

THE EYES and EARS

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

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Unit Citation for Gallantry
awarded to the Detachment and
those who served at the Battles
of Coral/Balmoral,
South Vietnam, 1968

**Detachment 131 Divisional
Locating Battery RAA
South Vietnam 1966 – 1971
2024**

**58 Years and the Detachment
Spirit Remains**



Republic of Vietnam Cross of
Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation
Awarded to those who served
with the Detachment
from 01.04.66 – 19.08.71



Repair "Job" 1967

Relaxing with a mate 1967

More relaxing in 1970

Mates again in 1966

DET.131 DIV LOC BTY NOTICE BOARD

Seasons



Greetings

**Enjoy the time with
Family and Friends!**

Art work: Ernie Newbold



106 Years on, and the Memory Continues...

Rieny Nieuwenhof – extracted from his Facebook page...

"It was a privilege to lay a wreath on behalf of the Geelong Vietnam Veterans Ass. at the Portarlington Remembrance Day ceremony. A good sized crowd on a beautiful day. Lest We Forget."



Mike Butler (left) - Remembrance Day at the local Box Hill cenotaph – see more from Mike in Mail Out – Mail In below.



Paul Dickson – here's the group of ex-Vets and ex-Service personnel I shared Remembrance Day for the 11th time in San Miguel de Allende.

It was a day to be remembered.

The National Service Scheme...



How “Nashos” were invented for Vietnam...



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

Appendix: The national service scheme, 1964-72

By Sue Langford

Appendix from Peter Edwards, *A nation at war : Australian politics,*

society and diplomacy during the Vietnam War 1965–1975: the official history of Australia's involvement in Southeast Asian conflicts 1948-1975, volume VI, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 1997.

The Series continues...

Conditions and obligations of service

Men who passed the final medical examination served for two years fulltime in the Regular Army Supplement and a further three years part-time in the Regular Army Reserve. An initial ten weeks' recruit training was followed by three months of corps training, after which national servicemen could then usually apply for posting to any corps. They were not always successful in obtaining the posting of their choice. In October 1971 the length of full-time service was reduced from two years to eighteen months and the length of liability for service in the Reserve increased from three years to three and a half. National servicemen could volunteer for an additional period of service at any time.

All national servicemen were liable for military service in Australia and overseas, or 'special overseas service', while with the Army full-time. Officially, national servicemen could not be posted according to their wishes and therefore could not choose whether or not they served in Vietnam, although a national serviceman could apply to his commanding officer to remain in Australia on compassionate grounds. The general impression given by serving Army officers at the time is that more national servicemen were keen to serve in Vietnam than were needed, and that those unwilling to serve there were transferred to units serving only in Australia. Commanding officers were understandably reluctant to have any soldier who actively opposed participation in the war and who therefore might be a danger to other members of the unit. For most of the war the Government denied that this practice existed. In September 1971, with the level of Australian involvement in Vietnam decreasing markedly, the Minister for the Army, Andrew Peacock, stated that although national servicemen would continue to be sent to Vietnam, they would not be compelled to go.⁹

National servicemen received the same pay and service benefits as Regular Army volunteers. Naturally, the Army provided free meals, accommodation, uniforms and work clothes, and medical, dental and hospital treatment. Unmarried soldiers of private rank were paid \$34.16 a week in 1966, married privates \$45.71. Extra pay margins were awarded if soldiers qualified at trade courses conducted at Army schools and were employed in that trade in their units. An additional combat allowance was awarded during service overseas. Other benefits included the following:

Three weeks' annual leave, with free travel, except for married soldiers whose families lived in the station area.

After two years' service, a gratuity of \$80. If discharged on medical grounds before completing two years' service, a gratuity of not less than \$40.

After two years' continuous service, an additional seven days' leave with pay or one week's extra pay.

If holding Intermediate Certificate at time of call-up, permission to study on Army time to gain Matriculation level. If matriculated at time of call-up, entitlement to undertake two years of a three-year university degree course by correspondence at the Army's expense.

Free legal advice for those requiring assistance on matters relating to financial commitments and re-entry to civil employment. Those sent to 'special service areas' overseas such as Vietnam, and the dependents of such men, were also entitled to settle their affairs at the Army's expense before leaving Australia.

Eligibility for legal protection from finance agreements including mortgages, debts, contracts and hire purchase agreements made before the national serviceman received his call-up notice. What amounted to financial assistance from the Army continued after the end of full-time service. If the full-time service was less than a year, the period was set at equal to the length of time served.

Training under the National Service Vocational Training Scheme where the Army believed a national serviceman's skills could be supplemented by a course of study or a refresher course, whether full-time, part-time or by correspondence, or if the serviceman had no job to return to on completing national service. The scheme covered the cost of post-discharge training, including compulsory fees, travel fares, textbooks and equipment, and a living allowance for those studying full-time.

Transfer whenever requested or on completion of national service to the Australian Regular Army. The minimum service obligation in the Regular Army was three or six years.

Eligibility for promotion to non-commissioned and commissioned ranks and to apply to be sent to the Officer Training Unit after commencement of basic training. National servicemen who in civil life were doctors or dentists or who held a commercial pilot's licence were also considered for officer training.

From 1968, membership of the Defence Forces Retirement Benefit scheme, giving national servicemen and their dependents invalidity, death and retirement cover.

Cover under the provisions of the Commonwealth Employees' Compensation Act for service-caused death or injury.

Pensions, medical treatment and war-service-home rights under the Repatriation (Special Overseas Service) Act for those injured or killed in Vietnam on service.

The Army was obliged to make effective use of the trade skills of national servicemen. Subject to vacancies, these men were employed in the Army in their civilian occupation, though the Army could not guarantee that every skilled man would be so employed. Early in the administration of the scheme, after a large number of students and apprentices called up in the first two ballots had deferred their national service obligation, the DLNS became concerned about the potentially large

number of skilled men liable for national service once the students and apprentices completed their training. There was also a fear of resistance from trade unions (particularly metalworking and electrical industry unions) as the Army would not be able to employ all national servicemen in their professional occupations. DLNS concerns appear to have been dispelled when subsequent intakes proved it had overestimated the numbers of deferments.

Re-establishment benefits and reinstatement protection

Re-establishment and civilian employment benefits were intended 'to protect the interests of national servicemen in relation to their reinstatement in civilian employment', 'to protect obligations they have entered into before becoming liable for national service', and 'to facilitate the re-settlement of national servicemen in civil life on completion of period of continuous national service'. The following benefits were provided:

A loan of up to \$3000 for a business or up to \$6000 for agricultural expenses where a national serviceman needed to be re-established in a business, profession or occupation. Interest was set at 4.5 per cent a year, and the first \$100 was interest-free.

Housing grants under the Commonwealth Home Savings Grants scheme. Those who served overseas in a 'special service' capacity could qualify for assistance in building or purchasing a home under the War Service Homes Act.

As mentioned before, training under the national service vocational training scheme was available if a serviceman had no job to return to on completing national service.

On 30 May 1969 the Government announced additional benefits for national servicemen who volunteered to extend their fulltime service of two years by a further three months. These included post-discharge vocational training, re-establishment loans to assist in a business, profession or occupation including farming, and rehabilitation treatment and training. The last was available to those not eligible for repatriation benefits but who required medical treatment and training for 'effective' resettlement. Those discharged before 30 May 1969 could apply for the new benefits within six months.

