

THE EYES and EARS

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Here's what up for reading in this edition...

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- . **Bill Taggart (1st/83rd)** – has a couple of great points of interest with Kim Beazley getting a mention – Pages 15 through to 17

So settle in and enjoy...

Long Tan – 18th August, 1966...



“People of Phuoc Tuy province warmly greet the heroic victory of the Royal Australian Forces in destroying the 45th North V.N. Regiment on August 18 . 66 war Long Tan” – transcript of what is written on the banner.

The amazing photo above was sent in by **Jenny Jacques** (see more from Jenny in **Vale** below) from a collection of her father's, the late **Fred Lennon**.

This is what **Fred** actually wrote on the back of the photo –

“This is a sign put up by the locals in Baria about 3 miles away, in gratitude for the battle put up by 6 Battalion when they lost 17 men but killed 245 Viet Cong on 18th August, 1966.”

...Jenny then sent the following email...

“Hi Paul,

I thought you might be interested in this as it is a bit more of Dad's history and is relevant to Long Tan. He left me a life history and this is an excerpt from it .

In Dad's words –

“In May, 1966 I was posted to South Vietnam as a radar Sgt. 131 Bty, and on the 20th May with my radar detachment of 9 men, we flew in a Qantas 707 from Richmond Air Base, our only stop over was at Manilla. We landed at Saigon, and from there flew in a Hercules plane to Vung Tau in Vietnam. After 2 weeks in the base camp in Vung Tau which was on the beach, we moved to a location about 20 kms north which was called Nui Dat.

I was allocated a spot where we set up our radar and given a task of locating enemy mortars when they fired, unfortunately the radar did not live up to its task.

The Americans sprayed Agent Orange over the rubber plantations to defoliate them, they sprayed in Hercules twin engine planes, and I copped some of the spray, as did many others.

On the 16th August, we were mortared by the Viet Cong, several rounds landed on the other side of our Task Force area but nothing fell on my radar position, two days later on the 18th August, 1966 a patrol from 6 battalion ran into a large force of enemy soldiers who were preparing to attack the task force, a fierce fight broke out and the patrol was surrounded, 18 of our soldiers lost their lives, I made sure I went to church the next day to give thanks for being alive. A patrol went out the next day and counted 245 enemy bodies.

Kind Regards, Jenny”



“Long Tan Action” by Bruce Fletcher, 1970.

.Battle of Long Tan - with due deference to Wikipedia I have plagiarised the following link - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Long_Tan to satisfy not only my fascination to things Long Tan, but hopefully yours.

I like the rest of you would have no doubt spared at least a solemn moment on the 18th just past to reflect on that day on what those 108 Grunts went through and also the labour of the support given to them – some of which you blokes have reflected in writing to us (see the website - **web site:** <http://www.131locators.org.au> and click onto ???). I have extracted some pieces from the Wikipedia item and put them up for discussion or comment or just to read and reflect –

Date	18 August 1966
Location	Long Tan, Phuoc Tuy Province, South Vietnam
Result	Decisive Australian victory

Belligerents

 Australia	 Viet Cong
 New Zealand	 North Vietnam
 United States	

Ed – I find the term “Belligerents” somewhat interesting – The Latin, literally means "one who wages war". Unlike the colloquial use of *belligerent* to mean aggressive (take after you favourite team loses and you’ve had a couple of VB’s!), its formal use does not necessarily imply that the belligerent country is an aggressor.

Units involved

 D Coy, 6 RAR	 5th Division
	275th Regt
	D445 Bn

Strength

108 men	1,500–2,500 men
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Casualties and losses

18 killed	245 killed
24 wounded	350 wounded (estimate)
	3 captured

The Battle of Long Tan (18 August 1966) took place near the village of Long Tan, in Phuoc Tuy Province, South Vietnam during the Vietnam War. The action was fought between Australian forces and Viet Cong and North Vietnamese units after the 108-man D Company, 6 RAR clashed with a force of between 1,500 to 2,500 men from the Viet Cong 275th Regiment, reinforced by at least one North Vietnamese battalion and D445 Provincial Mobile Battalion. The 1st Australian Task Force (1 ATF) had arrived between April and June 1966, constructing a base at Nui Dat. After two months 1 ATF had moved beyond the initial requirements of establishing itself and securing its immediate approaches, beginning operations to open the province. Meanwhile, in response to the threat posed by the Australians the 275th Regiment was ordered to move against Nui Dat. For several weeks Australian signals intelligence had tracked a radio transmitter moving south to a position just north of Long Tan; however, aggressive patrolling failed to find the unit.

...the time line...

At 02:43 on the night of **16/17 August** Nui Dat was heavily bombarded by mortars, recoilless rifles (RCLs) and artillery fired from a position 2,000 metres (2,200 yd) to the east. Although the Viet Cong were expected to have withdrawn, a number of company patrols would be dispatched. The following morning B Company, 6 RAR departed to locate the firing points and the direction of the Viet Cong withdrawal. A number of weapon pits were subsequently found, as were the positions of the mortars and RCLs.

