

THE EYES and EARS

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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**

2021 – 55 Years and the Detachment 131 Spirit Lives On: 1966 – 1971



**VIETNAM VETERANS DAY
- AUGUST 18, any year.**

**This photo will always let
us remember wherever we
are...**

Photo: John Dellaca

. Rieny Nieuwenhof – shares with us the 18th August in the Geelong region -

A privileged morning spending time with our cherished Veterans at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Service hosted by Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia - Geelong & District Sub Branch Inc. Plus the commemoration at Port Arlington Lest We Forget.



. Peter Dealy – updates from the Goulbourn Valley Region, Victoria...

"Hello Paul

Hope this finds you and yours OK?

Keeping our heads down here in the Goulburn Valley as Covid 19 hits the Shepparton area after being free of it virtually since this mongrel pandemic started.

The Goulburn Valley Vietnam Veterans Branch was able to have a VV Day Service on the 18th albeit without the general population as we kept it pretty much in house (Veterans and family) not wishing to push our luck too far, given Melbourne was under lockdown. Shepparton went into lockdown a few days later. A very good turnout considering, with camaraderie back at the Shepparton RSL. It was great to welcome a couple of faces that we had not seen for a while. There was no Service anywhere in Melbourne, only regional areas held them under strict Covid conditions.

Branch meetings are a great chance to help some to relax in a social atmosphere.

131 personnel in the GV have been in the joint replacement caper lately with yours truly (both knees together) and Ron Mason (one knee) going under the surgeon's knife. Both Veterans doing well.

All the best to all Veterans and families as the battle continues.

Cheers

Peter Dealy

President GVVVA"

. 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 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

. Australia’s conflict environment post-Vietnam...

IRAQ

Australia joined a US-led coalition in its **March, 2003 Iraq** invasion, widely viewed as illegal under international law. ... Australia later provided one of the four most substantial combat force contingents during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, under the operational codename Operation Falconer.

AFGHANISTAN

Australian Army in Afghanistan

In **November 2001**, Australia joined the United States-led coalition to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations, to remove the Taliban from power and to defeat al Qaeda in Afghanistan. There was no indication at the time that this would be Australia's longest war.

The Longest War: The Australian Army in Afghanistan

For the Australian Army, the mission in Afghanistan was a test of our people and our capabilities and a monumental achievement. For our soldiers, it was time to put the skills for which they had been trained into practice. More than 26,000 Australian soldiers served in Afghanistan on Operation Slipper (2001-2014). For them and their families, this was a time of joy and grief, pride and loss. In more than a decade of operations, 41 Australian Army soldiers died in Afghanistan. Many more were wounded, some physically and others mentally. We also saw countless acts of courage and bravery - our soldiers have received commendations, medals and awards for gallantry, including four Victoria Crosses for Australia, the first in almost 40 years. Army units have received citations for gallantry and meritorious service, as well as a unit battle honour.

Will the 31st mandated withdrawal from Afghanistan end this?

Conflicts/Wars – Australia’s deaths

Conflict	Dates of conflict	No. deaths
South Africa	11 October 1899 to 31 May 1902	589

First World War	4 August 1914 to 31 March 1921	61,620
Second World War	3 September 1939 to 30 June 1947	39,654
Australia (NQ Coast, bomb and mine clearance)	1947–50	4
Malayan Emergency	16 June 1948 to 31 July 1960	39
Korean War	27 June 1950 to 27 July 1953	340
Korean War (Post-Armistice service - ceasefire monitoring)	1953-57	16
Indonesian Confrontation	24 December 1962 to 11 August 1966	22
Malay Peninsula	19 February 1964 to 11 August 1966	2
Vietnam War	3 August 1962 to 29 April 1975	521
Bougainville	1997-2003	1
East Timor	16 September 1999 to 18 August 2003	2
East Timor (Operation Astute)	1999-2013	2
Afghanistan	11 October 2001 to present	43
Iraq	16 July 2003 to 14 December 2013	4

. Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War – the following is, I guess, a precise extracted from Wikipedia and in brief form covers most of the bases prior to, during and post the conflict. I just feel it's something to read and maybe absorb that's if you haven't already... The following only covers the period prior to 1966.

59 years ago, the lead up...

It began as a small commitment of **30 men in July, 1962**, and increased over the following decade to a peak of 7,672 Australians deployed in South Vietnam or in support of Australian forces there. The Vietnam War was the longest and most controversial war Australia has ever fought. Although initially enjoying broad support due to concerns about the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia, as Australia's military involvement increased a vocal anti-war movement developed. To a large extent this focused upon conscription, which had been an issue in Australia dating back to the First World War, however, considerable portions of society were opposed to the war on political and moral grounds. The withdrawal of Australia's forces from South Vietnam began in November 1970 when 8 RAR completed its tour of duty and was not replaced. A phased withdrawal followed, and by 11 January 1973 Australian involvement in hostilities in Vietnam had ceased. Nevertheless, Australian troops from the Australian Embassy Platoon remained deployed in the country until 1 July 1973, and Australian forces were deployed briefly in April 1975, during the Fall of Saigon, to evacuate personnel from the Australian embassy. **Approximately 60,000 Australians served in the war; 521 were killed and more than 3,000 were wounded.**

