

THE EYES and EARS

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



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ANZAC Day 2014

– the tradition continues – Melbourne



The group included - Peter Larkin, John Delacca, Al Adams, Don Chalmers, Ian Kennedy, Mike Butler, Peter Bennett, Graham Williams, Pete Creedon, Russ Jackson, Graeme Owens, John Henshaw, Jeff Schafer, Mitch Miller, Brian Smythe and Terry Erbs [where were Mick Quinlan and Kev Browning?]

Thanks to a great job by **Terry Erbs**.

Terry sent the following into **Grahame Dignam** – “Hi Dig,

Lesley & I were in Melbourne for ANZAC Day 2014 and here are brief social jottings with a few photos –

On Thursday night, 24th April, locals and interstate visitors gathered at “The Transport Bar”, Federation Square, for welcoming drinks and then had a pleasant dinner at the nearby “Feddish” Restaurant.



At left -

“Terry Erbs, Kev, Browning, Russ Jackson & Pete Creedon”

Next morning about 80,000 people attended the very solemn and moving Dawn service at the Shrine but most of us only managed to meet for morning coffee at the corner of Collins and Swanston St. Post WW2 Artillery units assembled behind their banners up Collins St and thanks to John Delacca, with the 131 banner, we were all able to find “the step-off” location.



Above - **“Terry Erbs, Russ Jackson, Mick Quinlan, Jeff Schafer & John Henshaw.”**

As usual, the march stuttered down Swanston St. but moved more smoothly on the long march down St Kilda Rd. In the Shrine forecourt Kevin Browning gave the order “eyes right “ towards the eternal flame and dignitaries, by then the “detachment” was in good formation and instep!



After taking a few group photos in front of the “131” banner most of us walked back to the Merrywell Restaurant at Southgate for a long very sociable lunch, joined by family and friends.

“Mick Quinlan & Brian Smythe – lunching in Melbourne’s bright sunshine!”

On Saturday morning “the diehards” boarded a mini bus and were driven, thanks to Graeme Owen’s son, to the National Vietnam Veterans Museum at Phillip Island. Despite cold, wet and windy weather, ANZAC Day had been perfect, we spent a couple of hours exploring and reminiscing amongst the large and growing collection at the museum – well worth a visit! Display space has been allocated to artillery units, including 131. Several of our visiting group discussed with museum staff the possibility of providing the “Det. 131 ” history and contributing equipment as well.



"Inside the National Vietnam Veterans museum at Phillip Island"

As we dispersed in Melbourne late Saturday, we agreed to gather again in Sydney for Anzac Day 2015. Many thanks to Graeme Owen and Russ Jackson, who organized the very successful social activities in Melbourne 2014 – I hope the Sydney 2015 organizers have started planning, Graeme & Russ set a very high standard! Cheers, Terry Erbs”

. Lord Howe Island – Vic Danko sent in the following of his visit to Lord Howe island which coincided with ANZAC Day – “Hi, I was on Lord Howe Island . Met Garth Nichols and marched on Anzac Day. That’s Garth behind me and to my left in the photo on the right. The fellow next to me was Air Force in Vietnam. Regards”



. 1st Australian Task Force – (source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>) The following is the continuation of the account of Australian involvement in the South Vietnam conflict focusing on The Battle of Long Tan...

Clearing the battlefield, 19–21 August 1966

By morning the weather had cleared. At 06:55 the remainder of 6 RAR departed Nui Dat with 2 Troop, 1st APC Squadron, while D Company, 5 RAR departed at the same time aboard a number of US Army helicopters. Meanwhile, at 07:40 Jackson arrived at 6 RAR's night location to observe the clearance, flying in as Townsend gave his orders for the operation. Stepping off at 08:45, the Australians returned to the battlefield in force while artillery and airstrikes continued to pound the area. The battalion group moved in a "two up" formation with D Company, 5 RAR and D Company, 6 RAR both mounted in APCs as the forward left and forward right assault companies, followed by A, B and C Companies in depth, each of which were dismounted. The assault companies planned to sweep the area then dismount and commence a detailed search, while the other companies would clear the surrounding features and begin the follow-up. Moving cautiously in case the Viet Cong launched a counter-attack, the Australians advanced on

an axis following the route used by D Company, 6 RAR the previous day. The battlefield was a scene of devastation, with many of the rubber trees stripped of their leaves and branches and bleeding sap, while the area around D Company's final position was heavily cratered by artillery fire. At 09:21 D Company, 5 RAR reported finding the body of a dead Viet Cong soldier, while half an hour later D Company, 6 RAR found 12 to 15 more. A large number of Viet Cong dead were subsequently found around the area, including a 60 mm mortar crew which had been killed by indirect fire. At 10:20 a bulldozer was requested to bury the bodies of approximately 100 Viet Cong soldiers.

