

THE EYES and EARS

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



Editor: Paul 'Dicko' Dickson

email: three-zero@hotmail.com

Vol. 6 No. 11 – 31/10/2013

Official newsletter of the 131 Locators Association Inc
web site: <http://www.131locators.org.au>

ABN 92 663 816 973

Supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs

October - This month marks the 66th Edition of Eyes & Ears

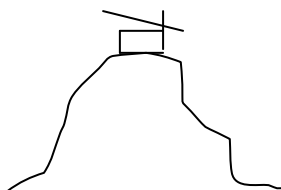
– 57 editions since February, 2009 plus the 9 in 1967 - and we can still fill a few pages...thanks everyone!
Here's how we've evolved the banner (if you can call it that!) over time...

South East
Asian Edition
Vol. I No. II

THE EYES' AND EARS

NUI DAT'S ANSWER TO PLAYBOY

Regt. in Hand
for transmission
by VC courier.



Eyes and Ears

No.0001 February, 2009

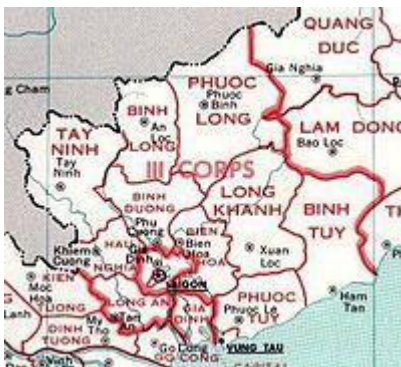


...then we incorporated the various components of the Battery's symbols to formulate where we are today



Thanks to everyone for the valued and continuing support. Only another 2 years 10 months for the 100th edition – so keep well and keep in touch. **Ed.**

. 1st Australian task Force – (source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>) The following is the continuation of the account of our introduction into the conflict in South Vietnam...



III Corps Tactical Zone.

1 ATF was tasked with dominating its TAOR and conducting operations throughout Phuoc Tuy as required, as well as deploying anywhere in III CTZ and neighbouring Binh Tuy in II CTZ on order. Its principal objective was to secure Route 15 for military movement to ensure allied control of the port at Vung Tau, while politically it sought to extend government authority in Phuoc Tuy. The task force would be based in a rubber plantation at Nui Dat, 8 kilometres (5.0 mi) north of Ba Ria, while a logistic base would be established in Vung Tau with a direct link forward via road. Situated on Route 2, Nui Dat's central position offered short lines of communication, it was close but not adjacent to the main population centres, and would allow 1 ATF to disrupt Viet Cong activity in the area. Astride a major communist transit and resupply route, it was close to a Viet Cong base area yet near enough to Ba Ria to afford security to the provincial capital and facilitate liaison with the local authorities. Australian doctrine emphasised establishing a base and spreading influence outwards to separate the guerrillas from the population. By lodging at Nui Dat they aimed to form a permanent presence between the Viet Cong and the inhabitants. 1 ATF would then focus on destroying Viet Cong forces in the province, while security of the towns and villages remained a South Vietnamese responsibility. Nui Dat would be occupied in three phases. Firstly, the province chief would remove the inhabitants around the base to create a security zone. Secondly, the US 173rd Airborne Brigade and 5th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (5 RAR) would secure the area. Finally, the main body would move forward after acclimatisation and training at Vung Tau.

The task force began arriving at Vung Tau between April and June 1966. From 17 May to 15 June, US and Australian forces secured the area around Nui Dat during Operation Hardihood, deploying two battalions of the US 173rd Airborne Brigade and an element of 1 RAR. The Viet Cong resisted strongly, with one company of the US 1/503rd Battalion losing 12 killed and 35 wounded during a clash with a company from D445 Battalion on 17 May, while Viet Cong losses included 16 killed. The clearance of the fortified village of Long Phuoc began two days later. Located within the planned security zone, the 3,000 inhabitants were relocated following heavy fighting between two companies from D445 Battalion and the US 1/503rd Battalion and South Vietnamese forces. American losses were once again heavy; however, by 24 May the clearance was complete with Viet Cong losses including 18 confirmed killed and a further 45 estimated killed, while the dwellings, bunkers and tunnels found within Long Phuoc were destroyed. 5 RAR deployed from Vung Tau the same day and was tasked with clearing any Viet Cong found in an area 6,000 metres (6,600 yd) east and north-east of Nui Dat. 1 ATF occupied Nui Dat from 5 June, with Jackson flying-in with his tactical headquarters to take command. The operation concluded on 15 June with Viet Cong losses totalling 17 killed, eight wounded and eight captured, while five Australians were killed and 15 wounded. Among the dead was a National Serviceman accidentally shot on the first day of the operation—the first to be killed during the

war. Total American losses were 23 killed and 160 wounded. 1 RAR subsequently returned to Australia in early June 1966, having completed 13 major operations attached to US forces for the loss of 19 killed and 114 wounded.



Australian soldiers arrive at Tan Son Nhut Airport, Saigon.

The plan to operate independently resulted in significant self-protection requirements and 1 ATF's initial priorities were to establish a base and ensure its own security. Meanwhile, Lt Gen Wilton's decision to occupy Nui Dat rather than co-locate 1 ATF with its logistic support at Vung Tau allowed the task force to have a greater impact on the Viet Cong but resulted in additional manpower demands to secure the base. Indeed, the security requirements of an under strength brigade located in an area of strong Viet Cong activity utilised up to half the force, significantly limiting its freedom of action. Brig Jackson was uneasy about the possibility of a concentration against Nui Dat, fearing a major military and political setback if they succeeded in attacking 1 ATF soon after its arrival and caused heavy casualties or damage.