Timeline

- 1950 The Democratic Republic of Vietnam led by Ho Chi Minh is recognised by the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union, but Australia supports the French-backed State of Vietnam of Emperor Bảo Đại.
- 1957 September—South Vietnam's President Ngo Dinh Diem visits Australia and Australia's Prime Minister, Robert Menzies reaffirms support.
- 24 May—The Minister for Defence, Athol Townley, announces the intention to send 30 army advisers to South Vietnam (SVN).
- 1962 3 August—The first members of the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam arrive in Vietnam.
- 1 June—Advisor, Sergeant William Hacking becomes the first Australian to die in Vietnam when his weapon accidentally discharges after being caught in vegetation. (Not KIA).
- 2 November—Ngo Dinh Diem, South Vietnam's first President (1955–1963), and his brother, Ngo Dinh Nhu, are assassinated in a successful CIA-backed coup d'état led by General Duong Van Minh of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN).
- 1963 22 November—Lyndon B. Johnson becomes US president after the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Johnson announces that the US will continue support of South Vietnam. By the end of 1963, 15,000 US advisors are serving in Vietnam; the US gives \$500m in aid to Vietnam that year.

- 8 June—Minister for Defence announces that the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam will be increased to 83 advisers and their role will be expanded.
- 6 July—Warrant Officer Class Two Kevin Conway, an AATV advisor, is killed in action, the first Australian battle casualty of the war.^[94]
- 1964 14 August—Six Caribou aircraft are provided by the Royal Australian Air Force; RAAF Transport Flight Vietnam is later renamed No. 35 Squadron RAAF.^[95]
- 10 November—Selective conscription is introduced for 20-year-old males by ballot under the National Service Act (1964).
- 18 December—In response to requests from the US President and South Vietnam Prime Minister for 200 additional advisers, the Australian Government offers to send ground troops to South Vietnam.
- 29 April—The Prime Minister announces the dispatch of an infantry battalion to South Vietnam, with an armoured personnel carrier (APC) troop, a signals troop and a logistic support company.
- 27 May—The 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment leaves for Vietnam on HMAS *Sydney*.
- 8 June—HMAS *Sydney* arrives at Vũng Tàu, South Vietnam, carrying the bulk of the Australian force.
- 1965 8 November—1 RAR fights one of the first set-piece engagements of the war between Australian forces and the Vietcong at the Battle of Gang Toi. Two servicemen, Private Richard Parker and Private Peter Gillson, are posted missing believed killed during the fighting. Their bodies are recovered more than forty years later, and returned to Australia for burial.
- 13 November—Warrant Officer Class Two Kevin Arthur Wheatley dies while defending a wounded comrade. He is posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for his gallantry.

This will be continued next month...

. Nui Dat Locators Locations Project -

The following is a continuation of the **Nui Dat Locators Locations Project** for which information has been sought and gathered over time. This is still in the “rough” stage and corrections/ additions/ amendments/ adjustments are welcomed, so, as the Project can be archived complete as possible. This is the third part of the Project with more to come covering the various sections that made up the Detachment during the period of service in Nui Dat, South Vietnam.

Note: the photos have been reduced to fit into the *Eyes & Ears* format.

Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery RAA South Vietnam 1966 – 1971

“Locators Locations”

Dedicated to those who served.

By Paul Dickson

4. Listening Post (LP) Locations – 1 Australian Task Force Area - Nui Dat

There were 4 permanent Listening Post (LP) locations in the 1 Australian Task Force (1 ATF) area of responsibility, strategically located to allow for maximum sound/sight/movement activity 24 hours per day etc. They reported activity after sighting directions were plotted.

Manning/Location details – the following lists of names are, obviously, not complete and need attention. Also, it is understood that a couple of the LP locations were altered during the period covered, so any information able to be supplied is more than welcome.

LP Nui Dat Hill – Call Sign 31A

1966 –_Campbell, B, Dean, R; Doyle, D

- late 66 - Thomson, A; Dean, R; Lombardo, B; Lock, G;
Hastings, N

1967 –_Binns, P; Newbold, E; Danko, V L/Bdr; Evans, R;
Goldsmith, A; Guzder, B; Hemming, L; King, R; Marques, E L/Bdr;
Millar, V; Nugent, B; Proskurin, N; Reid, J; Todd, G; Wilson, R

Photo: Ernie Newbold





Calibrated Bearing boards



Ernie Newbold and his photos

1968 – Chilton, J; Dealy, P – before and after FSB Coral; Delacca, J – before and after FSB Coral
Miller, M – before and after FSB Coral; Mulgrew, P – before and after FSB Coral; Newbold, E; Reid, J – before and after FSB Coral -Woodbine, K

1969 – Mid-Late Mar '69 - Black, B; Browne, J; Dove, A; Halligan, K Bdr; Lee, G; McKie, P; Mulgrew, P
Chalmers, D; Maker, K.