As the scale of the losses suffered by the Viet Cong were revealed it became clear D Company had in fact won a significant victory. By late morning a total of 113 bodies and two wounded had been found, while numerous drag marks and blood trails indicted many more casualties had been removed from battlefield the previous night.

With the clearance continuing two wounded Viet Cong still bearing weapons were killed by D Company, 6 RAR after they moved to engage them, while in a separate incident another wounded soldier was also killed. A third wounded Viet Cong was later captured and all three were given emergency medical assistance before being evacuated.

These events later caused controversy when journalist Ian Mackay published claims in 1968 that the Australians had deliberately killed unarmed Viet Cong wounded after the battle, citing a "witness" to the alleged incident, while a major newspaper misleadingly stated they had killed wounded "civilians". Yet an official investigation later determined the allegations were exaggerated and based on hearsay, with the soldier claimed as the source found not to have been present during the fighting and those killed confirmed to have been armed. Similar accusations were made in 1986 by Terry Burstall, a former D Company soldier who claimed up to 17 wounded Viet Cong had been executed, although Burstall's accusations were also refuted and his credibility challenged. In 2000 Buick admitted in his memoirs to having killed a mortally wounded soldier the day after the battle as an act of mercy. Burstall argued this may have constituted a breach of the Geneva Convention, while Buick's decision to publish the book was questioned by the President of the Australian Long Tan Association, John Heslewood, who was a private in 11 Platoon during the battle. Mollison later also criticised Buick's action in killing the badly wounded soldier.

Meanwhile, at 11:00 6 RAR reported they had located the missing men from 11 Platoon, their bodies found lying in a straight line where they had fallen, largely undisturbed and still holding their weapons. The majority were from 6 Section, which had been the first to be hit. One of the men was found to have survived despite his wounds, having spent the night on the battlefield in close proximity to the Viet Cong as they attempted to evacuate their own casualties. Earlier a second wounded soldier had also been found nearby, leaning against a tree but still alive. Both men were evacuated, and later recuperated in hospital. Thirteen Australian dead were also recovered, accounting for all the missing. As the search continued Viet Cong dead were found up to 500 metres (550 yd) south-east of the position reached by 11 Platoon. A large bunker complex was also uncovered which included 200 pits with overhead protection sufficient for a battalion; however, its layout suggested it had been constructed as a defensive position rather than for an ambush. A further prepared position of 100 pits was also found to the east. By 14:35 the total number of Viet Cong dead was reported as 168, while a large amount of weapons and equipment were also uncovered, including assault rifles, mortars, light machine-guns, sub-machine guns, and a RCL as well as ammunition and grenades. By 18:10 the number of Viet Cong dead had risen to 188, with shallow graves dug by the Australians to bury them where they had fallen.

Due to the likely presence of a significant 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. Yet with up to two Viet Cong battalions still believed to be in the area and with the continued vulnerability of Nui Dat to attack from the 274th Regiment, Jackson lacked the resources to pursue the withdrawing force. Company patrols continued to search up to 1,500 metres (1,600 yd) east, and to the north of the Nui Dat 2 feature. The Australians subsequently expanded their search to include the area contested during Operation Hobart. A number of tracks were discovered with telephone cables running along their length, as well as further drag marks, blood stains, discarded equipment, fresh graves and evidence of use by heavy cart and foot traffic. The main Viet Cong withdrawal route was discovered after midday on 19 August, running east away from the scene of the fighting. Townsend requested permission from Jackson to follow it believing he had sufficient forces for a pursuit, but Jackson would only permit 6 RAR to advance a further 1,000 metres (1,100 yd) so as to remain within artillery range and would not allow the guns to move forward from Nui Dat to increase the range of their protective fire. By 20 August the Australians had counted 245 Viet Cong dead, while scores more were found later. Up to four weeks after the battle decomposed bodies were found in the area, while numerous graves were also located, none of which were included in the estimates of Viet Cong losses. D Company, 5 RAR returned to Nui Dat early on 21 August, while D Company, 6 RAR was also withdrawn for two days leave in Vung Tau.

