

THE EYES and EARS

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

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

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Official newsletter of the 131 Locators Association Inc ABN 92 663 816 973

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Supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs



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 2025

59 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



Did you eat there?



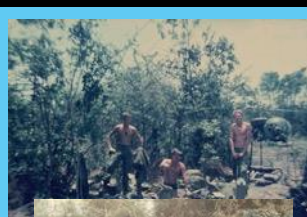
Ok, where were you?



Did he smile?



How about a light!



The
Detachment
was kept
busy...



Operations and Fire Support Bases (FSB) - South Vietnam...

The following is an extracted list of Operations and Fire Support Bases in which the Detachment took part in during the time it was active in South Vietnam.

Please note that the list may be incomplete or possibly inaccurate, to a degree, but the list does highlight the activities we were involved in and there are numerous -

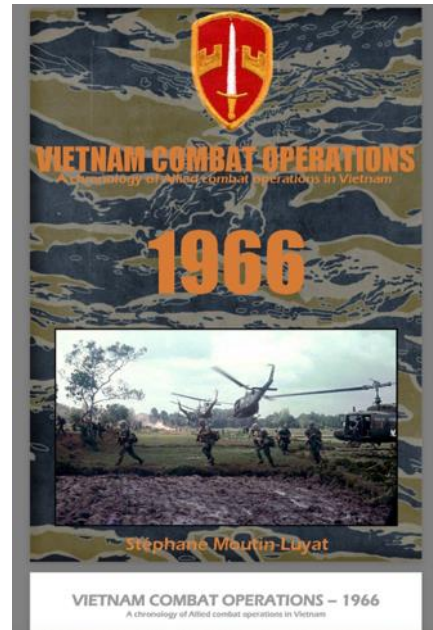
"The Detachment was kept busy"...

1966

Total listings of Operations in 1966 - it's an insight to an amazing list of Operations throughout 1966.

"Vietnam Combat Operations" 1966

This was just a "find" as I searched for archived information.
It's an amazing read - so detailed but ONLY for 1966



The Detachments detailed Operations and Fire Support Bases...

- 06 November - 12 November Operation YASS/HAYMAN.

1967

31 August - 23 September Operation AINSLIE

04 September - FSB ALLANBROOK.

27 October - 18 November Operation SANTA FE.

03 November - FSB LION.

26 November - Operation FORREST commenced

1968

08 January - Operation FORREST concluded.

10 January - 21 Jan Operation DUNTROON

11 January - FSB BERRYMAN.

24 January - 1 March - Operation COBURG commenced along with FSB HARRISON

31 January - FSB ANDERSEN.

21 April - Operation THOAN THANG commenced. FSB - HARRISON, WATTLE, CLOWES.

12 May - 6 June - Battle of FSB CORAL, BALMORAL and COOGEE

23 June - FSB CONCORD.

29 July - 31 July - Operation PLATYPUS, FSB AVENGER and FSB COOLAH

12 September - Operation HAWKESBURY (AO Tuggerah)

12 October - 19 November - Operation CAPITAL, AO DICKSON, FSB LION.

03 December - Operation GOODWOOD, FSB DYKE, FSB CHESTNUT, FSB AVENGER, FSB JULIA

1969

17 February - 10 March - Operation FEDERAL.

19 February - Operation GOODWOOD included FSB DUSTER, FSB MARTINE

10 March - 08 April - Operation OVERLANDER

08 May - 13 June - Operation REYNELLA

11 May - FSB THRUST.

06 Jun - 07 June - The Battle of BINH BA

14 July - August 15 - Operation MUNDINGBURRA

31 October - 12 November - Operation **KINGS CROSS**

Just a couple more details of interest...

