

THE EYES and EARS

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



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Vol. 6 No. 9 – 30/09/2013

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

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

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So settle in and enjoy...

. The late Fred Lennon...collection series...



Sgt Fred Lennon - aged 25 instructor 12 National Service TRG BN - after a march through Sydney Streets 1952-53.
Ed – what a wonderfully naive photo of a bunch of young blokes in the '50's. How about the blokes in the background twiddling the fingers off their noses – how typical was that! I guess it was later replaced by the "V" sign over the back of the head!

Look for more memorabilia in October and beyond.

. **1st Australian task Force** – (source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>) The following is an interesting account of our introduction into the conflict in South Vietnam and we're hoping to continue it...



May to September 1965.

The Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV) had been assisting South Vietnamese forces since 1962 as part of the wider US advisory effort.

However, in **April 1965** ground troops were committed as the worsening situation in Vietnam led to a significant escalation of the war. The 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1 RAR) was subsequently dispatched with engineers, cavalry, artillery and aviation elements in support, totalling 1,400 personnel. 1 RAR would be attached to the US 173rd Airborne Brigade based in Bien Hoa, a formation which operated throughout III Corps Tactical Zone (III

CTZ). Unlike later Australian units that served in Vietnam which included conscripts, it was manned by regular personnel only. The battalion would be employed in airmobile search and destroy operations using helicopters to insert light infantry and artillery into an area of operations (AO) and support them with mobility, fire support, casualty evacuation, and resupply.

Commencing operations in late **June**, 1 RAR conducted forays into War Zone D and the Iron Triangle where they fought a number of actions including the Battle of Gang Toi on **8 November** and Operation New Life in the La Nga Valley, 75 kilometres (47 mi) north-east of Bien Hoa between 21 November and 16 December. Operation Marauder was launched on the Plain of Reeds in the Mekong Delta on **New Years Day 1966** and continued until 7 January. 1 RAR then took part in Operation Crimp in the Ho Bo Woods, north of Cu Chi over the period 8–14 January. Further fighting followed, including the Battle of Suoi Bong Trang on the night of 23/24 February 1966.

At the strategic level, the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) and the South Vietnamese government had both rallied after appearing on the verge of collapse and the threat to Saigon had subsided by late 1965. Yet further troop increases were required if General William Westmoreland, Commander US MACV, was to adopt a more offensive strategy, with US forces planned to rise from 210,000 in January 1966 to 327,000 by December. The Australian government increased its own commitment on **8 March 1966**, announcing the deployment of a two battalion brigade—the 1st Australian Task Force (1 ATF)—with armour, aviation, engineers and artillery support; in total **4,500** men. Additional Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and Royal Australian Navy (RAN) elements would also be deployed and with all three services total Australian strength in Vietnam was planned to rise to **6,300**. Meanwhile, 1 RAR's attachment to US forces had highlighted the differences between Australian and American operational methods. Whereas the Americans relied on massed firepower and mobility in big-unit search and destroy operations as part of a war of attrition which often resulted in heavy casualties on both sides, the Australians—although not eschewing conventional operations—emphasised deliberate patrolling using dispersed companies supported by artillery, APCs and helicopters to separate the Viet Cong from the population in the villages, while slowly extending government control.

Consequently, 1 RAR would be replaced at the end of its tour by 1 ATF which would be allocated its own Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR) in Phuoc Tuy Province, thereby allowing the Australians to pursue operations more independently using their own methods.

By 1966 Phuoc Tuy Province was dominated by the Viet Cong. With forces dispersed across South Vietnam to defend against the growing communist insurgency, the ARVN was stretched thin with only limited resources available to counter the increasing penetration of the province. Politically, Phuoc Tuy was controlled by the province chief, a South Vietnamese army officer appointed by the central government, and was divided into five districts, each with a district chief. Although the government controlled Ba Ria and the Vung Tau Special Zone, it only partially controlled the village of Long Dien, the western parts of Dat Do and the villages of Long Hai, Xuyen Moc and Phu My during the day. Only the route from Ba Ria to Vung Tau was secure, and outside this area South Vietnamese forces were likely to be ambushed. Although the predominately Catholic village of Binh Gia opposed communist influence, it was isolated with the Viet Cong cadres controlling the remainder of the province, collecting taxes and subjecting the population to extortion and violent intimidation.

The Viet Cong increasingly operated in parallel to the South Vietnamese administration.

