

THE EYES and EARS

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

Editor: Paul 'Dicko' Dickson email: 131eyesandears@gmail.com Vol 15 No 1 January 2022 No 162
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**

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



**These blokes RTA'd
30th January, 1968...**

Ernie Newbold – supplied the names of the blokes, in the above photo, who RTA's on 30.01.68 and they are from left to right, John Vickary, Lionel Outen, Bob Retrot, Allen Morley, Terry Bruce, Stuart Sporn, Joe Clendinen, Max Troynar, Ernest Newbold and Ron Saunders.

RTA Project for 2022

How about you send me Return To Australia (RTA) photos ASAP, so I can continue on from January?

Other blokes who returned in a January were - Wally Franklin, George Clark (actually, George RTA'd a second time in a September), Phil Sheedy, Colin West, Peter Creedon, John Dellaca, Ian Brignell, Thomas Lempriere, Alan Robb, Andrew Opie, Michael Davis, John Stanford and Phil Perrin – that exhausts me, seriously, I can't think of anyone else!

I've seen some other group photos around – I'm sure I've got one – that'll be next December's *Eyes & Ears*! Then I can publish them in the month's you came home – just a bit of memory fun.



Give me a Name?

The "Lost Locator Project"

This Project is being re-ignited for 2022.

Our current list contains the names of ? Locators (as at 00.00.22) that we have not had contact with since basically commencing communications in 2012, so, we thought this year is as good as any to try and reduce this number.

However, this doesn't mean that we still have contact with the total number of Battery/Detachment members we have Located over time as continuing correspondence has lapsed in a lot of cases.

We regularly check bereavement/funeral notices and this does not locate members in the way we really want to. So, we're appealing for YOUR help in scouring all sorts of sources – local RSL's may not a good starter.

I can send you the total list of names or, if you prefer, by years in SVN to give you a starting point. I will keep an update and publish monthly results in *Eyes & Ears* and the Associations Facebook page on the web site.

Paul Dickson

Get in touch with me via 131eyesandears@gmail.com

Continuing on...the following data is extracted from the year 1966, when the 15 members began their tour of SVN...

NAME	Regt. No.	BORN	IN SVN	OUT SVN
EZIO LOMBARDO	216284	1946	20 05 1966	03 03 1967
LESLIE CAHILL	2412281	1947	20 05 1966	30 04 1967
GRAHAM HISLOP Sgt.	15290	1935	22 04 1966	03 03 1967
DAVID MARTIN	2781662	1945	22 04 1966	29 04 1967
MICHAEL McDONNELL	2781377	1945	04 05 1966	11 04 1967
PETER ROBERTSON	15543	1936	04 05 1966	29 04 1967
JIM SELLWOOD	1731045	1945	04 05 1966	30 04 1967
SYTSE ELZINGA	3787318	1945	20 05 1966	11 12 1966
BARRY UREN	214715	1940	28 10 1966	02 05 1967
DESMOND BURY	1411072	1946	20 05 1966	29 04 1967
JOHN PERRY WO2	36026	1932	22 04 1966	07 09 1966
THOMAS KING	1411018	1937	12 12 1966	12 12 1967
JOHN MCGREGOR	3787376	1945	20 05 1966	30 04 1967
BRIAN HAWKEY	1200572	1946	20 05 1966	29 04 1967

I look forward to hearing from you with regards to the above, plus any other years that you may want to have a look at.

. 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

Bob Billiards comes up with a great "Recollection" with an assortment of classic photos –

31 Delta gets a "once-over"

"Gents,

I found this in some B&W photos that **Bob King** took possibly in October 1967 after we had finished the new 31D LP.



L-R – John Blake, me, Des Spencer, Barry Guzder and Nick Proskurin

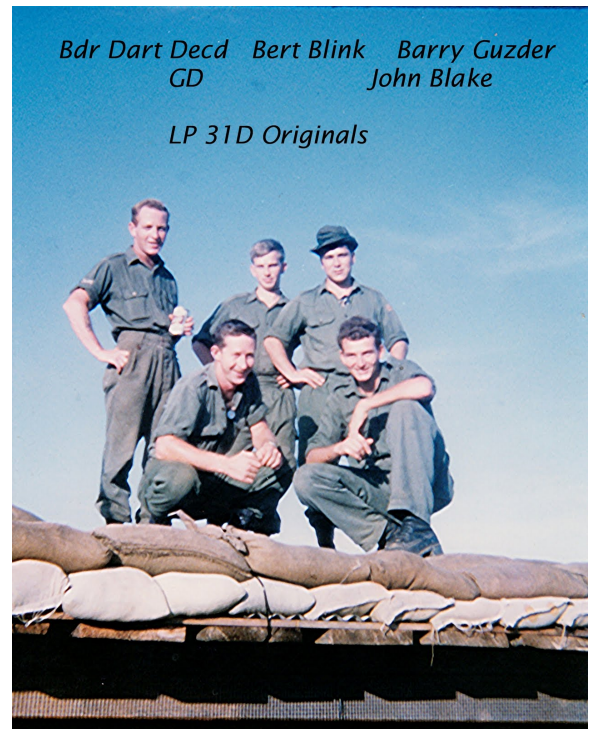
It was part of the lot that he took of us standing near the 8" gun (at right).