Around midday on 18 August, D Company took over the pursuit.

At 15:40 the lead platoon clashed with a Viet Cong squad, forcing them to withdraw. Shortly after resuming the advance,

16:08 11 Platoon came under small-arms and rocket propelled grenade fire at from a company-sized force after drawing ahead of the other platoons and was isolated. Pinned down, they called for artillery support as al rain began, reducing visibility. Beginning as an encounter battle, heavy fighting ensued as the advancing Viet Cong attempted to encircle and destroy the Australians. After less than twenty minutes more than a third of 11 Platoon had become casualties, while the platoon commander was killed soon after. 10 Platoon attempted to move up on the left in support but was repulsed. With D Company facing at least a battalion, 12 Platoon tried to push up on the right at **17:15**. Fighting off an attack on their right before pushing forward another 100 metres (110 yd) they sustained increasing casualties after clashing with several groups moving around their western flank to form a cut-off prior to a frontal assault. They subsequently opened a path to 11 Platoon yet were unable to advance further and threw smoke to mark their location.

At 18:00 With D Company nearly out of ammunition, two UH-1B Iroquois from No. 9 Squadron RAAF arrived overhead to resupply them. Meanwhile, the survivors from 11 Platoon withdrew back to 12 Platoon during a lull, suffering further losses. Still heavily engaged, both platoons returned to the company position covered by the artillery.

By 18:10 D Company had reformed but was still in danger of being overrun. A Company, 6 RAR was subsequently dispatched in M113 armoured personnel carriers from 3 Troop, 1st APC Squadron to relieve them.

Departing Nui Dat at 17:55 B Company was still returning to base on foot and was also ordered to assist. So, the relief force moved east, crossing a swollen creek before encountering elements of D445 Battalion attempting to outflank D Company and assault it from the rear.

19:00 The Viet Cong were caught by surprise as the cavalry crashed into their flank and with darkness falling they broke through, while B Company entered the position at the same time. Arriving at a crucial point, the relief force turned the tide of the battle. The Viet Cong had been massing for another assault which would have likely destroyed D Company, yet the firepower and mobility of the armour broke their will to fight, forcing them to withdraw. The artillery had been almost constant throughout the battle and it proved critical in ensuring the survival of D Company.

By 19:15 the firing ceased and the Australians waited for another attack. However, after it became clear no counter-attack would occur, they prepared to withdraw 750 metres (820 yd) west from where their casualties could be extracted by helicopter.

At 22:45 With the dead and wounded loaded onto the carriers D Company left, while B and A Company departed on foot. A landing zone was then established by the cavalry with the evacuation of the casualties finally completed after midnight.

Forming a defensive position ready to repulse an expected attack the Australians remained overnight, enduring the cold and rain. They returned in strength the next day, sweeping the area and locating a large number of Viet Cong dead. Although initially believing they had suffered a major defeat, as the scale of the losses suffered by the Viet Cong were revealed it became clear they had in fact won a significant victory. Two wounded Viet Cong were subsequently killed after they moved to engage the Australians, while three were captured. The missing men from 11 Platoon were also recovered; their bodies found lying where they had fallen, largely undisturbed. Two of the men had survived despite their wounds, having spent the night in close proximity to the Viet Cong as they attempted to evacuate their own casualties. Due to the likely presence of a sizeable force nearby the Australians remained cautious as they searched for the Viet Cong. Over the next two days they continued to clear the battlefield, uncovering more dead as they did so. With 1 ATF lacking the resources to pursue the withdrawing force, the operation ended on 21 August. Despite being heavily outnumbered, D Company held off a large assault of regimental strength supported by heavy artillery fire, before a relief force consisting of cavalry and infantry fought their way through and forced the Viet Cong to withdraw. Eighteen Australians were killed and 24 wounded, while the Viet Cong lost at least 245 dead which were found over the days that followed. A decisive Australian victory, Long Tan proved a major local setback for the Viet Cong, indefinitely forestalling an imminent movement against Nui Dat and challenging their previous domination of Phuoc Tuy Province.

Although there were other large-scale encounters in later years, 1 ATF was not fundamentally challenged again.

. Vietnam Vets Day 2013 - Bankstown Sports Club



... from Grahame Dignam... Attendees left to right: Merv (Baldy) Nairn, Jim (Fitz) Fitzgerald, George Lane, Ian Amos, Ernie Newbold, Garth Nicholls, Ken Woodbine, Geoff Holden .
Seated left to right: Ged Carroll, Nick Proskurin, Allen Morley and Grahame Dignam.

Ian brought along a group from the Shire (Locators and others) Garth was in town but is returning to his "Island home" next week and Geoff H was up from Merimbula.

