

THE EYES and EARS

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

Editor: Paul 'Dicko' Dickson email: 131eyesandears@gmail.com Vol 13 No 06 June 2020 No 143

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

2020 – 54 Years and the Detachment 131 Spirit Lives On: 1966 – 1971



Artillery Tactical H.Q. (Arty Tac) 1 ATF Nui Dat. 1967
Capt. Warwick Hamilton, O.C. Det. 131 Div Loc Bty 1967-68 on right.

OC's Report – Capt W R HAMILTON – the following was submitted by Allen Morley and is a final rendition compiled by Warwick which encompasses his term in South Vietnam. This is the first in the series...

17 Apr 67 – 12 Feb 68

Introduction

I joined 131 Bty on 1 Sep 66 having come from being a Radar and Locating Instructor at the School of Artillery, however my 'Vietnam experience' really started in Feb/Mar 67 when, together with a frighteningly young looking Gnr Danko, we attended the 2/67 Colloquial Vietnamese Language Course. Fortunately, a number of others destined for the Det attended similar courses.

Being a tonal language it was challenging and fraught with danger, eg: sometime later at Nui Dat a Padre approached me wanting to go to a church in Baria and sought the Vietnamese for 'church'. It is *nhà thờ* - note the downward accent on the last 'o'. Unfortunately, the word *nhà thổ* (different accent) means 'brothel' You can guess what happened!!!

It was only at Holsworthy that I discovered the method of replacement for the Det, and its' very high percentage of National Servicemen. Little did I understand what this was to mean...

SVN General

First impression: Shock. I didn't fully realise that most ordinary Vietnamese workers wore black pyjamas and conical hats. Sound familiar?

Subsequent impressions from my personal diary: replacement issues, equipment problems/challenges; amazing flexibility, adaptability and resourcefulness shown by all elements; acceptance of responsibility (well usually...) at all levels; the repeated use of the word 'tired' to describe myself; and reoccurring references to getting a haircut?

More Specifically (Roughly in chronological order and no names mentioned to protect the innocent/guilty/both unless germane to the story.)

Right from the beginning the individual replacement of members created a challenge, primarily in coordinating departure/arrival timings. eg: in May 67, the bulk of the new survey section arrived, but the previous Survey Officer and NCO's had already departed. The handover/briefing was successfully conducted by GNR Endicott.

The first couple of months saw a number of 'firsts'.

On Op COOPAROO Survey developed a novel and effective way of providing a fix to a Fire Support Base (FSB) surrounded by tall trees. Two tethered meteorological balloons raised above the canopy to allow remote observation. 6 new arrivals allowed creation of LP4 in 1/83rd US artillery area.

The first of our two NEW radars arrived.

The sites for the Q store and Rec Room were prepared

The first rains started...and Alpha radar was flooded

I flew my first FAC mission with our US pilots (the Jade crew)

And, gulp, I heard my first charge!

The Det was in full swing.

Op PADDINGTON (Jun 67) was interesting. The first deployment TF HQ and Arty Tac (forward). Somehow the Arty Tac chopper (Chalk 6) landed first, well ahead of our infantry protection company. Somehow, we also ended up right on the perimeter as dusk fell. Scary. Then there was a roar and a crashing through the bush (more scary) and a section of US M48 tanks appeared. Not lost, just not sure where they were. So, with quick talking, and the offer of slouch hats all round, the M48's formed a defensive position around us.

PADDINGTON also saw the first calling and adjustment of a CLOSE Defensive Fire by one of our LP, and Survey managed to provide provisional Theatre Grid to 4 Batteries by 2200 on day one. The Radars and Crater Analysis teams also provided accurate PROVEN locations. Great work all around.

The surveyors had problems with the US Artillery in establishing exactly what their requirement was. Subsequently, after a very successful liaison visit to the US Survey Section HQ in Long Binh everything was sorted out. Simply a case of two countries being separated by a common language!

Jul 67 saw the first thoughts about a Det emblem. It took quite a while to finalise but it was worth the effort. Well done team. Bet no one thought that nearly 50 years later it would still be around. Logically the idea of a plaque followed shortly after.

Warwick's Scary Moment No.?: After a long and tiring shift in Arty Tac I awoke about 1200 to find a snake comfortably ensconced in bed with me. (at least 17 m long it was!!). Don't know who was most surprised, but the poor snake lost (later identified as a harmless 1m long something).

Embarrassing Moment No.?: An unnamed Survey Officer, newly promoted Chief Clerk and driver reported that their vehicle had broken down and that they would have to overnight in Vung Tau. Ha! Rubbish! Etc etc. Two days later I had to contact said Chief Clerk advising that I was stranded in Saigon as my return aircraft had gone U/S. Had to eat my words!!

In Aug 67 reports emerged of the use of 140 and 122mm rockets in II Corps, potentially heading our way. Self, Arty Int Sgt and a certain Gnr Ernie (Name withheld), who for the visit was temporarily labelled 'Senior Technical Weapons Analyst' or some such thing, visited the US Combined Materiel Exploitation Centre (CMEC) at Tan Son Nhut seeking more information. Highly successful and the start of a valuable exchange of technical data and publications.