Part of the larger communist province of Ba Long—which also encompassed Long Khanh and part of Bien Hoa provinces—the Ba Long Province People's Committee co-ordinated efforts in the province under the direction of the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), an organisation controlled by Hanoi. Meanwhile, a network of cells and committees known as the Viet Cong Infrastructure provided support and extended their control into the villages and hamlets. The military forces which supported the political apparatus consisted of main forces, local forces and guerrillas. Also controlled by COSVN, collectively they comprised the People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF). Although purportedly separate from the North Vietnamese People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN), the later increasingly provided reinforcements to the Viet Cong main forces, while PAVN units themselves would operate in Phuoc Tuy in later years.

The Chief of the Australian General Staff, Lieutenant General John Wilton, departed for Vietnam soon after the announcement of 1 ATF's deployment, meeting senior South Vietnamese officials and US military commanders, including Westmoreland, to finalise arrangements. The southern-most province in III CTZ, Phuoc Tuy had been selected by the Australians because it was an area of significant Viet Cong activity, was located away from the Cambodian border, could be resupplied and, if necessary, evacuated by sea, and enabled them to concentrate their efforts in a single area to achieve greater national recognition. Rather than being attached to a US division, negotiations between Wilton and Westmoreland ensured the force would be an independent command under the operational control of US II Field Force, Vietnam (II FFV), a corps-level headquarters based in Bien Hoa which reported directly to Commander US MACV. This would allow 1 ATF greater freedom of action and the chance to demonstrate the Australian Army's evolving operational concept for counter-insurgency warfare which had been developed, at least in part, from its experiences during the Malayan Emergency. The task force would be commanded by Brigadier David Jackson, an experienced infantry officer who had served in the Middle East and New Guinea during the Second World War, and later in Korea, and had commanded the AATTV and Australian Army Force Vietnam (AAFV) prior to taking up the appointment. With the new force given less than two months to deploy hasty preparations began in Australia to ready it.

Meanwhile, 1 RAR continued to operate alongside American forces. Over the period **9–22 March** it was involved in Operation Silver City, a two-brigade search and destroy mission 25 kilometres (16 mi) north of Bien Hoa in War Zone D under the command of the US 1st Division. In late-March two brigades of the US 1st Division, reinforced by the US 173rd Airborne Brigade and a number of South Vietnamese units, conducted Operation Abilene, a search and destroy

mission through Phuoc Tuy Province, targeting the 274th and 275th Regiments of the Viet Cong 5th Division, and their base areas in the May Tao Secret Zone. 1 RAR was subsequently tasked with defending a fire support and logistic base established in the Courtenay rubber plantation and later conducted a cordon and search of the village of Binh Ba. Yet the Viet Cong largely avoided battle and contact with the sweeping American brigades was light. On the morning of **11 April** the US 2/16th Infantry Battalion clashed with the Viet Cong D800 Battalion in fierce close-quarters fighting during the only major action. With both sides too close for American firepower to be effective, casualties were heavy. Viet Cong losses included 41 confirmed dead and possibly another 50, while 35 Americans were also killed. In preparation for the arrival of 1 ATF, the population of the fortified Viet Cong village of Long Tan was forcibly removed, with the 1,000 inhabitants resettled nearby and the village destroyed by South Vietnamese forces. The Australians defending the divisional fire support base were also heavily engaged, with the fighting resulting in 14 Viet Cong killed, 12 wounded and 33 captured, while 1 RAR lost four wounded.

Located **40 kilometres (25 mi) south-east of Saigon, Phuoc Tuy Province** lay on the coast between the mountains of southern central Vietnam and the alluvial plains of the Mekong Delta, dominating the approaches to Vung Tau and the main highway to the capital. Approximately 60 kilometres (37 mi) from east to west and 35 kilometres (22 mi) from north to south, it was roughly rectangular. Mostly flat, it gradually sloped north, while rocky hills rose in the south-west, north-east and south, including the Nui Thi Vai, May Tao and Long Hai mountains. The province was bounded to the north by Bien Hoa, Long Khanh, and Binh Tuy provinces, and to the south-east by the South China Sea.

Administratively separate, the Vung Tau peninsula projected south, with the city of Vung Tau at its tip including a shallow water port of strategic importance due to its capacity to relieve congestion at ports on the Saigon River. Phuoc Tuy was bisected by Route 2 running north to the provincial capital of Ba Ria, while Route 15 ran south-west between Vung Tau and Saigon and served as the main supply route for the movement of stores landed at the port, and Route 23 ran east from Baria. With just a quarter of the province used for agriculture, it supported a modest population of 104,636, most of which was concentrated in the south-west in approximately 30 villages and 100 hamlets, while major settlements included Ba Ria, Long Dien, Dat Do, Binh Gia and Xuyen Moc. Racially, the majority were Vietnamese, while there were small numbers of Chinese, indigenous Montagnards, Cambodians and French. Two-thirds were Buddhist, while the remainder were Catholic. Most lived in poverty as farmers, fishermen, labourers, merchants or mechanics. Rice growing was the main industry, although fruit and vegetables were also cultivated, and coastal fishing was extensive. Meanwhile, a number of charcoal kilns, sawmills, salt evaporation ponds and rubber plantations also provided employment.

