

THE EYES and EARS

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The 131 Detachment Dragon and Plaque, 1967...



It's origins and how it eventuated...

One aspect of the Seymour paver dedication and associated activities that was often discussed was the source of the 131 Dragon drawing.

The following text from DSM 'Chalky' Royal should provide a clear answer of the original source of the dragon figure which appeared on the Detachment plaque. Together with acknowledgement and recognition of the late Gunner Ron Webb's role in designing the dragon figure.

The references to the various design elements mentioned in the text can be seen clearly in this photograph. That should put to rest any claims of alternative 'ownership' of the dragon figure.

THE BATTERY PLAQUE - 1 ATF DET 131 LOC BTY RAA, SOUTH VIETNAM

As told by Former BSM WO2 Ron V Royal (Chalky)

As an RAA Battery stationed at NUI DAT, SOUTH VIETNAM we had no home, unlike the Gun Batteries who were all together in their positions. The Bty was spread all over the NUI DAT area, LP, Radar, Svy and Arty Int. The Bty HQ consisted of a tent.

Captain Warwick Hamilton (BC - Det 131) said we should build a home, so the Bty HO went to work with help at times from parties from Radar, Svy, LP, etc. On completion we had an Orderly Room, 'Q' Store and a Rec. Hut, with the Bty Sign surveyed in to tell all who we were. The lane in front of the sign we called 'Locators Lane'.

The Battery Plaque then came into being. Having no guns we were going to be different, So Capt. Hamilton and I got to work. We wanted something to relate to being in the Orient, not gaudy, but with a meaning. The good Captain had a U.S. envelope which portrayed a dragon in flight, not dissimilar to a map of Vietnam. The subsequent basis for the adoption of that particular type of dragon will come at the end of this account.

Svy had a fine artist in their midst and drew a dragon for us. So began the build-up of the plaque, Something else was needed, so I thought of the atom symbol round a black background, indicating that all worked day and night, and having a Bty Centre representing all sections rotating around as their work and duties demanded them to be at Fire Support Bases in our area at all times. But they now had a home to come to, to get their mail, the latest news, R & C, R & R, postings home, and who were going to replace them.

The Rec Hut had its big opening for us, as we were host to a Concert Party in October 1967 and rotating shifts came in to welcome the Party with a Bty BBQ. At long last, we knew we had a home. The design of the plaques met with a good response, and quite a number were ordered so that each member could have one

The name of the Unit was included on each plaque, - 1 ATF Det 131 Div Loc Bty RAA, and the whole symbolising its good work in SOUTH VIETNAM from 1966 to 1972, "The eyes and ears of the Task Force. "

The accompanying photograph was taken by Gnr. Grahame Dignam in December 1967 and shows the original drawing accredited to Gnr. Ron Webb (unit Surveyor).

The DRAGON

The Dragon is the emblem of the Emperor (1) and there are two forms of this fabulous monster : that of the sea, called "LI" and that of the sky, called "LUNG".

The Dragon "LUNG" has a head like a camel, eyes like a hare, the horns of a deer, and the ears of a cow its body covered with fish scales and the claws are like those of a hawk. At each side of the mouth are whiskers, and in the head is sometimes seen a pearl.

The Oriental believed that this animal was capable of breathing out fire and water, and that its voice was like the jingling of metal fans.

A Mr Rayers (2) writes of four kinds of LUNG Dragons.

The Celestial Dragon (3), which guards the mansion of the Gods, and supports them so they do not fall.

Notes:

(1) "How to identify old Chinese Porcelain."
by Mrs Willoughby Hodgson
Methuen & Co Ltd, LONDON 1905.

(2) The Chinese Readers' Manual.

(3) Only just over half of the Dragon Story was known at the time of making the Plaque

Ed – The above article was sent in via **Allen Morley** from material he received from **Joe Kaplun** and shines a pretty bright light on the "Dragon's" origins and some of the blokes involved, namely **Warwick "Blue Leader" Hamilton**, the late **Ron "Chalky" Royal** and of course the late **Ron Webb**. Thanks also for the forethought of taking the photo, way back when, by **Grahame Dignam**.

. July starts our 131 History and there's a fair bit to celebrate...

Jul	8	Establishment 131 Locators Association Inc 2010
	10	The Battery was first raised in 1952 as 31 Battery and was re-designated as 131 st Locating Battery on 10th July, 1954
	22	First Eyes & Ears SVN 1967 – we've never been able to locate Vol 1 No1.
	31	Disbandment of the Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery RAA 1971

[Vietnam vets share stories](#)

- thanks to the



This item was sent by **Grahame Dignam** –

The humour and hardship of men at war was the topic of discussion at a “Know Your Community” talk at Shepparton Library last week. April 5, 2013 4:04am



Vietnam veterans **Kevin Heenan**, Bill Brown, **Ron Mason** and David Smith.

By John Lewis

Members of Goulburn Valley Vietnam Veterans' Association talked for an hour about their experience of the Vietnam War in front of a small but interested audience at the library on Wednesday morning.

Bill Brown, **Kevin Heenan**, David Smith, **Ron Mason** and **Peter Dealy** served in Vietnam from the 1960s to the early 1970s.

GV Vietnam Veterans president Mr Heenan remembered the funny side of army life.

“I was fresh off the plane with my shiny boots, when I was told to wait for the bus to the Beer RSL. I waited for ages on the roadside — of course there was no Beer RSL,” he said.

He also talked about blowing up a dunny with an angry officer inside and sticking fruit up the exhaust pipes of army vehicles.

“We always managed to have some sort of fun. When you talk to World War II veterans — it was a sense of humour that kept them going, too,” Mr Heenan said.

Mr Dealy remembered how easy it was to keep in touch with events back home.

“We got the *Sporting Globe* within two days. I would study the racing fields on Thursday and place bets on Saturday.

“The mail was virtually instantaneous. There were 10 or 12 letters waiting for you when you came back from operations,” he said.

Mr Dealy said when it became known he was from Shepparton, the *Shepparton News* was sent out to him every week.

“I was always pretty well informed about things back home,” he said.

Mr Brown, an army medic, remembered time spent at a Da Nang house with fellow Aussies — away from the American bases.

"We had plain bacon and eggs — Australian style.

"The American food was so rich — apple pie with cheese on top."

He also remembered the sadness of losing two mates from his group on Anzac Day in 1969.

"It seemed so unfair — really un-Australian to lose two blokes from my hut on Anzac Day," he said.

