

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 8 August 2022 No 169

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**

2022 – 56 Years and the Detachment 131 Spirit Lives On: 1966 – 1971



1971 August's RTA'ers –

Gerard (David) Pires, Jorg Kiene, Jeff Evans,
sitting Rod Beasley - (photo taken by Rieny
Nieuwenhof) In background Peter Fielden and
maybe Capt Tim Ford.

Garry Chillingsworth getting serious about RTA'ing



Rieny Nieuwenhof - Firstly, in regard to RTA in August. I departed SVN on 5th August, 1971. I remember others on that day Rod Beasley, David Pires, Garry Chillingsworth, Laurie Darcy, Jorg Kiene and Capt Tim Ford.

. Vietnam Veterans Day – 18th August, 2022...

Derek Hinde – reports in...

"G'Day Paul, here are some pics of my Vietnam Veterans Day 18th of August 2022 here at Forster, Mid Coast in NSW.

We had a good turnout of many Veterans from Army, Navy and Airforce. Plus, their wives, families etc.

Regards. Derek Hinde. LBdr. # 2787403.SVN 68-69."



Mike Butler – “Hi Paul

Attached are a couple of photos from VV Day at the Shrine in Melbourne. Quite a good crowd and entertainment provided by Normie Rowe, John Schumann, Mike Brady, Denise Drysdale and Marcie Jones (remember them ??). Very cold and windy day and the entertainment went on a bit too long but a good day all the same. This was the last "official" ceremony at the Shrine for VV Day. I ran into Rieny Nieuwenhof and marched with him and the Geelong crowd Cheers, Mike Butler."



Ian Kennedy adds a couple more photos from Melbourne...



. **David Dougherty** – “Hi Paul,

Sorry for being a bit lax in forwarding these photos but hope that I am in time.

The ceremony was held on Sunday 21st and was well attended and included a number of local schools. It started with a march by a small group along the Cherry Tree Walk led by the piper to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The walk in itself is a memorial with 521 cherry trees originally planted. The main address was given by Tony Blake RAR 1970/71 in respect of an operation where they were called out from Nui Dat in APCs as another group was in serious trouble. A young lass from Moss Vale High School also gave a well-spoken address and the school should be proud of their achievements.

In the photos, the individual panel shown is the one containing the name of Jimmy Menz, his name being just past half way down on the left list.

Regards, David D.”





Give me a Name?

The “Lost Locator Project”

This Project is being re-ignited for 2022.

Our current list contains the names of **117** Locators (as at 01.01.22) 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

. **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 –

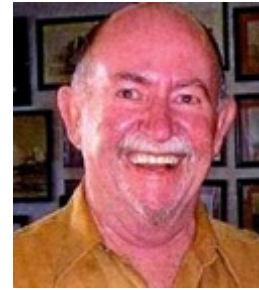
Paul Dickson at - 131eyesandears@gmail.com

Ed – The following is a continuation of a series, commenced in June's *Eyes & Ears*, taken from an unfinished book by Jeff Evans. Jeff gave the contents to Kevin Browning and he has made it available for us to publish in *Eyes & Ears* and to be archived on the Association's website.

NB – Please note that the contents are Jeff's words and have not been edited/alterd. You will see his “notes” and markings (eg. xxxxxxxxxxxxxx etc) needing further attention by him and so on. Please accept the fact that Jeff was fastidious in his research and still had so much information to follow up on, which included research of documents and interviews with fellow Gunners.

"Gunners in Vietnam, 1965-1971"

aka by Jeff initially as – “the book”



By Jeff Evans

Edited by Paul Dickson
in conjunction with Kevin Browning,

Chapter 6 Gunners on Operations

The first days at Bien Hoa were hectic. 173rd Abn had been given the task of deploying into the Bien Hoa area, securing ground, building an airfield, and holding the area for the arrival of the US 1st Infantry Division of 11 000 troops. The Bien Hoa base would eventually sustain a small city of thousands of troops and their equipment. The Australian battalion and the ANZ field batteries were to assist in the security of the base and were deployed on the perimeter.

“The allies worked to an exhausting schedule: ‘In a few days ... thousands of sandbags were filled, miles of wire laid, forests cleared and acres of stump blown. The monsoon started. Every afternoon the rains pelted down and reduced everything to a soup of red mud.’”¹

Harassing and Interdiction (H & I) fire was the order of the day for much of 105 Bty's time at Bien Hoa. These fire missions were primarily based on Intelligence received, from numerous sources, with the People Sniffer one of the primary sources. There were also times of significant activity from enemy sightings; nine missions were fired at enemy sightings on 16 Oct 66 for example. However, from 1600 hours on 23 October to 1815 hours on 25 October, some 35 missions were fired, all of them on H & I programs. No two days were the same.

Defensive preparations around the battery area had commenced on arrival and continued until around 12 Oct by which time a triple dannet double apron fence had been completed. Meanwhile the torrential rain prevented road-making altogether.

Some words here on the intervening 6 weeks before the next para.

On 16 Nov 65, having been in country for six weeks, 105 Bty submitted its first Report (to 1 RAR)¹. Generally, the Report was about deficiencies; four more of the 25 Set radios were required and two more 292 Elevated Aerials. The Gun Tannoy system withdrawn just prior to embarkation to effect modifications was urgently required. This resulted in the orders being given by loud-hailer, by day, with acknowledgements made verbally or by hand signal, but this was not practical at night. The Tannoy system comprised a loudspeaker and signal light at each gun and in the Command Post (CP). The CP could issue orders to the guns, and the guns could acknowledge the order by lighting their signal light, which would show in the CP. Similarly, the guns could talk to the CP to query orders or to make reports.

Two 2½ trucks were required for more efficient operations; one to tow the 200-gallon water trailer and the other for transporting ammunition from the Landing Zone (LZ), which could be some distance from the guns. Plus, there were always admin tasks – the movement of stores and personnel - for which the trucks would prove most useful.

The Report made mention of two critical factors: the first was the need for more spare sights for the guns, which were highly susceptible to fogging up (on the inside) in the humid weather and rain. This was a continual problem, and necessitated the use of a ‘humidity box’ (an enclosed box with a light bulb burning continuously – crude, but effective) in order to reduce, or disperse altogether, the fogging. This remained a problem until the L5 Pack Howitzer was replaced.

Secondly, there was a desperate need for guns to arrive in theatre already calibrated. The requirement to properly calibrate guns plagued the gunners until the decision was made, in 1967, to replace the Italian designed L5 Howitzer with the American M2A2 Howitzer. Thirty 105mm M2A2 guns were calibrated on Holsworthy range by 102 Bty prior to the guns' departure for Vietnam; LT Ian Ahearn commanded the guns and the shooting, while personnel from the School of Artillery provided the technical expertise for the conduct of the calibration shoot¹. Eventually, 24 guns were to serve in Vietnam; 18 in the three gun batteries, two were assigned for local defence tasks and four were held as a theatre reserve. The New Zealand artillery did not have M2A2 guns in service and so 161 Bty was loaned six guns for the duration of their tour in Vietnam.

¹ 1st Field Regiment Deploys to Nui Dat

¹ Ibid, p132

¹ Cecil, M. K., *Mud and Dust*. New Holland Publishers, 2009, p74

Chapter 7

Calibration

When a gun is developed, a set of 'Range Tables' are produced to accompany the gun during its time in service. The Range Tables tell us that, for a given elevation of the barrel, the gun will achieve a given range, under standard conditions. It will achieve this range because we know the muzzle velocity with which the gun fired the projectile. As the barrel of the gun progressively wears from firing, so the muzzle velocity will decrease, and so the range achieved will progressively decrease, and a correction must be applied to correct for the loss in range.

Before the advent of electronic means to measure the muzzle velocity, calibration was carried out by firing each gun, on a selection of charges, at previously established survey markers. The difference in range between the location of the survey markers and the mean point of impact of the 'fall of shot' of the gun was measured. This difference in range was converted to a difference in elevation required (for the gun) in order to move the mean point of impact onto the survey markers. The process was known as 'fall-of-shot' calibration.

This process was labour intensive, time consuming and very expensive in ammunition. The result of these constraints was that neither the guns of 105 Bty nor 1 Fd Regt were calibrated before movement to Vietnam. A huge effort was made by 105 Bty to do some sort of fall-of-shot calibration because their guns were not shooting together. (This does not instil confidence in the supported arm, infantry.) During November 1965, 105 Bty devoted the better part of nine days to calibration of their guns.

It was a frustrating time for the battery, as reported by MAJ Tedder. *"Our guns were NOT calibrated due to the last-minute rush of getting away. It was intended to calibrate immediately on arrival but this is not possible around Bien Hoa as all land except war zone D is heavily populated. ... As an expedient, the battery was calibrated on charges 7, 6, 5, and 4 using a precision adjustment technique onto a single well defined ranging point then converting variations in TE to variations in MV ... Fortunately ammunition expenditure was NOT a problem as it took over 600 rounds."* (Report in 105 Diary. For November)

During the period of the Task Force's involvement in Vietnam, two small radars, purpose designed to measure muzzle velocity - and end the need for elaborate calibration shoots - were invented. The first was the US Army M36 Chronograph, which the Task Force called upon on occasion, but it was an erratic machine which did not instil confidence in the result produced. The second was the Electronic Velocity Analyser (EVA) designed in the UK, and which the Australian Army purchased in 1970.

Chapter 8

Locating Artillery

An Overview

A potted history of the introduction and development of Locating Artillery is well covered by Keith Ayliffe and John Posener in *Tracks of the Dragon, A History of Australian Locating Artillery*. The regular battery, from which the locating troops for Vietnam service came, went through a number of name changes and by 1965, when National Service was announced, it was known as 131 Divisional Locating Battery (Div Loc Bty). The Vietnam element of the battery was to be known as Det (Detachment) 131 Div loc Bty which caused much confusion for the supply system for some time. In 1965, the battery comprised a Headquarters, a Survey Troop (of two Survey Sections), a Radar Troop (of three Radar Sections), three Artillery Intelligence sections, a Meteorological Section and a RAEME Workshop to maintain the equipment. With the plan to send a Survey Section, two Radar Sections, an Arty Int section with a small Workshop element, some 70 odd personnel, the battery was ordered to bring the manning to a wartime establishment of 231 personnel.

Sound Ranging, an Army Reserve Troop, was added to the battery later when it was decided to deploy a Sound Ranging capability in Vietnam. As far as personnel of the time can recall, there was no Met capability at that time. In 1970, the battery was also given responsibility for calibration of the regimental guns when a Doppler-radar velocity measuring device was introduced to service.

There was a further section of personnel which did deploy as part of Det 131 Div Loc Bty, but was never on the Order of Battle. It was the Sensor Section, raised from personnel who were originally Radar operators etc, but as the radars were withdrawn, they were seconded to Sensors.

The technical specifications and details of all equipment used by the detachment are more than adequately covered in Ayliffe and Posener's *"Tracks of the Dragon"*.

