IT WAS A BLOODY GOOD MORTAR!”

. **John Blake** came in with what could be considered a good estimation...”My guess - 82mm fired from about 3 o'clock to 3:30. Range? But out there. JB”

But whoa there's more...And now the killer... Crikey Warwick! The third question with the sting in the tail –

3) What would you consider is the range to the base plate?

Ed – No, JB (John Blake) - “But out there” – is not good enough!

. Extracts From "Cracker's" Blotter in January 1968...

This is Warwick Hamilton's last as OC Det 131 Div Loc Bty RAA, before his RTA.

Annex A To 4 Fd Regt RAA Operational Report

OPERATIONAL REPORT - 1st ATF DET, 131 DIV LOC BTY RAA 1-31 JAN 68

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

GENERAL.

1. The month has been quite busy with portions of the Det being deployed for the conclusion of Op FORREST, for Op DUNTROON - an Op in conjunction with 1 Bde 9th Inf Div (US) to destroy 274 VC Regt, - and for Op COBURG - an Op to provide security for the BIEN HOA - LONG BINH area during the TME period.

2. All have worked well even though resources have been strained with the forward deployment of a large percentage of the Det. At one stage, the concluding phase of FORREST, both radars were deployed out of the NUI DAT base area.

3. Op COBURG was mounted with less than 24 hours notice and it is a credit that the Det was able to deploy by both road and air, a forward Arty Int office in TF HQ, a radar, an LP and the Surveyor parties with relative ease. At this stage Op COBURG continues, and indications are that it should be a most interesting and profitable operation. Final details will be included in next months report.

ARTY INT SECTION.

4. There was little activity during the final phase of Op FORREST, even though the threat of mortaring was quite high when FSB ALLENBROOKE was deployed in the area 4577, near the DUC THINH outpost. For this reason, even though it was only a one Bty FSB, a radar and an LP were deployed with the Survey party providing an additional LP after completion of their task. There were no incidents at FSB ALLENBROOKE.

5. For Op DUNTROON, an LP was again deployed in FSB BERRIMAN (YS 3986). There was no enemy mortaring activity against ourselves but reports of an enemy mortar firing close to us were followed up by the radar with a lockup being obtained. Details will appear in the Radar Section Summary.

6. Straight after DUNTROON, as previously explained, Op COBURG started. A Listening Post was deployed at FSB HARRISON (YT1617) where 106 Bty and 108 Bty were deployed with RHQ 4 Fd Regt and a forward Arty Int Office was deployed with TF HQ Fwd at FSB ANDERSON (YF 2012). This put great strain on resources and experienced people had to be withdrawn from LPs to help man Arty Tac rear. The gaps in LPs were filled by surveyors and at one time even the Det HQ Staff. The manning during the initial stage had to be reshuffled to allow for the preparation for those RTA on 29 Jan and 5 Feb 68.

7. An "ad hoc" LP was arranged at FSB ANDERSON. Since the Det was not able to fully man another LP, the off duty staff of the Arty Int Office and 4 Fd Regt Tac HQ manned this LP.

8. At this stage the TF Loc Net consisted of a record number of stations to date, viz: 30 (Fwd Tac HQ), 30A (Rear Tac HQ), 31A, 31B, 31C (Fwd FSB HARRISON), 31D, 31E, 31F (Fwd FSB ANDERSON), 31G (Fwd FSB HARRISON - Svyro LP). Because of the distance involved the net was split into fwd and rear with the link between the two being by telephone radio relay.

...2/ 9. From..

-2-

9. From 20-26 Jan 68 the TFAIO visited C Bty 2 Fd Acquisition Bn 26th Artillery based at DONG HA (XT 2360) at the DMZ. Details are attached as Annex A. On arrival back at the NUI DAT the TFAIO was not initially deployed forward, but due to the situation existing on the 30-31 Jan 68, he moved to the TF HQ. This necessitated the cancellation of the anticipated date of RTA which was to be 5 Feb 68. The threat at this stage was from enemy Rocket and heavy mortar (120mm) fire from SW into the LONG BINH-BIENHOA area, and the mortar threat to ourselves because of our deployment as a blocking force across one of the VC access routes. Details of the Op will be included in next months report.

