

THE EYES and EARS

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

Editor: Paul 'Dicko' Dickson email: 131eyesandears@gmail.com Vol 16 No 06 June 2023 No 179

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

2023 – 57 Years and the Detachment 131 Spirit Lives On: 1966 – 1971



A memory from
5 years ago –
Canberra, May 2018
Battle of Coral/Balmoral –
12th May- 6th June, 1968

Back row - L to R – **Gordon Williams, Stan Briggs, Peter Dealy, Wal Franklin, Iain Kennedy, Brian Mitchell, John Dellaca.** Second row – L to R - Bob Billiards, Gordon Malcolm, Ric Marques, Ken Woodbine (no cap/hat hidden), Ken Jones, Ian Amos, Phillip Sheedy, Keith Ayliffe, Terry Erbs, Neville Wortlehock. Sitting – **Ian Finlay.**
MIA: **Denis Dye, Geoff Jebb, Phil Mulgrew, John Bayford.**

It's a memory still that will never fade – 55years.

...Fifty-five years ago, in May/June 1968 Australian soldiers fought their largest, most sustained and arguably most hazardous battles of the Vietnam War. Units of the 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF) confronted regimental-sized formations of the North Vietnamese regular army in fierce actions around Fire Support Patrol Bases (FSPB) Coral and Balmoral in what was then known as Bien Hoa province.

. Congratulations Rieny...



Government House CANBERRA ACT 2600

The King's Birthday 2023 Honours List

12 June 2023

The Governor-General is pleased to announce the following appointment and award:

Medal (OAM) In the General Division

Mr Rieny Anthony NIEUWENHOF

Portarlinton VIC 3223

For service to veterans and their families, and to the community.

An extract from the ...

Bellarine Times

Nieuwenhof receives King's Birthday honours

June 12, 2023 BY James Taylor

PORTARLINGTON's Rieny Nieuwenhof is among nearly 1,200 Australians recognised for their achievements and hard work in this year's King's Birthday Honours List.

Mr Nieuwenhof was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to veterans and their families, and to the community.

He is a life member of the Geelong and District Sub Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia and has been its president since 2013.

Mr Nieuwenhof was the inaugural chair of the Community ANZAC Day Dawn Service Committee, with the event held at Geelong's Eastern Beach, and chaired the Geelong Surf Coast Veterans' Centre Committee of Management for four years.

He has also worked as a teacher at several schools across Victoria, including as deputy principal of St Joseph's College in Newtown for 11 years.

This award could not have found a more dedicated, deserving person. Ed



Here is more information with regards to Rieny and other associated members supplied by Terry Erbs –

Locator's service recognized.

The King's Birthday 2023 Honours List recognised and celebrated 1,192 recipients, including awards in the Order of Australia (General and Military Divisions), meritorious awards and recognition for distinguished and conspicuous service.

Of those to receive awards this year were former Locators :-

Rieny Anthony Nieuwenhof OAM for services to veterans and their families, and to the community. Detachment 131 Div Loc Bty Feb 71 till Aug 71.

Geelong and District Sub Branch, Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia

- President, since 2013.
- Vice President, 2012-2013.
- Life Member, since 2017.
- Leader, Vietnam Veterans' Avenue of Honor Restoration, and Memorial Park, 2015-2017.
- Supporter, Geelong Sub-branch, the Returned and Services League of Australia, current.

Ex-service Welfare

- Inaugural Chairman, Community ANZAC Day Dawn Service Committee, Eastern Beach Geelong, since 2017.
- Chairman, Geelong Surf Coast Veterans' Centre Committee of Management, 2013-2017.
- Member, National Servicemen's Association, current.
- Member, Geelong RSL Club, current.
- Member, Portarlington - St Leonards RSL Club, current.

Geelong Cemeteries Trust

- Trustee, since 2017.
- Co-Chair, Community Advisory Committee, and Gisborne Community Advisory Committee, current.

Saint Ignatius College, Geelong

- Speaker, Anzac Day Commemorations, current.
- Director of Mission, 2008-2010.
- Assistant Director of Mission, 2011.
- Religious Education Teacher, 2008-2011.

Career

- Deputy Principal, St Francis Xavier College, Berwick Campus, 2002-2008.
- Principal, Presentation College, Moe, 1995-2002.
- Deputy Principal, St Joseph's College, Newtown, 1984-1995.
- Religious Education Coordinator, Mercedes College, Adelaide, 1978-1984.
- Teacher, Parade College, Bundoorra, 1975-1978.
- Teacher, Watsonia South Primary School, 1972-1975.
- Headmaster, Weerangout Primary School, 1969-1972



The **Conspicuous Service Cross (CSC)** is awarded only for outstanding devotion to duty, or outstanding achievement in the application of exceptional skills, judgement or dedication, in non-warlike situations.

Lieutenant Colonel Shamus Michael Armstrong CSC for outstanding achievement as Commanding Officer 20th Regiment Royal Australian Artillery. Lieutenant Colonel Armstrong's inspirational leadership, championing of Army modernisation, and deep targeting and surveillance expertise have greatly advanced Tactical Un-crewed Aerial Systems capabilities for Army and the Joint Force. Under COVID-19 restrictions and heavy domestic operations, he established a unit culture based on professional mastery and high readiness. He also deftly informed introduction into service planning for Army's new Tactical Un-crewed Aerial System and was central to contemporising Army's Information Warfare concepts of operation. Lieutenant Colonel Armstrong's was Commanding Officer of 20th Regiment RAA from Jan. 2020 to Dec. 2022

Lieutenant Colonel Wendy Jayne Wheadon CSC for outstanding achievement in the application of exceptional skills and judgment as principal logistics advisor and Brigade Aviation Maintenance Officer, 16th Aviation Brigade. Lieutenant Colonel Wheadon has displayed exceptional technical skills and judgement in aviation fleet management planning and industry engagement directly resulting in increased Tiger and Taipan helicopter serviceability and operational preparedness. The application of her engineering expertise and risk-based analysis of technical data has been pivotal to the timely and positive resolution of complex maintenance issues resulting in increased aviation support to the Australian Army, Australian Defence Force and Australian community. Lieutenant Colonel. Wheadon was the Senior Maintenance Manager in 20th Regiment from Jan. 2014 to Dec. 2015 and then as BC CSS Bty from Jan. 2016 to Dec. 2017.

Lieutenant Colonel Shamus Michael Armstrong CSC for outstanding achievement as Commanding Officer 20th Regiment Royal Australian Artillery. Lieutenant Colonel Armstrong's inspirational leadership, championing of Army modernisation, and deep targeting and surveillance expertise have greatly advanced Tactical Un-crewed Aerial Systems capabilities for Army and the Joint Force. Under COVID-19 restrictions and heavy domestic operations, he established a unit culture based on professional mastery and high readiness. He also deftly informed introduction into service planning for Army's new Tactical Un-crewed Aerial System and was central to contemporising Army's Information Warfare concepts of operation. Lieutenant Colonel Armstrong was Commanding Officer of 20th Regiment RAA from Jan. 2020 to Dec. 2022.

Ian Campbell adds a personal expanded note to Rieny's story...

131 member gets a new gong!

131 veteran Rieny Nieuwenhof was awarded the OAM in the King's Birthday Honours list on 12th June 2023 for service to veterans and their families and to the community.

Rieny served in with 131 Div Loc Bty in Vietnam from Feb 1971, RTA'ing when the unit withdrew on 5th August 1971.

In the years following his return he started volunteering with the Vietnam Veterans Centre supporting veterans in the Geelong area.