Mr Brown remembered being at a Carols by Candlelight service on leave in Sydney's Hyde Park when an announcement was made that two Australian advisers had been killed in Vietnam.

"There was a woman next to us whose husband was an adviser. It was the worst carols for her.

"I think they do things differently now," he said.

All the veterans said their homecoming experience was not the best.

Mr Brown said only three Vietnam veterans marched in Melbourne on Anzac Day in 1976.

He only joined the Shepparton RSL about five years ago.

"In 1979 I replied to an ad in the *Shepparton News* about a barbecue for Vietnam vets — but when I mentioned agent orange they didn't want to know," he said.

Mr Heenan said he was invited to speak at Numurkah High School in 1972.

"I found out later that all the Year 12 teachers had boycotted the talk," he said.

All agreed that the October 1987 Welcome Home march in Sydney, attended by 25,000 Vietnam veterans, was the first time they felt recognised.

Mr Brown said he didn't send for his service medals until 1986.

He had watched a television program about Australian World War II veterans marching in the United States.

"One of them said, 'You can't talk to anyone else about war — nobody else understands except the blokes who were there'. That inspired me to march in Sydney," Mr Brown said.

Ex-naval serviceman Mr Smith said it was a special day for all Vietnam vets.

"We recognised so many faces. The crowd were clapping us — it felt like we were floating," Mr Smith said.

The Shepparton Library presents a Know Your Community talk on the last Wednesday of each month.

. AN/KPQ-1 RADAR South Vietnam

Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery South Vietnam 1966 - 1970

This document records a brief history of the mortar locating radars used by Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery in South Vietnam...the reproduction of which has been granted by its author —

Keith R Ayliffe BEM

Ex 131 Div Loc Bty

1969 - Winding down

With the introduction to Det 131 Sound Ranging Base, trials and control of Sensor equipment and large searchlights with infra red capabilities, the emphasis on the radars seemed to decline with no mention of the radars in reports from January. It is highly probable that one radar remained in Nui Dat and one radar was deployed at the Horseshoe.

14 January - Appointment: Officer Commanding Det 131 (TFAIO) Captain Anthony S. Eaton.

17 February - Operation FEDERAL commenced, once again operating outside Phuoc Tuy Province to secure the major bases of Long Binh, Bien Hoa and the capital Saigon from an impending offensive. However, unlike the previous two NVA offensive episodes—Operation COBURG in January and February 1968, and Operation THOAN THANG I in May 1968 which had both involved large-scale attacks on Australian positions, Operational FEDERAL was less intensive and was limited to ambushing and patrolling, with none of the Australian fire support bases subjected to attack. AWM 95-1-4-140 Headquarters 1st Australian Task Force Commander's Dairy Annexes E-N 1-29 February 1969

19 February - Operation GOODWOOD ended.

Bravo (A7) was deployed to FSB DUSTER (YT 1211) Bien Hoa, which is described as the HQ of 2/5 Arty Bn US. FSB DUSTER believed to be named after the major defence armament for the base, the 40mm SP guns, which were officially referred to as DUSTERS.



The 40mm SP gun (referred to as <u>Dusters</u>) came in a number of configurations, 1. Single gun 2. Twin (two) guns, and 3. Quad (four) guns. Their general purpose was to supply perimeter defence for American installations; FSPBs and major bases.	The AN/MPQ-4A was a mobile, intercept-type (non- tracking) radar designed primarily to direct and locate hostile weapons and secondarily to adjust low-velocity artillery fire. Local or remote operation of the set was possible. In local operation, the control indicator group was operated from a position on the radar trailer. In remote operation, the control indicator group is removed up to 45 metres from the radar trailer. Range: 15,000 metres maximum, 225 metres minimum
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Alpha (A12) deployed by road to FSPB MARTINE (YS2575). It is difficult to find any information on these two FSBs in discussion with ex radar operators it is concluded that both these FSBs were US named and controlled.

It is suspected, although not documented that the radars were on loan to the Americans as added protection from rocket and mortar attacks on the major bases of Long Binh and Bien Hoa particularly with the threat of another Tet offensive.

At this stage the radars were no longer air portable and the sound ranging base at Nui Dat was functioning well and afforded a greater range of security from enemy rocket and mortar attacks to the Australian Task force base.

The documents record Alpha (A12) was located near a US MPQ-4A mortar locating radar system. This system was classed as a second generation mortar/weapons locating system and from radars operator reports was superior to our system. No enemy locreps were recorded during this period, however, operators were successful in tracking and recording a number of allied weapons.

10 March - Operation OVERLANDER a reconnaissance in force operation commenced with both radars Deployed in the Bien Hoa area.

17 March - Lt Paul Tys replaced 2Lt Gordon Williams as radar section commander.

01 April - Bdr Paul Butcher replaced Bdr Colin Gordon as No.1 Alpha radar.

17 April - On completion of Operation OVERLANDER both radars returned by road to Nui Dat.

18 April - Bravo (A7) deployed to Bien Hoa by road. Reports indicate Bravo (A7) remained at Bien Hoa for the remainder of the month and Alpha (A12) remained at Nui Dat. From this point it is impossible to identify the radars by serial number, as they are now simply referred to as — AN/KPQ-1

08 May - Sgt James "Zeke" Ritchie No1 Alpha radar

08 May - Operation REYNELLA commenced to deny access into populated areas by VC from areas such as Long Hai Hills YS4455 and Long Green YS5054.

11 May - An AN/KPQ-1 radar deployed to FSB THRUST - YS 50-54 23 km NE of Vung Tau, on the southern edge of Route 326, 4 km south of Dat Do, 4 km north west of the coast and 15 km south, south east of Nui Dat, Phuoc Tuy Prov, III Corps.

06 Jun - 0015hrs - FSB THRUST hit by 20 to 30 mortar rounds (calibre not recorded), resulting in 1 KIA and 9 WIA, 9 RAR. The enemy mortars fired while 105mm guns of 161 Fd Bty at SPB THRUST were conducting H&I mission.

Although bearings were reported by the LP, no Locrep was recorded. No CB fire took place. There is mention of a tower being built by Det 131 for the use by LP. There is an offhand mention that it was referred to as the —leaning tower of Pisa', however, no photo appear to exist and official records contain only scant mention.

0815hrs - The Battle of BINH BA commenced. (a village about 4 Km north of Nui Dat)

NUI DAT.

1525hrs - An unknown number of enemy rockets impacted outside 1 ATF perimeter.

1655hrs - An unknown number of enemy rockets impacted outside 1 ATF perimeter.