Reinstatement protection was offered to national servicemen who completed two years' full-time service. On completion of service, they were entitled to resume work in their previous employment provided they had been with their employer for at least 30 days before being issued with a call-up notice. Employers were not permitted to sack national servicemen, and their long service leave and superannuation credits were to be preserved.

Suffrage and discharge to stand election

In May 1966 the Government introduced an amendment to the Electoral Act which gave the vote to members of the Defence Force under 21 years of age who had served or were serving on 'special duty' in a 'special area' as defined in the Repatriation Act. National servicemen under 21 serving on 'special duty' in South Vietnam, the Borneo States of Malaysia, on the Malayan peninsula and in Singapore were thus given the option to vote in the 1966 and 1969 federal elections. Full-time Regular Army officers and men serving in the armed forces who wished to stand for election or to take a seat in the Commonwealth Parliament had to be discharged before standing for election. Initially, national servicemen could not be discharged for this reason. Before the 1966 election the legislation was altered so that national servicemen who were 'bona fide candidates' could be discharged to contest it at the discretion of the Military Board. Three stood for seats in the 1966 election. One was 21-year-old Brian King, who had made numerous unsuccessful attempts to be granted exemption from national service. With the support of Youth Campaign Against Conscription, King stood as an Independent against the Minister for Labour and National Service, Leslie Bury, for the Sydney seat of Wentworth. King was unsuccessful and performed the rest of his national service.

This series continues next month with Men not required to register and Non-compliance. It's an interesting journey of the reason for, how it was organised and how it played out.

There are some 10,000+ plus words in the series – so get comfy!

Now for a follow on “Nashos” story...

Bob Billiards...relates a couple classic ‘Intro-Exit’ reflections (maybe you could substitute “nightmare”) as to his ‘Welcome’ and ‘Thanks’ for being a part of the National Service programme -

“Paul,

Just read the next section regarding the NS recruitment process in the current *E's and E's* (October 2024's edition) and have a couple of reflections and comments.

I was interested in the “medical” that we had to attend. Living in Cabramatta at that time I had to go to the York St centre in Sydney maybe in November 1966. After waiting my turn, I was asked to see the doctor who was maybe 85 in the shade and well past retirement and possibly wanting to upgrade his old Merc or Bently. I had to run through some diseases and say whether I had them. I made a comment that I didn't know what some of them were and he told me that I didn't have them otherwise I would know them, which is logical, but it was his chairside manner that needed some readjustment. I then had to strip down to undies, and he did the physical and that was it. I can't remember having an Xray but possibly did.

The education thing was not an issue apparently as I had my NSW Leaving Certificate, and I was a law abiding citizen except for my driving record – negligent driving. I guess that ASIO also had nothing on my family or me. We did do some sort of education testing at Puckapunyal and further medical and dental examinations plus all the inoculations which I had to get all again before going to SVN.



Why do I mention this? Well prior to discharge when I was back at Holsworthy for 6 weeks I asked to be checked as I really hurt my back in SVN which took about 4 weeks to return to normal. I still worked at 31D for that time as I went to

the US battery medics to get some pain relief medication. I was OK if I didn't try to sit up, so getting out of bed was a roll out onto my hands and knees then stand up. Once again, I had to attend the commonwealth doctors in the York street building. Had X-rays and other tests and the specialist asked me if anyone had mentioned anything about my back at the recruitment medical. He then told me that I shouldn't have been deemed medically fit for service because of the congenital back problem. I then received a letter from the Veterans affairs in 1968 stating that they would cover me for any problems caused by my back abnormalities (I have 2) and no pension as I didn't apply for one, but they did say in their letter that the problem wasn't bad enough for a pension. They would also only pay where other organisations didn't cover the full amount.
Talk soon, Bob."

Ed (aka Paul Dickson) – I have a typical ‘Dicko’ reflection on my pre-‘Nasho’ medical...

Before attending the medical in Charlotte St (I think it was) Brisbane I had a couple of heart-starter XXXX's and confirmed my plan to be medically unfit for this 2-year stint.

My medical bloke (I won't call him a doctor, unlike Bob's ancient version) was possibly only a couple of years older than me, but was on the ball to see through my 'avoidance plan'.

Tests –

Hearing – before I acknowledged hearing any sound by raising a finger, via my head phones, I'm sure the doc could hear the noise across the room.

Sight – I'm just glad he didn't want to see my driver's license (he could have had it cancelled!) as I purported to supposedly have trouble reading the 6" (inches in those days) letters being displayed!

Other answers – "yes" I did wet the bed and did sleep walk.

Obviously, he could smell the XXXX's and passed me medically A1 – end of story – the rest is history!



The “Lost Locator Project”

This Project is being re-ignited for 2024.

Our current list contains the names of **95** Locators (as at 30.11.2024) that we have not had contact with since, basically, commencing communications in 2012, so, we are going to focus a little more on this programme to try and reduce this number.

Let's have a look at December's Birthday List, below, where there are 6 Detachment and Battery Members listed as Lost Locators – see the names below.

So, we've done some great discoveries with Members Dates Of Death, I'm hoping we might muster some enthusiasm for this difficult task. I've added some more details as to full DoB's and places of birth according to the DVA Nominal Roll for, maybe, some help.

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. **I have 252 recipients (Association).**

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.

Date	Name	Regt No	DoB	SVN In	SVN Out	DVA Location
1	Keven John Bush	3792069	1946	18 02 1968	21 02 1969	Melbourne
21	Michael George Boyle Lt	217004	1946	17 02 1970	11 02 1971	Waratah, NSW
22	John Duncan McGregor	3787376	1945	20 05 1966	30 04 1967	Melbourne
25	Robert John Holdsworth Pvt	3793058	1945	04 01 1969	03 12 1969	Toora, Vic AACC
28	John Crighton Martin Lt.	43613	1941	25 02 1968	21 02 1969	Glenelg, SA
29	Brian John Hawkey Pvt	1200572	1946	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	Murwillumbah, NSW AACC

I will keep an update and publish monthly results in *Eyes & Ears*.

Paul Dickson

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

. Unknown/Known Dates of Deaths continues to be updated...as at 30.11.2024 –

A continuing 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.

Sadly, we've added, ??????????????

10 Year Detachment/131 Battery Death Periods										Total
1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	
1	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	7
1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	
0	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	2	7
1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	
0	0	2	2	2	1	2	1	0	0	10
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
3	2	2	2	0	3	2	1	2	1	18
2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
0	4	4	4	2	9	5	6	5	4	43
2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
8	4	5	5	6	7	10	10	4	0	59
Unknowns*										2
Total										146

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 **33.09.2024**.

***Unknowns** – Sadly, we have only been advised of the Members' passings only.

This following sections have now been updated as of 30.11.2024 and show a clear picture of Battery/Detachment Members that have incomplete Date of Death details.

Here are the names and details –

Name	Rank	Regt No	Section	SVN	DoB	DoD
Robinson, Marcus Lee	Gnr	2791229		1970	14.02.48	Unknown
O'Keefe, Michael Francis	Gnr	2787168		1968-69	26.11.46	00.00.80

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 YOU give some thought to completing YOUR Locator Profile, which do add a personal background and also keeping in touch as it keeps us up to date with you and mates.

Ok, detectives, here's more homework – still 2 gaps to go!



131 Locators
"Cold Case Division"
 The Eyes & Ears of the Force

Ian McNicol – adds more information to enlighten this ongoing subject on Ian Murley...