Rieny held the position of Vice President in 2012 and was elected to President in 2013, leading the Geelong Association for 10 years. He is currently fulfilling the role of Public Officer.

His main areas of work in the Association have been the welfare of veterans, their partners and families; providing social activities - lunch and excursions; planning and holding commemoratives services which contribute to the historic and cultural aspects of the Geelong community e.g. Creation of the Vietnam Veterans Avenue of Honour and Vietnam Memorial Park; and enhancing the public profile of the Association as an active member of the community.

If this did not keep him busy enough he also lead the following:

Chairman of the Geelong and Surf Coast Veterans Centre providing advice and advocacy for and on behalf of veterans.

Chairman of the Geelong community ANZAC Dawn service at Eastern Beach. (There had been no Dawn service in Geelong prior to this)

Member of the Geelong Cemeteries Trust for 6 years advocating for veteran needs.

Member of the consultative Committee to establish a veterans and Families Welfare Hub in Geelong.

Congratulations to a worthy recipient.

Ian Campbell



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 be 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.

. **The item by Bill Wight in April’s *Eyes & Ears* has stirred the following ...**

The Vietnam War left many scars on those who not only participated, but attached families, not only from the actual involvement in the conflict but the return to Australia / Home – families/loved ones were not left unaffected.

The actual “return” was not something that we were trained for, or for that matter even gave any serious thought to – why would we have?

We had spent about (give or take) 12 months being trained, exposed to possible war activities. However, the training was for “war” involvement.

Our expectations on RTA’ing, I guess, was to be reunited with family, friends with a loving welcome as was the expected case. BUT, we encountered resentment, confrontation and aggressive protests from our fellow countrymen. Leaving the airport in “civvies” was a real game-changer.

Yes, we had inklings of what to expect, plus we’d experienced non-supportive actions by both the postal and waterside unions not supplying us with their services.

Bill’s case, as he expresses, was one of an extremely hostile environment which he had to escape to maintain some stability. Fortunately, his escape plan worked and he found an ongoing more acceptable lifestyle. That was NOT his original plan though.

It’s hard to comprehend that prior to and post-Vietnam, ex-veterans were not to be treated with more civility.

Yes, I guess our “12 month” tour was a picnic time compared to service tours in WW1/11, but I remember being the brunt of sarcasm by two older vets in the Bentleigh RSL, Melbourne – not a great memory. That removed me from RSLs for many years.

Then, it took some 15 years to welcome us home and it was done in grand style. Seeing the public smile, clap put some glue on the fractured heart.

Bill, you hit an accord with me, and maybe others – thanks for your story. Ed

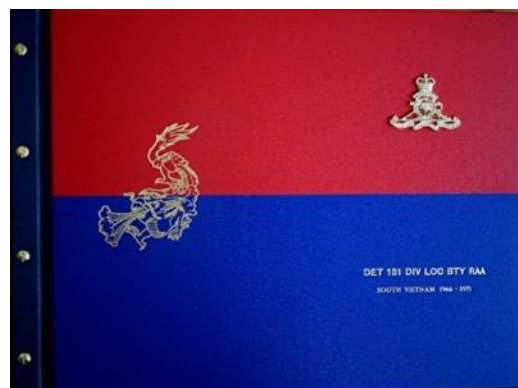


. **Quiz Time.**

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

The following photo raises a question – This looks like a fairly social group. I can actually recognise someone I’ve known for 77 years, now come on give me some answers to...

.Where? . When ? . And of course The Group?



VIETNAM VETERAN FOUND RESPECT ON A ROAD TRIP

Blair Jackson

Lieutenant Bill Wight drove his silver grey Datsun around Australia for two-and-a-half months to unwind from his time in Vietnam and get away from anti-war protests.

Mr Wight, 78, marched in Townsville for the third time on Tuesday, having moved north from Victoria six years ago.

Mr Wight was in the first intake of national service for Vietnam and from January 1967 to April 1968, he served in Vietnam.

Towards the end of 1969, the “writing on the wall” was that the Australian Government would withdraw from the Vietnam War, so Mr Wight resigned from the Army and went to university to study data entry.

But the anti-war protests were building, particularly in his home of Melbourne. He could only stand a short time in that environment, so bought



Vietnam Veteran Bill Wight with granddaughter Olivia Wight, 6

his Datsun and drove around the country. “I spent about two-and-a-half months just travelling, getting away from the protests. “I also found that in the country, I was very well received. It was only in the cities where the protests were occurring.”

He remembers that long drive as a terrific time, meeting many people who were good to him, particularly in the Northern Territory and Queensland.



But the anti-war protests were building, particularly in his home of Melbourne. He could only stand a short time in that environment, so bought



Pentagon Papers leaker and anti-war activist Daniel Ellsberg dies at 92

Daniel Ellsberg, a former military analyst and anti-war activist whose disclosure of the so-called Pentagon Papers revealed systemic US government deception about the Vietnam War, has died, his family announced in a statement. He was 92. The cause was pancreatic cancer, his family said.

Considered "the patron saint of whistleblowers" for revealing to *The New York Times* in 1971 that the US knew the Vietnam war was "unwinnable," Ellsberg spent his life focused on peace and transparency, later co-founding the Freedom of the Press Foundation.

In the late 1960s, Ellsberg was working as a defense analyst for the RAND Corporation when he became disillusioned with US involvement in Vietnam.

As part of his work with RAND, Ellsberg had access to classified documents that demonstrated how the US government had systemically lied to the public about the war, and Ellsberg felt compelled to reveal the information. He first approached several US senators in hopes that they could enter the papers into public record, but when that wasn't successful, he leaked all 7000 pages to *The New York Times*, which published them in 1971.

The documents revealed damning information against the Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

While officials spoke optimistically about the war to the public and continued to send troops to Vietnam, they privately knew that the US was losing, with then-Defense Secretary Robert McNamara advising President Lyndon B. Johnson as early as 1967 that American escalation would not win the war and, by some accounts, advocating for withdrawal.



. Grahame Dignam forwarded the following link to "CONTACT"

<https://www.contactairlandandsea.com/2023/06/11/new-resource-for-defence-and-veteran-carers/>

This is worth reading.



. An update on the following from last month – John McGovern has supplied DoD information on both William Holmes and Christopher Self, and see Vale below where Peter Ravelje adds Marcus Lee Robinson as an additional Unknown, adjusting the total Unknowns to 8 and Total Vales to 148.

A Reflective Thought with regards to Vales as we progress on in years.

The following table reflects Members passings over the years since our 'journeys' into South Vietnam which began back in May 1966.

It reflects on 10 year periods since, and including, 1966. The figures speak for themselves, and if you exclude deaths in SVN, of which there were two, the initial period does show a dark period considering the ages of our mates.

10 Year Detachment/131 Battery Death Periods

										<u>Total</u>
1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	
1	0	2	1	2	0	3	0	1	0	10
1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	
0	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	6
1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	
0	0	2	2	2	0	2	1	0	1	10
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
3	2	2	2	0	3	2	1	2	2	19
2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
0	5	3	5	3	9	6	6	6	3	46
2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
8	4	5	5	6	7	9	5	0	0	49
Unknowns*										8
Total										148

Please note that these figures represent data provided by Members, from what was, and is stated to be reliable sources (official notices/family/mates etc). Data as at **19.06.2023**.