Mortar Locating Radar

An Overview

The Mortar Locating Radar Section deployed as part of Det 131 Div Loc Bty in May 1966. The Task Force Artillery Intelligence Office (Arty Int Office) and two radar sections were under the command of the Task Force Artillery

Intelligence Officer (TFAIO), CAPT Jim Townley. The Radar Section Commander was 2LT Andrew Opie, with Section Sgt Frank Perry, and the two detachment commanders were SGT's Fred Lennon and Don Simmons. CAPT Townley with 18 soldiers, accompanied with the equipment on HMAS Sydney, while the remainder of the section flew Qantas with 1 Fd Regt main body.

Designed and introduced to service in the US Marines in the mid 1950's, the AN/KPQ-1 Mortar Locating Radar did not enter service with the Australian Army until 1964, just 18 months before deployment to Vietnam. This led to some problems, mostly related to a lack of experience with, and knowledge about, the radar and its requirements for deployment. Radar Troop personnel had not the opportunity to deploy with gun batteries and regiments before deployment to Vietnam, with the result that the gun elements were not aware of the requirements for the radar; the space required, the time required, what the radar could and could not do technically, the time required to move a radar, the manning requirements, the noise of the generator 24 hours a day, and so on. The radar detachments were subject to the whims of the GPO's and/or local defence commanders, and this sometimes meant moving the radar around and changing the location, before they were allowed to fully deploy and settle into the position.

The mortar locating system comprised three components: the Radars to produce locations; soldiers everywhere, but primarily, appointed Listening Posts (LP), as the eyes and ears of the Radars; and the Arty Int Office, as the central control entity for both LP and Radars. The Arty Int Office also provided the link to Arty Tac (or the FSCC) and the guns. The focus for the radars was to locate enemy mortars firing. The TFAIO, co-located with Arty Tac, could order retaliatory fire onto the enemy mortars; this was called CB fire, and was designed to inflict casualties on the enemy, destroy equipment, and stop them from firing at our own troops. All three components operated on a 24-hour basis when the radars were 'in action'.

In action, the radar was in all respects ready to locate, but was not transmitting. The radar did not continuously sweep the skies, like airport radars, searching for targets. It was waiting for the operator to initiate transmissions and point it in the right direction. The radar was essentially manually operated, with a small search beam (320 mils wide and 89 mils high – about 18 degrees x 5 degrees). With such a limited search capacity, it had to be manually pointed in the right direction, and then manually locked onto a signal echoing from an enemy mortar bomb.

To get the radar pointed in the 'right direction' required soldiers to be listening. Two or more Listening Posts (LP), on hearing an enemy mortar fire, would measure a bearing to the sound, report it to the Arty Int Office, where the bearings would be plotted, an intersection obtained, and a 'search grid (square)' ordered to the Radar CP. Plotting the search grid gave the radar a search bearing; the radar was then turned to that bearing and the Transmitter turned on. When a target was sighted, the radar was 'locked onto' the mortar bomb and the radar would then 'track automatically' for about 8 seconds. When the mortar bomb had been tracked by the radar, a location was produced, and Counter Battery fire could then be directed toward the offending mortar. The process, from first firing of an enemy mortar to the application of Counter Battery Fire would, in good circumstances, take about four to five minutes.

Information from the 'track' was fed to the radar's Computer, which was programmed to assume that each mortar bomb in flight followed a parabola. The Computer therefore assembled the tracking information as a parabola. After 8 seconds of track, the Computer had sufficient information to 'form' the parabola (the mortar bomb trajectory), and the operator could then manually extrapolate (manipulate the computer) back along the parabola (trajectory) to the ground and produce a location.

Operation of the System

This was a very basic radar. It was subject to a number of limitations, and was slow to react. It would take 1½ minutes to produce a single location to a range of 8km over an arc of about 17 degrees, compared to present day system of 1½ seconds for a location to about 25km over an arc of 90 degrees, and track nine targets simultaneously.

The radar operated on valves; it was a (pre-digital) analogue system, which meant that everything about the radar was cumbersome. The individual parts were large and heavy, the cables were huge and the deployment time was about 90 minutes for a good detachment. The radar Antenna was mounted on a Pedestal, which was in turn mounted on a Tripod; all three parts were heavy (over 100kg), each requiring (at least) a four-man lift. The six boxes of 'electronics', each weighing between 45 and 81 kg, were (at least) a two-man lift. While the radar was not dug in, the radar Command Post was, and it was the same as digging in a gun Command Post. All of this was to be achieved with 11 people, 12 including the radar mechanic, if they were all available.

As one of the first purpose-designed mortar locating radars, the AN/KPQ-1 was not without its limitations. Some of these were:

It could only track one mortar bomb at a time, and was sometimes lured away from that bomb, by a stronger signal, before sufficient information had been gained to produce a location for the original target.

Rain badly affected the radar, effectively swamping the radar with unwanted signals, known as clutter.

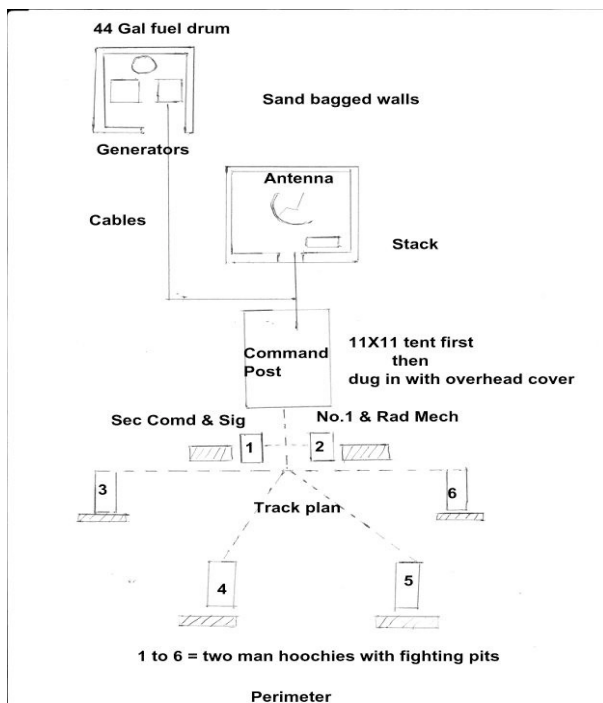
Humid, damp weather produced many a 'shorting' problem.

Too many mortar bombs in the radar beam also led to 'swamping'.

Without a crest to the front, to screen clutter from the ground, locating was difficult.

While it could not track artillery shells, the guns firing could also produce clutter and cause the radar to change targets before the original target had been tracked.

A schematic deployment of a Radar is shown below:



Deployment to South Vietnam

Movement of the radar section on board HMAS Sydney was without incident, but the radars did suffer from the ingress of moisture and sea spray on the trip. On arrival, the radar section assembled both radars in the South Vietnam Police Barracks compound at Vung Tau; both were non-operational (not functioning). *"Further problems were also encountered in preventing the ingress of moisture into sensitive areas of the sets eg cables and plugs, caused by heavy rain."*¹ Two drills were devised to counter these problems: the first was a liberal application of CRC 2-26 or carbon tetrachloride (water dispersing agents similar to WD-40), although the latter tended to distort the rubber plug fittings; the second was to seal the couplings (cable to component) with silicon grease once the radar was assembled.

At about the same time, a third radar arrived in crates; it is not clear if this radar arrived on board the HMAS SYDNEY or was flown in. This radar was held by Det 131 WKSPS in the role of a 'slave' radar for testing and for spare parts for the two operational radars (this set was also not operational on arrival). By 30 June, the end date of Operational Report Number 1, all three radars were operational, but not without *"long hours by the workshop detachment, the interchange of parts with the slave equipment, and a considerable amount of improvisation. The spare parts situation at present is extremely grave, as only two indents out of approximately 120 submitted have been satisfied."*¹

Movement to Nui Dat

On 'D Day' 1966 (6/6/66), the gunners moved by road convoy from Vung Tau to Nui Dat to deploy as part of 1 ATF. As with all elements of the Task Force, Nui Dat became home for the duration of unit tours of duty. *"Alpha Radar was originally deployed with 105 Fd Bty, and after much testing a new location between 161 Fd Bty Royal New Zealand Artillery (RNZA) and the Engineers in the south-east sector of the 1 ATF base was selected. This site was approximately 20 metres from the southern perimeter fence"*¹. Bravo radar deployed with 103 Bty. The choice of sites was limited by the deployment of the majority of the task force in the rubber plantation surrounding Nui Dat hill. However, both the guns and the radars required open spaces in order to shoot and locate respectively. Alpha radar personnel were rationed with the Engineers, while Bravo radar personnel were rationed with 103 Bty.

There were some adjustments in the siting of both radars, and by the end of June, Alpha Radar Command Post (CP) was dug in below ground, and then the rains came in July. The Command Post flooded and required Engineer assistance to pump the water out. Bravo Radar, learning from Alpha's problems, did not make the same mistake.

After many tests, the maximum range for tracking projectile was determined to be about 7000m on all systems. This was well below the manufacturers stated range of 10 000m. This was due in part to the fact that the surrounding landscape did not allow for screening or cresting angles, a technical requirement to enable the radar to reduce 'clutter'(interference) on the screen, thereby gaining a clearer view of the reflected signal from a mortar bomb.

Seeking better radar coverage of Nui Dat (from mortar attack), a reconnaissance of the Horseshoe feature was conducted with a view to establishing a third, alternate site. The reconnaissance consisted of deploying to the Horseshoe with a radar, selecting a number of possible sites, and testing the ability of the radar to track. This took two days and three sites were tested. A co-operative infantry mortar section fired to check the tracking of the radars. Using the Horseshoe feature as the 'crest' proved to be a success.

The radars were deployed near the task force perimeter which meant they had to man a strong point on the defensive perimeter. Like most gunner units, these tasks were not considered when determining the composition of units and the number of soldiers required. So, with a requirement to man a strong point and the CP 24 hours a day, surveyors of Det 131 (when they were not surveying) were used to bolster the numbers of the radar detachments. In Operational Report Number 1, CAPT Townley makes the case for *'four additional personnel: a Medical Assistant to bolster 1 Fd Regt RAP, a Cook for the regimental pool, a Vehicle Mechanic for the 16 vehicles and 19 trailers of Det 131, and a further Radar Mechanic'*.¹

With manning, the radar detachments had their own problems; the detachment was 11 men (12 with the RAEME Radar Mechanic), including three drivers and two signallers. Two members of the detachment were on duty 24 hours a day, once the radar was brought into action. When a search bearing was ordered, the minimum number of operators needed was four. It was essential that the drivers and signallers were also trained radar operators, and by good luck, or good management, the initial deployment personnel were so trained.