"Pau. Just a bit more re the possible passing of Ian Murley. I guess it's easy to assume that a person listed on the Virtual War Memorial website has died, (as I did). But this is NOT necessarily so. If you searched your own details on the site, you would find your service recorded there. I put in my own details, & got this result. [Virtual War Memorial](https://www.virtualwar.com.au/) The only anomaly was my birth date. It's the 23rd of January, not the 21st. So, there's no real evidence that Ian Murley has actually died.

I just entered your 1st & last name, & got this. It may or may not be you, I didn't have your service number [Virtual War Memorial | Paul Granville DICKSON](#)
I think it would be safe to assume that anyone listed on that site is not necessarily dead, unless it says so.
Regards, Scotty.”

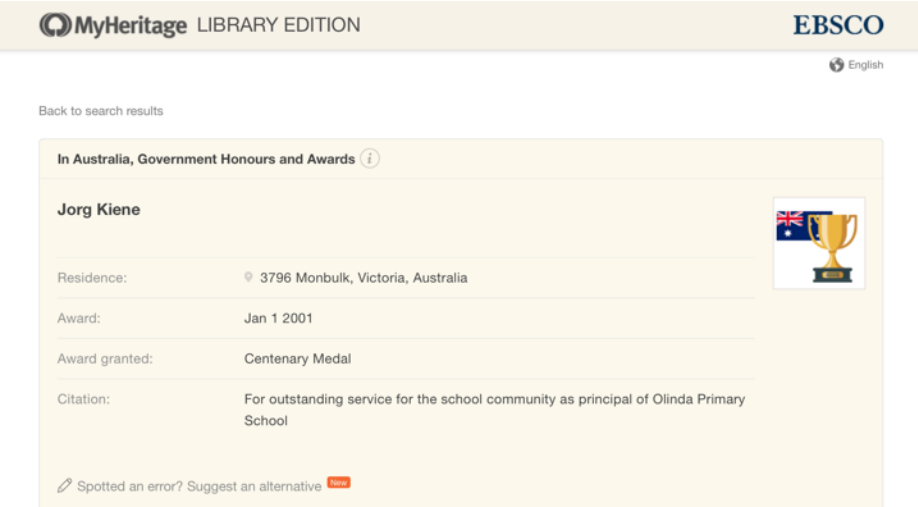
Ed – The Virtual War Memorial also has a few other mysterious entries – Scotty McNicol is KIA and so is Grahame Dignam. Luckily according to the archives, I made it through and I got my records changed to a Gunner not a Private as the original information stated!



Peter Meaney gives us some background information which may be of help to Locate Jorge Kiene as per the extract for last month's *Eyes & Ears* (October)

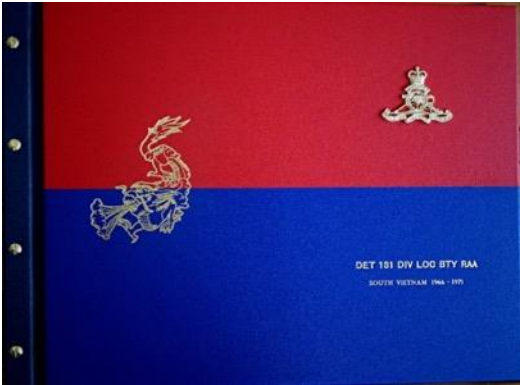
Date	Name	Regt No	DoB	SVN In	SVN Out	DVA Location
17	Jorge Kiene L/Bdr	3797963	1947	09 11 1970	05 08 1971	? Location

“Hi Paul,
Following is what I found on Lost Locator **Jorg Kiene**, ie in 2001 he was living in **Monbulk Victoria**, and had obviously taught at **Olinda School**.
Also found in 1953 he attended school in Gr 1 at **Alexandra school Victoria**.
Perhaps one of our members living in Victoria may have connections in those areas and may be able to find out more about this person?
Regards, Peter M.”



Ed – does this extra background information stir anyone’s grey matter with regards to Jorge?

. **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.



Paul Dickson (aka Ed) – I Couldn't resist to add a photo taken back in 2007 while we were wandering through the US as a reference to Allen's (Morley) mentioning "we would never wear a shirt with an electoral candidate's photo on it." in his Presidential Perambulations last month.

The photo with Helen holding the two US Pres's – a classic at the time!

Paul.

I wonder what they'll print after this latest 2024 election – the mind boggles!



An RSL Sub-Branch inquisitive



SURVEY...

There were no responses to this article in October's *Eyes and Ears*, so I'm

assuming there was

–
.no interest in the questionnaire

.no one is actually involved in a Sub-Branch, though I have heard a few comments earlier about certain members of our group who are

.no one belongs to an RSL Sub-Branch.

Ernie Newbold, a now ardent supported of his current Sub-Branch has supplied a very thorough memory passage int the arms of the RSL...

Why did you join ?.

I originally joined a local RSL Club in 1968, because as a returned veteran I was eligible and so I did, although I didn't become involved with the Sub Branch as such. I thought that there may be some benefits by being a member. After a couple of years I let my membership lapse as I was still working and had many other recreational interests that occupied my time.

Then in 1976 I joined a different RSL Club because I still thought that there may be some benefit to me in the future and by being a member I was supporting an organisation that was there to help and support veterans.

Does your Sub Branch offer DVA assistance ?

Not directly but they are able to direct members / inquiries to DVA assistance sources.

Remember that Vietnam Veterans were not readily welcomed by the RSL when we came home as the current Sub Branches at that time were run by WWII & WWI veterans who seemed to think that Vietnam wasn't a "real" war as it was different to the wars that they had fought in. The World Wars I & II were different in that the surviving veterans didn't come home until the war had ended. Whereas in the Vietnam War the veterans only served a 12 month tour of duty.

Now with my current Sub Branch and RSL Club I didn't get involved apart from being a member of a licenced club which provided a good meeting place to visit with my non-veteran mates for drinks and meals etc.

Work and other recreational interests meant that I wasn't really interested in being involved in the Sub Branch activities at that time.

A few years ago when the NSW State president was making headlines for all the wrong reasons I thought that it was time to leave the RSL and just belong to the Unit Association (131 Locators) and the TPI Assn. but before I cancelled my membership I thought that I should attend a Sub Branch meeting to see what was really going on. Well, I found a group of friendly, happy people who were very supportive and welcoming so I went again to the next meeting and then a third. As I was by now retired and no longer working and as involved in previous recreational pursuits when they invited me to join the Sub Branch committee I thought that I would give it a go.

Remember that the RSL is a veteran's organisation and the current definition of a veteran is someone who has served one day in the Australian Defence Force, not just someone who is classed as a returned from active service veteran.

.

Does your local branch still operate ?

Yes it does although there are quite a number who no longer do, due to lack of numbers and they have become a chapter of another RSL Club which enables them to continue. Lack of numbers in regional areas can be problem for the survival of clubs & Sub Branches in those areas outside major regional towns.

If it still operates is still fairly active ?

In my case yes, regular monthly committee meetings and two monthly general members meetings are well attended.

And what's the age mix like ?

Majority of members would be in our age group although we welcome Contemporary Veterans who served in more recent times and have recently had new members who are currently still serving.

Are wives / partners welcomed ?.

Yes they are but to be a member of the Sub Branch generally you must be a veteran. There is also a Sub Branch Auxiliary group for non veteran members who support veterans and the Sub Branch with various fund raising activities.

I believe that RSL Clubs were originally formed by returned veterans after WWI to provide a place where veterans could gather for camaraderie and support with like minded people.

