

THE EYES and EARS

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The 50th Anniversary 1966-2016 Coffs Harbour Reunion and Vale Coffs Harbour

Grahame Dignam gives us the lowdown of events and what he indulged in –
“Coffs Harbour happenings.

Happenings.

Friday: Ern Newbold was the driver and put in a polished performance delivering us to Coffs Harbour and returning us home in good order.

We arrived at 1555hrs and met a number of pioneer Locators staying at the Chelsea and who had already milked the "Coffs Ex" club of some cash having arrived on the Thursday (They are older and it takes them longer to settle in). At 1700hrs we ambled over to the Club for registration and the official "Meet and Greet" - nibbles and the odd ale. While the numbers were not what was anticipated there were enough people so that you could not get around to all the people you wanted to have a chat with. We did, however, manage to catch up with everyone over the weekend. A good posse of Qld-ers, a descent collection of Blue bags, a brace or 2 of "Mexicans", a couple of "crow eaters" and a lone "sandgroper" made the trip and our lone Territorian excused himself.

Saturday: Todays activity was a 'bus trip to the Bellinger valleys' "deep north" to experiencing the "green" culture of Bellingen and the local craft market and township. At 1700 hrs all personnel paraded with medals and proceeded to march to the War Memorial adjacent to the Club where a formal service including the Last Post took place. After dismissal we proceeded to the club to enjoy a Reunion Regimental dinner where great camaraderie was had by all and tall tales and true flowed like good wine.

Sunday: Another short trip down the A1 to Bowraville delivered us to the racecourse where a vintage car day was taking place.



A number of shiny vehicles reflected their proud owners love while down on the course proper was an American M4 Sherman Medium Tank http://www.wikiwand.com/en/M4_Sherman and an Aussie M113 APC firing up their engines and

proceeded to tear up the centre of the racecourse throwing sods of dirt high into the air as the diesels roared as they changed direction - they were having fun! (and probably only nineteen)! You can check the YouTube link <https://youtu.be/pdSUCrZdY1o>

A little further into town we visited the local war museum that was well worth the time as it has a very comprehensive collection of artefacts of local interest covering most warlike activities where Australian was involved. Then it was off to the Bowraville Ex Services Club for a buffet lunch and one or two ales.



The bus trip home was rather quiet and I think a number of eyes were resting up for the farewell dinner, I know I was. The weekend officially wound up with a Monday breakfast at the Coffs Ex Services Club where goodbyes were said and promises made to meet again at the next "Discovery of Locators" or maybe that should be "Find of Locators". There are some stories about the actual trip home but they are for others to tell... Grahame"



At left a long range desert patrol Jeep seen at the Bowraville racecourse. Good photo **Ernie** (Newbold)



At left, in the museum, shows Grahame Dignam and Phil Endicott in “discussion”.

Lost and Found.

The Manager of the Chelsea Motel found the attached casual shirt in the wash on Tuesday 5th. The owner can call the sec/Treas on 02 9822 9218 to claim it and we will be discreet.



Warwick Brooker sent the photo at right taken in Coffs Harbour during hr re-union – “Thanks Dicko, Very enjoyable final reunion event at Coffs. I’ve attached a photo of some Arty Surveyors! Best wishes, Brookey

L to R - Bruce Irvine, John McFadden, Peter Hopper and Warwick Brooker



. Officer Commanding (OC) – Recollections of the Tour with Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery, Royal Australian Artillery (RAA).

This is the third in the series of OC’s Recollections we are going to run in *Eyes & Ears*. These are not official documentations, but memory scratching exercises the Association has asked for to add another dimension other than the factual Reports recorded in the Australian War Museum (AWM).

The third in the series is from **Phil Perrin**, who was the Det’s OC from 29th January 1968 to 21st January 1969.

Recollections SVN - Phil Perrin.

After OCS Portsea, I was posted as platoon commander /instructor at a National Serviceman Training Battalion in Victoria. When that period of National Service Training ceased at the end of 1959, I was posted to 1 Fld Regt as a Gun Position Officer(GPO) with 105 Fld Bty which moved to Wacol Qld as the nucleus of the newly raised 4 Fld Regt. Each gun detachment was equipped with a 25pounder and as part of force Ambrose a 4.2inch mortar. Force Ambrose was raised as a reaction element for possible deployment to trouble spots in SE Asia. I was then posted to 131 Div Loc Bty as Survey section commander at North Head (Manly Depot). From there, I was seconded to Dept. of Supply, Weapon Research Establishment (WRE), missile troop Army Guided Weapons Trials Unit (AGWTU). Whilst at WRE they sent me to the USA to assess a programme to use a modified Redstone military missile for launching from Woomera in South Australia - this activity was named 'Special Project Army Research Trials Australia' (SPARTA) - I remained with SPARTA until Aug 1967.