But it did not end there; each detachment had to provide one soldier for 'kitchen duties' to the local unit with whom they were rationed. Then, with Rest & Convalescence (R & C), R & R, preparing for Return to Australia (RTA) procedures, clearing patrols, checkpoint duty, or acclimatising having just arrived in-country, the numbers were again reduced. Both SGT Simmons and SGT Lennon stated their detachments were nine only. But these problems applied to all units, including non-gunner units; there were never enough soldiers for all of the jobs to be done effectively.

Maintenance

By the end of June, both radars were operating well and both had located enemy mortar positions, onto which CB fire was applied, but trouble was just around the corner. In July 66, the spare parts situation was critical; so much so, that CAPT Townley and WO1 Prenter (OC Det 131 Workshops) travelled to Da Nang to investigate channels for spare parts through the US Marine Corps. On arrival at 12th Marine Regiment Da Nang, they were informed that all seven of the unit's radars had been returned to the United States in June 1966. The Marine Corps advised that the AN/KPQ-1 was introduced into Vietnam in December 1964, building up to seven of the equipment by July 1965. However, it was found that never more than four of the equipment were serviceable at any one time. The representatives were informed that the recently introduced MPQ-4A Mortar Locating Radar was the replacement for the 'aging' AN/KPQ-1.

The Marine Corps retained some spare parts for the AN/KPQ-1 which had been left in country after their radars were shipped home. Following negotiations through Ordnance channels, and HQ in Saigon, these nine crates of spare parts were eventually purchased in September 1966. However, the hunt for parts did not end there, with the result that the following year, in May 67, two replacement AN/KPQ-1 systems arrived direct from the USA. By the end of June 1967, twelve months since their arrival in SVN, all three systems (Alpha, Bravo and the slave radar) were operational.

In the period, July-August 66, only one radar was in action for a considerable portion of the period and by now, the Bucknell generators used to power the radars were also suffering a lack of spare parts. However, the major problem with this generator was its inability to work for extended periods under full load or in enclosed areas, apparently sucking in its own exhaust gases and over-heating. Sandbagging (for protection and noise suppression) of this equipment could not be carried out. By November 1966 all Bucknell generators had been returned to Australia and replaced by six new Bucknell Diesel Generators which proved moderately successful.

The Onan Generator and McColl Generators were investigated as possible replacements, but neither worked well under load and both were petrol powered. American helicopters would not carry 44 gallon drums of petrol, so petrol generators were a hindrance. But, showing locator ingenuity, the Onan generators were used to run the air conditioning units in the radar command posts at Nui Dat, and for testing the radars by Det 131 Workshops.

Finally, the most significant administrative problem for Det 131 was the appalling mail service which led to a lowering of morale.

Deployment Problems

First, the field gunners of 1 Fd Regt were not used to deploying into Fire Support Bases (FSB). These bases were a US expedient for the Counter Revolutionary Warfare (CRW) setting of South Vietnam, which were adopted by the Australian Army. Everyone, including the field gunners and the mortar locating radar people, took some time to get used to the 'no-front-line' CRW setting. In later years, the GPO's, trained to be more aware of the radar's requirements, treated the radar as a seventh gun, allocated the radar a space, and integrated it into the Fire Support Base structure.

The second problem, following on from the first, was that field gunners (the GPO or local defence commander), had to make changes to their normal *modus operandi*, in order to accommodate the radars of Det 131 Bty. The parties had not trained together before Vietnam, but the GPO controlled the turf, and the radar detachments had to fit in as best they could.

The third requirement was rarely met – ideally, the radars needed a hill 'crest' some 700-1000 metres to their 'front'. There simply was no 'front', and there were no 'crests', except perhaps one – the Horseshoe feature. If the radar was deployed with a crest to the front, then unwanted signal reflections from the ground (called clutter) were markedly reduced and the ability to locate targets was enhanced. Even if crests were available, the guns had priority for deployment areas, and, generally, they wanted flat open areas for their FSB's such that they could shoot unhindered throughout 360 degrees. So the crest aspect of the technical requirement of the radars could only ever be met when they were deployed to the south of the Horseshoe feature, and were searching to the north of that feature.

The final problem was the noise of the radar's generator, which ran 24 hours a day. The noise of a generator would not seem to be a problem on a gun position, where the noise of a 105mm guns firing is significant. However, the noise of the generator was seen as 'giving the position away' at night. One detachment tells of being ordered to stop the generator as it was keeping everyone awake, just when an H & I mission from the guns was in progress¹. Digging the generator in or sandbag walls around the generator to reduce noise was tried, but the generator was having none of this - it choked on its own exhaust fumes and overheated.

Movement

A. Vehicle or Road Transport

Each Radar Section contained seven Landrovers; one with the Section Commander (a long wheelbase general service vehicle), and three for each Radar Detachment. To this was added the workshops vehicle, a special purpose vehicle for the radar mechanic. The three radar detachment vehicles included a troop carrier general service Landrover, although when loaded there was little to no room for passengers, (see following photo of the GS vehicle fully loaded) and a trailer fitted to carry the generator. Then there were two special purpose radar vehicles to carry components of the radar. They were capable of carrying only the driver and a passenger in the front seats.

Below is a typical road move for the AN/KPQ-1 and support staff, departing the Horseshoe feature on 8 January 1968 at the completion of Operation Forrest. The first vehicle in line is the workshops vehicle for the radar mechanic, with spare parts and a second generator: one radar operator would normally travel in the front seat of this vehicle (referred to as the 'shotgun'). The following three vehicles are the radar detachment vehicles and trailers. The three radar vehicles were required to carry not only the radars but also the radar manning of 11 personnel and their kit, defence stores, rations and at least one 44-gallon drum of generator fuel. Therefore, any road move would usually mean that the section commander's vehicle (last vehicle in picture) would be employed to ease the loads, and to carry some of the radar crew.

Photo required

b. Air Movement/Transport

In October 1967, a special fibre glass 18 X 10 Foot Air Dispatch (AD) platform/pallet designed for air deployments arrived in country and trial lifts of the radar equipment began. On completion of the trials, the AD equipment was handed to Det 131 for maintenance and storage. A helicopter Landing Zone (LZ) was cleared and all AD equipment was maintained and stored there. Nearly all deployments were conducted by air in 1968 with road being the main method of deployment in 69.

The airlift of the equipment was accomplished in two lifts by CH-47 Chinook helicopters:

Lift One

Internal comprised the radar section with personal equipment and weapons. The number would vary depending on the inclusion of an LP and/or the Section Commander travelling with the radar. Generally, the load would comprise eight radar operators plus four LP personnel.

External loads used the air dispatch pallet. The two radar vehicles were especially built to accommodate the various parts of the radar (tripod, pedestal, antenna, electronics boxes, etc) with their own straps and tie-down points. One complete set of these 'tray bodies' had been removed from the vehicles and attached to the air dispatch pallet. For air movement, the various radar pieces could then be loaded onto their own accommodating framework, as if being loaded onto a Landrover.

Photo required

The Chinook would land and radar section personnel would board. The Chinook would then hover over the external load where the radar No 1 would 'hook-up' the load. The No 1 would then be lifted into the Chinook through the open lifting bay, by the loadmaster. This system worked well until, at one extraction from a FSB, Air Dispatch personnel were appalled to see an unqualified sergeant doing this hook-up operation. They ordered the radar No.1 into the Chinook and proceeded to carry out the hook-up'. Unfortunately, the Air Dispatch person stood on the Antenna unit (it being central), cracking two of the radar reflecting dishes. Then the lift straps caught a feed horn to the reflecting dish on the antenna, ripping it out of place.

On another extraction, orders were received to load an infantry section with the radar operators. When the pallet was about 15 meters above the ground it was released by the loadmaster as there was too much weight on board. Both these actions added to the never-ending effort to maintain operational radars. (for photo sequence of LIFT 1 see Annex –AIR LIFT 1 SEQUENCE)

Lift Two

The section commander's Landrover, complete with trailer, was lifted externally in slings. One generator was loaded onto the trailer and second generator was loaded into the vehicle. One 44-Gal Drum of fuel (for radar generator) and smaller equipment were lashed inside the vehicle.

This external lift was the recommended method following the conduct of trials. However, on the first attempt, the Chinook came down too low and sat on the trailer causing extensive damage, while the generator exhaust pipe pierced the underside of the Chinook with considerable damage. The result was that Lift 2 became an internal load for the Landrover and trailer, with two generators loaded on board, and the fuel was carried as a slung load in a cargo net.

Det 131 Workshops devise a third method such that they could move a radar (under repair) around the Task Force area to test it for serviceability. With the radar so mounted, on a US truck on loan with the generator towed behind, the Task Force had possibly the first self-propelled radar in existence.

Photo needed

Locating with the Radar

On 6 June, 1966, at about 2000hrs, the first location of an enemy mortar by Det 131 Radars occurred when an Australian clearing patrol was fired upon by an enemy mortar south east of Nui Dat. After a long day of moving to Nui Dat, and setting up, Alpha Radar was conducting tests on the radar and was laid on a bearing coincident with the direction to the enemy mortar. Although the radar computer was not functioning correctly, and the servo drives for the antenna failed to work, Alpha was able to determine a range and bearing from which the grid reference could be obtained. The radar No 1, SGT Don Simmons, sent in a Locrep to Arty Tac and at the same time alerted his mates in 103 Bty to come to a stand-by bearing. Arty Tac confirmed the threat and ordered 103 Bty to commence CB fire, which silenced the enemy mortar. While Sgt Don Simmons was congratulated for his quick thinking, he was also reminded firmly that there was a correct reporting method, which must be used in future.

On 9 June, the Task Force received its first enemy mortaring incident. Locreps were recorded by one radar. There is no record on the number of rounds fired or any damage caused. Air strikes are conducted by the USAF on the locrep, which was the deserted village of Long Phouc. Army Intelligence also suspected this to be a Viet Cong base.

On 12 June, an enemy mortaring incident occurred with a locrep obtained by a radar, which recorded the baseplate as being near the village of Hoa Long. No record of CB fire recorded.

More of this???

Counter Battery (Mortar) Fire

One might think that five minutes to produce a location in the 70's was a pretty good time, and that the VC/NVA would need to be very careful - quick to shoot and depart. However, there is evidence that the VC were not that clever with their mortar crew training, or their recognition of the capability of our guns in retaliation. The Jul-Aug Operational Report of the OC Det 131 is illuminating:

"A technique which has been developed to meet the mortar threat may be of interest. US studies and experience backed up by the experience of BC 105 Fd Bty (MAJ Peter Tedder) have led to the following conclusions:

Viet Cong knowledge of gunnery techniques is in the main very poor. Normal method of employing a mortar seems to be that the enemy are directed to a well-defined ground feature eg, a clearing, creek junction, track junction.

They are then ordered to set up their weapon and fire in a certain direction.

Any form of counter mortar retaliation directed in the vicinity of the firing position will normally cause the attack to be broken off¹."

The Report follows up with US evidence that those mortar attacks of the longest duration were those for which no retaliation had been fired. This seems an obvious conclusion.