He subsequently moved to construct fixed defences and secure the supply route to Vung Tau, as well as implementing a high-tempo patrol program utilising infantry supported by armour, artillery and engineers. Although hampered by the monsoon, defensive positions were dug, command posts sandbagged, and living areas built, while claymore mines, concertina wire and other obstacles were laid, and the vegetation cleared out to small arms range. Standing patrols were established outside the base in the evening and clearing patrols sent out before stand-to every morning and evening along the 12-kilometre (7.5 mi) perimeter. Daily platoon patrols and ambushes were initially conducted out to 4,000 metres (4,400 yd), which was the range of the Viet Cong mortars, but were later extended to 10,000 metres (11,000 yd) to counter the threat from artillery.

As part of the occupation of Nui Dat all inhabitants had been removed from within a 4,000-metre radius and resettled nearby. A protective security zone was then established, the limit of which was designated Line Alpha, and a free-fire zone declared. Although unusual for allied installations in Vietnam, many of which were located close to populated areas, in doing so the Australians hoped to deny the Viet Cong observation of Nui Dat and afford greater security to patrols entering and exiting the base. Such measures added to the physical security of the base, disrupted a major Viet Cong support area and removed the local population from danger. Yet they were also unlikely to have endeared the Australians to the affected population and may have been counter-productive. Indeed the resettlement resulted in widespread resentment and it was debatable how much useful intelligence the inhabitants would provide, potentially creating an opportunity to attack Nui Dat without warning. Meanwhile, the Viet Cong continued to observe the base from the Nui Dinh hills. Movement had been heard around the perimeter over the first few nights as they attempted to locate the Australian defences under the cover of darkness and heavy rain. Although no clashes occurred and the reconnaissance soon ceased, they were believed to be finalising preparations for an attack. On 10 June reporting indicated a Viet Cong regiment was moving towards Nui Dat from the north-west and was about 10 kilometres (6.2 mi) away. The same day three 120 mm mortar rounds landed just outside the perimeter. That night Australian artillery fired on suspected movement along Route 2, although no casualties were found the following day. Further warnings of a four-battalion attack on Nui Dat hastened the call-forward of 6 RAR, which arrived from Vung Tau on 14 June. Despite such warnings no attack occurred and the initial reaction to 1 ATF's lodgement proved unexpectedly limited.

Opposing forces:

Main article: **Battle of Long Tan order of battle**

Part of Military Region 1, the principal communist units operating in Phuoc Tuy were main forces from the Viet Cong 5th Division, including the 274th and 275th Regiments. Under the command of Senior Colonel Nguyen The Truyen, the division was headquartered in the May Tao Mountains. Operating in Phuoc Tuy, Bien Hoa and Long Khanh it included both South Vietnamese guerrillas and North Vietnamese regulars. As part of the campaign against Saigon it was tasked with isolating the eastern provinces by interdicting the main roads and highways, including national routes 1 and 15 and provincial routes 2 and 23. In this role it proved a major challenge to the ARVN, with the 275th Regiment successfully ambushing a South Vietnamese battalion near Binh Gia on 11 November 1965. The 274th Regiment was the stronger and better trained of the two, operating in the Hat Dich in north-west Phuoc Tuy, it included three battalions—D800, D265 and D308—with a strength of 2,000 men. The 275th Regiment was based in the Mao Taos and mainly operated in the east of the province. Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ut Thoi, it consisted of three battalions—H421, H422 and H421—with a total of 1,850 men. In support was an artillery battalion equipped with 75 mm recoilless rifles (RCLs), 82 mm mortars and 12.7 mm heavy machine-guns, an engineer battalion, a signals battalion and a sapper reconnaissance battalion, as well as medical and logistic units. Local forces included D445 Provincial Mobile Battalion, which normally operated in the south of the province and in Long Khanh. Under the command of Bui Quang Chanh (alias Sau Chanh) it consisted of three rifle companies—C1, C2, C3—and a weapons company, C4; a strength of 550 men. Recruited locally and operating in familiar terrain, they possessed an intimate

knowledge of the Area of Operation (AO). Guerrilla forces included a further 400 men operating in groups of five to 60, with two companies in Chau Duc district, one in Long Dat and a platoon in Xuyen Moc. In total, Viet Cong strength was around 4,500 men.



Soldiers of the ARVN 52nd Ranger Battalion and a U.S. Army advisor in Dong Xoai.

South Vietnamese forces included the relatively weak regular ARVN 52nd Ranger Battalion, as well as territorial forces consisting of 17 Regional Force (RF) companies and 47 Popular Force (PF) platoons; in total some 4,500 men. Making up the bulk of government units in Phuoc Tuy, the territorial forces suffered from varying standards of training and motivation. Although most villages were garrisoned by an RF company operating from a fortified compound, and PF platoons guarded most hamlets and important infrastructure, their value was questionable. RF companies were technically available for operations throughout the province, while PF platoons were mostly restricted to operating around their village, yet both were primarily defensive. Although there were examples of RF and PF units successfully defending themselves, they rarely conducted offensive operations; even when they did these were usually limited and lacked initiative or aggression. Mostly recruited from the same population as their opponents, they were subject to the same motivations and pressures, and often suffered equally at the hands of the Viet Cong cadre and the largely inept government. Poorly trained and unable to rely on reinforcement if attacked, the territorial forces often provided little opposition to the Viet Cong. The 90-man US Advisory Team 89 operated in support, as did a small number of Australians from the AATTV. Yet despite their efforts the capabilities of the government forces remained limited. Meanwhile, the arrival of 1 ATF further restricted the ability of South Vietnamese units to carry out operations in Phuoc Tuy as the Australians came to dominate the province.