The Bankstown Sports club were very welcoming and provided a good spread and looked after us very well. Great service and plenty of staff and spare seats for those who may not have booked in advance. Entertainment was provided by "Little Pattie" who performed her signature tunes and a smattering of other favourites of the era.

She also spoke of the beginning of her career and the background of her selection to tour and entertain the troops and of eventually winning her fathers' approval to tour.

She also mentioned the events as she lived them on the day of the Long Tan battle. Of how the troupe were told to end their performance part way through, as they needed to be transported to a "safe haven" as "a situation" was developing out in the rubber plantation to the east of Nui Dat. She could hear the small arms and explosions while on stage.

After loading two choppers –one with the troupe s' gear and the other with the concert party - they lifted off about 1600 hrs in torrential monsoonal rain and, as they gained height, they could then see the thousands of orange tracer being exchanged by the two combatant forces in the battle area – a memory still very vivid for her.

Well, you may get some other anecdotes so I won't take your time now.

Regards GD"

...Allen Morley added...

"It was an excellent turn out of 131ers for the Vietnam Veterans' Day Memorial Service on 18th August at Bankstown District Sports Club.

Those on parade were Grahame Dignam, Ged Carroll, Merv Nairn, Ernie Newbold, Nick Proskurin, George Lane, Jim Fitzgerald, Ian Amos, Geoff Holden, Ken Woodbine and Allen Morley. And out of the woodwork appeared Garth Nicholls ('68-'69). good to see you Garth.

The address was by Col. Donald Tait, RAA (Rtd) who spoke about his role as an FO with Bravo Coy, 1st Battalion, with regard to Coral/Balmoral. He said that the Aussies used up a lot of luck at Coral. Tait says that the Official War History of Coral/Balmoral is wrong, because everything happened too quickly for detailed records to be kept. Just ask Bob Billiards and Barry Guzder about that!

Entertainment was from Patricia Amphlett and her band. Pattie is better known as Little Pattie. Patty, at age 17, was completing her second show at Nui Dat on August 18th when the Battle for Long Tan began. She spoke passionately about her time in Vietnam and her story brought a tear to many Diggers' eyes. Allen"

Al Adams relaxing on the Sunshine Coast, Qld sent this in – “Hi Paul, Maggie and I have been here at Sunshine Beach for the last 3 weeks enjoying the Qld weather. I have caught up with Leigh (Hemming) a couple of times, and on Sunday went to the service at Caloundra. We met up with Steve Boutlis as in photo attached (at right). We are here until the weekend then back to Melbourne. It has been a busy year, so a month away has been a good break. Time for a bit of fishing and golf. Hope this finds you both well. Al”



Bob Billiards to his local stamping ground and sent us this on Springwood's (Blue Mountains area) Vietnam Veterans Day – “Paul, VV day at springwood was held in 11th so that people could attend RSL parades on the 18th. This year attendance was down, but still a good turnout. I always have problems finding a group to march with as there are generally no RAA units represented. A couple of photos of the memorial and the Catafalque Party. Here is a link to our history of the origins of the **Catafalque Party*** (see below). <http://www.army.gov.au/Our-history/Traditions/Catafalque-Party>. Regards Bob”



*Catafalque Party



A catafalque is a raised structure supporting a stand that usually holds a coffin to allow mourners to file past and pay their last respects. A watch or catafalque party was traditionally mounted around the coffin to ensure the safety of the body while it lay in state.



Members of Australia's Federation Guard form the Catafalque Party as Her Majesty The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh enter the Hall of Remembrance at the Australian War Memorial.

Today, catafalque parties are mounted around coffins as a sign of respect and around memorials on occasions of remembrance such as Anzac Day.

The catafalque party consists of four members of an armed guard who stand, their heads bowed and their arms (weapon) reversed, facing outward approximately one metre from the coffin or catafalque as a symbolic form of respect for those who have fallen.

The origin of the tradition of resting on reversed arms is lost in time. It was used by a Commonwealth soldier at the execution of Charles I in 1649 (the soldier was duly punished for his symbolic gesture towards the King's death) and it is recorded that at the funeral for the duke of Marlborough in 1722, the troops carried out a formal reverse arms drill which was especially invented for the service as a unique sign of respect to the great soldier.



Members of the Federation Guard participated in the Catafalque party during NAIDOC week in 2011.

***Catafalque** - The term originates from the Italian *catafalco*, which means scaffolding.

. Richard Chaplin had sent the following email to **Ed** not long after visiting North Head, but as I explained to Richard "it must have gone straight through to the 'keeper", so belatedly here it is – "Hi Paul, It's been a while ago now and I only noticed recently that the Dedication Ceremony of Australia's Memorial Walk at North Head didn't make it to Eyes and Ears - I was left wondering whether the email actually arrived, or whether there were editorial reasons for not including it. It's bit "old news" now and I would not expect it to be added at this late stage.

Paul, I commend you on an excellent Newsletter - you really have put your heart and soul into it.

Kind regards, Richard."

Extract from my email sent mid-December 2012.