The remainder of 6 RAR continued the search, with A Company discovering a series of freshly built and recently abandoned hides along the Viet Cong withdrawal route which were believed to have been prepared as delay positions. An older defensive position of approximately 40 pits was also found, while C Company located a makeshift hospital close by which contained 14 graves. Both had recently been occupied. Later an Australian light observation helicopter reported the presence of scattered groups of civilians, with the largest including up to 30 to 40 people, mostly women, carrying baskets and bags, while others had ox carts and were believed to be carrying medical supplies. These reports were followed up by the 1st APC Squadron and a number of military age males were detained for questioning. The infantry companies completed their search tasks by midday, moving to the edge of the rubber plantation, 500 metres (550 yd) north-east of Long Tan. Operation Smithfield concluded at 17:00 with the Australians returning to Nui Dat by helicopter and APC by 17:30. They had hoped of catching the survivors of the 275th Regiment and D445 Battalion before they were able to return to their mountain sanctuaries but the operation proved unsuccessful in preventing their withdrawal. A number of Australian officers later questioned the caution with which it

had been conducted. Yet Jackson had been unable to mount a pursuit due to the continued threat posed by the 274th Regiment, which was still believed to be in the area. With 1 ATF lacking the resources required for such an operation the opportunity to trap and destroy the Viet Cong while they were still vulnerable was lost and they made good their escape.

Next month we continue with the Aftermath...

. 131 Div Loc Bty dates –

10th June - Establishment 131 Divisional Locating Battery 1954

. June in SVN...

2 June	1967	2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, arrives in Vietnam	By 1967 Australia's commitment to the war in Vietnam was increasing as the Australian Task Force expanded its control over areas of Phouc Tuy Province.
6 June	1969	Battle of Binh Ba, South Vietnam	Binh Ba, located 6 kilometres north of the Australian base at Nui Dat was the site of a battle between an Australian Ready Reaction Force and a combined force of Viet Cong guerrillas and North Vietnamese Army troops who had occupied the village. The enemy were driven off after more than a day's fighting.
7 June	1968	Australian Prime Minister visits Vietnam	Prime Minister Gorton began a two-day visit to Vietnam against a background of both a growing Australian military commitment to the war and steadily increasing, though not yet overwhelming, domestic opposition.
14 June	1966	6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, arrives in South Vietnam	The deployment of the 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, to Vietnam formed part of Australia's build up of forces in Phouc Tuy province in the mid-1960s. D Company from this battalion became involved in the battle of Long Tan in August 1966.

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



They obviously built some helipads and a reasonable landing strip not long after – hopefully!

This photo brings us to the end of Fred's archives – we sincerely thank Jenny, his daughter, for her supplying the photos and narrative.

...however, it's not quite over as this came in response to last month photo below...

1966 Nui Dat- Fred's title for this photo is "Group of men sitting around a table", but unfortunately no names on the back - the back of photo says task force headquarters - Nui Dat – this information is supplied Jenny (Fred's daughter).

Ed – OK so can anyone give us some names??



Brian Campbell has a crack at solving last month's mystery – "Paul

I think the four "boys" sitting around the table are from left myself Brian Campbell, Dave Martin, Shorty Gow, Graham O'Toole.

Regards Brian Campbell"

...then from Mick Chase's archived photos Ed found this ripper...



Mick and Fred in their open air-conditioned quarters in SVN -

. OR's Mess SVN, 1967 – things “Mess” is becoming an obsession. **Grahame Dignam** sent this in after last month's *Eyes & Ears* and it shows a clearer view of the line of blokes waiting to partake in the culinary delights of the day which were on offer, plus some behind the scenes catering activity.

Now this raises the question – Did this “facility”, and I use the term in the broadest of sense, ever get upgraded over the years?

Can anyone answer that please?



It is apparent from later photos, upgrades were done to the Orderly Room etc and I suppose sleeping quarter tents were replaced with newer ones over time due to wear and tear.

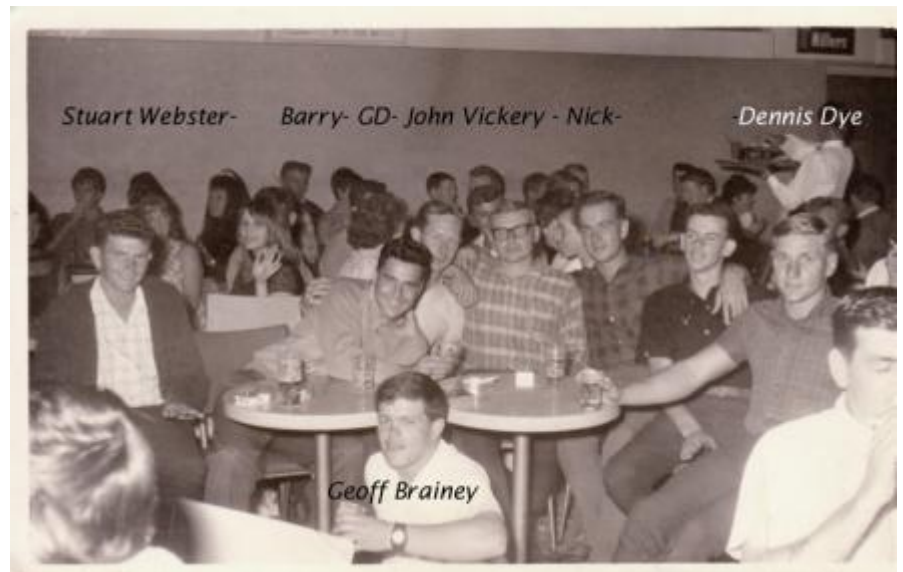




The following from **Allen Morley** highlights the upgrades made in 1967 – photos above and below left -

Ernie Newbold recalls the photo at left this way - The nearest building on the right was the recreation hut and darkroom – see the lower louvered openings at the side of the building. The far building the Orderly Room and Q-store – note the higher “window” openings.