Stay safe and well
Bob."

L-R – Barry Guzder, John Blake, Des Spencer. Nick Proskurin and me.



Ed – Gee the dress code certainly wasn't maintained after the original crew under Merv Dart left!



Bdr Dart Decd Bert Blink Barry Guzder
GD John Blake

LP 31D Originals

. **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.



. **Graham Dignam notified us of the following Australian Honours and Awards –**

Australian Honours and Awards 2022

Medal of the Order of Australia recipients -

Mrs Ann Elizabeth PIORO

Fairy Meadow NSW 2519

For service to veterans and their families.

Mr Peter PIORO

Fairy Meadow NSW 2519

For service to veterans and their families.

Our congratulations to both Ann and Peter.

. **Quiz Time...**



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

I couldn’t resist putting this question raised by **Phil Connor** in his email in “Mail Call”, following, with reference to what time did I pull the pin on New Year’s Eve ...

The quote - “to the year, following on from a quiet Christmas. With all our age now it would be good to have a survey (survey, that rings a bell!!!), no, a survey as to the time we individually went to bed on New Year’s Eve (for the purposes of nigh-nigh). Our time was 10.15pm.....”

I responded with an amazing, well for me anyway – 12.45am.

So, now to the point of all this – “What time did you make it to?”

Let us know so we can get a “survey” for February’s Eyes & Ears

So, now to the point of all this – “What time did you make it to?”

AN INVESTIGATION 181 Days



. The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (RVCM)

An update from Richard Barry –

“My appeal submission (to achieve full recognition for some 3,000 NS Vietnam Veterans from around the nation) has now been supported by the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs and Defence Personnel.

It now sits with the Minister for Defence for him to support the application and obtain necessary Government/Cabinet approval. I have respectfully stated that it is still time for these men to be awarded and to mount the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal in time for Anzac Day 2022.”

Richard Barry OAM.”

Paul Dickson

“Nothing ventured, nothing gained.”

Mail Call...

. **David Dougherty – Vale (Jack Heyes) correction in December’s *Eyes & Ears*...**we misquoted David Dougherty as David Doyle.
Apologies all around David, Paul.

. **Peter Meaney** – “Hello Paul,

Reading thru the latest edition of *E&E* – Vale section, I think George Clark has confused Dennis and Neville Smith, who both served in SVN at the same time.

In the photo (at right), the fellow to the left of George is **Neville (“Arunta”) Smith**.

The fellow to the right of George looks like the late Jim Lockhart, but I’m not positive on that. From memory Jim was a “lefty”, so would possibly have worn his watch on the right wrist.



George Clark’s recollection – “Not sure of the bloke on the left, but that’s me in the middle and Denis is on the right at the Horseshoe in 1969”

For my part, sorry I have not responded to your last few prompts, but this whole Covid thing has resulted in a loss in motivation, and a gain in weight!

We have been very fortunate in South Australia so far, as we have had minimal days in lockdown. However, like the other states, the Hotel, Hospitality and small business in general have all taken a huge hit.

We had to cancel a holiday to Brisbane and Longreach, however, we were lucky enough to holiday for a week in Darwin back in July, visiting our son and his family.

Health is fine at present for myself and wife Annie. She has recently had bunions removed on each foot, and is slowly recovering from that painful operation. Otherwise, all good.

Kind Regards,

Peter Meaney.”

...and Peter comes back with more -

“Hello again Paul.

Yes, since Annie’s bunions operation, I’ve had to do the weekly shopping, the laundry and food prep. Fortunately, we have a cleaner, compliments of DVA, so that is a big help.

She has feet X-ray this Thursday to make sure feet are properly aligned, and metal plates and screws are in place, followed by a telephone consult with the surgeon.

...now to some great recollections...

Regards **Neville Smith**, he and I first met at the School of Artillery in mid 1968, where we did a Signals Course together, then moved across to Holsworthy. We were both 12th Intake- Neville being born and bred in Townsville (where he still lives!), did his Basic Training at Singleton, whereas I did mine at Puckapunyal.

We caught up again in SVN, both attached to Arty Int.- later I moved to Radar Ops.

Neville and I RTA’d on the same flight (25 March 1970), also on that flight were:

Graham Williams, Peter Szabo(RIP), Paul Butcher etc.

We said our goodbyes at Sydney airport, and totally lost contact, for close to 40 years!

Our reconnection came at Coffs Harbour, purely by chance, in June 2009.