***Unknowns** – Sadly, we have only been advised of the Members' passings only. Here are the names and details –

Name	Rank	Regt No	Section	SVN	DoB	DoD
Broadbent, William				N/a	24.09.?	Unknown
Holmes, William John	SSGT	61040		1969	09.02.37	08.06.2019
Fawcett-Smith, Neil	Sgt	17732	RAEME	67-68/70-71	29.06.42	Unknown
Lempa, Helmut	L/Bdr	38120	Radar	1966-67	18.10.46	Unknown
McNaughton, Quentin			Catering Corp	N/a	N/a	Unknown
Pearce, Ralph William	Gnr	214806	Radar	1966-67	16.06.45	Unknown
Reid, Jeffrey Leonard	L/Bdr	3790495		1967-68	29.03.46	Unknown
Robinson, Edward "Ted"	WO2		Radar	N/a	N/a	Unknown
Self, Christopher	Gnr	66981	33 Dental Unit	1969-70	14.12.49	28.09.1995

If you can help in any way to update this data it would be greatly appreciated – You can send information to Paul Dickson at email 131eyesandears@gmail.com Subject: Vale update

Ed - As a closing thought, can we give some thought to completing Locator Profiles, which do add a personal background and also keeping in touch as it keeps us up to date with you and mates.

Mail Call...

A controversial Subject, but one worth noting... "Gutsy!"

Here's an email worth reading and distributing.

"From: Daniel Mealey
Date: Tue, May 30, 2023 at 7:57 PM
Subject: Dear General Campbell: I drank alcohol while on deployment in Afghanistan
To: <angus.campbell> <james.lybrand><chiefstaff><rick.burr>, <david.kelly>, <james.brown@aph.gov.au>, <Andrew.Hastie.MP@aph.gov.au>, <phillip.thompson.mp@aph.gov.au>

Dear General Angus Campbell AO, DSC,
I drank alcohol while on deployment in Afghanistan.
There, I've got it off my chest.
I note you've come down heavily on your troops, with a new directive stating "deployed ADF personnel are banned from drinking alcohol," reiterating previous advice that was "flouted by the nation's most elite troops."
May I remind you, Sir, that all alcohol consumed by the troops was provided to us by ADF Senior Officers, to be consumed on days of Western cultural significance?
In hindsight, this was in spite of Middle Eastern cultural sensitivities likely offended by the ADF. In hindsight, I am sorry for my own insensitivity.
I drank my beer on Christmas Day 2014, Remembrance Day, and numerous other days, sitting next to two Major Generals (each decorated with an AM, CSC, and DSM) who drank theirs.



Dr Daniel Mealey

Are you and your top ADF leaders now to be reprimanded for providing that alcohol, and drinking it with your troops in Afghanistan?
Are you all to lose your service medals, and your coveted DSC's, AM's and CSC's?
Or are we going to continue this internationally-embarrassing facade, that you and your Senior Officers are too important to be held to account for mounting leadership failures?
Your public position of a retrospective alcohol policy is a clear example of what you and your officers consistently do: you weaponise your rank and your media access, re-inventing a narrative that paints your own soldiers as character-flawed (criminals even) insisting that your heavy-handed reproach of your own soldiers makes you somehow disciplined (a leader even).
Where did all of this start?
Lest we forget that in June 2019 the Federal Police stormed the ABC studios in Ultimo in search of the Afghan Files. Australian media began an immediate rebellion against the Coalition government by way of weekly emotional media stories about deceased veterans and their mothers. The consequent national support for veterans was palpable. Your own public image was annihilated (as was the Coalition government's political potency consequent to the LNP's decade-long allegiance with your opposition to a Royal Commission to investigate your failures).
With the most expensive, tax-payer-funded PR and media executives at your fingertips, what would be the best way for you to reframe these nationally-lauded suicidal veterans as contemptuous?
The invention of a "war crimes" story would do the trick.
And it did do the trick, didn't it Sir?
My infantry colonel Dad went to Vietnam only once. All my WWI, WWII ancestors went to war only once. You are responsible for sending your own soldiers to Afghanistan up to 13 (thirteen) deployments in a row. You have consistently ignored the impact this has had on their lives, livelihoods and families, painting any of their real or perceived failures in war as just that: THEIR failures.
Every one of the accusations you have made about your troops are YOUR failures.
It's time, Sir, that you sink with your ship.
You and your Senior Officers are all decorated with DSC's, AM's and CSC's, but you're fooling no one with your decorations. All of you have succumbed to pressures from the very politicians who dictate which of you will become Governor General. Your career ambitions have blinded you to your primary responsibility: to ensure the welfare of the young men and young women that Australian parents have entrusted into your care for the defence of our nation. 1,200 of them are dead.
The human toll of 1,200 deceased veterans is your legacy. Truth and justice are unstoppable – your name and those of your cowardly silent Senior Officers will go down in history as the most despised military leaders of all time.
This Thursday, news will reverberate around the world that will shake the ADF to its foundations. Either way – you ought to brace yourself for a fight to defend the most noble military family this nation has ever known.

I hope, and pray that you will adopt a humble and responsible approach to the issues raised above. And I hope and pray that the 1,200 families affected by your defective leadership will find in their hearts to forgive you.

In continued service to my ADF patients,

Dr Daniel Mealey.”



Mail Out



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



Mail In - Here are the responses...

. **John Vitkovsky** – “G'day Paul, you certainly have been getting around!

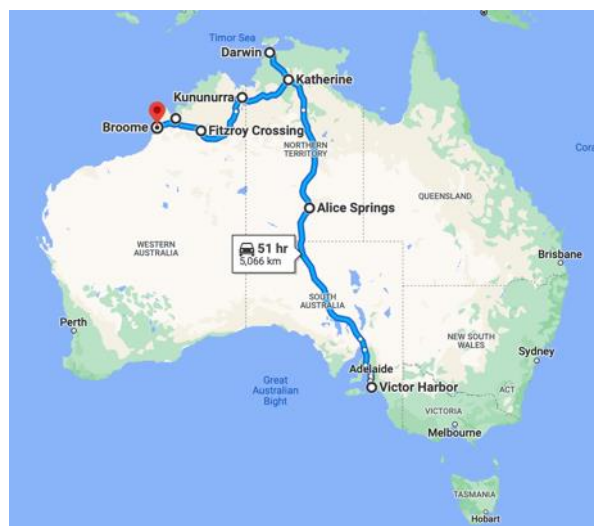
We left Victor Harbor, S.A. on 6th of May with the caravan and 'Harvey' the Poodle, so, today we have been one month on the road. Up the Stuart Highway through Alice Springs, (Daly Waters pub was hoot for 3 days) to Katherine, Darwin (caravan park \$74/night), Kununurra, Fitzroy Crossing (just rebuilt after the floods, see pic), Wyndham, Derby and presently in Broome for a few days. Doing a fair bit of off-roading and free camping.

Then, we will be heading down the west coast to Perth, across the Nullarbor back to Victor. Probably another month. Also pic of Prison Tree (Boab), Naomi in Bitter Springs Crystal clear thermal springs and a fabulous camp spot on a remote location. All the best, John.”



Note: The Baobab Prison Tree, Derby is a 1,500-year-old, large hollow *Adansonia gregorii* tree 6 kilometres south of Derby, Western Australia with a girth of 14.7 metres.

...a continuation of John's email – I (Ed) thought I'd track what he and Naomi have traversed so far...



. **Pete Fletcher** – “Hi Paul,

We are both well, keeping active with golf and walking.

Our planned trip to see family at Pt Macquarie did not pan out due to illness and unavailability.

I attended the dawn service at Terrigal on Anzac Day. The beach was packed with people. Mainly children.