1 ATF consisted of two infantry battalions—5 RAR commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John Warr, and 6 RAR under Lieutenant Colonel Colin Townsend. Other units included the 1st APC Squadron operating M113 armoured personnel carriers, 1st Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery which included two Australian and one New Zealand batteries equipped with eighteen 105 mm L5 Pack Howitzers, 3rd SAS Squadron, engineers from the 1st Field Squadron and 21st Engineer Support Troop, 103rd Signals Squadron, 161st Reconnaissance Flight operating Cessna 180s and Bell H-13 Sioux light observation helicopters, and an intelligence detachment. Support arrangements were provided by the 1st Australian Logistics Support Group (1 ALSG) established amid the sand dunes at Vung Tau 30 kilometres (19 mi) south, while eight UH-1B Iroquois helicopters from No. 9 Squadron RAAF also supported 1 ATF from Vung Tau. Although ostensibly independent, US forces provided considerable support including medium and heavy artillery, close air support, helicopter gunships, medium and heavy lift helicopters, and additional utility helicopters. Six 155 mm M109 self-propelled howitzers from A Battery, US 2/35th Artillery Battalion were also permanently attached at Nui Dat. The largest Australian force deployed since the Second World War, although many of 1 ATF's officers and non-commissioned personnel had extensive operational service, it had been rapidly assembled and included many untried National Servicemen. Few men had direct experience of counter-insurgency operations, and even less a first-hand understanding of the situation in Vietnam, while the task force had been unable to train together before departure. Yet despite these shortfalls 1 ATF had been required to rapidly deploy and commence operations in a complex environment.

More to follow next month...

. Geoff Jebb - WO1 GEOFF JEBB OAM RECOLLECTIONS

– taken from the ARTILLERY SURVEYORS 131 DIV LOC BTY web site using to following link - <http://www.artillerysurveyors131.com.au/jebb.html>

This is a continuation from October's *Eyes & Ears* initiated by an email from **Bert Blink** which re-acquainted us with a some fascinating memories -



Survey for FSB Coral & Coogee May 68

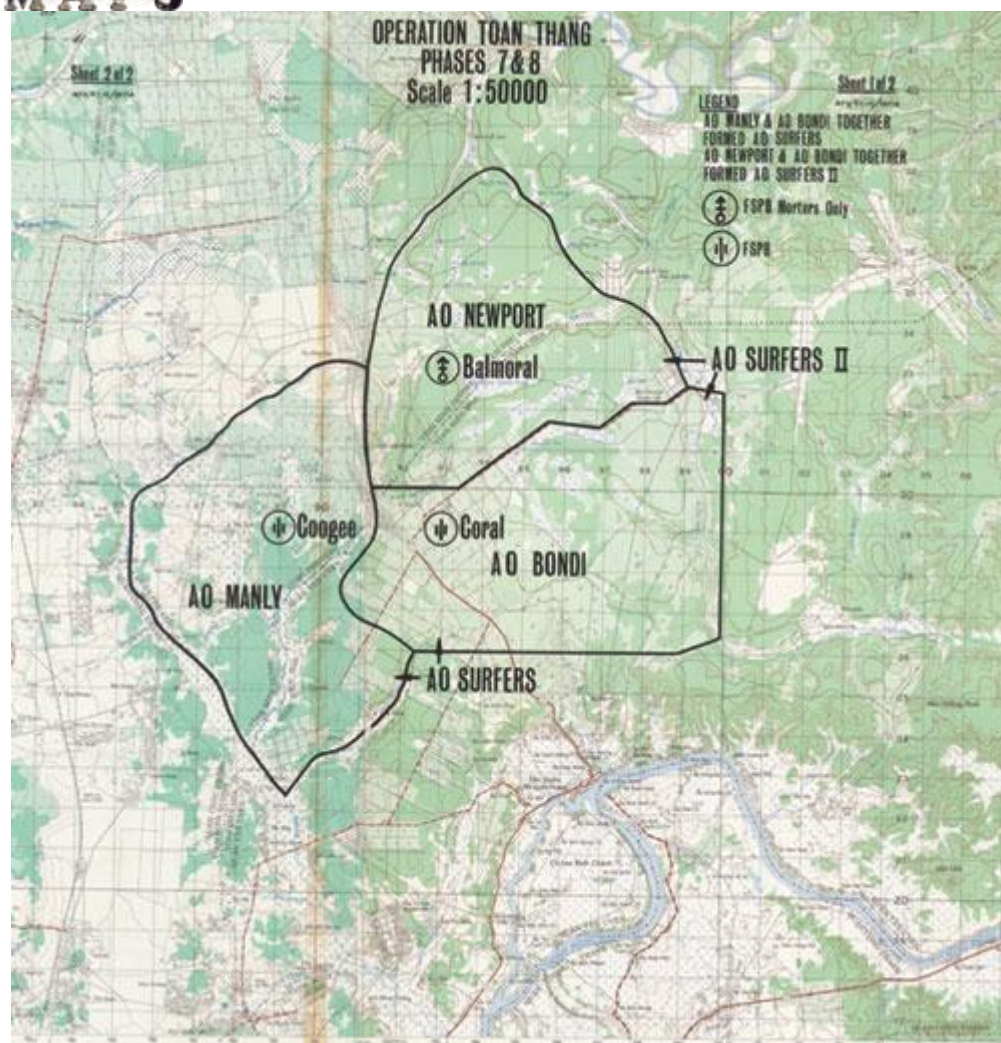
I flew in with the Regimental Recce party around mid morning of the 12th. With Major Murtagh and Capt Brooks we moved through the bush to the proposed FSB positions. Looking at where the FSBs were to be located, I ascertained the survey would be reasonably straight forward. My intention was to call my surveyors forward from staging point at Bearcat when ready. Things did not turn out as intended. There was great pressure to move men and material into this operational zone and FSB survey was lost to mounting defensive concerns borne from deployment problems! My recollection is only handing over map resections to 102 Fd Bty and 161 Fd Bty when they eventually arrived that afternoon to their disjointed positions. I spent the night of the 12th with the Kiwis. In the aftermath of that night,

surveyors waiting at Bearcat were flown back to Nui Dat and I managed a ride back on the afternoon of the 13th. The Surveyors and myself were called forward on the morning of 15th May. The eventual survey presented no problems. The weather was fine, FSBs Coral and Coogee were about 4000 metres apart and astride a common dirt road which provided a clear path for traversing. FSB Balmoral was not included as it had no artillery, only mortars. A Bty 2/35 US Regt was co-located at Coral about 300 metres south of 102 Bty. The task was completed by mid-afternoon and the Surveyors returned to Nui Dat.