Upon release from WRE I was posted to 131DLB as next Detachment Commander in SVN and was immediately sent to Canungra for a 21 day 'purgatory course', commonly known as "A Battle Efficiency course" where I became very, very fit. From there I was immediately sent to the Rockhampton area to join the 'shake down/marry-up "exercise with 1st Battalion RAR and 102 Fld Bty. In my opinion this was a waste of my time with 131 DLB as the organisation had next to nought to do with a Task Force Arty Tac setting and there was no advice or assistance as to my intended role in the New Year.

I was also attempting to arrange resettlement for my family into married quarters at Holsworthy - my wife had to do almost all of it. It was mid/end of Oct 67 by the time I actually got to 131 DLB and was able to glean what was before me and meet up with personnel in the unit.

Courtesy of a QANTAS 707, on 29 Jan 1968, myself and 7 other DLB individuals departed Sydney for SVN via Darwin and Singapore (where we were told to not look like soldiers!!). We touched down at Tan Son Nhat airport late that same day and were accommodated at Camp Alpha until the next day when Wallaby airlines flew our 8 personnel to Luscombe airfield Nui Dat.

At this time Task Force HQ (fwd) was operating at FSB Anderson where I went to meet up with the CO 4FLD Regt. Capt Hamilton came back to Nui Dat for handover activities which were completed by 31 Jan/12 Feb. I sent Sgt Brian Ruddick to FSB Anderson while I familiarised with the unit and Nui Dat dispositions and Arty Tac...a steep learning curve.

To celebrate our arrival, the enemy put on a brilliant display called 1968 Tet offensive and infiltrated Baria. This required a reaction force of infantry and APC's to clear the town street by street with artillery illumination for most of the night.

At FSB Anderson, a strong second wave of attacks began and locator Jim Menz was KIA and Marty Van Driel was seriously wounded changeover of personnel was implemented.

In mid-March, I was ordered to inspect the site of a SAS Sqn ambush on the firestone trail ...the patrol had successfully destroyed a tractor and trailer with a photo showing the results; it was known as 'the tractor job' but from the air I could not identify the objects so the pilot and I mutually agreed to land and recover the items (we had a light fire team in support) I was not aware of the rules which stated choppers were not allowed to land - anyway I recovered a brand new Chicom 75 rcl barrel and two anti-armour 75rcl cased rounds. The little Sioux chopper performed well!

The Detachment certainly had its share of characters, some hilariously good guys; some not so good, but after this lapse of time I dare not put names to the different categories. One such incident was their d-i-y construction of an observation tower in the new area being occupied by the arrival of 3rd Btn and another gun Bty. Their combined efforts made the leaning tower of Pisa look perfectly upright ...no soldier would have been game enough to climb it!!!

However, the construction of the Sound Ranging CP under the watchful eye of Geoff Jebb was a masterpiece of construction - it became known as the "Sound Lounge" ... most apt as it contained about six reel-to-reel tape recorders on the day the TF Commander decided to visit.

John Martin and Geoff Jebb identified a national trig point at Nui Chau Chan about 15k's east of Xuan Loc (YT6010) and occupied by a US communication unit and quite heavily defended. Geoff had a good rapport with the occupiers and it basically overlooked all of our province...it was from here that survey managed to get accurate fixation over a distance of 40k's using the tellurometer.

Our survey equipment was first rate. The radars were most useful when they could be sited correctly, but this was not that often due to the constraints of FSB's and protection of our operators and equipment. Our attached RAEME Mechanics were a God-send and fully integrated with our detachments. The level of training and proficiency of our operators was first class with the senior members conducting training all the time. Geoff Jebb had identified personnel to be part of the Sound Ranging Base Command Post. The Detachment had a very good working relationship with both 4 Fld Regt and 12 Fld Regt.