1970 –(LP-Sensor) - Chaplin, R; Chapple, C; Connell, L; Gough, A; Jux, A; Lucas, J; McMillan, I; Pryke, R; Riley, D;
Sheppard, B; Voss S

1971 –(LP-Sensor) - Jaggard, J; Nieuwenhof, R Bdr

LP Horseshoe – Call Sign 31B

1966 – Dean, Ronald; Al Thomson, Jock White, Ray Minns
then Tom Checkley, Ben Lombardo

1967 – Binns, P; Boutlis, S; Danko, V L/Bdr; Dean, Ronald;
Goldsmith, A; Guzder, B; Hemming, L; Hogno, J; Marques, E
L/Bdr; Proskurin, N

1968 – Nov'68 - Halligan, K; Little, H Bdr; McAlpine, S;
McKie, P; Owen, G; Schaffer, J; Hinde, D

1969 – Maker, K; Schafer, J

1970 – (LP-Sensor)

Gough, A; Jux, A; Lucas, J; Pryke, R; Sheppard, B

1971 –(LP-Sensor) - Jaggard, J; Nieuwenhof, R



Photo: Ernest Newbold

LP Engineers Lines – Call Sign 31C

1966 – Carroll, G; Chase, E; Dean, R; Thomson, A; White, J;
Minns, R; Checkley, T Lombardo, B

1967 – Binns, P; Evans, R; Gault, P; Guzder, B; Hemming, L;
Hogno, J; King, R; Millar, V.

1968 – Dealy, P; Hinde, D; Wortlehock, N

1969 – Wortlehock, N

1970 – (LP-Sensor) - Jux, A; McMillan, I

1971 – (LP-Sensor) -



Photos: Ernest Newbold

1966 –

1967 – Billiards, R; Blackwell, G; Blake, John; Blink, B; Danko, V L/Bdr; Dignam, G; Guzder, B; King, R; Marques, E L/Bdr; Millar, V; Proskurin N

1968 – (situated on the berm at the A battery 2/35th Artillery battalion gun park, Ref P. Mulgrew) - Billiards, R; Bohl M; Boutlis, S; Dealy P; Dougherty, D; Fowler Steve; McAlpine, S; Mitchell, R; Mulgrew P; Peisley, K; Wortlehock N Bdr

1969 – Robards, R; Mulgrew, P

1970 –

1971 -

Next month we will continue on with the Radars.



. Quiz Time.

This is not necessarily a typical (whatever that means) “Quiz Time” article but one with questions included, so let’s get started...

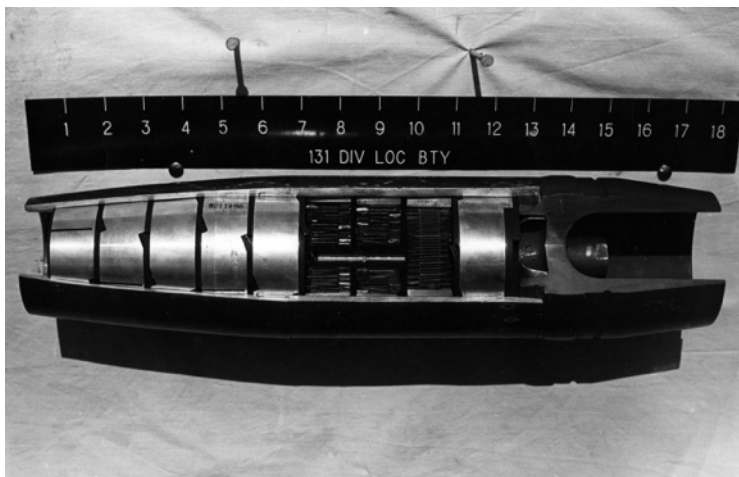
BOB KING’S sent in the following collection, and I thought it would be a good memory/brain exerciser task to have a go at answering the questions raised -



This at North Head and a combination of blokes who attended. I can’t pick the bloke, with dark sunglasses in the middle of (going around in a circle anti-clockwise from left) – Jim Hogno, Pete Fletcher, Chalkie Royal, John Blake, Ernie Newbold, Nick Proskurin and Grahame Dignam?

Now, this is a radar grouping and I’d guess Bravo in 1967 sometime. How about a complete listing, please?





The shell is what is called "Splintex" is was from the museum in the rec hut, in Nui Dat. **Can anyone enlighten us on this shell – was it mortar, recoilless rifle, 105 howitzers...?** Who can elaborate on any of this?

. A ZOOM meeting discussion came into focus!

At the last 131 Locators Association ZOOM meeting a discussion arose from **Warwick "Brookey" Brooker** about Surveyors and their preoccupation with owning cameras using them profusely. Mind you they did take some great photos.

Anyway, **Bert Blink** admitted to buying a camera in Nui Dat and he still has it! Read on...

"Hi Paul,

Please find attached a photo (at right) of my Yashica Electro 35 Rangefinder/viewfinder model camera purchased in the PX in Nui Dat. Everything has to be set even the type of film you are using.

Cheers, Bert."



Ed – It still looks amazing! Remember having to use rolls of film and having them developed!

...Terry Erbs continues the above with regards to Surveyors and cameras –

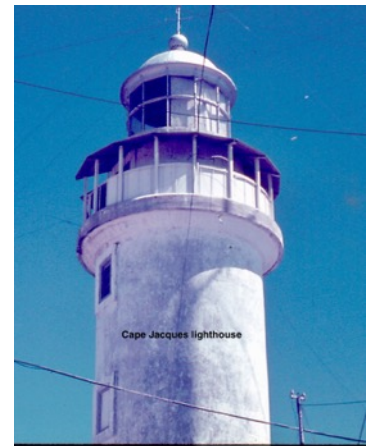
"Hi Paul,

All well in Queensland, not so good in other states.

As a follow-up from our conversation during the last ZOOM meeting, please find attached photographic evidence of surveyors on a "jolly" at Cape Jacques near Vung Tau - everyone had SLR cameras [single lens reflex], not SLR's or M16's rifles!!!!