As you probably know, it is so euphoric re-establishing contact with someone you had thought about over many years: “I wonder whatever happened to”

There were five or six of our group I put in this category, and thankfully I have since caught up with all but one, who sadly passed away 6 months prior to me reconnecting with Neville.

Neville always had a great sense of humour, was an outstanding all round sportsman, loved the horses, enjoyed a beer and a chat.

Kind regards,
Peter Meaney.”

. Derek Hinde –

Joe Losiak & Maj Russ Hamsey at 20STA on 7 Jan 22

“G'day Paul, Joe took his daughter there last Friday. I'm in Sydney since Christmas... Joe asked me to forward the photos to you hoping they may appear in the *E&E* newsletter. Joe does not have internet access. He arranged the visit via **Terry Erbs**.
Regards. Derek.”



. John Bayford – sent in the following email and the last sentence made me start to dig into archives etc...

“Hi Paul,

I live in Cape Schanck which is on the Mornington Peninsula. If you ever make it down this way I would be pleased to catch up. I think we met at an Anzac Day march?

John

...and I came up the following photo and names (with a bit of help from John) -

ANZAC Day 2009 –

L-R - ?, Mike Butler, John Dellaca, ?, Bernard Erica (late), Damian McManus, John Roberts (late), Al Adams, John Bayford and Me.





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...

. **Ken Foster** – “Paul, thanks for the update, COVID restrictions continue here, on and off, biggest problem at the moment is staff in all areas restricted by time off with COVID, Hospitals, supermarkets, food supply chains all affected. My biggest challenge has been since early 2021 a battle with cancer, two major surgeries, chemo treatment and associated health problems, cancer is now gone but I lost my Bowel, Bladder and all lower body lymph glands. Still having a daily visit at home by a nurse to change dressings etc and my mobility is severely restricted, severe loss of weight, that said I am recovering but have had to cancel a lot of my volunteer ESO work and some other activities. No complaints as I readjust to a new lifestyle, keep in touch and all the best for 2022. Regards, Ken.”

. **Terry Bruce (Orangeville, NSW)** – “Paul,
“Thank you for your e-mail.

Once again, I find myself apologising for my tardiness in not responding sooner, although a few things have stood in my way – hospital and specialist visits included.

Judith and I are both travelling OK currently – whilst Judith is recovering from some major stomach surgery and I am still getting over the knee replacement surgery from earlier in the year.

Fortunately, we are getting plenty of assistance from the family whilst we go through our recoveries.

As you are aware we live in a semi-rural environment, a distance from the suburban fringe and, as a consequence, we have frequent interaction with nature, including with wildlife of various types, the occasional bushfire, strong winds and so forth. As a consequence, we are currently preparing the property for the upcoming summer (read bushfire) season, removing leaf litter, fallen branches and so forth as well as slashing paddocks.

We've had some interesting interactions with the local wildlife recently – starting with my inadvertently locking a large wombat in one of my sheds overnight. The consequence of this was that, in its attempt to escape, it effectively 'wrecked the place', knocking down shelves of tools, jars of screws and nails, electrical cords, etc. And in short 'made a hell of a mess'. I've attached a couple of photographs of the inside of the shed in question. The wombat actually stayed hidden in the shed all day after I opened it, only coming out at nightfall. It was one lucky wombat as I was tempted to dispatch it to 'the big wombat hole in the sky' because of the damage it did to the shed which was only recently reorganised and made tidy. As an addendum to this, the same wombat (or his mate) has decided to dig a hole in the dirt floor of an undercover area of the same shed (which I haven't gotten around to concreting – as yet)! Resulting in another mess to clean up (shelves fallen down, etc.).



In another recent nature interaction, a red bellied black snake became entangled in some bird netting in the house paddock and had to be released by our neighbour, Deb (who, along with her husband (both of whom are fellow Rural Fire Brigade members) is a wildlife rescue and recovery expert). I've attached a photo or two of this incident as well (that's me bravely holding the snake-capture bag). I was contemplating releasing the snake myself but, if it had had a go at me during the procedure, it may well have ended badly – for one or both of us!



On the subject of the local wildlife, last weekend some of the grandkids were here, and they, and we, saw in one day on the property a large goanna, several wallabies, wallaroos and kangaroos, wombats, several feral deer as well as the aforementioned snake. It's not uncommon to see possums, sugar gliders, and other native animals as well as foxes, rabbits and hares running around the place. We've yet to spot a koala but it's probably only a matter of time as there is a colony a short distance north of our place.

On the Covid-19 front, as you would be aware, NSW is opening up at a great rate so we are now able to go further afield for shopping, visiting, etc. That said, we live in a relatively isolated place so our exposure to the virus is limited. To be honest, it would suit me if I never had to leave the place.