10. The choice of the final site of the new LP in 3 RAA has been temporarily halted due to Op COBURG.

11. Work on the identification project has likewise started but some of the initial photography has been done with extremely good results. An RVE to include a POLOROID camera outfit and a 35mm PENTAX complete with a large range of accessories has been submitted and recommended by 1 ATF and AFV. This will allow for better documentation and a quicker obtaining and passage of initial intelligence.

RADAR SECTION.

12. The period saw considerable deployment of radars with some pleasing results and no time lost other than routine maintenance and very minor repairs.

13. ALPHA RADAR: The set remained deployed at the KONGSE-SHON until 8 Jan 68, the end of Op FORREST. There was no real enemy mortar activity during this final stage. The radar bunker was completed other than the sandbagging of the roof which will be completed later.

14. The set has remained at NUI DAT for the other 2 operations. The manning has been temporarily reshuffled because of the factors previously mentioned.

15. On the night 31 Jan/1 Feb there was a mortaring attack on 1/83 Arty Position. Little damage was done, but the radar obtained a locrop which promptly bombarded and the mortar was silenced. The locrop was later confirmed by a patrol which found the baseplate position plus some 25 unfired bombs. Details of this plus subsequent events in PHUOC TUY will be included in next month's report.

16. BRAVO RADAR. Due to a fairly large mortar threat, the radar was deployed from 2-6 Jan 68, by road in FSB ANDERSEN (YS4577), with 106 Bty for the final phase of Op FORREST. As it happened there were no incidents.

17. On 10 Jan 68 the set was again deployed on Op DUNTROON by air, to FSB BERRYMAN (YS 3986) with 108 and 161 Btys plus HQ and B Bty 2/35th Arty. Again there were no mortaring incidents directly against 1 ATF forces, but LP reports of mortar fire to the east of the FSB resulted in a location being obtained. This was bombarded using the 155mm guns of B Bty. The next day a Cavalry patrol found a hurriedly vacated VC base camp at the grid reference of the locrops.

18. The Det had hardly arrived back from Op DUNTROON that it was deployed on Op COBURG. Because of the short notice, B Set was again deployed with the beforementioned changes in manning. The deployment went smoothly into FSB HARRISON (YT1617) where it is within range of possible heavy mortar and rocket sites, and thus

...3/ which is...

-3-

which it also covers FSB ANDERSEN. Up till 31 Jan the only locrops produced were of some previously unknown US mortar positions which were almost bombarded until a negative ground clearance was given by the US forces owning them. In each case according to the US forces, the location was extremely good.

19. The state of training of the replacement radar operators is such that on return from Op COBURG, an extensive practical locating training program will have to take place.

SURVEY SECTION.

20. This was a reasonably active period for the surveyors who were engaged in three operations during the month.

21. On 2 Jan 68 a FSB was established by 106 Bty at YS4577 for the final phase of Op FORREST. Providing therefore grid for the Bty involved no problems as the area had been used as a FSB for Op AINSIE in Sep 67. Once the survey had been completed, the svyrs manned an LP in the FSB to provide information for the radar which was also deployed.

22. On 10 Jan Op DUNTROON commenced. There were three FSBs involved during the operation, two of which required svy. FSB A at YS 4577, did not require survey, was only occupied for four hours. At FSB 'B' at YS 4583, Regt grid was provided for the two batteries occupying the area. In the third FSB, BERRYMAN at YS 3986, the three Btys involved, 108, 161 and B 2/35 plus the deployed radar were put on Regt Grid. The original plan was to provide Theatre grid, but the FSB was a relatively small clearing surrounded by the high trees which made higher survey impossible. The svyrs again deployed as an LP, as O/S 31G which is now becoming well known on the Div Loc net.