By the end of August there was a new CB Fire Plan, based on the outcome of the US studies, and a new CB system in place. The new system allowed a time for locating devices to operate, before the retaliatory fire commenced. This was to prevent 'swamping' of the radar with multiple targets, as occurred on the night of 16 August. That night, 1ATF received the first attack from incoming mortars and rockets, the prelude to Long Tan on the following day. The one working radar (Bravo) was unable to produce a location because there were multiple mortar firings on the one hand, and retaliatory gunfire on the other. However, the newly adopted CB Fire Plan proved a success in that the guns, without a definite location from the radars, were ordered to fire on a 'likely' location produced from mortaring reports from LP's. The mortar and rocket fire onto 1ATF ceased.

This mortar and rocket attack on the task force base was the prelude to the Battle of Long Tan. Some 'x' rockets and mortars were fired into the Task Force base, causing 24 wounded with two of those seriously wounded. The action was recorded as follows:

2:43 am. - Det 131 LP 31A reports "MORTREP" (a mortar firing report). 1ATF is put on alert.

2:44 am. - Det 131 LP 31C reports MORTREP.

2:45 am - Bravo Radar is ordered a search bearing; Alpha Radar out of action. Bravo Radar reports "Searching"

2:50 am - 1 Fd Regt conducts Counter Battery fire. This first engagement is fired on information supplied by Det 131LP's and co-ordinated with the CB fire plan prepared by the TFAIO.

4:10 am - 1 Fd Regt CB fire ceases.

Bravo Radar failed to record a LOCREP (a location of a mortar) although many bombs were 'seen' on the screen. Clutter and swamping prevented the radar from tracking any one mortar bomb to produce a location. This was probably the first real test of the radar; not only the number of projectiles on the screen, but also the heavy rain. These were inherent problems for the radar.

The benefits of mortars are twofold; first, they are generally light, man-portable, easy to operate and deploy, and simple to use. Second, a reasonably skilled team can fire some 15-20 mortar bombs per minute. In three minutes, they can fire 45-60 bombs, and still have time to pack up and scurry away before the retaliatory Counter Battery fire arrives on their position; of course, this only works if they have been trained and advised of the CB time frame. This was an ideal weapon for the VC and NVA units. The smaller rockets in the VC arsenal were similarly employed.

25 December – Alpha radar section would spend XMAS at the HORSESHOE, with drinks supplied by (the very appropriately named) Whiskey Company, New Zealand Infantry.

The book continues next month with "Chapter 9 – "Artillery Survey".

As the series continues, you are invited to submit your own recollections and as Kevin mentioned to me there is a bit of a lack of information as to activity in Artillery Tactical HQ (Arty Tac), so efforts of recollections there is more than welcome.

Also, please feel free to submit to me any factual errors you detect.

Paul Dickson: 131eyesandears@gmail.com

. 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

RTA Project for 2022

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

Just off the top of my head – RTA'd in an August were –

1966 – Tom Checkley (KBA)

1967 – Murray Poustie

1968 - Graeme Smith, Murray Smale, Peter Teather

1969 - Edward Henson, Robert Ramsay, Graeme Salter, Roger Stanley, Ralph Mitchell, William Laughlin, Peter Clarke, Kenneth Halligan, Gary Stratton

1970 - Chris Chapple, Richard Chaplin, John Browne, David Reilly, David Negus, Stephen Hall, Lindsay Black (Late), Anthony Sheldrake, Kevin Heenan, Marcus Robertson, Adrian Spencer, Robert Miller (Late), Leon Djatschenko, Leslie Connell (Late), Kenneth Sanderson, Karl Doehermann (Late), Wesley Hindmarsh, David Dacre

1971 - David Pires, Peter Fielden, Rieny Nieuwenhof, Neville Davis, Roger Whittacker (Late), Norman McManus (Late), Johan Molenkamp, Tim Ford, Gary Chillingsworth, Jorg Kiene, Laurence D'Arcy, Rod Beasley

OK, I can't come up with any more; anyone else got ideas? August was fairly full-on!

I've seen some group ones 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.

AN INVESTIGATION

181 Days



. The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (RVCM)

This is just a continuing update with regards to the progress being made with the submissions on behalf of Defense Force Members, who for no reasons of their own, were not awarded The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (RVCM) –

Richard Barry AOM forwarded the following document as a brief, which formulated the continuing skeleton for the basis of the submission of the RVCM –

"SHORT STATEMENT OF THE RVCM CASE:

Issue:

Mr Barry OAM, on behalf of some 3,000 ex-National Servicemen who served in the Vietnam War for at least 60 days, seeks the belated award of the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (RVCM). These people were returned home, due only to the impending expiry of their lawful term of National Service, but before serving the 181 days of operational service. They had all done their duty according to Australian law.

Discussion:

There continues to be distress amongst affected NS personnel whose return before serving 181 days in SVN was due solely to the expiration of their NS obligation.

These men had no legal obligation to extend that service, and seek to be recognised by this award for serving in SVN for freedom and democracy, under Australian law. They convincingly raise the analogy of the United States 'end-of-war' provisions, which provide for RVCN eligibility for certain personnel after 60 days' service in theatre.

They demonstrate the overriding power of Australia to determine eligibility for its own personnel in a manner that is true to the spirit of the award but does not unbendingly adhere to the criteria.

With support from then-Ministers Gee and Dutton, the matter had almost reached its approval stage when the 2022 Election intervened. There continues to be overwhelming support from all sides of politics, and it is time to now "get it done".

Given the fact that final consideration by the previous Government was on the cusp of reaching approval for the issue of the RVCN to these men, there is now a high expectation that the new Government will pick up the ball and immediately cross the line with it. This is especially so in view of the many senior and other Labor figures' written promises – eg "I can assure you that Federal Labor supports your campaign to have the RVCN awarded to around 3,000 former National Servicemen who, like you, served in the Vietnam War for more than 60 days but less than the 181 days currently required to receive this medal, on the grounds of individual justice, fairness and equity."

(Mark Dreyfus, MP 11 August 2021) "As a nation, the least we can do now is to give these veterans the recognition they deserve and allow them to lawfully and proudly wear the RVCN when they march on Anzac Day next year"

(Senator Wong 28 Oct 21)"

with similar from **Shorten, Kitching and Templeman** and many others.)

Legal Context:

Senator Scarr's and **Mr Kolomeitz's** letters to then-Minister Gee place the case in solid legal context, and provide a more detailed argument in support of these men.

Subsequently Senator Scarr wrote to Minister Keogh in similar terms.

No new Entitlements:

Other than to wear the medal, there would be no entitlements at all attached to approval, and the cost would be minimal.

Paul Dickson

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained."

The following is a submission made by Allen Morley on behalf of the Association in support of not only Detachment members, but all Vietnam Veterans affected by this decision...



119 Riverview St
RIVERVIEW NSW 2066

August 27, 2022

The Hon Matt Keogh

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel

Parliament House

Canberra

Dear Minister

131 Locators Association Inc is an organisation representing those soldiers from Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery (131DLB) who served in South Vietnam from 1966 to 1971. The total number of Detachment members over that period was 476 soldiers. My own combat service as a National Serviceman was from May 1967 to February 1968.

The Detachment comprised both National Servicemen and Regular soldiers, with a small majority of the former. The replacement of serving soldiers at Nui Dat reflected both particular specialist needs, and particularly the service time remaining of their two-year National Service period.

This situation led to soldiers serving combat periods ranging from several months to a full year. 131DLB soldiers were specialist trained in anti-mortar radar operation, listening post operation, survey tasks, RAEME and artillery intelligence. Soldiers from the Detachment operated at various locations within the task force perimeter as well as on operations. A more detailed analysis of the Detachment can be found at www.131locators.org.au

Many of the 131DLB soldiers served in the combat zone for less than the 365 days due to both the National Service obligation period and specific requirements across the broad spectrum of specialist needs for the detachment. As a consequence, a number of 131DLB soldiers did not serve in the warzone for the required days deemed necessary for the award of the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (RVCM). That particular situation should in no way detract from their contribution to the detachment and the Taskforce. And yet, there has been a stigma attached to those soldiers who served less than the arbitrary time required to receive the medal. On Anzac Day, an ex-131DLB soldier may ask why a former Detachment acquaintance is not wearing their RVCM. Such a question inadvertently casts the shadow of doubt upon that Vietnam Service Medal-less status.

On behalf of members of 131DLB, our request is that those soldiers who previously were unfairly and unreasonably denied the right to wear the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, now be given the right to legitimately wear the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal whatever their duration of warzone service served. That would be a reasonable outcome for a non-belligerent battle fought for more than 50 years seeking justice to that group of soldiers.

I look forward to you taking the required action to ensure that this disenfranchised group of soldiers receive the right and privilege to proudly wear the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal that they rightfully earned.

Yours sincerely

Allen Morley

Allen Morley
President 131 Locators Association



Mail Call...

. Grahame Dignam forwarded on the following email sent to him by Bill Taggart (1st/83rd Battery fame) with reference to an expanded cover of effects from Agent Orange –

“In case you missed it, our so-called representatives in Congress finally passed the PACT Act on Tuesday night and now it will go the President to be signed. As you probably are aware, this will have an impact on many of us as it adds some things to the list of Agent Orange presumptive disease perhaps most notably they have added hypertension. Here are 2 links on this, the one is a CNN news report and the other is from the VA website...

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/02/politics/senate-vote-burn-pits/index.html>

<https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/>

Bill’

. **David Dougherty** - Hi Paul,

I have attached a copy of my transcription of the article that was in Reveille along with an additional reference from a later edition. I had scanned the pages but have somewhere deleted one of them so I have not included these. I had transcribed the article for an elderly cousin of Carolyn. His father was in the British Army in WW1 and in WW2 put down his age to join the Australian Army. One of the unfortunates captured at Singapore and killed at Sandakan on 10 June 1944.

Plus, here is a link to the Imperial War Museum with a short video explaining sound ranging in WW1 by them.

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/sound-ranging-explained>

And the AWM if you have a ½ hour to spare, includes radar and SR

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a2gki6xRsew>

You may be able to pull something out of these to give an intro into the development of sound ranging's beginnings in WW1.

Regards,
David.

“Part of article from AWM WARTIME Issue 74

BRITISH INTELLIGENCE; THE SOMME

COLLECTING INTELLIGENCE

Front-line sources were the cornerstone of the intelligence system directed against the German army. At the most basic level, the British used binoculars and telescopes to observe their enemy's comings and goings. In 1916, these observation systems were not particularly sophisticated, and much of the work was delegated to units rotating through the front rather than to specially trained observers. Since 1914, German artillery had been monitored by flash-spotters who triangulated gun positions by watching for their fire; in early 1916 this system had been standardised across the BEF front. **Complementing this work were sound-rangers who located German guns through the noise of their firing (see Wartime Issue 51). This system took a significant step forward in 1916 with the introduction of a new microphone that allowed better filtering of background noise.** All these methods of collecting intelligence were passive and relied on the Germans revealing themselves through their activity, but as the war went on, the Germans became adept at camouflaging themselves from both observation and flash-spotting.