As a result, I was appointed Project Manager DARMA (Defence Against Rocket and Mortar Attacks). Wow! Little did I know what was to happen later.

What does not show in any Operational Report is that the Three Musketeers brought back to Nui Dat an example of an RPG2, a 140mm (1.2m long and about 32 Kg) and a 122mm rocket (2.8m long and about 40 kg). An unnamed TFAIO convinced the Caribou pilot they were harmless, but in fact said TFAIO had merely removed the nose fuzes and placed them in his pack. These WERE later rendered inert. These were the start of our shell/fragment collection and data repository.

Problems with logical personnel replacement continued. What was very interesting was that some Det members might have to Return to Australia (RTA) before a proper handover, but almost to a man their preference was to stay on for a smooth transition. I think this really said something about the group.

Giving orders to a detachment of predominantly smart Nasho's was always fun, and I found the 'considered discussion/coercion/group therapy session' method usually worked. This was always to the disbelief/incredulity of any senior officers' close by.

Some of our equipment requests were also viewed scathingly. Eg: Why did we need several sets of tree-climbing irons? Answer: So, the surveyors could place their tellurometers in tall trees. Request denied...but we got around that.

By now the Det was producing good, VERIFIED, results in all areas. LPs were welcomed in previously non-believer areas, and crater analysis was slowly being accepted as being something other than a black art.

Sep 67 saw a lot of deployment by everyone, including I think our first radar into a Fire Support Base (FSB). The surveyors showed their flexibility by forming additional LPs AND by becoming civil surveyors marking out housing blocks for the new "resettlement village" of Ap Suoi Nghe.

Arty Int produced an instruction on 'The Rocket Threat' – a brilliant document (later to be proven accurate), but I fear no one read it, and I can't even find a copy.

This month also produced a social coup. The Rec hut had been officially opened the previous month thanks to builders Gnrs Roger McDonnell and Bill Thomas, and a cast of many others who provided support, labour, expertise and, sometimes unknowingly, material. So, we were able to host the visiting entertainers 'The Melbourne Show' who performed at Luscombe Bowl before being rapidly whisked away to a BBQ at the Rec Room. Certainly, no names will be mentioned except that a certain (numberless) Field Regt was miffed that we gazumped them.

Interestingly I note that my Operational Report for this month states that the Det health was good '...with no cases of VD at all.' Hmmm. Does this mean...

Warwick's Scary AND Embarrassing Moment No?: Decided to spring a surprise inspection on Nui Dat LP. I'm sure the bush telegraph signalled by 'other means' that this was happening, however on arrival the site was a shambles with stuff everywhere. LP commander said that it was immaculate until this 'bloody great monkey' came and wrecked it. Now the Nui Dat monkeys are small, so the LP got short shrift and two hours to fix it. On return the mess was different but the excuse the same. In good OC fashion, I blew the mandatory fuse, issued rockets and dire threats all around and promised to return shortly!!

On the narrow track down from the top, where the jungle comes right up to the sides of the road, onto the passenger side of my stripped down LandRover leapt ...this 'bloody great monkey', bare fangs and all. In fact, I'm sure it actually thumped its chest too. It then disappeared back into the jungle.

Once I was over the shock, embarrassment set in, and I just drove back down, told no one, and never did return for the inspection.

Scary Insight No?: Op KENMORE. Arty Tac again moved forward, this time in APCs. Apart from the inherent confusion in being closed down and not feeling in control I learnt that 7.62 and 12.7 mm rounds, when fired at right angles to an M113's aluminium armour, go straight through. Another Hmmm!

Oct 67 saw a most important event – we gained a TV for the Rec room.

Another milestone was that after some trials we had the first lift of a radar and Det by CH47 Chinook.

An Ingenuity Moment. We had been formally requesting an upgrade to our telephone and radio equipment for ever, with the usual response. No one really understood how spread we were, even in base. A nameless technical member of the Det was in Vung Tau idly wandering through the equipment rubbish tip (as you do) when he spotted some of the better telephone wire we needed, some junked switchboards, stuff to make our own tall aerials etc. So, after a quick raid on said tip, we vastly improved our telephone and radio communications.

Nov 67 could be called Artillery Intelligence month. We had tracked the movement of the relatively new RPG 7 and bigger rockets down from the North and anticipated the imminent arrival of the RPG 7. A pamphlet was prepared and distributed around all the Task Force and the Logistic Support Group in Vung Tau on the characteristics, probable use, preventative measures and safety if a fired but unexploded rocket was found. The safety aspect was DO NOT TOUCH as the rocket has a piezoelectric fuze which, when armed after firing, is most susceptible to movement and changes in temperature.

27 Nov saw the first confirmed use of an RPG 7 in our area.

30 Nov saw a 7 RAR vehicle bounce to a halt outside Arty Tac and my name was called. The 7 RAR guys brought in an unexploded RPG 7 because they had heard that I, by name, wanted it.