We were treated with a fly over by a Huey helicopter from our era. Evidently the chopper had been stripped back and rebuilt by the pilot and his assistant. The chopper flew in at an extremely low level, across the water from the north and hovered over the beach for some time, performing tricks rolling over etc.

The ‘whoop whoop’ sound from the blades brought back memories from our days at Nui Dat, very eerie.

Best wishes my friend, till next time. Pete.”

. **Ken Osborne** – “Dear Paul ,

I have had a pretty rugged seven months or so that all began when Neridah had a fall at home where the Paramedics and I convinced her to go to the Urgent Care Centre and get checked out just in case. Well, the result wasn't good, they found out she had an infected kidney that could have been fatal. So, they air lifted her to Geelong where they started to treat her and so over the last seven months she has been in hospital for six of them, has been flown to Geelong three times and has seen the inside of the hospitals at Geelong, Warrnambool and Portland. She finally came home at the end of May, she has to take a plethora of pills, watch her fluid intake and try to put a bit of weight on as she lost a lot of body muscle and tone while bed bound. So, hopefully she is on the mend and her general well-being will improve greatly.

On the other hand, after her fall and some comments from a couple of friends, I have given up driving, sold my car to the grandson and as my mobility is going down the gurgler, and I need a walker to get around there has been some changes to my lifestyle. My mind is OK, so, I do things to keep myself mentally active, do research, read a lot, do the cooking, it takes a while to get around. I have to furniture surf and my balance is a bit off, but as my wife says you are still upright so that is a bonus.

At the moment I've been doing some background research on Ayers Rock and the Olgas. When I was at Woomera in 1966, some AGWTU and RAAF members did what we called adventure training and went to Alice Springs, Ayers Rock and the Olgas and the information we were given by an aboriginal at that time about the site has been added to over the years so now you are restricted in what you can do and that includes climbing the Rock. Back in 1966 there were no such restrictions but time and money change things but not always for the best. Trouble is I am a sceptic and like to know the real story and not the manufactured ones that seem to come up all the time nowadays, but I will get off my hobbyhorse.



Caribou on Luscombe Field

So keep well, glad your trip went well and I will add a few photos of slides I have scanned of Vietnam that I may or may not have sent before, regards Ken O.”

Caribou bringing Ted Doust and others to Luscombe Field





Market entrance at Vung Tau



Waiting to cross bridge outside Vung Tau on way back to Nui Dat



Scene near Baria

Gary Luscombe seated and Ted Doust being shown his new home



Myself KO outside my tent

Ken Osborne and Fred Walter Fred Walter



1 Fd Regt LAD area with 131 attachment included



Bill Prenter, Ken Osborne and Des Bailey



Bill Prenter, Fred Walter, Graham Stanley (NZ) Doc Pimm and two others



**Percy Long and
Tellurometer Survey
Corp**



Fred Walter and LP Nui Dat



View from top of Nui Dat



Luscombe and Chalky White among group going home

. Steve Wynn - "G'day mate,

The reason you can't see my face is because I am hanging my head in shame for not responding to your last email of 3 months ago, so I'll start with that, although we did chat before the last month's 131 meeting.

It is pleasing to hear you are spreading the wealth around, like a drunken sailor too, I hope we don't have any sailors in 131? Anyway, between keeping the airlines in business, a dentist, probably a brewery or two and lots of taxis, you still had some left for more tripping around after getting home from Oz. Like you are trying both ends of the earth, Sth and Nth poles, don't you like the tropics anymore.

Be very careful with that sterilization gear mate, don't slip, although it probably wouldn't make any difference to you now, except for a squeaky voice. I got 'snipped' after we had our second child cause my boss, er wife, couldn't bear anymore, not that bear, she couldn't carry again after the second one. Work it out you are younger than I so should be able to understand gobbledygook, that is how you speak when you get to my age.

What! You went to NZ for a feed in a Mexican restaurant. Good thing you live in Mexico then.

Mate, I learned early on if you sit down, Covid can't get you, hence I have done a lot of sitting for the last couple of years. Guess what, no Covid. I did have 2 shots initially, just because I had to for seeing the GP and getting into hospital for my ops. Not having any more Covid shots, I want to continue living a healthy life, of sorts, anyway.

My boss, er wife, also had a birthday, happy birthday Helen, plus we had our 54th anniversary, but I forgot didn't I, bugger! I will have to remember one year eh. I blame forgetting on my age, thing is I never forget most other things, must be the way I prioritise things.

I always thought all those moose and bears were painted onto the trees in Canada to give one the impression they had lots of wildlife, now you have confirmed it, I won't bother going now.

If I had your luck with flights and luggage, I would sit home for the rest of my life, it only happens once in a lifetime for 0.0000005% of the world's population - my statistics.

Really sorry for being so slack in writing mate, I have been very busy here, cool enough to begin all the work pruning fruit trees and lots of other chores around the place. Pruning's have to be dealt with, so out comes the chipper and another job is initiated munching it all up for putting back into the gardens. Then there is the collecting of firewood for winter, cutting it up, then splitting it all. No I got a mate in with a commercial splitter to do the splitting, I am over that.

Damn maintenance never stops either, the chipper needed pulling apart and fixing, then my big Husky chainsaw, then 2 of my lawn mowers needed work to get going, bugger mate, which way to the nursing home.

I haven't cleaned the roof gutters out for a couple of months so they are full of leaves now. Wondering if I trade the wife in on a newer model will the younger one do the work for me?

My latest battery system is going great and powering the house permanently now, never know when there is a blackout and always running big TVs and associated peripherals, 3 lots, I have a daughter who will not leave home, why would she getting all meals, washing etc done for her. My wife and I watch different stuff so 3 TVs etc needed. The stay at home daughter has her own properties, a house and another farm, the house is nearby but the farm is about 25kms out of town. I watched my first 2 games of soccer, first time, very impressed too. My grandsons are top players hunted by the big clubs even though they are only 7 and 8, they both play in teams for 10 year old's. I am pretty sure I enjoyed the game, and not because my boys were playing, and won. We went to Newcastle to watch their last 2 games. They both represented NSW in the national finals which meant a trip to QLD and the finals in Sydney last season.

I got my daughter and son-in-law to do the driving around Newcastle, I am OK sitting in the left lane of the 4 lane highway doing 100km/hr to get to one of their farms in the Hunter but won't drive in traffic anymore. Heading down the highway it took 2.5 hours instead of the usual 2 hours due to damn 60km/hr for a third of the way for roadworks. OK smarty, you were one of those kids that got an education and not an indoctrination, so you calculated I did not sit on the speed limit, just don't tell anyone.

The weather has generally been warm days 20-22C with cold nights, so the fire is on all night. A few drops of rain the last couple of days, but not enough to wet the ground so the bore goes back on for sprinkling the fruit trees, gardens and lawns.

What did I forget, the cat had kittens and the dog died, no not really.

Take care and stay safe my friend.

Steve."

. Graham Williams – "A Bit Of This And That."

"Hola Paul and Helen,

You are right when you say time passes quickly these days. Thank you for your informative E mail.

When you travel you certainly don't do things by halves. Quite an adventure all up but as always it is good to catch up with family and friends. I would, however, like to know the secret of how you managed so many flights without any drama. All I ever seem to get is late flights leading to cancellations and overnight sleeps in airports.

Jenni and myself are well. No flu or covid this winter so far, although the latter lurgy is still around. We just go on our way living from day to day so at present all is quiet on the "Eastern Front."

