

THE EYES and EARS

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

Editor: Paul 'Dicko' Dickson

email: 131eyesandears@gmail.com

Vol 12 No 10 October 2019 No 135

Official newsletter of the 131 Locators Association Inc ABN 92 663 816 973

web site: <http://www.131locators.org.au>

Supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs



Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery RAA

Unit Citation for Gallantry (UCG) awarded to the Detachment and those who served at
The Battles of Coral/Balmoral in South Vietnam, 1968

2019 – 53 Years and the Detachment 131 Spirit Lives On 1966 – 1971



**"Welcome Home"
1987, Sydney**

A group of 1967-era-Locators

This photo, above, represents about 10% of the total group in the photo below.

The Locators in this photo are –

From the top row left to right – Grahame Dignam, Nick Proskurin, ?? ??, Lee Hemming (Late), Jim Hognio, Pete Fletcher, ?? ??, Ernie Newbold, ?? ??, Ron Evans, Bob Billiards, Bob King, Vic Danko, Ross Gunnel, Ron Royal, John Blake, Frank Ipsa, Stan Briggs, Barry Guzder, Bert Blink, Warwick Hamilton (Late), Trev Prideaux (Waghorn).

NB: Great when you have a significant date oriented photo and no one can name three Locators – any suggestions?

Now this raises the question – “Are there any other photos that have groups of Locators, from different eras, taken at the Welcome Home parade?” If so, then can we share them please?



You'll note that we've circled faces – this was done some time ago when we had a “names please” drive.

A lot is owed to the dedication of the blokes who put a lot of work into making it happen on our behalf.

It's 32 years ago! Amazing!

. The “Lost Locator Project”

Ed – The Project continues on relentlessly so, we need to be vigilant and keep our minds active as who knows who, where and how we might stumble on, discover someone etc be it by accident but even more so by design. Paul

Get in touch via 131eyesandears@gmail.com

. The “Detachment Album Project” – This project is

sponsored by the 131 Locators Association and is in need of some photographic and by-line input from our members/Readers.



. Insights and Recollections...

This topic/s has raised a great deal interest – maybe there are other activities that can be formulated to continue this programme that has bought some remarkable memories back to life.

So, if you would care to contribute, please send your Insights and Recollections – Paul Dickson at - 131eyesandears@gmail.com

. “Did you know this happened in the month of October with reference to SVN?”...

3 October, 1992 - Dedication, Australian Vietnam Veterans' National Memorial, Anzac Parade, Canberra, was opened by the Prime Minister, the Hon. Paul Keating, MP, and honours those Australians who served and died in the war in Vietnam.

13 October, 1969 - HMAS Brisbane returns to Sydney. This was the end of the Brisbane's first deployment to Vietnam. A turret from HMAS Brisbane is on display outside the Memorial.

16 October, 1967 - Royal Australian Navy Helicopters deploy to Vietnam. An RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam (RANHFV '67) joins the US Army's 135th Aviation Company at Vung Tau, supporting American troops in South Vietnam.

18 October, 1967 - HMAS *Perth* hit. HMAS *Perth* struck by return fire near Cape Lai, Vietnam, while on the United States 7th Fleet 'gunline'. This was the only occasion on which an Australian warship suffered casualties from enemy fire during the Vietnam War.

. Here's the next in the “Unknown” series...

This photo at right is extracted from **John Vitkovsky's** collection as we were putting together his Locator Profile and for the lives of us we couldn't identify the bloke on the left.

Anyone got any ideas? John thought that he may have been a Pom and ex-Brit army.



From the Advocate's Desk...



Our professional Advocate's contact details: -

Peter Pioro JP - email contact: piorowp@ozemail.com.au

Ken Foster OAM JP - email contact: khfoster1@bigpond.com

Disclaimer: Please note that all correspondence submitted will be treated with the total confidentiality between the sender and our Advocates. Printed submissions and responses that may be published in *Eyes & Ears* will be completely anonymous, just used as examples of help.

. A Sunday outside my front door ...



All for the patron saint of the city San Miguel de Allende
– Saint Michael's / San Miguel's day. Paul

*****News Item – Announcement...*****

**. 1 Oct 2019 3:00 PM AEST - Chester Media Release –
COUNCIL OF THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL APPOINTMENT
MEDIA RELEASE** Tuesday 1 October 2019

COUNCIL OF THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL APPOINTMENT

FORMER Prime Minister, the **Hon Anthony (Tony) Abbott** has today been appointed as a member of the Council of the Australian War Memorial, bringing with him dedication, passion and knowledge in a period that will see the Memorial upgraded to tell the stories of more recent conflicts.

*****Another Important Newsflash – *****

Please note **20STA** is now be known as
20th Regiment RAA

See their Facebook page –
<https://www.facebook.com/20th-Regiment-Royal-Australian-Artillery-1146627815368184/>

Mail Call...



. Here's another story in the series with regards to Locators' "passions" under the Grey Nomad banner...

Ted Jux – “Hi Paul,

I've been travelling for a few months and am enquiring about photos and memories that may be used in our history book.

What is the time frame for things to be sent?

Also, I read in a past newsletter that Kim Hewitt was trying to find **BLAIR SHEPPARD**. I am regularly in contact with him and several of “The Funny Little Lot” so you can give him my contact if you like.

My wife, Sharon, and I have spent the past few months travelling across this great country of ours. We did the top end this time Kakadu, Litchfield, Miriam, Purnululu NP* and all the gorges in between. Very, very, dry and lots of burning off in the NT (70 percent each year. Also, very little or no water in the parks and at the falls.

Did the Darwin thing and enjoyed the museums.

Lots of us “Grey Nomads” touring this huge country.

All the best,

Ted Jux.

*The Purnululu National Park is a World Heritage Site in the East Kimberley region of Western Australia. The 239,723-hectare national park is located approximately 300 kilometres south of Kununurra, with Halls Creek located to the south.



Ed – I supplied Ted with the info requested, but, then couldn't resist and asked for more info - additional information is supplied –

“Hi Paul,

We have a 2016 Avida Ceduna Multiterrain which is a six-speed manual 3L turbo diesel.

My wife Sharon is the only driver and loves it. It is fully self-contained as we like to do a lot of free camping. It has a separate shower and toilet with a large lounge area at the rear with a Queen bed above which comes down when needed.

The photos (above) were taken at the Mirima NP outside Kununurra. They are the mini Bungle Bungles and you can get right up close as you walk through. Totally amazing, we have such an amazing country to navigate.

Caught up in Katherine with my son and his wife who have taken a year off work and are travelling Australia.

Thanks for the contacts re the enquiries. Regards, Ted Jux.”

Warwick Brooker – sent this email notice in last month, but had to resend it, because it disappeared into the ethernet by some mysterious means! Anyway, here it is with photos –

“National Servicemen's Association Commemorative Ceremony 6 Sep 2019

Dicko, on Friday 6 September I attended the annual National Servicemen's Association Commemorative Ceremony at the Australia War Memorial.

John King, Deputy President of RSL National and ACT Branch President invited me to attend with him. I'm not a member of the NSA, but I was delighted and honoured to attend with John and was quite moved by the service. What I didn't expect was a centre front row seat as his 'special guest'. I'm seated next to John (gold and blue striped tie) in the attached AWM photo.

There'll be a larger gathering next year to mark the 10th anniversary of the National Service Memorial dedication (**8 Sep 2020**) at the AWM, but NSA membership is gradually dwindling, as you would expect. Next year's commemoration is expected to be the last of its kind.

Best wishes, Brookey"

I've also attached a few photos taken by the Veterans' Affairs Shadow Minister's photographer.



In the group shot (at left): Mr Don Spinks AM (Repatriation Commissioner, until recently Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army), Mr John King (President RSL ACT Branch and Deputy President RSL National), **Gunner Brooker**, The Hon Shayne Neumann MP (Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel).



. **Des Bailey** sent the following in after an exchange of emails we'd had back in May this year. I'd had a similar "error" with my going to SVN on my lonesome, when, in fact I'd gone with the first major replacement group. I managed to get my "date" corrected very easily. Anyway, Des extended his tour in SVN and was involved in "Coral/Balmoral" and I had mentioned to him that he was entitled to the UCG based on his dates in his Locator Profile. However, his records show him leaving SVN earlier – ok, now read on –

"Hi Paul, my name is Des Bailey, ex RAEME tech with 131DLB Vietnam, 1967/68. Some months back we discussed my dilemma re my incorrect return date from Vietnam. I got on to Records in Canberra and they go by the record that was given to them and I have to prove my case.

This is almost impossible.

Now I refer to your big article re "THE ANK/PQ-1 IN VIETNAM", on Page 40, under "Bibliography" it relates to A. Det 131 DLB Operational Monthly Reports SVN 66-67-68. and B. Det 131 DLB Wksp Monthly and Equipment Reports 66-67-68.

The fact is as I understand it is that we came under 131 for all our admin, including Q, Pay and movements. So, if I can find out where these reports are held, presumably in 131 DLB records or Artillery records somewhere.

My next question to you. Is Keith Ayliffe still in the system and would he be in a position to help??

Where would these reports be held??

It is interesting to note that my sister in Brisbane has come across some old letters I wrote to her while in Vietnam and I, in fact, left Saigon by Qantas on the 21st May 1967. So, it would seem that the Admin staff at 131 DLB in Vietnam has given Records my incorrect return date!!