13 May 1968 - The Battle of Coral & Balmoral

The Battle for Fire Support Base (FSB) Coral begins with an enemy attack that overruns 1 RAR Mortar Platoon and captures one of 102 Field Battery's gun pits. The base is cleared with the help of helicopter gunships. After a second attack on May 15, Australian casualties around Coral stand at 15 killed and 56 wounded while enemy losses are estimated to exceed 100 dead.

06 June 1969 - The Battle of Binh Bah

Two companies from 5 RAR, supported by APC and Tank troops and Australian helicopter gunships, engage in house-to-house fighting to clear the town of a strong force of NVA regulars. The fighting destroys much of the town.

<<<<<<<<>>>>>>>>>>>>>

. 2025 Remembrance Day -



Princess Anne makes first appearance in Sydney at the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Parke to mark Remembrance day

Sydney Opera House...



Photo extracted form Rieny's web page.



Paul Dickson - San Miguel de Allende, Mexico



**The 11th year and the group is growing, though we did lose one member recently.
May he Rest in Peace.**



It's a great ex-Vets and ex-Service Personnel day.

Regards
Allen."

NB - See more in Allen's Presidential Perambulations in the Association section below.

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Give me a Name?

The “Lost Locator Project”

This Project is being re-ignited for 2025.

Our current list contains the names of **69** Locators (as at 30.11.2025) 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, Vic
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, Vic
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 30.11.2025 –

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 **William Alan Thomas and John Andrew Brewer** to the list below as he recently passed. (See Vale below)

10 Year Detachment/131 Battery Death Periods

1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	Total
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	1	2	0	2	8
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	3	1	19
2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
1	4	4	4	2	9	4	6	5	3	42
2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
9	5	5	5	6	8	11	14	10	9	82

Unknowns*

1

Total

168

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 **31.17.2025**.

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

This following sections have now been updated as of 31.10.2025 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

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 one more to find!

...a continuing investigation –

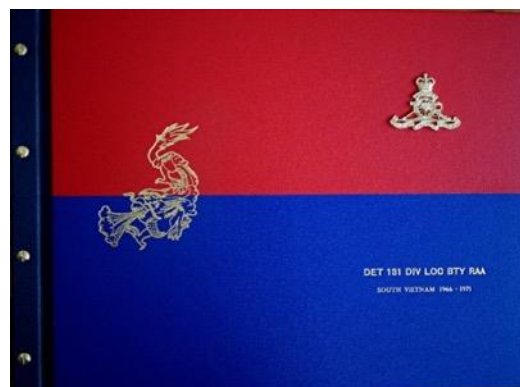


131 Locators
“Cold Case Division”
The Eyes & Ears of the Force

Peter Meaney has received confirmation of **William Alan Thomas** passing from **Australian Vietnam Veterans Mortality Listing** from the information we discovered on an earlier on via our own research.
Please see Vale later in this edition for more information.

Paul Dickson has confirmation of **John Andrew Brewer** passing from **Australian Vietnam Veterans Mortality Listing**.
Please see Vale later in this edition for more information.

. The “Detachment Album Project” – This project is sponsored by the 131 Locators Association and is in need of some photographic and by-line input from our members/Readers.



. Insights and Recollections...

This topic/s have raised so much interest – we're still in the middle of some really great discoveries with some remarkable memories being brought to life.

The series will continue on the receipt of more Insights and Recollections, so if you would care to contribute, please send your Insights and Recollections –

Paul Dickson at - 131eyesandears@gmail.com

Mail Call...

Paul Dickson - I found this on Facebook and couldn't resist taking a screen shot.

Danger Close: The Battle of Long Tan

The photo shows -

Johannes (John) Gerard Anthony Las T/bdr who served with the Detachment from 23.09 1968 to 18.06.1969 diving into the pool and the late L/Bdr **Clive Leslie Dreis** who served with the Detachment from 05.02.1968 to 03.12.1968 involved in water polo.