Hi Paul,

A couple of weeks ago, on 1 December, I attended (with my wife and daughter) the Dedication Ceremony of Australia's Memorial Walk at North Head within the old School of Artillery grounds where I trained on the Radar in early 1969. We even parked our car on the old Parade Ground!

The following web site describes briefly what the Memorial Walk is about and covers details of the ceremony.

http://artilleryhistory.org/memorial_walk_dedication.html

The dedication ceremony was attended by The Governor of NSW Prof Marie Bashir, and retired Major General Tim Ford who is Chairman of the Royal Australia Artillery Historical Company that was responsible for making the Memorial Walk happen. Tim Ford of course spent part of his army career with 131 Div Loc Bty.

Like many other 131 Div Loc Bty veterans, I have a paver in the walkway section allotted to the Artillery Locating Association, and one on the attached photos shows me kneeling down close to it. You will also notice a paver in the name of Capt Tim Ford who was my Commanding Officer during the last couple of months I was in Vietnam.

After the ceremony which lasted an hour, and while my daughter was taking the "kneeling down photo", the official party of the Governor of NSW Prof Marie Bashir, Major General Tim Ford, Kevin Browning and others came up behind me, and we held them up while my daughter took the photo (I didn't know they were there, but in the photo you can see them approaching!). Tim Ford then enquired which was my paver, and then located his own paver close by (it can be seen in the photo). I mentioned to him that he was my Commanding Officer in Vietnam 42 years ago and this prompted a short conversation, and we posed for more photos while the Governor politely waited and commented that this was "lovely to see"

After the stroll along the Memorial Walk we then went on a tour of the tunnels linked to the two large gun placements built just before WW2 was declared

It was an excellent day
 For anyone interested in having a paver made and included in the Memorial Walk, go
 to http://artilleryhistory.org/memorial_walk.html
 Kind regards, Richard Chaplin"



The opening and commemoration sign (left).

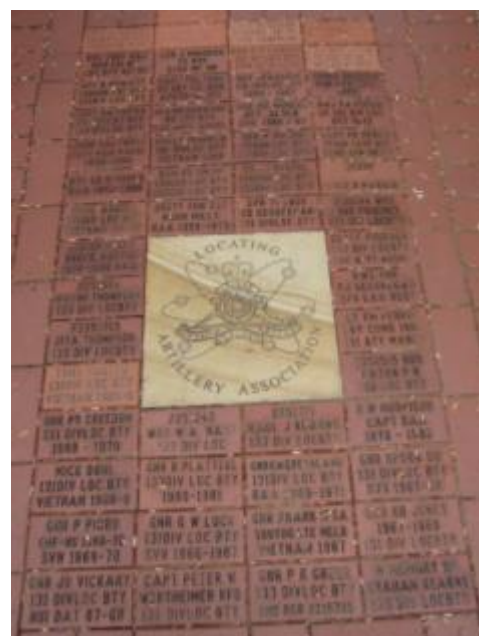


Me with my paver at right.



The Locating Artillery Assoc paver with related member's pavers.

Self with Tim Ford.



What happened in August in SVN...a series of calendar month events.

Grahame Dignam - found a great link to the AWM which lists happening in the Wars that Australia has been involved in and lists events by calendar month and then by date. So we thought it would be a great monthly event to cut out the relevant SVN dates and list them.

We're starting with June and we'll go on from here and hopefully be around for the next eleven months...

1962 - 3 August: The main body of the AATTV arrives at Saigon.

1964 - 8 August: The first RAAF unit is deployed - RAAF Transport Flight Vietnam arrives at Tan Son Nhut with Caribou aircraft.

1965 - 17 August: The Australian Government approves an increase of the force in Bien Hoa to a battalion group, with 1RAR to be supported by artillery, additional armoured personnel carriers, engineers, army aviation and further logistical support.

1966 -18 August: The Battle of Long Tan is fought as 'D' Company, 6RAR, runs into a much larger enemy force and eighteen Australians (including one of the relief force) are killed. The anniversary has become Vietnam Veterans' Day. Pipers played a lament for the dead during the commemorative service held in August 1969, on the site of the Battle of Long Tan, fought by D Company, 6RAR in 1966.

1971 - 18 August: The Australian Government announces the withdrawal of the bulk of Australian forces.

...and continuing one more thing – Ernie Newbold's discoveries.

. Customs – This is another item in the continuing series suggested by **Ernie Newbold** from the AWM site <http://www.awm.gov.au/commemoration/customs/recitation.asp> - they're not totally peculiar to the Australian Armed Forces, but they are deeply rooted traditions which we identify with...

Rifle volleys and gun salutes...



A twenty one gun salute at Royal Military College Duntroon, 1946.