On the 16th May the CO (Jack Kelly) tested the survey with a Regt practice fire mission. 161 Bty and 102 Bty fell together, but the US A Bty was somewhere else. A furious CO got on the blower and we were all told to return and sort things out. On the 16th we were back at FSB Coral. A discussion with the BC solved the problem. Despite assurances at the time, they didn't have a clue as to what was required and promptly binned their Battle Plan (BP) and carried on as before with no change of grid. They didn't like the idea of re-setting up and having to amend their recorded data, but when it was suggested we discuss the matter with the CO they played ball and when the survey was re-tested, all was well. There was no re-survey and we were back at Nui Dat that same afternoon. Towards the end of May, Surveyors again visited Area of Operation Surfers to place in a BP for FSB Balmoral. Our tanks had beefed up the old mortar position so they were coordinated with the guns of FSB Coogee and FSB Coral.



Rough panorama shot of 102 Bty position FSB Coral 15th May 1968. Photo courtesy Geoff Jebb.



AO Surfers FSB deployment after the Battle on the 12th May.

. November in SVN...

10 November	1964	Selective conscription introduced	Australian government introduces selective conscription of 20-year- old males by ballot under the <i>National Service Act</i> . The National Service Scheme saw 15,381 young men serve in Vietnam.
13 November	1965	Warrant Officer K. Wheatley, VC	Warrant Officer Class 2 Kevin "Dasher" Wheatley, Australian Army Training Team Vietnam, is awarded the first Victoria Cross of the Vietnam War posthumously in the Tra Bong Valley, Quang Ngai province.

. The late Fred Lennon...we continue with a sample from his collection...



1966 Nui Dat- Radar set - Mountain in background is where VC shelled Task Force from 2.5 miles away. **Ed** – obviously no real need for aircon and the generator fumes wouldn't be a problem!
Ed – this photo may raise the interest of some of the Radar aficionados?

Jenny Jacques, who most of you might know by now, is **Fred's** daughter, sent this in after October's *Eyes & Ears* - "Hi Paul,

Many thanks for the photo of Dad published in your latest newsletter, on page 1. I get a real thrill when I see what you have done with publishing these photos, It really makes me happy, and I thank you so much for remembering him so well. I have had a couple of people get in touch with me since the first newsletter, which has been fantastic and I was wondering if you could publish my email address again, maybe in the next newsletter as I was hoping to hear from anyone that knew dad. Once again, thanks for all your help, will keep in touch,

Kind Regards, Jenny Jacques." **Ed** - Here's Jenny's email address: jennywren1958@hotmail.com

. **The RAA Historical Company** is seeking information on **Jim Menz** to include on their RAAHC web site www.artilleryhistory.org and **Peter Bruce** sent in the following email for assistance -

"Hello Paul

I read with interest you latest edition of *E & E*. Well done again.

I am researching some info on Jimmy Menz who was KIA in SVN in 1968. I have all the official info from various web sites but would be interested in more personal stories about Jimmy. It would also be interesting to hear from anyone who was in the unit (131) when they named the Menz Club after him and any stories about the Menz Club.

I have been in touch with Jim's brother as well but not able to extract a lot of information. Am hoping they will send me a photo to use as well.

Information will be collated and used in an obituary for Jimmy on the RAAHC web site www.artilleryhistory.org

Best wishes

Peter

Peter Bruce, OAM, JP

Obituary Resource Coordinator - RAA Historical Company pjbruce8@bigpond.net.au

. **Ernie Newbold** picked up a great link to the ABC which covered a good story on **General Vo Nguyen Giap** who has just died – It's worth a view - "G'day Paul, I trust that you and Helen are both well and as happy as can be. It is the October long weekend here and the weather is as fine as it can be.

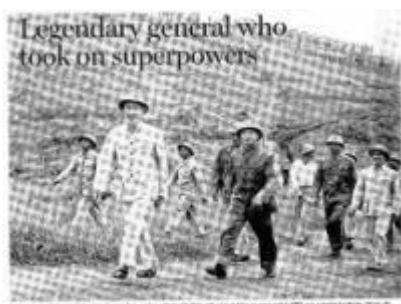
An interesting item appeared on the ABC News website this morning and being unsure as to whether you would see it I thought that I might send the link for you to read.

It is about General Vo Nguyen Giap who masterminded the Tet offensive in 1968

Even though he was the enemy he must have been a great strategist to secure the end result as he did in 1975, he also achieved victory over the French at Dien Bien Phu in 1954.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-10-05/vietnam-independence-hero-general-giap-dies/5000566>

.Regards, Ernie."



Vo Nguyen Giap, the relentless and charismatic North Vietnamese general whose campaigns drove both France and the United States out of Vietnam, died Friday in Hanoi. He was believed to be 102. The death was reported by several Vietnamese news organizations, including the respected Tuoi Tre Online, which said he died in an army hospital.



. **Chris Bouilly** sent the following in which has a ring of recycling to it –

In case you were wondering what happened to all those fuel tanks we jettisoned from aircraft in Southeast Asia?

"The Fuel Tank Yacht Club" SVN



Recycling at its best!

. **Alistair Reid** sent the following email to **Allen Morley**. It's an interesting read and asks for help with activity in Malaysia in 1973 -

"Good afternoon.

Graham Hampton of the RAA Association has suggested contacting you.

I am hoping that someone within one of the artillery associations may have memories of an exercise in Malaysia in 1973 I was in Singapore and part of ANZUK.

I was a medic with the Australian Army and was in Fd. Med Support Sect Kangaw Bks. Just wondering if you have any memory or can remember any one who may have been on a live fire exercise with the 105's in 1973.

I would dearly like to be in contact with someone who was on the same convoy as me to the exercise area from Singapore on the convoy to the exercise area I was in the Ambulance and the vehicle behind me the last vehicle broke down.

