

THE EYES and EARS

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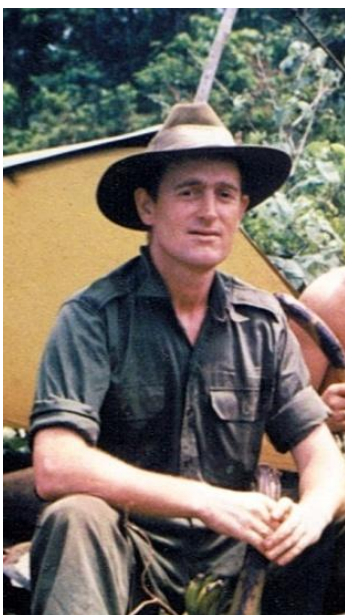
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The Gunner Tom Checkley Mystery -



An interesting ongoing story now added to by **Allen Morley** who brings us up to date with the following ...

Tom Checkley arrived in South Vietnam on 22 April 1966, along with other 131 Div Loc Battery Detachment 'Pioneers'. Tom had previously been in the British Army but transferred across to the Australian Army. He died in South Vietnam on August 5th 1966 following a vehicle accident.



Tom was a bit of a lad according to some Pioneers. He loved a beer and a fight. Perhaps that is not too surprising, given that his parents owned a pub in the UK. The anecdotal evidence is that it was probably the Old Sun Inn, Brixton Derbyshire. This is a 17th century coaching inn.



Earlier this year Senator Michael Ronaldson, announced that all remaining bodies of soldiers who died in Vietnam could be removed and returned to a location of their family's choice. Tom was buried in Terendak Military Cemetery in Malaya (now Malaysia). Our Association has for many years tried to contact Tom's family, without success. We wrote to Senator Ronaldson offering to act a 'surrogates' for his family due to the link between the Pioneers and Tom. A recent communiqué from Senator Ronaldson advised that Tom's sister, Yvonne Taylor, had been contacted by DVA in England. Yvonne will be given the Association details should she wish to contact the Association. So perhaps we are now close to solving the Tom Checkley mystery after all those years.

. Terry Westerway must have had a sleepless night on receiving last month's *Eyes & Ears* – a nightmare returned!

Poor young "Chalky", back 50 years ago, if only he had access to Google – where was it when you really needed it? Anyway, thanks to Terry we may now, finally, have our "Dragon" of whatever origin clarified - 謝謝



"Paul,
I hate to rain on anyone's parade (especially Chalky Royal's parade) – BUT, the name of the 131 dragon is wrong. I mentioned it years ago at a meeting in Coffs Harbour when they were first discussing the creation of a plaque to be given to the unit at Enoggera and when Keith Ayliffe and John Posener were still preparing "Tracks of the Dragon".
How do I know it was wrong?

My second wife was Chinese and she not only recognised the design, but corrected the name. My third wife is also Chinese and has confirmed what I recall of discussions about the name.

"Lung" is a misspelling of the Pinyin for the Chinese character 龙 (Pinyin: Lóng), pronounced "Lohng" (as best I can hear it) – which means "dragon". If you call it a "Lung Dragon", what you are actually saying is "dragon dragon". Incidentally, the Vietnamese "dragon" is con rồng – although the Vietnamese seem to often use the Chinese "Lóng" to mean dragon (e.g. Ha Long Bay = "descending dragon bay").

The Chinese for "Imperial Dragon" is 御龙 (Pinyin: Yu Lóng).

The dragon that appears on the 131 dragon design is actually the "Heavenly Dragon" 天上的飞龙 (Pinyin: Tiānshàng de fēilóng)

I am not having a shot at Chalky Royal and the guys who first designed the dragon – they were working with whatever they could find on the subject – but I do think it is surely time to correct the record on what the dragon is?

I know I am being pedantic, but it gets up my nose to keep repeating errors in language.

Terry Westerway"

...Terry then added...

"Just checked – now I know where they got "Lung" from – it is the (now disused) Wade-Giles transliteration of 龙 (modern Pinyin, Lóng). Terry Westerway"

Ed – whatever the outcome his "lungs" must be pretty good just going on the amount of steam he's producing!

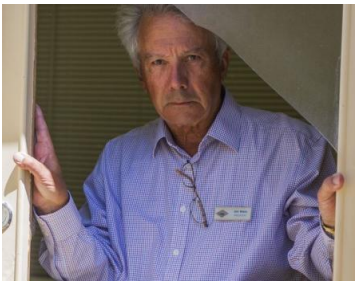
. Bert Blink got the following to us. 50 years on and the Government and their so-called experts over the years have denied the deleterious effects of the chemical – it was only sprayed on leaves, no not by hand but by plane over a very large area.

Anyway, enough of me...

Vietnam War's medical history to be rewritten to correct record on Agent Orange

Date - July 13, 2015

by **Gregory Pemberton**

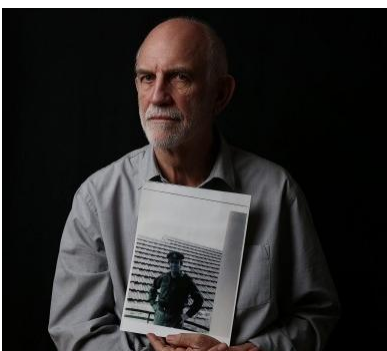


Wonderful news: Jim Wain, the national president of the Vietnam Veterans Federation. *Photo: Jay Cronan*

A new official medical history of the Vietnam War is to be written to correct the record on the Agent Orange controversy.

The council of the Australian War Memorial decided on the move after a long campaign by veterans dissatisfied by Barry Smith's account in the original history.

Jim Wain, the national president of the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia, told veterans the "wonderful news" over the weekend.



Vietnam veteran Graham Walker. *Photo: Alex Ellinghausen*

He said that Professor Smith's account was "fatally flawed" and "unjustly insults" the veterans over their "years of campaigning" to have the repatriation system acknowledge Agent Orange's harmfulness.

Mr Wain said that Professor Smith's history "goes so far as to accuse the campaigning veterans of dishonesty and greed".

Instead, he said, the "veterans turned out to be right about the harmfulness of Agent Orange" and "their behaviour, far from being dishonest and motivated by greed, was a fine example of the Anzac tradition of veterans looking after their comrades-in-arms".

Mr Wain succeeded Tim McCombe, who died this year after leading the long campaign to achieve this result.

Professor Smith also died this year, but when contacted by Fairfax Media last year, when the possibility of a new history was first raised, he was unavailable for comment.

Brendan O'Keefe was the main author of the 1994 volume *Medicine at War: Medical aspects of Australia's involvement in Southeast Asia 1950-1972* that included Professor Smith's chapters on Agent Orange.

Mr O'Keefe did not wish to comment but had previously "welcomed" the prospect of a new history.

Mr Wain said the campaign was important for veterans because Professor Smith's history omitted two key findings of a royal commission on the effects of chemicals on Australian Personnel in Vietnam, established under Justice Phillip Evatt in May 1983.

The findings were that "under the standard of proof prescribed by Repatriation law, there were two categories of cancer attributable to exposure to Agent Orange" and "the Department of Veterans' Affairs purposely disobeyed Repatriation law in not allowing veterans the prescribed 'benefit of the doubt'".

In July 1993, the year before Professor Smith's chapters were published, the Institute of Medicine of the US National Academy of Sciences found "sufficient evidence" and "limited/suggestive" evidence to conclude there was a positive association between the herbicides used in Vietnam and various cancers.