Warwick's VERY Scary Moment No?: TF HQ and Arty Tac were cleared. An unnamed and serenely calm TFAIO borrowed a shifting spanner from aforesaid 7 RAR truck and defused the rocket. Fortunately, I did know what was where and how the fusing system worked.

Immediately gave another round of briefings on the RPG 7, using shorter words, and a brand new and very graphic movie from our friends at the CMEC.

Our project to collect, make inert (now very big on my agenda), sectionalise, photograph and document as many of our own, US, other Free World Forces, SVN and VC/NVA projectiles and fragments was now well under way and producing results and good feedback from others. A lot of great work by the Det and the many others who were conned, I mean encouraged, to assist. It even included the RNZEME Workshop and the RAN Clearance Diving Team in Vung Tau.

This project was ongoing when I left.

To assist in our understanding and interpretation of some of the more exotic sensors being used by the US I attended a 3 day G2(Air) Orientation Course in Saigon. Great value and recommended for future OC.

An ARVN post to our South was mortared and Sgt Waghorn and party went to perform a crater analysis and fragment identification. The ARVN soldiers had already collected all the bits to sell as scrap metal. The team was able to identify

60mm mortars though, and Sgt W in his best colloquial Vietnamese (he had been trained) gave Lesson No 1 in crater analysis etc – we need the bits, so don't nick them. Lots of nods.

Two days later a similar event at the same post. Sgt W and team arrived. A smiling Post Commander presented them with a sandbag full of all the bits. Lesson No 2 – don't touch, leave them in place.

Pleasingly this seemed to work for subsequent mortaring and yielded good results including identifying the use of RPG 7.

There is a following section which will complete his time served and includes “Musings” and a “Footnote – stay tuned.

. Insights and Recollections...

This topic/s have raised so much interest – we're still in the middle of some really great discoveries with some remarkable memories being brought to life.

The series will continue on the receipt of more Insights and Recollections, so if you would care to contribute, please send your Insights and Recollections –

Paul Dickson at - 131eyesandears@gmail.com

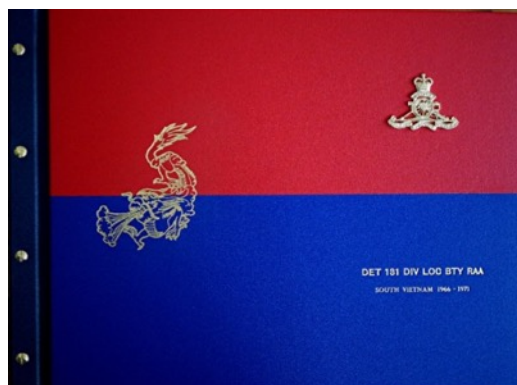
. The “Lost Locator Project”



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.



. **Bob Billiards** read the article that **Grahame Dignam** sent in with regards to “Activities” and sent in the following email complete with firsthand knowledge –

“Paul,

I just read that report that GD posted to you. Amazing how wrong they can be. What can we believe?

I was on duty on 1st Feb. 1968 at 31D and the mortar attack was on 1/83rd not 2nd/35th. The 8” guns didn't engage, it was 161 Bty “FM Bty 6 rounds FFE” and the mortars stopped. They actually got close to the guard post on the north-western corner of 1/83rd. There weren't 3 grenades, it was what sounded like 3 rockets heading north from the Hoa Long area. I was talking to Arty Tac duty officer about what sounded like rockets overhead with no bang in the 1ATF area when there were mortar rounds between us and the bypass road. I asked if we were firing DF's and the answer was NO FRIENDLY FIRE so, I suggested we were being mortared and I would get back on the radio. They must have recalibrated as they were walking the rounds in and during that short break, I just heard them firing again and gave a bearing. I could only just hear them so gave the range a 6KM, the 82's maximum range then headed down with the Yanks as they had overhead cover and at that stage 31D didn't but 2 days later it did. The next day we went out with **Sargeant Waghorn** to do a crater analysis. I was on the radio and then we got a call to say to get back in as a group of VCs were heading our way. I was happy to head back in and they had done the crater analysis. While I was on the radio and from when 161 fired, 31A couldn't ID the primaries, just that they were landing near us.

Easy to see that report wasn't written by Blue Leader.

Bob.”



Exercise Dragon's Crawl 20

On 04 May 2020, 131 Battery got the call to conduct a relief in place of 132 Battery in Wide Bay Training Area (WBTA). This saw the Battery conduct months' worth of planning in less than a week



CAPT Chris Wishart (BK) – conducting detailed planning

On 11 May, the Battery drove a convoy of new MAN 40Ms and G-Wagons (below) to WBTA. This was the first, the Battery drove a convoy of new MAN 40Ms and G-Wagons (below) to WBTA. This was the first opportunity we had to employ our 40Ms. Due to vehicle weight restrictions, the convoy was required to drive all the way up to Maryborough, before turning around and finally being able to place our boots on hallowed Wide Bay soil once again.