Paul, I know this is a big ask and probably is out of your area of responsibility but I would be grateful if you could throw some light on my problem.

I am in the process of becoming a member of your org. I was saddened to learn of Warwick's death. We were good friends. I first met him as a Capt at Canungra pre-Vietnam. Then in Vietnam. Then I met him again at Woodside, he was CO 16 Air Defence Regt and I was ASM of the Wksp in 1978-1982.

I see also that my ex-boss Ken Osborne had an article in your last copy.

Keep up the good work and good luck.

Des Bailey (ex Sgt RAEME, radar tech)"

Ed – I wrote to **Keith Ayliffe** and **Kevin Browning** and got an in-depth response from Kevin Browning – see a bit later.

Ed – my response –

"Des, good to hear from you.

Ah, the bureaucracy continues. Yes, I remember your emails back in May.

You're right I'm not much help directly, but what I'll do is forward your email on to Keith A and also another bloke called Kevin Browning - he delves into all sorts of things - ex Det 131 and very into history. He's picked up the cudgel once more re: the UCG etc.

Anyway, I'll get them to get back to you and let's see what develops. Keep me in the loop please? Paul"

Ed – I then sent emails to Keith and Kevin.

Now, here's **Kevin's** response, which goes to show the skills of this bloke – he's a gem.

"Hello Des,

I am not sure whether Keith has been in touch with you yet but just in case he hasn't I thought I had best respond to your request.

The RAEME Monthly Report for May 68 shows you as RTA 12 May 68. Copy of the report is attached, see para 3, for the report Apr 68. There was obviously some problem here as both reports appear to refer to matters in May and possibly April. The May report shows 342848 Sgt F Walter and 18689 Sgt G Richardson RTA 21 May 1968, but the DVA record indicates they RTA on 23 April 1968 so I assume these two individuals did RTA in April as the report is dated 1 May, whilst the report your name appears on is not dated but is more likely the report for May 68. You would know better than I whether the two RTA'd before you.

Have you contacted Qantas to see if they hold passenger manifests for their flights?

The RAEME reports show you coming home 12th and your sister's letter 21st. A typo could easily move 21 to 12. I also doubt that both dates would be correct for flights as I believe they flew out on the same day each week. The 12th was a Sunday and the 21st a Tuesday. When I flew home it was a Tuesday.

The Detachment Reports for April and May 1968 do not exist.

Regards, Kevin Browning"

The following are extracted from the RAEME Monthly Report shows the following –

<u>AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES</u>	
Det 131 Div Loc Bty Wksp NUI DAT	
May 68	
R723-1-1	
<u>RAEME MONTHLY REPORT - MAY 68</u>	
<u>ESTABLISHMENT COMMENTS</u>	
1.	NIL.
<u>EQUIPMENT DEFICIENCIES</u>	
2.	NIL.
<u>PERSONNEL</u>	
3.	1732807 Cfn J BOTHWELL arrived this location on 16 May ^{APR} 68. 18687 Sgt D J BAILEY RTA on 12 May 68. Except for the replacement for Sgt BAILEY the change over of personnel has been completed.

Then here's a statement of operation deployment (below), signed by Mike Burgess...

G ASPECTS

9. Fifty six man days have been spent on operations. All three radar mechanics have spent some time maintaining ALPHA equipment on operational duty outside the Task Force area. Cpl McNIEL has spent a period of 29 days on the current operation. At present Cpl STRAUTINS and Cfn PALMER are employed at ALPHA equipment.

A ASPECTS

10. Cpl MCKENZIE (RAAOC) has been nominated for promotion to T/Sgt Gp 5 Clerk (ORD)

Q ASPECTS

11. NIL

OTHER POINTS

12. NIL

Distribution

EME TF 1
DADEME AFV 1
EME 9 1
Det 131 Div Loc Bty 1
131 Div Loc Bty 1 ✓

M J Burgess
(M J BURGESS)

Capt

OC Det 131 Div Loc Bty WKSP

Ed - Des's DVA Nominal Roll record shows him RTA'ing on **14.03.68**. So, there is a discrepancy which can be challenged. Interesting!

Take a look at the second extract above (taken from the last page of the report) and you'll note "Fifty six man days have been spent on operations" then that the number of "radar mechanics" spent time "maintaining Alpha equipment on operational duty outside the Task Force area". So, from this it can be confirmed that there were at least "three radar mechanics" and who knows who else were on duty in the field during Operation Coral/Balmoral for 56 days of Operational Deployment!

...The following is Des's response to Kevin -

"Hi Kevin,

Thanks very much for your rapid response. I was most surprised to receive both those 131 DLB Wksp Det reports. The reports were done by our new boss at the time, one Capt. Mick Burgess. I didn't know that anyone could make so many mistakes in such short reports. I think there is enough evidence to prove my case. Would you happen to know who actually gives the dates to CARO? They have me RTA on 14 Mar 1968. I have no idea where that date came from. Anyway, I am going to ring Qantas as you suggested and see what they keep.

Thanks again Kevin, you have really been a big help.

Regards, Des Bailey"

... and here's Kevin's response -

"Hi Des,

One of the problems we had in Vietnam was that the admin staff were usually high jacked from other tasks so they did the best they could. Do you have a copy of your service records? A look through them might reveal where the error occurred. My records show me as still being in hospital in Vung Tau!

CARO, now known as SCMA, would have received a copy of your records, one copy would go in your record at the unit and another sent to CARO.

Did you come home with anyone on the aircraft or were you at Coral with others from the unit. These should be able to verify you were there. I doubt they took a roll book call each day and even if they did there is little possibility the roll book still exists.

Glad to have been of assistance and please let us know how you go

Regards, Kevin"

Ed - Kevin has certainly given Des some ammunition for a DVA Nominal update and perhaps more positive information from QANTAS if it's possible. I don't think it's the OC's fault; it appears that there are discrepancies across all sections including the possibility of incorrect data being processed by the final records collators. Kevin is another ripper with him being in hospital!

My further investigations also show that the following Locators left on 21.05.68 – they are Ric Marques, Bert Blink, Barry Guzder and Geoff Blackwell, so perhaps there was a reasonably sized group left on that day. – continue watching this space...

. **Ernie Newbold** - G'day Paul,
Extreme Coincidence Department (ECD).

Today while I was at the local RSL, having had lunch with our old mate **George Lane**, I saw a car in the car park with personalised number plates showing the initials "YT".

Immediately the first name that came to mind was **Yarema (aka Max) Troynar***. The name was still on my mind when I returned home so I "Googled" Yarema Troynar. See the links below, they may be of interest.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/48531484?>

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C312840>

It looks like he is on Facebook too, but I'm not, so I couldn't see him there.

I'm sure that the car I saw wasn't Max's, it was just the unusual initials that caused my memory to click.

Regards, Ernie."

***Max served with us in SVN 1967**

Bert Blink responds – "Hi, before leaving for SVN I visited Max at his home several times meeting his family. He went RTA before I did and we never met again.

In the Feb 2015 Edition of E&E mention is made of Max sending an email to Paul with a photo of Nick. So, he has made contact. Also, I thought that Ron Evans sent in an E&E email saying that on a whim he looked Max up in the white pages and made contact. Bert"



Max Troynar

This is extracted from the
Women's Weekly,
November 22, 1967

...Then Ed responds with a bit of an update –

"Ok - interesting "spotting" and memory surge Ernie. I've downloaded the first link - it's a bit messy as it is in several parts pasted together - we'll see if it survives the E&Es transition? Parts of it have been in E&Es before.

Bert, your search is correct and just to add a bit more. I included Max in my quarterly individual mail outs and received no responses for a year, so removed him from the list in March this year. He like several others have been through this process - it could be for several reasons. Luckily there are still a loyal band that respond to my meanderings. Paul”

. **Grahame Dignam** sent the following article in that he extracted from the Sydney Daily Telegraph – 19.10.19

National servicemen

A retired military lawyer is preparing a brief on behalf of National Servicemen who served in South Vietnam less than 181 days and missed out on the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. Affected men can register their details at **richyvon47@hotmail.com**.

Ed – This has been, and still is, a sore point for blokes who, for no reason of their making, had their tours shortened.
It could be an avenue worth exploring.

NB – **Ed** did a bit of a search of richyvon47@hotmail.com and discovered that he is actually Richard Joseph Barry, born 16.03.47. He's was a Nasho and was with 6RAR in SVN from 16.06.71 to 19.01.72 = 118 days – this could explain his interest.

He was involved in organising a 50th Anniversary of National Service Reunion in Sawtell, NSW in October, 2017.

. **Allen Morley** – gets a note into us – “While preparing the slides for **Warwick Hamilton's** Memorial Event required viewing about 600 half frame slides. There I found one which is worth sharing.

Leigh Baker to the left, **Stewie Sporn** to the right and myself next to **Warwick**. Allen”





Mail Out



I started this in September, 2017 and have decided to continue running down the alphabet of names and sending some emails to blokes in general to say g'day and just to generally keep in touch. A lot of the blokes I've never met, so it's just to keep some connection alive. Plus, it's good to keep in touch, even sporadically, it may help to avoid any unpleasant unforeseen surprises.



Mail In - Here are the responses...

David Auld – “G'day Paul, yeah surgery does tend to help you lose weight I had a hernia removed on the 16/9 and the medications were such that I couldn't venture to far from bathrooms, lost 3 k's in a week, other than that all fine in my neck of the woods. Rosemary is still managing the motel until end of January. Spring is here, 14 degrees this morning, wind chill factor is 12, have a good trip.”