Due to the relaxation of the Covid-19 rules, we have recently recommenced face to face Rural Fire Brigade meetings after I had to chair a few meetings over Zoom, in recent months, which was an interesting experience that took some getting used to.

I trust that you and Helen had a pleasant Christmas and New Year period. From Judith's and my perspective, we had a large Christmas day family gathering on the property and it was quite a good day. Having so many people here at the one time in order to celebrate Christmas with us was most pleasant.

That's it from me for now – I'll keep you informed of any further nature interactions - as they occur.

Kind regards,

Terry Bruce

P.S. I commenced writing this e-mail towards the end of last year – finally gotten to finish it now (2022)."

. Wade Cooper (Canberra) – "Merry new year, Paul. All good here in Canberra, just keeping busy with family and the remainder of my leave. I hope all is well your end. Coops."

. John Bayford (Cape Schank, Vic) – "Hi Paul

Just returned back to the house after a cancelled game of golf due to a number of thunderstorms rolling through.

My family and I are all well after getting together at Cape Schanck over Christmas.

We have booked a holiday in Tassie for late February so fingers crossed.

Best wishes

John."

. Warwick Brooker (Canberra) – "Happy New Year, Dicko!!



All went well over the Christmas/NY break. Very quiet and afraid to cross borders, although COVID rules are being relaxed in most states/territories, faster in some than in others. The ACT is pretty much in step with NSW now. We still 'check in' (via a QR code) and wear masks indoors in public establishments (except when eating/drinking) and have our



temperature taken at some venues, and we can wipe our trolley handles at supermarkets if we want to! Canberra is 98.5% 2-shot vaccinated (ages 12+) and about 20% of residents 18+ have had their third shot. Children aged 5 to 11 are now receiving their shots. COVID cases are rising rapidly, but there are not too many hospitalisations at this stage. That could change as Omicron runs riot.



Yes, international travel is still fraught with difficulty. Don't do a Novak Djokovic!!

Stay safe!

Brookey."

. Nick Armstrong (North Shields, SA) – “Friday 7th January 2022

Hello Paul

Glad to hear everything all well with you as you move into a new year. Robin and I are both well, but waiting to see where the Covid is taking us. It is somewhat galling to see South Australia being overwhelmed by Covid, since borders were opened before Christmas. Before the opening, Covid was well controlled. Our illustrious political leaders assured us that they had everything under control. The military acronym ‘SNAFU’ is the word that comes to mind! Oh, excuse me, is my cynicism showing?

I recall Donald Trump told his health advisors to stop testing people, to reduce the number of infected people. Apparently, our PM does not want to know how many people are infected, just the ones in hospital. I suppose the less information he has, the easier it will be to change non-existent plans?

Christmas Day, we drove an hour north to have a barbecue lunch with our daughter and her family at their shack. We have not travelled anywhere else, pending Covid developments. Robin and I have had our third (Booster) injection, so we have done all we can, and now just avoid crowds.

School year begins in three weeks. We do not have children to worry about, but I have been asked to do a bus run for a local school, while they try to employ a permanent driver. I do not know what the latest procedures will be if there is infection on the bus. Testing protocols have been changing every day or so. What they will be in three weeks is anyone's guess! The State Education Minister is on holidays, so no leadership there. Whether schools open on 31st January is uncertain.

Controlling the spread has effectively ceased. Tracing and tracking has been overwhelmed. We can self-test with Rapid Antigen Test kits, if you can find any, or afford them if you find any. If you have a positive test, there seems to be no protocols for reporting in place. There are rumours that there is Covid in Port Lincoln, but nothing official.

Assuming we will all get infected, I will keep going as before, until I get sick, and then I will stop driving until someone feels they need me.

I have one son living in Narrogin (WA). The plan was for WA to ease border restrictions in mid-February. With the chaos developing in the Eastern States, I would not be surprised if those plans were delayed. My son feels many Western Australians support keeping the border sealed indefinitely.

I have managed to launch the boat a few times during the holidays, although not as often as I had hoped. Robin and I are sharing one car while the local Landrover mechanic is reconditioning an engine for the old Discovery 1, which usually tows the boat. The weather has not been particularly favourable since Christmas. Persistent, strong southerly winds have blown for a week at a time. Boston Bay does have sheltered areas for most winds, but I usually stay at home when winds are forecast above 15 knots. The boat is capable of handling stronger winds, but I am usually alone and in stronger winds someone should be steering constantly.

Not much else to report for now. Keep well and I will write again when there is something to tell.

Regards from, Nick and Robin.”