The Battery emplaced the flight line on 12 May with the intent of conducting the first live flight in nearly 12 months, unfortunately, we were defeated by aviation crew hours. Waking up fully rested on 13 May, we were finally able to conduct a successful flight and hand over the flight line to the School of Artillery.



BDR Luke Crane, BDR Elvon Noble and LBDR Sang Lian – conducting a flight on the PGCS

Leaving behind a crew of 10 soldiers to support the School of Artillery with vital maintenance, flying management oversight and life support, the Battery returned to Gallipoli Barracks on two buses due to COVID-19 restrictions (taking the normal route this time).

Operating between the flight line and Camp Kerr, the soldiers were afforded the privilege of being catered for, by what most considered some of the best food they'd ever eaten from the cooks of the Australian Army Catering Corps. The skeleton crew were indulged with a variety of treats, such as homemade brownies and loaded hot dogs.



LT Lyndon Harvey (B TPCOMD) – eating a well-earned hotdog.

Besides eating, the crew conducted a range of tasks vital to the maintenance of the flight line, such as refuelling, mission commanding, airspace management, and daily equipment maintenance.



GNR Ryan Kearney – assisting with the emplacement of the 10kVa generator.

Plans of finishing on time were nearly compromised when Mother Nature targeted our critical vulnerability and attacked us with multiple storms. Thankfully, we were able to work around the weather and completed the flights for the School of Artillery just in time.



GNR Jared Littin – observing the recovery of the SH200

A mammoth effort went into the recovery of our equipment. The skeleton crew displaced nearly all of the equipment on the flight line and on 25 May a group of drivers were sent on a bus to WBTA, vehicles were packed, bums were on seats and the battery (skeleton crew included this time) returned to Gallipoli Barracks, once again via Maryborough. Despite some minor setbacks, the relief in place for Exercise Dragons Crawl was successful and we cannot wait to get back into being at work full-time again following the pandemic.



BDR Brett Atkinson (right) and GNR Ashley Gibb (left) – All smiles in the Ground Control Station



. An Oddity –

No one is at the AFL, but they seem to be on the streets!





In Life's Path

Bob Billiards takes us on a Recollection "Detour" ...

"I originally went to the UK in 2003 to do a job in France for the implementation of PeopleSoft Financials software but that project fell through, so I eventually did some work for a publishing company in Peterborough for a few weeks and then another small job in London for a commercial business set up by the City of London. It was to finish a conversion of their sundry debtor's application into PeopleSoft Debtors, a two-week job. They then found that I knew a lot about the application and contracted me to train their staff on its full use and then assist with supporting the applications, including writing several specific reports. The company was Business link for London and they were set up to market London as a business hub for OS and local companies. I spent just over a year with them and eventually we decided we needed to head back to OZ in 2005 after nearly two years away from home.

Some photos of where we lived in Guildford -



"Home" in Guildford



When going through my photos I was surprised at just how many places we visited in that time.

Cathy worked while we there and was eventually appointed Deputy Matron in a local nursing home in Guildford. It was a really nice town to live in with a real English country feel and an hour train trip from London.



The Tottenham Court underground tube station was under it somewhere. So, a train from Guildford to Waterloo and then the

Northern Line tube to Tottenham Court.

**Getting close to work.
Waterloo Station.**



The office was on the 8th floor of Centre Point in New Oxford Street London.

Celebrating my birthday at the office.

From memory, my monthly ticket was somewhere around 400GBP. Bob."

. Nui Dat Location/Personnel Project

The Project is really developing into an interesting exercise. The responses, so far, are really bringing to life the morphing or changing of the Detachment over time with section movements, people movements, equipment upgrades and tents being replaced by more permanent structures.

It's also proving quite challenging for memories – well it's been 50 odd years!

I've yet to get on with Detachment HQ (though this section is progressing well with ancillary info being supplied already), Radars and Survey (Survey, like Det HQ has had info supplied in relation to its relocating). There are some great photos which really help the visual along with map type layouts.

The interest continues with '71 and lights being turned off and the relocation of Locators to the Field Regiment.

It's still early days and I've a lot more of you to drive mad! If you can add to your recollections any mates that may have served in the sections you did that would be very handy too.

Thanks for the help so far – I still need heaps more.

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.



Mail Call...

George Kijurina – sent in the following classic “teaser” – no Googling, but the first correct response to the email’s mystery location wins another free 12 month’s editions of *Eyes & Ears*!

“Hey Paul,

I trust you're well and keeping safe?

Thank you for keeping us updated with *Eyes and Ears* and your ongoing commentary and support.

I recently caught a commercial for Big Brother on channel 7.

A little trivia for you, the new Big Brother series about to start on channel 7 is being filmed in What location?? - see photo at right.

I thought you may have been interested.

Have a good week.

Kind Regards, George Kijurina

ED - You must supply the correct Location. George's correct answer doesn't count and NO contacting him!





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...

John Vitkovsky – “G'day Paul,

Bit of a surprise to hear from you!