23. Op COBURG commenced on 24 Jan 68 with less than 24 hours warning. Two FSBs were involved in the Op; FSB ANDERSEN at YT 2012 and FSB HARRISON at YT 1617, both in BIEN HOA province. ANDERSEN was occupied for 24 hours by 106 and 108 Bty and these were put on Regt Grid. The initial plan had been to provide theatre grid for HARRISON by a traverse from CHUA CHAN (XT6010) into HARRISON. However, over the distance involved, about 90 Km the haze was too thick to provide line of sight. When the svy was completed 31G was again deployed and the Svy Sect Cmdr worked as a duty officer in the Regt CP. This is not a normal practice, but it was to help out HQ who were at this stage down to two officers only.

24. Advice has been received that replacement WILD theodolites and the much needed tellurometers will be arriving early Feb 68.

RESUPPLY.

25. During Op DUNTROON the storeman Bar HUTCHINSON, went to PSB BENEFIMAN to learn the workings of the Fwd resupply. On Op COBURG he went fwd with the main body and it was found that having him straighten out the resupply problems in the first few days considerably improved the smoothness of the deployment. During this period the assistant storeman, Gnr REID, ran the Q Store at NUI DAT. Bar HUTCHINSON returned to NUI DAT after the first few days, once the resupply system had settled down. Gnr REID then went forward to learn the system himself. This will allow either of them to go forward for the first few days on subsequent operations.

26. Replacements. The scheduled draft for Jan 68, except Sgt WAGHORN and Cpt HAMILTON departed on 29 Jan. The replacements

...4/ arrived...

-4-

arrived on 30 Jan with the exception of 3 who are due on the HMIS SYDNEY in early Feb. Sgt WAGHORN's replacement, Sgt BUNDECK, arrived and the handover should be completed in time to allow Sgt WAGHORN to RFL on 5 Feb 68. Due to Op COBURG the changeover of Capt HAMILTON/Capt FLEMING has had to be delayed and Capt HAMILTON has cancelled his 5th Feb departure date. The handover will take place when over the operational commitment allows his release from Fwd TF HQ.

27. Due to the present reshuffling of people a number of the replacements will not be with their correct detachment until after Op COBURG.

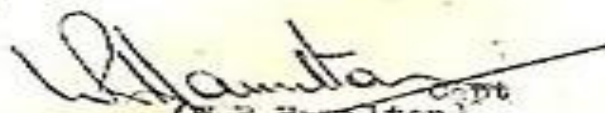
28. WELFARE.

- a) A total of 16 persons went on R&R and R&C during the period.
- b) The darkroom is now in full swing,
- c) Health remained at a high level,
- d) A farewell party was held on 28 Jan for those departing on the 29th. Due to operations however only a reasonably small proportion of the Det was able to attend.

29. Gnr REID, successfully completed a 4 Pd Regt Q Storemans course, coming 3rd overall after starting from scratch against current practicing storemen. A commendable effort. He is now assistant storeman replacing Gnr NORLEY who has RFL.

CONCLUSION.

30. A very active month, the results of which were most pleasing, but a training program is most necessary for all sections to bring them up to full efficiency. Op COBURG is as well offering an opportunity to really provide some concrete Artillery Intelligence, and I feel sure that the Det must gain greatly from this months activities.


Cpt
(W.R. Hamilton)
OC Det 131 Div Loc Dty RLA.

. Going Home / Getting Out...

Here's another version in this series -

. **Warwick Brooker continues** (see note above on Tet) - "In regard to your earlier request for post-Vietnam experiences: I returned to Oz on 20 February 1968, with discharge a full seven months in the future. They were totally wasted, of course, and I regretted Canberra's decision to refuse me (and several others) the additional three months in Vietnam that Warwick Hamilton had requested. The decision saved me from a 'Coral' experience, of course, and I can't say I regret missing out on that!

On the morning of our departure, we artillerymen were very subdued, as we'd lost our mate Jimmy the day before. Also, Tan San Nhat Airport had come under mortar/rocket attack early that morning - I guess many of us have a photo of a decapitated Hercules on the tarmac - and we half expected to be returning to Nui Dat. Our Qantas 707 would have turned

back to Oz, but fortunately (for us) didn't have sufficient fuel to do so. Inside the Terminal at Tan Son Nhut - a Bruce Irvine photo
We departed Vietnam pretty much as scheduled and arrived back in Sydney at the 'normal' time which was scheduled for about midnight.