More proactively, the British captured enemy soldiers, either in trench raids or during larger attacks. Some Germans would also oblige the British by deserting, but their numbers were always low. To obtain and then exploit the information that could be gathered from these soldiers, the BEF had developed simple interrogation systems. Before 1916 the number of captives was fairly low, so it was possible to subject a large proportion of them to questioning by German-speaking intelligence officers. However, during the battle of the Somme the number of Germans to be interrogated increased dramatically during attacks, and the system was overwhelmed. Collecting stations known as "cages" were established close behind the front. Here hundreds of German soldiers could be searched, questioned briefly by German-speaking non-commissioned officers, and prisoners of particular interest could be passed on to the experienced interrogators. By rummaging through prisoners' clothing, the British also found large quantities of documents. Some of these, such as marked maps or written orders, were used immediately to inform tactical decisions. Diaries and letters were subjected to closer examination to reveal information about morale or even about conditions on the German home front. Individually, a prisoner or his papers were rarely very revealing, but collectively these snippets could provide useful insight into the German army.

Article from AWM WARTIME Issue 51

LAWRENCE BRAGG AND SOUND-RANGING

A brilliant Australian played a crucial but unrecognised role in the Great War **By John Jenkin**

Author

John Jenkin is Emeritus Scholar, La Trobe University, Melbourne, and author of *William and Lawrence Bragg, father and son* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

In 1884 a quiet, modest student from rural Cumbria in England graduated with first-class honours in the most famous and competitive examination in Britain, the Mathematical Tripos at Cambridge. When he was unable to find a college fellowship or a suitable job, William Henry-Bragg pursued his growing love of physics with experimental work in the Cavendish Laboratory. His foresight was rewarded the following year when he was appointed to the combined professorship of mathematics and physics at the University of Adelaide. He was just 23 years old, but the university's gamble on him was to pay handsome dividends.

On his very first day in Adelaide, William Bragg was taken to meet the only other notable scientist in the colony, Charles Todd, his wife, Alice, and their six children. He quickly fell in love with their third daughter, Gwendoline, whom he married three years later. They had two sons,



William Lawrence and Robert Charles and a daughter, Gwendy. William Lawrence later took to calling himself Lawrence to distinguish himself from his father.

In this period, William Bragg matured to become the university's most talented teacher and Adelaide's most respected public figure, captivating large audiences with his public lectures on the newly discovered X-rays and radio. He began serious research in 1904 and quickly became a world figure with his studies of alpha-particles from radioactive decay and his suggestion that X-rays and gamma-rays were particles rather than waves, as most scientists believed.

Lawrence was a carbon copy of his father: quiet, reserved and exceptionally talented in mathematics. He entered Adelaide University at the age of 15 and graduated at the end of 1908 with first-class honours in mathematics, most of his instruction coming from his father. Within weeks the family sailed for England. His father had finally accepted the inevitable offer to return home, and Lawrence would go to Trinity College, Cambridge.

Their new world was overturned in 1912 when news arrived from Germany that X-rays had been diffracted, apparently proving that they were waves, not particles. Father and son dropped everything and created two new fields of science, X-ray spectroscopy and X-ray crystallography; they dominated the latter for the next 50 years. With it, scientists would discover the arrangement of atoms inside materials of all kinds: from the simplest, NaCl or common salt, to moon rocks and then DNA.

But just as their collaboration was peaking, their research stalled with their involvement in the Great War: William to attempt (unsuccessfully) to detect German submarines by listening underwater for the sound of their engines, Robert to die on Gallipoli, and Lawrence to undertake a special scientific assignment in Flanders.

The French had several undeveloped schemes to detect the positions of the devastating but unseen German artillery by recording the sound of their firing; Lawrence was asked to see if he could make one scheme work in practice. He bravely decided to pursue the most accurate but most complicated plan. At each major location along the front, six microphones were ultimately placed close to the trenches, each connected to one string of a six-string electrometer at the rear. When a German gun fired, the sound would reach each microphone at a different time, depending on how far it was from the gun, and its string would vibrate briefly.

When a gun fired, a forward observer would start a motion-picture camera, which photographed the electrometer and its strings. Figure 1 shows a section of film used to record a German howitzer firing, the report reaching the first microphone nearly a second earlier than the last microphone. Using the known speed of sound, the timing for each string could be converted into distance over the ground.

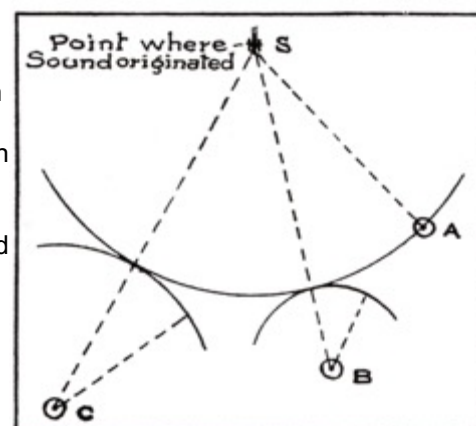
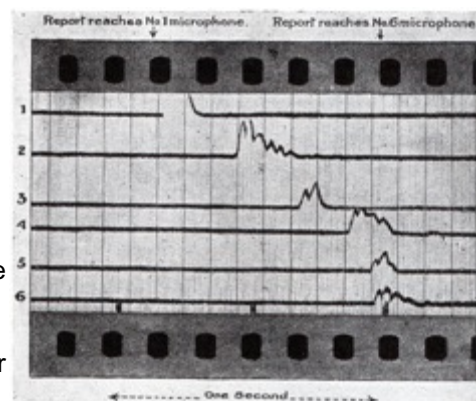
Figure 2 is a simple diagram of the sound-ranging method. The sound reached microphone A first (number 1 in Figure 1), followed by the microphones more distant from the gun. On a map, a circle was drawn around the position of each microphone, the radius of the circle being the distance calculated from the time the sound took to reach that microphone. These data should have enabled a large circle to be drawn, passing through A and touching all the other circles, the centre of this circle revealing the position of the gun. But the mathematics involved was very difficult, and it became necessary to develop a simpler method. Lawrence Bragg was able to show that the centre could be found with sufficient accuracy by using six cords stretched across the map, one for each microphone. Their intersection then marked the position of the gun (dashed lines in Figure 2).

Initially there were severe difficulties. The wires connecting the microphones to the recorder were vulnerable, the wind sometimes blew the sound away, and the early carbon microphones easily picked up the useless sound of the shell as it passed overhead but failed to record the sound of the gun. Conditions were often atrocious, and the early maps were inaccurate.

Lawrence persisted, month after dreadful month, close to the front. His brother and his dearest friend were killed elsewhere. Another telegram arrived to say that he and his father had been awarded the 1915 Nobel Prize in physics, but he allowed himself only one bottle of wine provided by the local *cure*. And then the breakthrough came; it would change the war.

Lawrence noticed that he was lifted off the toilet if he was sitting there when a six-inch gun fired close by; and one of his new staff, Corporal Tucker, noticed that as he lay on his camp bed a jet of cold air blew across his face, coming in through a hole in their hut. Bragg realised that the gun's sound wave had a very low frequency but was also of high pressure, and this suggested a new kind of microphone. Tucker was a physicist and had been working in London on the cooling of fine wires by air currents. In the new design, an electrically heated wire was stretched across a hole in a rum jar or an ammunition box. The gun's sound wave cooled the wire and changed its resistance, which was picked up on the film at the recording station.

Lawrence recalled later: "I will never forget the thrill of seeing the first record, in which the shell-wave hardly made the galvanometer string quiver, while the gun-wave gave an enormous kick. The real success of our sound-ranging dated from that day." It was June 1916, and by September all his sections along the front were using them. Other problems



were steadily overcome or minimised. Attempts by the other combatants on both sides to develop a similar system were distinctly inferior.

After a bitter winter, hostilities resumed in early 1917, a period Trevor Wilson has called "the killing time". In his major study, *The myriad faces of war* (1986), Wilson wrote:

If one thing had changed markedly ... it was the quantity and effectiveness of artillery fire ... not least in suppressing the artillery of the enemy ... This was consequent on the development by scientists, mathematicians, and gunners of such devices as flash-spotting and sound-ranging, the latter one of the most potent factors in the development of counter-battery work towards the excellence it eventually attained.

By 1918 Lawrence Bragg's sound-ranging had improved further. When German troops returned from the Eastern Front they made major advances but became overstretched, however, and the battle turned for the last time. Wilson wrote: *On 8 August two-thirds of British shells were directed at the German artillery ... With devastating effects, the British gunners unleashed an unregistered bombardment on enemy batteries ... the Amiens battle opened, despite poor visibility, with British shells falling with deadly precision upon the enemy's carefully concealed artillery pieces.*



At left: Australian gunners of the 2nd Siege Battery in action near Voormezele in September 1917. AWM E00694

One of Wilson's students, Jackson Hughes, concluded that 'the Royal Artillery ... proved to be the decisive force in dislodging the German armies from the Hindenburg line'.

Lawrence Bragg's men and equipment had finally triumphed. He would return to academic life, and at only 28 he had a daunting record: Adelaide BA, Cambridge BA, MA, and Trinity College lectureship and fellowship; the Barnard (USA) and Italian Medals and the Nobel Prize; articles and a book on X-ray crystallography with his father; military commissions to the rank of Major, Officer Commanding British sound-ranging, MC, OBE, and three times Mentioned in Despatches. He would be appointed Professor of Physics at Manchester and then Cambridge, both in succession to Ernest Rutherford, and conclude his career at the Royal Institution in London. His Cambridge staff would win a number of Nobel Prizes, not least Crick and Watson for the structure of DNA.

The shy but hugely talented Australian youth was now a mature, confident and assertive man of major significance. But he had been very close to the trenches in the notorious Ypres salient for 18 months, and had driven along the front many, many times thereafter. He saw everything and missed very little. Few participants came away unscathed; even fewer understood shell shock or how to handle it. One of Lawrence's daughters told me she sometimes woke in the night to hear her father's anguish. He could be like a volcano, she said, threatening to erupt at any moment, finally exploding in a rage, and then falling into a period of deep remorse.

Perhaps the flash-spotters, sound-rangers and other support troops have not received adequate recognition; certainly, Lawrence Bragg's contribution has never been adequately acknowledged, partly because sound ranging remained secret for decades, partly because earlier historians neglected the role of the guns, and partly because he was "a colonial". In Australia, his extraordinary life in science and in war is also largely unknown. This should change."

Memories of Mates...