Graham Walker, AM, who was an infantry company commander in Vietnam said, on behalf of veterans, that Professor Smith had "ridiculed their case and accused them of dishonesty and greed" but without interviewing anyone.

The council has appointed Dr Peter Yule, History Department Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne, to complete by 2019 a volume entitled *Medical Legacies of South East Asian Conflicts – Vietnam War*, which will also cover other medical issues such as post traumatic stress disorder.

Mr Walker, who was directly involved in the lobbying to commission the new volume, said: "Of course the veterans' campaign has been vindicated. The official war history must now tell the true story and restore the reputations of those fine Vietnam veterans."

A spokesperson for the Australian War Memorial explained the council's decision "to proceed with the history", which will be "an independently written single volume funded from within the memorial's resources".

The volume is not intended to "rewrite history but instead be informed by 25 years of new knowledge and interviews with Vietnam War veterans".

However, Mr Wain cautioned: "It remains to be seen whether the new history redresses these omissions and insults ... We can only hope so."

Gregory Pemberton worked on the diplomatic history of the Vietnam War, before the start of the Agent Orange chapters.

. Diane Dean, yes Diane dropped me the following email of a great trip and a "funny" story... "Hi Paul

Just wanted to relate something funny to you.

In June Keith and I were away on a cruise visiting Turkey, Greece, Crete and China. Part of our trip included a 2 day tour of Gallipoli. There were 18 of us on the bus, all Australians.

While we were driving along I overheard this guy say that he "won the lottery" that his number had come up and he was conscripted. I heard him say he went to Vietnam.

I relayed this information to my "deaf" husband.

Keith leaned over and touched the guy on the shoulder. "hey mate are you a Vet?" back comes the reply "yes".

When did you go? "1966" he replies. Who were you with Keith asks....."131 Div Loc Bty" comes the reply.

His name is Kevin Thornton. He has only just discovered that we have an Association. Looking forward to catching up with him at one of the reunions.

What a small world we live in.

Regards Dianne Dean"

Ed – maybe we should get more Partners to drop us a line and give us some different in put?? Thanks Diane.

. Bert Blink forwarded an extract taken from "Cannonball" (the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society's newsletter) which includes the following piece in which **Grahame Dignam** gives an interview to Mark Jamieson and it's a great read...

Grahame would like it called – "**The Accidental Nasho**" read on and you'll discover why...

A National Service: Gunners in Vietnam

Author –Mark Jamieson holds a Bachelor of Arts - History (Honours) from the University of Wollongong. He is a Graduate Member of PHANSW/ACT and a member of the RAAHC.

Purpose of Oral History

The experience of serving in Vietnam is viewed differently by those who were there. As Paul Thompson states, oral history has been, and remains in many ways, a principal source of communicating past human experience. It offers insight into areas of history not always covered by the written records. Nigel Hunt extends Thompson's insight by offering that, oral history is not an objectification of the past, but more an acceptance of events as seen through the eyes of the participants. It provides a voice for those who, more often than not, remain faceless, but who are no less important than the leaders whose lives are recorded in the written record.

This article therefore provides a voice for three **National Servicemen (Nashos)**.

The interviews conducted with the veterans' reveal an important caveat that, regardless of agreeing or not with National Service, they answered the call. The soldiers interviewed come from 12 Field Regiment, 102 'CORAL' Battery

and 131 Divisional Locating Battery (131 Div Loc) of the Royal Australian Artillery, viz: John 'Blue' Ericsson, Stan Carbines and Grahame Dignam.

National Service

National Service was, and can still be, a contentious issue surrounding Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. For the first time, conscripted soldiers were sent to fight outside the Australian territory by the government. They became colloquially known as Nashos, and the process of selection was known as the 'Birthday Ballot' for the very reason that the ballot resembled a lottery draw and the numbered marbles represented birthdates. Two ballots were held each year and the marbles were randomly drawn from a barrel. All 20 year olds were required to register, and those whose birthdates drawn were officially advised by the Department of Labour and National Service (DLNS) of their need to participate in the scheme.

In 1964, Prime Minister Robert Menzies referred to the developing hostilities in Asia as 'aggressive communism' stemming from incidents in Indonesian policies. This was the catalyst for the introduction of the National Service Scheme being passed in Parliament on 5 November 1964. The reasoning was inadequate manpower in the defence of Australia, and the need to increase the Australian Army to 33,000 personnel by 1966.

On 24 November, the *National Service Act 1964* was passed in Parliament. Males aged 20 years were to serve, if selected, for a period of twenty four months in the Army. The Defence Act was then amended in May 1965 to include overseas active service as part of the conscription process. Then in March 1966, it was announced by the then Prime Minister Harold Holt, that conscription would now extend to the war in Vietnam, and National Servicemen would be fighting with regular Australian Army units. Registration was compulsory, and over 800,000 men from 1965 to 1972 registered for national service, but this was only a requirement of the Australian Army. The Navy and Air Force provided the option for 20 year olds to elect, a year before the ballot to serve in the Citizen Military Forces (CMF) for six years, thus fulfilling their national service requirement. Of the 800,000 registered men, 63,735 were conscripted and 15,381 served in Vietnam.

Our knowledge of the anti-war movement and the opposition to conscription grew from the activism predominately orchestrated by student activists and the peace movement of the 1960s and 1970. However, our knowledge and understanding of the experiences of those men conscripted and sent to Vietnam is far less understood. Conscription changed the lives of the Nashos who were sent to fight the war in Vietnam, just like the war changed the lives of the regular enlisted soldier. The difference is that the Nashos no longer had control of their life's direction after their birth date was plucked from the barrel. Some were happy to go, for others being compelled to serve overseas were seen as unfair by themselves and their families.

There were three interviews conducted by the author – we have only included the one which involved our Locator...

Grahame Dignam was employed by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) as a clerk prior to being called up for national service. He was fortunate that the CBA was one of the few employers who "made up" pay so that employees were not disadvantaged financially during the course of their service. On discharge from the Army, the CBA guaranteed placement in a job comparable to that held prior to Army Service which Grahame accepted.

Before registering for the national service ballot, Grahame and his older brother by two years joined the Citizen Military Forces (CMF) with the Parramatta Lancers as a possible saver to being called up. Both underwent the required medicals, but Grahame was turned down and classed unfit for service, while his brother was accepted. Enquiring as to the reason why, he was brushed aside and simply told to 'accept it'. Always in good health, Grahame was puzzled by the failed medical, and felt that he was a good chance of missing out on national service if he had passed. Grahame subsequently registered for the national service ballot and got lucky. He was drawn in the third ballot on 11 March 1966, and after the usual medical checks, was accepted as fit for service. The reason for his rejection by the CMF only dawned on him much later. His brother had a turn in the shape of his foot from a childhood accident and had trouble walking long distances as the foot would play up and cause him pain. Grahame had been ruled unfit for the CMF as they had mixed up the medical results for the two brothers.

Grahame was part of the fifth national service intake and was ordered to report to the Marrickville Recruitment Depot on 13 July 1966. When his birth date was drawn from the barrel, despite some feelings of trepidation, Grahame was accepting of the situation and felt proud to serve his country, and an opportunity was knocking for an experience not to be missed. Today, Grahame is still in favour of a limited form of compulsory service for those physically fit and, voluntarily for the mildly disadvantaged, with service performed in the military, for State or some Local government agencies:

I was in favour of it [National Service] as it matured me earlier due to having to cope with the lifestyle changes and discipline required in the Army. I felt that a good number of my friends would also have benefited but sadly they missed out.