Presently, it is as cold as charity, with the last few morning around zero degrees, but fine days. We shut down our resort about 12 weeks ago and refunded all 50% deposits for accommodation (Gulp). Easter is always booked out. Most of our clients come from Melbourne, and we had no wish to spread this virus from there to here, some 350Kms. So, have been locked down since then. A couple of days ago, the Vic. Govt. allowed us to accept bookings again, with severe provisos re deep cleaning etc. However, we will not take any bookings for probably another 6 weeks to gauge whether is virus thing will expand or not. I cannot afford to get it, as I've been battling cancer for the last couple of years and a heart attack 3 months ago. Not to mention being in my 75th year... we have never had a mortgage or overdraft here, so not under pressure financially.

Will hook up the caravan in the next couple of weeks and disappear up north for a month or more, into outback NSW. Had planned to head up to Katherine, Lake Argyle, Kununurra and Broome, but NT and WA borders look to be closed for a while. South Australia still has 14 days' isolation upon entry, which is a pain as would like to catch up with my grandkids and my two daughters there.

We have the resort up for sale, but we are not holding our breath for a buyer. This recession is and will be causing havoc in the financial industry, and have given up hope of moving the place in the foreseeable future. Still, it's a nice place to live with Rocklands Reservoir on our bottom boundary for fishing and boating, and plenty of firewood on our 230 acres of forest. Something always to do to keep us occupied. I am importing caravan diesel heaters from China as a bit of a hobby and a bit of cash flow. Fantastic in a caravan in this weather.

Other than that, life goes on. Good to hear from you. How's your health?

Cheers, John.”

Michael Quinlan – “Hi Paul.

Thanks for your email it is always good to hear from you.

I have a few ideas which I would like to share with you:

As a country, we have seen a broad spectrum of events many of which stretch the social fabric of our society and yes even democracy! The fires and loss of life was heart destroying and we kept asking why the Greens would not allow the controlled burning that even our aborigines have done for many thousands of years. “The Royal Commission will ensure this never happens again!” blab la bla.

Next, we have the pandemic which has had far reaching consequences but none so terrifying as the \$200 billion blow out to this year's budget making our total national debt \$640 billion. This will be a heavy burden on many future generations. Being an old bloke in the vulnerable age group I am pleased the Scot Morrison chose the ethical model of isolation and Jobkeeper subsidies not the Swedish model of herd immunity. Helen and I observed all restrictions to the letter. I set up a fire in a cut out 9kg LPG bottle and had a fire every night and shared this with a few mates who liked garlic prawns cooked on a skewer and potatoes similarly. A green Sulo bin can take 415 cans and bottles and we filled this regularly. We are now encountering the effects of George Floyd. In NSW, the Supreme Court over ruled an order to stop a rally “Black lives matter” in Sydney yesterday. Thank goodness as police would never have been able to disband the many tens of thousands of protesters, a big win for the Supreme Court. I believe we should recognise aborigines in our Constitution but let us first who is an aborigine, 50% of aboriginal DNA is a starting point.

Enough of my ramblings and back to my roasting a whole rump for the family tonight.

Regards, Michael”

Terry Westerway – “I am okay – but this “social distancing/quarantine” is getting to me – I am so fed up with being marooned at home. And the plethora of conflicting advice about what we must or have to do to avoid a “second wave” which seems to be driven more by political “one-upmanship” than any serious scientific/medical opinion. ScoMo introduced the National Cabinet to avoid the usual “bun fight” when states and commonwealth get together – but they still could not agree on a common policy on border closures. What's the best “bottom of the harbour” scheme? 5,000 lawyers swimming out to sea through Sydney Heads, carrying a politician under each arm!!!

As you might have gathered from some of the emails I have sent out, I am more than a little pissed off with China. High time we told China to piss off and stick their trade up their ring end. Would cost us, but would be likely to be better for us in the long run. As for China's latest round (as per the attached cartoon from The Australian) – my “supervisor” has been in Australia for the past 14 years and has NEVER encountered the “racist attacks” that China (and the ABC) talk about – nor has her friend, who has been in Australia almost as long.”

Tony Goldsmith – “Hi Paul,

What the hell do I write about. Haven't been anywhere - haven't done anything. Oh - wait - went to the dentist today (without a mask) - bit adventurist of me. Everyone in the surgery had a mask - and they were hiding behind perspex

screens at reception. Even the taxi driver had a mask (probably essential). Needless to say, lots of hand sanitiser everywhere and I had to fill in a health questionnaire before I went to the appointment. Good to see they are taking all the right precautions. Good also to see a bit more of the outside world.

Chris and I are both well. Not fighting too much, (just joking) We do escape occasionally to visit those littler members of the family. We just do knuckles and elbows.

Also, the odd visitor at 10 paces (no pistols though).

Bloody hell!!!! My tongue was just feeling around where the dentist did a temporary filling before I get a crown and it fell out. Obviously, he didn't use Tarzans Grip.

Oh well - I guess i get another outing tomorrow.