Plenty of activity of course around Anzac Day. Did not forward you any pics, reason being you would have pretty much received virtually the same as I sent in in the past. Went to the Dawn Service in Tweed Heads. Seems more of the public are turning up each year which is a good thing. Then across the road to the Dolphins Hotel, breakfast (my own version of a gunfire breakfast) followed by the usual reverie with fellow Veterans and friends.

Still go to gym 2 days each week with other vets. One day do cardio and weights and the other pilates and stretching exercises. The latter has been very beneficial actually, ha, ha, finally get to use parts of the bod that haven't moved in years. Of the vets I am the oldest in both classes but everyone gets on very well so Anzac Day we spend together.

The following day I drove down the coast to Woolgoolga where I used to live. What with the new highway right through to Coffs Harbour, what used to be a 4 hour drive now only takes a touch over half that. Caught up with a lot of friends there over the 5 days I stayed over. Enclosed a couple of photos of the Diggers Club there taken the day after Anzac Day in case you wish to use them. Also got to catch up with Herb Andrews (32 Alpha Radar class of 69) for a short time as he is now living in Woolgoolga. While I may not be able to win the lottery, did well over the 5 days in raffles in the various clubs. One seafood tray and 8 meat trays 3 of which survived to take home with me so the order of the day was BBQ's.

Last weekend we had the Cooly Rocks On Festival here in Coolangatta. Great weather and a cast of 1,000's on the streets. The Gogomobile crew were well represented again but I did not stop to chat as everyone seemed busy talking with members of the public. I know in the past you have added the Goggomobils photos in "*Eyes and Ears*", so sent on a few other pics taken this year. While the Festival did not seem as big this year there were some unbelievable vehicles and as a kid growing up in the fifties used to sit outside on our front veranda and count cars, makes and models the majority of which were on show here. Nuff said they look better now than they did then. Ah memories eh?

In August, Jenni and myself will be heading off on another adventure; this time to Slovenia and Croatia. Will be flying into Ljubljana in Slovenia and using that as H.Q. to tour to Lake Bled and Postojna Caves among other places for five days and then across to Zagreb in Croatia for three days before heading across to the port city of Opatija. Have 2 days there prior to joining a cruise through all the islands along the coast to Dubrovnik, on to Kotor in Montenegro then back to Dubrovnik for four days prior to flying home. One of Jenni's girlfriends from Newcastle comes up for a holiday and to look after the ponderosa and the dogs in our absence. As such will miss Vietnam Veterans Day unfortunately.

I believe a few of the lads from up this way are talking about going to Canberra for the Services there. After Croatia, things will go quiet again here until the end of the year as in early December I will return to Vietnam for several weeks. Unsure what "tour of duty" that will be but with 1969 being the first must be high up in the late twenties by now. While airfares are booked already still have to decide where I will go this time but a good chunk of that time will be spent in Vung Tau among friends and other vets.

That is pretty much it from this end so will finish up now with a hope you are both well and that you have finally done something positive about your Golf Handicap; sorry, couldn't resist that.

Stay safe and Best Wishes,

32 Bravo out."

...Graham's pictorial collection, including some absolute "classics" -



. **John Richmond** – "Hi Paul,

Seems like you are now a well-travelled person.

As to the weather. We are now into winter. Had an early start during May (although still in autumn) with a few minimums well below zero. Things like minus 5 and air temperatures of minus 8. Makes your 30+ seem like someone left the door in the oven open.

Have had a great week. Wife and son are down in Melbourne. Have been left to look after 2 cats. One is an indoor one, the other only comes in at dark.

My main activities these days are going from one specialist to another.

Last month the eye specialist. Had growth taken off my eye a year or two ago and needs to be reviewed yearly.

Next month off to the medical oncologist. Again he is monitoring my prostate cancer. Had an op in 2014. Was glad my GP kept my PSA on a regular basis.

I hope this finds you well

Regards, JR."

. **Terry Bruce** – “Good day Paul,

Once again I find myself apologising for my tardiness in not replying to your e-mail sooner.

It sounds like you had a great trip to New Zealand and Australia, as well as other places en-route.

We have done some travelling too, although within Australia. This entailed some train travel (naturally) – travelling Sydney to Adelaide on the Indian Pacific with a one-night stay in Adelaide. This was followed by a trip on the Great Southern from Adelaide to Brisbane over three days, stopping at several places including The Grampians in Victoria. The next day after departing from the train at Yass Junction we travelled by bus to Canberra for lunch at the Old Parliament house with an afternoon tour of the Australian War Memorial. After rejoining the train at Goulburn we travelled overnight to Coffs Harbour for a tour of the town and to visit local places of interest. Then travelled to Brisbane and spent five days there (hotel) visiting relatives and sightseeing. This was followed by a flight to Sydney and home. It was a very good trip overall. We travelled Platinum class for both train trips (which made it even better) and we classified it as a SKI trip (Spending the Kids Inheritance).

Other than this we have been working on the property – recently had some trees that were close to the house removed (giving us plenty of fence posts, mulch and, later, firewood) and have been cutting/gathering firewood in preparation for the cold weather. I've attended a few Rural Fire Brigade meetings too, although since resigning from my official roles within the brigade and with the problems that my right knee has been giving me since its replacement, I haven't been too heavily involved in the running of the brigade (although as a life member I retain a keen interest in its operations).

I am currently visiting an Exercise Physiologist twice per week in an effort to get my knee working properly. Seems to be having some positive effect. Judith is attending the same practitioner after recently suffering a fall at home and subsequent hospitalisation.

Had a good ANZAC Day in Camden (attended the dawn service and the march with some of the family). An interesting component of which was a photograph submitted to the *Eyes and Ears* (April edition) by Grahame Dignam describing his ANZAC day in Camden which included some photographs of a couple of Jeeps (page 6 of the *E&E's*). The jeep in the left hand photo is mine – my son, Scott, having driven it to Camden and parked it by the side of the road whilst looking for me before the march commenced. Attached is a photo of Scott and me in the Jeep, taken about twenty minutes after the one taken by Grahame (my granddaughter, Lily (who turned four on 26/04/23) is in the back, and the centre of attention of the people at the roadside, but obscured in the photo).

There's not a lot happening on the property, except for ongoing maintenance – repairing fences, looking after the cattle, carrying out some hazard reduction/pile burning, keeping the Wombats out of the sheds and, of course, rebuilding my Jeeps (GPW as per photo, CJ3B, and the CJ5) plus working on the restoration of my various pieces of railway paraphernalia.

So that's about it for now. I'll try and communicate more frequently in the future.

Keep up your excellent work with compiling and publishing the *Eyes and Ears*.

Keep well and give my regards to Helen.

Kind regards,

Terry Bruce.”



. A News Update – forwarded by Ian Campbell...

\$50 million blow for Phillip Island and Vietnam Veterans

May 16 2023 Updated May 16, 2023 Michael Giles

THE tragedy of the decision by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal yesterday, Monday, May 15, to knock back the application for a \$50 million new National Vietnam Veterans Museum to be built



on Phillip Island is that some of the older or unwell Vietnam Veterans will never see it. That has been the response from Kingsley Munday AM, chair of the National Vietnam Veterans Museum board after receiving the decision by VCAT at 7pm on Monday night this week.

"It's not good news. I've seen the decision but I'm still working my way through the 48-page deliberation. We'll take a couple of days to consider our position and to meet as a board.

"It's a speed bump, not a roadblock. We'll look at where we go to from here," Mr Munday said.

"The critical factor for us is that our veterans are dying, and we need to build it so they can see it. Every day we delay, more veterans are dying.