I had not realised the lights had taken that moment to decide not to work. I had slowed down expecting the convoy to stop which they didn't and I had to really hurry to catch up and get them to stop. We then waited some time on the side of the road for the last vehicle to catch up at the time the convoy commander was deciding whether or not to send back another vehicle when the truck that was at the rear caught up to us.

On our arrival at the camp area for the exercise the Brigadier who was there spoke with our doctor re the trip up and we said about our lights not working and he detailed me to go and roust out the mechanics, who were at mess, to have it fixed immediately on the off chance the ambulance was needed that night.

This of course upset said mechanics with the normal don't shoot the messenger not my fault blame the Brigadier.

I went to this exercise with our doctor Captain John Moran RAAMC and a NZ Pte Ian Currie RNZAMC. Capt Moran has vague memories of the exercise and was hoping to find someone else who was in the convoy and remembers the breakdown of the last vehicle or the fault with the ambulance lights. The NZ RSL is still trying to find Ian Currie.

As a memory jogger on the exercise I remember going out to collect a gunner from I believe it was Alpha gun firing the first round and the spades I believe hadn't been dug in and the gun recoiled into his face smashing his teeth an cheek. I remained on site for the rest of that shoot and have photos of the guns in action.

I have attached two pages of my photo album from 1973 (below) and unfortunately the quality is not very good after being in the album for 40 years but these were the gun crews that I went out to the gunner with the fractured jaw.

I have a claim in with DVA for something that happened as I was rushing to catch up to the convoy to let them know of the last vehicle break down.

And my RSL advocate who is an ex WO1 has asked me to get onto the contact pages to see if we can find anyone who can remember anything at all.

I have my hearing review on the 31st of this month October and the researcher for the DVA was not very in-depth or applying himself to find any evidence that I was even there.

If you can remember anything or know of anyone I should speak with I am happy to do any phone calls and pay for any faxes, emails or letters to get a statement.

Regards

Alistair Reid"



...Allen responded with the following –

"Hello Alistair

Thanks for your inquiry. Our association focuses upon the war in South Vietnam, which finished in 1972. So your time scale is a little beyond our remit.

Many of our members were nashos, so there is only a two year army involvement for a lot of us.

However, I have copied our newsletter editor who will include your inquiry in our October edition of *Eyes & Ears*. That is probably all we can do in practice.

I wish you the best for your battle with DVA, which I know personally, is a real challenge.

Regards

Allen Morley

President, 131 Locators Association. www.131locators.org.au"

...the **Grahame Dignam** responded with the following as extra help...

"Alistair.

Good luck on your quest.

While trying to identify which units may have been involved I came across this reference from this link. See the end of the article which lists the references who provided information for the article:

[http://www.indonesia.embassy.gov.au/files/klpr/History%20of%20the%20Australia-](http://www.indonesia.embassy.gov.au/files/klpr/History%20of%20the%20Australia-Malaysia%20Defence%20Relationship.pdf)

[Malaysia%20Defence%20Relationship.pdf](http://www.indonesia.embassy.gov.au/files/klpr/History%20of%20the%20Australia-Malaysia%20Defence%20Relationship.pdf):

The Five Power Defence Arrangements

In 1967, as part of its 'East of Suez' policy, Britain announced its intention to withdraw its military forces from Malaysia and Singapore during the 1970s. The announcement caused considerable concern for Malaysia and Singapore as they had relied heavily on Britain to guarantee their security. Britain's subsequent decision to complete the withdrawal of around 26,000 troops by the end of 1971 gave greater urgency to find a solution. Those efforts would lead to the formation in November 1971, of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA), involving Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia.

The cornerstone of the FPDA was the Communiqué in which the five powers agreed that in the event of any form of armed attack externally organized or supported, or the threat of such attack against Malaysia or Singapore, their Governments would immediately consult together for the purpose of deciding what measures should be taken jointly or separately in relation to such an attack or threat.

The longevity, relevance and evolution of the FPDA is well illustrated by Australia's commitment of forces under the arrangement. On 11 February 1971, Headquarters Integrated Air Defence System (IADS) was formed at Butterworth with Australia providing the Commander. On 1 September 1971 IADS assumed operational responsibility for the air defence of Malaysia and Singapore.

Under the FPDA, an ANZUK force of some 7,100 men, including 3,400 Australians with 1500 stationed at Butterworth was established to support the defence of Malaysia and Singapore. In line with the changing strategic and defence environment in the region, including the end of the war in Vietnam, ANZUK force was disbanded in 1975 and the function of IADS has subsequently evolved. Although the number of Australian defence personnel in Malaysia has also reduced during subsequent years to its current strength of 186 personnel, Australia's commitment to regional security under the FPDA is today still evident in its strong support of IADS, its permanent P3-C maritime patrol aircraft detachment and the Australian Army Rifle Company at Butterworth, and its strong commitment and participation in frequent multi-lateral Exercises.

The FPDA arrangements were intended to be transitional, providing security for Malaysia and Singapore for a few years while they developed their own national capabilities. Instead, while there have been fluctuations in the level of involvement of its members, FPDA, as the only multi-lateral security arrangement in South-East Asia, is still in good shape. For over thirty years the FPDA has progressively evolved to form a key element of relations between the five members and continues to provide a stabilising influence in the region.

Malaysia Australia Joint Defence Program

The last major development in the history of Australia's close defence relationship with Malaysia occurred in 1992 with the signing of the Malaysia Australia Joint Defence Program (MAJDP), aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the bi-lateral defence relationship between Malaysia and Australia. Under the program, ADF officers have the opportunity of undertaking long-term attachments with the MAF while similar numbers of Malaysian officers are attached to ADF Units. Significant numbers of MAF personnel also undertake military training courses in Australia at institutions such as Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies, Australian Command and Staff College, Australian Defence Force Academy and the Duntroon Royal Military College while Australian officers attend the Maktab Turus Angkatan Tentera. Australia and Malaysia also conduct frequent bi-lateral exercises to improve interoperability, promote understanding of each other's unique operational environments and to strengthen the military skills and capabilities of both forces.