I just thought it was a classic memory photo.
Paul

Danger Close: The Battl... 23 May 2016 · 🌐 · 🌐

Nui Dat, South Vietnam. 1968-11. Private John Las of Ballarat, Vic, takes a plunge into the fabric swimming pool erected at the 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF) Base at Nui Dat. Private Clive Dreis of Hornsby, NSW, catches a water polo ball that had just been thrown to him. Both are members of the 131st Divisional Locating Battery.



Barry Guzder - "Hi Dicko,

We didn't get to Jordan till 28th October. Travelled all over (camels in Wadi Rum, Lawrence of Arabia made it here, saw the train he blew up).

Went down to Aqaba, then to Petra (magnificent) and onto Dead Sea. Couldn't drown if you tried! This is a wonderful country with friendly people.

Churches and mosques side by side, the Brits left a good legacy.

Then onto the land of the Pharos. What can one say? Gobsmacking! Pyramids, Sphinx, travelling down the Nile through Valley of the Kings, Karnak, Luxor, all the way to Massive Aswan dam. Then onto Abu Sambal and the massive statues of Rameses and wife. Saw king Tuts tomb which is now preserved in a glass case.

Bit different to the gold Sarcophagus in Cairo museum.

Did a quick flit up to Alexandria, very clean and worth a visit just for the massive new library, built on the site of the ancient one that Alexander destroyed.

Went out to El Almein and paid respects to the Aussies graves.

So, what a journey, worth every expensive penny!

Looks like we were about three weeks behind you!

Photos to follow.

Regards,
Barry."



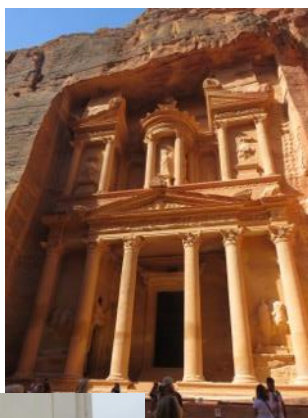
1. Camels in Wadi rum.
2. 2 Going 'native'



3. Sphinx & Pyramid



4. Petra



2. 9th. Division plaque in cemetery

1. Entrance at El Alamein



3 Carol & Me - the 'Bent' pyramid behind.



4. Rameses and wife. Abu Simbal.



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 Responders = 55



Mail In - Here are the responses...

Ken Foster - "I can only say I am grateful for family, in particular grandchildren, I feel well, not a lot of energy but manage day to day.

Over the past three months I have had a heart stent inserted, that settled down well and my kidney stones have been removed, about a month ago my scrotum started to swell, ended up almost three times normal and hard as a rock, back into hospital, remove a testical and drained the fluids, that was Tuesday, bugger me yesterday my optometrist tells me my cataracts are getting worse so refer to a surgeon who will fix them and insert a stent to help, or fix, my glaucoma, let's hope it all ends soon in a positive way, not whingeing just the facts of having survived my 85th birthday."

Wade Cooper -

"Good to hear from you, Paul.

Happy birthday!

Good luck with the surgeries for the cat and dog!

Weather starting to get nice here in Canberra

**Phil Connor -** "Hi Paul and Helen,

Good to hear from you. Great Newsletter last month, well done.

Racking up the 8-zero last month, congratulations. And still tripping around with those wonderful holidays, great times.

Saw the pics last edition. 6 cabin sailing boat up the Nile, amazing and spectacular.

As to your local temps, spare a thought for our son and family in Fort Wayne, Indiana. When we spoke to them last Sunday it is rug up weather. Being in North Indiana the cold winds blow in from Lake Michigan. By December they will have snow up to their knees.

You have mentioned before re the sterilisation clinic and that is amazing the work both Helen and yourself do.

We are doing OK. As I have said before, "In your 30s and 40s you go out, however in you 70s and 80s you go out but only to appointments!"

The weather here on the Sunnie coast, over the last month, has been up and down, we had a very dry spell, then bucket loads of storms/rain. With giant hail in some towns and suburbs. I managed to feed the lawns (with CK-88, my favourite), when the first storms started, and now we have a lush jungle.