"We still want to do it, but we have to do it in a place where people will have us," he said.

Another issue, revealed recently by CEO of the museum, Braxton Lane, is that there are many Vietnam Veterans, both in Australia and overseas, wanting to offer their memorabilia, from the Vietnam War, to the museum before they die, much of it having high historical value.

The delay caused by the VCAT decision is a threat to that process because the NVVM simply hasn't got anywhere to store the equipment and material.

Mr Munday confirmed that the 'Farming' use zone of the land they own, 40.11 hectares at 24 Churchill Road, Newhaven, fronting Phillip Island Road opposite the intersection with Woolamai Beach Road, was one of the main stumbling blocks for VCAT and also the scale of the building, at approximately 4200m2.

The VCAT decision also notes the project is contrary to the local strategic context.

"What I find difficult is that council has been extremely supportive of the project. Not offering us any short cuts, of course, but council did a good job of working through the changes we made, signing off on it and then having it unanimously supported by council only for VCAT to say no and criticising council in the process, which I don't believe they deserved.

"But look, I only found out about this at 7pm last night and we are still considering our position."

The National Vietnam Veterans Museum board has reportedly spent \$180,000 on the VCAT process, to consider objections brought by several local landholders, among other things, objecting to the use in a Farming Zone. In a newsletter to supporters, before the VCAT hearing in February, they also revealed spending \$1 million on the development application for the site at 24 Churchill Road.

But they have no right of appeal, other than on a point of law, to the Supreme Court.

The decision by VCAT is effectively final.

Another member of the NVVM board, John Methven OAM, when asked if the project could be put forward again, if council rezoned the land to a more favourable use, Mr Methven said it was highly unlikely.

"I don't think they'd do that," he said.

The project had already secured \$10 million from the State Government, the promise of a further \$10 million from the State Opposition prior to the election campaign in 2022 and an earlier commitment of \$5 million from the Federal Government.

A favourable decision by VCAT would have initiated a new drive for additional funding. What happens now is up to the NVVM board to decide. The NVVM purchased to 40.11 hectare site, reportedly from one of those who subsequently objected to their project, for \$2.6 million on July 19, 2019*.

A local property consultant believes they would likely get their money back on the open market if they wanted to sell the property with a house a permissible use in a Farming Zone where the site is over 40ha.

* In a 'A Call to Arms' communique to supporters, on February 6, 2023, published online ahead of the VCAT hearing, the National Vietnam Veterans Museum tried to put a positive spin on the objections but couldn't hide their disappointment about one of the objectors: "Attached is a flyer addressed to all Vietnam veterans alerting them to a Victorian Civil and Administrative Council (VCAT) hearing at which the NVVM will argue against some objections raised by self-important individuals to the construction of a new museum building on our land. The objections are flimsy, to say the least, and negotiations to settle the matters without recourse to VCAT have stalled. Ironical that one of the objectors is the very same person who sold us the land knowing full well what was planned for it".

. Grahame Dignam forwarded the following link to the magazine "CONTACT"
<https://www.contactairlandandsea.com/2023/06/11/new-resource-for-defence-and-veteran-carers/>

This is worth reading.

Notice Board – Hey, see what's coming up?

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

50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War...An Invitation

An event to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War is one of the last opportunities to gather as a large group.



Here are additional details regarding the Reunion -

.Accommodation booking and costs for the Pavilion on Northbourne. The room rates offered including other add ons are attached below . Please call and when making your booking, mention the 131 Association Reunion - bookings T: 1800 828 000 (Free call) . The date for the booking quote has been extended.

Registration and ticketing for the event at the Memorial on Anzac Parade. Please read as it includes travel to/from the event location on the day and parking etc [Vietnam War commemorative medallion and certificate | Department of Veterans' Affairs](#)

Commemorative Medallion and Certificate application if required is also in the above link.

Run sheet for the Event sequence attached below

The \$60 per head cost of the reunion Buffet Dinner on the Evening of the 18th will need to be directed to the Association (please include Number and Name) by :

Direct Deposit to:

131 Locators Association Inc. Bank: Westpac, Kingsgrove NSW BSB No: 032 166 A/c No: 264133.

Late applications will be accepted but the sooner the arrangements are made the more time we will have to cope with problems.

For any enquiries please call me on Mob 0437 361 602



Grahame Dignam, Secretary / Treasurer, 131 Locators Assn Inc. ABN 92 663 816
Supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

973

Event sequence -



50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War

Stakeholder Consultative Committee Meeting Proposed Event Sequence

1	Playing of the didgeridoo
2	Welcome and Introduction – Veteran and family acknowledgement
3	Mounting of the Catafalque Party and service devices
4	Call to Remembrance – Delivered by a senior veteran or current serving member
5	Commemorative Address – Delivered by the Governor-General or the Prime Minister
6	Musical Piece – TBC
7	Veteran Reading
8	Prayer of Commemoration
9	Official Wreath Laying
10	Ode of Remembrance – recited by a veteran
11	Last Post – One Minute's Silence – Rouse
12	National Anthem
13	Proposed Flypast of era appropriate military aircraft
14	Final Blessing
15	Dismount of the Catafalque Party and service devices
16	Formal closing remarks
17	Public Wreath Laying – This would allow the opportunity for Associations and individual members to lay wreaths, followed by members of the public.
18	Final closing remarks

Commemorating Australian service *in the* Vietnam War

In 2023, the Australian Government will mark the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War with:

- a televised Commemorative Service (service) at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial on Anzac Parade, on Friday 18 August 2023; and
- production and distribution of a Commemorative Medallion (medallion) and Certificate of Commemoration (certificate).

Commemorative Service

18 AUGUST 2023 FROM 10:00AM

- Attendees are encouraged to plan their journey and arrival times carefully. You are requested to arrive prior to 10:00am; the site will be open from 9:00am.
- You are encouraged to use public transport where possible to attend the service as car parking is extremely limited. Free shuttles to the service will be provided from the Canberra CBD going directly to Anzac Parade.
- Only 6,000 seats are available for this service. Accessible seating and support are provided to those who have indicated a need for accessible assistance when registering for an attendance pass.
- All attendees planning to attend the service are required to register for an attendance pass to access the commemorative site.
- To obtain an attendance pass, please visit vietnam50.teg.com.au

Commemorative Medallion and Certificate

While Australia can never repay the debt we owe to the 60,000 who served in Vietnam, the medallion and certificate are a small but meaningful way to honour their service and to recognise the sacrifice of those who never returned home.

- The medallion and certificate will be made available to every living veteran, widows of veterans and other family members of veterans of the Vietnam War.
- The medallion is free of charge for any veteran who served in the Vietnam War.
- Applications are made online at dva.gov.au/vietnam50
- Please note that you will need to know your service number, or the service number of the veteran you are applying on behalf of, in order to apply.
- If you require support to apply, please phone **1800 VETERAN** (1800 838 372) between 9am and 5pm AEST Monday to Friday, and say the word 'medallions' when prompted. You can also email commemorations@dva.gov.au



More information:
dva.gov.au/vietnam50



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs



PO4597

“Class of ‘69” – Get Together

Graham Williams – during the course of a recent “havachat” with Ian Brignell and Gary Lovell we discussed our time in Vietnam with the Detachment during 1969, or should I say the “Class of 69.”

Call it a memory thing, I guess.

Anyway, it was suggested we try and organize a get together of anyone who may be interested by asking for expressions of interest with some of those we are in contact with and got a “yes” vote from the following people. Peter Ravelje, Peter Bremner, Grant Perrins, T.C. White, Joe Losiak, Derek Hinde, John Stanford, Bill Edward, Herb Andrews, Peter Bennett and Peter Meaney along with several who are simply interested.