Thanks for your offer of toilet paper - we're OK - online ordering and home delivery is keeping us well supplied.

The cook arrived home and judging by the aromas coming from the kitchen I'd say I'm about to get fed. YA!!

Keep safe, well and happy to you and Helen.

Best Wishes, Tony"

Steve Wynn - "G'day Paul,

Thanks for the update, glad all is OK with you and your family, your timing is perfect making it across the 'borders' (in Oz) without incident, I can't believe I am saying that about borders in Oz.

All good here although after the 'rebels' marching last weekend and ignoring the Wuhan flu rules and restrictions made me so mad I considered taking my Oz flag down and removing the flag pole, I even considered what other country to move to. I have decided to let my vote do the talking. The last time I was so upset and mad was when the morons were marching down George Street behind Jim Cairns and his commo mates, against our boys in VN, sometime around the end of the 60s early 70s.

I did the right thing and have not been out anywhere since getting back from hospital early February, four damn months now, and these ignorant mongrels put all the effort and cost at risk that the nation has put in, so they can have an illegal protest and no one gets fined.

I am 7th generation Oz, no mate we did not come in chains my ancestors were in the Navy, I have never been so disgusted with the way this country is going.

Keep up the good work mate and stay safe.

Cheers, Steve Wynn."

Rieny Nieuwenhof – "Hi Paul,

Great to hear from you again. Like the rest of the world we have been in lockdown for over 2 months, but some of the restrictions are being eased. My wife and I were able to visit the grandkids, something we had been unable to do. Other social distancing regulations are still in place, although many ignore them eg. protest rallies BLM in the USA and here in Aus. (Australia's history of deaths in custody among our first Australians is a national shame.)

We intend to re-open our Vietnam Veterans Centre next week (10/6/20), but we have been in phone contact with our members to ask 'Are You OK?'. In 2017, the local Council closed the building we had occupied since 2010, this included our Museum. There were some 2,000 items related to the Vietnam War on display. Since the closure those items have been in storage. Recently, the Geelong Vietnam Veterans decided that we would not re-establish our Museum (not enough guys to man the roster and rental costs of a new building). So, we have been in the process of identifying the owners of the donated items and asking if they want them back. This is a long process!

You know what happened on ANZAC Day here in Australia, but we did manage new ways to honour our ANZACs. Other issues which have occupied our attention has been the decision of RSL Vic to sell Vasey RSL Care veteran/ aged accommodation. Some 500 veterans/partners/widows are housed in Vasey aged care or independent living units across Victoria and they are very concerned about their futures if the assets are sold to some multi-national. All this is predicted to happen by 2022!

The Victorian Vietnam Veterans are engaged in advocating for our mates. I have been invited to speak to the VVAA State Exec via a Zoom meeting on what the VVAA response should be. Some other rogue RSL Sub branches are also actively protesting, their methods however are causing aged veterans even more concern, using very emotive language and spreading fake news.

We are preparing for VV Day in August and hoping the local Council will issue a permit, given the COVID 19 restrictions. We are hoping that the March and Memorial service will go ahead.

Personally, I am in good health, although a little heavier than before Corona. We live overlooking the sea at Portarlington and walk each day. The weather whilst chilly in the morning turns out to be a beautiful day (generally).

Keep up the great work keeping 131 Locators informed and giving us a platform to share our experiences.

Regards, Rieny Nieuwenhof."

David Pires – "Morning Paul,

Nice to hear from you, and your experience in Aus in March. Obviously got pretty scary for a lot of people, especially the oldies in aged care facilities etc, that really had a difficult time trying to adapt with no visitors or outside association.

We are pretty lucky in WA, with now most of the state open for travel, all pubs, restaurants, playgrounds, schools etc are all go, but still minor restrictions on numbers of up to 100 in most cases. State borders are still closed, to maybe Aug/Sept this year.

So really although we were isolated for 8 weeks or so, only going to supermarkets etc, we have not been too badly effected.

Unfortunately, our cruise to Italy which was planned in last July, had to be cancelled, so hopefully will get some of our \$12,000 back in the future.
However, have now decided to head up North of WA in July for a few months in the caravan, so looking forward to that. We have another river cruise booked from Amsterdam to Budapest next April, so hopefully international travel will be allowed, or we could be in trouble again.
Trust you're keeping well and hopefully getting back to normal in the not too distant future.
All the best and kind regards
David Pires."

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

"Warning Notice"

This program is subject to the easing of current state travel & social constraints due to the coronavirus.

Locators Reunion Program 16/17/18th October 2020

15th Birthday of 20th Regiment RAA



Friday 16th Oct:

Locator's Reunion Cocktail Party 6pm in Southern Cross Room at Kedron Wavell RSL

Saturday 17th Oct:

Regiment's family day 10am till 3pm at Fort Lytton Historic Military Precinct, including guided tour of Fort Lytton, display of Regiment's equipment & family barbeque.

Sunday 18th Oct:

Farewell drinks/lunch noon, Ship Inn Hotel at South Bank, Brisbane.