Warwick Brooker – “G'day Dicko.

Thanks for the update. I hope that BCC has gone forever. I've had a few skin cancers removed over the years, but nothing that required 16 stitches!

Nothing of interest has happened in my world since the report I sent you on 12 September about the National Service Commemorative Ceremony at the AWM. I attached a few photos. I don't know if you received that, as you didn't acknowledge. Maybe you were busy attending to your shoulder wound!

I don't think switching from flannelette shirts to T-shirts is newsworthy. Besides, we're still transitioning here in Canberra, with a maximum of 30°C recorded yesterday and 1°C minimums forecast for later this week. Feel free to send some of your rain to Oz!

Hope you've mended well. Best wishes to you and Helen. Brookey”

Chris Bouilly – “Well mate I'm sorry I have taken so long to reply, but better late than never as the saying goes?

First off, I think everyone that knew Warwick our leader in Vietnam would feel sadness, it is sad when you hear of another one of our time passing on RIP Warwick.

On a more newsworthy subject, along with 33 other members of SACA (South Aust Cricket Association) we travelled to England for “The Ashes” series visiting Lords, Headingly etc, including travel, we were away for 5 weeks had a great time. It was a much better experience this time, 30 years since I was there last. London last time had too many people in it for this country lad. Unfortunately, half our group came home with virus coughed for 3 weeks getting rid of dead cells from the lungs got over that, last week ate part of a rockmellon high in bad bacteria. Went dizzy and broke out in a heavy sweat and lost my balance. Dry reached for 7 hrs before being taken to hospital in an Ambulance. Just as well because I was having chest pains, not my heart, but, a lingering lung infection from the virus I caught in

London. I'm just about to get discharged. I now know how to avoid all this medical stuff, just stay home 🏠 Enough of all that, have been doing a bit of lamb tailing for the locals on Yorke Peninsula. I have three CFS units to help maintain, and do charity work for the local publican who looks after the marine jetty's, Pylon's Wharf's in South

Australian waters. Spend a bit of time out to sea and occasionally have time to catch a feed of 🐟.

Vanessa has taken on another poison chalice job looking after 17 regional hospitals in country South Aust. Medical is the toughest job in Aust at the moment. The cost is blowing out the window and is hard to get on top of.

Other than all that we are both well and look forward to the trip we are planning to visit Albany, W A next Anzac Day. Hopefully, we will be able to send some photos. We are travelling in our coaster bus, a bloody beauty - finally got away from my swag and stretcher. Cheers for now, keep well Chris and Vanessa”

Wade Cooper – “Dear Paul, Good to hear from you.

I'm now up in Brisbane - weather is perfect. We are about half way through the basic operator course - due to finish up at the back end of November.

Caught up with Graham Hampton over the weekend up at his house in Caloundra - was nice to get away. I will be getting back down to Canberra next weekend to see my family.

I hope the shoulder is healing ok! I have had two shoulder recons myself - tricky things!

Keep the update coming, I enjoy reading them. Best get back to the grind!

Best regards, Wade”

Kevin Browning – “Hi Paul,

Thanks for the email and update on yourself. You can keep your weight loss programme to yourself but hope all is well after the operation.

My travel is very restricted at present with family matters but once that is resolved we have our bucket list ready. For the past few months I have been undergoing eye surgery but am now awaiting final results.

I am still fairly heavily committed to Artillery Historical research and that keeps me fairly busy. For a number of years have been compiling a record of historical artillery pieces in Australia. The States have now been ‘completed’ and are being placed on the net. NSW is there at present but those records will require updating. Am presently working on the Northern Territory and ACT. The ACT includes the Australian War Memorial so there is still plenty to do. We have records for about 2000 guns at present.

In addition, am compiling a record of all bravery awards to Australian Gunners. Have to visit the AWM to view their records for WW2 recommendations which will show what the recipient did to receive the award. Then have to get into the modern conflicts – post-Vietnam. Will not bore you with other projects.

Apart from that there is the occasional contact with you to keep me sane. In my spare time, I coach junior cricket and umpire senior cricket.

Thanks for the message and keep up the good work.

Regards, Kevin”

John Blake – “Hey Dicko, it really is nice to get those kicks in the bum. I do appreciate your contributions. Enough suck up now.

Kama as usual, nothing much happens here. Have had a recent non-lethal health scare with a few days in hospital. I thought I was having another broken brain but it turns out it was most likely very sudden high temperature followed up by weakness too great for me to roll out of bed. As a result, I wore a hole in my bum cheek that has taken a few weeks to heal. Someday if you are game I will show you the photographs.

Other than that, I think I am keeping well. Still managed to walk Mt Coot-tha two or three times a week with mates or on my own. I have powered up with a group of blokes loosely formed. We reward ourselves with a cup of coffee, occasionally eggs and toast and the “*Australian*” and other newspaper general knowledge quizzes to stretch our brains. Talking about brain stretching for the last 10 months I have been trying to learn Japanese. A bit of a joke, but what the heck.

We went up Coolum way, where a friend lives, but for some reason I did not go to see Barbi (Barbara Hemming – Leigh’s). For some reason, I do not have her phone number. If you are talking to her, give her a pat or a hug for me. While at Coolum we walked a million miles and I had the fishing line in the water over 3 days. I caught one very nice whiting then when there was nothing else there, apart from a couple of dart that I threw back out of guilt, I gave up.

There were very few fish there and very few beach worms and I found one only Pipi (I forget how to spell eugarie I think). I may be paranoid but I am very concerned about the lack of weed amongst the rocks. Maybe it will pick up with summer.

A bright spot was that overlooking the rocks at Coolum we were able to spot a heap of whales with at least one calf in tow and dolphins to entertain us for an hour or so at dusk. We were close enough to the shore to hear the whale tails a’lapping as they crashed back into the water. We did not take any photos but instead simply enjoy the watching and listening.

It’s good to hear from you again and that you are generally well. As a consolation while bcc’s dig a hole, thankfully they do not spread or proliferate. They simply assist with weight loss.

Happy locating, John Blake

PS planning to be in Sydney for Blue Leader’s send off.”

Nick Armstrong – “Hello Paul.

Thank you for your latest email. Time is certainly passing rapidly – still! I think our last correspondence was before ANZAC Day last April. Robin and I were in Canberra for Easter, but decided to head home before ANZAC Day. We were on the road and didn’t attend any ANZAC Day celebrations.

In July, I visited my Son and three Grandsons in Narrogin WA. Robin remained in North Shields, having spent about nine months helping him relocate and settle after a messy marriage breakup. My brother-in-law took the opportunity to travel with me. He had never travelled the Eyre Highway, and it was also an opportunity for him to catch up with his nephew and grand-nephews (if that is the correct title).

Many people find the road trip boring, but I find it variable and interesting. I do have a particular connection with the region, having worked along the route over the years since leaving the Army in 1969. My first job after leaving the Army was with the then Bureau of Mineral Resources, doing seismic survey work between Frazer’s Range, west of Balladonia through to the hills west of Northam. In 1974, Robin and I, with our four-month-old, eldest child, travelled with a 25ft caravan to the Diamond Bore Microwave tower. I was working as a Grader operator with Crawford Earthmovers, constructing the 90km section of the current Eyre Highway, from the Koonalda turn off to the WA/SA border. We lived there for about 18 months and left with some great memories. Each trip across the Eyre Highway gives me a sense of pride in seeing how our work has stood the test of time (40 years) and many vehicles! In the late 1980’s, I spent a year building an effluent system at the Aboriginal community of Yalata, 200km west of Ceduna. I have worked at various places on Eyre Peninsular, and the SW of WA over the years, so the area is really my large back yard.

Another activity since last writing, was installing a Sonnen Battery to capture surplus power from my 5kW solar panels. It has been installed since last May. I won’t know whether they are cost effective until I have had them for a full year. In SA, the ‘Feed-In-Tariff’ is about one third of what I pay for my power, which I believe is the greatest difference in Australia. The SA Government has been offering up to \$6000 subsidy to install batteries, and that was probably the incentive I needed. Through the winter, May to August billing period, my power consumption from the grid has fallen by 29%, compared with the previous year. Many days the solar panels were unable to produce enough power to charge the hot water service and the battery, so that difference was quite a pleasant surprise. From September through to April, I am expecting to be able to recharge the HWS and battery by about midday, and leave the afternoon sun to produce power for the grid. I don’t know whether an Accountant would tell me whether the battery makes economic sense, but that question could apply to many things we must have, like motor vehicles, televisions, and countless other essentials?

Enough from me for now, and greetings to colleagues from Vietnam days. Nick.”

... **Ed** – with a bit of follow up Nick expands on his earlier connection with the Eyre Highway ...

“Hello Paul

I have put together a series of old scanned slides and comments about my time on the Eyre Highway in 1976. Let me know if it works. If successful, I could do the same for other places I have been.

I don't have too many photographs of recent trips between SA and WA. There are generally uneventful, and therefore don't provide a reason to reach for the camera. I never carried a camera in Vietnam, so I suppose I have never been much of a 'shutter bug'. I do have older pictures taken over the years, although usually more relevant for their earthmoving and family connections, rather than for their tourist significance.