Summary

Australia's strong historical defence ties with Malaysia, cemented on the battlefields of WWII, the Malayan Emergency and the Confrontation, and further developed through the FPDA and MAJDP agreements, have matured to become one of Australia's most long-lasting and strongest defence relationships. This strong mutual history forms the bedrock of the Malaysia - Australia defence relationship today, and will continue to do so in the future.

Materials Extracted from:

Diggers: The Australian Army, Navy and Air Force in Eleven Wars, George Odgers, Landsdowne Publishing Ltd 2000.
Australian War Memorial Encyclopedia: www.awm.gov.au The 5 Power Defence

. **Graham Hampton** sent the following email in wondering if there are a few or several blokes who would care to join in some more connections through Facebook -

"Hi Paul,

The guys on Facebook page Arty Guys and a few other Facebook Artillery orientated pages have decided to have an Australia wide Facebook Happy Hour. I am sure that there are a few Locators who frequent the Facebook page.

Would you mind including the attached notice in your next Newsletter.

Thanks,

Graham Hampton"



facebook

Happy Hour

Facebook - Happy Hour

It's been decided we need to move forward with technology and have ourselves an Australia wide Artillery **Facebook Happy Hour** and if you're a Gunner you're invited.

On Saturday 14th December 2013 between 4 pm and 7 pm no matter where you are in Australia, in a pub or at the RSL with friends, at a BBQ or simply at home having a quiet one on your own then why not join us on **Facebook** with a couple of photos and some healthy banter and a whole lotta laughs and take the time to catch up with mates across Australia and possibly overseas.

The above concept should prove to be fun, loads of fun actually and if successful will be run on a quarterly basis. So let all your mates know the Happy Hour is on, and be ready to access the Arty Guys **Facebook** page on Saturday 14th December 2013 between 4 pm and 7 pm.

Cost - Oh there is always a cost! - The cost to participate in this activity is at least 1 photo (selfie acceptable) uploaded to the Arty Guys **Facebook** group and plenty of texting banter.

Don't know where to find us then click on any of the **Facebook** words within this document and you will be taken to the Arty Guys **Facebook** page.

Cheers, George”



Welcome – The Association has great pleasure in welcoming the following really good blokes – **Murray Poustie** and **Denis Smith** to the Association fold.

A photograph of a family of three. On the left is a woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark patterned vest over a light-colored shirt and a dark blue baseball cap with a red brim and a logo. In the center is a man with glasses, wearing a green button-down shirt and a dark blue baseball cap with a red brim and a logo. In the foreground on the right is a young child with blonde hair, wearing a blue t-shirt and a pink and white polka-dot bucket hat. They are all smiling and standing in front of a light-colored, textured wall.

. Birthdays in the Battery...November –

Now let's pick the “oldie” out for the Month – **John Perry** - Happy 71st – hope it's a great day where ever you are?

Here's what **Trevor Prideaux** looked like on or about his 31st birthday just going about his job – have a great day on the 2nd Trev!



November	Name	Regt No	YOB	In SVN	Out SVN	Comments
1	DENIS SMITH	2789286	1946	15 04 1969	17 12 1969	
1	VAUGHAN MILLAR	3411742	1948	27 11 1967	26 11 1968	
1	WAYNE JEFFREY	2794772	1946	04 11 1970	29 07 1971	
2	TREVOR PRIDEAUX (WAGHORN)	52837	1936	05 05 1967	06 02 1968	
2	KENNETH HALLIGAN	2788319	1946	16 09 1968	27 08 1969	
4	JOHN HENSHAW	3793057	1945	20 01 1969	28 11 1969	
4	HAROLD LITTLE	2789038	1945	21 02 1969	28 11 1969	
5	DAVID DACRE	5716803	1948	20 08 1970	20 08 1970	131
	" "			20 08 1970	05 05 1971	4 Fd REGT
10	BARRY UREN	214715	1940	28 10 1966	02 05 1967	
11	BILL TAGGART		1946	00.10.1966	00.11.1967	US 1st / 83rd
12	THOMAS LEMPRIERE	3412000	1949	02 12 1968	21 01 1969	
13	MICHAEL CAMPBELL	6708462	1946	05 05 1967	13 12 1967	† 1984
16	KEN LONG	2783232	1945	04 05 1967	28 10 1967	
16	ALLEN MORLEY	3788972	1945	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	
17	WARWICK HAMILTON Capt.	235190	1939	17 04 1967	12 02 1968	
17	TERENCE (LOFTY) HAYES	214973	1939	{04 05 1966	29 04 1967	† 14.12.2011
	" " "			{10 12 1968	10 12 1969	
17	JORG KIENE	3797963	1947	09 11 1970	05 08 1971	
17	BARRY WILLIAMS	3796729	1947	16 12 1970	08 02 1971	
18	DESMOND BURY	1411072	1946	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	
19	JOHN PERRY WO2	36026	1932	22 04 1966	07 09 1966	
20	MICHAEL FLETCHER	352778	1945	29 04 1969	16 04 1970	
20	LESLIE BATES	218053	1950	27 11 1969	05 11 1970	
22	MURRAY POUSTIE	3787941	1945	04 05 1967	14 08 1967	
22	BRIAN RUDDOCK (M.I.D)	216134	1935	{29 01 1968	21 01 1969	
	" " Sgt.			{03 02 1970	04 02 1971	4 Fd REGT
24	DONALD SIMMONS Sgt.	212769	1937	22 04 1966	21 12 1966	
25	STANLEY TODKILL	1201908	1946	04 11 1969	17 06 1970	
25	BRIAN PARKER	3793586	1946	20 01 1970	27 05 1970	AACC
	" "			28 05 1970	14 01 1971	1st Arm'd Regt
26	MICHAEL O'KEEFE	2787168	1946	08 01 1968	14 01 1969	AACC † 1980
26	FRED WALTER Sgt.	342848	1943	11 05 1967	23 04 1968	RAEME
26	JEFFERY SCHAFER	2788886	1946	12 02 1969	17 12 1969	
28	JOHN BAYFORD	3791019	1946	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
30	RON SAUNDERS	38516	1947	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	
30	GARY STRATTON	2788161	1946	08 11 1968	27 08 1969	

Ed – 22 blokes not highlighted is **4** better than this time last year – a 15% improvement! Let's go for another 20% this year.