Here’s the “Plot” –

We are asking for expressions of interest from anyone else who may wish to catch up with some of those they served with.

With both Peter Bennett and Peter Meany living in Victoria and South Australia respectively we have given consideration to anyone living interstate, as far as a time frame goes, so anyone wishing to come has plenty of time to check airfares, accommodation and the like.

We are considering holding this get together in November of this year (2023) prior to any school holidays, but depending on interest can be flexible on dates.

The proposed location will take place in Coolangatta/Tweed Heads, where everything required will be within walking distance, so it is possible some may wish to stay over for a break or holiday. The airport is handy.

Anyway, I thought I would take a “chuck at the stumps”, and if anyone wants to provide an expression of interest with regard to this, please contact me on my following email address - beastmaster@iprimus.com.au

I look forward to hearing from you.

Graham Williams.

PS – here’s a bit of a collage of the ‘69 Members...



Kevin Browning is getting a request out there...

Calling ALL Sensor Operators

Sensor Operators - Your Story needs to be Expanded

If you operated Sensors in Vietnam we need your help to flesh out your story. Eddie Tricker who was with D&E Platoon and involved in the early days of the sensor program is writing the story of sensors but needs the personal stories of what you did. If you are interested in assisting please let Kevin Browning know. Eddie is happy to either call or email. Yours is a very special aspect of what the Detachment did in Vietnam and only you can tell it as it was.

My email you have phone is 0411 966 785.

Regards
Kevin



At right - **Original Australian Unattended Ground Sensor Course** participants –

ARVN Signals School, Vung Tàu – 10th – 11th July 1970 –

Stuart Telford (Late), Albert Jacka, John Lucas, Laurie Mion, Warren Jaenke, Geoff Carthew, John Brewer, Jeff Bassford (Late), Gary Navas (Late) and Richard Edwards

An Editor's Note: Ok, so everyone thinks all I do is play golf!

Well last weekend, I volunteered, with my wife, who is on the board of the charity, Amigos de Animales, which held a FREE Sterilisation "Blitz", where **246 cats and dogs** were operated on.

I got paired up with another volunteer (also on the board) to carry the animals (cats are much easier) from the operating tables to a rest and recuperation area.

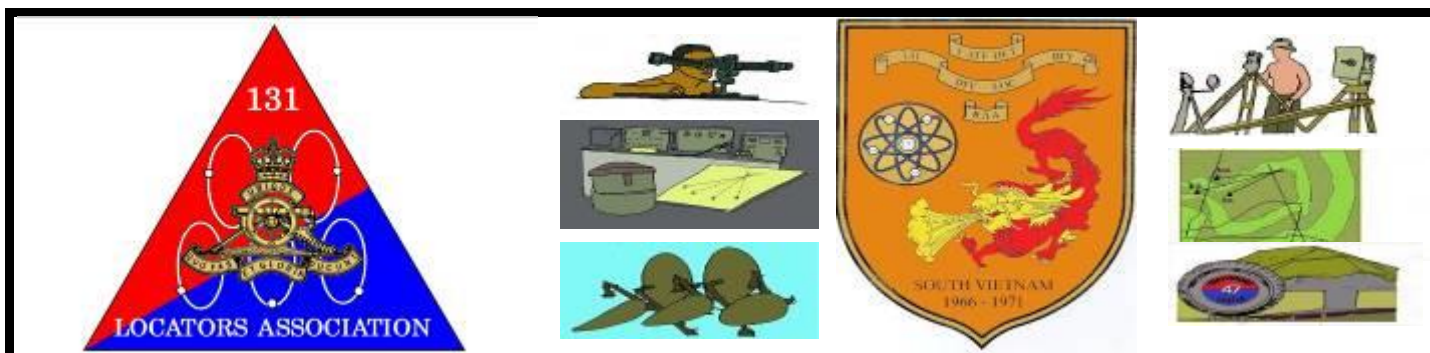
The photo (at right) has me laughing, because I beat her to the head section and she got stuck with the arse!

It was a great weekend.

You can see more photos on my Facebook page if you're up for it.

Footnote – I did get to play golf twice this week!





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

International and domestic travel have both flown back into popularity. We live near the flight path north of Sydney CBD and can vouch for more incoming and outgoing flights. Now that winter school holidays have commenced the aircraft regularity is up consistently.

In order to join the international flying crowd I booked a return flight to the US for late July. My aim was to use covid related flight cancellation credits and to top up the fare with points and a call on credit card for the rest. However, I found the airline would only accept the use of one credit plus the remainder in cash/card.

So my action was to ring the airline's complaints/compliments number. I found the advice that the airline would usually respond within 15 working days a little extreme - are there really so many people queuing to complain or compliment? My patience wore off after less than the 15 working days, so I telephoned again. The outcome was two phone hang ups by agents, one promised call back that never occurred and at last someone who actually understood that I wanted to use my four credits.

The agent promised to use an internal email requesting that my four credits be combined into a single credit. But, the kicker is that with less than a month before my flight departs that internal process would take 3 to 5 working days. I'm not sure if that was an addition to the original 15 working days. Nevertheless, I live in hope that it will be sorted this week. And this fits under the description of customer service?

Allen

50 Years
April 1966 - April 2016



The Memories Remain
1966 - 1971



find us on

Facebook

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

Minutes for the General Meetings of the 131 Locators Association Inc. Date: Tuesday and Thursday,

A June 13th, 2023 at 1105hrs

and

B June 16th, 2022 at 1105hrs...

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

Attendees were:

A Zoomed members were Steve Wynn, Ron Mason, Paul Dickson, Ian Campbell, Terry Erbs, Bert Blink

A Present at the club were Allen Morley, Grahame Dignam, Ernest Newbold Nick Proskurin, Gordon Malcolm

B Zoomed members were, Allen Morley, Grahame Dignam, Bert Blink, Ian Amos, Terry Erbs, Barry Guzder, Steve Wynn, Bob Billiards and Laurie Sawyer

Apologies: Merv Nairn, Rieny Nieuwenhof, Ged Carroll, George Lane, Warwick Brooker other State Reps and Jim Fitzgerald

Due to internet difficulties the original meeting had 2 parts - the club and the zoom. Each had a version of their minutes which are shown here and referred to A.

A.

Zoom minutes were: We did have a meeting of sorts.

Attendees were **Bert Blink, Terry Erbs, Ron Mason, Steve Wynne, Ian Campbell and me.**

Discussion topics:

- . **Rieny Nieuwenhof** being awarded an OAM - we all expressed our congratulations.
 - . **Dr Daniel Mealey's** email to General Campbell with regards to alcohol being served/provided to troops on active duty etc. It was duly commended.
 - . **DVA services** - the slowness of reaction times etc.
 - locating and using Advocates, not going direct to DVA. Contact local (major towns/cities) for directions via RSLs if need be.
 - Paul Dickson can help via Assoc members.
 - the type of DVA card you have determines the continuing service that will be maintained to partners if the vet dies.
 - DVA extra home service ceases if the member goes into assisted living and is replaced with Medicare CENTRELINK etc. (oops)
 - . **Vietnam Museum**, Phillip Island update on the legal case - the case was lost, and Ron Mason is going to forward a source of this action to follow up with.
 - . **All the blokes are breathing**, and we discussed mail that had been received and who they were keeping in touch with other mates etc. Small local groups of vets do gather (not all necessarily ex-131).
 - . **Discussions** were held on upcoming events and the possibility of numbers declining in general with ANZAC Days - smaller local groups are gathering and more members are attending local areas with families. The upcoming 55-year event was agreed to still have legs.
 - . **Association longevities** were discussed - the subject of 2025 was raised as shutdown times - Terry Erbs agrees with the LSTAA lot as they are having trouble gathering ex-service personnel, in their 50's plus, are not easy to re-contact and enthuse. Will ANZAC Day still be celebrated in the decades to come was another topic - hmmm! was the response.
- I think that covered most of the points - we did talk for some time - it was good interaction.
Paul

B Zoomed 16/6/23

Financial Membership is currently ...131, plus Associates 2, Affiliates 15. Total 148. Lapsed 31 members as at 1st June 2023.