If I remember correctly, I had a few days at home with my parents in Brisbane before finishing off my term of conscription at Holsworthy with guard duty, evenings in Liverpool, more guard duty and some survey training that included a painfully chilly exercise at Tianjara, where the rain puddles had frozen over. Several months later, having refused an offer to sign up for extra time – after all, I had agreed to do that in Vietnam... when it mattered! – I returned to my bank job in country Queensland (following a short reorientation course in Brisbane). Gunner Brooker had returned from war to resume what now appeared to be a dull banking career. That career lasted seven more years, terminating on Bougainville in 1975, where I had found another jungle home. The ten-year Bougainville War was waiting to happen.”

Ed – I apologise for the section of repetition, but it's a good yarn from **Brookey** and it all fits into each bit of the context.

. **The following** was sent in by Allen Morley and is pretty self explanatory –

Australian government - The Repatriation Commission Family study Program

“Dear Sir or Madam

As a participant in the Vietnam Veterans' Family Study (VVFS), I thought it timely to update you on what has been happening since the letter from my predecessor in April 2010.

In the April update, you were asked to ensure that the address details held for you by the Family Study Team were correct. I thank the over 1,700 participants who updated their details following this request.

For this update, there are two changes to our method of distribution. Participants who have a recorded e-mail address will be receiving my letter by e-mail and all others through Australia Post. The utilisation of e-mails will save an estimated \$20,000 in printing, handling and postage costs. Also you will have noticed that the letter is not personally addressed. This is due to a small number of instances in the past where more than one letter has been placed in the same envelope. This has allowed the identification of one study participant to another study participant, thereby resulting in a breach of privacy. I was not prepared to take this risk again so I do hope you will forgive the lack of personalization.

Since April, registration numbers have continued to increase with over 27,000 registered participants. Whilst the minimum numbers needed have been reached, we are still encouraging more registrations. The more people involved in the study the greater the validity of the results.

The research work to assist with the development of the health questionnaire (Tiers

1(a) and (c) to (e)) has been completed and the reports are being finalised. These reports will be available on the VVFS internet site over the next few months. The Main Survey (Tiers 2 to 4) questionnaires are being finalised. There will then be a Pilot of the questionnaires and our administrative processes that will involve 300 randomly selected participants.

This pilot will be undertaken by Colmar Brunton Social Research, the research organisation that will also be undertaking the main survey. If you are asked to participate in the Pilot, I would encourage you to do so as this will greatly assist in testing the questionnaires and our administrative processes to identify any changes which need to be made.

If, following the Pilot, the analysis shows that the questionnaire requires significant changes, those who participated in the pilot will be asked to also participate in the Main Survey. Alternatively, if the analysis shows that the questionnaire requires only minor changes, the questionnaires from those participating in the pilot will be used in the Main Survey and pilot participants will not be asked for any further assistance.

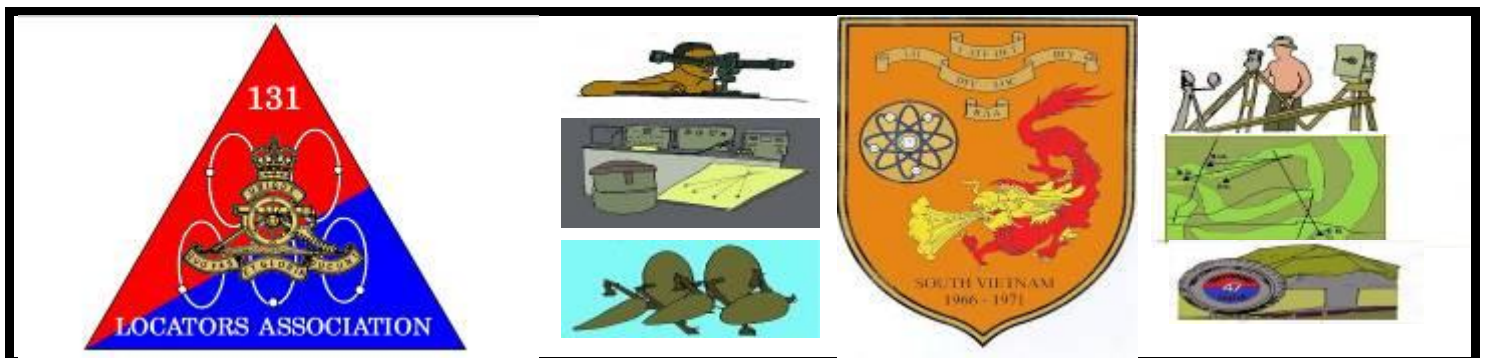
This approach will ensure that data from all participants is both comparable and valid.