The Commanding Officer 4Fld Regt, Lt Col R Gardner approved the Locators Club and approved the naming as 'the Menz Club'

Sound ranging equipment arrived in September 1968, but 2, or possibly 3 of the batteries were damaged beyond repair. Geoff Jebb had made overtures to visit a US Sound Ranging base along the DMZ, north of Dong Ha at Gio Linh and Con Thien. Our team consisted of Brian Smythe and Kevin Browning. Our drive in two jeeps to the border of SVN and NVN was rudely interrupted by a breached highway between two vast paddy fields. Fortunately, an ARVN truck came from the opposite direction and was able to winch our jeeps across the thigh high rushing water. Gio Linh was on the site of an old French fort and we could look down onto 'freedom bridge's spanning the river. We couldn't see the base operating as it was not in operational mode but the CP was sort of interesting... I think Geoff was more than happy with his WW2 equipment. Our return to Saigon was in a deluxe 12 seater twin rear engine jet business plane but a higher authority (CIA?) took it off us at Da Nang where we stayed overnight at Australia house.

I did have work trips to Saigon and Vung Tau but came away with the distinct impression that they were not in our theatre of war! Going to clubs and restaurants armed with a new cake of soap or to really lash out at the economy with a can of hairspray as gratuity for good service!

Leisure time activities.....you are kidding me!

I shall not go into operational activities except to say that whenever Task Force HQ was split into Fwd and Rear, I went with the former. Of course, the most frightening activity was FSB Coral.

Task Force HQ was in the road convoy at Bearcat when Coral was hit on the first night. When we arrived at the base, the men looked mentally and physically exhausted. The next day the base was really buzzing and the troops showed an air of confidence as they witnessed controlled defence and APCs patrolling around the base. The US Arty 2/35 arrived and had bought their own ground defence in the form of 'dusters' (twin 40 mm Bofors mounted on a tank chassis).

The LP bearings were quite good and among the artillery craters we found 3 base plate locations and a neat stack of 30-40 mortar rounds plus one NVA with his foot blown off. We had in support Spooky, Puff the magic dragon, ground attack aircraft (Phantom F4), helicopter gunships, arty and mortars outgoing - how on earth I was granted air clearance I have never been able to work out.

On 6 June Coral was abandoned and as everything left the base the engineers blew up TGFHQ and left in a cloud of dust leaving just 7 of us standing in the open with a defensive umbrella of 16 Infantry. After about 15 minutes, our Chinook appeared, circled us then flew away, saying it was too dangerous to land but would return!

I was about to tell my radio operator to start digging again when the Chinook reappeared with two escorting gunships. We all loaded rapidly and as circumstances happen Peter McKie was the last person to step off FSB Coral.

One of our Btns was operating (I think co was Lt Col Charlesworth) from a Btn base 1k west of route 15 when a village, Ap Ong Triah, claimed they were hit by a mortar bomb from our base during the night killing two villagers and wounding an ox. The Btn denied firing at all and sought our help through TFHQ. A US 'compensation team' was on its way from Saigon. With 3 locators, we flew into the Btn base and were taken by APC to the village which was known to be anti Aust.

The APC had three ambushed VC on the front which were dumped in the village....not a good start and in the front of the house were two coffins and family members. Worse still was the fact that crater analysis was not possible as the bomb had exploded in the thatched roof, and as was normal, the house was fastidiously clean despite the trauma. So we then examined everything for some shrapnel...several smallish pieces were found and then Brian Ruddick found a piece about 1inch by 1inch in a pole upright - it was the shoulder (and colour coded) piece of a 60mm (I think ogive is the word) so we then went to the ARVN compound about one k south of the village where the US adviser said he hadn't heard their mortar fire but willingly gave us a bomb to keep for comparison...the Btn CO was happy of course and nothing more was heard.

The second favourable task was at a village on the beach east of the Long Hai range. The villagers claim they received a hit from an Aust ship off the coast. There was, in fact, a ship off the coast, but with the aid of the US adviser who helped our little team of locators find the fuse and determined it was a 105mm round. My assumption was that an ARVN Artillery unit located west of the Long Hai range had fired at the mountain pinnacle, missed, and the round carried a few k's to the village. The local ARVN soldiers were notorious for losing their personal weapons (sold or stolen?) and were not allowed to carry arms. Whilst waiting for our return chopper flight my little team and the adviser walked along the beach which had 20 or so fishing boats beached. Heading towards us came two narrow gutted US Cobra gunships obviously on patrol.