Final notice, with full details including RSVP, will be circulated when program is confirmed.

Have YOU joined yet?



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/131divlocbtyraa>

First up, cut and paste this link (above), have a look at what's going on, then, bite the bullet and join up!

"It's a good way of connecting!" - Ed





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

It is interesting that now we are allowed to talk to people in public – keeping our distance of course – different stories come out about what exactly was done during lockdown.

Our 131 Locators Zoom meetings show that Ian Amos has grown a magnificent beard, albeit on the pale side. Merv Nairn prefers to use a tablet over a computer. And we get to talk with Dicko from the other side of the planet getting ready to sleep and relaxing and we're starting our activities for the day.

One task I took on was to go through our photo collection in its various forms for my daughter living in New Zealand. The transitions were quite revealing.

The collection began with black and white photos which were developed in Baria. The quality left a bit to be desired and no doubt the local VC were provided with duplicates. The dark room established by Bob King at our Nui Dat building tropical only became operational after I had RTA.

At about the same time slides were infra dig, be they B&W or colour. Kodak product featured prominently. The big decision was where to send the processed slides. Use your home mailing address back in Australia or use the AFPO4 system and get them back to Nui Dat or Vung Tau? I did lose one lot of slides at the time, but usually the mail was reliable.

Next were developed colour photos. These had the advantage that you could just look at the pic, without needing to hold them up to the light as you did with slides. Pacific springs to mind as one of the larger colour photo developer organisations. The particular advantage was that a photo kiosk was usually available locally.

Nowadays, everything seems to be digital. I'll wager that many of our readers have a large number of photos, including some multiples on their mobile phones. In the previous eras for we amateurs it was mainly single shots and hope it came out OK. My younger grandkids always want to see the image as soon as the photo is taken. No more waiting a couple of weeks for the processed slides to arrive.

Cheers

Allen

50 Years
April 1966 - April 2016



The Memories Remain
1966 - 1971



find us on

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/131divlocbtyraa>

. Upcoming Events Calendar –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday, 14th July, 2020 at 1100hrs

Venue: **ZOOM** – check the **EVENTS** section on the Association website. Come and join in!

zoom

. **Pertinent Points** – extracted from the 131 Locators Association Committee **ZOOM** Meeting Date: Tuesday, 9th June, 2020 at 1105hrs...

Attendees were: Allen Morley, Bert Blink, Grahame Dignam, Ernest Newbold, Bob Billiards, Ian Amos, Terry Erbs, Paul Dickson, Merv Nairn and Ron Mason.

Welcome: Acting Chairman Grahame Dignam opened the meeting and thanked those who had logged in to join us. We welcomed Terry Erbs from Qld, Ron Mason from Northern Vic and last but not least "Ed" Paul Dickson from Central Mexico.

Financial Membership is currently ... **123**, plus Associates **2**, Affiliates **11**. Total **132**. Lapsed **33** members.

Grahame Dignam adds the following - "The yearly reminder of membership fees being due on 1 July, 2020 will be in your personal mailbox very shortly"

Presidents report.

Allen's Report delivered via Bert Blink -

My apologies (attended late) - meeting at Granville re my ongoing battle with DVA

. LSTAA reunion in October if Queensland opens the borders

. 50% sign payment for 131 Bty. I will get a pic once it is installed.

. Facebook – is 'Collins Creek Hall Events' (twice) a ring-in to the 131 group? I cannot see a connection and maybe it needs to be deleted?

. Perhaps our July meeting can return to Canley Heights or some other venue?

. George is still able to cross into Queensland for his early morning coffee and later shopping. He complained to me about the 'cold' mornings, and said he thought he had left that behind

Public Officer Report.

Gordon has apologised hence no report. Nothing has come to the notice of Sec/Treas.

Webmaster Update.

Bob will produce web stats prior to the next meeting.

Mention was made of our Face book page and thanks to a large push from Joe Fabri from "the 131 oldies" and Rieny Nieuwenhof (131 locators) our membership now stands at 141.

Health.

We reported the passing of Kevin Maker during the past month. No other dire problems have been reported at this time.

General Business.

. Bob Billiards has crossed paths with Gnr **Mick Young** by accident. We will chase contact details. **Grahame Williams** has located a RAEME Mech. **Brian Colin Jones** and we are attempting to make contact.

. 133 Battery RAA is going to be raised and personnel are being positioned to bring the Battery to full strength.

. The reunion in Qld in October will go ahead this year if the border is opened. Worst case scenario is it will be deferred until the Caloundra function in 2021.

. Dicko is chasing up schematic drawings of SVN 131 locations & related sleeping quarters of personnel. Allowance will need to be made for changing/evolving roles during the period e.g. Tpt compound before Sound ranging CP between Huts tropical, moved Radar sites, changed LP positions etc.