Geographically the province was **ideally suited to guerrilla warfare**, consisting of flat, open farmland and rice fields with numerous villages and small settlements, a long and mostly uninhabited coastline aside from the port of Vung Tau and the fishing villages of Lang Phuoc Hai and Long Hai, and a region of dense mangrove swamp and waterways in the south-west known as the Rung Sat, both of which aided infiltration for the VC and also meanwhile, isolated mountains covered in dense vegetation provided supply routes and base areas for them as well. Rainforest, thick scrub and grassland covered almost three-quarters of the province, in places restricting movement of tracked and wheeled vehicles, limiting visibility to close range and providing extensive concealment. In the lowlands the vegetation provided little obstacle to either mounted or dismounted movement, although a number of watercourses and streams were difficult to traverse, particularly during the wet season, with four major rivers flowing north to south, being the Song Hoa, Song Rai, Song Ba Dap and Song Dinh. Phuoc Tuy had a tropical climate, with the monsoon lasting from mid-May to the end of October, which resulted in several hours of heavy rain up to twice a day, while the dry season lasted from October to May. **The Viet Cong and their predecessors, the Viet Minh, had dominated Phuoc Tuy since 1945.** As a consequence, the local population had a long tradition of resistance to the former French colonial administration, while communist revolutionary elements later challenged repeated attempts by the ARVN to bring the province under control of the central government in Saigon. In contrast, Vung Tau was largely free from Viet Cong activity. A popular seaside resort with many bars and nightclubs, it was rumoured to have been used as a rest centre by both allied and Viet Cong soldiers. A number of large allied military installations had also been established there, including the support base for the US Mobile Riverine Force.

This series will be continued in October's Eyes & Ears.

. Barry Campton...dropped us an email (following) that is a follow up from the "Battle of Lang Tan" article in last month's *Eyes & Ears* –

"Hello Paul

Further information that may illustrate that locaters were doing their job at the Battle of Long Tan.

The morning after the shelling of the base (18th Aug 66), crater analysis by Jim Townley and myself was carried out revealing very accurate locations of the mortar base plate and what was later revealed as a 70mm Mountain gun. All in a straight line!

So even though we were not able to use the ANKPQ 1 radar (because of the amount of metal in the air at the time) locaters did utilise artillery intelligence to prove the location of the VC at that time.

Also Locaters were invaluable as gun numbers especially in preparing ammunition for the gun batteries.

Use your editorial skills if you want to use this information. Kind Regards, Barry Campton"

...and we received more info in relation to Aug 18 from David Crowther...

"Hi Dicko, Another good read.

re Col. Kelly's (12 Fd.) doubts on mortar locating radar and use of them virtually as a decoy. It was more widespread. as previously expressed, I was mortified (and expressed my views loudly) when dispatched by Chinook to secure the area for our radar, **Alpha**, ahead of it arriving by road. On securing the area, we were told that 103 Bty would be located **behind us** and our radar would not only carry out our own roles **but also maintain perimeter defence and**

twice daily clearing patrols. 103bty would maintain the standing patrol 1 Bdr, 2 x Gunners. They would go out with my patrol and I would bring in the standing patrol from the previous 12hrs.

The generator was pounding day and night and no doubt we were not the only troops employing sound triangulation, as the bombardment prior to battle of Long Tan came straight through our section with Carl D, Lofty H and also a Gunner from 103 Bty (**name blacked out in my memory** - who was hit in the temple region), who was in my tent being the first three casualties of I think 24 wounded. The Gunner spent the rest of his life in Callan Park mental hospital up to when it closed a few years ago. I personally took out the twice daily clearing patrols every day in my term at the Dat. Prior to 6 RAR settling in at the Dat we also had to contribute to the t.a.o.r patrols to **the line Alpha** (roughly to Long Phouc 4000 mts) led by a Sgt from 103 Bty. These men also had to carry out our duties with the radar detachment including several command posts during the wet as we were also located in the watercourse between the hill and the paddies.

Not griping but letting my feelings (and on behalf of our section living and deceased) be known on the misuse of our highly trained radar section,
Keep up the good work
D.C.”

Ed - “**NOT GRIPING**” – you’ve got to be bloody joking!

. A FOLLOW UP ON THE BANNER AFTER LONG TAN....AWM, Ron Mason etc...