Well there it is I have participated in the survey, I hope what I have written makes sense and helps the cause in some way.

Regards,

Ernie.

Ed – a great concise history – Thanks Ernie.

However some more interesting facts did eventuate with a bit more investigating...

Interesting facts: There are 1,105 RSL Sub-Branches in Australia with a total of 148,000 members. That equates to 1,034 members per club!

The 2021 Census calculated that there are 496,276 former serving ADF members. Again, based on these figures that means that almost 30% belong to RSL Sub-Branches – that's amazing.

Anyway, the RSL and Sub-Branch connection possibly will have a cloudy future.

Paul

A Curiosity...



**Australian
Military Bank**

A couple of emails with Kevin Browning originated by David Auld as to the name of the bank involved in the donations for the **2024 Gunners Race** and the bank is called the **Australian Military Bank**. I'd never heard of it, so thought I'd go and have a gander and came up with the following from their website...

'As Australia's longest serving Defence financial institution we've been helping Australian Defence personnel and their families make the most of their money since 1959. After 65 years serving our members, we know a thing or two about the unique aspects of life in the armed services.

We're dedicated to helping the men and women who protect and serve our community offering customised products, lower fees and competitive interest rates to integrate your service with your financial wellbeing.

As a mutual organisation, Australian Military Bank is run for the benefit of our members who are also our shareholders.

This means we'll always put you first, we;

- manage member funds in excess of \$1.45 billion
- offer a digital first 24/7 globally accessible service
- offer ATMs and branches at major defence bases

The story so far

Over 65 years we've had quite a few highlights:

- 1959: Founded as the Navy (Civil Staff) Co-op. Ltd.

- 1971: Membership extended to civilian employees of the Army and RAAF in NSW
- 1983: We merged with Army Defence (NSW) Credit Union and rebrand as Australian Defence Credit Union (ADCU)
- 2008: Selected by Department of Defence as one of three DHOAS home loan providers
- 2014: Achieve in excess of \$1 billion funds under management
- 2015: Membership exceeds 50,000 and new name, Australian Military Bank
- 2018: Launch of new Core and Digital Bank offerings 24/7
- 2019: Awarded Baa1 Stable rating from leading global independent agency Moody's
- 2020: Achieved \$200,000 of charity donations via our Military Rewards Account
- 2022: Became a Platinum Pledge Partner with Soldier On
- 2024: Celebrated 65 years supporting the Defence community'

Interesting how you discover things – it expanded just after my time as a Nasho.

Mail Call...

Graham Williams – (18.11.2024)

Re:- Peter John Bennett (Gnr) 5794060.....Vietnam 26/8/69 - 4/6/70

I am finding it difficult to find the words but am typing this on behalf of my good friend, bunk mate initially in Arty Int then Radar after our transfer there and of course partner in crime in all things Vung Tau during a number of memorable R&C's. He has asked me to contact you to advise of his current situation and I am hoping this can be passed on through the "Eyes and Ears" to enable those who served with him that I have been unable to contact personally as to what is happening.

Peter has been diagnosed with late stage pancreatic cancer. It is inoperable and the specialists have given him only 4 weeks. He was given a choice of palliative care or to go home and has accepted the latter option informing me DVA has come to the party in organizing a special bed among other things. He was taken home by the family 2 days ago and has assured me that head wise he is in a good space, there has been counselling and the family are coming to grips with the situation after a long family chat.

He is most grateful he was able to attend our reunion in Coolangatta at this time last year, in doing so catching up with people he had not seen since 1970 but had always considered friends. At this time he wishes to convey his best wishes and thanks to all those he served with during his tour of duty. Thanks for their friendship and camaraderie through the good and bad times which he has never forgotten.

.....

Peter Ravelje – forwarded the following interesting piece...

Private Richard Norden VC - Awarded posthumously...

11 NOVEMBER 2024

Vietnam War Service – DVA Nominal Roll

Name: NORDEN, Richard Leslie

Service: Australian Army **Service Number:** 2412437

Date of Birth: 24 Aug 1948 **Place of Birth:** Gundagai NSW A

Rank: Private **National Service:** No **Corps:** Royal Australian Infantry Corps

Honours: Distinguished Conduct Medal

Unit History:

Unit Name	Start Date	End Date
I Australian Reinforcement Unit	05 Dec 1967	30 Jan 1968
7 th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment	31 Jan 1968	09 Apr 1968
1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment	10 Apr 1968	13 Aug 1968



The following was extracted from Australian Government Defence –

Victoria Cross for Australia for Private Richard Norden

As Australians gather today to honour our veterans for Remembrance Day, the late Private Richard Norden will be awarded a Victoria Cross for Australia for his gallantry during the Battle of Fire Support Base Coral in Vietnam in 1968.

The Governor-General, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, has announced that His Majesty The King has given approval for the award of the Victoria Cross for Australia to be bestowed to Private Norden.

The Victoria Cross for Australia is the highest military honour that can be awarded in the Australian honours system. Private Norden has been recognised for the most conspicuous acts of gallantry in action in the presence of the enemy.

On 14 May 1968, Private Norden's platoon came under heavy fire during the Battle of Fire Support Base Coral. Using his initiative and demonstrating a depth of care for his mates, Private Norden rescued a wounded soldier and recovered the body of another, with little cover and under intense enemy fire.

His actions also secured the enemy position and avoided the potential for further casualties of platoon members.

Private Norden's service to his country continued when he returned to Australia and became an Australian Capital Territory police officer. He died at the young age of 24 following a traffic accident while he was on duty.

The Governor-General's Office will work with Private Norden's family to finalise plans for the investiture ceremony.

May He Rest In Peace

Terry Westerway responds to an article by Bob Billiards in October's *Eyes & Ears* –

"re photos posted by Bob Billiards in the October edition of *Eyes and Ears* – remember all of the scenes in the photos **BUT** – dunno where he got the name "Warburton Mountain" for the "Warbies" (west of Nui Dat).

When I was there in 1966, they were known as "Wolverton Mountain" (shortened to "The Warbies") taken from the 1962 song "Wolverton Mountain" (by Claude King):

They say don't go on Wolverton Mountain

If you're looking for a wife

'Cause Clifton Clowers has a pretty young daughter

He's mighty handy with a gun and a knife

Her tender lips are sweeter than honey

And Wolverton Mountain protects her there

The bears and the birds tell Clifton Clowers

If a stranger should enter there

All of my dreams are on Wolverton Mountain

I want his daughter for my wife

I'll take my chances and climb that mountain

Though Clifton Clowers, he might take my life

Her tender lips are sweeter than honey

And Wolverton Mountain protects her there

The bears and the birds tell Clifton Clowers

If a stranger should wander there

I'm going up on Wolverton Mountain

It's too lonesome down here below

It's just not right to hide his daughter

From the one who loves her so

Her tender lips are sweeter than honey

And Wolverton Mountain protects her there

The bears and the birds tell Clifton Clowers

If a stranger should wander there

I don't care about Clifton Clowers

I'm gonna climb up on his mountain

I'm gonna take the girl I love

I don't care about Clifton Clowers

I'm a gonna climb up on that mountain

And I'll get the one I love

On the official maps, the highest peak was (still is?) named as **Nui Ong Cau**

Ernie Newbold has a request for submissions regarding Christmas' at Nui Dat...

"Can we get submissions from our readers in this month (November) from those who were fortunate enough to be there for at least one Christmas in Nui Dat?