. Keith Ayliffe (Brisbane) – “G'Day Paul,

Good to hear from you. Not a great deal happening out here mate, so I decided to liven things up a bit. I thought my pacemaker could do with a test so had me with a minor heart attack. Ended up in the Sunshine Coast Private Hospital. Found out I was still important and alive with Specialists and nurses looking after my every whim. All good or as good as it's gonna be. Apart from that working to ensure a good reunion next ANZAC weekend we have 20 Regt fully involved four locations [Fort Lytton, 20 Regt, Kedron Wavell -RSL and Brisbane March]. I've worked with your people (131 Assoc), 20 Regt and RAA Assoc to help provide a little different approach to the Saturday at Fort Lytton. I hope that all the people coming will enjoy what we have planned for them.

Hope you and yours are doing well catch you next time.

Keith.”

. Steve Boutlis (Buddina, Sunshine Coast, Kawana Waters) – “Hi, Dicko.

Thanks for staying in touch. I wish a happy and healthy 2022 for you and Helen.

We have both (as well as Fran's sister Veronica from NZ) had our boosters. I recently had a Covid test, due to four symptoms associated with it, and returned negative. Just a mild cold!

Veronica (Ronnie) came from NZ for a visit as soon as the bubble came into being and has been with us since July. She and Fran are so, so close, that it has been a pleasure to have her with us. They are currently on their second visit to their older sister Aileen in Townsville. The three of them are the surviving siblings of ten.

Fran cut her left big toe on an outdoor paver in April last year and it became infected. Three different courses of antibiotics, two stays and two operations did not improve it. Finally, my son rang his Infectious Diseases specialist mate at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital who took a biopsy and discovered that the infecting agent wasn't a bacterium but a fungus. Yep, the tile was covered in!

Two courses of standard antifungal treatment did not improve the toe. The ID doctor was aware of a new antifungal medication being trialled at The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital as part of a world-wide trial conducted from London.

As her infection is so rare (one of two in Australia) she was admitted to the trial.

This has involved twice-weekly visits to Brisbane for two months, then weekly visits for two months, and now once monthly. Scans of the toe monthly. The dose has been doubled as the toe has not deteriorated, but not improved either. The increased dose has required twice-weekly blood samples to be taken to check if the anti-fungal is not affecting her liver (all OK).

So please, if you have an infection that does not improve with antibiotics, have it checked for fungus!
Christmas with family was very enjoyable, and three movies accompanied with drinkies and cheese platter saw the new year in.

The Covid pandemic has got a lot worse here and around Oz. Mask wearing indoors has again been mandated in Queensland. Numbers infected with Omicron are soaring and deaths are increasing.

Fran and Ronnie have been going to ukulele groups around the Sunny Coast and I am their chauffer. At one of their sessions at Noosa, I caught five fish off the nearby jetty. I throw them back regardless of size or species. Hate the cleaning of them!

If this goes to *Eyes and Ears*, Happy and Healthy 2022 to all of my 131 mates. Perhaps we can catch up at the next reunion.

Stay safe, Cheers, Boots."

. Mike Butler (Blackburn, Vic) – "Hi Paul

Well things aren't getting any better here. Had a good Xmas with family but then things turned sour with all the social events around the city. With Omicron raging folks are now going into voluntary lockdown just to avoid getting the virus. Both Michelle and I have had our boosters but we are avoiding shopping centres where there are crowds and ordering food online for pickup at the local Woolies. There have been some products that are hard to get but mostly it's been OK. Melbourne has been hot and humid since Xmas. They promised a wet summer but haven't seen any of it yet so am watering pot plants etc, to keep them going. Our local Box Hill RSL has restricted meals due to Covid and a lot of businesses are suffering due to loss of patronage.

As a result of all of the above we haven't been doing a lot except a bit of maintenance around house and garden. Hopefully things will improve before they get any worse.

Cheers, Mike Butler."

. Pete Fletcher (Wamberal, Central Coast, NSW) – "Hi Paul, it is nice to hear from you again. I haven't made any progress on joining your zoom group yet, still thinking about it.

Nothing much has changed since we last wrote to you.

We are both well but have not much to report due to restrictions etc. Not good.

We had a nice Xmas and spent some time with my two sons and their families at Tanilba Bay which is north of Newcastle in the Port Stephens area. We had a great few days catching up with them.

Veneice's family and friends joined us at Xmas at our home for lunch which was enjoyed by all. Plenty of eating and drinking. A good day.

We both continue to play golf. My handicap has blown out from 17 to 20 which is not so good. Veneice is playing steady golf though she would disagree.

I am still thinking about travel but we will see how things go over the next few months. Probably wishful thinking for this year with this new variant. We would like to go back to Hawaii if possible.

That's all for now,

Best wishes Pete and Veneice."

. Peter Creedon (St Peters near Campbelltown, Syd, NSW) – "Hi Paul.

I should start by apologising for not responding to your previous catch up note, I feel that I have got so used to doing nothing I did not want to let myself down.

In answer to your latest catch up, it pleasing to hear everything seems to be OK at your end including the golf.