. **Locator Profiles** – we’ve received **122** and we’ve sent out **119**. **Ed** – I’d better check the mail – a couple may have snuck in unseen!

Bill Taggart (1/83rd Honorary Locator) sent this in after reading **Roger Long’s** Profile - “Paul, the “Yank” cutting Roger’s hair (at right) is our **Hugh Messina**. Hugh was in Arty Survey with me and is a part of our active group. In fact, I hope to see him at our next reunion. Small World! Bill”



...Bill then added these photos and the commentary...”He is cutting the hair of another good friend Pete Karika (at right). In the other photo (at left) he is cutting the hair of our First Sergeant, Roy Laudette who was a great guy and also a World War II vet”

Ed – Did Hugh ever get time to do any Arty type work and did he open a chain of Hairdressing Salons post SVN?



. 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.

.Vale –

Name	Regt No	Rank	Section	Served in SVN	DOB	DOD
Macaulay, Geoffrey John	35753	WO2		28.11.69 – 05.11.70	28.12.36	27.04.13
Gunn, Gordon “Jock” Campbell	16915	WO2	Gun Bty	11.06.66 – 10.06.67*	24.09.44	23.09.13
*1 Fd Regt			Sound Ranging	11.03.69 – 11.03.70 (Det 131)		

Macaulay, Geoffrey John - Graham Williams advises the following entry appears in their RSL magazine as passing. Geoff was connected with Burleigh Heads RSL.

Kevin Browning comes to aid once more with some memories of **Geoff** – “I recall first meeting Geoff at Holsworthy in 1968. He was a WO2 and I think posted to the Battery pending future posting to Vietnam. He would have been the Survey Sound Ranging Section WO2. I do recall that he ran a qualification course for us in July/August 1968 so that we could qualify for our pay as surveyors. Bill Findlay and Ivan Mills were our Sergeants at the time and assisted on the course. Soon after the course I was posted to Vietnam and by the time I got back Geoff was about to be posted to Vietnam. I believe he was the Detachment SM relieving Alan Cleasby.

I next recall meeting Geoff when he took over as BSM 131 in, I think, 1973 and 1974. It was a difficult time for the battery with the end of National Service severely reducing our numbers and new postings into the unit from many other Batteries. I do recall Geoff as a very sincere and caring person. Despite the reduction in staff there was no corresponding reduction in tasks and he was always active to ensure the soldiers were taken care of.

I note from *Tracks of the Dragon* that Geoff had been the BSM of 130 Corps Locating/Gun Loc Battery from 17 December 1965 to June 1967. I assume it was at this time he was posted to 131.

He was certainly a very nice person.

Regards, Kevin”

Gunn, Gordon “Jock” Campbell - We were, thankfully, first notified of **Jock’s** passing by **Graham Williams**, which lead us to contact, **Kevin Browning**, who was kind enough to send in the following memories of an “accidental” Locator –

“Gordon Campbell Gunn, known to all as Jock, is indeed worthy of inclusion amongst us most distinguished group of gunners.

When the sound ranging base commenced operation in November 1968 there was a need for a third senior NCO to complete the three shifts that operated the base (two shifts per night). Permission was obtained for the Regimental survey sergeant to be seconded to the Detachment. Initially it was Arthur Penn from 12 Field Regiment but when 1 Field Regiment took over their survey sergeant, Jock Gunn, joined us. Apart from shift duty in the sound ranging CP Jock was also involved in many of the survey deployments.

About 1972 Jock was posted to the Battery at Holsworthy as a Staff Sergeant where he was the Senior NCO in the Survey/Sound ranging Troop, Arthur Penn and myself being sergeants in the Troop. In 1975 he became BSM of the Battery, a position he held until 1977 being replaced by Kevin Salter who was the first WO1 BSM of the Battery. About this time Jock was posted to one of the ARes Locating Batteries. He returned to 131 as a Troop Sergeant Major and was still there when I took over as BSM in 1981. He accompanied us to Enoggera when the unit moved and took his discharge in Brisbane, his home town. Some years later Jock rejoined the unit when an ARes component was formed. Jock certainly had his faults but he was a good soldier. He was first to tell you his yearly reports often had the comment of 'no tact' but his soldierly knowledge was first rate. He joined the detachment on his second tour of Vietnam and rarely spoke about his first tour but I suspect there had been an unfortunate incident during that tour. I would rate him as a first class map reader which was evident on many occasions but two cases stand out.

Most people tend to use the artificial features such as roads on a map as their point of reference. In 1969 one of the batteries was deployed near a junction in the Firestone Fire Trail. This trail had been overprinted on the maps and the battery had used the junction to locate themselves. Jock very quickly pointed out that this was wrong but no one would listen. Getting survey to that point was impossible so after providing orientation we returned to base and the fixation problem raised with the HQ. A visit to the Survey Corps to discuss a possible problem quickly revealed they knew the fire trail was incorrectly plotted. Jock had spotted this by following the contour lines in the area, an area heavily timbered. The error was 1000 metres.

A similar incident occurred at the holiday centre known as Tianjara. A battery deployed at the very conspicuous road junction accepted its location. Jock was quick to point out the error referring again to the contour lines. But the battery would have none of that and fired on their assumed data. The error could be seen at the target end and following the arrival of our survey data the battery changed their information. A check of the area soon showed the location of the original road, as marked on the map, about 500 metres from the new road.