I was there for Christmas in 1967 along with Allen Morley, Nick Proskurin, Grahame Dignam and many others whom I am sure will remember it well as possibly their first Christmas away from home and family. Christmas Day 1966, 67, 68 and so on should cover quite a number of our readers

It could give a good a great read boost to the December 2024 edition of the *Eyes & Ears*

Regards, Ernie."

Ed – So how about it, who did a Christmas stint in the Dat and has a story/photos to share?

Bob Wilson – “An exercise in futility.... Scotty McNicoll and me at the Gym. Not sure who the other bloke is. It's obvious he has overdone it!”



Mail Out → **Ed** - I started this section in September, 2017 and have continued to write to Locators based on a year quarterly basis, by breaking down the names alphabetically into groups of one third of the then available list. The list has diminished over time, but, in general, there is a good core of blokes who communicate regularly 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.

Total Mail Out Members = 222 & Total Quarterly “Catch Up” Member Responder

Mail In ← **Here are the responses...**

Wade Cooper – “Good to hear from you, Paul.

Sounds busy times! 😊 Canberra is starting to warm up... slowly! ”

David Auld – “The wife is Rosemary, and we are fine just a bit of traveling over the past few weeks but nothing major.”

Ed – apologies as I called David's wife “Robin” – another aging problem I have becoming more evident!

Nick Armstrong – “Hello Paul

Thank you for your recent news. I admire your resilience undertaking long-distance air travel. The actual flying does not bother me too much, but navigating through air terminals is a task I can live without!

Robin and I have just completed a road trip from North Shields to Narrogin (WA), to visit son and grandsons. It is a route we have travelled many times since we first married. Over the years I have worked at different locations along the highway. The drive is a pleasant drive revisiting familiar haunts. The journey takes about 2 ½ days to cover just over 2000km.

It was good to catch up with family, and this time we travelled to Albany for a couple of days. We visited the ANZAC Museum which was very interesting. We also visited the Whaling Museum on the same day, which was also very interesting. We should have allowed a day for each.

Since I last wrote, I have renewed my bus accreditation. The cost breakdown was as follows.

‘Working with Children’ – valid for 5 years – cost \$117.00

‘Working with vulnerable people’ – valid for 3 years – cost \$98.50

‘Australian National Character Check’ – valid for three years – cost \$59.06

‘Medical examination’ – valid for 1 year - \$153.00

There were also letters from Audiologist, Cardiologist and Endocrinologist, which were provided free as they were connected to my annual DVA checkups. I also had to extend my Heavy Vehicle Driver's Licence to cover the three years of the Passenger Vehicle accreditation. It is good to have it completed once again, but in about two years I will begin the process once again.

School bus driving is still keeping me occupied. I tell people I am a ‘relief’ driver, although the reality is I drive virtually full-time. The Education Department in SA operates many school routes. They also have trouble replacing drivers. For the last few years they have found a solution to that problem. When a driver can't be found, the bus is taken from service and a contract bus operator is chartered to provide the service. If a replacement driver is hired, the contract operator is cancelled and the department reinstalls their own bus again. That is provided they have not sold their buses. It does not solve the problem of insufficient drivers. It simply kicks the can down the road. Is my cynicism showing?

I am still involved with the local Country Fire Service Brigade. This is another organization with manpower problems. Volunteers are scarce, and generally have work commitments that limit availability. My bus driving duties often conflict with responding to the pager calls. I am still able to drive the truck, although I do not have the physical strength to do sandbagging during floods now. I am qualified to load water bombers, and it is a job I am probably more suited to now. Hopefully numbers responding to crew our truck will improve, and I can respond to the airport.

I think that is about all for now. Greetings if I don't write before Christmas.
Cheers, Nick."

Diane and Keith Dean – “Hi Paul

Thanks for the catch up. We are still trying to get back to some sort of normalcy after the past 7 months of hell. Keith's hip replacement in April ended up being the worst thing. He got sepsis in the joint and was admitted to hospital for a period of 6 weeks. Then he developed a cough that would not go away after lengthy periods on antibiotics. This resulted in a chest x-ray which showed he had an enlarged heart and fluid on the lungs. Another 10 days in hospital to have open heart surgery to replace his aortic valve. What a way to spend his 80th birthday.

It's been a bloody awful year for us both, Keith as the patient and me as his nurse. Bring on 2025 in a hurry.

Best wishes to you and your family for Xmas and the New Year

Dianne and Keith Dean."

Ken Foster – “Over the past week I have drafted a reply to your email and then for some reason it drops off, not that I have anything to report just day to day stuff, no travels or excitement.

Your travels sound interesting and it's always good to catch up with family and friends.

Keep in touch old friend your emails and newsletters make my days when they arrive, this draft seems to be going well considering I have no news to report, stay well and look after yourself

Regards Ken."

Ron “Mook” Evans – “Dicko, you Old Scoundrel, always a pleasure to hear from you. Your travels leave me exhausted. I have become rather sedentary and much attracted to inactivity.

I still find much to take an interest in and my health is better than I deserve - given the decades of self-abuse. I enjoy the most affectionate of partners and I continue to thank the stars for having lived in the best of places and in the best of times.

Thanks for reminding me of my happy youth and thanks for your friendship.

Love to you and yours.

Mook."

Phil Connor – “Hi Helen and Paul

Great read the last Newsletter, well done to all.

The Thailand trip corresponds with most of the places we have been to over the years and always enjoyed the country.

Sad about the elephants, always enjoyed that part of the trip.

Yes, it can get a bit sticky in Thai, especially playing golf.

One of our trips was a couple of months after the tsunami and we felt more obliged to 'pay extras' when bartering, well it wasn't bartering, some had nothing as a result of the devastation, but all had those infectious smiles.

Helen's mums 98th, wow. Offer our sincere congratulations to her next time you speak.

Vegan hotel, that sounds interesting and I could just imagine the associated Thai flavours.

Good to catch up with the Sydney based Locaters on return.

Yes, Dermatology, had my checkup last month and the scalpel and needles came out, included in the number taken for biopsy was one from the sole of my left foot, the Dermo said they will turn up anywhere and that is a common area. What the!

Good news with the prostate at the moment. When I raised taking my current batch of tablets with my RN D-IN-Law she said, what is the alternative.....So keep taking the pills.

Yes, a number of times we have been over to the Son and D-IN-Law in the States at Halloween time, massive, walking around with the grandies, slept all day the next day.

All OK up here on the Sunnie Coast, typical November weather, humidity, rain, storms, lightning--very very frightening.....

Cheers for now

All the best to Helen

Miriam and Phil."

Warwick “Brookey” Brooker – “G'day Dicko.

So another big adventure is over. Sounds like you and Helen had a great time. Thanks for the photos on Facebook!

Hope you and Helen can slip back into your Mexican lifestyle without too much trouble!

Nothing to report from here except that it's Remembrance Day badge selling time again.

Best wishes, Brookey."

Peter Creedon – “Hi Paul

You certainly had a big October travelling which is good to hear, Pauline's and my travelling days are over we have even sold our caravan and tow car. We currently joined a small group of like-minded people who organise outings and shows so that takes up a lot of our time.

At the moment we are getting some work done at our place, we had a spa in the floor of our rear entertaining area which we haven't used for a long time so I removed it and we have just had the hole concreted over which has pleased Pauline no end, I thought we could leave for the new owners to worry about after we broke it, but no it had to be done now, happy wife happy life as they say.

Not much else to tell at this time, still playing golf twice a week, my handicap is coming down very slowly so I must be improving although you would not know it if you were watching me play.