Cheers, Terry."

Ed – Terry supplies the evidence with the photo below...



If you can't see the writing on the photo, then here are the culprits – left to right – Jim Marchant, Pete Creedon, Peter Larkin, Mick Delaney (sun glasses) John Henshaw and back to us John Las.

Now who else has in their possession anything memorable purchased while in SVN – we'd be interested in having a gander at it/them???

AN INVESTIGATION

181 Days



. The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (RVCM)

This subject was introduced by **Rieny Nieuwenhof** at August's 131 Locators Association ZOOM meeting and raised interest to the point where I thought it was worth pursuing with our Detachment members who served in Vietnam but did **NOT** qualify to be awarded the RVCM.

On doing the investigation from the information available (this task was made somewhat easier by the 'number crunching' of the actual days served by members in Vietnam done by **Ernie Newbold** some years back) that I have archived from which the following data* was calculated:

Data Base Information:

1. There were actually **37** members of the Detachment, both National Service and Regular soldiers, who for various reasons did not serve 181 days in SVN. This number does not include the two that were killed whilst serving.
2. Of the **37 members** there are some major hurdles trying to contact them -
 - . because of their passing (since RTA'ing)
 - . no contact details
 - . members we have lost contact with i.e. they're emails bounced back.

The stats are -

- . Passed - 9
 - . Not Located - 11
 - . Available to contact – 17
3. I have sent out emails to 17
Mail returned not (unable to reach) – 2
Nett - 15
 4. I have received 3 responses so far (28.08.2021)

Reasons –

- . 1 x medical reason (hearing loss). National Service – 20th intake, served in SVN **157** days with **162** days remaining. He transferred to 12 Fd Artillery Regt (with guns) for a month in SVN (the Det had RTA'd) before being RTA'd. He was not discharged on RTA'ing and completed his National Service of 18 months in the army (NS time was reduced in 18/08/1971 NS to 18 months).
- . 2x National Service members were RTA'd with –
 - . 1 x NS serving 162 days in country with 204 days remaining before discharge
 - . 1 x NS serving 176 days in country with 277 days remaining before discharge

Without responses, so far, here is the data I have been able to complete from my archive source (Locator Profiles etc) – showing intake number, days served and days available to complete service after RTA.

- 1 x 11th Intake – served 170 days – 59 days available
- 1 x 14th Intake – served 146 days - 43 days available
- 1 x 4th Intake – served 170 days - 206 days available
- 1 x 5th Intake – served 146 days - 289 days available
- 1 x 4th Intake – served 170 days - 206 days available (Dec's since RTA)
- 1 x 13th intake – served 170 days - 36 days available

To conclude, for the moment, I'm hoping this gives you some idea of my tracking.

The 131Locators Association did not commence activities until 2010, however we had a newsletter – *Eyes and Ears* - in place in 2009, so as you can see there is a very large gap from 1971 and 2009 and more so now, which makes data collating difficult.

*Some notes on the data:

Where possible the data relies on –

- . The DVA Nominal Roll for in-country service dates.
- . Locator Profiles for National Service intake dates (the dates, again, archived this time from information supplied by **Bert Blink**) or in the case of Regular members' service dates. This data was used to calculate time remaining after the RTA date.

- . Members who passed before completing Locator Profiles makes it impossible to calculate remaining time after RTA and discharge. We don't know what intake they were in, or in the case of Regular Members their discharge dates.
- . Not Located Locators can't be included.
- . Uncontactable Members can't be included at present.

...the following email was distributed for input from the recipients –

Subject: Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

"Morning All,

This email is being directed to you all, because none of you were awarded the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (RVCM).

Rieny Nieuwenhof (a member of your group) raised the subject at the last 131 Locators Association ZOOM Meeting as he had been involved in the receipt of correspondence raised by the National Service Association who are now legally pursuing the abolition of the 181 Day in country qualification for the awarding of this medal – you're right, it hasn't been forgotten, but because of the bureaucratic "stone walling", it has and continues to take time.

The background –

The awarding of this medal was made commencing 31 July 1963 and ending on 28 March 1973. So, army personnel who served for over 181 days are eligible for the award. It seems the 181 days was an "arbitrary" figure, no doubt decided on by representatives of the Republic of Vietnam and Australian Government (military leaders).

The RVCM was issued to those who were in SVN for less than 181 days if they were:

- . Killed on active service
- . Wounded in action and evacuated
- . Captured and later released or escaped

The argument that has been forwarded, to Rieny, by Richard Barry OAM is that many soldiers, especially Nashos, were sent home before the 181 days because their unit (eg. Armoured) was sent home. This argument is referred to as the 'end of war' so there was no possibility of staying longer to qualify for the RVCM. In other cases, Nashos were sent to SVN as replacements but were already close to the end of their two years as National Servicemen and were sent home before the qualifying 181 days.

The "argument" used by the Directorate of Honours and Awards (in at least two appeals) is that the Republic of Vietnam no longer exists and therefore the criteria for being issued the RVCM cannot be changed. However, the independent legal advice argues that the Australian Government can change the criteria and thereby give the authority for the RVCM to be awarded to those who through no fault of their own were denied the recognition they deserve.