They were about 200 metres above us but did a smart about turn to from whence they came, and then sped towards us in an obvious attack mode. One was about 20 meters above the beach directly at us while the other cobra sat out over the ocean in an overview position. Our US adviser friend said the fact that we were carrying side arms in this area, dressed in sweat covered greens would have attracted their attention. I immediately told my digs to put their weapons in their left hand and if they were so inclined to wave, do so with their right arm!!!! This was one of the most fearful events in my tour. A cobra heading straight at you in attack mode is something I'll never forget!

On RTA I was promoted to Major as OC of AGWTU Woomera where no-one appeared to be interested in SVN and no-one had been to SVN so there was no soft let down by being able to talk about experiences.



Self at Con Thien. Notice no rifle – one of the rules to enter the base was NO weapons. After a “chat” with the Base Commander he approved Jebb and Perrin to retain our pistols! (I make no comment for this unusual rule!)

Con Thien – old French Fort overlooking the DMZ into North Vietnam. The river in the middle distance right is the border.



In the rear of the jeep is either L/Bdr Blythe and or Gnr Browning. In the front with the driver is either Jebb or Perrin. The winching is courtesy of an ARVN truck.

Drying out after crossing the breached river. Traffic was banking up on either side, hence the bevy of onlookers.



Trying to relax in a small village after crossing the breached highway en route to the DMZ



Items recovered from SAS ambush – “The Tractor Job”.
Self with Chicom 75mm RCL and 2 x 75mm anti-armour rounds.
19.03.68

Back with the Aussies at a FSB – paperwork must go on in my “outdoor” office.



Note the Commander’s bunker in background compared to our “hutchie” covered holes! Arty Tac / TF HQ at left rear.

. **The Australian War Memorial (AWM) collection** – the photo was sent in by **Ernie Newbold** from the AWM Collection. The description is below the photo. We'll add more of these edition by edition.



Sergeant Ron Pratt of St Marys, NSW (left), a member of the 12th Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery (RAA), checks a weapons identification booklet with **Sergeant Brian Ruddock** of Holsworthy, NSW, a member of the 131st Divisional Locating Battery. They were identifying a captured 12.7mm heavy machine gun at Fire Support Base (FSB) Lion, the operational headquarters of the 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF) in Phuoc Tuy Province. The weapon was captured by troops during Operation Capital, a reconnaissance in force in the northern areas of the province.

. **Uniforms** – A few editions ago we saw the commencement of this bit of insane nostalgia and here we go again with a bit more.

A couple of other “activities” which spring to mind during the introduction to “Army” life, other than instructions/directions becoming orders, were –

. The “haircut” – while standing in some sort of formation then being tapped on the shoulder as an indication that you needed a bit of a trim – need to see more of your ears. I'd actually had, what to me was a very short trim prior to saying farewells in Brisbane. Anyway, my “shearing” was pretty tame to the bloke beside me who must have played in a rock band known as the “Red Haired Rockers” – he was devastated to see his red locks laying in piles around the barber's chair! I must admit that the “slouchie” fitted a bit more loosely!

. Then there was the inoculation process! The process was conducted in single file as we were “stabbed” on both right and left sides almost simultaneously. In fact, the needle was left hanging until the next “specialist surgeon” attached the body of the needle to it and gave the plunger a workover! I should have been impervious to any disease known to mankind at the time. The only other strange medical activity or dosage I remember enduring was the consumption of Pauldron – it was dispensed to combat mozzies and reasons for living etc.

Well, unless anyone else has other oddities that may come to mind this might do me for the time being.



. **Here's more...**



David and Lois Smith take us of on an interesting and varied meander through the outback...

"Hi Paul

I wanted to thank David & Lois for their efforts with the Coffs Reunion. Thank you.

Thanks for your email, hope this may help...

I have put together some photo and comments on Birdsville. Not sure what you may to use, feel free to cut or adjust. If you need any of the photo's sent through separately just ask.

Take Care Denis' -

Last year in April we had a trip from Adelaide to Lake Eyre & on to Birdsville. On the first day from Adelaide to Port Augusta we stop for lunch in a small settlement called Snowtown.

Across from the park where we stopped was the Snowtown Soldiers Memorial Club.

We stopped overnight at Port Augusta.



Setting off the next day for Marree. On the way we stopped at the historic Site of the "Kanyaka" Homestead ruins established as a cattle station in 1852 by Hugh Proby. Born in 1826 at Stamford in Lincolnshire England. He was the 3rd. son of Admiral Granville Leveson Proby (the Earl of Carysfort of Ireland).