Regards, Peter.”

Graham Williams – “Apologies for the late reply but have only just arrived home after more travelling. This time Eastern Europe. Kicked off in Romania then on to Poland and Hungary. In Budapest joined a river cruise.....Budapest to Bucharest in Romania and return over 14 days. This took in places along the way in Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania and western parts of Croatia. Interesting but not as good as the trip north, (Budapest to Amsterdam)...



In many places still a lot of damage still visible from the Balkans War in the 90's. Vukovar in Croatia was the best example of that. It was under siege for 3 months prior to capitulating with our guide explaining during that time some 12,000 artillery rounds daily of various calibre were incoming. Seems like a lot you think????



Anyway the place was demolished.....only a few places left standing including the large water tower which was rendered useless after taking some 600 hits and still stands as it was then as a memorial today.



Came home to the usual jungle here which I am still presently trying to catch up with. What I could once manage in a day now takes up to 10 these days and then time to start again....as they say, “such is life.” That’s about all the news from here so best wishes to yourself and Helen and catch you next time around.

Cheers,
Graham Williams.”

Mike Butler – “Hi Paul

Sounds like you had a great time in Thailand - but it's always good to get home isn't it?

Not a lot going on here - went to Remembrance Day at the local Box Hill cenotaph (photo attached) and then drinks and nibbles at the RSL - it was a well-attended event and good weather for once.

One of my RSL mates organised the annual October trip to a Black Powder Gun Club near Seymour. Had a good day out with men and women having a go shooting old firearms - also had a BBQ lunch. Stopped at the Vietnam Vets Wall in Seymour on the way home. Evidently the powers that be are having trouble organising maintenance of the wall and it's surrounds - I believe the local Council and RSL head office have come to some sort of Memorandum of Understanding about costs etc etc.

Have kept in touch with a few ex 131'ers and exchanged news etc etc

Went for a weekend away to Warrnambool last weekend to see my son who lives down there - a great spot. We usually take the van but stayed at a nice motel with a restaurant attached and wined and dined ourselves !!!

Having very odd weather - humid for a whole week with thunderstorms.

Anyway enough from me - all the best.

Mike.”

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

Kevin Browning sends a final notice to help “OUR”
20th Regiment RAA
win this race once more with
donations...Closing date is 4th December 2024–



The 2024 Gunners Race has begun!



What is the Gunners Race?

The Gunners Race is a fundraising activity for the Gunner's (Regimental) Fund. Funds raised in 2024 will be spent in 2025 on:

- Recognising the service of all Gunners who leave the Army with a certificate and pin
- Awards to recognise service to the Regiment from those in our wider Gunner family.
- Grants to support Gunners who represent the Gunners, Army, or the Defence Force.
- If funds allow, the establishment of a welfare fund for Gunners and their families.

Donate now and nominate your regiment

Whichever regiment's community has raised the most money by St Barbara's Day will be awarded the Pagan Cup. Don't let those other regiments show you up!

BSB: 642-170

Account Number: 1000 260 37

Account Name: RAA Regt Fund

Nominate your chosen regiment in the 'reference' line
e.g. '2RegtRAA'



Have you tried to source us or your mates via Facebook?

Why not give it a go, if you haven't already, just click onto the Association's Facebook via the link below, then let us know what you think...



Hey, you don't have to have a Facebook page of your own...

58 Years

April 1966 – April 2024

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

SALUTE

Official Journal of the Totally and Permanently
Incapacitated Veterans' Association of New South Wales Limited
Winter 2024

Ernie Newbold forwarded in the following link – copy paste and read November's edition -
The link below will take you to the TPI NSW's latest Newsletter (November, 2024) – It's a worthwhile read as it contains information from DVA and some great stories...

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=55f192afee&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-f:1802742395713089188&th=1904a0a85603eea4&view=att&disp=safe>

National Vietnam Veterans Museum update...

– the following is a response from Ron Mason with regards to a question raised at the latest 131 Locators Association ZOOM on 13th August, 2024 with regards to an update on the National Vietnam Veterans Museum...

Ron Mason gives us an update...

"Hi Paul, not sure if I will get to the next meeting so here is a bit of a report from the last state council meeting.

At Phillip Island the 4th exit on a new roundabout is due to start in January, this will be for the museum. The War Memorial in Canberra will transfer a DC3 & radio direction gear to Phillip Island when the museum buildings are finished.

So things are moving forward, I don't have a date for construction yet, I guess the exit road from the roundabout is the next step.

Regards, Ron."



Keep watching this space for more as information comes to light.



Saint Barbara's Day – 4th December

Saint Barbara (273AD - 306AD) is the patron saint of [The Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery](#) due to her association with lightning and explosions, a staple of any good Artillery operation.

The gunners of the 17th century adopted St. Barbara as their patron saint because of the questionable reliability of their own cannons and to this day, artillerymen revere her selfless sacrifice and dignified service.

Her martyrdom took place on the **4 December** and as punishment for her murder, her father was struck by lightning and killed. It is this legendary association with lightning that gives Saint Barbara her contemporary connection to explosives.



Committee Members:

President:	Allen Morley
Vice President:	Bert Blink
Treasurer/Secretary:	Grahame Dignam
Public Officer:	Gordon Malcolm
Webmaster:	Bob Billiard
Research Officer:	Ernie Newbold
Design Development Officer:	Nick Proskurin
Eyes and Ears Editor:	Paul Dickson

General Members: Ian Amos, Ged Carroll, George Lane, Merv Nairn

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>



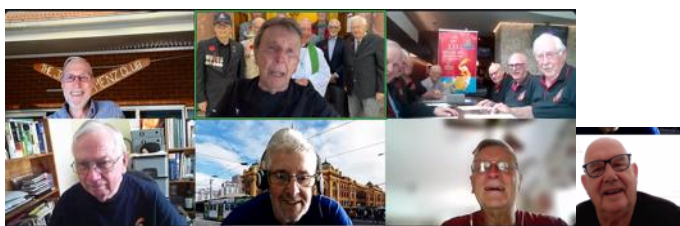


<https://www.facebook.com/groups/131divlocbtyraa>

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the 131 Locators Association Inc.
Held on Tuesday 12 th November 2024 commencing at 11.00 AM at
Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club
26 Humphries Rd, Wakeley NSW 2176
and via Zoom Internet facility

Personal attendees were - Allen Morley, Grahame Dignam, Merv Nairn, Nick Proskurin, Ernest Newbold, Gordon Malcolm and Ian Amos.

Zoomed members were - Paul Dickson, Bob Billiards, Terry Erbs, Bert Blink, Rieny Nieuwenhof and Ian Campbell



Apologies were received from - Kevin Browning, Warwick Brooker, Brian Campbell, Ron Mason, Steve Wynn, Ged Carroll, George Lane, other State Reps and Jim Fitzgerald

President Allen Morley welcomed those present and those attending via Zoom.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 14 November 2023 having been circulated prior were deemed to be read and as no matters were arising were accepted.
Moved G Dignam Seconded Gordon Malcolm Against Nil Accepted

Received and adopted the scrutinized **Balance Sheet and Accounts** for the year of operation 2023-24 prepared by the Sec/Treasurer. It was considered a fair and true view of the Associations' operations for the past financial year.
Moved G Dignam Seconded Gordon Malcolm Against Nil Accepted

The Election of office-bearers for the 2024-25 year.

Allen Morley declared all positions vacant, and the meeting proceeded.