The next stop was recruit training. Like all those before him Grahame marched, saluted, ran, marched and marched some more until the time came to pass out with the other recruits and head to Corp training. Grahame chose to go into either Transport or Engineers, but of course the Army decided Artillery as they were looking men with higher educational skills sets. This was due to the maths required for conducting Survey and Radar operations which were being introduced into the Army in South Vietnam.

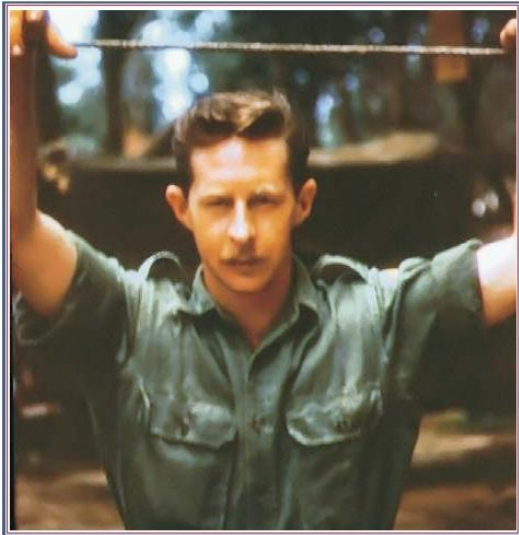
With that being decided Grahame was trained as a Signals Operator for Artillery Intelligence or Survey, and worked initially in that role in Listening Posts (LP's). With training complete 131 Divisional Locating Battery (131 Div Loc) were ready to head to South Vietnam arriving on 5 May 1967 in Vung Tau at 1400 via a Hercules from Darwin. As Grahame recalls:

When the ramp went down we were confronted by black pyjama clad locals just like those we were supposed to kill. They however sprayed the plane for bug control. Heaven forbid if we were to import any 'nasties' into their ecosystem!

The role of 131 Div Loc in South Vietnam began on 22 April 1966, when an advance party departed Sydney on HMAS Sydney. Then on 4 May 1966, the remainder of the advance party departed the Richmond RAAF base. The Detachment remained in South Vietnam until May 1971. Their service in South Vietnam ran from 1966 to 1971; this made Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery the longest continuing Detachment in the Royal Australian Artillery. They were deployed for a total of five years and two months, totalling 1886 days.

While in South Vietnam, the role Grahame was initially tasked with changed at the end of June 1967. A clerk was required for the Orderly Room and Grahame knew what a typewriter looked like and what it was used for, so he was allocated the position. His days were now spent typing Operational Reports, manning schedules and charges for misdemeanours to be dealt with by the Officer Commanding. As it was not always busy in the Orderly Room, Grahame also spent time doing four hour shifts as a Sig in Artillery Tactical Head Quarters (Arty Tac HQ) manning the radio net at night or as required in LP's.

As with most soldiers, their first operation experience holds some significance as this is the first time that they step out through the wire at Nui Dat and enter an operational phase. For Grahame, this was a re-supply trip to Fire Support Patrol Base Wilton on the 28 and 30 October 1967. This was part of Operation Santa Fe.



Grahame at Nui Dat in August 1967 prior to a trip to Vung Tau or "Vungers" as it was generally known. (Grahame Dignam, personal photograph.)

As with all soldiers, there are always standout moments or quotes that are remembered for good or bad. Grahame remembers a few:

'An army marches on its stomach' and 'It takes nine people to keep one soldier in the field', maybe because of the huge logistics machine that chugged along in the background appearing to achieve not much, and I was a part of that.

The diggers at Nui Dat were also treated at various times to concerts by many famous and some less famous Australian entertainers. These entertainers volunteered to perform for the diggers in Vietnam. These concerts lifted the morale of those in South Vietnam and were thoroughly enjoyed by all who could attend. Between 1967 and 1971 some 50 troupes left Australia for Vietnam.

One particular concert that was put on by 131 Div Loc in October 1967. 131 hosted the cast of the Melbourne Show after their performance at Luscombe Bowl with a BBQ. The group comprised 'The Strangers', Patti McGrath and Denise Drysdale. There were other shows during Grahame's tour in country, but this was 'Our Show' as he recalls and the men thoroughly enjoyed it.

From memory, the steaks were traded from the US Artillery down the road probably for some Aussie beer. They were great guests and joined in the banter and they did not want for attention - we didn't get to see too many women and 'Round Eyes' were especially scarce around the rubber plantation.

With 292 days completed in South Vietnam, Grahame departed on 19 February 1968 around noon and arrived in Sydney, emerging from Her Majesty's Customs at midnight. He then went on accrued leave and returned to Eastern Command Personnel Depot, and was there about a week. Grahame then agreed to a request to fill a vacancy at Kapooka as a clerk in the Regimental Aid Post. He recalls:

That was better than bludging around Watson's Bay, so I accepted the offer, and I drove to Kapooka and completed about 10 days there.

Grahame's main task was assisting in the administration of the multishot of needles given to the new recruits during their initial training. The recruits lined up Indian file coming in one door passing like battery hens between two 'experienced' soldiers who were administering the flu, hepatitis, and other shots required at that time, then filing out the other door.

About ten recruits per needle then change - OH&S wasn't invented yet!

With his time served at Kapooka, Grahame, like all other returning National Servicemen needed to readjust to the civilian lifestyle. Returning to his previous occupation in the CBA, he was put through a re-education course that was

designed to cover the changes that had occurred in banking procedures in the intervening two years. Part of that was to re-engineer the acceptable language used (no swearing), getting used to the banker/customer relationship again (they were not the enemy) and as he recalls: re-accepting those on higher Grades who were their superiors, but as Grahame puts it:

Whom we knew were 'dickheads', 'suckholes' and 'deadshits' without being too hard on them. Like everything, if you don't rebel you fall back into the system.

Reflecting on a past war, Grahame sees the military achievement as appearing quite small when compared with the effort and cost expended in running it. The duplicity of the US government in its dealing with its Allies was disgraceful and as Grahame stated, 'we deserved better'.

At the time when Australian troops were heavily engaged in the war in Vietnam, the popular press was so complicit in delivering the message of the day, little regard was paid to the truth. As a result of this, even today the general population are short-sighted and have little understanding of what really occurred in South Vietnam. In total, Australia lost 520 good fighting men (numbers vary depending on website accessed), and from that number 210 National Servicemen died as a result of active service in Vietnam.

Although this article has only captured the events of three Nashos who did their bit when called to serve in Vietnam, I hope that others may come forward to tell their story. There is so much more that needs to be told about Australia's involvement in Vietnam from the soldiers' perspective. This is what we need to embrace and applaud.

..then Ed got back into it digging for more info...

"Grahame (formal for this email - there's a reason),

Bert - what a great find!

Now GD, I'm going to put this into E&Es – well, the section regarding you (yes, Bert I'll give the author due acknowledgement) now I want some information - please answer the following with more than 2 words for each question.

1. When did this interview/correspondence take place?
2. How did it come about?
3. Did your brother continue in the CMF?
4. Would/did you consider re-enlisting (continuing your service) in the army?

Are there any other comments you'd like to add? Paul"

...Grahame's response goes like this...

"PD,

You could sub-title the piece **"The Accidental Nasho"**

You will recall I was delving into locating various "Lost Locators". Along the way when chasing Laurence (Larry) Darcy I received a link to Larry which included a reference to author of "365 and a wakey", Mark Jamieson, who authored the work. I was after personal contact with Larry to seek him out. He was OK about the contact and passed the info on but I never did hear from Larry.

I will re-send the transcript of the email conversation I had with Mark.