Ed had sent an inquiry email to the AWM re: Fred Lennon’s photo of the banner (black & white photo below left which was sent in by Fred’s daughter Jenny Jacques and used in Fred’s Locator Profile) as he thought it was pretty unique and got this back from Andrew Jack at the AWM...



“Dear Mr Dickson,
Thank you for your offer of a banner flown over a local village, sometime after August 18 1966.
I have a suspicion that your image might be similar to one of these two images for which I’ve attached links.

<http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P04112.001>

<http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P03916.001>

These two came in to the collection from different private sources about ten years ago. If you cut and paste the

following into the AWM’s online search box you will see the two other images that came in at the same time as the first image: P04112*

All three relate to your unit.

Thanks again for your email and I would like to talk to you if you think your image would substantially enhance the Photograph Collection’s coverage of that period of the Vietnam War.

Regards,

Andrew Jack

Photographs Section

Australian War Memorial

andrew.jack@awm.gov.au”

...**Ed** – well I responded to Andrew and attached a copy of Fred’s photo, so I’ll keep you posted on the results.

...then...

The photo below is one of **Ron Mason’s**, which, along with another of a radar, is in the AWM archives... **Ron** responded to an email from me with – “Paul, the photo of mine that the AWM has was taken on the 19th or 20th Aug, can’t remember which day, may have been a day later. On that trip to V T only 2 vehicles were on the road, as I recall, the Rover I was in & the 131 Rover that is in the photo, you can see the red & blue square on the front of it. I don’t remember who else was on the road that day in our mob, Baldy or George may remember if they were out that day. The banner was soon removed from over the road & put on a fence next to the road, some official crap about security!!!

By the look of the B&W photo it must have been taken from a higher vehicle than a Landrover. Ron.”



P04112.001

...Does anyone else have photos archived in the AWM's website – we'd be keen to hear from you?

. **Geoff Jebb - WO1 GEOFF JEBB OAM RECOLLECTIONS** – taken from the web site using to following link - <http://www.artillerysurveyors131.com.au/jebb.html>
An email from **Bert Blink** re-acquainted us with a some fascinating memories. This is the first section which we'll run as a series -



131 Surveyors on Hill 837.



Approaching the Hill 837 Helipad



SVN ARVN on Hill 837, 1968



US Commanders of Hill 837



Part of the defensive bunkers ringing Hill 837 Nissen Hut Command Centre Hill 837



Re-supply Chinook, Hill 837, 1968

131 DIV LOC BTY ARTY SVYS AT NUI CHUA CHAN SVN: 1968 – 1969

Chua Chan is located in Long Khan Province about 60 km east of Saigon and 10km east of Xuan Loc. Xuan Loc was where the last major battle of the Vietnam War was fought in March/April 1975.

Chua Chan rises on the eastern edge of a plain to a height of 837 metres. Its summit gave uninterrupted views from the south east to the north west; to a distance of about 25km.

In 1966 the Americans established a base on Nui Chua Chan as a radio relay station and observation post. It bristled with radio antennae and was only accessible by helicopter. The summit was cleared of all vegetation to about 50m down the slope and ringed with wire, mines and well constructed bunkers. With heavy machine guns and mortars it was very defensible. The VC made occasional probes and in May and August 1968 they made serious assaults without success.

131 Artillery Surveyors' interest was the French Trig Station established there in Colonial times. This provided a reliable point of origin when FSBs were deployed in the area sweeping from south to the west. Given the right conditions, a direct line of sight could be achieved, if not into the FSBs proper, then to points close by. For the Survey task a small party would be choppered to Chua Chan, the remainder would deploy as near the FSB as possible. Here

they would set up and establish a computing centre.

It was not always plain sailing! At times smoke, haze, rain, mist and low cloud made visual contact difficult. The use of heliographs and even magnesium flares usually solved these problems.

Data was passed by radio to the command centre and because we were usually operating outside our AO, our particular frequency was often taken by another Unit. Data transfer by radio, often resulted in harsh words being exchanged; especially when dealing with chopper pilots!

Once these problems were overcome, the survey task could proceed. Long traverse legs- diamond, closed, or parallel for closure, and the job was well underway. The Svy Sgt would handle things at the other end, manage the computations and issue the BP cards.

While working and waiting at Nui Chua Chan, we would be looked after by the base and nothing was too much trouble. More often than not our survey involved an overnight stay. Meals, hot tubs and accommodation would be provided, all precious items in this isolated rocky outcrop. Probably the most precious was the appearance of "Jack Daniels"!!! Needless to say, we always managed to include a few cases of VB and Fosters in our load. This all approved and paid for by Regt Funds in the interest of good PR!