2. The Pilot is expected to be completed in February 2011, with the Main Survey questionnaire following in March or April 2011.

Further information on the study can be found at www.dva.gov.au/vvfs or you can contact the Family Study Team by phoning 1800 502 302, a toll-free number.

Again thank you for your continued involvement in this very important study and I wish you and your family all the best for the festive season.

Yours sincerely Mark Kelly AO Major General VVFS Consultative Forum Chair Repatriation Commissioner 10 December 2010”



. 131 Locators Association News...

. **The Association Committee** wishes all our Members, Associates and Affiliates a Happy New Year and hope that the festive season was a great one spent with family and friends!

...and now for fabulous news...

...on 10th January the Committee was advised by Allen Morley that he had received the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) approval for the funding assistance grant for the Association's website – yahoo! So now the real fun begins putting our all into the design, content and so on. We'll keep you up to date with our progress.

However, the time has now come to seek a further increase in Financial Member numbers for the Association, not so much to help in the initial instance, but to ensure the ongoing viability of the website's future. We'd really appreciate your joining now and your continuing support.

...at the Committee meeting on 13th January a sub-committee was formed and **Vic Danko** was elected DVA Project Manager to oversee proceedings for the next 12 months. It is planned to have the web prototype up and running just before ANZAC Day this year.

Letters of thanks for their support have been sent to Stephen Smith and Tony Abbott.

...and now to other stuff...

. Late last year the Committee canvassed a design for a **lapel badge** (pictured at right) which has been manufactured and they are being sent out to our Financial Members as this edition is going to press.



...Which now leads on to something very curious –



While one of the blokes was out he spotted something that took his eye on a suit coat lapel – they had to get a closer look and take a photo (on the left) – bloody hell! It was the new 131 Locators Association lapel pin – someone was quick off the mark!

The lapel pins have only just started to be sent out to all our financial members and the bloke on the left didn't want to be identified, though we think it might be **Grahame Dignam** strolling through the local shopping centre on a Saturday morning looking fairly sharp – as you would expect Dig to be.

However, the photo above is of the actual lapel badge – so if you join the Association now you'll get one to wear on ANZAC Day or any other occasion you choose!

...the Locators Association welcomes a new member as at 24th January – Members – Charles Brewer

Thanks again fellas for the additional funds provided in the way of donations.