As time passed he mentioned his newer project and asked if I would be interested in contributing. I thought it would be a university article for a thesis and nothing more but he did say it would end up in Cannonball. Anyway, I had started a family project that had most of the information in place so I just filled out the blanks and added the political part-that came from hindsight as I wasn't that militant when I was 20.

Mark came to Sydney for the 2015 Anzac Day march - we met and talked a while. He marched with the 102 BTY guys as he had more contact with them. He had to chase me up and down O'Connell St as we were organising cadets to carry the banner at the time.

Back in 1965/66, my brother continued in the CMF for about nine months, certainly until after I was inducted in July '66. He did eventually get a medical discharge due to his foot problem.

I did the interview for Officers Training College at Scheyville, I think it was, but lost all my troops crossing an imaginary river and so I failed again, BUT I was in sufficiently good enough health to become a Gunner where my true worth was recognised as a sig behind a "25 set" and as a "base-wallah with a manual Olympus typewriter.

Then I met you lot.....which was my undoing!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

As for considering an extended army career – “Do you think I had the mentality, cold hard discipline, mongrel, devil may care attitude, athletic body, amazing strength and agility (and small brain), and short hair to continue on in THAT mans army? (Place your answer here (_ _!) **Correct!**

I thought I might have had a career in the Finance industry, where the most dangerous act would be to tackle a Greek guy who was behind in his payments on the personal loan for his purple Valiant, so I went back to the CBA.

Other comments – have a look at my Profile on the Association website.”

Ed: The whole series by **Mark Jamieson** is an interesting read, made more so, of course, by having one of our own Locators air his memories. As **Grahame** says “have a look” at the Profile section on the web to catch up on other Locators' memories.

. Ed had the following article sent in by his brother Jim and thought he'd run with it just to promote a bit of controversy/ or confuse everyone with Tim's logic or lack of!-

'Playing god' with nasho ballot

By David Ellery



The National Service ballots used to draft 63,740 Australian men into the army during the Vietnam war were fiddled by senior public servants "playing god", former deputy prime minister and "nasho" Tim Fischer said.

Mr Fischer used Tuesday's 50th anniversary of the first intake of conscripts on June 30, 1965, to call for those responsible to "come clean".

"Somebody in Canberra played god [with peoples lives]," he said.

"They are now retired former senior members of the Department of Labour and National Service.

"In the interests of historical accuracy and fairness, they should now step out and explain the methodologies they used."

Mr Fischer's concern is there appear to have been serious inconsistencies in the way in which the draft was run, which meant men born on some days had a much greater chance of being called up than men born on other dates. The inconsistencies included the failure to adjust the numbers required to take into account the leap years between 1965 and 1972, fiddles to achieve a "geographic balance" and the practice of rounding up and rounding down results for the last day of each six-month conscription period depending on whether more or fewer men were required to fill the quota.

Mr Fischer was the first Vietnam-era "nasho" to be elected to parliamentary office when he won the NSW Legislative Assembly seat of Sturt for the NSW Country Party on February 13, 1971, after returning from the war.

CANBERRA TIMES
THU 2 JUL 15

. Memories of the "Vung Tau Ferry" by Dave Crowther.....

I well remember the morning of our departure, 22nd April, 1966. To ease the pain on my wife, Beverley (and me), we bade farewell at her mum's place and my younger brother (who toured with 5 RAR second tour) dropped me at Holsworthy. We then proceeded to Garden Island.

As we pulled out I was standing on deck alongside Vic Moreau. Vic threw a streamer to his wife. As the slack was taken up, his wife walked toward the edge of the dock. I held my breath, but all turned out ok.

The first meal really got me. The variety and the quality was enormous, even freshly baked breads and rolls. The only stipulation was no waste. I did not hold back and it reminded me of the biblical "fatted calf", ready for the sacrifice. I quickly settled into the life on board. The meals were rostered and a call was broadcast for each sitting. There was always a scramble to get there a.s.a.p. On one occasion early on the "cruise", I decided to take a shortcut. I jumped from the deck down into a gunnel (a very small deck jutting out the side of a ship). It was only a 6' drop, but as I landed a part of the plate (floor) broke away and disappeared into the sea. I was later informed by a "pusser" that the only thing holding the rusted floor together was an undeterminable number of paint coats. It was my only shortcut taken on the "cruise".

Three days later we had an ANZAC Day memorial on the flight deck, it was very moving. The next day 26th April, I celebrated my 20th birthday with a few tinnies. Our grog ration was generous given some were non drinkers. My recollection of the timing with regards to the Navy v/s Army boxing tournament slips me, but the events are firmly in my mind.

I was just under 9 stone on sailing but the meals pushed me just over the limit. I was no longer a featherweight but had to fight in the lightweight division. In the lead up when I was on piquet, checking our vehicles, I heard a pounding noise. On investigating, it was a powerfully built "crusher" (naval ship's police) hammering a body-bag. My thoughts were "I hope his army opponent is good".

Come the day, "frosty" was my second and the Captain doctor from 5 RAR (a Qld middleweight champion) was in my corner. When my opponent climbed into the ring, my confidence slumped. It was the crusher and was built like sugar Ray Robinson, only white. The first hit was my left eye and shook me. I thought...

"Crowther, your big mouth has got you into this and you are going to cop a flogging".

I think he eased up on me as I later found out he was a naval champion. I think it may have been on the day of "the crossing" – equator. I was pretty sore after the bout and the doc reassured me all will be ok when we arrive in SVN. My eye was still "lazy" when I had a portrait done at the barber's in Baria in June.

I also remember target practice, laying on the rear of the flight deck potting balloons in the ocean.

The night we arrived in Vung Tau, it seemed like an eternity and then over the rail into an LSM. We were all primed and on the alert. The two black helmsmen were laughing and joking as they played draw poker and advised 1 minute to landing. The rear drawbridge hit the deck and we were out.

“shit, look at all those bastards in the black p.j.’s!”

I remember two training team members leaning on their vehicle, smoking.

We proceeded to a site at the rear of the National Police Academy and set up base. At 1530 hrs huge explosions were heard in the not so far away. This was a regular occurrence and I told the main detail when they flew in that we were mortared each arvo at 1530 hrs. A sick joke, but we all laughed after the event. I won’t go into the leave vehicle incidents as they are legend. I was verballed over one incident after a can was thrown and hit the vehicle commander. I just refused to comment. Legendary Ralph Pearce was another one but my conscience is clear on them all. Say no more. My lips are sealed.

...I had to reply...

“Dave,

If I wasn’t well (I am though) I would be a hell of a lot better now!

That is such a great yarn - it made me feel 50 years younger just to read about a bloke and a what was a “life changing” adventure and how unprepared, in a way, you blokes were on arrival - things didn’t change all that much and I came over 13 months later!! The “black pj’s” on arrival, the friendly firing on everyone’s first night was always explained as “incoming” - always a shock!

Just a couple of points -

1. What’s a “pusser”?

2. Do you have any photos either from the “cruise” or your time in SVN - I’d love some please?

I’m bloody amazed you remember anything after the fight! Did you ever box prior to the Army?

Hey - being married for 50+ years ‘aint no mean feat either.

Any time about anything just get in touch - and have a good squiz for some photos

Dicko”

...and Dave’s response is just so genuine...

“Hey Dicko, good to hear from you.