. Grahame Dignam re-visits some memories with this photo taken at **Millers 3 Swallows** pub at the Cnr of Hume Highway and Rookwood Rd Bankstown Here’s the roll call from left to right Stuart Webster, Barry Guzder, Garahame, John Vickery, Nick Proskurin, Ean Thomas (who Grahame thinks ended up in 130 Gun Loc Bty) Dennis Dye, Geoff Bill Braine.



There is an unanswered question though – “Who ended up with the blonde?” (waving in the background??

Nick Proskurin adds a bit of info – “Hi Paul, The young lad is Ean (?) Thomas, who never went to Vietnam, but he marched with us on Anzac Day, Cheers, Nick P”

Ernie Newbold adds another comment – The “Three Swallows” is still standing and operating all these years later – some things change, some things don’t!

. Now Ed is pleased that at least **Ron Mason** is a devout reader of the blurb as he spotted the incorrect assignment of a photo that appeared in “. Birthdays in the Battery...April”



The photo to the left had the following description – “Here’s what **Ron Mason** looked like some 48 years ago – when he was about 21!”

Anyway, here’s Ron’s correction – “Paul, the photo in E & E (left) was one of mine but not of me, the attached photo (right not cropped) is of **Jock White** (I think) & **Ralph Pearce** about to go for a stroll in the woods. Ron Mason”

Ed – I’m glad Ron put me on the straight and narrow – well almost!



. **Dave Crowther** sent the following in on 19th May with regards to passing of **Les Frost** (Ed also received in other copies of this same article from a number of other blokes) – “Hi Dicko, just got this from my daughter in Orange. It was in today's local. You might have to enlarge it. Kind regards. DC”



HONOURING LES: (back) Lindsay Wright, David Pepper-Edwards (front) Allan Bennett, Chloe Morgan and Donna Frost at a special presentation in memory of the late Les Frost at the Vietnam Veterans Association annual general meeting.

Tributes for Vietnam vet

By JANICE HARRIS

FORMER founding member, life member and patron of the Orange branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association, the late Les Frost, was honoured at the association's annual general meeting.

Mr Frost's widow Donna and his niece Chloe Morgan, who marched by the former Vietnam veteran's side in Anzac Day marches in Orange, attended the presentation and tribute at Bloomfield Country Club.

Mr Frost served in Vietnam in the Nui Dat region from 1965 to 1966 in 131 Division Locating Battery and was a regular army soldier with 20 years service.

Over the years through his involvement with the Orange branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association Mr Frost established his own 'museum' in the shed at the back of his house, with scores of items of memorabilia from the Vietnam conflict.

Mrs Frost, who recently lost her husband, said she can't bring herself to go inside yet.

"It's just too soon," she said at the ceremony.

"But the Vietnam Veterans Association has been a big part of our family's life."

Secretary of the Orange branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association Allan Bennett told the *Central Western Daily* much of the inroads gained by Vietnam veterans in Orange was due to the efforts of Mr Frost.

He was a founding member of the Orange branch in the years before it was publicly recognised and the veterans were shamelessly shunned by the Australian government and the public following the war, Mr Bennett said.

"He was instrumental in getting our association off the ground," Mr Bennett said.

For Mr Frost's niece Chloe Morgan, aged 15, Friday's presentation of photographs of her marching with her grandfather were poignant.

"I was always there with him - marching alongside," she said.

"I first marched with him when I was three - I was very proud of him," she said.

At the ceremony, photographs and an Australian flag were presented to Mrs Frost and Chloe Morgan.

. **LP Bearing Boards** – this topic has been raised with the possibility of a Bearing Board (see photo at right taken at 31D) facsimile being constructed at the Vietnam Veterans Museum on Phillip Island, Victoria. Anyway here's a snippet extracted from some correspondence between **Grahame Dignam** and **John Blake** (ex-31D dweller). Grahame asks – “Was there any special skill in making the bearing boards as I was proposing we do a miniature version for the 131 DLB display we are developing for the V V Museum on Phillip Is. in Vic? GD”

And then John responds... “Dig, G'day, 31D bearing boards. Just needed boards, mils protractor, pencil and straight edge and hammer and nails, paint, long pins to hold it in place and the will to do it. Sight the object being observed over the central sighting nail and note the peripheral nail number nearest that object and there is your bearing. We had the boards on 3 sides for 4800 mil readings (270 degrees.) Note the mortar resistant roof. JB”

Ed – Plus also note the phone – what a cracker!