- . **Discussion on finances** including the NVVM case loss in the Victorian Land Tribunal.
- . **Bob Elsworthy** thanks the Assn for its donation to the fighting fund.
- . **Confusion** on issuing a Brevet to Sean Voss, 20 Regiment RAA.
- . **Bill Taggart** sent a musical link to "In the shadow of the horseshoe". This may be suitable for our Website. Permissions will be investigated.
- . **The 131 Locators Assn** need to nominate a VIP for the DAY and Grahame Dignam has been nominated and accepted.
- . Webmaster Update.
- . **Facebook** has 360 members, and a poster is near to her limit due to excessive volume.
- . We had **181 members** access the link to *Eyes & Ears* Newsletter, but we had a drop of 12% loss of hits and a severe drop in International accesses.

General Business and around the grounds:

Discussions ensued on the following:

- . **Terry Erbs** reported 133 Headquarters Battery is being reformed and a new building has commenced construction. A history of 133 is being collected for a "Battery Identity" and its history.
- . **Terry Erbs** advised that an Advocate has been touting for clients from the younger aged veterans to process Medical/Pension claims for a fee. This appears to be illegal. Beware if approached. More information and better access are being sought to Direct Veterans to the correct pathway. Kits are to be developed.
- . **The Gunners Dinner** in Caloundra in 2025 is a goer, and a Locators Table is being canvassed.
- . **Issues** with the new Fair-Trading version of the Constitution concerning ZOOM meetings are being checked. Our Association Constitution may need to be changed.

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

. Upcoming Events Calendar –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting

Date: **Tuesday, 11th July, 2023** at 1100hrs Venue: to be advised

Also, available via Zoom link to be advised



. Birthdays in the Battery...July – **HAPPY 56TH EYES & EARS!!!**

DATE	NAME	REGT NO	SVN In	SVN Out	COMMENTS
1	STEPHEN FOWLER	217186	16 09 1968	17 09 1969	
2	PETER O'DONNELL Sgt.	213115	24 03 1970	05 11 1970	
3	BRUCE FOWLER	2795238	16 12 1970	29 07 1971	

4	GEORGE WEARN Capt.	2251140	05 08 1968	20 08 1968	133 Div Loc CMF
7	PETER JOSCELYNE	2792023	03 06 1970	17 12 1970	
12	NEVILLE ATKINSON	1733449	08 11 1968	05 11 1969	† 14.12.96
13	DEREK GRIFFITHS		N/a		† 02.04.05
10	BILL FINLAY Sgt.	37818	20 05 1966	01 05 1967	
10	ROBERT PELHAM	55342	16 11 1968	19 11 1969	
10	REX ARNOLD	424096	16 12 1970	29 05 1971	
	" "		29 05 1971	16 09 1971	Ind 161 Recce Flt.
11	JOHN JAGGARD	4721862	03 03 1971	02 08 1971	131
	" "		02 08 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
12	HARRY LYNUS	176377			
13	ALASDAIR GOUGH	2105130	27 03 1970	04 03 1971	
14	EDMOND DOUST Sgt.	53111	04 05 1967	02 04 1968	† 26.12.14
14	FREDERICK KRUMINK	6708867	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
15	IAN EARLE	3166824	19 08 1970	10 12 1970	131 / 4 Fd Regt.
	" "		11 12 1970	23 06 1971	33 Dental Unit
16	GEORGE ADDISON WO2	2410040	16 04 1969	16 04 1970	† 27.12.12
18	KEITH AYLIFFE Sgt.	217354	18 12 1967	03 12 1968	131
	" "		08 07 1971	24 07 1971	HQ AFV
18	ALAISTAIR McLEAN	312524	21 02 1969	21 02 1970	
18	JOE KOCKA	1202703	20 08 1970	29 07 1971	
19	MAXWELL McPHERSON	3795560	27 11 1969	05 11 1970	†19.05.16
21	GRAHAM WILLIAMS	2789698	03 06 1969	25 03 1970	
21	WILLIAM SLAPE	44464	22 12 1969	17 12 1970	† 12.05.12
21	WILHELMUS Van ZETTEN	3794919	17 03 1970	17 12 1970	
21	PETER SUMMERS	3796803	09 11 1970	09 06 1971	
22	JOHN HOMER	5717596	17 03 1971	02 08 1971	131
	" "		02 08 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
22	THE EYES & EARS		1967	1967	
23	DAVID DODD	2790139	03 06 1969	04 06 1970	
25	WILLIAM DOYLE	4719912	17 12 1968	04 01 1969	4 Fd REGT
	" "		05 01 1969	28 11 1969	131 † 05.09.78
25	JOHN SMITH	610231	16 11 1968	12 11 1969	
25	PETER BARRY	2794949	17 03 1971	04 08 1971	131
	" "		04 08 1971	02 11 1971	12 Fd Regt
28	MALCOLM MUSGRAVE	214359	03 06 1969	04 06 1970	
29	RICHARD EDWARDS	218595	03 06 1970	14 05 1971	
30	KEITH HOLLOWAY	15851	20 05 1966	10 10 1966	

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

Ed – 8 blokes not highlighted need attention to Locate. Let's pursue the goal to find them.

. **Locator Profiles** – we've received 175 and we've sent out 175. Ed – Maybe we need to draw in a deep one so as to hold our breaths for a while longer.

. **Located...**

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



131 Locators Association is always on the lookout for new financial members. With the establishment of the web site we continue to be burdened with the ongoing cost of maintenance etc and we need to be able to support this effort equally. So, if you're a non-financial Associate receiving emails and the *Eyes & Ears* regularly you could bite the bullet and email Grahame Dignam:

sectreas131locators@gmail.com and he could forward you the relevant forms to join - Memberships are available for 1 year or longer deposit a DONATION direct (add your name) to the associations account at

"A/c Name: 131 Locators Association Inc. Bank: Westpac, Kingsgrove NSW BSB No: 032 166 A/c No: 264133"

Hope we hear from you?

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

. Other related sites...

. Locating, Surveillance & Target Acquisition Association...



LOCATING, SURVEILLANCE & TARGET ACQUISITION ASSOCIATION
The Eyes and Ears of The Battlefield



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL COMPANY

www.artilleryhistory.org



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

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

. VETERAN'S AFFAIRS WEBSITE

The Dept of Veteran's Affairs has launched a new mental health initiative to assist veteran's experiencing the affects of mental illness and their families. Providing information and fact sheets about understanding mental illness, links and contact information for accessing support, and online resources for health professionals, this website focuses on helping veterans identify early warning signs of mental illness to effectively manage their mental illness and seek treatment. For more info or to access, please visit www.at-ease.dva.gov.au



. 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery...



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

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

The Royal New Zealand Artillery Association

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

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

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