I have to thank Rieny for the above information as it explains the reason for this email, which is –

"This email is being forwarded to **you** and 26 other members of the Detachment who served less than 181 days in South Vietnam and are still with us. Sadly, we have lost members. Also amongst these 27 members there are members that we don't have contact with, so that's not great news either.

However, we want you to reply with an explanation of the reason (what you understood at the time, even if it was personal) for your return to Australia.

Some general reasons are –

- . **The Detachment was returning to Australia or perhaps the unit you were transferred to was returning to Australia after the Detachment departed.**
- . **Your enlistment time was about to expire.**
- . **A family reason.**

It is our belief that NONE of us knew of the 181 Day qualification criteria at the time of service.

Please give this subject some serious thought, because we want to offer our support, knowing that ALL of you have been affected by this unfair decision for a very long time.

I look forward to your responses,

Paul"

I welcome any responses with regards to this subject. Paul Dickson: 131eyesandears@gmail.com

This is not the end of this project as I intend to communicate with the current Minister for Defence on the Association's behalf – watch this space.

Mail Call...

. Graham "Wheels" Campbell re: Locator Profile #169: Erbs, Terry...

"Paul,
Thanks very much for the entertaining Terry Erbs Profile.
As a little aside, when I was working at RAAF Williamtown the BOM office was next to mine. Grant, the senior meteorologist and other staff remembered Terry with great affection. Terry can spin some yarns about his Williamtown experience at the next reunion. Ubique, Wheels.'

. **Bert Blink** showed us his RAA Historical Company 150 Anniversary badge and the last 131 Locators Association ZOOM meeting and I asked him for a photo –

"Hi Paul,
This was sent to me earlier in the month by the RAA Historical Company of which I am a member. Their website is <http://artilleryhistory.org/membership.html>. I get a quarterly "Liaison Letter (current RAA)/ Cannonball (RAA History)" a very glossy magazine. I also receive a regular email eNewsletter.
Cheers, Bert"



. **Barry Guzder** – "Hi Dicko,

Two Sundays ago, we had the **150th Anniversary of Aussie Artillery**. With firing of guns all around Australia. Due to Covid only (I think) WA and Tassie held a ceremony.

Anyway, it was a wet drizzly day, but we went up to Kings Park Memorial with some vets and current members to watch.

Had a good afternoon of lunch and "fellowship".

Have attached photos of the 4 M2A2 howitzers firing. (3rd Battery 9th Field Regiment WA)

There was a lone 'protester' against wars but the cops controlled him!

Barry G."





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 "Kanga" McFadden – "Dicko,

Thanks for your vaccination outline. Way ahead of us but from your recounts we can get an idea of what might eventually be in the pipeline. Any idea when you expect booster shots?? Here, Delta's putting the pressure on vaccination supply and where the hell you can get it.
Keep Safe Little Buddy, Kanga."

. Darryl Musgrove – "Hello Paul, glad to hear all is well with you. As you suspect it's a little cooler here at the moment but no worse than Holsworthy back in the sixties. Campbelltown has been placed in the Red Zone this time so we are restricted to a 5-km radius of home, unless engaged in essential work. Emergency tradesmen only to do house repairs, and the occupiers have to stay out of contact. Actually, the tradies probably find they get their work done more efficiently with us not looking over their shoulders! Only recently the gardeners and lawn mowers have been allowed to work, provided the occupiers stay inside. I have not heard this morning's figures for number of infections detected so not aware of how much longer the lockdowns will continue. Hoping this will be the final one. Stay active. Cheers, Darryl."

. Ron Mason – "Hi Paul,

we are both well only in yet another lockdown, 5km travel limit & only 5 reasons to leave home. Since our closest supermarket is 25km away we take no notice of the 5km travel limit. No eating out as cafes are closed at the moment - glad I'm not trying to run one - poor buggers. This last lockdown was sprung with 3 hours' notice at 5pm Thursday evening effective from 8pm that night. What happens to the food ordered by restaurants for the weekend? It does make it tough on that type of business. We are 1/2 way through our vax - Astra Z. hope it works...,
The weather here - cold & wet, no further comment - but will add the crops are looking good so far with the soil moisture profile looking pretty good at the moment - time will tell as always. It is tonnes in the silo that counts - as always. Missed the last Zoom meeting & will miss the next one on Tuesday most likely, having a knee replaced on Monday so may have a few other things to think about the next day. Anyway, hope the meeting goes well & Covid does not ZOOM around! 😊

Not really much else to report at the moment, come the 18th Aug we may still be CB so that may be a non-event this year.

All for the time so stay safe, Ron."

. John l'Anson – "Well Paul a few things have happened since we last chatted. Unfortunately, in March. I decided to return to Australia for vaccination, not knowing the situation there and the difficulty leaving Australia. I got my first jab and was told I must wait for 3 months for my second to be fully vaccinated. My reaction was fuck that I am not waiting that long because Australia was not the same anymore! So expensive for a start and politically ruined by the two major parties who seem to be shovelling the same political shit. To me Scumug has been a major catastrophe, he is just a clone of Turnbull with no intestinal fortitude.

I won't bore you with any more political crap but I decided I must return to Thailand so I booked a flight from Cairns to Bangkok with Singapore Air and just fronted-up. My front worked and I flew from Brisbane at midnight on the 6th June after the Singapore lady rang Canberra where they checked my passport and told her I could leave because I hadn't lived in Australia for years. But now it has been changed and everybody must apply to leave. I now have a new visa until September 2022 a new rental house and my lady with me and a new second hand car. My lady bears no resemblance to any ladies I would attract in Australia. I know all the doomsayers will spruik it's all about money but do you think the ladies in Aus aren't money conscious!