. **Jim Menz** is mentioned in the following extract from the book called "**A Sappers' War**" by J Thompson & S Macgregor and the following was sent in by **Bert Blink** – "Hi, Attached is a small section from the above book. It mentions James Menz - I leave you to read the details.
This book is a continuation of "Tunnel Rats" by the same authors. The interesting thing is it covers the whole war from a Sappers point of view and is in reality a collection of reminiscences by various Engineers (whose motto is also Ubique by the way).

The interesting thing about this book is that it tells the stories of various Infantry operations in a new light. Basically infantry patrols included a Sapper or Sappers as part of the team. They sometimes fought as infantry but their main role was to clear mine fields, booby traps & bunkers that the infantry invariably encountered.

So far, up to page 68, a good read. Bert"

The extract – this memory is related by Allan Rantall who was a Sapper.

"On 18 February it was 3 Troop's turn to provide the standing patrol, but the Vietcong launched a mortar attack on the tree at the same time as they mortared the FSB. Lance Corporal John Garrett and Sappers Allan Pattison and David Steen were all killed.

After the attack which was in the early hours of the morning I left our shell scrape to check on the surrounding area for casualties remembers Allan. "I came across an artillery digger who had taken a direct mortar hit. It turned out that he was an old school mate of mine from Alexandra. We had actually flown into country on the same flight. **James Menz** was his name, and he had only just got married two weeks previously while on R&R. So it was a very tragic and upsetting time for all of us that night."

. **Ian Amos** is keeping active – must be the air down in the Sutherland Shire!! Here's a piece I chased him up for –

"Hi Paul,

My maiden sprint distance triathlon (750m swim, 20k bike, 5k run) was successfully completed on 17th May at Bintan, Indonesia in a modest time of 1hr 49mins. I finished 199 out of 341, not too bad for a geriatric with a dodgy knee!!! The race was hard, particularly the run as it was very hot and humid. I was very glad to see the finish line as you can see from the attached photo. While I was training for this for the last year I vowed I would retire with a PB but I'm probably going to line up again to try and beat my time.

There is no movement yet on the expected birth of my first grandchild, but that could happen any day.

Hope to catch up when you're in OZ in July. Ian"

Ed couldn't resist adding some details from the photo property description – "Screen Shot 2014-05-24 at 5.39.20 PM" – gee starting at about 1530hrs is a bit late – an early morning start might have been a bit kinder to the participants!! Ian - good look after 1hr 49mins!



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 – The Association has great pleasure in welcoming **Roger Pryke** to the Association fold.

. Upcoming Events Calender –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday 24th June, 2014 at 1100hrs

Venue: Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club, 26 Humphries Rd., Canley Heights for directions - <http://www.canleyheightsrsl.com.au/contact-us/> You're all welcome.

Presidential perambulations:

Over the last month or so I have been working on an album loaned by 20STA based in Enoggera, Queensland. None of the photos have real identification. They come from the 1966-1970 period that the Detachment was based at Nui Dat in South Vietnam.

A few black and white pictures were annotated, and my detective work identified them as belonging to the late Ron 'Chalky' Royal, the first BSM of the Detachment. My suspicion is that the album came from Chalky's records. The Association is keen to identify as many of the photos and times as possible. Therein lies the real challenge. Regular soldiers from 131 Div Loc Bty generally had some military continuity; we nashos had two years and were then expunged from the army.

I was able to have some of the Detachment Pioneers identify those photos featuring soldiers who were there in the 1966-67 period. We 1967-68ers have also put names to faces. Some of those names, unfortunately, are now recorded on our Honour Roll.

It is amazing how the mind can dredge up a name from the intervening 45+ years since the person in the picture was last seen.

Regards

Allen Morley



Ron 'Chalky' Royal relaxing

. 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.

.INQUIRY INTO ELIGIBILITY FOR THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL

– by the Australian Government Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal.

In May 2013 **Allen Morley**, President, submitted the following on behalf of the 131 Locators Association (see details in *Eyes & Ears* Vol 6 No 5 May 2013 – yes, one year ago!) and below also is the negative response from the Tribunal...



Submission to the Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal

Re: Inquiry into Eligibility for the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

Introduction:

This submission is made by 131 Locators Association Inc. (131LAI). 131 LAI is an organisation formed for the purpose, inter alia, to establish a central forum for former Members of 131 Divisional Locating Battery to establish and maintain ongoing contact to provide a communication point for former serving 131 Battery soldiers which includes newsletters and a website to establish a verbal, visual and written history of 131 Battery activities, with particular attention to its role in 1 Australian Task Force, South Vietnam.