The following pictures were taken while constructing the present Eyre Highway. I worked on the 90km section from the WA border eastwards. I worked for Bordertown (SA) based Crawford Earthmovers. My wife, Robin and daughter, Judith, were with me, living in a 25ft caravan. Our caravan was parked with about a dozen other married employees' caravans, immediately east and part of the construction camp established by Crawford Earthmovers. The camp was located at the Telecom Australia Microwave tower at Diamond Bore. The camp was about 420km west of Ceduna, of which about 320km was along the old unsealed Eyre Highway. We moved to the job in early spring 1975, seven years after leaving Nui Dat, and remained there until February 1977.



Diamond Bore Microwave Tower with additional dishes being installed by Andrews Antennas.

Nick and Judith outside caravan



Bath time for Judith. Bore water was very salty, so potable water used for hair washing. Potable water was carted from Koonalda Cave, about 40km away. On our day off, we would obtain water from rock holes near the camp, or fill containers from the rain shed on the old Eyre Highway.



Filling water cans at the rain shed. Robin obtained her driver's licence while at Diamond Bore. 'Local' policeman came from Penong (about 350km) for the practical test. No hills and no traffic, so test was mostly reversing around the caravan park. She passed on her first attempt, but the policeman suggested she should get more practice before driving in traffic!





We worked a ten-hour day Monday to Friday, and eight hours on Saturday. Sunday was family time. Towards the western end of the job, the cliffs gave way to bluffs which could be negotiated to reach the sea. The beaches were a thin cover of sand over very sharp rocks. To prevent Judith from falling on the sharp rocks, a rope harness was used to keep her on the sand.



The beaches did tend to alter due to wave action, but it was usually possible to find a new beach somewhere nearby. Occasionally whales could be seen close to shore, although their favoured location is about 150km further east at the Head of the Bight.

Cheers for now and let me know if this transmits alright, as an attachment to an email. Nick”

Brian Campbell – “These are some random shots of the Vets park at Toukley that I mentioned to you. This park was given to us by Central Coast Council to maintain.



Ken Foster – “Probably the biggest problem in Australia at the moment is the drought and bushfires, as we come into summer there is a feeling that without significant rain there will be problems that will take years to reverse. Climate change activists continue to disrupt cities and without providing any convincing argument or solutions to what they see as a problem continue to get prime media exposure. On the veteran front, we wait for two pieces of legislation to pass through the federal parliament, one related to partner service pensions and the other on recognition of veterans and new Veterans cards. Add that to the delays in having government respond to the recent productivity commission report into veteran’s services and we have a degree of frustration. On a personal front, I am well and busy but at the moment that is not a problem, at least not bored just a bit frustrated with delays in being able to move forward in some veteran’s support areas. Regards, Ken Foster”

Peter Bruce – “Hello Paul.

I am currently sitting in our caravan in a very cold Canberra. We arrived a few hours ago after driving down from Toowoomba Bay where one of the kids runs a caravan park. We left home (Lake Cathie) on Monday morning. We are heading for Victoria and will be away about three weeks. I keep saying five weeks but Susie keeps saying three! I know who will win out in the end. Heavy traffic through Sydney (to be expected) and we ran into head winds just south of Mittagong. We will be here for three nights then Melbourne for three nights and then Phillip Island for two nights, Portland (with Reg Shepherd) for a couple of nights and then heading up to Myrtleford where we used to live. I hope to then spend a few days along the Murray but time will tell if we make it. Catching up with Chris Jobson on Thursday am here in Canberra. Doing the War Memorial tomorrow pm and will stay for the "Last Post Ceremony". National museum on Thursday am and perhaps the Portrait Museum as well. Weather forecasts for Canberra are not looking too good at the moment.

To other news. I have taken leave from Legacy for six months and will reconsider going back next March. I think I am past my use by date with Legacy but we'll see what the new year brings. I am on a health kick at the moment - you

may have heard of the DVA sponsored "Heart Health Program ". Might pick up a few hints from them and get them to pay my swimming pool access for 12 months. I aim to shed about 8kgs and 2 or 3 cm around my waistline.

Back to Legacy and we recently had the book launch of "Legacy in the Hastings District" Which I had been putting together for about 18 months. Turned out pretty good even if I do say so myself.

No plans for any overseas trips at our end. Susie and I are going up to Port Douglas with another couple at the end of November. Good friends who I actually met through Legacy. They have a time share and a double br unit so invited us to join them. It's only for five days but we get on well them so should be a good break away. They have recently come home from nearly two months in Europe and they plan on no more OS trips at this stage. We are talking about a caravan trip up north next year perhaps around May.

I haven't put out a newsletter from the 4 Fd Regt Old Boys for some time now. I get very little feedback and often wonder if it is worth it or not. You put together a great newsletter and it appears you have quite a following. In our case, most of the guys seem to associate more with their battery rather than a regimental attachment. We have few bob put away as well and I often wonder what will become of it. One suggestion has been to give it all to the current 4 Regiment - Regimental Funds. Apart from one large function, that's probably what will happen eventually.

Well mate, that's a brief update from down south. We have packed away the shorts and thongs and outcome the winter woollies for a while. I personally like the cold but Susie is the opposite!

Best wishes, Peter"

Ron "Mook" Evans – 'Lovely to hear from you Paul.

All is pretty well with me. Some radiotherapy but nothing I am going to let bother me - just yet. Time will tell, but right now I am feeling as happy and optimistic as ever.

Now tell me, how do you pay for your medical bills? Does the DVA help you where you have chosen to evade justice? Does Interpol have access to DVA records I wonder. Also, are the local drug cartels as bad as everyone makes out?

I think I asked you this before but have you heard anything of **Terry Kennedy***? He was a Reg when we were in Viet Nam. I don't think that he ever went over there but he was a character I remember well. It was him who christened me Mook. I would love to know where he ended up.

Cheers for now. If you ever need an alibi for anything please remember, I can be bought.

XXX, Mook"

***Ed – Anyone remembers Terry or has any idea of his whereabouts/wellbeing – please send me a note?**

Keith Ayliffe – "G'day Paul,

Sorry to appear rude, but I have been without a PC for a while, I had to send it back to the Company in Melbourne as it was under warranty. They had to wait for a part overseas which I am told came by sea. So, I've been off-air a while. Been Busy working on a Project for 131Bty related to the UCG in which the Heraldry was not passed down. This is now completed, if accepted by the LSTAA, it will be presented to 131Bty on behalf of the Coral Veterans. I will forward it to you if it is passed/accepted. Off to Brisbane for meeting on Thursday.

Things are going well with me at the moment in passable health.

Playing golf sometimes twice a week. On Tuesdays, I play with **Eric Marquis** so keeping the old boys involved.

Best Regards, Keith."

Mike Butler – "Hi Paul.

Thanks for the note. Yes, temperatures are gradually improving in Melbourne but we have had a cold winter. Took the van to the Grampians last week for a week's R and R with the caravan club. Now looking forward to a get together in Canberra in early November with **Pete Saint, Rieny Nieuwenhof, Les Falkai, Joe Molenkamp** and **John Jaggard**. Michelle and I are both well and have just been delivered of our 5th grandchild - makes one feel ancient!!!

Went to a VV Day lunch in August at the local Box Hill RSL. It was well attended with about 50 veterans and some wives and partners. Trying to tidy the garden before summer and plant some veggies which I get a good deal of pleasure from seeing them sprout!

One of us will get some photos of the Canberra get together and send them to you.

Cheers for now. Mike Butler."

Phil Connor – "Paul g'day, how are you? Latest read is a must, well put together and a great read. 16 stitches...whoa.

'All quiet on the South-Eastern front'. Did not have rain for a long time until a week ago and had a lot in 24 hours spread over two days. Still very dry and we should get some more this coming weekend. Starting to warm up here with some places inland getting 40 degrees a couple of days ago while we had 28 on the same day. Our son in Indiana also said their summer was very good. Also, they get the full colour swing of leaves, magnificent in the fall. We travel over to his place per year and select different time of the year and the varying season changes and colours are exceptional.

Winter "woollen's" drawers... what is that? I have winter drawers and summer drawers all with T shirts, shorts in both. I was going to say thongs as well but that is for another day.

Noticed a lot of "Beyond Meat" products when we were over there last. However, still stick with the real thing.

Last weekend (a long weekend) we had the NRL Grand Final with the Roosters defeating the Canberra Raiders 14 – 6. A very controversial game with some bad calls. My team (Rabbitohs) was not there, so was not biased to any team, but thought the Raiders were hard done by. The AFL has also come and gone.

Surf down at Alex Headland during the winter has been great. The three Grandsons, here in Oz, keep us busy each weekend. As soon as winter sport/s finishes (Soccer, indoor Soccer and Aussie rules) they are straight into Cricket. The beauty is that whilst they are 1/2 hour away south they play all sports in the Sunshine Coast area. The grandson in Indiana commenced Gridiron for first time this year.

Recently, with my Head and Neck Surgeon we have decided to remove a further cancer lesion on the good part of my tongue together with some other smaller lesions in the vicinity. Once he has completed all the paperwork down at St Vincents Sydney I will fly down for the operation.

All the new roadworks on the Bruce Highway and the major intersections at the Sunshine Motorway and Caloundra are going well with completion in 2020. Also, the Sunshine Coast Airport is being expanded to include a larger East West runway, besides the existing North South runway. The new runway will be large enough to accommodate the new 787 Dreamliner and A350 and is due for completion backend of 2020. It will cater for more International traffic. And, the Old Horton Park Golf Club in central Maroochydore has now given way to a new Central Commercial Hub with the Council buying the land and the Golf Club moving to a new location in Bli Bli.