Anyhow, it has been a bump in the road but now all is well. We have lockdowns here but not like Aus and of course everything is much cheaper!

My regards to everyone and just remember you can always do better than what you've been stuck with!

John l'Anson 2787424."

. Russell Jackson – "Hello Paul,

Thank you for your latest mail.

Good to have some news from across the world in this time of social isolation.

Regional Victoria will emerge from its latest lockdown tonight which will be a relief as successive lockdowns seem to be more difficult to cope with than previous ones.

Winter doesn't help of course with some very cold and grey days being experienced over the last few weeks.

The regime of rolling lockdowns seems to be having some interesting side effects.

With socialisation being so restricted and social conversation being infrequent one's ability to carry on a meaningful conversation with anyone apart from oneself is being negatively influenced. Old saying, 'I suppose use it or lose it.'

To a certain extent also the willingness to get out and about is sadly diminishing.

Perhaps warmer weather and the advent of Spring will have a positive influence here. Good to hear that you are mobile in this regard and getting out to restaurants etc. As with your situation, masks are required here and probably will be for some time.

Vaccination uptake has been very slow with a supply problem being a major issue. Margot and I are fully vaccinated with no after effects from our Astra Zeneca shots. We are expecting a need for a booster shot at some stage. With virus variants on the march an update of protection will most likely be required.

An ongoing concern for us is when International Travel restrictions will be lifted. We have our Swedish Family that we haven't seen for over two years. After previously visiting on at least an annual basis and spending summer with them it would be nice to know when we can resume our visits.

I had been looking forward to updating my car this year but a lack of supply means that I will need to hold off. With new cars in such short supply used car values have skyrocketed. If I wasn't looking for a replacement it would be an ideal time to sell with the market indicating that I would have a real chance of recovering my purchase price.

Thank you again for your contact.

It is most appreciated as is your continuing work with *Eyes & Ears*. Best regards, Russell."

. Joe Molenkamp – "G'day Paul,

First, I must apologise for not answering your previous email...sorry I was just slack! Thanks for writing again.

We've just gone into lockdown here, Gladys has just found the balls to do what she should have done at least 6 or 7 weeks ago and it would have saved a lot of people a lot of grief. Just meant I missed out on bowls this morning and a few beers with some good mates.... but we can survive that OK.

I've been well except for another scare with cancer back in June...just had a fairly minor operation and all good now.

Unfortunately, my wife's health is still going downhill all the time and mostly in extreme pain pretty much all over her body.... even the cannabis oil treatment isn't doing any good any more.

Still riding the pushbike and paddling the kayak to keep reasonably fit and healthy...also allows me to eat pretty well and enjoy a few beers without worrying about putting on weight.

Thanks for the work you put into *Eyes and Ears*... look forward to each issue.

Keep up the good work. Cheers, Joe."

Harry Lynas – "Hello Paul,

Sorry for the delay but I have been pretty busy the last few weeks - taken on the job of Secretary to Fort Lytton Historical Assoc Inc (FLHA) again and also helping Keith Ayliffe with docs and etc from FLHA to facilitate the use of Fort Lytton for the Open Day/Reunion 2022.

So, what has been going on - well with all this my computer is getting a workout again instead of just doing a lot of reading and research. There is a couple of things that we have to get down at the fort for our plan to move forward from here on. It is now 30 years since the Fort Lytton Guides began and I started late in 1993 - so there is a lot of history just from then to make sure it is all digitised because this is the way to go now.

It is Saturday afternoon here 2 pm and it is a nice 22 Centigrade so it is a beautiful afternoon and it is nearly time to finish and go and sit outside and have a couple of nice stubbies.

Until next time.

Cheers, Harry Lynas."

. Philip Mulgrew – "Hi Paul.

We have just gotten out of an eight-day lockdown here, courtesy of the Delta variant. Thankfully, watching the Olympics took away most of the tedium. But it is disturbing that this variant has been contracted by primary school children in the Indooroopilly area. As a result, apart from everyone wearing masks in shopping centres and the like and outdoors.

Teachers and students must wear masks in the classroom at least in the southeast corner of Queensland. Latitude is given to really young kiddies as masks are too big for most of them to wear, but their teachers have to wear them at all times in the classroom.

A virus that originated in a wet market that keeps on mutating to fit the conditions it finds its self in? Sounds more like a militarised SARs virus engineered to cause as much havoc as possible, though it would have been an accidental release from the Wuhan facility.

There's not a lot to talk about at this time, except that I have had the time to do some upgrades to my trailer boat. Boats seem to be like aeroplanes where an item for a popular make of car might cost five dollars, a similar part made of the same material will cost anywhere between triple or quadruple the price. Yeah, I know, marine and aviation parts are made to greater tolerances, but the quality of some marine products is questionable.

Helen and I had our second Astra Zeneca jabs in early July. I had no adverse reaction at all to both jabs. Helen had minor symptoms for the first jab, but not on the second one. As you mentioned, down the track, we will all need a booster too, given the nature of the beast we are dealing with.

But first, we all have to have those two important vaccinations over and done with and hopefully, get a 70 to 80 per cent uptake of the vaccine in Australia.

Take care. Phil."

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.