For a little while there we looked like things were going to get back some sort of normality but thanks to Omicron the place has slipped back to organised chaos. I'd had my two shots as had everyone around me. The week before Xmas I went over to my son's place for an early Xmas get together.

Got on the turps a little heavy and then they brought out jelly shots so I thought why not, at the end of day I developed a tickle in the throat which I put down to reflux. Driving to the shops on the Tuesday morning still with the little tickle in the throat I dropped into the local testing station not really thinking there was a problem, four days later they send me a message telling me that I was positive.

That certainly messed up Xmas but luckily, I had not infected anyone else, it was a mild dose, I have had colds much worse but I was locked down for ten days.

Everything is back to normal now including the golf, at the moment I am hitting the ball well, won the day last Thursday so can't complain.

Regards Peter."

. Phil Connor (Mountain Creek, Sunshine Coast, Qld) – 'And a Happy New Year to you both. Hope you have had a good start to the year. Combined with what we have it was a very quiet start to the year, following on from a quiet Christmas. With all our age now it would be good to have a survey (survey, that rings a bell!!!!), no, a survey as to the time we individually went to bed on New Year's Eve (for the purposes of nigh-nigh). Our time was 10.15pm...

Went to my GP Christmas Eve to obtain the necessary pain relief for the month and the GP said that I was due for the booster. We then both agreed that I would come back early in January in case I had a reaction over Chrissie. The GP was right, 4 days of Pfizer problems after the jab!!

The QLD Govt have now opened the borders and we are now getting case numbers. And, sadly increased deaths. Also, all the necessary supermarket/shopping procedures are still in place. There is also an indication that the 'Check In QLD' app will slowly be phased out.

We had our first case of Covid at the Bowls club (Buderim) between Chrissie and New Year and we still have some members not vaccinated, who can play but must leave the premises after playing and not allowed to enter the clubhouse and associated areas.

Oh, I asked Novak to close the door on the way out!

Cheers to all.

Regards, 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

The following was forwarded in by both Grahame Dignam and Gary Navas – thanks to both of you...

The Hon Andrew Gee MP, Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Minister for Defence Personnel, Federal Member for Calare

MEDIA RELEASE - 12 January 2022 –

COMMEMORATING THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF AUSTRALIAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE VIETNAM WAR

Planning is underway for a range of significant events around the country to commemorate the **50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War in 2023.**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel, Andrew Gee, announced that the Australian Government has committed \$6 million to ensure this important milestone is marked with appropriate respect and appreciation for all those who served and those who gave their lives in Vietnam.

"Australia owes our Vietnam veterans an enormous debt of gratitude," Minister Gee said.

"Almost 60,000 Australians served in the Vietnam War, 521 lost their lives and more than 3,000 were wounded.

We honour and remember the service and sacrifice of each and every one of them.

"At places like Long Tan, Nui Lei, Binh Ba, Coral and Balmoral, Ap My An and many others, Australians served with distinction, in the finest traditions of our armed forces. Our country should be very proud of all they achieved.

"Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam conflict will be an important opportunity for Australians to express the pride, gratitude and respect of the nation.

"The Vietnam War and its aftermath exacted a heavy toll on all those who served and their families. The treatment of our diggers upon their return home by some of their fellow Australians remains a source of hurt and pain for many. The 50-year commemoration is another important step in helping to heal the wounds that were inflicted back in Australia.

"I will be working closely with the Vietnam veteran community to ensure the funding announced today delivers a program of events that honours all Australians who served in the Vietnam conflict.

"The centrepiece will be a national commemorative service at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial on Anzac Parade in Canberra.

"We owe the men and women who served in Vietnam nothing less than a commemorative program that reflects their extraordinary service and sacrifice. Our country will always be grateful for it and we will never, ever, forget it," Minister Gee said.

Further announcements on the details of specific commemorations and the consultation process will be made on the Department of Veterans' Affairs website in due course.

This isn't "coming up" – it's here...

This happened again with the January email out advising the publication of *Eyes & Ears*...

yourname@bigpond.com ... this email address @bigpond is causing problems in being received by those of you who use bigpond.

Ed – I'm getting about 24 "unable to receive" messages for the last two general emails that I've sent out, including the last *Eyes & Ears*.

The response received:

"Address not found

Your message wasn't delivered to **yourname@bigpond.com** because the address couldn't be found or is unable to receive email."

I have been advised it's the "bigpond.com" component that is causing the trouble. **Bob Billiards** has advised me that another association he's involved in has had the same problems.

So, those of you who have ".....@bigpond.com" as your email server may want to check your "Junk/Spam" emails and have a go at correcting the problem.

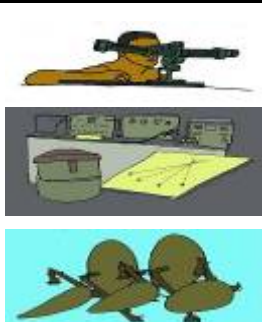
I hope you can rectify the problem.