Have you lodged a request with the company "The Coffee Club" in OZ to ship a franchise over on land near you!!!!!! Cheers mate, Phil"

Notice Board...hey! See what's coming up?

There's plenty of room for notices – has anyone got or getting any events planned?
Just send an email and I'll post it. Ed

* URGENT NOTICE



A reminder that the **AGM for our Association** is scheduled for
12th November 2019

and will be held at the Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club*,
26 Humphries Rd., Wakeley.
Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club, 26 Humphries Rd., Wakeley.
Ph (02) 9604 9975 and for directions -

<http://www.canleyheightsrsl.com.au/contact-us/> You're all welcome

It will commence at the normal **11.00AM** start time followed by a general meeting before breaking for lunch.

A general call to arms for this event will be made to all Locators far and away to attend.

***The venue at North Head is not conducive to a luncheon at the present, hence the change back to our regular site.**

If you have anything to announce re: an upcoming event – don't be shy, just send it in to –
Paul Dickson 131eyesandears@gmail.com



Committee members:

President – Allen Morley, Vice President – Bert Blink, Treasurer/Secretary – Grahame Dignam,
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 – Alan Adams, WA - Barry Guzder

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

Presidential perambulations

At the request of Warwick Hamilton's widow, Kate, I have been checking out appropriate photos for Warwick's 15th November celebration service from his collection.

There are many that I have no idea who, what or when is the photographic subject. But some are recognizable for their 131 connection and they took me back mentally more than 50 years when attending to the job. The task was doubly challenging because the slides were photographed with a half-frame camera. That is a real antique photographic machine.

The greenness of the countryside and the colour of the South Vietnam soil were vivid reminders of this Nasho's time in South Vietnam.

Warwick seemed to have a challenge in keeping his shirt on, although this pic shows him in uniform with Officer's cap and a 155 mm (?) round on his shoulder. My guess is that the photo was taken at Than Son Nhut airport, but I am not sure as the aircraft in the background appear older.



Indications at this time are that there will be an excellent turnout of 131ers at the celebration. Vic Danko and I have been asked to tell a few stories about why Warwick at Nui Dat was important to us. To those present with the detachment in '67 - '68 Warwick was "Blue Leader". To those Detachees present before and after this time, maybe this OC will be only a name.

Cheers, Allen



. Upcoming Events Calendar –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday, 12th November, 2019 at 1100hrs
Venue: Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club, 26 Humphries Rd., Wakeley.
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, 8th October, 2019 at 1105hrs...

Attendees were: Bert Blink, Grahame Dignam, Ernest Newbold, Ian Amos, Gordon Malcolm, Nick Proskurin, Merv Nairn, Ged Carroll and George Lane

Financial Membership is currently ...119, plus Associates 2, plus Affiliates Total 130

Lapsed as at 1/10/2019 37 members

Presidents report.

Allen provided a written report delivered by Bert and advised that:

. An application for a DVA Grant for the delivery of the Photo Album pictorial record of **SVN** service has been commenced. More input will be required and has been offered.

. RSVP for the celebration for Warwick Hamilton is due on 18 Oct 2019.

. The AGM for the LSTTA Sydney branch will be held at Panania RSL on Sunday 1 Dec 2019 at 11.45AM. Finger food will be provided. Our members are invited to attend.

. The committee, to a man, passed a vote of thanks to stalwart member and catering officer **George Lane**, for the service he has given and camaraderie since the inception of the Association. We all wished him a fond farewell as he moves to a new abode at Tweed Heads shortly. He will be sorely missed by many.

Public Officers Report: There are no changes or developments that will have any effect on our association that I am aware of. However, I would like to divest myself of the Public Officer position on the committee to ensure a spread of the talent pool at our disposal.

Photo Album Project: Ernest Newbold has been contacted with offers from Ted Jux and Kevin Browning, of further photographs which will need to be evaluated and captioned etc.

General Business:

Discussions ensued on the following:

. The AGM has been moved to the usual venue at Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club due to unserviceable conditions at the proposed venue at North Fort.

. **Gordon Malcolm** has volunteered to take up the position of **Public Officer** at the 2018/19 AGM. The offer was quickly accepted and his nomination for the committee was amended from "member" to "Public Officer" forthwith and heartily endorsed.

If you've got more photos that you want added, just send them to: - Paul Dickson – web Photos
131eyesandears@gmail.com– BUT DON'T FORGET TO ADD TITLES/NAMES ETC.

. Birthdays in the Battery...November –

Date	Name	Regt 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	† 26.10.17
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	† 02.04.18
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	WILLIAM TAGGART		1946	00.10.1966	00.11.1967	US 1st / 83rd
12	JOHN RICHMOND	2784289	1945			
12	THOMAS LEMPRIERE	3412000	1949	02 12 1968	21 01 1969	
13	MICHAEL CAMPBELL	6708462	1946	05 05 1967	13 12 1967	† 1984
16	KENNETH 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	† 26.08.19
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	† Unknown
22	MURRAY POUSTIE	3787941	1945	04 05 1967	14 08 1967	
22	BRIAN RUDDUCK (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 Arm. 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	
27	PAUL HOBSON	2799714	1951			
28	JOHN BAYFORD	3791019	1946	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
30	RONALD SAUNDERS	38516	1947	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	
30	GARY STRATTON	2788161	1946	08 11 1968	27 08 1969	

*Above colour background coding explanation – Red – financial Locator, Yellow – located Locator, Black – passed Locator, Blue – honorary Member, White – NOT Located Locator.

Ed – 11 blokes not highlighted out of 24 of us still around is a pretty high figure – it needs wok fellas! We need to fLocate a few more!

. **Locator Profiles** – we've received 160 and we've sent out 160. Ed – 170 must just be around the corner.

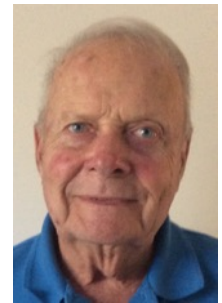
Seriously though, time is not on our side and we should add to our legacy while we can.

. **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

Name	Rank	Regt No	SVN	DOB	DOD
Townley, James Harold	Brigadier	17072	Det OC 1966	02.03.39	20.10.19



Bert Blink forwarded to following information – extracted from *Cannonball* -
“Sad news to commence this newsletter; James Harold Townley passed away on 22 October 2019. For those who crossed paths with Jim you know what a gentleman and great bloke he was. For those that did not know him you have missed a rewarding experience. Jim graduated from the Royal Military College in 1960. He joined 103 Field Battery in Malaysia and was posted to 131 Div Loc Bty in early 1965 as an ACBO (Assistant Bombardment Officer). This was before we adopted the UK term "Artillery Intelligence". Jim took 106 Field Battery RAA to Singapore in 1971 thus providing the Australian component of 28 ANZUK Field Regiment. His many postings after that included Exchange Officer USA, Commanding Officer of 1st Field Regiment RAA, DRA, DGLWP Army HQ and Commandant Army Staff College. Jim is survived by his wife Wendy, son Peter and daughters Penny & Sally. A gentleman of great wit and presence has gone from our midst. RIP Jim.



Service Details are:

Date: Monday 4 November 2019, Time: 1130 am QLD time
Location: Allambie Gardens Address: 129 Nerang Rd, Broadbeach

The wake:

Location: Southport Golf Club Time: 1300 hours onwards Location: Slatyer Ave, Southport

Locator Profile

Surname: Townley **Given Name:** James **State of Origin:** Qld

What did you do before the army: I was at school in Brisbane.

Army service dates from: February, 1957 **to:** March, 1994 **Regt. No:** 17072

Battery/s Activity/s (Bty/s served in, Sections of Bty/s worked in, locations, dates etc) before SVN: I graduated from RMC Duntroon into the RAA in December 1960 and joined 103 Field Battery of 4th Field Regiment at Wacol about Easter 1961. The battery was due to go to Malaya (as it was then) at the end of 1961. Before that however, our major exercise was Exercise Tropic Holiday Mount Paluma / Hidden Valley area out from Townsville. My everlasting memory of this exercise was the five-day drive to and from in 2.5 ton Studebakers towing our 25 pounders in convoy at a stately 45 miles per two hours, and being checked for time intervals by the CO with a stop-watch. For the “singlies” of the battery, our trip to Malaya was aboard an Italian migrant ship MV Flaminia. We boarded her in Sydney having travelled down overnight from Brisbane on a troop train, or at least three or four carriages which if I remember correctly were detached from the rest of the train somewhere in Sydney and shunted directly to the dock where we boarded. We sailed late because some of the VIPs who had come to farewell us were loath to leave the hospitality of the Captain’s reception for them (or at least so the story went at the time). We got a gun salute from the School of Artillery as we exited the Heads.

About 12 or so days later we docked in Singapore and the next day were bussed up to Malacca and Camp Terendak, which would be our home for the next two years. Camp Terendak, the base of 28th Commonwealth Brigade, which consisted of: an infantry battalion from each of Australia (2RAR), New Zealand and the UK; an integrated field regiment (26 Regiment RA) of two British batteries and ourselves; and integrated engineer, signals, transport, ordnance, military police and medical sub-units. It was a busy two years with exercises at battery, regimental, battalion and brigade level, and live firing at Assahan range. However, it wasn’t so busy that I couldn’t manage a quick trip by RNZAF back to Australia to get married to Wendy and then return to Malacca by sea.