The Chair was handed to Gordon Malcolm, Public Officer, during this portion of the meeting.

Nominations for the positions of President (Allen Morley), Vice President (Bert Blink), Public Officer Gordon Malcolm and Secretary/Treasurer (G Dignam) were received and as all were prepared to stand again and were unopposed were duly elected for the new term.

The committee namely Ged Carroll, Ian Amos, Bob Billiards, Merv Nairn, Ern Newbold and Nick Proskurin also elected to stand again as a group.

As no new nominations were received and the group being unopposed, they were duly elected for the new term.
The regional Representatives who were appointed and are not elected and so continue in their roles.

President's Report for FY 2023 – 2024

Herewith the President's Report for the financial year 2023-2024, a year of continued effective operation. This period represents our fifteenth full-year of operation and shows a stable, nonetheless positive trend in most aspects of the Association's activities.

The Association continues to be financially viable and sustainable for the foreseeable future as the organisation's financial report illustrates. Nevertheless, the continuing ageing of our members continues to be, without doubt, the major factor for limitations on what the association can achieve. Many of the early Nashos have celebrated their 78th or 79th birthdays and others will do so within a year or two. Our former Regular soldiers are of very various ages. Contact with those who served in the Detachment and those who served at Holsworthy remains incomplete, although there has been continued success with new contacts in the past year.

Although it did not produce any known direct health issues amongst members, in 2021 and 2022 the corona virus changed the structure of our meeting program, with a mix of Zoom and physical attendance. We have sought to focus upon inclusivity with zoom as a viable alternative communication medium. Nevertheless, we did experience some missed zoom opportunities in the reporting period.

The Association website, www.131locators.org.au continues to provide both a web presence and a defined identity. During the reporting period external access to the website has plateaued or even reduced. However, through establishing a facebook presence, the size of the facebook members has showed pleasing growth, particularly among younger 131ers.

Bob Billiards has continued as our Webmaster/facebook master, providing an essential role in doing so, and has been ably supported in digital areas by Bert Blink. Thank you Bob and Bert.

The website statistics and inputs into Facebook demonstrate the ongoing interest in our activities, albeit sometimes at a reduced level. As mentioned in previous annual reports, facebook has directly resulted in some of our previously unlocated locators being located.

Bob, your effort in setting up these ecommunication mechanisms is much appreciated.

Eyes and Ears, under the editorial overview of Paul Dickson, appears monthly, and regularly delivers editions of 18-25 pages. I believe that together the size and frequency are major measures of our Association's success. Members' contributions illustrate that we are recording more of relevance from our military past for both history and information. The June 2024 edition was the 191st in the new series, post the 1960s editions.

Only a limited number of activities, meetings, reunions and events were achieved in the latter part of the year's program. Highlights for 2023-2024 were:

- . A further twelve editions of *Eyes and Ears*; extremely well-done Dicko and your enthusiasm is infectious. A sincere thanks to all of our contributors for stories, photos and some history, without which we would have a very thin monthly newsletter, as other associations have demonstrated over time.
- . Despite having found several new members, this few unfortunately demonstrates that we are just maintaining membership levels or even have a declining membership base
- . Anzac Day 2024 saw the annual march take place, with an increase in attendees of Sydney members of the Battery versus the previous few years. A special mention for those Committee members who made things happen for the Association.
- . Bert Blink continued in the role of Vice-President and is generous of his time and digital skills. Bert has subsequently been a regular attender at the new format meetings
- . Grahame Dignam, Treasurer/Secretary remains the tie in for the Association's financial arrangements, records and operation of the membership database.
- . The Public Officer responsibilities by Gordon Malcolm saw our regulatory responsibilities complied with.
- . Ernie Newbold, Nick Proskurin, Ian Amos, Ron Mason, Merv Nairn and Ged Carroll are all acknowledged for their ongoing involvement and support.
- . Our regional representatives provided local overview and contributed to our planning program. I thank Bert Blink (ACT and doubling up as Vice-President), Al Adams (Vic), Geoff Blackwell (SA), Barry Guzder (WA), Stuart Sporn (NT), Terry Erbs (QLD) and forward scouts in rural Victoria, Ron Mason and Rieny Nieuwenhof, for their collective contribution. A note of appreciation to our Secretary/Treasurer for again keeping us on the financial straight and narrow.
- . Sadly, the names of more of our number have now been etched onto the Association Honour Roll. Lest we forget them.

Allen Morley
October 2024

Receive and adopt the Presidents Annual Report read by A Morley.
Moved Allen Morley Seconded Grahame Dignam Against Nil Accepted

The Chair of the meeting was passed back to the new President-elect Allen Morley for the balance of the meeting. President-elect Allen Morley expressed his appreciation to Paul Dickson especially, for his continued efforts in publishing the *Eyes & Ears* regularly.

Mr. Morley also expressed his appreciation to Bert Blink and Bob Billiards for their commitment as Vice President and Website administrator and for all the committee who actively assisted during the busy year.

Scrutiny of Income/Expenditure by the committee.

Fair Trading current rules governing Tier 2 Associations do not require a formal audit.

A report on Receipts and Payments and Income expenditure duly scrutinized by the committee are the requirements as no auditor is formally appointed. Jim Fitzgerald has indicated that he would be available to act as Auditor for the Association if any issues arose.

Moved Grahame Dignam Seconded Nick Proskurin Against Nil Accepted

Statement of the Association to the Dept of Fair Trading.

Completion of the report for the Dept of Fair Trading under section 49 of the Act was tabled regarding the operating results of the association and our ability to continue operations as required by our Constitution was tabled.

Payment of costs as required by Fair Trading was proposed and approved.

Meeting closed at 11.15 AM AEST

Signed Allen Morley President

Minutes for the General Meeting of the 131 Locators Association Inc.
Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club, 26 Humphries Rd, Wakeley NSW 2176
and via Zoom internet

on Tuesday 12 th November 2024 11.16AM AEST

The meeting was chaired by President Allen Morley

Members attendees, absentees and apologies as per the Annual General information above.

Presidential perambulations

Sydney transport infrastructure has a new entrant. The new rail lines come under the name of Metro. Not an original name, because the French named their Paris system Metropolitain at the turn of the 19th century.

The Sydney Metro has some interesting aspects including driverless trains, a section of the line beneath Sydney Harbour with most of the system underground. The Metro is separate from the above ground heavy rail and light rail systems. London and New York have their Tube and Subway or Train nomenclature respectively.

I had an appointment last week in the Sydney CBD. So, it was time to try out the new system. From Victoria Cross station in North Sydney to Martin Place in the centre of town took 5 minutes with one intermediate station. There is a plethora of escalators at both stations, which could be a potential problem in the case of future escalator breakdowns. However, the transition from deep levels at both stations was smooth. And the newness of the interiors was notable. The new experience was well worthwhile experiencing.

Cheers, Allen

Financial Membership is currently ...**121**, plus Associates and Affiliates **18**. Total **139**. Plus Lapsed as at 1/11/2024 **38**

Presidents report.

Allen referenced.

. A request from 133 Bty contact, Gnr Alexander Cullen, to establish and liaise with members of 133 BTY in earlier times who would be interested in speaking and sharing information regarding procedures and processes in use at that time. As we have no members in that category, we will politely decline the invitation with the suggestion the regiment may be better able to assist.

. The VVPPAA at Granville have commenced their Member renewal program

Public Officer Report. Gordon will lodge the Associations' AGM Financial Report to Fair Trading shortly.

Webmaster Update.