Vale

...here are some responses to Vale postings in July's edition of *Eyes & Ears* –

. David Dolye's email – ...*Pat Gowan's Vale* –

"Hi Paul

I would like to give you a little history of (Paddy) Patrick Gowans Major [BC 1964-1966] was a breath of fresh air when he came to the battery replacing the (Swamp Fox) W.N.F. Reid (Major) [BC 1963-1964]. Bruno had just replaced Dick

Matthews as BSM (1963) and having been a gunner most of his life intended to get the Battery a lot more regimented than old Dickie Matthews had.

I marched out of my gun coarse at the School and up to North Fort (NF) as a Signaller (26 Jul, 1963). This was not for long as Bruno took over and had a heart to heart interview with all the troops and I was then posted as a Battery Surveyor (27 Nov, 1963).

I also believe this was when we broke away from the Pentropic Division to cover for the influx of troops under the National Service scheme and the Army reforming under the Task force that we served in South Vietnam as a regular Unit with no CMF attachments.

It was not until Sep 1964 I was then called into the BSM office which was beside the BC in the larger of the buildings at NF and asked would I like to go to Malaya as a BDR signaller to 111 Bty they were based at Maleeka (I think) I was given 24 hrs to get back to BSM. (that was on a Friday so I had most of the weekend to make my decision with my girlfriend who later became my 1st wife) and I decided to go to Malaya as a single person. Come the Monday Morning I marched into the BSM office who then paraded me into the BC office and told to take a seat. I was congratulated on being promoted to BDR by BC and asked where I would like to be posted and I said that I thought that I had one option and that was 111 Bty Malaya, but no I was offered another and that was as an RDI to Puckapunyal to 2RTB for the first two intakes of NS training. I said that after the weekend I had decided to take the posting to Malaya as a single person for 2 years. Well Bruno got in my ear and said that he wanted the best for me as one of his NCO's that I should go to Pucka. Get the experience and come back to the Bty as I would be fully qualified for promotion to SGT. To which end the BC said he had to agree with the BSM even though he thought that Malaya would broaden my employment in Artillery by a posting to 111 BTY.

I was posted to 2RTB on (29 March, 1965) returning to the BTY on 12 December 1965 as a Surveyor Arty. When I came back to the BTY in 1965 I was not down to go for the first Det to SVN. I was to be promoted when they left and be with the second Detachment but a series of adverts arose and a BDR was withdrawn and I did go with the first Det. The problem with this was I knew most of the regulars but none of the NS servicemen who I got to know when we arrived in country. That was not a problem as we all got on well together as a team in LP Bravo with our home in 5RAR of which we operated as the only LP during our stay in SVN to have the most operations of any LP in our Detachment.

I was to run into Brigadier Patrick Gowans (Retired) when I was vice chairman of Clubs NSW some years later and we were at Government House for a function with the then Premier, Bob Carr, who I knew quite well having been mentioned in parliament several times (good and bad) and Pat asked if I could introduce him to Bob which I did and we spent the rest of the afternoon on the veranda having a nice ol chat about his military career. He was the same Paddy Gowans that I knew in 131 many years before. Paddy and I met on several occasions after this as he lived close to the city and when I came down from the bush we would have a coffee.

I was truly sorry to hear of his passing.

I was also lucky to receive a few phone calls from Bruno who happened to live just down the road from my first wife at Dora Creek and we had a good chat on the phone reminiscing about old times and our journey through our military careers. I thank them both for their input into my career with the military may they both RIP as they were both good soldiers and I enjoyed their company after all we had been through together. David Doyle OAM."

...then onto Gary Navas's Vale -

This photo appeared in Gary Navas's Vale – and it prompted an email from me –

"We have a query as to the identification of Gary in the photo in *Eyes & Ears* relating to the Vung Tau Censor course (page 23). The suggestion is that Gary did not have a moustache?

Can any of you lend a hand?

I've attached a copy of August's Eyes & Ears

Paul



Gary

Original Australian Unattended Ground Sensor / Sensor Course Participants - ARVN Signals School, Vung Tau.
Back-Standing-L to R: Pfc Ryder, USA; Pfc Rosenfeldt, USA; Cpl John Anderson; Captain Norm Gomm; Gnr Stuart Telford.
Bombardier Albert Jacka; Gnr John Lucas; Gnr Laurie Mion; Major Cooper, USA; Gnr Warren Jaenke;
Frontrow squatting-L to R: Pfc Patterson, USA; Gnr Geoff Carthew; Sgt John Brewer; L/Bombardier Jeff Bassard;
Gnr Gary Navas; L/Bombardier Richard Edwards; Sergeant, 1st Class Oliveri, USA. Taken 10/11 July 1970 - Vung Tau.

...here's a response -

John Lucas – “Hi Paul, I think I remember Gary having a moustache, however, my memory on whether he did during his time in Vietnam is vague.

In the sensor course pic (above), he has a moustache, however, he doesn't have one in the pic taken at the Horseshoe. He didn't have a moustache in 2019 either when most of our group, “the funny little lot”, caught up for a few days around ANZAC Day 2019 in Currumbin, so I guess I'm not much help! I have attached a photo of that event, at the Currumbin Surf Club. Gary is forth from the right proudly wearing his 131 Div Loc Bty polo.

Our group name “the funny little lot” was given to us when we turned up at Holsworthy Barracks from North Head core training and no one was expecting us and consequently no one knew what to do with us. If I remember correctly we were just put in a hut and left there for a day or two until someone up the chain realised we were there. Our welcome to 131.

As you do, we began referring to ourselves as the funny little lot from then on and we still do!



Currumbin Surf Club: L-R. Grahame Smith, Blair Sheppard, Alasdair Gough, Mike Davis, Ron Boaler (from his sunglasses up), John Lucas, Ted Jux, Rob Torrisi, **Gary Navas**, Chris Brazier, Warren (Pop) Jaenke and Eric Williams
Cheers, John (Jack)”

Jeff Schafer – “Hi Paul,

Regarding Jeff Evans' discussion of Arty Tac/FSCC, I have a clear recollection of my one and only overnight stays surveying in a fire support base in 1969, where the Kiwi gunners increased their rate of fire when a small spotter plane flew across the terrain in front of them.

Cheers, Jeff Schafer

PS - Has anyone who was in Nui Dat during Long Tan seen the movie "Danger Close" streaming on 7Now? Is it likely that Land Rovers had doors or there could have been Owen guns in use?”

. **David Auld** – “A few pictures from the last weekend - I assume you're familiar with most of those people <http://www.smclp.orwntris.com/>



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...

. **Darryl Musgrove** – “Hello Paul, always a pleasure to hear from you. Not much happening here. Made the road trip to Queensland last Month, postponed due to the March flooding, and brought back a souvenir - you guessed it, Covid-19, so a seven-day isolation at home. Still trying to restock the larder which had a workout during the absence of shopping resupply forays. More importantly, still in the land of the living, looking forward to an improved twelve months. Cheers.”

. **John l'Anson** – ‘Well Paul still cruising along here in Thailand. I have considered returning to Australia but my son and grandchildren suggest no! It has gone crazy there especially with real estate and the cost of renting something to reside. He says I am better off here in Thailand, especially when I tell him the rental costs and cost of living costs here compared to Australia! It is cheaper here to dine out than bother cooking at home! So, I think I will stay put for the foreseeable future.

After living here, you do not realise how the medical system is set-up for the medical profession to make a fortune, I cannot remember the last time I saw a doctor in Thailand where-as I must visit a doctor at least once a month in Australia just to get a prescription! Here I can buy my medication over the counter and it is cheaper than through DVA.

Enough of my rambling chat again soon. John l'Anson.”

. Russ Hamsey – “Paul: It has been a busy time these last few months. We finally managed to finish a trip to Tasmania that we started in 2020. COVID sure had a way with messing with travel plans. We are starting to consider overseas travel again but probably not until next year.

20 Regt has had a busy time as well. When I last wrote 131 Bty had just returned from Op Flood Assist. In May, both 131 and 132 Btys were able to deploy to Shoalwater Bay and get some good training done. 132 Bty has commenced training on the new TUAS called Integrator. 131 Bty will maintain the Shadow capability until 132 Bty is ready with the new one.

Covid still causes issues and remains a central feature of planning. And although the Regt has not recently had to contribute to Covid support operations, the unit remains ready to assist.

One interesting development of late is the growth of the uncrewed aerial system or "drone" industry in Australia and it appears that everywhere you look you will find a 20 Regt presence. From the highest levels of regulation within CASA to the broad spectrum of industry participation, it isn't long before you find someone who has served in 20 Regt. It is a small unit with a long reach.

The next months will be challenging as we manage the current capability and raise the new one.

Two final points. The first is we are seeing indication from Army HQ that there is a desire to re-raise 133 Bty sooner than originally proposed. We may see 133 Bty return to the order of battle as early as 2024. Watch this space.

The second is the awarding of the Theatre Honour of Iraq 2003-2011 to 20 Regt. Like a battle honour, this award is quite unique for an artillery unit and it has taken time to consider how this honour should be presented to the unit. The RSM is working on a parade later this year, hopefully. But there are a number of protocols that need to be observed. We will keep you advised of how this proceeds.

That's about it for now. Let me know of your travel plans back to Australia. If there is a chance you will be in Brisbane, we will have to get you into the Regt. Take care, Russ.”

. Russ Jackson – “Hello Paul, Thanks for the mail.

Good to hear from you and to hear that your golf outings are still on the agenda.

Pleased also to hear that your extensions have been completed and that you are up to the furnishing stage.

We have really felt the winter this year and have given the central heating a bit of a bashing to keep the house warm.

The days are not too bad but we have had a few of the proverbial brass monkey nights.

As we are now into the last month of winter we would expect to get some relief with some warmer days.

COVID is again rife here with little regard being paid to mask wearing and social distancing by the average punters.

As a consequence, Margot and I have retreated into partial isolation and we rely heavily on home deliveries for essentials.

No travel plans for us at the moment.

In April/May we enjoyed an extended visit from the Swedish side of our family. It was great to catch up with the Grandkids after not seeing them for three years. They were very fortunate weather wise and had many beach trips on their agenda. Something they were able to follow up on their return home as they moved into a very warm summer. Our son did point out, and this is something you may encounter if you are looking at an Aus visit, that discount flights are virtually unobtainable. He normally does his homework with flights but on this visit he couldn't find any cheapies and paid full fares for a family of four.

My health hasn't been real flash in recent times with another hospital stay for me in late June early July. I am being managed but I am certainly not as active as I used to be which is probably why I have felt the winter chill more than usual. Congratulations again on your continuing work for all of us. Regards, Russ.”

. Joe Molenkamp – “G'day Paul,

Thanks for your note, sorry I'm slow in replying.

Sounds a bit wild in some parts of Mexico at the moment with the drug cartels trying to take over...better steer clear I reckon!

I'll tell you my story about "volunteering" to go to Vietnam as a nasho.