“pusser” was a reference to navy personnel. They used the term

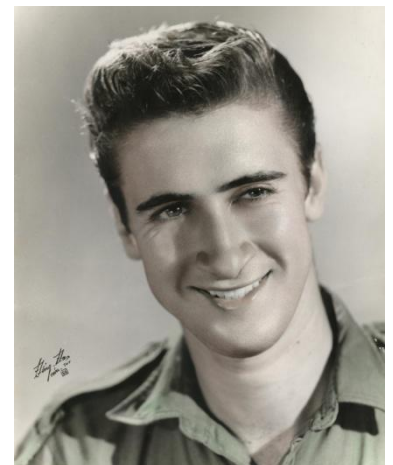
“pongoes” for us in the army. ie anywhere the army goes, the pong goes.



L to R: Don Simmons, Bob Tanner, Me and Bob Ness

I don’t have any photos as such. I have one which Brian Turner sent me just prior to losing Beverley (at right)

I have also one taken by the barber in Baria in June ‘66 (at right). Check out the lazy eye. Jim Townley had ordered me to have a haircut, so “frosty” and I went into Baria (I was also ordered to get my haircut by Barry Campton but that was after Long Tan. On the second occasion I had “Spike” Chase remove all my hair. Never had a problem after that! The only females around were the water buffalos ha ha! Mine was getting prettier by the day. No way Jose! Just joking. I had my beautiful angel waiting at home and writing to me daily). The barber convinced me he was a good photographer. He then placed a copy in his window and did a roaring business. My cousin was a machine gunner in 5 RAR and saw it in May ‘67 on patrol through Baria.



Not only was my ego dented/humiliated with the fight, my first in the ring for a few years, I backed up at the end of the bouts for a novelty fight. We were both blindfolded and away for a two minute round. I never landed a blow. On the bell, my blindfold was removed to reveal that my opponent was in actual fact the referee. He had a padded glove on a broomstick and used it to strike me. No wonder the crowd roared each time I was hit. But it was all in fun. Even I had a laugh after I cooled down.

I boxed on the high school boxing team and we used to have bouts once a month in schools of art. My father was from a family of boxers, although he wasn't a boxer. They came from the slums of Surry Hills. Being born on the smaller side, they taught me much. I lacked the mongrel required to be good but never walked away from a blue. I also played rugby league in my older brother's side, so I was used to punching above my weight. Whilst I was on school staff, prior to 131, I did a few stints alongside Doug Stapleton as general duties in the p.t. wing with p.t. courses. We got to have a few friendlies in the ring on the mezzanine. I may have had my ambitions and capabilities mixed up but I survived. Actually, I think, I am more handsome now than back then. I know my good wife would not agree if she were still here.

My years with Bev were made easier as I was married to an angel. It still took her till I was 50 to fully domesticate me. Regrets I have many. I could go on for hours but I will keep my promise. My profile is still in my memory and I will eventually get to put it in writing. My problem is so much has happened in my lives, yes that is plural.

Take care DC"

This sort of thing makes my job REALLY worthwhile – how about some of you writing some memories?

. The follow-on from the "**Vung Tau Ferry**" which we started in the April, 2015 edition of *Eyes & Ears*, however, the following deals with the disputes that occurred with the re-supply of arms, equipment and supplies to support our efforts in SVN...

***The Boonaroo and Jeparit Disputes of 1966**

On May 11 1966, representatives from the Australian National Line (ANL) and the Department of Shipping and Transport, as well as the Federal Secretary of the SUA, E.V. Elliott, met in Sydney to discuss whether SUA members would crew an ANL merchant ship, the *Boonaroo* on a journey to South Vietnam. Elliott told the meeting he would take the proposal to the SUA Executive and would give the ANL an answer in forty-eight hours. The SUA Executive decided to recommend to its members at stopwork meetings that they decline to crew the *Boonaroo*, in light of the union's opposition to Australian involvement in the war. On May 13 the seven maritime unions involved in crewing the ship met together; with the exception of the SUA, all unions volunteered to crew the *Boonaroo*. That day the SUA Executive's proposal became public and the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that the *Boonaroo's* cargo consisted of "supplies of food, cigarettes and beer for the troops." A cartoon in the *West Australian* on 13 May created the impression that the *Boonaroo's* supplies were urgently needed by Australian troops.

On May 17, ACTU secretary Harold Souter called a conference of maritime unions, the ANL, the ACTU and the Department of Shipping and Transport to discuss the dispute. The SUA boycotted this meeting. The next day SUA members at the engagement centre refused to crew the ship and were penalised by the ANL by being placed at the bottom of the roster and not being paid their attendance money. At the same time the SUA was given a telegram which stated that unless the ban on the *Boonaroo* was lifted, action would be taken in the Commonwealth Industrial Court. The spectre of the Commonwealth Crimes Act, which carried a penalty of twelve months imprisonment for "obstructing or hindering the performance of services", must have loomed large in the minds of many SUA members. At the arbitration conference ACTU Secretary Souter reaffirmed the Executive's ruling that the ACTU would not support stoppages which prevented the "passage of troops or conveyance of materials for use by Australian troops in Vietnam." According to the history of the SUA, Souter's statement was regarded as a directive by Mr Justice Gallagher and the conference was adjourned so that the SUA could hold stopwork meetings to decide the union's course of action. At stopwork meetings around the nation, seamen recognised the isolated nature of the union and agreed to crew the *Boonaroo*, but only "with great reluctance and under protest". The internal unity between the SUA's leadership and its rank and file was reflected in the telegrams sent to the SUA Executive by the stopwork meetings, such as that from seamen at Port Kembla:

"We believe that there has been an attempt to deliberately isolate the Seamen's Union because it dares to carry out Union policy. With the line of the Court, the Government, leadership of the other maritime unions and the ACTU, we find ourselves in the position of having to man the *Boonaroo* but do so under great duress. Let it be known that this Union, the leadership and the rank and file, are completely united around opposition to the war in Vietnam and that the rank and file of the union are completely opposed to any suggestion that these decisions are the decisions of a few individuals."

SUA members joined the crew and the ship was due to leave on July 26 1966. Its departure was delayed for three hours when members of the crew and other seamen staged an anti-war demonstration on the wharf. Unbending in their opposition to the war, seamen draped banners over the ship's railings that declared "Boonaroo seamen oppose war in Vietnam" "Y Dy for Ky" and "No kids for Ky". Officials from the SUA, the WWF and the Deckhands and Firemen's Association addressed the demonstration, denouncing the Vietnam War and Australia's involvement in it. Finally, the *Boonaroo* sailed out of Sydney Harbor as a "peace" ship with its unwilling crew of seamen.

The sense of isolation weighed heavily on both the leadership and membership of the SUA. Della Elliott wrote later that:

"Seamen manned the *Boonaroo* not because they feared a clash with the Federal Government, or were intimidated by threatened Industrial Court action, they were prepared to face such challenges (as they had in the past), but they were not prepared "to go it alone" and succumb to actions designed to isolate the SUA from the Australian trade union movement."

E.V. Elliott told a meeting organised by the University of Sydney Socialist Club that, "...while [the SUA] thought that most of the country's workers would have backed it in objecting to the war they would not have backed the ban on the ship." He went on to summarise the union's problem, stating that "we manned it because we were isolated". Even the SUA's traditional ally, the WWF, did not take industrial action against the *Boonaroo*. The Federal Secretary of the

WWF, Charles Fitzgibbon declared that the union would not take "...any action that would prejudice the carriage of supplies to Australian lads forced into this war."

Ted Bull, later the Victorian secretary of the WWF, suggested that Fitzgibbon complied with the ACTU policy because he was on the Executive of the ACTU. Needless to say, the threats of "disciplinary action" against the SUA by the ACTU would hardly have encouraged taking industrial action against the Boonaroo. In this first test of the tradition of independent militant action against the war, the SUA was unwilling to risk estrangement from the rest of the union movement.