Salutes may be fired with personal weapons, field pieces, or ship's cannons. The origins of such salutes are a little obscure. Making a loud noise has long been regarded as a form of celebration. Another suggestion is that the salute was originally a sign of trust, originating around the 14th century. In the days of muzzle-loading cannons, it took a while to reload a ship's armament once it had been fired. So when a ship was approaching a foreign port or another friendly ship, all the cannons on board would be fired to show that they were empty and posed no threat. It was also a sign of trust that people on land or in the other vessel not to open fire on them. In time, this practice was adopted as a way to honour dignitaries on land as well.

The salute today is not fired in one large burst of gunfire but rather as a rolling volley, in which one gun fires after another. It's said that this practice originated in less chivalrous, more pragmatic times. By firing one gun after another, a symbolic salute could be fired to honour a VIP, but some guns would remain loaded so as not to leave the vessel wholly defenceless. A specific number of guns are fired to honour VIPs in accordance with their status. Royalty and heads of state receive a 21-gun salute, field marshals, state officials and equivalents receive a 19-gun salute, generals and equivalent ranks receive 17, and so on down to 11 for a brigadier.



A firing party of Australian infantrymen fire a salute at the burial of Brigadier A.H.L. Godfrey DSO MC ED.

To honour the passing of a soldier below the rank of brigadier, or as a general gesture of mourning and remembrance, three rifle volleys are fired; all the rifles are fired in unison, and this is repeated three times. The three volleys are believed to have originally represented the holy trinity. Other sources, however, trace the practice to more ancient origins: at pagan funeral ceremonies to honour dead warriors, their comrades rode three times around the funeral pyre.

. David Dougherty sent in this interesting article re: Vietnam book offerings via Kindle. He concludes with some great excerpts from "*The Battle Of Coral: Vietnam Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral, May 1968 Macaulay, Lex (2012-01-01). Random House Australia*" – it's a fascinating read –

"Hi Paul,

Had advised Grahame & John that a number of the books on Vietnam are available on Kindle and can be read on PCs & tablets using free app from Kindle.

Price is much less than hard copy. Below is email I sent to Graham...

Hi John & Grahame,

As an addendum to our previous conversations if members are not aware a number of books on Vietnam can be downloaded from Kindle. It is not necessary to have a kindle as Kindle have free programs to cover other devices such as laptops and tablets. I have found two big advantages, one being cost (see books below) and another the

ability to search the entire book by a word or phrase. Another benefit is that usually the first chapter or much thereof is available online to read but the down side is that you cannot flick through the whole book to see the overall content. An example of cost is:-

Fire Support Bases Vietnam by Bruce Picken \$35.00 approx. retail, Kindle \$9.99 plus banks foreign exchange fee \$1.50??

This book makes an excellent reference to what FSBs there were but is basically factual giving operation name, date, grid, units present etc. but does not describe the general events.

Another is:-

The Battle Of Coral: Vietnam Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral, May 1968 by Lex Macaulay also \$9.99

Later books generally can cost more such as:-

Vietnam: The Complete Story of the Australian War by Gary McKay and Bruce Davies \$17.50

Below are a couple of quotes from *The Battle Of Coral: Vietnam Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral, May 1968 Macaulay, Lex (2012-01-01). Random House Australia. Kindle Edition* that may be of interest/concern to the radar personnel in particular if they have not already seen them.

"Lieutenant Colonel Kelly, CO 12 Field Regiment, had never had faith in the ability of the mortar- locating radar, and had recommended against its purchase. It could track a single bomb in the air, but became confused if there were more in flight. Kelly, determined to get some use from them, placed them in a visible position so the enemy would fire at them. Then, in the old way, compass bearings were taken to the origin of the enemy fire; these were reported to HQ; and where they intersected was the probable position of the enemy, so was shelled. (Major General Kelly described this use of the radars in an interview with the author in July 1986. Div Loc Battery members may now realise why their equipment was under fire in 1968.)"

"The counter-mortar radars never did achieve acceptance, despite continued efforts with their use. The Engineers dug a pit for the machinery, later realising that the pit must be dug to suit the requirements of the device, not the other way around. While all this was being sorted out, an enemy mortar began firing, and the base plate position was obvious to all, in plain sight were the bombs sailing through the air. It was a great opportunity for the radar, and George Hulse and his men stood there, watching the radar dish move across the sky tracking the bomb ... then the operators gave a position for the enemy which was wrong by 180 degrees ..."

"The artillery radars had been affected by the concussions and vibrations at Coral, and a technical sergeant was sent up from Nui Dat to repair them, being rostered for duty in the artillery CP during his stay. He had never been under fire before. Thinking that the NVA might be using the interior illumination as a target reference, and acting decisively and swiftly, the sergeant shot out the CP light, to the consternation and amazement of all around him. His action was not well received, and it was explained to him in short sentences why the counter-bombardment processes required light."

"The hapless artillery radars had a minor disaster on the flight out, when the machine itself was somehow dropped from beneath its Chinook, just outside the Fire Support Base, and did not survive the fall."

I was on the Chinook that dropped the radar as noted in this last quote and it was my understanding that it was intentional as the pilot could not gain height due to the load and therefore the radar was sacrificed by the crew to lighten the load.