Those who went to Chua Chan would remember the experience!

UI THI VAI - 131 BTY SVYRS TAKE A LOOK, JULY 1968



Approaching Nui Thi Vai in the Warburton's



I see purple! Trig Point LZ on Nui Thi Vai July, 1968.



Our pickup arrives at the Trig Point.



WO1 Geoff Jebb next to the Nui Thi Vai Trig Point, July 1968

Nui Thi Vai (467m) is the highest peak in a chain of hills 10 km west of Nui Dat. These hills were collectively known to the troops as the "Warburton's". Nui Thi Vai sat in the North West corner of the "Warbies". A trig on its stony, bamboo covered summit was part of a network used to map the country in earlier times.

From Nui Thi Vai, the map showed an extended area of low ground sweeping northwards to Bien Hoa and Long Khan Provinces which were often in the Task Force's area of operations. The Trig was a possible control point for survey in these operations. It was decided to check it out.

The idea was treated with some scepticism but it was agreed if the logistics could be organized, it should be attempted. Securing the area would be the problem!! This task was given to the Reinforcement Company as a worthwhile training exercise.

The Reinforcement Company (about 50 personnel) made their way to a re-entrant between Nui Thi Vai and Nui Toc Tien, and then climbed the 467 metres to the summit. There they formed a defensive perimeter, cleared a small LZ then radioed the "all clear".

Three Surveyors and a Sig left Nui Dat by chopper and 15 minutes later were at the site of the Trig. The Trig itself was a pillar of stones concreted together, topped with a metal plate. It stood about one and a half metres high. It was all we had hoped for, with uninterrupted views sweeping from west to east.

The place gave us the creeps! You could almost feel eyes watching from the adjacent hills! While there was no sign of trouble, we left after making up a BP card, feeling that we'd seen enough. A short time later we were back at Nui Dat. Despite its obvious Survey advantages, it would require a very important operation to justify the resources and effort to occupy this hill. To my knowledge it was never used for this purpose.

. October in SVN...

18 October	1967	HMAS Perth hit	HMAS Perth struck by return fire near Cape Lai, Vietnam, while on the United States 7th Fleet 'gunline'. This was the only occasion on which an Australian warship suffered casualties from enemy fire during the Vietnam War.
16 October	1967	Royal Australian Navy Helicopters deploy to Vietnam	An RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam (RANHFV '67) joins the US Army's 135th Aviation Company at Vung Tau, supporting American troops in South Vietnam.
13 October	1969	HMAS Brisbane returns to Sydney	This was the end of the Brisbane's first deployment to Vietnam. A turret from HMAS Brisbane is on display outside the Australian War Memorial.
3 October	1992	Dedication, Australian Vietnam Veterans' National Memorial	The Vietnam Veterans' National Memorial, ANZAC Parade, Canberra, was opened by the Prime Minister, the Hon. Paul Keating, MP, and honours those Australians who served and died in the war in Vietnam.

. National Servicemen's Association "medal" Issue -

OK where to start...we'd noticed an erroneous looking "medal" in one of the blokes photos submitted and **Allen Morley** raised the query to its origin in an email to National Serviceman's Association -

"Hello Earl

I am the President of 131 Locators Association (131locators.org.au). Many of our members are former Nashos. My issue relates to a Nasho who is wearing a medal which he claims was '... issued by the National Serviceman's Association to their members years ago.' From your website I notice the advice that any such medals should not be worn with officially issued medals. This Nasho did serve in Vietnam and justly wears his issued medals. I was hoping that you might provide some clarification on this medal.

Thank you.

Allen Morley

President"

...not one to give up another email was despatched...

"Hello Hugh

I am president of 131 Locators Association, which is a group of principally Nashos (www.131locators.org.au). Some weeks ago I sent an inquiry to your president but have not had a reply.

The gist of my inquiry relates to a medal apparently issued by your association some time ago. I am interested in the background to this medal, its availability etc. One of our members wears his along with his rightfully gained medals, which according to information I have found is not correct.

I look forward to hearing from you or someone in the Association.

Regards

Allen Morley"

...finally an answer...

"Gooday Allen,

Back in the early days of our association there was a medal manufactured and sold to our members. This was stopped when we were awarded the official ANSM by the Govt. We have slowly convinced most (About 98%) to stop wearing them. If anyone wears it, **it should not be worn on the left breast or mixed in with official medals**. As you say most of your members are Nashos, they are entitled to the ANSM as shown on our website. <nashos.org.au>. This medal is worn by most Nashos together with an ADM (Also shown on the website). When the ANSM was designed, they made it very similar in design to the old "bought" one. This makes it very difficult to identify even the ribbons are very much alike.