1925hrs - An estimated nine rockets impacted in the area to the NORTH of 1 ATF perimeter.

2032hrs - An estimated four rockets impacted in the area to the NORTH of 1 ATF perimeter. There was no damage or casualties reported. No record of any locreps from either SRG or radars.

07 June - Battle of Binh Ba ended. The baseplate position from the FSPB THRUST previous mortaring (6 Jun) was located by an infantry patrol.

10 June - Det 131 Counter Battery Fire Plan in support of 1 ATF Base rewritten and renamed 'FIREBALL' (original Fire Plan 'CRACKERBARREL'). Main alterations were new targets and newer groupings of targets.

15 June - 2030hrs LP reports Mortar firing. 7 rounds of unknown calibre impacted near FSPB THRUST without causing casualties or damage. No record of Locreps, CB fire or crater analysis. Operation REYNELLA ends. There is no mention of the radar returning to Nui Dat.

14 July - Operation MUNDINGBURRA commences to assist in the security of the population within Long Dien and Dat Do. 105 Fd BTY deploy to FSPB THRUST. There is no mention of an AN/KPQ-1 radar deploying at this time, however, as we have evidence of the radar being at this location at this time, raises the possibilities that it remained here after Operation REYNELLA or was redeployed here at the commencement of this operation.



Photos : Terrence Hayes

03 August - Baria reported incoming mortar and rocket fire. Locreps were produced to say the primaries were coming from grids YS3670, YS3771 and YS3770. There is no record on who or what produced these locations (radar or sound ranging base). The Locations placed them into an area where B Bty 2/35th were firing into. These grids were then engaged by both B Bty and 161 Fd Bty.

04 August - Det 131 Arty Int Operators conducted crater analysis in Baria with the result that the fire received was identified as 105mm. A subsequent investigation ordered by the CO revealed 161 Fd Bty had been adjusting a target to the south of Baria had fired the rounds.

08 August - 0045hrs FSPB THRUST received approximately 12 rounds of enemy 82mm mortar fire. 105 Fd Bty fired a CB mission with unknown results. Also not recorded where the CB data came from. 2 Aust WIA were Dusted Off. (a term for medical evacuation by helicopter.)

15 August - Operation MUNDINGBURRA ended FSB THRUST. The AN/KPQ-1 radar at FSPB THRUST moved back to Nui Dat. (AWM 3-6-17)

26 August - Appointment: Officer Commanding Det 131 (TFAIO) Captain Brian W. Kennedy.

31 October - Operation KINGS CROSS, A reconnaissance and ambush operations commenced deployment into AO GRACE centre of mass YS3082 Phuoc Tuy Province one (1) AN/KPQ-1 Radar deployed by road to FSPB CAPE YS3082.

01 December - one (1) AN/KPQ-1 radar deployed at HORSESHOE.

12 December - Operation KINGS CROSS ends. Radar returned by road to Nui Dat from FSPB CAPE. The AN/KPQ-1 radar deployed at HORSESHOE moves by road to FSB BARBARA YS4577 15

December - 105 Fd Bty at Nui Dat engaged a suspected mortar base plate position. Locrep 419732 from AN/KPQ-1 radar at FSB BARBARA. Results not known.

31 December - The AN/KPQ-1 radar redeployed from FSB BARBARA by road to HORSESHOE produced these locations (radar or sound ranging base). The Locations placed them into an area where B Bty 2/35th were firing into. These grids were then engaged by both B Bty and 161 Fd Bty.

Next month we'll get into 1970 - The end of an era....

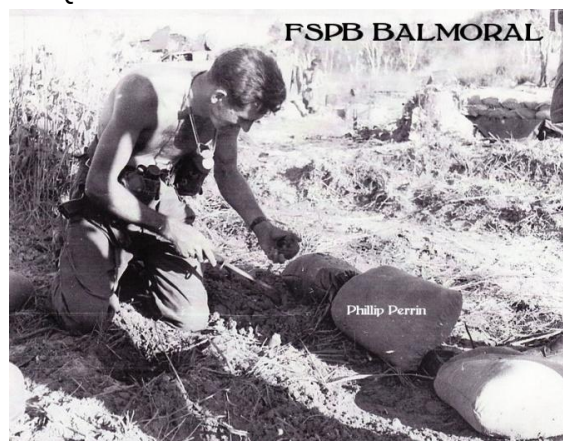
. **Phillip Perrin** writes back to us with reference to the ongoing "AN/KPQ-1 RADAR South Vietnam" series we are running in *Eyes & Ears* and clears up pertinent point -

"In the reference under the heading AN/KPQ RADAR, I wish to correct data for the sake of our history - at FSB CORAL there was indeed crater analysis carried out and although some interference to some craters was evident we had received enough bombs to obtain a good intersection that related to base plate position which was found by an APC clearing patrol. Among some artillery craters 3 base plate sites and a neat stack of 30/40 mortar rounds plus one NVA with his foot blown off were confirmed by myself.

I flew to FSB BALMORAL with CO 12 FD REGT but no crater examination was conducted. However, with a couple of locators we went outside the wire to inspect bodies and RPG blast marks. By the time we arrived at BALMORAL most mortar craters had been tampered with. The photo (at right) depicts me at CORAL examining a 75mm RCL anti-armour fuse. There were 9 such craters and fuses. Each crater being about 30 meters behind, but in direct line with our APC's lining the perimeter.

Based on crater analysis a patrol was sent to the likely location and indeed found the charge casings left in situ. The above data relates to activities following the second major attack on CORAL, and of course BALMORAL was several days later after FSB COOGEE was closed and the KIWI BTY returned to NUI DAT.

...over and out... regards Phillip"



Ed "over and out - Phillip" – hopefully only for the moment until the next Locrep etc.

. Last days with the detachment in SVN...

This subject originated from an email from **Rieny Nieuwenhof** with regards to a vexing question as to "when did the Detachment cease operation in SVN?"

Ed thought he'd contact a few blokes who are known to have been in the vicinity just about when the lights were turned off and received the following. I also sent Kevin B the following email on receiving his recollections –

"Kevin,

Thanks - that is just so good - the end has a real Browning taste to it - take NO crap! Who needs the enemy some time?

These sorts of memories are what makes my job (if you can call it that) so much more enjoyable and interesting. The periods either side of when you are there tend to be a blur and this sort of memory report is almost essential to understand, not necessarily by us, but also by the public.

Thanks and I'll always gladly accept anything else more you may remember/come across.