Jock was also a good administrator and his arrival at Holsworthy soon saw the survey store changed to make stock takes much simpler. The Survey/Sound Ranging Troop of 1993 held all the war establishment equipment but only a peacetime personnel establishment. An interesting incident occurred during an inspection of the unit by the CO of 8 Medium Regiment, under whose command the battery fell. Whilst inspecting the survey store the CO asked why we had so many 11 x 11 tents (we had about 14 for the 18 personnel then in the troop). Jock was very quick to point out the entitlement was actually two additional tents. The CO left simply shaking his head.

As mentioned before he had his faults. His Scotch accent was not improved when he had a drink! His timing was not always the best as witnessed the day he did a highland fling on the Battery parade ground at Holsworthy as the BC was looking out his window at that exact moment. His sense of humour was also not always appreciated by people. On his second tour in Vietnam he was in the mess one day when one of the batteries had changed over. The new arrivals walked into mess to see two senior NCO having a heated argument at the bar which ended in one of them drawing their pistol and pointing it at the other. This had been specially staged for the new arrivals and the pistol was not real but the RSM was far from impressed. So unimpressed was the RSM with Jock over a period of time that eventually he was 'banished to the bush' until his tour ended.

Perhaps strength of Jock was his ability to judge character. In the early 70's one of his sister-in-law's visited them in Sydney and stayed for a couple of weeks. She was a very attractive woman and one of the young Lieutenants with a reputation as a lady's man took a fancy to her. Jock very quicker looked for safer ground and asked me to escort her. He knew she could not have been in safer hands.

Unfortunately Jock cut ties with people in later years but he was always in our conversations. We have lost a good Locator at too young an age.

I have attached two photos.

No. 51 shows Jock seated on a US APC at FSB Wattle as we measure to Nui Chu Chan, a distance of some 30 Km. No. 52 shows Jock on our recon from FSB Wattle looking for Nui Chu Chan. Although the mountain was a very tall feature on a very flat surface it was actually crested at this location and only his great map reading skills found the feature. Regards Kevin"



At left, Jock seated on a US APC at FSB Wattleas then at right Jock on our recon from FSB Wattle looking for Nui Chu Chan



. **Presidential Perambulations** - Allen Morley sent this in after attending the service for **Godfrey "Rusty"**

Eugene Priest –

“Today – October 2nd – I attended Rusty Priest’s State Funeral as representative for 131 Locators Association. St Mary’s Cathedral in Sydney was full to capacity with more than 400 attending. The new Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Senator Ronaldson was in attendance, as were a host of dignitaries. The service was long, occupying more than two hours.

I reflected on aspects of Rusty’s life as the anecdotes and observations flowed. He was most remembered for his role as NSW President of the RSL and for his sterling work in establishing the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway at Concord. These, together with helping the rebuild of the celebration of Anzac Day in NSW are fitting legacies. His relationship with the late Bruce Ruxton (his RSL counterpart in Victoria) was obviously a very close and deeply personal one.

Although I do not seek to blame Rusty in any way, I also remembered how badly the RSL treated us Vietnam Veterans upon our return. It made me think, and hope that we were not doing a similar thing to Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. However, I don’t think that is the case.

It is intriguing that the retired generals present still claim their rank with (Rtd) as a suffix to their names. Never have I seen a reference to Rusty WO1 (Rtd). Res ipsa loquitur.

RIP Rusty Priest.”



May they rest in peace



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 or 5 years. Hope we hear from you?

Web site - <http://www.131locators.org.au/131locators/>

. 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

...notes taken from the LS & TAA website – The next committee meeting will be held on **24 November 2013** at 11.15am at the Paddington RSL and it is to be also our **Christmas Function** this year held at the Club. Members are cordially invited to attend.

Details of scheduled Committee meetings will be available in the next issue of the Association’s Newsletter LOCREP.



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL COMPANY

www.artilleryhistory.org



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



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

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

. **VETERAN'S AFFAIRS WEBSITE** 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://83rd_artillery.home.comcast.net/~83rd_artillery/

. **NSW Fires** is everywhere on the international media and **Bill Taggart** forwarded on an enquiry from one of his "Gunners" – "My good friend **Rich Webekind** (Nui Dat 66-67) asked the question below. Are any of you effected by the wild fires?

The western part of the USA in particular has annual big problems with wild fires and recently one killed 19 firefighters from an elite special unit. My Dad was a career Firefighter in Philadelphia and while that is a very dangerous profession, fighting wild fires is a whole other level of danger. Bill"

...Ed responded...

"Bill, I'm passing this on to the Assoc committee - Sydney dwellers (Bob Billiards actually lives in reasonable proximity to the Blue Mountain fires).

Fellas - thought I'd pass this on - would some one care to respond to Bill? Paul"

...to which Bill responded with... "Several have so far Paul. Thankfully none seem to be in harms way as yet, let's hope that continues and also that you get some much needed rain. Bill"

...here's Allen Morley's response... "Hi Bill, We are in an early spring heat wave in Sydney. As you will know the bushfires are severe.

The combination of heat (100F or more) plus strong winds are a cruel combination. One of our Committee members - whom some of your people may remember from 31 delta - lives near the fire area.

Sydney has fires to the north, west and south. East is the Pacific Ocean so that is safe.

The fires are like those of 1968. That of course when some of us were on an Asian holiday at Nui Dat.

So far there is only a single fatality. Lots of property damage and loss of homes.

The bad weather combination promises to reappear next week. That is very unfortunate for all.

Regards Allen Morley"

...then came the response from Rich...

"To All, Thank you for responding to my message as passed along by Bill Taggart concerning the wildfires burning in NSW. They are indeed a tragedy. With all the problems facing the world today, I don't think any are more serious than those posed by mother nature. Responses to problems caused by fiscal crises, governments, and foreign affairs are more forthcoming (although not always satisfactory) than those problems caused by weather. Efforts to reduce our carbon footprint may be too little, too late. In the meantime, I pray for an end to your tragedy and will look into performing an old American Indian rain-dance as a solution. Cheers, Rich Webekind"

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