Very early in the piece we changed from an eight gun, two troop battery to a six-gun battery, and re-equipped from 25 pounders to 105 mm L5s. We also learned to deploy in a variety of fixed wing aircraft ranging from Beverley heavy transports to single engine Pioneers, a variety of RAF and RN helicopters, and assault boats, all of which required the guns to be stripped and carried in pieces. Incidentally, we used all of these deployment methods at one time or another on exercises. At the end of 1963, the battery returned to Holsworthy and joined 1st Field Regiment.

After a year in 1st field Regiment, I was posted to 131st Divisional Locating Battery at North Head. I won’t cover that again as I already did so in my “OC’s Recollections”, except to recall that the battery was given the job of inducting the

first intake of National servicemen at Moore Park barracks in Sydney. Two things struck me about that exercise: the first was how composed the inductees were faced with the prospect of having two years taken out of their lives with little or no recourse; the second was the very professional banners being displayed by the Save our Sons movement- probably the start of the Vietnam War protest movement.

After leaving SVN, I went to England for 18 months to do a Gunnery Staff Course, followed by six months as an instructor in Germany. Then back to North Head to be the Senior Instructor of Locating Wing, once again back at North Fort. Here I was privileged to work with a virtual "Who's Who" of locating artillery. As well as IGs Barry Campton and John Jansen, the AIGs at various times included Norm McManus, Geoff Jebb, Bill Liddell, Kevin Salter, Harry Webster, Alan Cleasby and Fred Lennon.

I got some idea of things in Vietnam in 1963. I was then in Malaysia with 103 Fd Bty, as part of 28 Commonwealth Brigade. The officer training syllabus in 103 Fd Bty included Bernard Fall's book "Street Without Joy" and Graham Greene's "The Quiet American". The Australian officers in the brigade were also rotated through Vietnam a couple at a time for a week or ten days. My stint was with Barry Campton (also then with 103 Fd Bty) with US advisers in Pleiku and Kontum in the Central Highlands.

I joined 131 Div Loc Bty in early 1965 as an ACBO (Assistant Counter Bombardment Officer). This was before we adopted the UK term "Artillery Intelligence". With the benefit of 50 years of hindsight, I now think that the change was probably a mistake in our Australian / South East Asian context. However, that's another story.

131 Div Loc Bty was then an integrated ARA / CMF unit commanded by Major Pat Gowans. The ARA component consisting of Bty HQ and about one third of the battery were stationed at North Head (North Fort and the ARMC in fact). The remainder, the CMF component, were at a depot on Pittwater Road. The ARA component, other than BHQ, consisted of a CB Section, a radar troop, a survey troop and a RAEME Wskp. At this stage, it was pretty clear that we would be in Vietnam in the not too distant future, because in early 1965, 1 RAR, supported by 105 Fd Bty had been deployed there. Although what was to become Det 131 Div Loc Bty had not then been formed, a lot of preliminary work was initiated by Pat Gowans, including identification and coding of stores, compiling ledgers and earmarking personnel for the detachment.

At the end of 1965 or the beginning of 1966, the ARA component of 131 Div Loc Bty relocated to Holsworthy and shared barracks with 1 Fd Regt. The CMF component remained at Pittwater Road and became 133 Div Loc Bty. I think it must have been sometime in March that we were warned for deployment to Vietnam. Things then got pretty busy, and I can't remember much of the detail of what went on except for our pre-deployment medical which I do remember was conducted in the middle of the night at the Camp Hospital at Ingleburn.

I can only recall one pre-deployment exercise with HQ 1 TF and Tac HQ 1 Fd Regt, up the Colo-Putty Range. In hindsight, our immediate preparation was all a bit once over lightly, but we didn't have a lot of time given that HMAS Sydney, which took our equipment, was to sail about mid- April and the equipment had to be readied for a couple of weeks at sea on an open flight deck. It was also necessary to grant pre-embarkation leave of a week. It was really due to the preliminary administrative work, initiated by Pat Gowans, that we managed to squeeze it all in.

During this period also, the Detachment was formally raised, consisting of an Artillery Intelligence section, two Listening Posts, a radar section of two radar detachments, a survey section a small admin section of a WO2 and (maybe) a clerk and a Q clerk cum storeman. Also, raised at the same time was the Det 131 Div Loc Bty Wskp commanded by WO1 Bill Prenter.

Dates served in SVN with Det 131 from:	22.04.66	to: 18.08.66
Prior to Det from:	14.06.63	to: 22.06.63 (on Official Duty from 103 Fd Bty)
Post Det from:	30.04.70	to: 28.05.70 HQ, Aus Force Vietnam (Army Component)

Nui Dat location: Arty Tac HQ

Activities in SVN:

My "Recollections" recorded on the Association website and in *Eyes & Ears Vol 9 No 7, July 2016 No 96* cover my activities in quite some detail.

Who were you in the service with in SVN: I was very fortunate to have **Peter Sadler** and **Andrew Opie** as officers in the detachment. That the calibre of the NCOs was also high can be judged by their success in later careers. It is probably unfair to single out individuals, but some do stick in the mind even after 50 years. Last, I heard of them (some time ago now):

Bill Prenter was commissioned, commanded the LAD of 8/12 Mdm Regt and became a wing SI at the RAEME Training Centre.

Graham O'Toole became the WO1 Regimental Master Gunner at the Directorate of Artillery in Canberra.

Fred Lennon, Bill Finlay, Alan Campbell and **Dave Doyle** all did Gunnery Staff courses at the Royal School of Artillery, Larkhill, and became AIGs at North Head. Alan was later commissioned.

Keith Deans became a PTI, transferred to the Medical Corps when they took over PT and I think became RSM of the School of Army Health.

Don Simmons became a Pastor.

Karl Doebrmann became our second casualty when he was wounded in the mortar attack on Nui Dat. He was also commissioned later.

I have vivid recollections of **Al Thomson**. Somehow or other he seemed to have an endless supply of jokes and huge black evil smelling cigars as well as a .45 pistol which I never wanted to know how he came by.

I couldn't close without a fond mention of my batman, **Ralph Pearce**. Sadly, I never did find out what happened to him in later life, but I'll bet it would have been interesting.

What was your last rank: Brigadier

Army service post SVN: I left Vietnam in August on posting to a Gunnery Staff Course at Larkhill, via a week in Sydney to collect my family and sell our elderly Holden.

I handed over to Barry Campton, whose recollections I guess come next."

For the rest of my time in the Army until I retired in 1994, I was fortunate enough to spend most of my time in artillery postings, including stints in the Directorate of Artillery as a major, a lieutenant colonel and finally as a colonel as Director, when Graham O'Toole (ex 131 Bty) was the Regimental Master Gunner. I was also lucky enough to be the Battery Commander of 106th Field Battery in 4th Field Regiment in Townsville and then in 28th ANZUK Field Regiment in Singapore. I was doubly lucky in that Bill Gallagher was the BSM, and I had served with Bill in Malaya in 103 Field Battery. We were in Singapore when Mr Whitlam became Prime Minister and the National Servicemen in the battery were given the option of leaving immediately. Most chose to stay. A couple of years later I became the Commanding Officer of 1st Field Regiment in Wacol, where I was again fortunate to have as RSM, Rex Taylor who sadly died a couple of years ago and Gerry Berson who also had been in 103 Field Battery.

My non-artillery postings were as an exchange officer with the US Army at Fort Hood, Texas, as Director of Combat Development at Army Office, Canberra, as Commander of the 5th Military District in Perth, as Commandant of the Command and Staff College at Queenscliff in Victoria, and as Director General of Operations and Plans at Army Office. I also had postings as a student at Queenscliff, and at the Joint Services Staff College in Canberra and at the Royal College of Defence Studies in London.

Post Army activities/interests:

Since leaving the army, I completed a degree in International Relations at Deakin University. I also chaired the Conditions of Service Committee at the National Headquarters of the RSL and represented the RSL at hearings of Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal. These days my main interests are golf and grandchildren.

What city / town do you live in now: Southport, Qld.

Ed – I've added a couple more recollections that we have gathered over time from Jim that expand on certain subjects (maybe a couple of sections already stated), but show more of the real character that made Jim not only an important part of the Detachment's history, but 131 Battery and his military career. He is to be remembered.

BEFORE AND AFTER

I graduated from RMC Duntroon into the RAA in December 1960 and joined 103 Field Battery of 4th Field Regiment at Wacol about Easter 1961. The battery was due to go to Malaya (as it was then) at the end of 1961. Before that however, our major exercise was Exercise Tropic Holiday Mount Paluma / Hidden Valley area out from Townsville. My everlasting memory of this exercise was the five-day drive to and from in 2.5 ton Studebakers towing our 25 pounders in convoy at a stately 45 miles per two hours, and being checked for time intervals by the CO with a stop-watch. For the "singlies" of the battery, our trip to Malaya was aboard an Italian migrant ship MV Flaminia. We boarded her in Sydney having travelled down overnight from Brisbane on a troop train, or at least three or four carriages which if I remember correctly were detached from the rest of the train somewhere in Sydney and shunted directly to the dock where we boarded. We sailed late because some of the VIPs who had come to farewell us were loath to leave the hospitality of the Captain's reception for them (or at least so the story went at the time). We got a gun salute from the School of Artillery as we exited the Heads.