The controversy over crewing Australian ships bound for Vietnam did not end when the *Boonaroo* left Sydney. In early June 1966, the *Jeparit* was chartered by the government for a journey to South Vietnam. The SUA expressed "shock and disgust" over the decision. The *Jeparit* arrived in Newcastle on the 6th of June, but no seamen volunteered for the crew the next day. According to the SUA's Federal Office Report, ACTU secretary Souter rang Elliott about the lack of volunteers:

It appeared Secretary Souter's purpose in ringing was to ascertain whether the Union had in any way influenced seamen not to volunteer for *Jeparit*. He opened up the conversation by asking what the position was; when told seamen were not interested, he queried this and asked whether there had been any direction, any meeting or any speaking by officials in relation to *Jeparit*. When told by Elliott "no", Souter again put the question and asked whether the men knew the ACTU policy. Elliott said his first reply was correct, there had been nor direction by the union or its officials, the men had been advised of the situation and of the telegrams between the union and the ACTU.

During this conversation Elliott asked whether the ACTU's decision on industrial action against the war covered the active physical involvement of Australian trade unionists in the war in Vietnam. Souter replied that the ruling applied wherever members of the union operated outside Australia. In the course of the conversation Elliott argued that the SUA had not prevented the passage of troops or the conveyance of materials. The *Jeparit*, having failed to recruit a crew, sailed to Sydney. The Federal Council of the SUA believed the journey to Sydney to obtain a crew was an attempt to isolate the union and in light of what had transpired with the *Boonaroo*, they decided to crew the *Jeparit*. Eventually the ship sailed on June 17 with a full crew. Later, at the beginning of December 1966, 40mm cannons were loaded on the *Jeparit*. Following protests by the SUA and representations by the ACTU, the cannons were removed and the ship left for Vietnam on December 3 1966.

The Boonaroo and Jeparit Disputes of 1967

While the SUA tolerated having to sail ships carrying war materials for troops in Vietnam, it drew the line at carrying actual weapons and ammunition. On February 21 1967 the *Boonaroo* was instructed to sail to Port Wilson Explosives Depot. The crew refused to do so until the SUA could consult with the other maritime unions. Two days later, the union was informed that the ship was to carry aircraft bombs and detonators. A meeting of the seven maritime unions, the WWF and the ACTU took place on February 27. At this meeting the ACTU made it clear that in its May 1965 ruling about industrial action against the war, the word "materials" referred to all "materials for use of or by the Australian forces in Vietnam" and that this included weapons.

The ACTU also argued that the *Boonaroo* should be crewed voluntarily by Australian unionists rather than by service personnel. Such a recommendation was in light of the public declarations made by the Minister for Labor and National Service, Leslie Bury, that if the SUA refused to crew the ship, navy personnel would be used. Bury had spoken to Monk on February 22 and had stated that navy personnel would be used if seamen refused to crew the *Boonaroo*.

According to the *Age* newspaper, Bury had also told Monk that the ship had to sail by March 8. At the February 27 conference, the Merchant Service Guild and the Marine Power Engineers were willing to carry bombs and the Marine Stewards, the Radio Operators and Cooks went along with this position. The WWF stated that no unionist should be forced to crew a ship carrying explosives. The Shipwrights opposed civilians transporting bombs and the SUA, represented by Elliott, declared that seamen would most likely refuse to crew the *Boonaroo*. The next day the ACTU Executive decided that: "...we believe that Australian merchant ships should be manned voluntarily by trade unionists rather than by Service personnel."

The SUA remained defiant and the Victorian secretary Bert Nolan stated on February 28 that: "We have no intention of taking the ship to Point Wilson to load explosives that could be used for any purpose."

In the Federal Parliament, Bury renewed his threat to use the navy on the *Boonaroo* and launched into an attack on the communist leadership of the SUA stating, "I hope the crew will follow the Australian flag and not the hammer and sickle." On March 1 the civilian crew was paid off and the ship was commissioned as a Royal Australian Navy ship.

The *Jeparit* was the next ship to be drawn into the conflict. On March 2 1967 the ANL and the government informed the SUA that the *Jeparit* would carry weapons and ammunition on its next trip. When the ship berthed in Sydney the next day, all the maritime unions, with the exception of the SUA, agreed to crew it. The Australian Workers Union, a supporter of Australian involvement in Vietnam, attacked the SUA for preventing the shipment of supplies for Australian troops, saying it "went against everything Australian". President Monk stated that the "Seamen's Union is not entitled as an organisation to disregard the ACTU executive's decision." The mainstream press was ferociously hostile to the SUA's refusal to crew the *Jeparit*. An editorial in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 7 March summed up the commonly held belief about the union leadership's true intentions:

The Seamen's Union is Communist-led, and the reason for its tactics is perfectly clear. As Mr Bury has said, Mr Elliott and his colleagues are less concerned about the welfare and employment opportunities of their members than they are trying to ensure the triumph of Hanoi.

On March 8, stopwork meetings of seamen were held around the country. Overwhelmingly, the SUA members voted against carrying weapons and ammunition in merchant ships, including the *Jeparit*. According to Elliott, only eleven seamen voted to sail the ship to Vietnam with its war cargo. In the meeting resolutions, seamen proposed that SUA

members would transport all Australian troops back to Australia, without pay, if the Australian government decided to withdraw its troops. To make the point, the motion stated that SUA members would "...willingly man any ship to bring Australian forces home from this filthy, unwinnable war."

Once the decision was known, the seamen on the *Jeparit* were discharged and the next day, naval ratings took the place of seamen and firemen. All the other maritime union members remained on board and the ship operated with a joint civilian/naval crew.

The *Jeparit* and the *Boonaroo* disputes of 1966 and 1967 reveal a great deal about trade union opposition to Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war. They brought the radical and labourist traditions into sharp relief, with the leaderships of the SUA and ACTU coming to personify the two sides of the debate. The disputes can also be viewed in the light of previous disputes such as those over Korea. The principal protagonists were the same and the responses to the union's intentions from the government, the media and the ACTU were almost identical. Similarly, the SUA's isolation from the rest of the union movement effectively curtailed its attempts at industrial action over political issues.

The disputes also raise questions about the influence of communist leadership on union opposition to the war. The government and sections of the media emphasised the fact that the SUA was led by communists, including its Federal Secretary E.V. Elliott. The WWF and the SUA had militant, communist leaderships during the *Dalfram* dispute and communist trade union officials such as Elliott and Jim Healy, General Secretary of the WWF, played a leading role in the boycott of Dutch ships in 1945. It would be wrong to assume however, that communist leadership automatically produced the kind of action on non-industrial issues characteristic of the SUA. A number of maritime, metal and construction unions had communists in their leadership, but they did not take industrial action in opposition to the war as early or as consistently as the seamen did. Furthermore, the SUA's democratic procedures and the broader anti-communist sentiments in Australian society meant that the SUA's communist leadership could easily have toppled, were it not for the strong support of the membership.

The strong internationalist streak in the SUA was, in part, a product of the attitudes of the rank and file seamen whose views had been shaped by their experiences working on ships that sailed around the world. The ability to put their "worldly" views into action was facilitated by the strategic position in the economy that seamen enjoyed. It may well be said that the leadership of the SUA was as much the product of seamen's internationalism, militancy and radicalism as the other way around. They bequeathed to a divided and nervous labor movement a tradition and a practice of "political unionism" which would soon grow in other union as well.

Ed – It is disparaging that it was ALL about THEM and NOT a lot of consideration about US and where we were.