The web site -

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...July –

Date	Name	Serv. No	YoB	SVN In	Svn Out	Comments
1	STEPHEN FOWLER	217186	1948	16 09 1968	17 09 1969	
2	PETER O'DONNELL Sgt.	213115	1941	24 03 1970	05 11 1970	
3	BRUCE FOWLER	2795238	1949	16 12 1970	29 07 1971	
4	GEORGE WEARN Capt.	2251140	1937	05 08 1968	20 08 1968	133 Div Loc CMF
7	PETER JOSCELYNE	2792023	1945	03 06 1970	17 12 1970	
12	NEVILLE ATKINSON	1733449	1947	08 11 1968	05 11 1969	† 14.12.96
13	DEREK GRIFFITHS					† 02.04.05
10	BILL FINLAY Sgt.	37818	1944	20 05 1966	01 05 1967	
10	ROBERT PELHAM	55342	1949	16 11 1968	19 11 1969	
10	REX ARNOLD	424096	1949	16 12 1970	29 05 1971	
	" "			29 05 1971	16 09 1971	Ind 161 Recce Flt.
11	JOHN JAGGARD	4721862	1949	03 03 1971	02 08 1971	131
	" "			02 08 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
12	HARRY LYNUS	176377	1942			
13	ALASDAIR GOUGH	2105130	1947	27 03 1970	04 03 1971	
14	EDMOND DOUST Sgt.	53111	1939	04 05 1967	02 04 1968	† 26.12.14
14	FREDERICK KRUIINK	6708867	1945	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
15	IAN EARLE	3166824	1951	19 08 1970	10 12 1970	131 / 4 Fd Regt.
	" "			11 12 1970	23 06 1971	33 Dental Unit
16	GEORGE ADDISON WO2	2410040	1930	16 04 1969	16 04 1970	† 27.12.12
18	KEITH AYLIFFE Sgt.	217354	1941	18 12 1967	03 12 1968	131
	" "			08 07 1971	24 07 1971	HQ AFV

18	ALAISTAIR McLEAN	312524	1947	21 02 1969	21 02 1970	
18	JOE KOCKA	1202703	1951	20 08 1970	29 07 1971	
19	MAXWELL McPHERSON	3795560	1947	27 11 1969	05 11 1970	†19.05.16
21	GRAHAM WILLIAMS	2789698	1947	03 06 1969	25 03 1970	
21	WILLIAM SLAPE	44464	1950	22 12 1969	17 12 1970	† 12.05.12
21	WILHELMUS Van ZETTEN	3794919	1947	17 03 1970	17 12 1970	
21	PETER SUMMERS	3796803	1948	09 11 1970	09 06 1971	
22	JOHN HOMER	5717596	1949	17 03 1971	02 08 1971	131
	" "			02 08 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
22	THE EYES & EARS		1967	1967	1967	
23	DAVID DODD	2790139	1947	03 06 1969	04 06 1970	
25	WILLIAM DOYLE	4719912	1947	17 12 1968	04 01 1969	4 Fd REGT
	" "			05 01 1969	28 11 1969	131 † 05.09.78
25	JOHN SMITH	610231	1949	16 11 1968	12 11 1969	
25	PETER BARRY	2794949	1949	17 03 1971	04 08 1971	131
	" "			04 08 1971	02 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
28	MALCOLM MUSGRAVE	214359	1943	03 06 1969	04 06 1970	
29	BRIAN JONES	18879	1948	14 05 1969	14 05 1970	RAEME
	RICHARD EDWARDS	218595	1949	03 06 1970	14 05 1971	
30	KEITH HOLLOWAY	15851	1943	20 05 1966	10 10 1966	

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

Ed – 8 blokes not highlighted is looking marginally better, but still not acceptable! Ok, let's get into it and actively get out there locating a few more!

. **Locator Profiles** – we've received 163 and we've sent out 163.

. **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.

Here's an update...

Graham Williams has been in touch with a couple of RAEME blokes he remembers from SVN and they weren't noted by us on some of our lists (now adjusted) -

Brian "Buck" Jones – have a look at a very interesting resume of Brian under "Brian Buck Jones LinkedIn"

Peter Hartshorn – is another find added to our lists now.

All we have to do now is Locate them – they were both with the Det in 1969-70!



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.

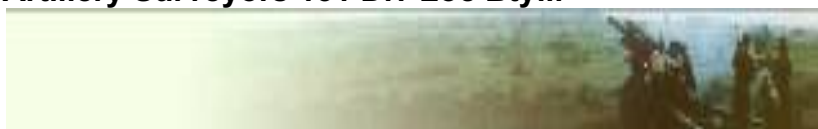
So, if you're a non-financial Associate receiving emails and the *Eyes & Ears* regularly you could bite the bullet and email Grahame Dignam:sectreas131locators@gmail.com and he could forward you the relevant forms to join - Memberships are available for 1 year or longer deposit a DONATION direct (add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



www.artilleryhistory.org



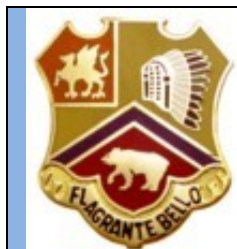
Website link - <http://www.vvaa.org.au/>

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>



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*.