. **Birthdays in the Battery**...Hell! Here we go again! Another year older – ALL of us, not just you blokes in January...OK January is fairly evenly placed except for the trifecta of blokes who made their Mum's New Years Eve celebrations a bit on edge...Vic Danko not only made history as one of the first National Service marbles to be drawn out on the 1st in 1945, but he gave **Joe Librizzi** 2years head start, then Chris Chapple 3 years in 1948, John Browne made it on the 2nd in '49, Peter Pettiford got going on the 4th, Graeme Smith was a day later on 5th, then **Arthur Dove** saw the light of day on 6th in 1950, then there's a bit of a gap to the late Peter Sadler (09.01.41 – 2008) and **Robert Ness** on the 9th, **Paul Travis** from RAEME had a short visit to SVN in Sept '65 for 10 days then made a return in 1967 for 2 more months, anyway he shares the 11th with Peter Piro, Peter Hopper of Survey fame has the 12th to himself, then Phil Endicott made his appearance on the 15th, **Edward Cooper** came to life in 1950 on the 16th followed by **Peter Szabo** on 18th, our renowned honorary Locator Infanteer Associate Barry Heard got his first feel for "stand easy" on 19th, the 21st started Don McNicol off and he made a brief visit to SVN in Sept '68 followed by another month in '70 followed by Kevin Browning on the 22nd who also did 2 stints (must have liked the place?) – one in '68—'69, then the other in '71 with part of the time with 12 Fd. Regt, **Donald Chalmers** took his first breath on 23rd, Terry Erbs had his first look around on 24th, Wally Franklin liked the look of the place on 25th in 1949, **Ray Hutchinson** and **Geoffrey Todd** claim 26th, Al Adams brought a smile to his Mum's face and brightened up what could have been another dreary Melbourne day on 27th, Alan McDonald has a corresponding Wikipedia entry which goes like this - "On January 30, 1947, the nationalists renewed their attack on their communist enemy, but the advanced of the 143rd Regiment of the 48th Brigade of the nationalist Reorganized 17th Division were checked by the enemy at Huangpu (黄甫), and Yaoli (腰里) regions just as the communists had planned. After successfully taking the region of Wei's family (Weijia, 魏家) in a pincer movement, the 368th Regiment of the 123rd Brigade of the nationalist Reorganized 36th Division continued their push toward the Liang's Village (Liangzhuang, 梁庄). The 7th Regiment of the communist 3rd Garrison Brigade lured the 368 Regiment of the 123rd Brigade of the nationalist Reorganized 36th Division near Liang's Village (Liangzhuang, 梁庄), with the 771st Regiment of the communist Newly Organized 4th Brigade outflanking the nationalist regiment, which was consequently besieged in the communist trap between the region of Ning's Family (Ningjia 宁家) Liang's Village (Liangzhuang, 梁庄). After a fierce battle, the besieged nationalist force was completely annihilated; suffering over 930 fatalities and this nationalist defeat marked the end of the battle of Guanzhong." – **Ed** wonders if he was aware of that when he took his first breathe? Then the month finished off with the late mate to many and Locator Colin "Bones" Gordon (31.01.45 – 28.03.20)

Ed – 9 blokes in bold is still a lot not accounted for, but down on other months!

. **Locator Profiles** – we've still only received 49 and we've sent out 44. **Ed** – OK the process has come to a screaming halt once more – can some of you find the accelerator pedal?

. Found...

. **Allen Morley placed** a small advertisement in the Sydney Morning herald and he got a response from **Allan Bath** - "G'day Allen I was posted to 131 after failing Scheyville OTU.

We were doing gun trials at Woomera 1969 when I was called back to Holsworthy to go to Vietnam as a single reo. Ended up being shoved around a bit and finally ended attached to 1 Field Regiment.

Whilst I was not attached to 131 in Vietnam, had a lot of fun with the boys in the unit at Holsworthy - some names that come to mind are Charlie O'Neill, Bill Van Zettan, Dave Preston, "Legweak" Armstrong. He was a real estate agent and came from WA I think. Unfortunately I can't say I remember you but that's not surprising.

I would appreciate some details on the Association. Regards ALLAN BATH"

Ed – **Allan B** makes our 171st contact.

. **Ernie Newbold can't** be faltered as the following email attests to – "G'day Paul, have you found **Stephen Fowler**, 217186 who served with the detachment from 16.09.1968 to 17.09.1969?

If not then here is a link that is very interesting, it is called "Lost Medals Australia". It seems that at some time past Stephen Fowler lost his Vietnam medals and the person who re-unites lost medals with their owners was able to track him down to return the medals.

We could offer our help to Lost Medals Australia with our contacts if ever required in the future. They may be able to offer to help us contact Stephen Fowler if we have been unable to do so.

What do you think about that? Regards, Ernie." Web site: <http://lostmedalsaustralia.blogspot.com/>

When you open the website scroll down to 26 October 2010 to read the Stephen Fowler story.