After doing the Survey course at North Head I went back to 131 at Holsworthy. I had been going with my girlfriend for about 3 years and she thought it was time to get married. I then decided that if I had to go to Vietnam I would rather wait till after I came home and she agreed, if I didn't have to go we'd get married ASAP. So, I went to the CO to ask if I would have to go or not...his exact reply was "do you think we would want a dickhead national serviceman like you fighting our war for us" and I promptly "No Sir". He said "well there's your answer." So, I arranged for 2 weeks off and we got married. I arrived back at Holsworthy and was sent to 24-hour guard duty at Victoria Barracks for about 6 weeks...great way to start married life! I was only back at Holsworthy for a week and I was called out on parade to go pack a bag for 3 weeks at Canungra. So, back to the CO to ask why? He said he didn't like me much so just wanted to get me out of the way! Needless to say, we didn't see eye to eye. On arriving back from Canungra, off the bus and straight to the First Aid Post and jabbed full of needles, told I had 3 days leave to organise myself and then I was off to Vietnam! And they wondered why some nashos were pretty pissed off with the army!

Anyway, I did my bit and have some great mates from the experience and we still keep in touch. I guess the CO must have got some pleasure out of stitching me right up. Or I might have the last laugh as we're still very happily married after 52 years.

Covid does seem to have slowed but there are still plenty of cases here on the mid north coast of NSW. I certainly still wear a mask anywhere inside to be safe.

Until next time.... Cheers, Joe.”

Iain Kennedy – “Three months! - time has been flying by, we are half way through the year and still so much to get done.

Vietnam Veterans Day coming up, trying to see what's on - not a lot. The RSL don't show any interest in doing anything, even Vietnam Veterans Association not doing much. So, only thing on is at the Shrine. Plan to attend, weather permitting (I'm a fair-weather attender).

Just finished two weeks with a technician here from Taiwan for a customer installation, he has to go back to Taiwan and quarantine for 7 days - don't envy him! It's the first tech visit for installation since before Covid. Is this a sign things are getting back to normal (new normal anyway?).

Just had the car taken off on the back of tow truck, wouldn't start. Only a new battery 6 months ago. Probably due to lack of use, it's only done 16,000Kms in 5 years, as with the price of petrol we tend to use the EV most days.

Not getting out on the bike that much at the moment, I've gone soft and don't go out if the roads are wet. Still doing the trainer every morning, I'm now up to 781 days of continuous days on the trainer. Covid has helped that, as I'm sure I would have travelled and broken that continuity. Keep looking at going away and then the news gives you all the frustrated people at airports and I say that's not for me. I'm not a patient man at the best of times, so wouldn't handle the delays very well. Still looking at Singapore and/or Malaysia for next trip, but probably not until March 2023. Well that me for now. hope we find you happy and Healthy. Stay safe, Iain Kennedy.'

. Harry Lynas – “G'Day Paul,

Well it seems as if we are going to get a wet spring and summer so I don't think the floods have done with us yet. I am okay but if it happens there will be a lot of people that are not OK.

It is now starting to warm up and the aches and pains generated by the cold weather are slowly disappearing again.

It was good to catch up to a lot of old friends over the ANZAC Weekend but I am afraid I only went to the Saturday event at Fort Lytton. Last month I turned 80 so now I have got an OBE to go with my OAM.

That's all for now - hope to see you if you do get to Australia. Cheers, Harry Lynas.”

. Philip Mulgrew – “Hi Paul.

You're right about us getting out and about now, as Helen and I travelled by car to Victoria and back last month for the funeral of Helen's little sister. She passed away from cancer after a two-year battle. She was only 53 years old and left behind a husband and three boys.

Helen is still coming to terms with the loss as she was Mum to her little sister for years before we met and at that time, their parents were working long hours on the farm in the Western District.

The weather is decidedly cool here at the moment by Brisbane standards, and we have been warned of another La Nina event this coming summer.

The Met is talking copious amounts of rain and flooding at that time with probable impact on previously flooded areas. It reminds me of the advice my Dad's family, who have lived here for generations, gave us years ago, that if you buy property in this town, make sure you are looking down at Brisbane and not up at it!

The best to you and the familia.”

. Graham Williams – “Hi Paul,

Well you did ask mate. Enclosed please find pics of how I spent Vietnam Veterans Day 2022.

As it is said... “the best laid plans of mice and men” ...or “A funny thing happened on the way to...”

Joe Losiak and myself had planned the day in advance. He was coming down from Brisbane on the 17th and staying over, the plan being for us both to do the Service and day at South Tweed Bowls Club next day. That was of course before the gremlins struck. I was carted off to hospital suddenly on the 12th August for what looked like a possibly long stay. Wife, Jenni, decided she would go as my replacement with Joe and leave arrangements as is. That is, he come down, stay over etc. She did not tell Joe I was at that time in John Flynn Hospital. However, Joe called home on the 15th to advise he had a cough, sore throat and somewhat worried he may have contracted Covid. As such and not wanting to pass it on if that was the case Joe reluctantly had to cancel all plans. And so, it came to pass both Joe and myself dipped out on another Vietnam Veterans Day.



As a footnote the hospital denied my request for a hospital march past my room of doctors and nurses on the day...disappointing. Home now and in recovery mode with a month to get ready for our next trip to Switzerland. For the record the major problem was GOUT most likely caused by a workplace accident and significant knee trauma way back in 1994 and ongoing ever since. Kind of like the Victoria Bitter advertisement... “you can get it here, you can get it anywhere” so at least now I know where I stand with things.



Our European trip though starting badly in May/June was a hoot and great time considering Scenic cruises called and cancelled it 2 days before we were due to leave suggesting options. Take the cruise a month later. Couldn't do that as we had already had a friend from Newcastle come up to baby sit the house and dogs so not viable. Then there was take the trip in 2023 but I advised we were booked out for travel already for the entire year. Then there was the possibility of tacking it onto our trip for Switzerland. For me that would have been too long but told them it would be acceptable only if we were upgraded to the owners' suite on the river ship. Naturally this was denied. Other options fell by the wayside till in the end I simply said "tell you what, just cancel the entire trip including add ons and refund all moneys paid and no fees." This caused some kind of flap on the other end of the line and I was asked to wait. Twenty-five minutes later they came back and asked if we would be interested in doing the trip the other way around still leaving on the same day... "Say what, what's the bloody difference." Quite a lot as it turned out. We were scheduled for the 7-day cruise Amsterdam to Basel... the tour in the opposite direction (Basel/ Amsterdam) was a 14-day cruise so with a bit of itinerary tweaking turned out we could get an extra 7 nights on the cruise for \$360. That did get my interest and so it came to pass we left on the appointed day. Things turned sour again next morning on our arrival in Frankfurt. Flight was running late and as Frankfurt is a hub for Lufthansa put us in a holding pattern behind their incoming flights. Although we had three and a half hours to catch our connecting flight to Prague had still not cleared immigration when it took off and Frankfurt Airport was in total chaos. Over 5 hours in a queue just to book another flight with the earliest and only available being the following day... THEN lost for words mate, trying to describe the thousands lined up trying to get overnight hotel accommodation. And they think we have problems here with airports. Everywhere in Europe was and probably still is insane. Had to make an executive diggers decision. Passed on the queue for accommodation and so it came to pass Jenni and myself slept on a carpeted floor in the terminal (along with about 2,000 other people). That produced a few flashbacks. Now one would have thought it would have been smooth sailing from there. WRONG!!!! Next morning headed to our gate early, got coffee and sat around to wait. Nothing seemed to be happening so wandered off for another coffee per chance checking the departures board on the way back...oops... change of gate so off we went (naturally near enough to the bloody end of the terminal) only to find the flight delayed. We were to have another 5 gate changes before finally boarding. To sum up the cruise itself was fabulous, weather fine and track good. Stopped off and toured some fabulous little places along the way along with some major cities, some as part of the cruise or others as add ons for several days so, Prague, Zurich, Basel, Strasbourg, Koblenz, Dusseldorf, Maastricht, Nijmegen where we visited the Arnhem Airborne Museum, Luxembourg, Antwerp, Bruges and finally Amsterdam for our last few days. A fabulous trip all round but always good to get home.

Leave for Switzerland on 2/10 but not expecting airport hassles there as it is only flights in and out. We are doing the 14-day rail trip to all places Switzerland with brief side trip into Italy. Here's hoping my leg is back to its marching best by then. Begin rehab on that tomorrow and gym again next week so will be pushing the envelope.

To end out 2022 I head off back to Vietnam on another adventure on 28th November so it has been a full-on year of good bad and evil.

Anyway, Paul that is the latest from downtown Tweed Heads West.
Hope this finds yourself and family travelling well and leading the easy life.
Cheers,
Graham Williams.
P.S. I am still working on the 1969 radar thing I promised."



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.

. An item of real interest -

131 Detachment Conscripts who served less than 2 years/730 days because of an "Interim Discharge Certificate by the Australian Military Forces".

This subject was brought to life by an email sent to me by **Bert Blink** which contained the following link - <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-07-26/whitlam-government-army-discharge-haunts-queenslander/101128348> which relates to –

"Calls for change to army discharge certificates issued under Whitlam government"

Source - ABC Wide Bay by Brad Marsellos, Posted Mon 25 Jul 2022 at 5:18pm Monday 25 Jul 2022 at 5:18pm, updated Tue 26 Jul 2022 at 1:46am

"On a small piece of paper, six typed words have caused half-a-century of anguish for Hervey Bay man **Alan Williams**. In February 1973, then-Private Williams was issued an Interim Discharge Certificate by the Australian Military Forces, citing **"upon the grounds of exceptional hardship"** — words that have haunted the former conscript ever since. Mr Williams was among 2,200 young men issued the discharge certificate simply due to a change in federal government. At the time, he was not even old enough to vote. He had served in the Australian military for 13 months."

The article continues with photos and more of Alan Williams' story and is worth clicking on to read and understand the "hurt" a simple disconnected phrase used by the then government - **"upon the grounds of exceptional hardship"** have caused Alan and no doubt very many others.

All of this prompted me to do a bit of researching in our archives, and I rediscovered an item forwarded in, again, by **Bert Blink** to his tabulating **National Service (NS) Intakes 1965 – 1972** (see below) where I extracted the relevant dates in conjunction with the disbandment of **Selective Conscription**.

Just as an aside my Certificate of Discharge states –

"Reason for Discharge: Expiration of service in the ARAS (NS)". It then goes on to state **"Total Effective Service: 2 years NIL days."**

I served for 2 years – 20.04.1966 to 19.04.1968 = 730 days – this was a normal 2 Year National Service duration.

However, note below, again, in Bert's table that on the **18/08/1971 NS reduced to 18 months**", which raises the question as to someone being discharged after this date serving 18 months; were they given the same or similar reason on their **Certificate of Discharge - "upon the grounds of exceptional hardship"**?

Add to this another relevant date: **31 July, 1971** should feature, as that was when Det 131 was disbanded although lots of Det 131 people finished earlier for example – the Radar Section members etc.