Sorry fellas, the "problem/s" need fixing from your end!

Paul

email: 131eyesandears@gmail.com

NB: "yourname" is a substitute for your actual first part of your email name.



Committee members:

President – Allen Morley, Vice President – Bert Blink, Treasurer/Secretary – Grahame Dignam,
Webmaster – Bob Billiards, Research Officer – Ernie Newbold, Designs and Development Officer – Nick Proskurin,
Eyes & Ears Editor – Paul Dickson

General members – Ian Amos, Ged Carroll, George Lane.

Regional Representatives: ACT – Bert Blink, Qld – Terry Erbs, SA - Geoff Blackwell,

Vic – Alan Adams, WA - Barry Guzder

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

Presidential perambulations

At last a sunny Sydney summer day. So far it has been a lousy end to 2021 and start to 2022. Last year annual Sydney rainfall totalled 1550 mm versus the long-term average of 1200 mm. So 'twas a wet year for us.

We seem to have gone from not knowing anyone with a positive Covid test during the early versions, to knowing quite a few positives with this vintage. I'm currently watching the Australian Open and barracking for Nadal. Sitting near me is my Covid positive wife, who has only minor symptoms. I am still negative - latest test today - and put that down to McLaren Vale shiraz consumption, or luck.

Two of our grandkids have tested positive, although one was a RAT, which can be a dodgy test at times. Our two-year-old grandson, Alfie, objects strenuously to having a stick stuck up his nose. I also dislike that aspect of any test.

Our 131 group seem to be keeping pretty covid free. Maybe as a group we just got out and were vaccinated. Healthy Gunner effect? Unlike exported Djokovic most of us just went out and got it done.

Regards

Allen.

50 Years
April 1966 - April 2016



find us on
Facebook

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

. Upcoming Events Calendar –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday, 8th February, 2022 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.

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...February –

1	JIM MENZ	38838	10 10 1967	18 02 1968	† 18.02.68 KIA
2	ROGER McDONNELL	2784019	04 05 1967	20 02 1968	
3	ROBERT GIBSON	2787361	29 01 1968	07 02 1969	† 02.03.21
3	EDWARD HENSON	2788331	16 09 1968	27 08 1969	
4	OLAF ASMANIS	3796272	27 11 1969	05 11 1970	
5	IAN YERBURY Capt.	43129	{05 05 1967	05 03 1968	131 † 1989
	" "		{05 02 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd REGT
5	RICHARD FLAVELL	3791902	23 09 1968	04 06 1969	
5	GEORGE CLARK	2412252	{20 01 1969	21 01 1970	
	" "		{09 01 1967	27 09 1967	1 ARU/131
5	STEPHEN HALL	4720327	27 11 1969	13 08 1970	
6	WAYNE WHITEHEAD	3791969	N/A		
6	MICK HABBEN	3788307	05 05 1967	20 12 1967	
7	LINDSAY BLACK Sgt.	213794	30 04 1970	04 08 1970	131 † 2009
	" "		05 08 1970	12 03 1971	4 Fd REGT
8	ROBERT RAMSAY	2788108	16 09 1968	27 08 1969	
8	IAN CAMPBELL	3798378	10 02 1971	07 06 1971	131
	" "		07 06 1971	30 10 1971	12 Fd REGT
9	WILLIAM HOLMES	61040	1969	1969	† Unknown
9	GEOFF WOOD	2783898	04 05 1967	13 12 1967	† 26.04.07
9	CHRIS ARMSHAW	2781291	04 05 1966	27 10 1966	† 10.02.70
9	GARY WORRALL	43796	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	
9	NEVILLE HASTINGS	1730813	20 05 1966	03 03 1967	
10	ERIC WILLIAMS	1735449	13 02 1970	04 02 1971	
10	GRAHAME SMITH	2792939	30 05 1970	26 05 1971	
11	DENNIS MALLOY	3795057	22 07 1969	16 07 1970	
11	DESMOND BAILEY Sgt	18687	13 05 1967	14 05 1968	RAEME - Radar
12	ROSS GUNNELL	5714499	05 05 1967	27 09 1967	
12	LEIGH BAKER	3789657	10 06 1967	23 04 1968	
12	ANTHONY SHELDRAKE	5716358	04 11 1969	13 08 1970	
14	ERNEST NEWBOLD	2783771	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	
14	KEVIN HEENAN	3794777	27 11 1969	13 08 1970	
14	MARCUS ROBINSON	2791229	20 01 1970	13 08 1970	
16	DAMIAN McMANUS	3787689	20 05 1966	29 05 1967	
16	LUIGI LANERA	3795443	25 11 1969	12 11 1970	RAEME
16	TERENCE HUNT	3792120	19 02 1968	21 02 1969	