. Locator Re-union – a calendar reminder from Allan Harrison –

"As covered in the last few editions of LOCREP (and on the LSTAA Website), the last in the series of Locator Re-unions to be held at Coffs Harbour happens on the October long weekend 2016. These biennial re-unions will be organised by 20 STA Regt from 2018 onwards, to coincide with the Regiment's Birthday.

This is an extract from the last LOCREP:

As foreshadowed in LOCREPs Vols 56 and 57, the last in the series of Coffs Harbour re-unions will take place next year on the October long weekend (30 Sep-1-2-3 Oct 2016). Please note this in your calendar and start planning travel and accommodation early.

At the NNSW Branch Committee meeting held on 2nd June, It was determined that the event, which will again be held at Coffs Ex Services Club (C Ex), will look like this in broad outline:

Fri 30 Sept Meet and Greet at C Ex

Sat 1 Oct Breakfast at C Ex - Visit to Dorrigo Falls -Lunch at Dorrigo RSL - Dinner at C Ex

Sun 2 Oct Breakfast at C Ex - Bowraville RSL Museum - Lunch at Bowraville RSL - Farewell Dinner at C Ex

Mon 3 Oct Breakfast at C Ex - Depart

Cheers mate Allan H."

Have a look at the web site at this address for more info: <http://www.locatingartillery.org/notice%20board.htm>

. Lost Locator – Grahame Dignam sent in the following item from the RAA Association (NSW) Guestbook. The

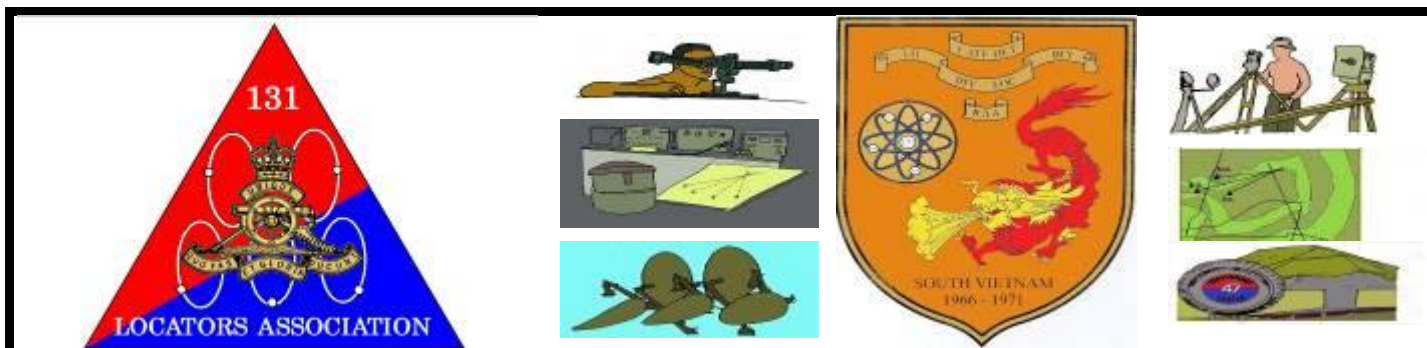
link to the site is: <http://users3.smartgb.com/g/q.php?a=s&i=q35-04730-1b>

Maybe someone knows Ray? His contact email address is: sunrayblue23@hotmail.com

#78 | Thu, May 8 2014, 12:39:18 | Ray Stanley  | Location Sydney NSW

Hi to all, I am an ex RAA member from 133 Div Loc Bty around 1975-76 when the unit was co-located with 23 Fd Regt at Belmore NSW. I then transferred to RAAOC. Is there anyone around from the Div Loc days that may remember me?

Please let us know if you make the contact?



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 **Tony Foley**, our newest member, to the Association fold.

Presidential perambulations

My wife Diane and I recently returned from an overseas trip. It encompassed Dubai, Ireland and England. It was four years since our last major trip – to Scotland and parts of Europe – and quite a few things had changed.

The main observations were:

- .a full Airbus A380 does not have a lot of extra walking/standing space
- .Dubai was hot, but quiet; I recommend not going during Ramadan as the city pretty much closes down
- .there is no paper work for either arrival or departure; a lesson for Australia
- .A Boeing 777 has even less walking/standing space than an A380
- .Irish immigration is smooth and easy, as long as you don't say you are travelling to the North
- .Ireland is so green, and often raining even in summer
- .the Guinness Storehouse in Dublin is the top tourist destination in the Republic
- Pubs are now non-smoking in Ireland, so you can actually see the bar now; but you have to battle the smokers outside to get in the door
- .We found a local near Dingle who had gone to Antarctica three times and survived both Scott's and Shackleton's expeditions; he opened a pub when he left the Navy
- .London is a great place to be a pedestrian when there is a charity run through the streets; no cars, bikes or buses allowed
- .Heathrow departure areas are still zoos; better to use any other UK airport.

Cheers

Allen



. Upcoming Events Calender –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday, 25th August, 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, 28th July, 2015 at 1100hrs...**

Presidents report.

.Regarding "Bringing them home" and Tom Checkley: The DVA is in contact with Yvonne Taylor in the UK, the sister of Tom and next of kin, who will be arranging what happens regarding Toms remains. (The association will contact the Minister with a request to arrange contact with Ms Taylor on our behalf. This will allow her to have contact with soldiers who served with Tom if she happy to do so.)

.Allen attended the recent LSTAA meeting and reported that Joe Kaplun has been re-appointed President. Joe has varied the meeting venue for the 22 Nov 2015 Xmas do and 28 Feb 2016 meeting to the Panania East Hills RSL. The May and July 2016 meeting will stay at the Paddo RSL. Allan Harrison has been handed the webmaster reins for the website.

.Springwood V V Day March will be held on Aug 16 commencing 11.30AM

.Bankstown Sporting Club will host the Sydney Vietnam Vets Day commemoration commencing 9.30AM with a lunch and Roland Storm show following.131 is on Table 21 – limited seats available.

Webmaster Update.

Bob emailed website stats which showed May was very busy with June a little quieter. May had 774 unique visitors and 8000+ pages viewed.

Statement on Vietnam

.2016 Vietnam Vets day ACT Bert and George advise they will check accommodation available and report as bookings will be heavy .

.Allan will contact Terry Erbs to co-ordinate on-site accommodation arrangements at Enoggera for the ANZAC day 2016 observations and Plaque dedication.

Other Matters.

.Terry Westerway advised that a Lone Pine tree dedication will take place at Campbelltown VVAA in Queen St on 7 August 2015 attended by Turkish consular representatives commencing 11.00 AM

.Bert is perusing a 3D model of the ANKPQ/1 Radar unit for display in the 131 section of the National Vietnam Veterans Museum at Phillip Island Vic. We need to establish the size that can be accommodated and then consider the cost benefit.

.Ern Newbold mentioned the value of adding our logo to the VIETNAM Vets film Festival promotion where we will be on show. A number of 131 vets may view the promotion material and be prompted to get in contact with us. (A vote of the committee against supporting the actual film festival raising concerns for vets mental health was noted.)

.Ern also delivered to the meeting the Official 131 Locators Association photo album superbly presented with "Dragon and Artillery emblems". The meeting asked Ern to pass on our thanks to David Newbold for the expert presentation he had produced. As a bonus David also provided a second album for use by Association members for a significant photo record of our history.

.Ern also mentioned that we are currently holding our meetings on the same day as the TPI association of which he is a member. We resolved to avoid the 4th Tuesday of the month in our future meeting considerations.