This submission is made on behalf of our membership. For more information on the Association see:

www.131locators.org.au

Eligibility:

The original eligibility criterion was 181 days minimum service in South Vietnam. Some exceptions were made to this timing criterion based upon the return to Australia of battle casualties and soldiers killed in action. Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery had one soldier KIA and another who died as a result of a vehicle accident in South Vietnam. The Battery also had a number of soldiers wounded in action.

Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery

Many of our members who served with Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery are eligible to wear the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal following service in South Vietnam for the required duration.

Some did not satisfy the 181 days time in country criterion. Within Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery this comprises approximately 6.5% of the total complement.

Others, principally National Servicemen, were returned to Australia due to the expiration of their National Service commitment.

The final group comprises those returned to Australia due to the cessation of the war in South Vietnam.

Consequently, within the Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery group of some 463 soldiers who served in South Vietnam, some fitted into each of the above four categories.

Therefore, the Association, on behalf of the membership has a responsibility to provide its recommendations to the Inquiry.

Recommendations:

The Association's recommendations to the Inquiry are in three parts.

Those Servicemen who served more than thirty-one days in the South Vietnam War Zone should be eligible for the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Those National Servicemen who served in South Vietnam and who returned to Australia in order to complete their National Service commitment should be eligible for the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

Those Servicemen who served in South Vietnam and returned to Australia due to the cessation of the war in South Vietnam should be eligible for the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

Submitted for consideration by the Inquiry.

Prepared by Allen Morley, President 131 Locators Association Inc

May 2013

...Allen's synopsis of the Tribunal's response...

"It is sad to report that the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal has recommended to the Australian Government that there should be no change that would affect 131 soldiers for the awarding of the Vietnam medal. The following are their recommendations -

117. The Tribunal makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

No action be taken by the Australian Government to change the criteria for the award of the RVCN.

Recommendation 2

The Department of Defence amend its interpretation of 'wounded-in-action' to include psychological injury under the following conditions:

- the injury would need to be incurred as a result of enemy action;
- the injury would need to be noted on the member's medical records at the time; and
- the casualty would need to be evacuated from the operational theatre as a result of this particular injury.

Recommendation 3

The Department of Defence continue to assess applications for the RVCN using the present criteria with the recommended change to the interpretation of wounded-in-action, see Recommendation 2.

The report can be found at <http://defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/AF17314681.pdf> The relevant recommendations are on page 44 of the report.

Our submission was recognised and I received acknowledgement, somewhat ironically, on the day before Anzac day. Allen Morley"

. Birthdays in the Battery...June –

Now here's a random pick – **Allan MacLean** – RAEME Captain with us in SVN in 1967 – he's 86 on the 3rd – Happy Birthday where ever you are?



Here's **Paul Butcher** striking a pose (he's actually leaning on a radar) some 40 odd years ago. Have a great day on the 25th Paul!

June	Name	Regt No	YOB	In SVN	Out SVN	Comments
1	GEOFFREY SULLIVAN	3798292	1949	02 12 1970	03 05 1971	131
	" "			03 05 1971	20 10 1971	12 Fd Regt.
3	ALLAN MACLEAN Capt.	32203	1928	24 05 1967	28 06 1967	RAEME
5	PETER DEALY	3411983	1947	18 02 1968	21 02 1969	
5	JAMES LOCKHART	6709144	1947	03 06 1969	21 02 1970	

5	VITO CICCOLELLA	2791669	1947	16 12 1969	17 12 1970	
6	JOHN I'ANSON	2787424	1945	12 04 1968	16 04 1969	
7	BRUCE IRVINE	2783695	1945	04 05 1967	20 02 1968	
8	EDWIN FIELD Sgt.	242577	1934	22 04 1966	31 07 1966	† 20.07.96
10	KEITH WHITE	2783029	1945	17 04 1967	13 12 1967	AACC
12	IAN AMOS	2785676	1945	12 09 1967	17 09 1968	
12	LAWRENCE SAWYER	3787393	1945	04 05 1966	03 03 1967	
14	PAUL BUSS	2781443	1945	22 04 1966	28 04 1967	† 28.09.11
15	KARL DOEHRMANN Sgt.	38119	1933	{20 05 1966 {28 01 1970	29 04 1967 27 08 1970	† 10.08.09
15	EDWARD WEBB	29964	1941	27 01 1970	21 01 1971	
16	RALPH PEARCE	214806	1945	22 04 1966	30 04 1967	† Unknown
18	ROGER WHITTAKER	2184592	1949	19 08 1970	05 08 1971	† Unknown
20	JOHN CHILTON	215855	1946	09 12 1968	03 12 1969	
23	WILLIAM PRENTER WO1	64258	1933	22 04 1966	07 06 1967	† RAEME 01.10.97
	" "			20 08 1970	09 06 1971	4 Fd Regt
25	PAUL BUTCHER	3411454	1946	01 04 1969	25 03 1970	
26	LINDSAY MEAD	3790714	1945	27 03 1968	26 04 1968	
26	GERRY CARROLL	2781311	1945	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	
28	BARRY COLLINS	2793213	1948	20 08 1970	20 08 1970	131
	" "			20 08 1970	07 03 1971	4 Fd Regt.
	" "			08 03 1971	09 06 1971	12 Fd Regt.