17	ADRIAN SPENCER	3794631	28 10 1969	13 08 1970	
18	TERENCE McMANIS	44277	30 05 1970	09 10 1970	
21	WILLIS (BILL) WIGHT 2Lt.	39136	12 01 1967	23 04 1968	
23	GEOFFREY JEBB WO2	24660	12 04 1968	16 04 1969	
23	GRAEME SALTER	3792618	16 09 1968	27 08 1969	
23	GRAEME JENNION	3796241	24 03 1970	04 03 1971	
24	GREG GREEN	2784565	04 05 1967	12 12 1967	
24	ALBERT JACKA	39856	16 12 1969	11 03 1971	AACC
25	ROBERT MILLER	36499	05.11.69 & 08.4.70	28.11.69&02.08.70	† 29.12.17 RAEME
27	DONALD PERRY WO2	38675	15 04 1970	19 11 1970	
28	PARICK GOWANS LT COL	57036	09 09 1965	19 09 1965	VISIT
	" "		11 03 1971	04 01 1972	AATTV
28	NORBERT KROLL	218285	27 11 1969	05 11 1970	
28	BRIAN LESLIE MITCHELL	2412582	14 03 1968	26 03 1969	
28	KIM MCGRATH	2795249	N/A	N/A	

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

Ed – 12 blokes not highlighted isn't a great result! Ok, let's get into it and actively get out there locating a few more!

. **Locator Profiles** – we've received 172 and we've sent out 171. Ed – Maybe we need to draw in a deep one so as to hold our breaths for a while longer.

. **Located...**

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

Vale



Name: Claxton, Victor Leonard

Service No: 4410991 Rank: Gunner

SVN In: 17 01 1968 SVN Out: 23 12 18968

DoB: 13 09 1948 DoD: 07 01 2022

Lest We Forget



Ian Finlay sent the following information –

“Just letting you all know that I had a phone call from Vic's wife Andria last night informing me of his death. Vic passed away yesterday 7th January 2022 after a long illness in hospital.

With Sadness and respect,
Ian Finlay (Fin)”

Keith Ayliffe emailed – “G'day Paul in case you need more info on Vic - He was a Vet of Battle of Coral.
Keith.”

Phil Mulgrew – “Hi Paul.

I was saddened and a little shaken by the news of Vic's death. Most of us knew he was in ill health for a long time, but it still came as a shock to me. I went through North Head with Vic, Mick Bohl, Gary Bester and others who were subsequently posted to 111 LAA Battery at Woodside in South Australia. I shared the Observation Post section hut with Vic and the aforementioned blokes until we were old enough to be considered for overseas service. Vic and I and most of the OP blokes went to 131 Div Loc Bty. I ran into him at FSB Coral among other places that we found ourselves in SVN. God speed, Vic. Phil Mulgrew.”

Ed aka Paul Dickson – while looking for something completely different I came across this email from Ron Boaler which was in *Eyes & Ears Vol 3 No 17 April, 2010* and thought it was a fitting memory **Nev Smith...**

. **Ron Boaler** keeps us in the loop as to what happened in Townsville on the 25th ...



"Hi Paul, Attached are photos from ANZAC Day in Townsville. All 3 that we know of past members of 131 were in attendance with family.

Those appearing in the photos L to R : **Neville Smith, Ann Pioro, Peter Pioro, Ron Boaler & son Ken Boaler.**

The rain was light but still saw the largest ever crowds both at Dawn Services and the two main parades in the area. Being a garrison city for Army, Navy and RAAF bases (where Ron and Peter finished up at the RAAF Sergeant's Mess) there were many service personnel who had just returned from overseas deployment. Peter Pioro is the Welfare Co-ordinator and Ron is the Magazine Editor for the TPI Association and the results of injury in war zones is very evident.

We welcome visitors to the north and would love to hear from members coming up this way,

May He REST in Peace



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

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

Hope we hear from you?

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

. **Other related sites...**

. **Locating, Surveillance & Target Acquisition Association...**



LOCATING, SURVEILLANCE & TARGET ACQUISITION ASSOCIATION

The Eyes and Ears of The Battlefield



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL COMPANY

www.artilleryhistory.org



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

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

. **VETERAN'S AFFAIRS WEBSITE**

The Dept of Veteran's Affairs has launched a new mental health initiative to assist veteran's experiencing the affects of mental illness and their families. Providing information and fact sheets about understanding mental illness, links and contact information for accessing support, and online resources for health professionals, this website focuses on

helping veterans identify early warning signs of mental illness to effectively manage their mental illness and seek treatment. For more info or to access, please visit www.at-ease.dva.gov.au

. 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery...



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

It is also dedicated to those members of the 1/83rd who did not return. We will never forget their sacrifice. Website: [http: www.1stbn83rdartyvietnam.com](http://www.1stbn83rdartyvietnam.com)



The Royal New Zealand Artillery Association

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

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

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