Regards, David"

. **Peter Ravelje** – forwarded a link to a great website – it's really worthwhile have a browse through –

"From the National Vietnam Vets Museum .. Philip Island

We are having a wall with dog-tags from all those killed in Vietnam hanging in chronological order. I have two reasons for asking members to check. First, if the details I have is correct and if they have better photos than the ones I am using, can they email them to me and I will replace mine with theirs. - www.piriemadigans.com.au/dogtags"



Welcome – The Association has great pleasure in welcoming **David Negus** to the Association fold - a Vet from the '70s era.

. Upcoming Events Calender –

Presidential Perambulations...

- Where did that dog come from in Rob Retrot's album? Surprising perhaps that it survived on army rations.
- Why does Nick Proskurin not have an album?
- The late Geoff Wood pops up frequently, especially in Hans Weber's album.
- Did the surveyors do any work or just party?

Family histories represent much more common records these days. The convict ancestor – I have one who stole church silver – the surprising celebrity and even the destruction of a family story with links to fame.

The time for action is now, before we all forget!
Cheers Allen Morley



Dear Veterans,

Below is the link to the video pressing our case for the War Memorial to commission a new official account of the Agent Orange controversy.

We believe the present Official History account misrepresents the truth and grossly insults our veterans.

If you feel you can support our request, we would be grateful if you would sign the on-line petition accompanying the video and pass it on to as many veterans, family and friends as you can.

Our National Research Officer is addressing the War Memorial Council on the issue on Wednesday 14th August.

Regards,

Tim McCombe

National President

Video and Petition Link: <http://chn.ge/1c6ZtVr>

Note: To enlarge the video, click on the four inward facing arrows on the bar at the bottom right of the image. To restore to original size so you can sign the petition press 'esc'.

(The link to the video only: <http://vimeo.com/72155135>)

...This prompted the following email to the group from the Associations' Allen Morley...

Members of 131 Locators Association

I have watched the VVPPA video and have for a long time been aware of DVA's role in the Agent Orange case.

My personal experience of DVA's highest order bureaucratic bastardry means that I believe the VVPPA's case is strong, and very worthy of our support.

I urge you to spend 4.5 minutes to watch the video, if necessary read the supporting material, remember how your mates and other soldiers often had significant health problems, and to sign the petition as confirmation of our Association's support.

I have signed the petition personally and ask that you do the same

Best wishes

Allen Morley (Gunner ret'd)

President

Some responses...

Stuart Sporn responded with – "I have signed the petition and will be interested to know where this goes. Since Federation Australia has never looked after its war veterans and it is time they were taken to account for their lack of duty of care.

"A man who sees a wrong and doesn't right it, isn't"

Steve Boutlis's response – "Did it yesterday, Dicko. I will publish the link in Ricochet, our newsletter.

Cheers, Boots"

...Ed – See. 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery... below for Bill Taggart's support by his involvement in this petition...

. web Performance...

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

. Birthdays in the Battery...September –

Now let's pick the youngster out for the Month – **Kevin Geoghegan** - Happy 62nd!



Here's what **Keith Dean** looked like in 1966 with a beer in his hand. **HAPPY Birthday** for the 16th!

September	Name	Service No	YOB	In SVN	Out SVN	Comments
2	PHILIP MULGREW	3411756	1948	29 04 1968	07 05 1969	
3	MILLS BUCKLEY	16950	1937	20 05 1966	03 03 1967	† 02.04.07
3	PETER SAINT	45033	1949	04 11 1970	29 07 1971	
6	JOHN DELLACA	3791355	1945	29 01 1968	28 01 1969	
7	STEVE BOUTLIS	3787962	1945	02 01 1967	27 09 1967	
7	GARY BESTER	3411737	1948	08 01 1968	03 12 1968	