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 **124** and we've sent out **123**. **Ed** – good to have at least one up our sleeve!

. 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 –

<u>Name</u>	<u>Regt No</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>In SVN</u>	<u>Out SVN</u>	<u>DOB</u>	<u>DOD</u>
Ness, Robert John	4717755	Gnr	20.05.66	30.04.67	09.01.45	01.01.2001
Gault, Peter "Pappy" Scott	2783644	Gnr	04.05.67	27.09.67	19.12.45	24.05.2014

Ness, Robert John - Julie Dale initially informed us of Robert's passing with the following email on 4th May – "Robert (Bobby) Ness was a close friend of my former husband, and passed away from a sudden heart attack on 01/01/2001, after many years driving trucks all over Australia.

I don't know much at all, and the only story I remember hearing him tell was about being in Vung Tau on Rec leave and stealing a jeep from the 'white mice'. Thought it was quite funny.

I hope this helps you with updating your records.

Dave Crowther says a lot from the heart – "Hey Dicko, we are really losing some of the pioneers lately. Bob was with me on Alpha radar in 1966 and was a "gun". He was the first one chosen by me on our contribution to TOAR patrols and went on every clearing patrol night and day. He was always the first to put up his hand and volunteer. Bob was a large man, with a heart to match. I was stuck in hospital in Vung Tau for three weeks and was booked for a medivac flight home. All requests for my personal gear to be sent down fell on deaf ears and I was left stranded. I had no clothes, personal items or money left in my tent. Bob was on R & C in Vung'as and visited me the day prior to flying home. When I told him of my plight he went back to the Grande Hotel and came back with his kit bag as a gift for me. He was a lot bigger than me, but if I wanted he would have given me his greens, boots etc.



I was in Adelaide in 1967 - down from Port Wakefield to do a projectionist course and bumped into Bob at the barracks. His father was critically ill on the family dairy farm at Murray Bridge and the army had given him an early discharge on compassionate grounds. He was a first intake Nasho. I remember also when we moved from North Fort to the old "A" Battery lines at Holsworthy in November, 1965 Bob would put a locker on his shoulder and effortlessly carry it from the truck to the barracks. The incident with the jeep probably happened at the time he gave me his kitbag. A few drinks for a "young bushie" may have been enough to help him play-up, as we worked very hard on Alpha and well deserved what little break we got.

The photo (at right) was sent to me by Brian Turner in November, 2012 a few months before I lost my wife of 48 years. I did not know of any photos of us on Alpha, we didn't get time. Bob is on the far right next to me.

Vale Bob - a True Blue Aussie Digger."

Don Simmons, Bob Tanner, Self & Bob Ness



Brian "Wirey" Hackett shares a memory – "Hi Paul, Mate this is a very sad day for a lot of people who I served with "Back in the day". I served with Big Bob along with Hoggy ,Corny and lots of others over there and he was one of the best. I think there was a lot of us who wondered where he was and why he could not be found ,now we know.

R.I.P Big Fella.

Fond Regards, Wirey"

Bill Taggart (1st/83rd) sends condolences on behalf our mates from the 1st/83rd - "Paul, please pass along my condolences along with those of the entire 1/83rd family on Robert's death. Bill"

Jim Fitzgerald remembers – "Paul, both Bob Ness and I commenced our Army service in the Sept 1965 intake. We were both in 12 Platoon C company at Puckapunyal. We were both members of the Company Rugby team that won the inter Company Rugby competition during our recruit training. We were both posted to 131 after recruit training. Bob attended my 21st in March 1966. We both served in Vietnam at the same time and were discharged 1 September 1967. Bob was a good mate through my time in the Army. I think everyone will remember Bob as a good bloke. Jim Fitzgerald"

. Gault, Peter "Pappy" Scott – Carol, Pete's wife, let us know on 26th May of "Pappy's" passing – "I am sorry to say Peter lost his battle with cancer on 24.5.2014. Feel I have lost my best friend and husband, Peter was one incredible man. Carol Gault"



"Pappy" and Al Adams
before their RTA flight in September 1967.