Travelling on we came across Overland Telegraph Poles which stretched for 3,200 km from Port Augusta to Darwin. Construction began in 1870 and was completed in 1872, with 36,000 poles used and 11 repeater stations at a cost of 676,120 Pounds.

Back on the road again. the next stop Aroona Dam Leigh Creek.



After the dam at Leigh Creek we visited the Lyndhurst Ochre Quarry so many different colours in one quarry.

It's been a long day on the Oodnadatta track when we arrive at Marree. After a feed and a pleasant stay overnight, we were set for the next somewhat apprehensive part of a journey.

The next morning, a short journey up to William Creek where we boarded our small plane, for a flight over Eyre's Lake following the Diamantina River and on to Birdsville.



On the ground at our destination of Birdsville

Arriving at the Birdsville Hotel for some essential fluids we were surprised to see a familiar sign.



Up the next morning, on move again, we were going back to Marree with a stopover at Mungerannie Station
Back to the 5 seater plane for another adventure, a quick flyover the Birdsville race track



After flying over some very interesting country side we were about to land at Mungerannie Station.

We were in the final approach to land on the airstrip, being metres from the ground when a mob of cows decided to cross. After a number of choice words, the Pilot made some very decisive moves, the plane lurched back into the air and we circled again. This time we made a perfect landing. After this excitement we all decided to have some therapeutic refreshment. Thirsty work this travelling!



A couple of old vehicles on the grounds that are slightly past their use by date.



It was a great and varied trip ending with us going back to Marree and back to Adelaide via Wilpena Pound.

. A SPECIAL NOTE – Grahame Dignam forwarded the following which is really worth noting –



V360 Australia Ltd. Are proud to announce the first NATIONAL FREE CALL number for veterans, their families and friends to contact our Outreach Team and seek information or assistance for any ex-service personnel who are vulnerable, at risk or experiencing homelessness. 1800 838 360 will be manned 24/7 by our experienced operators and link callers directly with Outreach staff.

Web site link: <http://v360.org.au>

Mail Call...

Russ Hamsey – MAJ, S7 (Trg and Stds), 20 STA Regt – sent in the following update on the Regiment...

News from 20 STA Regt

It has been an exceptionally busy time in 20 STA Regt since the end of Exercise Hamel 16 in Cultana, South Australia. 131 Bty continued their work-ups towards readiness which culminated in two exercises.

Ex Lions Flight was conducted at Sam Hill in Shoalwater Bay and there 131 proved their capabilities. One highlight of the exercise was a move from Williamson Airfield to Sam Hill. Now while that doesn't sound like much, 131 moved the entire Bty and still managed to keep flying the Shadow UAS throughout. For those that remember the old days; you moved and whilst you were moving, you couldn't do your job until you set up in the new position. In this case, 131 was able to keep flying and conduct the "step-up" move. Not a bad effort.

131 Bty then returned to Gallipoli Barracks and went straight into a Command Post Exercise. For those who haven't seen it, the Synthetic Training Environment in the unit lines allows a Bty to train with simulators and can really push the limits. Throughout the week-long exercise, the Bty engaged target after target using the Shadow UAS as the observation platform and worked with artillery, armed reconnaissance helicopters and close air support aircraft (all simulated of course). In the end, 131 Bty proved very capable and from the Regt's birthday, 9 Oct, assumes the role of the "Ready Bty".

The big highlight of the last half of the year was something quite simple. During one of the lead-up exercises in Wide Bay in Aug, 131 Bty found itself sharing the ranges with 9 RQR, a local reserve infantry unit. Over a range safety conference, BC 131 found that the infantry had brought their mortars and in quick order, coordinated a range shoot whereby Shadow adjusted live mortar fire. It was very successful and by all accounts, a lot of fun.

The Regt is now working on getting to the end of the year. The inter-Bty competition continues with 131 and CSS Btys fairly close. A number of folks are getting ready for postings and 132 Bty is getting ready for the final exercise of the year – Ex Falcon's Cub. This ex will see 132 Bty reset after coming off a year as the "Ready Bty", integrate a number of newer soldiers and support the School of Artillery's UAS Operator course.

It has been a very busy year for 20 STA Regt. The unit continues to progress and improve. Support from the association is very important to our young soldiers and many of them still talk about meeting a number of you during ANZAC Day commemorations this year.

One final note, the permanent structure for the AN/KPQ-1 is under construction as I type. It will be a fitting monument to your service in Vietnam and will ensure that our younger soldiers remain aware of their heritage.