Paul"

...**Ed** would grab any additional information with regards to this era, and again as KB said maybe the last of the Sensor group could spread more light on the subject.

...anyway, let's have a read of what we've got so far...

Rob Buzzacott – adds an interesting twist to his SVN fate and some really typical Locator serious and fun memories-
"G'day Paul,

My memory is a bit hazy and somebody who may have good recollection is Kev Browning, whom I'm sure also stayed on until the end.

I actually went over as part of 12 Fd Regt, classified as an Arty Surveyor, but as you probably know, the regimental arty surveyors worked in Arty Tac instead of doing surveying because the Det 131 Surveyors did all the survey work for the regiments in SVN. In about May, myself and 3 or 4 others of the 12 Fd Regt surveyors were attached to Det 131, as they had a shortage of surveyors, and we stayed with the Detachment until they wound up.

Kev Browning was the Det 131 Survey Sergeant and Jeff Evans was the Survey Officer at that time. The radars had long gone and the sound ranging had left around about Nov '70, but I believe the LPs were still operating and the Detachment had been running trials of ground sensors as well. I believe Tony Turner was involved with the sensors. After the 131 Detachment left, the LPs ceased operating, but the Arty Surveyors stayed on and we continued providing regimental survey for 12 Fd Regt until they left Nui Dat. Arty Tac also continued functioning until we moved out of the Dat. We would have left Nui Dat around mid to late September '71, I believe. From there we moved down into Vung Tau into some old ARVN barracks, where we spent several weeks cleaning and packing all the equipment for RTA.

There was a fair sort of a party for Det 131's farewell from Nui Dat, with the unfortunate outcome of a Land Rover being rolled either going up, or coming down (can't remember which) Nui Dat hill. A couple of the guys had decided to visit the LP up there for some reason (probably best kept to themselves) and Joe Molenkamp ended up spending some time down in Vung Tau hospital with a broken leg, which probably delayed his return home.

Hope this is helpful. Regards, Rob."

John Jaggard – this story is of real interest too, yes it does add a trip on the Vung Tau ferry (not first class by the sounds of it!), but also it adds to the dimension of the demise of the blokes who remained after the Detachment was wound up and what they encountered – John in particular –

"Hi Paul, since receiving your e-mail I have been searching the deep dark depths of my mind to attach something to your questions.

I found a lot of interesting stuff but I don't think much of it will be of use to addressing your request.

I can't remember exactly when, but I was transferred to A Bty during the last weeks of 131 packing up and going home.

I do remember making wooden packing crates and loading shipping containers all in an atmosphere of excitement and confusion.

A Sergeant was in charge of the packing up and I can't recall his name, but if you should link him to this event I would like to contact him.

I also remember the feeling of betrayal and dejection when I was informed that I was to be transferred to A Bty and not moving out with 131.

A few weeks (or months) after settling into my new home at A Bty (it felt like hell after 131) we were given a day off so I decided to go back to 131's lines to see who or what was left. There were a few familiar faces but I can't remember who. The boozier was open and that was what mainly interested me. (A Bty alcohol consumption policy was 2 cans per day, perhaps).

Sometime in October 1971 A Bty moved down to Camp 500 - an SVN Army Base in Vung Tau in preparation to sailing on the 'Vung Tau Ferry' (the Sydney).

I got into some strife whilst at Camp 500 and was put on a charge which followed me onto the Sydney. I spent most of my days on the Sydney down in the Laundry.

I was also sea sick from Vung Tau to Sydney (12 days), so I don't have fond memories of the voyage.

I doubt if any of this trip down memory lane has revealed any historical data for your records but it was a pleasant trip none the less.

Cheers Paul, John Jaggard."

Barry “Spink” Fountain – this is such a refreshing down to earth account of “when it’s over, it should be over”.

“Hi Paul,

Bit late but here goes

All the guys that had been in country 6 months or more were all being sent home some of the newer ones went to A Bty. The Horseshoe was closed down and we only manned SAS hill during the day. Then sometime in September, I think 4 or 5 of us were sent to HQ Bty. I don’t know where the rest went, it could have been 104 Bty or A Bty. They wanted to put me in Arty Tac, but spoke to BSM Ponting and told him that as soon as I got home I was out of the Army. So I was sent cutting grass making wooden boxes for the Officers to send all their shit home. At some time in October HQ Bty packed up in about 30 trucks and moved to Vungers to an old disused Yank Base and that’s when we all started to get our “happy pills” and RTA dates - about 20 at a time. I didn’t do much in Vungers other than into the bars at night. On a couple of times when the happy pills took hold all you did was eat, shit and sleep. We all came home on C130’s - 14 hours to Darwin, then 6 hours to Adelaide. Customs did us over in Darwin - a lot of radios and other shit was smashed because we would not pay the duty. In Adelaide they gave us a free train ticket to which we said “give us the money, we want to Fly home to Melbourne”. Now this was fine, but there is always a “but” – “you have to find you own way from the RAAF base to the airport”. Now that’s when the shit hit the fan - the RAAF brass soon found a bus!! The one hour flight to Melbourne - we had the plane dry in 20 minutes!!



Home in Vang Tau Ian Campbell - we did get beds later in the day



The freedom bird home

Very brief, I’m not one to write to much – Regards, Barry”

Ed – it’d be great to get a Locator Profile from Barry to see what he got up to before and especially after the Army – How about it Barry?

Kevin Browning – in his usual inimitable way adds humour to his very thorough and readable memories...

“Paul,

They were interesting days you speak of and I doubt any commonsense was actually put into many of the higher decisions to reduce numbers in country. I suspect the Detachment was head of the gunner list as we were different from the others and not that the expertise wasn’t required. I recall speaking with Norm McManus years later and recount the discussion here. Norm attended the 2 I/Cs weekly conference (probably because Tim was busy in Arty Tac in his ‘second job’) and it was announced that the Detachment would be withdrawn. At that time we had responsibility for assisting in Arty Tac, the LPs, Sensors and Survey for the Regiment (12 Field). Norm asked who would provide the survey once the Det had left. That must have highlighted the fact that 12 Field survey section existed on paper only and their ‘trained surveyors’ had not carried out survey in country and probably not since their survey course. They had been used to make up numbers working in Arty Tac. It was then that the decision was made to retain a number of the Detachment’s surveyors and transfer them to 12 Field Regt.