Ed – well after one email to a Lt Col **Glyn Llanwarne** (watch next month's E&E's for a follow up story on Glyn), who responded promptly with an email address – it didn't work, but not being phased I phoned Stephen and had a great conversation. Stephen is now our #173 email contact and knows the likes of "Lofty" Hayes and a couple of the other '68 crew.

.Vale –

From October 2010 to January 2011 we remember...

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Regt No</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>SVN</u>	<u>DoB</u>	<u>DoD</u>
Leplaw, Garry James	L/Bdr	217182	Arty Tac/LP	1968-69	21.09.48	06.12.83
Luxford, Arthur Gordon	Sgt	212803		1969-70	08.08.39	01.01.08
O'Mara, Anthony Joseph	Sgt	38334	Radar- RAEME	1968-69	07.12.40	01.01.85
Palmer, Stephen Edward	Cpl	18820	W/Shop- RAEME	1968-69	31.08.46	03.12.72
Pepper, Francis Gordon	Bdr	216683	B Radar	1967-68	16.09.48	27.12.89
Prenter, William Douglas	L/Col	64258	HQ	1966-67	23.06.33	01.10.97

May they rest in Peace

. 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](http://www.artillerysurveyors131.com.au/) for details: <http://www.artillerysurveyors131.com.au/>

. Locating Artillery Assoc...notes taken from their website –

- Committee meetings are held regularly with most held at Paddington RSL commencing at 1115 hrs.

The next Committee Meeting will be held at the Paddington RSL on 6 March 2011. Members are cordially invited to attend. Details of scheduled Committee meetings will be available in the next issue of the *Associations Newsletter* LOCREP.

The next scheduled meeting is - Sunday 6 March, 2011.

- Work parties at the Australian Army Artillery Museum - **With the announcement on Thursday 2 December 2010 of the closure of Australian Army Artillery Museum, work parties have concluded.**

All future dates for the removal and safe keeping of *Association* items, such as the banners, will be either confirmed verbally or in the *Associations* Newsletter.

. 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 1/8rd who did not return. We will never forget their sacrifice. Website: http://83rd_artillery.home.comcast.net/~83rd_artillery/

. **Dan O'Brien** fires in the following...

"Aussie Arty brothers.

In your after action report, you mentioned testing of seismic equipment. Sound like what we used on the LP/OP/ NDP in 1969. The box had 4 letters, ABCD or 1234. For each sensor placed 50 feet out at 9, 11, 1 and 3 o'clock positions. At the start of the night shift, we tested each letter / sensor by dialling A and hitting the ground of the LP with the boot, then switching to B and so on with testing. We also used first generation starlight scopes mounted on our M-14s. Our 7.62 rounds were all tracers taken from the M-60 link bands. Always had two magazines taped to each other upside down for quick reload. All troops used this 40 round 2 mag system

Cheers to you fellows down under. I am a HAM operator and once during a Field Day exercise / contest, an Aussie station came in on a tropospheric induction to Massachusetts operators. Very rare to talk on that particular band half way around the world.

Back in 69, there was a US NAVY MARS station at Camp Eagle that phone patched calls to GI's parents and friends back in the states. Would like to know if you had that opportunity to make five minute calls using the proword OVER after each transmission??

Dan O'Brien HAM call N1IVT

AIR FORCE MARS CALL. AFA1DS.// AFE1MACIVIL AIR PATROL PATRIOT 930"

Editor contact email: three-zero@hotmail.com Ed – Paul 'Dicko' Dickson

All material that is included in *Eyes and Ears*, official Newsletter of the 131 Locators Association Inc remains the property of 131 Locators Association for its sole use. Prior written authorisation for the use of any material whatsoever contained in the Newsletter must be sought from 131 Locators Association Inc. Any material approved for use by third parties must acknowledge 131 Locators Association Inc as the source. No responsibility is accepted for unsolicited manuscripts, illustrations or photographs, or for the accuracy of information contained in the text of *Eyes and Ears*.