Seek to Strike

Russ Hamsey

Brian Kennedy – got in touch with **Grahame Dignam** pretty recently and asked Grahame if he could pass on his contact details. Brian was the OC in SVN from 27th Aug 1969 to 27th Aug 1970 – his recollections will be appearing in *Eyes & Ears* very soon.

"A little while ago I received a call from Brian and it was good to reconnect again.

Brian was at Seymour when we had the paver ceremony and reunion in May 2015. Shortly after, he was off to the USA for a tour and then home.

He had been keeping well but has recently had a minor stroke that affected his right arm and right leg. It has slowed him down a little but his mental capacity has not diminished. He is licensed to push his "goffer" around the nursing facility, is accident free and still has all his "driving points".

Brian has asked that we pass on his contact details to our readership. He would like to hear from the group.

His details are:

Mobile: 0438 831 806 Address is: Resthaven Aged Care, 336 Kensington Road, Leabrook SA 5068



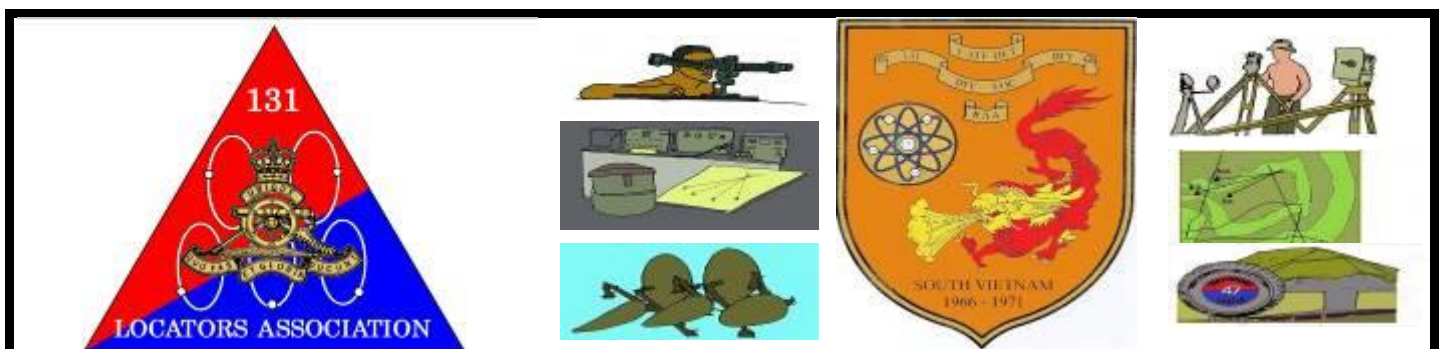
Peter Binns needs some help to ID some of the Locators in the photo at left – “Hi Paul I’m on the right try to find names of the other two in pic can you help Photo was taken between July and November in 1968 at 31A Photo can put in eyes and ears if needed
Regards Peter Binns”

. **Ernie Newbold** thought the following would be of interest just to show that we’re not “licked” yet or more meaningfully – never will be! –

“G’day Paul, something that you might be interested in for the “Eyes and Ears”

Regards, Ernie. “

A Century of Service: The Vietnam War - We have just released a stamp issue commemorating Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War (1955-75) - our longest period of military service of the 20th century. The five stamps explore key themes of the war, from the soldiers in the field to the home front and aftermath, including the Battle of Long Tan, the civil action undertaken by Australian troops in Vietnam and the widely opposed introduction of compulsory military service. [Learn more](#)



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>



. Upcoming Events Calendar –

The Associations Annual General Meeting

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday 15th, November, 2016 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, October 18th, 2016 at 1105hrs...

Attendees were: Grahame Dignam, Ernest Newbold, George Lane Bert Blink

Apologies: Paul Dickson, Jim Fitzgerald, Ged Carroll, Vic Danko, Merv Nairn, Nick Proskurin, Des McGuiggan, Ian Amos, Gordon Malcolm, Allen Morley, Bob Billiards.

Financial Membership is currently is 140, plus Associates 2, Affiliates 7 **Total 149** Plus 12 Lapsed members

Presidents report.

Despite no formal written report, it is rumoured Allen is in the USA attending the 1/83rd Reunion.

He and Bob Billiard, accompanied by their partners, met with Bill Taggart, webmaster for their association website and organizer of the event in Washington DC. A great time was had by all and lots of stories told. Allen was able to exchange a number of caps and Polos for some hard currency which will be accounted for in the near future.