This appears to have happened quicker than the other close down elements for the detachment. Jeff Evans was first to move, being transferred on paper to 1 Aust Reinforcement Unit (2 June 1971) then to 12 Field Regt (12 July 1971). He remained as the Survey Section Commander throughout the change over and until 12 Field pulled out. Those members of the survey section who still had six months or more to serve were transferred to 12 Field on 30 June 1971. They were Tony Turner, Len Walker, Les Falkai, Joe Molenkamp, Terry Welsh and myself. We then received a small number (about seven) surveyors from the Regt’s Survey Section to make up numbers. In all I think we had about 12 gunners/bombardiers in the Section. For the Detachment Surveyors that remained with 12 Field there was no change to daily life. They remained in the Survey living lines that had been built in late ‘68 when sound ranging was introduced. What happened was the 12 Field surveyors moved from the HQ Battery lines to join us in the old 131 area. We had to run refresher courses for the Regimental surveyors who I think were all Nashos, some with attitude. So basically the Survey section only changed its unit and continued on as normal. Jeff Evans was the Survey Section Commander as well as undertaking duties in Arty Tac. The only change for me was that I now reported to the BSM HQ Battery, Jim Ponting, rather than to Norm McManus. The survey section continued to use the same survey office and Detachment store area once the Detachment closed. I even think we continued to use the “Menz Club” building as the Regiment’s Transport section moved across to our area when the US Battery moved out.

The detachment still ran its own orderly room, Q store, Survey, Sensors and LPs plus forming part of Arty Tac. When the Detachment was winding down all other duties started to wind down as well. People returned to Australia over several weeks, a list being produced about a week in advance. Among the last to go would have been the orderly room and Q element. John Tickle had to close down the account and Tim mentions that in his paper. John and I shared a tent in the HQ Battery Sergeants lines and when he left on 13 August I had the best tent (we had rebuilt it) in the Sergeants Lines all to myself. Norm McManus was last to leave on 19 August.

There would have been a wind down of unit activity commencing about June. Apart from the surveyors, other Detachment members that still had time to serve were transferred across to 12 Field in different capacities. The Survey Section retained their landrovers and all the survey equipment. Sensors would have continued until the latest. I recall attending a sensor course in June '71 and after that being involved in the deployment of a sensor string. It would be best to ask the group that were the sensor operators if they recall the period when the sensors ceased operation. I find it difficult to understand that it would have been closed down as it had been a very useful tool in operations. I suppose you could equate the closing of the Detachment with the evacuation from Gallipoli. Duties continued right up to the day of departure. One could not imagine the consequences of a Locator with time on his hand.

To better understand some of the happenings going on at the time and after the Detachment left it might be worthwhile mentioning the following.

As mentioned above the movement of people happened on a weekly basis and was not overly flexible. I can remember Sgt Bob Harris's name appeared on the departure list and he asked if he could be changed and held over for a couple of weeks. He was two weeks short of the six months that would have qualified him for the South Vietnam Medal. His request fell on deaf ears and he left as directed.

161 (NZ) Battery had already gone home and the area they occupied had been filled by A Battery who had moved from near the middle of Nui Dat to take over the perimeter that had been covered by the Kiwis.

The American unit also moved out and the perimeter was brought in close to the area that had once been the home of one of the radars and later the sensor boys (photo at right from Kev Maker).



Also living in that area were the drivers from HQ Battery 12 Field. The new perimeter was too close to the driver's lines and so the 2 i/c 12 Field ordered they be moved. By this time 131 had gone and he directed the drivers take over the old 131 Survey lines. The fact we still had three of the four rooms filled with surveyors didn't seem to be taken into account. When this was brought to the 2 i/c's attention he wasn't interested and directed the surveyors be moved into the old 131 Q store. One can appreciate the Q store wasn't ideal, but more importantly over the years the surveyors had turned their lines into fairly comfortable condition. From the original tin walled and tin roofed buildings sleeping four per room, they had clad the walls and put in ceilings using the timber from the rocket boxes obtained from the helicopter group. Some rather interesting discussions took place over a couple of weeks to try and get the 2 i/c to change the plan. Thankfully, I had the support of the BSM HQ Battery but things were not looking good until one day the 2 i/c frustration of being challenged by a young sergeant took the better of him. He said, obviously without thinking, for all he cared the surveyors can go live where the drivers were presently living. It was quickly brought to his attention that if this was to be the case why did the drivers need to move in the first place. Next day the drivers moved into the old 131 Q store.

Regards Kevin"

Ed – hopefully this might inspire some or ALL of you to tap out some memories of anything – recruit training, Coprs training, 131 section training, pre-SVN training or what there was of it, returning to 131 and beyond in the service, the return to civvie street etc – remember we have a new regime of Locators, who may be interested in what the hell we thought/felt etc, to whom we represent a bunch blokes who were in a less technical, less sophisticated sphere, but no less encountered what they may be going through now.

OK I'm leaving space in forthcoming *Eyes & Ears* for what you're going to send.

. **John Dellaca** came to the rescue a month or so ago when **Ed** went hunting for an original photo of **Stan Briggs** that John had taken. We not only got the photo to Stan, but in John's collection came up a couple of others showing Stan.

The first **Ed** thinks is a classic showing Stan sifting through some NVRA equipment – it's such a poignant shot with Stan caught in the moment.

John's words describing the photo at right–

"The one with Stan was early morning 13th May (1968) at headquarter battery area and is indeed NVA equipment which was all over the place.



The second shot shows Stan once more, but what is a classic it shows **Wally Franklin (sitting on sandbag roof)** who featured in last month's *Eyes & Ears* being awarded receiving his OAM

John's words again – (photo at left)
"This was the morning of the 12th May at FSB Anderson, packed up ready to go to Coral. We waited for hours."



. **Murray Smale** sent in the following FSB Coral memorabilia (he's been kept busy with correspondence – and it's greatly appreciated) in conjunction with his Locator Profile and is timely as this month it is now 47 years (the time in itself is incredible as it is more half of our lives ago!) since FSB Coral.



FSB Coral from left Mac, Keith, Mick, John and Raeme background.

Murray included the following article/press clipping marking the 16th anniversary of Fire Support Base Coral and covers the proceedings pretty vividly.

Killed: 17 Australians

THIS weekend marks the 16th anniversary of the battle in Vietnam for Fire Support Base Coral — a bungled operation that was to cost 17 Australian lives.

FSB Coral was established in a hot clearing 40 kilometres from Saigon. It was a significant base because no Australian units had probed so far north before.

Its purpose was to deny North Vietnamese gunners access to rocket launching sites for their attacks on the Bien Hoa-Long Binh-Saigon complex.