**Ernie Newbold and
"Pappy"** at Victoria
Barracks, Sydney



"Pappy" and Nic Proskurin – ANZAC Day 2010

"Pappy" with the blokes in Sydney - ANZAC Day 2010



Allen Morley sent in the photo on the left – "Hi Fellas
Indeed a sad occasion. I last saw Pappy at Anzac Day 2010.
The pic shows Brian Killworth and Vic Danko with Pappy on
that day.
Vale Peter 'Pappy' Gault. Allen"

Paul Dickson – Pete will always be remembered as "Pappy" – geographical distance meant not a hell of a lot of contact post SVN – his presence will be missed but not in spirit.

Stuart Sporn – "See ya Pappy. Another of the "tour" of 67 leaves the Detachment. Fond regards to Carol and family."

Bill Taggart (1/83rd) – "Paul, please pass along my condolences, and those of the entire 1/83rd family, to the Gault family. May he rest in peace. Bill"

Bruce Irvine – “Hi Paul,
Received your email with great sadness and recall seeing Pappy and talking to Carol in Coffs a few years back about how he was travelling then.
My thoughts and prayers go out to Carol and those dear to Pappy.

I'm attaching a couple of photos I have from Holsworthy around June/July 1966.

The one on the right shows "Napoleon" Pappy. I hadn't written anything on the back of the photo but I think it may be Rob Retrot (?) and Terry Bruce at the back, Kenny Mac and Geoff Flett next row, Pappy and ?? and ?? at the front.



The other photo (at left) shows Ernie Newbold endeavouring to "hang" a compliant Pappy!!!

Both shots do show Pappy's warped sense of humour though. Sorry to lose such a nice bloke and good mate.
Bruce”

Leigh Hemming – “Paul, thanks for letting me know about the sad news of Pappy. I was only looking at some photos of him last week.

Barb and I had lunch at Cotton Tree yesterday with Al and Maggie Adams so we had spoke about what a nice bloke he was and how sad Carol will be losing her mate after all of these years. We spoke about the night they had us to dinner at their house before we left for Vietnam. Of course there were many other stories we spoke about in remembering Pappy.

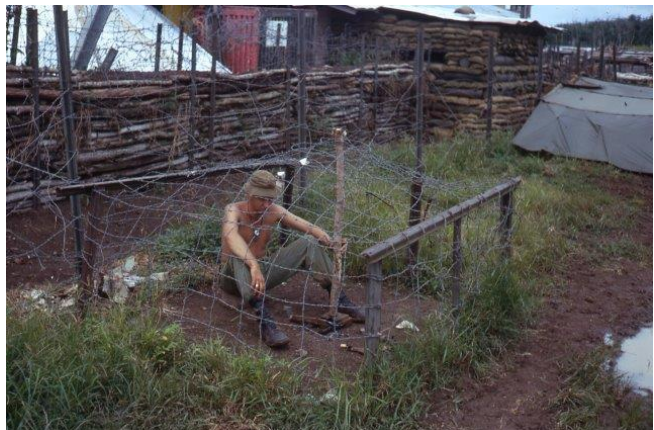
I have just spoken to Carol and she was literally just walking out the door to the funeral service at the Proserpine Uniting Church. She said he had been suffering with a lot of pain since last Christmas so at least now he will be in peace. Far too young!

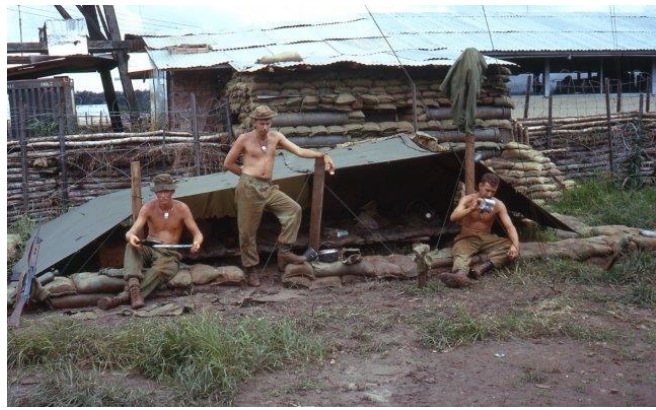
I said I will call her in a few days and have a chat.

We have lost one of the nice ones.

Regards, Leigh.”

Leigh's photo memories of "Pappy" –





The above photos with Bob King, Des Spencer, "Pappy, myself and a bloke whose names escapes me were on an Op north of the Binh Ba rubber plantation and the one taken with Tony Goldsmith, "Pappy" and Terry Bruce was out at Horsehoe.

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 – Committee meetings are held regularly with most held at Paddington RSL commencing at 11.15am.

The next **Committee Meeting and Annual General Meeting** will be held on **20th July 2014** at Paddington RSL. 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



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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