A visit to the world renowned Uvar-Dazy Air Museum followed with Bob riding shotgun (or flying wingman if you wish).

Further touring will round out the trip.

Public Officer Report.

Vic has not furnished a report but has suggested via email the Association develop some objectives to focus our efforts and purpose for the year ahead.

He mentioned production of the Photo album of 131s' period in SVN (this is an ongoing project where we are gathering pictorial evidence via RELEVANT photos of equipment and events of the UNITS total tour which will then be presented to 20STA Regt).

With regard to this idea we refer to our Item 8 in General Business of the September Minutes where a number of suggestions were made and are being developed.

Ern Newbold suggested that we donate an amount to allow the 20STA soldiers to benefit from an amenity provided by 20STA Regiment in our Association Name. The amenity would be an award or reward generally available to all ORs. This will be investigated.

Gordon Malcolm suggested that our Association sponsor an award named "The Jim Menz Book prize" to students attending the local school where Jim grew up and the family still lives.

This does not preclude other worthwhile items being added to the list and further submissions are encouraged and will be welcomed.

Update from Coffs Harbour.

The last Coffs reunion has wound up and the baton has been passed to the SEQ branch of the LSTAA and President Terry Erbs and his committee to develop the 2018 event.

The weekend was down on numbers but very enjoyable nonetheless. The organization was up to the usual standard and no Locators were lost during the event. We managed to meet new people we had only previously heard about and they hadn't aged a day. Visits to Bellingen on Saturday and Bowraville on the Sunday were very interesting and enjoyable.

The only minor hiccup came when dismissing the parade after the service at the Memorial on Saturday evening when the parade turned to the east instead of the west then ordered 'Dismissed'. We all knew the beer was in the other direction!

A farewell breakfast on the Monday saw most head off to home pastures except those flying out as Qantas had other ideas providing the first aircraft around 4pm in the afternoon and another an hour later. It was a long day for some and Qantas staff were left red faced over the issue.

General Business

As supplies of our Association apparel diminish we need to think what we require in the future. Ern Newbold has suggested that we design a new version of the cap for example and when ordering that minimum number then add a top up order for the existing design. That would give us the merchandise on a cost -effective basis.

This will be developed and a report made.

. 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...November –

November	Name	Reg No	YOB	SVN In	SVN Out	Comments
1	DENIS SMITH	2789286	1946	15 04 1969	17 12 1969	
1	VAUGHAN MILLAR	3411742	1948	27 11 1967	26 11 1968	
1	WAYNE JEFFERY	2794772	1946	04 11 1970	29 07 1971	
2	TREVOR PRIDEAUX (WAGHORN)	52837	1936	05 05 1967	06 02 1968	
2	KENNETH HALLIGAN	2788319	1946	16 09 1968	27 08 1969	
4	JOHN HENSHAW	3793057	1945	20 01 1969	28 11 1969	
4	HAROLD LITTLE	2789038	1945	21 02 1969	28 11 1969	
5	DAVID DACRE	5716803	1948	20 08 1970	20 08 1970	131
6	PETER WERTHEIMER	355747	1941			Ares 132 '60-'88
	" "			20 08 1970	05 05 1971	4 Fd REGT
10	BARRY UREN	214715	1940	28 10 1966	02 05 1967	
11	BILL TAGGART		1946	00.10.1966	00.11.1967	US 1st / 83rd
12	THOMAS LEMPRIERE	3412000	1949	02 12 1968	21 01 1969	
13	MICHAEL CAMPBELL	6708462	1946	05 05 1967	13 12 1967	† 1984
16	KEN LONG	2783232	1945	04 05 1967	28 10 1967	
16	ALLEN MORLEY	3788972	1945	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	
17	WARWICK HAMILTON Capt.	235190	1939	17 04 1967	12 02 1968	
17	TERENCE (LOFTY) HAYES	214973	1939	{04 05 1966	29 04 1967	† 14.12.2011
	" " "			{10 12 1968	10 12 1969	
17	JORG KIENE	3797963	1947	09 11 1970	05 08 1971	
17	BARRY WILLIAMS	3796729	1947	16 12 1970	08 02 1971	
18	DESMOND BURY	1411072	1946	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	
19	JOHN PERRY WO2	36026	1932	22 04 1966	07 09 1966	
20	MICHAEL FLETCHER	352778	1945	29 04 1969	16 04 1970	
20	LESLIE BATES	218053	1950	27 11 1969	05 11 1970	
22	MURRAY POUSTIE	3787941	1945	04 05 1967	14 08 1967	
22	BRIAN RUDDOCK (M.I.D)	216134	1935	{29 01 1968	21 01 1969	
	" " Sgt.			{03 02 1970	04 02 1971	4 Fd REGT
24	DONALD SIMMONS Sgt.	212769	1937	22 04 1966	21 12 1966	† 25.04.15
25	STANLEY TODKILL	1201908	1946	04 11 1969	17 06 1970	
25	JIM TOWNLEY	3793586	1946	20 01 1970	27 05 1970	AACC
	" "			28 05 1970	14 01 1971	1st Amoured Regt
26	MICHAEL O'KEEFE	2787168	1946	08 01 1968	14 01 1969	AACC † 1980
26	FRED WALTER Sgt.	342848	1943	11 05 1967	23 04 1968	RAEME
26	JEFFERY SCHAFER	2788886	1946	12 02 1969	17 12 1969	
28	JOHN BAYFORD	3791019	1946	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
30	RON SAUNDERS	38516	1947	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	
30	GARY STRATTON	2788161	1946	08 11 1968	27 08 1969	