I hope this is what you wanted to know, please do not hesitate to ask any further questions.

Seeya

Hugh Williams www.nashos.org.au/hugh.htm"

. Concerned, Sydney – it's been a while, but here is the latest from one of our local contributors after the Long Tan stories/photos came in – "Hi Dicko,

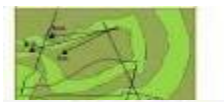
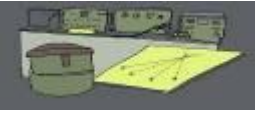
I loved the latest Eyes and Ears newsletter. You or Ed do a terrific job.

My eyes were transfixed by the photo of Steve Boutlis, Al Adams and Leigh Hemming. There was Queensland's answer to Poppa Smurf on the left of the trio! See what I mean?

Regards

Concerned, Sydney





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

Welcome to those who have sourced *Eyes & Ears* for the first time – we look forward to your continued support to keep it alive and well.

Grahame Dignam would like to sincerely thank the blokes for the ongoing commitment with their renewals, but would like to gently prod the others who have had paperwork sent to them to please get back in touch with him.

...Grahame adds more interesting news from the September Association meeting –

"Your Association has resolved to place a plaque in the Seymour **"Vietnam Veterans Memorial Walk"** (The Website is <http://www.vietnamvetstalk.org.au/>) similar in size to that placed outside the war memorial in Canberra in May 2012.

To allow us to achieve that objective the Association is calling for donations to offset the cost of approximately \$1000 for the construction of the plaque. The appeal was launched at the September meeting and currently stands at \$260. Funds can be deposited directly to the Association's account: **Electronically** by funds transfer to:

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

or

By cheque – Make payable to: **131 Locators Association Inc** and mail to: **G. Dignam, Secretary / Treasurer,** 131Locators Association, 8 Darling St. ABBOTSBURY NSW 2176

And we thank you for your support for the project."

Your scribe" – an alias for Dig!!

Presidential Perambulations

"Another Federal election, but with a change of government resulting. It is unfair that voters have to be subjected to the barrage of claims, counter claims and absolute lies during the election period. I guess that is 21C politics in this country.

However, it seems we will not have to put up with it again for the next three years. That is unless there is a double dissolution. In that case, perhaps we could even set up a Locators Party and bid for a Senate seat. That could not be worse than the number 1 of very minor groups who will become Senators.

The new Minister for Veterans' Affairs is Senator Michael Ronaldson from Victoria. One of his first actions was to announce an increase in veteran pensions. A good start it would seem. Nevertheless, we will still have the DVA bureaucrats to joust with.

Your Association also has elections coming up. The Annual General Meeting is scheduled for November and all committee positions are spilled. Some older, new-blood would be welcome. So why not climb on your election soapbox and make a difference at either National or State level.

I had not seen a real soapbox for decades, but I eventually located one, placed my old Army boots on top and took the photo.



Cheers,
Allen"

. Upcoming Events Calender –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting **Date: Tuesday 15/10/2013 at 11:00hrs**

Venue: Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club - 26 Humphries Rd., Canley Heights for directions -

<http://www.canleyheightsrsl.com.au/contact-us/>

Special Calendar date to be marked – The Association AGM's details have been confirmed as - 11.00am on 19th November 2013 at the Canley Heights RSL and Sporting club. More details will follow.

. 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...October –

Now let's pick the youngster out for the Month – **Gary Chillingsworth** – was another **"Only 19" –er** when he made it to SVN – have a great 62nd Gary where ever you are – it's a shame we don't know!



Here's what **David Lochore (Lahore)** was about in 1968-69 in SVN. Obviously his matching pants were in the wash! Happy 68th David!

October	Name	Regt No	YOB	In SVN	Out SVN	Comments
1	IAN BRIGNELL	2789405	1946	20 01 1969	21 01 1970	
2	TERRY BRUCE	2783213	1945	05 05 1967	30 01 1968	
2	PETER TEATHER	3790242	1945	12 04 1968	06 08 1968	
2	LESLIE ROBINSON	217662	1949	09 12 1968	28 11 1969	
4	LEIGH HEMMING	1732039	1945	04 05 1967	11 12 1967	
4	MIKE LUFF	2783725	1945	02 01 1967	27 09 1967	
4	DAVID LAHORE	3791183	1945	02 09 1968	04 03 1969	
5	JAMES MERCHANT	2788817	1945	18 12 1968	28 11 1969	
7	GARY CHILLINGSWORTH	313477	1951	29 11 1970	05 08 1971	
8	JOHN O'NEILL	243505	1949	09 11 1970	11 11 1970	RAEME
				11 03 1971	12 05 1971	RAEME
9	BRIAN SMYTHE	1201484	1946	02 09 1968	03 12 1969	
10	BRIAN KENNEDY Capt.	213488	1942	02 03 1965	11 03 1965	3 RAR