7	IVAN MILLS S/Sgt.	213051	1934	31 01 1969	05 11 1969	
8	WILLIAM EDWARD	2789911	1947	21 02 1969	21 02 1970	
12	BARRY NUGENT	1411039	1945	03 01 1967	12 12 1967	
12	LARRY BRIDGE	2786506	1946	15 03 1968	18 03 1969	
12	PHILIP JOHNS	4719086	1946	16 09 1968	18 03 1969	
12	STEVEN VOSS	1735605	1948	29 04 1970	18 03 1971	
12	KEVIN GEOGHEGAN	219351	1951	16 12 1970	02 06 1971	131
	" "			02 06 1971	23 12 1971	HQ AFV
13	VICTOR CLAXTON	4410991	1948	17 01 1968	23 12 1968	
14	MERV DART	37821	1942	03 01 1967	09 01 1968	† 2001
14	FRANK IPSA	3786657	1945	04 05 1967	12 12 1967	
14	RUSSELL HEWITT	2792435	1948	03 06 1970	04 03 1971	
16	FRANK PEPPER	216683	1948	12 09 1967	17 09 1968	† 27.12.89
16	RONALD DEAN	215527	1944	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	
16	BRIAN BLACK	2786469	1946	27 11 1967	26 11 1968	† 18.01.11
16	ALLEN WHEATLEY	2790305	1947	16 09 1969	04 06 1970	
17	JOHN BLAKE	1731550	1945	04 05 1967	13 12 1967	
17	BARRY GUZDER	5714500	1945	10 06 1967	21 05 1968	
17	MAURICE ARCH	43350	1937	02 01 1967	14 11 1967	
17	ERNEST GALLOWAY	216708	1948	08 01 1968	22 04 1968	
18	BOB WILSON	3791425	1946	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
18	JIM LAWLER Sgt.	28523	1936	18 12 1967	03 12 1968	
19	ROBERT DAVID GOW	61644	1944	20 05 1966	03 03 1967	
19	HUBERT ANDREWS	2790121	1947	21 02 1969	21 02 1970	
19	WESLEY HINDMARSH	2791313	1947	30 09 1969	13 08 1970	
19	PHILLIP WAPSHOT	3793468	1947	27 11 1969	18 03 1970	
21	GARRY LEPLAW	217182	1948	05 02 1968	11 02 1969	† 06.12.83
22	IAN BUBB	2792358	1948	13 05 1970	11 03 1971	RAEME
23	GREGORY TOMMASI 2Lt.	3791966	1946	10 03 1970	25 08 1970	131
	" "			25 08 1970	11 03 1971	4 Fd Regt.
24	BOB BILLIARDS	2785702	1946	12 09 1967	17 09 1968	
24	GEOFFREY CARTHEW	2793339	1949	03 06 1970	09 06 1971	
26	KEN McNAMARA	2783740	1945	04 05 1967	12 12 1967	
26	JOHN DAVIES Sgt.	29351	1937	07 10 1966	30 04 1967	
26	RONALD BOALER	130230	1948	20 02 1970	11 02 1971	
28	LEONARD WALKER	3798942	1949	16 12 1970	30 06 1971	Det 131 † Unknown
	" "			30 06 1971	30 10 1971	12 Fd Regt.

Ed – 11 blokes not highlighted is **10** better than the “disaster” we stated in August last year’s *E&Es*. See what we can do when we try? However, no resting on laurels – lets Locate more.

. Locator Profiles – we’ve received **120** and we’ve sent out **115**. **Ed** – let’s get busy in September!

David Troedel sent the following in after reading **Robert Tompsett’s** Locator Profile and it’s interesting the closeness some of our paths take – “Hi Paul,

Reading Robert Tompsett’s Locator Profile prompted me to send you mine.

It is interesting as we were in the same intake and Coy in 20 NSTB.

His Regt No was 3/781345 and mine was 3/781349, we must have been pretty close in the queue on that cold winter day. Can you let me know what Platoon Robert was in? I would think that the Bn marched out on the 1st August 1958 after completing 77 days. I completed 74 days.

Another interesting story was that I was the only one that enlisted from NS to go to Artillery and arrived by train at Central Station in Sydney and the RTO told me to catch a bus from Central to Circular Quay and catch the Manly Ferry to Manly and catch the bus up to North Head.

The bus stopped under the archway and when I got off with my kit bag the first person I bumped into was Bull Storey. He had difficulty understanding why I arrived at the School by bus (I must admit after all these years it seems a bit strange)

Hope you can read the attachment OK.

Regards David”

...Ed interesting not about your trip to North Head, I'm sure Bob Billiards and somebody else had similar stories: their turning up on the doorstep and surprises all around!

...**Stuart Sporn** comments with another angle on part of **Robert Tompsett's** Locator Profile - "Interesting to note the occupation of ringer both with sheep and beef... I think the correct terminology for "cow ringers" is "shit ringers" to not confuse with "sheep ringers". In the days of cattle droving "shit ringers" used to round up the herd at night camp and patrol the outer ring all night. The cows all had their bums to the outer ring and pooped all night. Next morning there was a ring of shit hence the correct terminology!!@@@

My old man was a stock agent and we regularly used to go to Maree SA where the cattle were driven from Birdsville surrounding stations to be railed to Adelaide markets from Maree. With the advent of road trains this is now history. I knew Noel Buntine in Katherine who had 2 trucks in Alice in the early 60's. He had well over a fleet of 100 road trains at the end and Mack would always give him their new model to play with prior to Australian release. Hope this trivia is of interest"

Allen Morley has a request for some assistance in compiling a Locator Profile for the Late **Mick Campbell** -
" **Wanted - No Reward**

I am attempting to prepare a 131 Profile for Mick (Lewis Michael) Campbell (SVN 4th May - 13 Dec 1967). I suspect he died in Victoria in 1984-5, apparently accidentally. But I have no Date of Death nor location.