About 12 or so days later we docked in Singapore and the next day were bussed up to Malacca and Camp Terendak, which would be our home for the next two years. Camp Terendak the base of 28th Commonwealth Brigade, which consisted of: an infantry battalion from each of Australia (2RAR), New Zealand and the UK; an integrated field regiment (26Regiment RA) of two British batteries and ourselves; and integrated engineer, signals, transport, ordnance, military police and medical sub-units. It was a busy two years with exercises at battery, regimental, battalion and brigade level, and live firing at Assahan range. However, it wasn't so busy that I couldn't manage a quick trip by RNZAF back to Australia to get married to Wendy and then return to Malacca by sea.

Very early in the piece we changed from an eight gun, two troop battery to a six-gun battery, and re-equipped from 25 pounders to 105 mm L5s. We also learned to deploy in a variety of fixed wing aircraft ranging from Beverley heavy transports to single engine Pioneers, a variety of RAF and RN helicopters, and assault boats, all of which required the guns to be stripped and carried in pieces. Incidentally, we used all of these deployment methods at one time or another on exercises. At the end of 1963, the battery returned to Holsworthy and joined 1st Field Regiment. After a year in 1st field Regiment, I was posted to 131st Divisional Locating Battery at North Head. I won't cover that again as I already did so in my "OC's Recollections", except to recall that the battery was given the job of inducting the first intake of National servicemen at Moore Park barracks in Sydney. Two things struck me about that exercise: the first was how composed the inductees were faced with the prospect of having two years taken out of their lives with little or no recourse; the second was the very professional banners being displayed by the Save our Sons movement-probably the start of the Vietnam War protest movement.

After leaving SVN, I went to England for 18 months to do a Gunnery Staff Course, followed by six months as an instructor in Germany. Then back to North Head to be the Senior Instructor of Locating Wing, once again back at North Fort. Here I was privileged to work with a virtual "Who's Who" of locating artillery. As well as IGs Barry Campton and John Jansen, the AIGs at various times included Norm McManus, Geoff Jebb, Bill Iiddell, Kevin Salter, Harry Webster, Alan Cleasby and Fred Lennon.

For the rest of my time in the Army until I retired in 1994, I was fortunate enough to spend most of my time in artillery postings, including stints in the Directorate of Artillery as a major, a lieutenant colonel and finally as a colonel as

Director, when Graham O'Toole (ex 131 Bty) was the Regimental Master Gunner. I was also lucky enough to be the Battery Commander of 106th Field Battery in 4th Field Regiment in Townsville and then in 28th ANZUK Field Regiment in Singapore. I was doubly lucky in that Bill Gallagher was the BSM, and I had served with Bill in Malaya in 103 Field Battery. We were in Singapore when Mr Whitlam became Prime Minister and the National Servicemen in the battery were given the option of leaving immediately. Most chose to stay. A couple of years later I became the Commanding Officer of 1st Field Regiment in Wacol, where I was again fortunate to have as RSM, Rex Taylor who sadly died a couple of years ago and Gerry Berson who also had been in 103 Field Battery.

My non-artillery postings were as an exchange officer with the US Army at Fort Hood, Texas, as Director of Combat Development at Army Office, Canberra, as Commander of the 5th Military District in Perth, as Commandant of the Command and Staff College at Queenscliff in Victoria, and as Director General of Operations and Plans at Army Office. I also had postings as a student at Queenscliff, and at the Joint Services Staff College in Canberra and at the Royal College of Defence Studies in London.

Since leaving the army, I completed a degree in International Relations at Deakin University. I also chaired the Conditions of Service Committee at the National Headquarters of the RSL and represented the RSL at hearings of Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal. These days my main interests are golf and grandchildren.

Recollections

James Townley

Disclaimer - These recollections cover events that took place about 50 years ago. I have never been a keeper of diaries or records, so I am relying on an imperfect memory. Please allow for this when you come across errors or omissions.

Early Days in 131 Div Loc Bty

I got some idea of things in Vietnam in 1963. I was then in Malaysia with 103 Fd Bty, as part of 28 Commonwealth Brigade. The officer training syllabus in 103 Fd Bty included Bernard Fall's book "Street Without Joy" and Graham Greene's "The Quiet American". The Australian officers in the brigade were also rotated through Vietnam a couple at a time for a week or ten days. My stint was with Barry Campton (also then with 103 Fd Bty) with US advisers in Pleiku and Kontum in the Central Highlands.

I joined 131 Div Loc Bty in early 1965 as an ACBO (Assistant Counter Bombardment Officer). This was before we adopted the UK term "Artillery Intelligence". With the benefit of 50 years of hindsight, I now think that the change was probably a mistake in our Australian / South East Asian context. However, that's another story.

131 Div Loc Bty was then an integrated ARA / CMF unit commanded by Major Pat Gowans. The ARA component consisting of Bty HQ and about one third of the battery were stationed at North Head (North Fort and the ARMCO in fact). The remainder, the CMF component, were at a depot on Pittwater Road. The ARA component, other than BHQ, consisted of a CB Section, a radar troop, a survey troop and a RAEME Wskp. At this stage, it was pretty clear that we would be in Vietnam in the not too distant future, because in early 1965, 1 RAR, supported by 105 Fd Bty had been deployed there. Although what was to become Det 131 Div Loc Bty had not then been formed, a lot of preliminary work was initiated by Pat Gowans, including identification and coding of stores, compiling ledgers and earmarking personnel for the detachment.

At the end of 1965 or the beginning of 1966, the ARA component of 131 Div Loc Bty relocated to Holsworthy and shared barracks with 1 Fd Regt. The CMF component remained at Pittwater Road and became 133 Div Loc Bty. Preparations Prior to Departure

I think it must have been sometime in March that we were warned for deployment to Vietnam. Things then got pretty busy, and I can't remember much of the detail of what went on except for our pre-deployment medical which I do remember was conducted in the middle of the night at the Camp Hospital at Ingleburn.

I can only recall one pre-deployment exercise with HQ 1 TF and Tac HQ 1 Fd Regt, up the Colo-Putty Range. In hindsight, our immediate preparation was all a bit once over lightly, but we didn't have a lot of time given that HMAS Sydney, which took our equipment, was to sail about mid- April and the equipment had to be readied for a couple of weeks at sea on an open flight deck. It was also necessary to grant pre-embarkation leave of a week. It was really due to the preliminary administrative work, initiated by Pat Gowans, that we managed to squeeze it all in.

During this period also, the Detachment was formally raised, consisting of an Artillery Intelligence section, two Listening Posts, a radar section of two radar detachments, a survey section a small admin section of a WO2 and (maybe) a clerk and a Q clerk cum storeman. Also, raised at the same time was the Det 131 Div Loc Bty Wksp commanded by WO1 Bill Prenter.

Deployment to Vung Tau and Nui Dat (Operation Hardihood)

The detachment's deployment to our Vung Tau staging area was split between air and sea. I went with a small advance party, including WO2 Frank Perry, our Detachment Sergeant Major, and all our equipment on HMAS Sydney in about the second week of April 1966. It must have been about then, because I can remember an ANZAC Day dawn service somewhere up in the Coral Sea. It was pretty moving as we were about to go on operations, and we already had other Australian units on operations in Vietnam and in Borneo.

Training on a very crowded ship was limited to small arms shooting and PT. There was little or no scope for any work on equipment, which of course had been heavily greased up for sea travel.

On arrival in Vung Tau Harbour, the ship was visited by General Westmoreland, the American force commander. He arrived in a highly-polished Huey with a couple of equally highly polished aides. We all looked very shabby by comparison. Australian greens and jungle hat do not lend themselves to stylishness.

Unloading began that day, over the side into barges. My own vehicle with my party and me in it was hoisted over by crane about midnight; not a comfortable feeling. However, we survived the experience and arrived at a landing slip to set out for our staging area somewhere on the outskirts of Vung Tau out past the airfield. I should add at this stage that our knowledge of what was going on and what to expect was not good. The only map I had was a 1:1 000 000 Michelin Road map of Vietnam, containing not a lot of detail. It goes without saying of course that there were no guides to get us to the staging area. All there was, was a cheerful wave and the dreaded words "you can't miss it" from an MCO corporal at the top of the slipway. I had unhappy thoughts of taking a wrong turn and ending up in Hanoi. We did find the staging area, however, and flopped, only to be awakened at dawn by a lot of shouting and the sight of a couple of hundred black pyjama-clad armed Vietnamese on the road nearby. As I said we really didn't have too good a grasp on the situation, so I thought our end was nigh. Fortunately, they turned out to be trainees from a nearby training depot and, at that stage at least, on the government's side.

After about a week or so (I am a bit hazy on the details), a second advance party led by Andrew Opie, the radar section commander, arrived by air from Sydney, courtesy of QANTAS, RAAF Caribous and USAF C123s. Finally, again a little later, the main body of the detachment arrived, also by air, led by Peter Sadler, the Survey Section commander. The main work in this period was the degreasing of equipment and getting it back into operating order. From the staging area, we deployed to the feature that became known as "Nui Dat". Again, I can't recall the actual date of our deployment from Vung Tau to Nui Dat, but it was by air and road. The area of what was to become the 1 ATF base was secured for the 1 ATF deployment by 173 (US) Airborne Brigade, which included 1 RAR and 105 Fd Bty.

Nui Dat Deployment and Operations

The Task Force Commander's orders before we left Vung Tau had included the areas within the Nui Dat perimeter to be occupied by each unit and a general outline of his concept for immediate operations. This was to establish defensive positions and then for the infantry battalions to begin aggressive patrolling to clear out to gun range (9000 metres).