	" "			26 08 1969	27 08 1970	131
10	PAUL DICKSON	1732012	1945	04 05 1967	12 12 1967	
10	BARRY BONSER	37661	1941	03 01 1967	27 09 1967	† 03.09.98
11	PAUL JONES	216324	1946	22 04 1966	30 04 1967	† 09.09.68
11	JEFFREY EVANS Maj	3789164	1945	10 02 1971	02 06 1971	131 † 23.12.11
	" "			02 06 1971	02 11 1971	12 Fd Regt.
12	ALAN CLEASBY WO2	36053	1937	02 12 1968	10 12 1969	131
	" " "			11 06 1972	20 11 1972	AATTV
12	BARRY FOUNTAIN	3798485	1949	03 03 1971	20 08 1971	131
	" "			21 08 1971	30 10 1971	12 Fd Regt.
13	PETER SALI	1735560	1948	24 02 1970	18 02 1971	
13	DENNIS AVERY	4720906	1948	19 08 1970	09 06 1971	4 Fd Regt.
14	ANTHONY DODDS	16776	1944	04 05 1967	02 04 1968	
14	NORMAN LINDROOS	3410957	1939	20 05 1968	24 05 1969	
14	PETER McGANN	55672	1950	27 11 1969	19 11 1970	
16	WILLIAM THOMAS	16727	1944	{07 01 1967	19 03 1967	1ARU
	" "			{20 03 1967	26 09 1967	
17	TORIN WHITE	218372	1945	21 02 1969	25 02 1970	
18	HELMUT LEMPA	38120	1946	20 05 1966	06 12 1966	† Unknown
18	ARTHUR JUX	2792371	1948	29 04 1970	18 03 1971	
19	IAN FINLAY	2412363	1948	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
20	ROBERT HARRIS Sgt.	213514	1942	10 02 1971	29 07 1971	
23	JOHN VITKOVSKY	4718271	1945	02 03 1967	12 03 1968	
23	NORMAN BULLEN	214545	1944	20 05 1966	11 12 1966	
22	IAN BOARD	213879	1943	22 04 1966	11 12 1966	
25	MICHAEL DELANEY	2789205	1947	17 02 1969	28 11 1969	† 17.02.13
28	MICHAEL BOHL	1411182	1948	08 02 1968	17 12 1968	† 15.06.93
28	DAVID DOYLE Sgt.	17760	1943	{22 04 1966	11 12 1966	
	" "			{24 09 1970	08 02 1971	
28	IAN MURLEY	38503	1946	12 04 1968	23 04 1969	
28	PAUL TYS Lt.	235362	1946	17 03 1969	18 03 1970	
29	JAMES "ZEKE" RITCHIE Sgt.	2411899	1940	21 05 1969	09 04 1970	
29	PETER LARKIN	3793067	1946	08 11 1968	19 11 1969	
30	GRAHAM O'TOOLE	61497	1943	20 05 1966	11 12 1966	

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 **120** and we've sent out **118**. Ed – I've enlarged the memory on my computer for the storage of the new Locator Profiles I'm expecting!

. **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 –**

Godfrey Eugene Priest AM, known to all as "Rusty", was state president of the RSL from 1993 to 2002 and also served as national deputy president, dedicating his life after army service to veterans' welfare and to highlighting the sacrifices made for the nation.

After retiring from the army, Rusty devoted his life to the RSL and to making sure that the community at large never forgot the sacrifices that had been made.

At 18, Rusty enlisted in the 2nd AIF and had just finished training at Cowra when Japan surrendered.

From April 1946 until December 1948 he served in the occupation forces in Japan with the Signals Regiment, 8th US Army Signals Corps and "A" Field Battery Royal Australian Army.

He retired as a Warrant Officer Class 1 in 1967 and was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 1997.

There is one gesture for which the former NSW RSL president Godfrey "Rusty" Priest will always be remembered...

Standing on a beach in Gallipoli in 1997 he looked down at the sand and thought it would be a nice gesture to take some of the grains back to Australia.

He had it in mind that the glass container of sand would eventually be placed beneath the foot of the statue of an Australian soldier planned for the new Glebe Island Bridge, which was rededicated the Anzac Bridge at a ceremony on Remembrance Day 1998. The statue would finally be installed in 2000.