It was one of several bases thrown up by the Americans and Australians to "complete the route" of the North Vietnamese.

The bases were part of "Operation Complete Victory" ("Toan Thang") which was the American answer to the Tet Offensive. "Toan Thang" launched on April 8, 1968, was later described as the biggest operation launched in Vietnam to that time.

Destruction

Its aim was to destroy, once and for all, the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong influence around Saigon. When it was over, it was claimed that 7645 communists had been killed.

For the Australians, "Toan Thang" started on April 23 when two battalions and supporting gun batteries began criss-crossing Phuoc Tuy and Bien Hoa provinces on seek-and-destroy missions.

Helicopters were used to fly in artillery and infantry who would set up Fire Support Bases Dyke, Evans, Willow, Harrison and Coral. These were to be surprise moves

CYRIL AYRIS learns from a survivor how a Vietnam operation was bungled.

which would play havoc with the enemy's communication and supply lines.

The area chosen for FSB Coral was bounded by rubber trees and woodlands to the north and west. The "cleared" area was overgrown with waist-high grass which grew out of hard-baked clay — something that was to be cursed when the battle started.

When the Australians moved into position on May 12, the temperature was hovering around 37 degrees and the air was heavy with humidity.

The first mistake was made when the artillery was flown in before the infantrymen. The infantry, whose job was to protect the gunners, should have arrived first.

The gunners soon found that the hard-baked clay was not conducive to digging "shell-scrapes" ("fox-holes") in which they could sleep with some protection from enemy fire.

They chipped and hacked at the ground but were unable to dig deep enough for their peace of mind.

It was not until late in the afternoon that elements of the infantry started arriving. A mortar platoon was set up north of 102 Battery but 1 Battalion (Royal Australian Regiment) dug in around the helicopter pad 150 metres to the east.

When night fell the six howitzer artillery pieces were in a roughly north-south configuration with no barbed wire protection and only two earth walls in front of five and six guns.

The infantry was still not in

the right position to give a protective screen.

The mistakes were noted by the North Vietnamese infiltration units which were watching the Australians from nearby woodlands. They decided to attack that night.

At 4am on Monday, May 13, the enemy opened fire with salvos of rocket-propelled grenades aimed at the gun positions. At the same time, the communist infantry attacked from the north-east.

The Australian's mortar platoon was overrun and two gun emplacements became the scenes of hand-to-hand fighting. It was the first and only time in the Vietnamese war that an Australian artillery post was overrun.

Burning

FSB Coral was bathed with the light from burning equipment and the air was filled with the crackle of machine-gun fire, the whoosh of rockets and the cries for medics.

The Australians called for "splintex" — artillery shells filled with small arrows for close quarter fighting.

The shell was rarely used but at FSB Coral that morning, the Australians threw themselves flat on the ground as the steel arrows went screaming into the North Vietnamese.

The Australian infantrymen, who were pinned down by enemy fire, had troubles of their own and were able to offer little help to the Australian gunners.

An American Dakota aircraft, dubbed "Puff the Magic Dragon," flew low over the

battle dropping flares and sweeping the enemy with machine-gun fire.

In the better light and with their support lines cut, the North Vietnamese faltered then fell back to the woodlands.

When dawn came, the Australian infantrymen were able to add their fire at the retreating enemy.

The Australians had lost 10 killed and there were another 50 casualties. Another 60 dead North Vietnamese littered the battlefield.

The bodies of the enemy were "rolled" with ropes — the Viet Cong had a nasty habit of leaving primed hand grenades under their dead comrades.

A hole was dug and the North Vietnamese bodies were buried without ceremony. A few days later, the Australians were to be horrified to see arms and legs protrude suddenly from the mass grave.

Australian reinforcements were flown in during the day and on Monday night it rained heavily filling the "shell scrapes" with water making sleep impossible.

By now, there was a protective screen of infantry around the guns but still the communists probed the Australian position.

American gunships and fighter aircraft strafed the enemy with napalm and gunfire — and another seven Australians died.

The battle for FSB Coral subsided on May 16 when the North Vietnamese quietly withdrew into the woodlands to continue their fighting elsewhere.

The Australians had lost 17 dead and about 50 wounded.



FSB Coral facing South.



FSB Coral looking South East



FSB looking east, Ian Amos and Sgt Lawler - Charlie offensive from Rubber Trees in the background.



FSB Coral looking North.

Ed thought Murray's photos showed the Det's positions pretty vividly too (some were seen in Murray's Profile).

. Russ Hamsey – Major 2 I/C 20 STA Regiment –

Ed if we'd hung on another 40+ years we could be saluting him! When you consider the timelines below "our youngblokes" were in Iraq / Afghanistan for 8 years (2005 – 2013) – that's serious time. Makes us proud.

Russ, some of you may have met him in Seymour, has been corresponding with (possibly stalked by) **Grahame Dignam** and has supplied the following information on a question as to a flag that appears in a photograph (at right) sent in by **Derek Hinde** taken on a recent visit...

"Gentlemen:

Can I ever help with this one. It is the flag that was taken by CAPT Danny McGinley and his AN/TPQ-36 WLR crew to Iraq in 2005. Danny and the guys supported the Al Muthanna Task Group 1, commanded by (now) BRIG Roger Noble. This was the first deployment by 131 STA Bty with a weapon locating radar since Vietnam. The Det was 9 all ranks with a CAPT, a WO2 (who ran the CP) and then a SGT and 6 Bdrs / Diggers who ran the radar 24 / 7.



In the small photo to the right you see the 131 Det with a number of Brits and their Mamba WLR (a Brit version of the Arthur WLR).

Upon arrival of our guys in Camp Smitty (near As Samawah, the capital of Al Muthanna province), the Brit radar was redeployed to Basrah, which was just starting to arc up badly.

Our AMTG-1 crew was followed by AMTG-2, which had the radar Det reinforced with a Skylark Miniature UAV section. 20 STA Regt was formed at this time. AMTG-3 moved to Tallil (near An Nasiriyah in Dhi Qar province) in 2006 and became Overwatch Battlegroup 1. In late 2006, the more complete 131 STA Bty redeployed to Iraq as part of OBG-2 with a Radar section, an Arty Int Det, a Skylark Miniature UAV section and a ScanEagle UAV Troop. This deployment marked the first of our Bty deployments that ended with Afghanistan in 2013. A total of 15 Btys in all deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

And it all started with that little Det with the 131 flag. The flag, by the way, sits proudly on the wall of the MENZ Club. I asked the diggers last year about my idea to move the deployment flags all around the unit and they told me to get stuffed, they like them in the MENZ club.