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 ORDER FOR 2022



In association
with



Proposed LSTAA Reunion Programme

Reunion Program:

23,24 and 25 April 2022

REUNION = 131 DLB, 132 DLB, 133DLB, 130 Gun Loc Bty, 20 STA Regt 131 STA Bty, 132 STA Bty, LSTAA members, 131 Loc Assn. Current 20 Regt, 131 Bty, 132 Bty,

Location; - Brisbane – Queensland –

Event dates:

23 April 2022 - 10 – 3pm Saturday Fort Lytton LSTAA/20th Regiment family day. Regimental catering with LSTAA subsidising costs.

24th April 2022 5-8pm Sunday Drinks and War stories: - Kedron Wavell RSL

25 April 2022 Monday ANZAC DAY: Dawn service at 20th Regiment. Brisbane ANZAC Day March, post drinks at The Stock Exchange Hotel.

If you would like to attend contact Keith Ayliffe aylif@westnet.com.au

There is no obligation at this stage, we need possible attendance numbers in our attempt to keep prices down. Let us know if there is a possibility of you attending.

Should you wish to become a member LSTAA. For details contact the Secretary Bob Morrison robmor47@ozemail.com.au

LOCATORS FOREVER




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>

A few well chosen words of wisdom from the Sec/Treas - "Just a reminder that a yearly renewal notice went out 2nd July and to check with Sec/Treas at sectreas131locators@gmail.com **before you pay** any money if you are unsure of your financial status."

Email sectreas131locators@gmail.com to check.
 Grahame"

Presidential perambulations

August, the eighth month, is historically windy in Sydney. This August we experienced a major front come through with destructive winds, rain and in the mountains, snow. Otherwise, it has not been extra windy.

But plenty of other things took place during the month. Worthy of noting.

. In Kabul, the Taliban wandered into town and caused an extreme exodus of citizens from many nations and locals claiming visa status. Australia joined the fly in, fly out stream of C-17 and C-130 transports. Much criticism was directed against President Biden for the seemingly poor plan to extricate US military from Afghanistan. The two suicide bombers added a most unfortunate dimension to the withdrawal program.

. In Sydney, our usual attendance at the Vietnam Veterans' Day lunch was defeated by coronavirus. Usually there is a good turnout of 131 veterans, providing the chance to catch up with our fellow ex-Gunners, be entertained and enjoy lunch. This was not to be in 2021.

. Coronavirus strain Delta was extremely active in New South Wales and somewhat lesser so in Victoria. Numbers of cases grew rapidly. However, the rate of vaccination soared to record heights in response to the testing results. Some almost promises would allow for a degree of relaxation in the lockdown conditions, but in the end, that was a damp squib.

. No kids in New South Wales back to school for a further two months was perhaps the most significant outcome.

. And in the sporting arena AFL and NRL finals began. There are some real challenges as to when and where finals will be played, but go ahead they will.

I hope that our readers had a good August, in a Covid safe manner.

Regards

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 September, 2021 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

ZOOM MEETING: Date: Tuesday, 10th August, 2021 at 1105hrs...

. **Pertinent Points** – extracted from the 131 Locators Association Committee meeting...

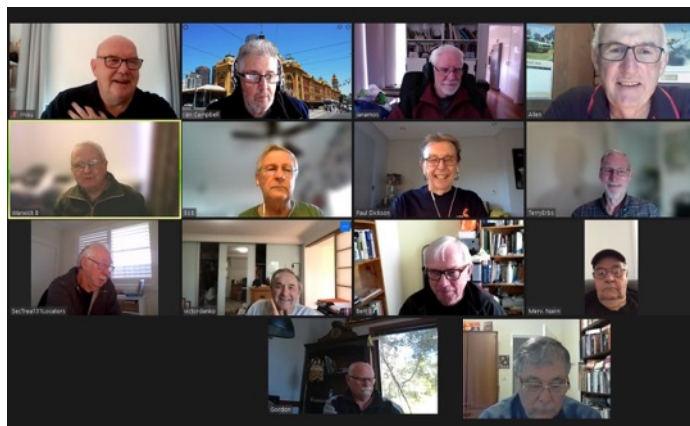
Attendees were:

Rieny Nieuwenhof, Ian Campbell, Ian Amos, Allan Morley

Warwick Brooker, Bob Billiards, Paul Dickson, Terry Erbs

Grahame Dignam, Vic Danko, Bert Blink, Merv Nairn

Gordon Malcolm and Barry Guzder



Apologies: Jim Fitzgerald, Steve Wynn, Ern Newbold, Nick Proskurin, Ged Carroll, George Lane and State Reps.

Financial Membership is currently ...132, plus Associates 2, Affiliates 13. Total 147. Lapsed 31 members

Presidents report.

Allen reported:

. The reunion planned for Caloundra has been deferred to 2022 when a healthier community can appropriately welcome visitors.

. He has received an update Report from Vets Support Force (Heston Russell) re the DVA Royal Commission.

. web Performance...

Bob advised that Facebook was becoming quite active now and members are now 244.

Health Report:

SMEAC presentation by Vic Danko – an appeal for a “Letter of support” for a project aimed at the wellbeing of military personnel exiting the service and combined with a facility for juveniles with issues...