Priest would say "With that jar of sand it can be said that he (the statue) is still standing with his mates on the beaches at Gallipoli. Now, whenever I walk or drive over the Anzac Bridge I always think of those World War I veterans I knew." Dedicated to keeping alive the memory of significant moments in Australian military history such as Gallipoli and Kokoda, Priest, who died this week, saw remembrances such as Anzac Day as an opportunity not to glorify combat but to honour the dead, pay tribute to those who served and "reflect on the futility of war".

Unlike some other heads of the RSL, Priest saw no point in courting controversy.

He once said: "I've always thought, 'What do you gain by getting people's back up before you start to talk and negotiate them?' We must never move away from the core aims of the RSL."

Born Godfrey Eugene Priest in 1927, in Melbourne, his mother Patricia died when he was five years old and his father William raised him and his two brothers. He would later say his father set high standards of morals and ethics that he always tried to live up to.

It was as a primary schoolboy with fiery red hair and freckles that Priest earned the nickname "Rusty".

One of the nuns from the school was asked by another student why young Godfrey Priest had freckles to which she quipped that it was because all of the iron in his blood had gone rusty.

His older brother Patrick, who served in New Guinea during the war, was wounded and evacuated out.



Former RSL state president Rusty Priest at the Padstow Army Depot, circa 1957.
Source: News Limited

Too young to join up in the early part of the war, Rusty worked as a clerk in the Department of Information before joining the 2nd AIF in 1945. He was Training for jungle warfare when the war ended.

He stayed in the army and was sent to Japan serving with the 22 Line Maintenance Section as part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces, there to keep order and help to rebuild the nation after its defeat in the war.

He was there until 1948 but by then had decided to make the army his career.

Early in the 50s he undertook special training involving British submarines. In 1955 he got what he called the three Ws. He earned his pilot's wings, became a warrant officer and took Gloria Merle as his wife. They had two children, Patrick and Carole-Anne.

In 1965 he was posted to Holsworthy where he trained the C Troop for Vietnam. Promoted to Warrant Officer Class 1 he was then posted to the Directorate of Artillery at Army Headquarters in Canberra and retired in 1967 to settle with his wife and family in Revesby. He remained part of the Army Reserve until 1975. By then he had joined the Revesby Heights Ex-Servicemen's Club and rose to

become its president in 1987.

He became NSW State President in 1993, determined to make the RSL relevant for new generations of Australians.

He threw his determination and powers of negotiation and persuasion behind projects such as the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway at Concord Repatriation General Hospital and having the new Glebe Island Bridge renamed Anzac Bridge. He played a key role in getting the statue placed on the bridge.

In 2002 Priest finally stood down as RSL State president, but remained active as a member, taking part in ceremonies, speaking out against vandalism of war memorials and generally reminding people of the sacrifices made by service people.

A special note funeral arrangements notice from the Locating Surveillance and Target Acquisition

Association – "It is with great sadness I inform you of the death of our patron, 'Rusty' Priest. Rusty passed away peacefully on 25 Sep 13 at his daughter's residence at the Razorback near Camden NSW.

A state funeral will be held at **St Mary's Cathedral Sydney on Wed 2 Oct 13 at 11:00 AM.**

If you are planning to attend, please let me know by phone on the mobile number below before Sunday evening and I may be able to obtain limited seating/standing allocation inside the cathedral.

Joe Kaplun

President, Locating Surveillance and Target Acquisition Association

Joekaplun@optusnet.com.au H: 02 9774 1473 Mob: 040 774 147"

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.

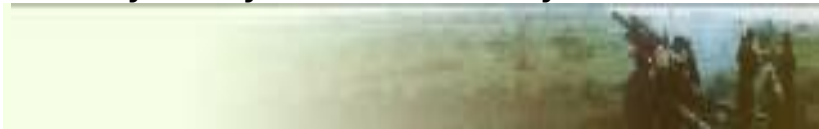
So, if you're a non-financial Associate receiving emails and the Eyes & Ears regularly you could bite the bullet and email **Grahame Dignam**: Sectreas131locators@gmail.com and he could forward you the relevant forms to join.

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 *Associations Newsletter* LOCREP.



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL COMPANY

www.artilleryhistory.org



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



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

. VETERAN'S AFFAIRS WEBSITE

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

. 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery...



Dedicated to the men of the 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery who served in Vietnam from 1966-1971. We left Fort Sill in October 1966 for Vietnam. We originally were at Bear Cat, Nui Dat and Xuan Loc. We later were in many other locations in Vietnam. We also welcome our Australian and New Zealand Allies to whom we owe so much.

It is also dedicated to those members of the 1/83rd who did not return. We will never forget their sacrifice. Website: http://83rd_artillery.home.comcast.net/~83rd_artillery/

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

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