Hope this helps, Russ Hamsey RW HAMSEY MAJ 2I/C, 20 STA Regt, Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera, QLD"



...and here's Derek outside the Menz Club...

L to R Derek Hinde, Joe Loziak and Kym Fox (current serving WO)

. **Joe Kaplun** – congratulations on being awarded -

MEDAL (OAM) OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA IN THE GENERAL DIVISION - QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST 2015, ANNOUNCED 8th June, 2015

The citation reads -

For service to the community, and to veterans and their families.

President, Locating Surveillance and Target Acquisition Association, since 2012 ; VicePresident, 2001-2012; Member, Panania Sub-branch, The Returned and Services League of Australia, many years. Vehicle Advisory Co-ordinator, Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Veterans Association, many years. Activities Organiser, ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day, Revesby Heights Ex-servicemen's Club, 1977-2011. Community includes: Foundation Member, Revesby Blue Light Disco, South Bankstown YMCA, since 1988; Publicity Officer; Supervisor, since 1998. Director, Panania East Hills Skillshare, Treasurer, Revesby South, Picnic Point Neighbourhood Watch Committee, 1987-1997; Founding Member. Foundation Member, Association of Combined Civil Marriage Celebrants, since 1994. Instrumental in fundraising events for the Diabetes Centre at St Vincent's Hospital, since 2007.

. **Ian Amos** sent the following photo in after a recent discussion re: **Grahame Dignam** communicating with **Hans Weber** (Hans is in the photo below). Now the photo got minds racing as to who were the blokes in the photo –



The general consensus was – that it's 2nd from left **Denis Dye**, then **Barry Guzder**, then facing the camera **Hans Weber**, **Ian Amos**, **Geoff Holden** and **Bob Billiards** (minus dog tags as usual). The curly hair between Geoff H and Bob B was considered that it might be **Bob King** (only a suggestion because of the "hair"??) Anyone got any other thoughts??

. **George Lane** forwarded the following article in to us. It's a great reminder of times past repeating themselves and careful note should be given to the second last paragraph in the article as it rings a bell or several for that matter...

"Costs of war soar as returned Afghanistan vets fall to disability". by: Andrew Troupson – The Australian 9th June, 2015

The number of Afghanistan veterans being accepted for disability support is soaring as the physical and mental costs of the war hit the home, sparking a warning better interventions are needed to limit the long-term human and economic cost.

The number of Afghanistan veterans with an accepted disability has almost trebled in three years to 3444 and is up a third in just the past 12 months, according to figures posted by Veterans Affairs last week.

Instances of post-traumatic stress disorder are up a staggering 300 per cent since 2012 to 1040, and have increased 45 per cent in the past year. Accepted claims for PTSD are growing at a rate of about 300 new cases every year.

While the level of disability varies, the number of Afghanistan veterans qualifying for "gold" cards, which for this young cohort will be those judged to be totally and permanently impaired by their injuries and conditions, now amounts to 474, up from 331 a year ago.

More than 26,000 Australian military personnel served in Afghanistan and the Middle East from 2001 to 2014, of which 41 were killed and 262 wounded.

The biggest single accepted complaint among Afghanistan veterans is hearing loss and tinnitus (1682) followed by PTSD.

Accepted claims for back injuries amount to 634, ahead of depression at 554. Claims for alcohol dependency or abuse amount to 289.

Philip Clarke, a professor of health economics at Melbourne University, said the fast-rising instances of PTSD suggested more and better treatments were needed to help veterans recover.

The length of future deployments could be re-examined given his research on Vietnam veterans that found rates of disability were highly correlated with length of service. "Clearly, the challenge is for the community to look at ways to mitigate the long-term impact on returned soldiers of the war," Professor Clarke told The Australian.

He said the community did not appreciate that the post-war cost of caring for veterans would exceed the cost of deployments, and more effort should be put into minimising the human and economic costs.

He notes the pension for an Afghanistan veteran totally and permanently disabled at age 30 will cost the government about \$1.7 million, excluding healthcare costs. Healthcare costs for gold card members are running at \$21,700 a year per veteran, which includes World War II veterans.

About 13 per cent of Afghanistan veterans are on some disability support, compared with about 5 per cent who served in the East Timor deployment that goes back to 1999. Professor Clarke said if Vietnam was any guide then many more Afghanistan veterans would end up on disability support. Among Vietnam veterans, where 61,000 Australians served, more than 70 per cent are now on support.

"The figures show there is going to be a significant and ongoing human cost, but also a significant and ongoing cost to the community which will need to be funded," Professor Clarke said.

. **Ed** galloped through Sydney for a quick lunch and managed to share a staggered event with the blokes below – l to r – **Vic Danko, Ernie Newbold, Nick Proskurin, Grahame Dignam and Allen Morley** – the very well looking **George Lane** had departed a little earlier.



. **George Lane** sent in the following photo from the Memorial dinner in Seymour which he titled the "Power Group" - our "Pioneers" who scrub up pretty well – "Dicko, it's at Seymour at dinner on Saturday night. From left to right George Lane, rear Ray Smith, centre "Spike" Chase, rear in blue Barry Campton (who we hadn't seen for 50years) far right Ged Carroll.

It was really great catching up with Barry and his charming wife Elizabeth. Barry was BC after Jim Townley. George."



. **Vic Moreau** – We've had some updates on Vic with regards to his current health situation via **George Lane**. Vic has had a couple of major scares in the last week or so and here is the latest from **Jane Dow** –

"Hi George

Just had a text message from Kylie (Vic's daughter). Vic is still at Nepean and is now able to talk to people. The doctors are doing scans on his heart and brain, to see if he has also had a stroke.

Jane, Coffs Harbour"

Ed – Wish him well and keep him in your thoughts.



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 – **Robert Tanner and Derek Hinde** to the Association fold.

Presidential perambulations

Here we are only halfway through 2015 but I want to bring our readers up to date on what promises to be a hectic 2016 for 131 Locators.

But first, some current news. We have received a grant from DVA to install a Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery unit paver at the North Fort Memorial Walk. (for information on the Walk see http://artilleryhistory.org/memorial_walk.html). The money has to be spent and accounted for by the end of this year. The paver will be of the same design – by Nick Proskurin - as that dedicated at Seymour last month. Further information will be provided in *Eyes and Ears* as it becomes available.