About the only information I can find is date of birth and general service info. At this stage I have not identified any photos of Mick from Nui Dat or Holsworthy.

Can you help???

Thanks, Allen"

. 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 –

. **Jenny Jacques, Fred Lennon's** daughter, sent the following in which is greatly appreciated and extends the image of what Fred meant to those who came in contact with him –

"Hi Paul,

Just wanted to get in touch with you and your members to say thank you after the passing of my Dad, Fred Lennon. My name is Jenny Jacques and I have looked up your website and noticed the Vale on Dad. I would like to take this opportunity to respond to the kind help of Dave Troedel, supplying some valuable information on him and the lovely comments written about Dad. It makes me feel so proud of all his achievements and I would like to add a little more about his life, if that's ok with you. Dad was, and still is my hero; he came from very humble beginnings to become a high achiever in every aspect of his personal and army life. He was highly intelligent and the two words that come up often to describe him are joker and gentleman. Both these words describe him to a tee; he loved his jokes and was always kind and thoughtful. Both he and Mum moved to the Gold Coast with us in 1985 and we have all lived together on the same property since then. Dad was diagnosed with 'Parkinson's Disease' over 20 years ago and although this slowly progressed and halted a lot of his activities, he still kept going. Mum has always been by his side, and is a wonderful wife. Just 2 weeks before he passed away he was taken to hospital as his condition was worsening and after a scan they found quite a large brain tumour, which as they informed us could have been there 30-50 years. This was quite a shock for us, and made me question was this really Parkinson's as he had some of the symptoms, but some were a little different. I know he had been sprayed with "agent orange", and they say there could be some connection to neurological disorders. Dad wanted me to have his medals, which I treasure as we would often sit together and he loved to tell me about his life in the army and he knew I was a good listener. He even wrote his life story for me and my family, sometimes typing with one finger! He is so sadly missed, but never forgotten. Thanks again for the article on Dad, and if anyone would like to get in touch with me, that would be lovely. My email address is jennywren1958@hotmail.com.

Kind Regards,
Jenny Jacques"

May he rest in peace



131 Locators Association is always on the lookout for new financial members. With the upcoming establishment of the web site we are going 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 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 Paddington RSL at 11.15am 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 *Associations* 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

The Dept of Veteran's Affairs has launched a new mental health initiative to assist veteran's experiencing the effects

of mental illness and their families. Providing information and fact sheets about understanding mental illness, links and contact information for accessing support, and online resources for health professionals, this website focuses on helping veterans identify early warning signs of mental illness to effectively manage their mental illness and seek treatment. For more info or to access, please visit www.at-ease.dva.gov.au

. 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery...



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

The following are some excerpts taken from –

1/83rd Artillery - Weekly Update 2013 - Week of August 12 - August 16, 2013



Aussie FOC . . .



And Gun Crew



The Ever Present . . .



APC's

1/83rd Unit News

c. As I mentioned last week, August 18 is the 47th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. This battle, fought by the ANZAC forces (Australia and New Zealand) in Phouc Tuy Province 1966, resulted in 18 KIA from the ANZAC forces, the most in any action during the Vietnam War. This prompted our Chuck Mattson (70-71) to send me some pictures (on left) that the Aussies in particular may enjoy. Chuck's first tour in Vietnam was with the 2/35 Artillery, our 155SP "neighbours" at Nui Dat. Chuck was there for the Battle of Long Tan on August 18, 1966.

General

a. Agent Orange. I received this material from Paul Dickson our Aussie mate who is the editor of the *Eyes and Ears* newsletter. It concerns the problems that the Aussies are having getting their Government to recognize the resulting health problems from exposure to Agent Orange. There is a background video and link to sign a petition. I have already done so and encourage all of you to help our Aussie mates as they fight for something all of us know all too well. Click here.

...then Bill gets to add more comments with another email...

"When I was at the Reunion Planning event this past week, one of the things we were taken to was the Evening parade held during the summer months at the Marine Corps Barracks in Washington DC. This is the home of the US Marine Corps, where the Marine Commandant traditionally resides and also is the oldest continuous active Marine post in US history.

The Evening Parade is very impressive and the Marine Band and Marine Drum and Bugle Corps also perform along with 2 Companies of Marines. The highlight of event however is a performance by the Marine Corps Silent Drill Team. The precision is absolutely amazing and done in silence with no spoken commands. If you ever get the chance to see it you will enjoy it. All I could think of was the amount of time we had close order drill in Basic Training. Trust me, we never came close to looking like they did!

What I did not know was that the Guest of Honor that evening was The Hon **Kim Beazley**, Australia's Ambassador to the United States. The first song played by the band was Waltzing Matilda. I know this is a special ballad to all of you but it has always been a favorite of mine. It highlighted a memorable evening.

Here is a link from 2010 that shows a summary of their performance...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7nqBkTjmV8>

Bill

Email... artillery_83rd@yahoo.com

1/83rd Website link... http://83rd_artillery.home.comcast.net/"

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