Ed – 11 blokes not highlighted doesn't make for a great number – can we have this reduced please?

. **Locator Profiles** – we've received 140 and we've sent out 140. Ed – how about 10 more?

. 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.

Again, I have the very sad news to advise of the passing of another great Locator...

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>
McManus, Norman Ronald Keith	26202	WO11	11.11.70	19.08.71	15.08.24	04.10.16

The following is extracted from Norm's Locator Profile...

Surname: McManus **Given Name/s:** Norman Ronald **Nickname:** "Mac" **DOB:** 15.08.1924

State of Origin: Qld

What did you do before the army: Postal Employee 3.3.42 – 11.49

Army service dates from: March 01.09.52 to Sept 1974 **Regt No:** 26202

If served in SVN, then dates: from 10.11.1970 to 19.08.197

Battery/s Activity/s (Bty/s served in, Sections of Bty/s worked in, locations,

dates etc): From 1942-49 various units including Japan & HMAS Kanimbla, Papua & New Guinea, Borneo, England & Italy on Kanimbla

1952-74: 1 Fld Regt, 104 Loc Bty, 12/13 N.S. Bns, School of Arty Loc Cadre, 132 Loc Arty Bty, School of Arty, 131 Div Loc Bty, P&E.E. Graytown

Who were you in the service with: Geoff Jebb, Les Kidd, Rusty Priest, Fred Lennon and A Cox

Last Rank: WO2 M.G. P & E.E.

What did you do after the army: Manager Caravan Park Narrabeen NSW: TAB

Sub-Agency Berry NSW: "Grog shop" Berry Part-time

What city / town do you live in now: Shoalhaven Heads NSW



Photo at right – **Unveiling the plaque at the Detachment plaque dedication ceremony Canberra, 4th May 2012**

Terry Erbs adds a few more memorable moments from Canberra in 2012 and one from Enoggera this year -

"Giddy Paul,

I have a few recent photos of Norm for Eyes & Ears.

Cheers Terry



Norm, at left, with Kevin Browning, Dave Doyle and self at unveiling of 131 plaque AWM Canberra 4/5/12



Norm, above, with Geoff Jebb & Dave Doyle at unveiling of 131 plaque AWM Canberra 4/5/12

Norm, at right, with Geoff Jebb & Tim Ford at Enoggera for 20th STA dedication 2016





Norm, SVN, 1970



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.

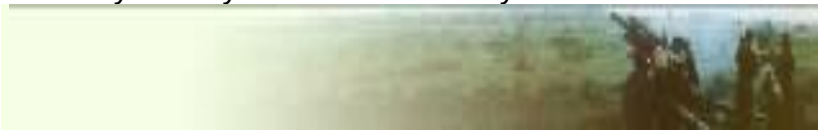
So, if you're a non-financial Associate receiving emails and the Eyes & Ears regularly you could bite the bullet and email Grahame Dignam:sectreas131locators@gmail.com and he could forward you the relevant forms to join - Memberships are available for 1 year or longer deposit a DONATION direct (add your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



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: www.1stbn83rdartyvietnam.com](http://www.1stbn83rdartyvietnam.com)



The Royal New Zealand Artillery Association

<http://www.rnzaa.org.nz/>

Editor contact email: 131eyesandears@gmail.com Ed – Paul 'Dicko' Dickson

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