General Business and around the grounds:

Discussions ensued on the following:

. The association has been approached to support a project by researcher, Kit Cullen, involving Vets from all units who were part of the Battle of Coral on the 13-16 May 1968. It is to relate their personal stories to a writer/researcher who will compile the project and arrange publication. The meeting agreed that we will contact our Det 131 cohort and Kit will contact them directly to ascertain their consent or not to take part.

. The Vietnam Vet Medal being withheld issue is being pursued by Richard Barry OAM and we are investigating our method of support. More TBA.

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...September –

Day	Name	Regt No	SVN In	SVN Out	Comments
1	ERIC THOMPSON Sgt.	44153	18 02 1968	18 02 1969	
	" "		13 05 1971	04 06 1971	VISIT
2	PHILIP MULGREW	3411756	29 04 1968	07 05 1969	
3	MILLS BUCKLEY	16950	20 05 1966	03 03 1967	† 02.04.07
3	KENNETH HENRY BORGES	13543	N/A		† 08.11.18
3	PETER SAINT Bdr	45033	04 11 1970	29 07 1971	
6	JOHN DELLACA	3791355	29 01 1968	28 01 1969	
7	STEVEN BOUTLIS	3787962	02 01 1967	27 09 1967	
7	GARY BESTER	3411737	08 01 1968	03 12 1968	
7	IVAN MILLS S/Sgt.	213051	31 01 1969	05 11 1969	
8	WILLIAM EDWARD	2789911	21 02 1969	21 02 1970	
12	BARRY NUGENT	1411039	03 01 1967	12 12 1967	
12	LARRY BRIDGE	2786506	15 03 1968	18 03 1969	
12	PHILIP JOHNS	4719086	16 09 1968	18 03 1969	
12	STEVEN VOSS	1735605	29 04 1970	18 03 1971	
12	KEVIN GEOGHEGAN	219351	16 12 1970	02 06 1971	131
	" "		02 06 1971	23 12 1971	HQ AFV

13	VICTOR CLAXTON	4410991	17 01 1968	23 12 1968	
14	MERV DART	37821	03 01 1967	09 01 1968	† 2001
14	FRANK IPSA	3786657	04 05 1967	12 12 1967	
14	RUSSELL HEWITT	2792435	03 06 1970	04 03 1971	
16	FRANK PEPPER	216683	12 09 1967	17 09 1968	† 27.12.89
16	RONALD DEAN	215527	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	
16	BRIAN BLACK	2786469	27 11 1967	26 11 1968	† 18.01.11
16	ALLEN WHEATLEY	2790305	16 09 1969	04 06 1970	
17	JOHN BLAKE	1731550	04 05 1967	13 12 1967	
17	BARRY GUZDER	5714500	10 06 1967	21 05 1968	
17	MAURICE ARCH	43350	02 01 1967	14 11 1967	† 26.08.17
17	ERNEST GALLOWAY	216708	08 01 1968	22 04 1968	
18	BOB WILSON	3791425	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
18	JAMES FREDERICK LAWLER Sgt.	28523	18 12 1967	03 12 1968	† 14.08.20
19	ROBERT DAVID GOW	61644	20 05 1966	03 03 1967	
19	HUBERT ANDREWS	2790121	21 02 1969	21 02 1970	
19	WESLEY HINDMARSH	2791313	30 09 1969	13 08 1970	
19	PHILLIP WAPSHOT	3793468	27 11 1969	18 03 1970	
21	GARRY LEPLAW	217182	05 02 1968	11 02 1969	† 06.12.83
22	IAN BUBB	2792358	13 05 1970	11 03 1971	RAEME
23	GREGORY TOMMASI 2Lt.	3791966	10 03 1970	25 08 1970	131
	" "		25 08 1970	11 03 1971	4 Fd Regt.
	GORDON CAMPBELL GUNN	16915	11.03.69	11.03.70	† 23.09.13
24	ROBERT BILLIARDS	2785702	12 09 1967	17 09 1968	
24	GEOFFREY CARTHEW	2793339	03 06 1970	09 06 1971	
26	KENNETH McNAMARA	2783740	04 05 1967	12 12 1967	
26	JOHN DAVIES Sgt.	29351	07 10 1966	30 04 1967	† 2004
26	RONALD BOALER	130230	20 02 1970	11 02 1971	
28	LEONARD WALKER	3798942	16 12 1970	30 06 1971	Det 131 † 29.01.07
	" "		30 06 1971	30 10 1971	12 Fd Regt.
1	IAN BRIGNELL	2789405	20 01 1969	21 01 1970	

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

Ed – 7 blokes not highlighted is looking decidedly 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 169 and we've sent out 169. Ed – ??????????????????????

. **Located...**

Have a look at the Association's web site - <http://www.131locators.org.au> – you might find some lost mates or get in touch with us and see if we can for you.



131 Locators Association is always on the lookout for new financial members. With the establishment of the web site we continue to be burdened with the ongoing cost of maintenance etc and we need to be able to support this effort equally.

So, if you're a non-financial Associate receiving emails and the *Eyes & Ears* regularly you could bite the bullet and email Grahame Dignam:sectreas131locators@gmail.com and he could forward you the relevant forms to join - Memberships are available for 1 year or longer deposit a DONATION direct (add your name) to the associations account at "A/c Name: 131 Locators Association Inc. Bank: Westpac, Kingsgrove NSW BSB No: 032 166 A/c No: 264133"

Hope we hear from you?

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

. **Other related sites...**

. **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.mzaa.org.nz/>

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

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