. Robert advised Facebook members are 493 and most access to the newsletter (191) are coming from that source.

. Robert is in contact with the Website ISP in the US of A regarding an issue with the software causing the loss of access to the links to the "Galleries" tab.

Health Report:

. Keith Dean continues to rehabilitate from his recent surgery.

. Merv reported 2 episodes (loss of consciousness) which require further tests to establish the cause.

. Merv also reported that George was currently suffering from ulcers.

General Business and around the grounds:

Discussions ensued on the following:

. A request via Kevin Browning from Head of Regiment BRIG DJ Hill AM outlining "RAA Gunner Race 2024". The fundraising project is designed to rejuvenate the Regimental (Gunnery) Fund via promoting competition between units that comprise the Royal Regiment. The race will end at midday on 4 December 2024 Saint Barbara's Day (known as the St. Barbara's day Stakes) with the winner raising the most funds and be deemed to be the holder of the Pagan Cup currently held by 131 Locating Battery since 1994 (now 20 th Regiment RAA). See Facebook site for details <https://www.facebook.com/groups/131divlocbtyraa>

. Dates for the 2025 Reunion are impacted by ARMYs' commitment to Operation Talisman Sabre next year and are still uncertain.

. Plans for a plaque for Shadow 200 are proceeding. More details to follow.

. Ron Mason relayed the following update via Dicko regarding the NVVMuseum

"Hi Paul, not sure if I will get to the next meeting so here is a bit of a report from the last state council meeting. At Phillip Island the 4th exit on a new roundabout is due to start in January, this will be for the museum. The War Memorial in Canberra will transfer a DC3 & radio direction gear to Phillip Island when the museum buildings are finished. So, things are moving forward, I guess the exit road from the roundabout is the next step. Regards, Ron."

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, 10th December, 2024 at 1100hrs

Venue: Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club, 26 Humphries Rd, Wakeley NSW

Also, available via Zoom link to be advised



. Birthdays in the Battery...December –

Date	Name	Regt No	SVN In	SVN Out	Comments
1	David John Dougherty	2786594	17 01 1968	04 02 1969	
1	Keven John Bush	3792069	18 02 1968	21 02 1969	Melbourne
1	Neville Angus Smith A/LDdr	1734352	01 07 1969	25 03 1970	
3	Raymond Arthur Minns T/Bdr	4410744	20 05 1966	28 02 1967	† 24.05.1997
3	Clive Leslie Dreis L/Bdr	2785766	05 02 1968	03 12 1968	
6	Alan Ernest Robb L/Bdr	5715343	29 01 1968	21 01 1969	
7	Anthony Joseph O'Mara Cpl	38334	15 03 1968	18 03 1969	RAEME † 01.01.1985
7	Terrence Howard Westerway	215818	04 05 1966	07 05 1967	
8	Robert Barnett White L/Bdr	311537	22 04 1966	16 05 1967	† 24.01.1992
9	Andrew Lance Diprose Opie 2Lt.	43611	04 05 1966	06 01 1967	† 14.07.2022
10	Hans Rienhard Weber	3789591	04 05 1967	02 04 1968	† 12.07.2016
12	Michael John Davis L/Bdr	4720736	20 01 1970	30 01 1971	
12	Christopher Leonard Brazier	2792185	24 02 1970	25 02 1971	
13	Johnn William Stanford	217765	29 01 1969	21 01 1970	
13	Laurence Gilbert D'Arcy Bdr	215649	04 03 1968	04 02 1969	12 Fd Regt.
13	" "	215649	20 05 1971	05 08 1971	131
14	Peter William Fletcher L/Bdr	2783429	04 05 1967	12 12 1967	
14	Thomas King T/Bdr	1411018	12 12 1966	12 12 1967	† 25.04.2011
15	Geoffrey Reece Price L/Bdr	5715931	08 05 1969	25 02 1970	
16	Phillip Montague Perrin Capt.	53105	29 01 1968	21 01 1969	† 12.08.2024
17	Anthony Victor Goldsmith	1732029	04 05 1967	12 12 1967	
18	Lionel James Hogno	2783680	03 01 1967	27 09 1967	
18	Thomas William Checkley	311534	22 04 1966	05 08 1966	† 05.08.66 KBA
19	Geoffrey Guy Blackwell	4718307	20 06 1967	21 05 1968	
19	Peter Scott "Pappy" Gault	2783644	04 05 1967	27 09 1967	† 24.05.2014
19	Allan Bruce Bensley Sgt	243104	04.06.68	18.06.1969	RAEME † 20.12.2011
	" "		20.01.70	30.01.71	
19	Rodney James Beasley	3797746	04 03 1971	05 08 1971	
19	Michael William Ferris T/Cpl	1733794	23 12 1968	28 03 1969	† 21.09.2005
	" "		30 03 1969	03 12 1969	131-RAEME
21	Robert Willem Retrot	1731922	05 05 1967	30 01 1968	† 27.03.2023
21	Michael George Boyle Lt	217004	17 02 1970	11 02 1971	Waratah, NSW
21	Blair McPherson Sheppard	1735563	01 04 1970	04 03 1971	
22	John Duncan McGregor	3787376	20 05 1966	30 04 1967	Melbourne
22	Michael James Burgess Capt.	242895	24 03 1968	26 03 1969	RAEME
22	Peter John Meaney	4719804	03 06 1969	25 03 1970	
22	Ronald Victor Ryan	2793176	20 08 1970	09 06 1971	
24	Ronald John Evans	3789614	04 05 1967	20 02 1968	
25	Stewart Wayne McAlpine	2787471	08 07 1968	04 06 1969	† 21.11.2023
25	Robert John Holdsworth Pvt	3793058	04 01 1969	03 12 1969	Toora, Vic AACC
25	Peter Christopher Bremner	1734544	16 04 1969	16 04 1970	
26	Christopher Harry Bouilly L/Bdr	4717884	17 04 1967	12 12 1967	
28	Geoffrey John MacCaulay WO2	35753	27 11 1969	05 11 1970	† 27.04.2013
28	Lionel Eric Outen	1732195	05 05 1967	30 01 1968	
28	John Crighton Martin Lt.	43613	25 02 1968	21 02 1969	Glenelg, SA
29	Brian John Hawkey Pvt	1200572	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	Murwillumbah, NSW AACC
29	Frederick Norman Lennon Sgt.	29712	20 05 1966	11 12 1966	† 25.07.2013

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

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

. **Locator Profiles** – we've received **176. Ed** – Maybe we need to draw in a deep one so as to hold our breaths for a while longer.

. **Located...**

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

Vale

Vales and Locator Profiles...

This is just a request to all and general, that we need to complete, and perhaps, update Locator Profiles, because as of times past and as time moves forward we have lost and will continue to lose mates.

Let's keep a memory alive.

The Vale section in *Eyes & Ears*, can at times be very scant of personal and service details, yes, there is the DVA Nominal Roll which contains tour dates, but supplies nothing for those who did not serve overseas, and contains no personal details.

Is it possible that we can have Locator Profiles completed with photos, where possible, and/or updates to make this section more honouring to those mates who pass and may be unknown to others to help make the Unit and Detachment archived history have more heart?

Take 10 minutes, please, to complete a Locator Profile as it is important to all of us.

For a blank Locator Profile contact Paul Dickson at 131eyesandears@gmail.com

May They Rest in Peace, and Never be Forgotten.



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 Graeme 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

Website: <https://www.locatingartillery.org>



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



www.artilleryhistory.org



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

. 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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