In 2016 the indicative calendar currently includes:

Anzac Day April 25th to be celebrated with 20STA Regiment in Brisbane and at local levels elsewhere
 April 26th for the dedication of a 131 Detachment plaque at Enoggera Barracks Queensland, the home of 20STA, to coincide with the (almost – only a week short) 50th anniversary of the arrival of the first Detachment 131 gunners to SVN

August 18th in Canberra for a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan and Vietnam Veterans Day in other locales

October (NSW) long weekend – 30th Sept to 3rd October 2016 - will see the last Coffs Harbour reunion

A Gunners lunch in Canberra on a date to be advised

Grahame Dignam's 70th birthday; look out for your invitation in the mail.

It will obviously not be possible for a maximum turnout for each event. Notwithstanding that, the April events at Enoggera and the Coffs Harbour reunion would represent the calendar highlights for members.

Best wishes

Allen

. Upcoming Events Calender –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday, 28th July, 2015 at 1100hrs

Venue: Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club, 26 Humphries Rd., Canley Heights Ph (02) 9604 9975 and for directions - <http://www.canleyheightsrsl.com.au/contact-us/> You're all welcome

. Pertinent Points – extracted from the **131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday, 23rd June, 2015 at 1100hrs...**

Presidents report –

.Allen reported that he made his submission regarding the (repatriation of the) remains of Tom Checkley

.Reported a reduced DVA Grant of \$1500 would be approved in a tight financial climate for the DVA covering the paver for North Heads.

.Allen asked for the committee to accept delegation for events in the coming year as it will very busy. Consequently, details of transport, accommodation and Dinners for **Vietnam Vets Day Aug 2015 will be Bankstown. Anzac Day 2016** will be at **20STA Enoggera** with the Plaque dedication on **April 26** to be co-ordinated by Allen and Grahame. The **Vietnam Vets Day Aug 2016 in Canberra** will be co-ordinated by Bert Blink and George Lane. **131 Reunion in Coffs Harbour in Oct 2016** will be co-ordinated by George Lane. Other details for all events will be handled by Ern Newbold and Nick Proskurin and other committee members where required. Those nominated accepted their roles (Note - no one volunteered).

. 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...July –

July	Name	Regt No	YOB	SVN In	SVN Out	Comments
1	STEPHEN FOWLER	217186	1948	16 09 1968	17 09 1969	
2	PETER O'DONNELL Sgt.	213115	1941	24 03 1970	05 11 1970	
3	BRUCE FOWLER	2795238	1949	16 12 1970	29 07 1971	
4	GEORGE WEARN Capt.	2251140	1937	05 08 1968	20 08 1968	133 Div Loc CMF
7	PETER JOSCELYNE	2792023	1945	03 06 1970	17 12 1970	
12	NEVILLE ATKINSON	1733449	1947	08 11 1968	05 11 1969	† 14.12.96
13	DEREK GRIFFITHS					† 02.04.05
10	BILL FINLAY Sgt.	37818	1944	20 05 1966	01 05 1967	
10	ROBERT PELHAM	55342	1949	16 11 1968	19 11 1969	
10	REX ARNOLD	424096	1949	16 12 1970	29 05 1971	
	" "			29 05 1971	16 09 1971	Ind 161 Recce Flt.
11	JOHN JAGGARD	4721862	1949	03 03 1971	02 08 1971	131
	" "			02 08 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
13	ALASDAIR GOUGH	2105130	1947	27 03 1970	04 03 1971	
14	EDMOND DOUST Sgt.	53111	1939	04 05 1967	02 04 1968	† 26.12.14
14	FREDERICK KRUIMINK	6708867	1945	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
15	IAN EARLE	3166824	1951	19 08 1970	10 12 1970	131 / 4 Fd Regt.
	" "			11 12 1970	23 06 1971	33 Dental Unit
16	GEORGE ADDISON WO2	2410040	1930	16 04 1969	16 04 1970	† 27.12.12
18	KEITH AYLIFFE Sgt.	217354	1941	18 12 1967	03 12 1968	131
	" "			08 07 1971	24 07 1971	HQ AFV
18	ALASTAIR McLEAN	312524	1947	21 02 1969	21 02 1970	
18	JOE KOCKA	1202703	1951	20 08 1970	29 07 1971	
19	MAXWELL McPHERSON	3795560	1947	27 11 1969	05 11 1970	
21	GRAHAM WILLIAMS	2789698	1947	03 06 1969	25 03 1970	
21	WILLIAM SLAPE	44464	1950	22 12 1969	17 12 1970	† 12.05.12
21	WILHELMUS Van ZETTEN	3794919	1947	17 03 1970	17 12 1970	
21	PETER SUMMERS	3796803	1948	09 11 1970	09 06 1971	
22	JOHN HOMER	5717596	1949	17 03 1971	02 08 1971	131
	" "			02 08 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
23	DAVID DODD	2790139	1947	03 06 1969	04 06 1970	
25	WILLIAM DOYLE	4719912	1947	17 12 1968	04 01 1969	4 Fd REGT

" "				05 01 1969	28 11 1969	131 † 05.09.78
25	JOHN SMITH	610231	1949	16 11 1968	12 11 1969	
25	PETER BARRY	2794949	1949	17 03 1971	04 08 1971	131
	" "			04 08 1971	02 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
28	MALCOLM MUSGRAVE	214359	1943	03 06 1969	04 06 1970	
29	RICHARD EDWARDS	218595	1949	03 06 1970	14 05 1971	
30	KEITH HOLLOWAY	15851	1943	20 05 1966	10 10 1966	

. **Locator Profiles** – we've received 127 and we've sent out 127. **Ed** – we can always do with a few more though!

. **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.



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 year or longer deposit a DONATION direct (add your name) to the associations account at "A/c Name: 131 Locators Association Inc. **Bank:** Westpac, Kingsgrove NSW **BSB No:** 032 166 A/c No: 264133"

Hope we hear from you?

Website: <http://www.131locators.org.au>

. **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

...see the LS & TAA website for up to date information – <http://www.locatingartillery.org/http://www.locatingartillery.org/>
Future Committee meeting dates – Sun 19 July 2015 AGM at Paddington RSL.



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



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/

. **Grahame Dignam** forwarded on the following from **Bill Taggart** (of 1/83rd fame) with regards to a shirt/jacket patch see at right needing to be identified...

"One of the guys sent me this photo of an Aussie military patch, don't know what era it is from. Thought you would like to see it. Attached.

Bill"

...we put out the word to a small audience, but came up with a lot of maybes etc. So can anyone give us a hand to id it?



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

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