However, in the table below, Selected Conscripted National Service Personnel could only serve a maximum number of days, based on **Selective Conscription ending on 05.12.1972** plus two days as noted by the last service dates below (07.12.1972).

National Service (NS) Intakes 1965 – 1972

The last NS Intake (30th) members were discharged on the 07/12/1972 – and served only 71 days (see below). The other **"Max days able to serve"** are gestimations based possible maximums from conscription starting dates.

Service Dates	Intake No	Comments	Max days able to serve
24/09/1969 – 23/09/1971	18	18/08/1971 NS reduced to 18 months	540
28/01/1970 – 27/01/1972	19	Most were discharged earlier	540
15/04/1970 – 14/04/1972	20	Most were discharged earlier (probably all after 18 months' service)	540
08/07/1970 – 07/01/1972	21		540
23/09/1970 - 22/03/1972	22		540
03/02/1971 - 02/08/1972	23		540
14/04/1971 - 13/10/1972	24		540
07/07/1971 - 06/01/1973	25	Most from now on would have been discharged early.	519
22/09/1971 - 21/03/1973	26	07/11/1971 4 RAR leaves Nui Dat	76
02/02/1972 – 01/08/1973	27	05/03/1972 only AAAGV & AATTV left in Vietnam	309
12/04/1972 – 07/12/1972	28		239
05/07/1972 – 07/12/1972	29		214
27/09/1972 – 07/12/1972	30	05/12/1972 conscription ends	71

Actual dates served cannot be calculated by us, as these dates are only available to the actual member. And another "gestimation" - one could assume that there were possibly 10 conscripts allotted to 131 DLB at every intake. Note: There

were 29 NS members despatched to SVN arriving on the 4th May, 1967 (possibly a large number of them from the 4th Intake). I realise this was a major "replacement" number, so based on reducing the average number to 10 replacements per intake, then the premise could be **130 personnel** (13 intakes x 10 conscripts) who served less than 2 years/730 days in the Battery at large.

All of this leads me to be curious as to the number of NS members who served originating with the 131 Battery and other units (due to transfers etc) for less than 2 years/730 days.

Regardless of numbers (less now, due to passings), they are mates who deserve equal consideration for equal treatment, not just written off by some obviously meaningless phrase.

However, like all these things – "why has it taken 50 years to come to light" – I was certainly not aware of it!

Anyway this, along with many other "Defence Dilemmas" raises a similar conundrum as to ex-Veterans not being awarded the RCVN for their time served in the SVN conflict reduced involuntarily to less than the "180 Day" qualifying time because of a couple of possible reasons – 1. The war being ended, or 2. The upcoming expiration of NS time.

Notice Board – see what's coming up and going on...?

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

Vietnam Veterans Day, Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne

Mike Butler first notified us of the following and this was confirmed by Rieny Nieuwenhof who forwarded the following advice as to the scaling down of full VVA Day Ceremony at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne from 2022 –

"There will be ceremonies at the Shrine in the future on VV Day, but scaled down. The reason is increasing costs, paper work required and lack of volunteers. In the future, it will be a simple wreath laying ceremony.

Cheers,
Rieny."

. **Volunteers needed by the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company** – cut and paste the on the following link and download to read the latest newsletter for more details -

https://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001ACONbVeOCTwdQdFUb4e5nINnAPTRjiHdRibpADEn4dghUeqFOUKMgFpCqjCeYPsQutUBI_rhLZFA6a5A_dJ0bwMUSiL5KcixLRc2MTkAWIPNyKM-vzwmhO2W65TTUkqXNmKAUuCuLFdeWpxTfZLqNmKh3wtChDgK&c=IY6boiwUpgmlJr-N63D7fyxqNCewv6PkDpLrtbrkwy6BvMnyDquY6Q==&ch=4qbyPca515j9CvDWkaEPBU3St5kJQNpP3MAcCS-X1R3QGB16c3_dIA==

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.



If you are interested in history and its preservation do we have a job for you!

Volunteers needed!

We are still looking for Gunners or members of the public, to join the RAAHC. Volunteers are used in all aspects of our work. You can help by contributing to historical research on artillery no matter where you live or if you live in Sydney you can assist in the Cutler Research Centre and/or Australia's Memorial Walk. You can become a director of the RAAHC or offer any skills you may have in specific areas. No knowledge of artillery is required

TO MAKE INITIAL CONTACT Email:
secretary@artilleryhistory.org

Get involved...does this continue to affect YOU!

Grahame Dignam forwarded the following newspaper clipping extracted from Telegraph on 30th July, 2022...

NASHO FAIR GO



*A Voice for the Men
Australia Forgot*

WANTED

**1965-72 NASHOS
WHO DID NOT
SERVE IN VIETNAM**

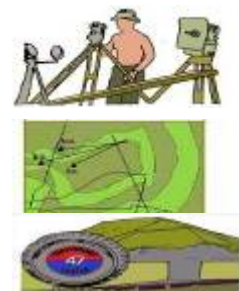
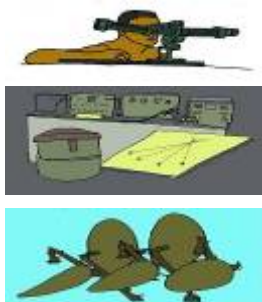
Nasho Fair Go is looking for all national servicemen who served between 1965 and 1972 but did not go to Vietnam. For 50 years we've been forgotten, but now we're asking for some fair compensation for the two years of our youth taken from us by conscription under threat of imprisonment. Our campaign is to obtain DVA Gold Health Cards for those of us who are left. Many national servicemen qualify for a DVA White Card but don't know it. Ask us.

- If you are a 1965-72 Nasho, please come and join us. We're running out of time.
- If you know a 1965-72 Nasho who didn't go to Vietnam, please ask him to join us.
- Even if you don't know a Nasho, you can help us by logging on and signing our petition. Your help would be most appreciated.

Register or sign on our website -
www.nashofairgo.com.au.

Nasho Fair Go Inc. Mobile: 0475 118 537 | Email: hello@nashofairgo.com.au

SATURDAY TELEGRAPH 30 July 2022



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, Vic Nth – Ron Mason, WA - Barry Guzder
<http://www.131locators.org.au>

Presidential perambulations

In the southern hemisphere spring is approaching rapidly. Following a very average 2021-2022 summer, this past winter has been chilly. Or maybe it's because my bones are that bit older and the cold affects me more.

Over the past one and a half years we have experienced so much rain, with parts of the country still recovering from significant flood damage. The experts have suggested in New South Wales it has been three 1 in 100-year flood events, which is weird nomenclature, to say the least.

However, after a fairly dry August, my wife's daffodils are upright and spring-colourful. Other plants are showing new green growth and seemingly enjoying dryer feet.

In Sydney, September offers potentially a dry month. That is why the 2000 Olympic Games were celebrated in September. The winter football games are now ready for finals, which will identify the best team in each of the codes. And hopefully my old bones will enjoy the warmer days.

Cheers
Allen



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

Association ZOOM MEETING: Date: Tuesday, 9th April, 2022 at 1105hrs...

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

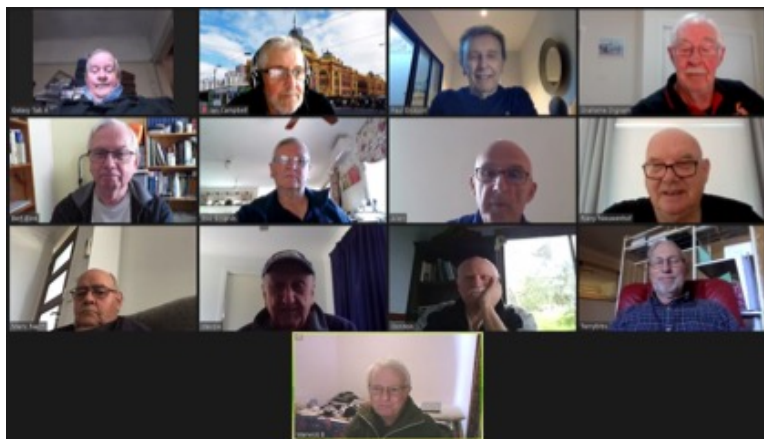
Attendees were:

Ernie Newbold, Ian Campbell, Paul Dickson, Grahame Dignam

Bert Blink, Bob Billiards, Allen Morley, Rieny Nieuwenhof

Merv Nairn, Steve Wyne, Gordon Malcolm, Terry Erbs

and Warwick Brooker



Apologies: Apologies were received from Ron Mason, Ian Amos, Nick Proskurin, Ged Carroll, George Lane, other State Reps and Jim Fitzgerald.

President Allen Morley welcomed all those who have joined us to-day via ZOOM and thanked them for making the effort.

Financial Membership is currently ...**130**, plus Associates **2**, Affiliates **16**. Total **148**. Lapsed **34** members as at 1/08/2022.

Presidents report.

Allen referenced:

. A letter of support for the Vietnam Medal proposal will be sent on behalf of our Association.

. Noted that the RAA Historical Company had requested volunteer for the Cutler Center at North Head to assist with chores.

Public Officer Report.

Gordon reported that he has had a quiet time with nothing to report apart from reviewing the Public Liability guidelines which is ongoing.

. **Webmaster update -**

Webmaster Bob report 3124 Face book users most of which are reading the monthly *Eyes & Ears* from that source.

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

Interim Discharge Certificates -

A discussion regarding the historical correct wording was had. This was important as it has affected the lives and entitlements of those who received these certificates. The meeting could not agree on a strong position. An item will appear in the newsletter.

Health:

. We were advised that US ARMY have extended their interpretation of war caused injuries re Agent Orange. Our US Correspondent provided a summary and we are advised that the Australian Government bodies are aware of the changes. The links were from CNN and the Vets Affairs Dept USA - <https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/02/politics/senate-vote-burn-pits/index.html> <https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/>

. Other health items were discussed and most had reasonable news to report. The issues were around "OLD MENS" issues – sleep Anomie, Prostate and its effects, various cancers, etc

. Steve warned against mentioning "naps" in any visits to Drs or with Driving license related officials as they jump on that issue.

General Business and around the grounds:

. Discussions on other subjects occurred in this area but have been placed in the health area for reporting consistency.

. Bob reported that he had brought a new baby for the family and now has a full set of Gogo's.

. A reminder re the Vietnam Vets day on 18 th August at Bankstown Sports Club was given. Details were provided with the Agenda Meeting email sent earlier or from the Granville branch on 02 9682 1788.

. Upcoming Events Calendar –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 13th September, 2022 at 1100hrs

Venue: to be advised

Also, available via Zoom link to be advised



. Birthdays in the Battery...September –

Date	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	† 07.02.2022
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.

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

Ed – 6 blokes not highlighted is looking decidedly better, but still could be improved with a little more effort! 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 **172**. Ed – Maybe we need to draw in a deep one so as to hold our breathes 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.



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.rnzaa.org.nz/>

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

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