. 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...August –

August	Name	Regt No	YOB	SVN in	SVN out	Comments
1	PHILLIP ROSS	3794468	1947	06 05 1969	30 04 1970	
1	JOSEPH LOSIAK	218302	1950	04 11 1969	05 11 1970	
1	JOHN LUCAS	3796256	1948	20 02 1970	11 02 1971	
2	JOHN GREENAWAY	3790617	1946	24 10 1967	22 10 1968	
3	LES SMITHLESTER	1201202	1949	23 09 1968	24 09 1969	
3	MICHAEL BUTLER	3796958	1948	04 06 1970	09 06 1971	
3	GRAHAM GREENLAND	2792441	1948	15 04 1970	29 07 1970	† 17.11.14
4	ANDREW OVERALL Lt.	235330	1946	22 02 1969	21 02 1970	
7	MARTY VAN DRIEL	38954	1944	27 11 1967	13 03 1968	† 08.08.98
7	RANDALL JONES	2788775	1947	29 01 1969	28 11 1969	
8	ARTHUR LUXFORD Sgt.	212803	1939	20 01 1969	28 01 1970	† 01.01.08
8	EDWIN LEWIS Sgt.	53909	1935	18 03 1970	11 03 1971	† 26.08.92
9	TERRY WELSH	4721779	1949	03 03 1971	29 06 1971	131
	" "			30 06 1971	30 10 1971	12 Fd REGT
9	GARRY GRIMWOOD	2795771	1949	24 03 1971	01 07 1971	131
	" "			01 07 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt.
12	ALAN THOMSON	42308	1937	20 05 1966	22 06 1967	
13	BRIAN HACKETT	2783449	1945	03 01 1967	12 12 1967	
13	STAN BRIGGS	1731999	1945	27 11 1967	17 09 1968	

13	BOB BRUCE	4718049	1945	11 06 1967	13 12 1967	
15	JOHN POLLOCK	53860	1939	{17 04 1967	24 05 1967	131
	" "			{05 02 1971	07 04 1971	12 Fd REGT
15	KEVIN TAYLOR	2791357	1945	29 07 1969	23 07 1970	
15	NORMAN McMANUS WO2	26202	1924	09 11 1970	19 08 1971	
17	PIERRE GOSS	213990	1936	24 03 1969	25 03 1970	† 06.08.2011
20	PETER BINNS	356367	1947	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
21	NORMAN JONES	5717611	1950	04 05 1971	01 12 1971	12 Fd Regt / AACC
22	JOHN VICKARY	1732218	1945	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	
22	STUART SPORN	4718471	1945	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	
22	ANTHONY COUTTS	1733291	1946	29 01 1968	21 01 1969	† 1988
23	ROBERT ETHERINGTON	66962	1946	04 11 1969	19 11 1970	
24	JOHAN MOLENCAMP	2795074	1948	03 03 1971	30 06 1971	131
	" "			02 07 1971	09 08 1971	12 Fd REGT
25	LES FROST	215230	1945	22 04 1966	28 04 1967	† 26.03.14
25	KENNETH JONES	2786931	1946	27 11 1967	26 11 1968	
25	COLIN WEST		1947	20 01 1969	21 01 1970	
26	MAX TROYNAR	3790244	1945	05 05 1967	30 01 1968	
26	STANLEY PATTERSON	38451	1947	29 01 1969	28 11 1969	
27	LAWRENCE FARR	1734257	1947	27 08 1969	25 02 1970	† 2009
27	KEN PIESLEY	2787174	1946	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
27	GORDON MALCOLM	2785906	1946	26 09 1967	17 09 1968	
27	PETER WHITAKER	2786848	1946	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
27	PETER CREEDON	2790207	1947	31 01 1969	28 01 1970	
27	GRANT PERRINS	1734509	1947	27 11 1969	04 06 1970	
28	DAVID PIMM	215746	1946	17 04 1967	23 04 1968	RAEME
29	TIM FORD Capt.	235300	1945	19 08 1970	05 08 1971	
31	STEPHEN PALMER	18820	1946	12 04 1968	30 04 1969	RAEME † 03.12.72

Ed – 10 blokes not highlighted not bad, but could be better! Where the hell is Bob “Woofers” Bruce??

. **Locator Profiles** – we’ve received 128 and we’ve sent out 128. 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.

. **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>
Simmons, Donald Victor	212769	Sgt	22.04.66	21.12.66	24.11.37	25.04.15

The following are a collection of photos extracted from the archives that highlight some special traits of Don being serious and enjoying life as he found it..., Opie, Crowther



Geoff Jebb’s photo shows Brian Mensworth, Don and Geoff



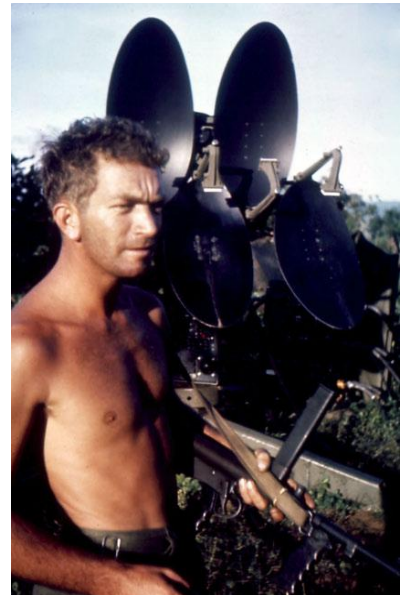
Don with Bob Tanner, Dave Crowther and Bob Ness



Andrew Oppie's photo shows "Lofty Hayes, Bob Ness and Don



Andrew Oppie has a fun one showing Don "heaving some sand" along with George lane and Mick "Spike" Chase



Then to top them all off Andrew Oppie supplied this one of Don

May he 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.

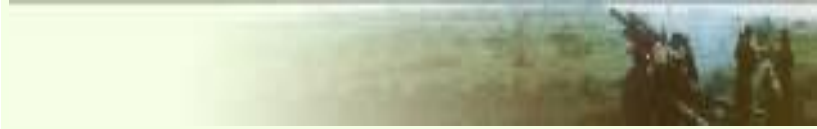
So, if you're a non-financial Associate receiving emails and the Eyes & Ears regularly you could bite the bullet and email **Grahame Dignam:sectreas131locators@gmail.com** and he could forward you the relevant forms to join - Memberships are available for 1 year or longer deposit a DONATION direct (add 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/>



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL COMPANY

www.artilleryhistory.org



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



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

. VETERAN'S AFFAIRS WEBSITE

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

. 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery...



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

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

Australian Military Patch – Bill Taggart got the following response with regards to the inquiry in last month's *Eyes & Ears* -

"Hi Paul, Ross Wood (B Company 5RAR 66-67) had sent me this explanation of the patch you show in the June E&E.

Bill"

...the response from Ross...

"Thanks Bill,

If its cotton, and in the photo it looks cotton, these were the small Australian Army patch that was supposed to be worn high on the left sleeve. Basically a shoulder patch.

Mostly worn on good Australian Army Jungle Green cotton and khaki polyester uniform shirts from early - 1966 in Vietnam. That is where U.S. troops would have first seen these Rising Sun shoulder patches.

Some were worn on the front of bush hats and others were worn on shirts in the field. However, with the exception of nick names written on the bush hats no insignia of any type was usually worn by Australian troops outside the wire, except on R & C leave in Vung Tau, or on guard duty in Saigon.

In the period The 1/83rd Artillery was at 1 ATF Nui Dat, Australian troops in the area would have been issued with these Rising Sun patches.

Best Wishes, Ross Wood"



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