The Arty Int party deployed to Nui Dat by Huey with Tac HQ 1 Fd Regt as part of the task force headquarters. The rest of the detachment deployed by road with the main body of 1 Fd Regt in a protected convoy.

On arrival, Andrew Opie deployed the two radars, one ("A" commanded by Sgt Don Simmons) in the vicinity of 103 Fd Bty, and the other ("B" commanded by Sgt Fred Lennon) in the vicinity of 105 Fd Bty. Sgt Bill Finlay set up the Arty Int office with Tac HQ 1 Fd Regt. The two Listening Posts commanded by Bdrs Al Thomson and Dave Doyle went to the two infantry battalions. The Survey Section provided the link between the Topographical Survey Troop and the regimental survey section of 1 Fd Regt to place the guns and radars on theatre grid. (By now, we had something more than Michelin road maps to work on.) WO1 Bill Prenter deployed the Workshop collocated with the 1 Fd Regt LAD. I won't attempt to go through the ensuing days and weeks in detail, but rather pick out some highlights that I think I can remember.

Because the red laterite soil around the base did not lend itself to sandbag filling, especially when wet, runs were made to Vung Tau with the resupply convoys for a bit of time off and also to collect trailer loads of sand for sandbagging. It was on one of these runs that the detachment suffered its first casualty, when Gnr Tom Checkley sadly lost his life in a road accident.

Our personal equipment on deployment had included steel helmets. We never wore them and I guess somewhere around Nui Dat there is a deep hole with several thousand steel pots in it. I remember leaving mine at home in my married quarter at Holsworthy, so, embarrassingly, had to go back for it as we drove from Holsworthy to Garden Island. It was all in vain, as it got stolen on board HMAS Sydney anyway. Why I don't know as they were hardly an attractive souvenir item.

Likewise, with camouflage nets. In the absence of enemy air, these provided privacy screens. There must be a big pit full of them somewhere as well because they were the old cord and hessian type ones which, aside from being very smelly and weighing a ton (several tons when wet), were pretty much indestructible.

This was also the time of no mail. We got sporadic deliveries from home, but none of our letters got through. This caused a deal of distress as might be expected. The situation got a lot of publicity in Australian newspapers, one of which I seem to remember launched a "punch a postie" campaign. In the event, it wasn't the posties' fault. Mail from Vietnam to Australia was routed through Hawaii, where someone eventually found a shed full of it that no one had known what to do with.

Because the TF commander's concept of operations at this stage was all about clearing out to gun range from Nui Dat, there was no artillery deployment away from the area. Consequently, there was no call for survey to be carried forward. This must have been a very boring time for the survey section and I have always felt uncomfortable about this. Eventually, I think, Peter Saddler arranged for his surveyors to help out on radar detachments and LPs.

Equipment and Processes

Aside from landrovers, radios, theodolites and tellurometers our major equipment was our AN/KPQ1 radars, originally developed for the USMC. They were probably late 1950s technology, as the RAA introduced them in the early 60s. They needed a ready and reliable supply of spare parts to keep them running, (think first generation 1960s TV set reliability as a yardstick). We deployed with three radars, two for mortar locating and one in the Workshop detachment. Without going into a lot of technical detail, which I am certainly not qualified to do, they had certain characteristics which governed how we operated.

We had deployed with a 90-day scaling of spare parts, by which the supply chain from Australia was to have been set up. Whether it was or not, I don't know, but I do know that in rather less than 90 days' problems of keeping the radars "on the air" through lack of spares became acute. We knew of a USMC unit at Da Nang who were equipped with

AN/KPQ1s. So, with the help of the staff at HQ AFV in Saigon, Bill Prenter and I headed off to Da Nang to do some begging. When we got there, we were told that the unit concerned had been shipped back to the US as their AN/KPQ1s had been totally unsuccessful at locating mortars. Fortunately for us, they had left behind all their spares boxed for shipment, which the HQ AFV staff very kindly bought and shipped down to us. I would like to be able to report that this solved all our problems, but regrettably, it was not so. It did however lessen them.

The second defining characteristic was that when it was operating, to locate a mortar the AN/KPQ 1 needed to track a bomb in flight for about 10 seconds having first been directed where to search by information from the LPs. Given terrain masking limitations, the likelihood of getting a ten second track on a 60mm mortar, with which the local VC were reputedly armed, was pretty slim.

The unreliability of the AN/KPQ1s and their probable difficulties with 60 mm mortars meant we needed a "Plan B". Our Intelligence assessment was that we faced an enemy, who was unlikely to have any technological way of directing his mortar fire. We reckoned that he would probably limit his firing positions to natural features that he could find at night and orient by compass or by marks made during a day recon. Based on this, Bill Finlay and the Arty Int section pored over maps to identify likely creek junctions, track junctions and so on, out to 60 mm and then 82 mm mortar range. I can't remember if we did 120mm mortar range as well. We then grouped these targets by locality, allocated a nickname to each group of targets and then produced an AB545 fire plan for 1 Fd Regt including the attached US 155 mm battery. (The original Fire Plan "Cracker Barrel").

In the event, all this work paid off during the mortar attack on the TF base in August that preceded Long Tan. The TF was attacked by 82 mm mortars and an old Japanese 70 mm howitzer left over from WW2. Based on mortreps and locreps, the appropriate targets were engaged. After action reports, quoted by Ernie Chamberlain in his translation of the unit history of D445, record body parts and bloody dressings in the areas shelled by counter battery fire. The 70-mm howitzer story is interesting. It was identified from an unexploded projectile found on the road outside the 1 Fd Regt Adjutant's tent. The shell had gouged a rubber tree to which his tent was tied. The shell had failed to explode because the fuse had not been screwed completely in. As I was not about to handle it to measure it, the shell was identified from photographs sent to the Captured Materiel Exploitation Centre.

Personalities

I was very fortunate to have Peter Sadler and Andrew Opie as officers in the detachment. That the calibre of the NCOs was also high can be judged by their success in later careers. It is probably unfair to single out individuals, but some do stick in the mind even after 50 years. Last, I head of them (some time ago now):

Bill Prenter was commissioned, commanded the LAD of 8/12 Mdm Regt and became a wing SI at the RAEME Training Centre.

Graham O'Toole became the WO1 Regimental Master Gunner at the Directorate of Artillery in Canberra.

Fred Lennon, Bill Finlay, Alan Campbell and Dave Doyle all did Gunnery Staff courses at the Royal School of Artillery, Larkhill, and became AIGs at North Head. Alan was later commissioned.

Keith Deans became a PTI, transferred to the Medical Corps when they took over PT and I think became RSM of the School of Army Health.

Don Simmons became a Pastor.

Karl Doehrmann became our second casualty when he was wounded in the mortar attack on Nui Dat. He was also commissioned later.

I have vivid recollections of Al Thomson. Somehow or other he seemed to have an endless supply of jokes and huge black evil smelling cigars as well as a .45 pistol which I never wanted to know how he came by.

I couldn't close without a fond mention of my batman, Ralph Pearce. Sadly, I never did find out what happened to him in later life, but I'll bet it would have been interesting.

RTA

I left Vietnam in August on posting to a Gunnery Staff Course at Larkhill, via a week in Sydney to collect my family and sell our elderly Holden.

I handed over to Barry Campton, whose recollections I guess come next.

Condolences: –

Phillip Perrin – "Paul, thank you for passing along the info re Jim and I would appreciate it if you would include a message of condolence in *Eyes & Ears* to **Wendy**...from Sylvia & Phillip Perrin – "Jim was a Groomsman at our wedding in Manly in 1963.....kind regards Phillip"

Wade Cooper (20th Regiment, RAA)

"Lest We Forget.

Please extend our condolences and sympathies from the officers, men and women of 20 Regt, RAA.
Wade"

Bill Taggart (1st Battalion/83rd Artillery, USA) – "It is always sad to hear such news Paul, unfortunately we hear it much too often any more. On behalf of your brothers from the 1/83rd, please pass along our condolences to Jim's family, may he rest in peace. **Lest We Forget.** Bill"

Geoff Cowgill – “Hi Paul. Would you know if Jim Townley was a Captain Townley in the early sixties? I had the pleasure of serving with a Capt. Townley at North Fort
Regards Geoff Cowgill.”



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.

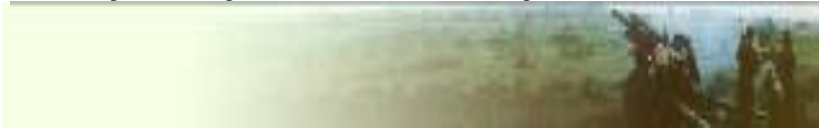
So, if you're a non-financial Associate receiving emails and the *Eyes & Ears* regularly you could bite the bullet and email Grahame Dignam:sectreas131locators@gmail.com and he could forward you the relevant forms to join - Memberships are available for 1 year or longer deposit a DONATION direct (add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

. 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

All material that is included in *Eyes and Ears*, official Newsletter of the 131 Locators Association Inc remains the property of 131 Locators Association for its sole use. Prior written authorisation for the use of any material whatsoever contained in the Newsletter must be sought from 131 Locators Association Inc. Any material approved for use by third parties must acknowledge 131 Locators Association Inc as the source. No responsibility is accepted for unsolicited manuscripts, illustrations or photographs, or for the accuracy of information contained in the text of *Eyes and Ears*.