Weather forecasts suggests more rain/storms, at times, over the months ahead.

We are now getting Pollies spruiking, pamphlets and notices for the proposed rail link from the great Northern rail line, branching out from Beerwah to Birtinya then onto the Sunshine Coast airport. And in the design, we are to have a station at Mountain Creek. Hahaha, all proposed to be in place for 2032 Olympics. It is proposed to have a number of events up here on the Coast.

Great to hear from you, especially your travels at your young age.....

All the best to you and Helen.

Cheers

Phil and Miriam"

Warwick Brooker - "Hi Dicko,

Congratulations on your 8 decades!

Your life is far more exciting than ours. We're still childminding, with a little badge selling for Remembrance Day thrown in.

Springtime here and the weather keeps fluctuating between winter and summer. Only three weeks away from summer and the morning forecast for Wednesday is Zero with frost. The maximum last Saturday was 28c.

Best wishes to you and Helen

Brookey."

John Bayford - "Hi Paul

Just a quick reply. Family are all well. I am having surgery on my shoulder on Monday that will keep me out of action for a while.

All the best

John."

Nick Armstrong - "Hello Paul, and Helen.

Thank you for your recent email. I noted your involvement in the sterilization program for cats and dogs. How many others are helping in your team. Three hundred would be a lot for one person. If you feel the need for additional practice, Australia has plenty of feral cats for practice. You would have to be very active catching them!

I saw your tour pictures and am impressed with your energy! Do you walk the golf course, or do you use a golf buggy? I have never tried to hit a golf ball, however an excuse to drive around in a golf buggy does appeal to me.

My 'speedo' turned over 81 in May, so slightly ahead of you. I am still involved with my local DVA financed small 'Physio gym' group. I have occasionally considered that a few of the group seem to be ageing well. Recently it was announced that one of our group was celebrating their 70th birthday. That is eleven years younger than me. I was still working fulltime at that age. It also focussed my thoughts on Australia's ability to be involved in someone's war somewhere, practically constantly.

Healthwise, everything here is good, all things considered. I am still doing some 'relief' school bus driving. The hours have reduced somewhat, although I did about three months commencing last June. It is helpful to reduce my hours, which helps to validate my claim with DVA that earning above my pension entitlement is not intentional.

Fire Season begins in two days, here in the 'Lower Eyre Peninsula' region. I am still active with the local Brigade. The number of responding members is quite low. It is an ongoing problem confronting organizations relying on 'volunteer' members. If the number of volunteers crewing the truck improved, I would probably move towards more 'Air Operations Support'. Air operations are primarily responsible for loading the water bombers. The work is not too physically demanding and mostly involves connecting hoses and operating pumps. During the fire season, Port Lincoln airport is the base for three fixed wing 'Air Tractors', one Blackhawk helicopter and two reconnaissance helicopters. There are groups of bombing aircraft staged throughout the State during the fire season. If the situation demands, available outlying aircraft can relocate to a big fire, to supplement the available air attack. The last fire to threaten Port Lincoln, about three years ago, eight aircraft were operating from the Port Lincoln airport. The fixed wing aircraft carry about 3000 lt or 3 tonnes, and

load in less than five minutes. Depending on distance from the fireground, eight aircraft can shift over 250 tonnes of water in an hour. This can exceed the capacity of the water supply from the mains supply.

My travels can't match your globetrotting; however, I have managed one trip to Tasmania, and two to Western Australia. Travels and bus driving seem to have limited my boating excursions. The weather has not been particularly helpful through winter, but hopefully I can manage more trips in the coming months.

That is about all from me for now.

Cheers

Nick."

...a response to Nick's comments from above - "I noted your involvement in the sterilization program for cats and dogs. How many others are helping in your team. Three hundred would be a lot for one person."

Well - here's a go at responding.

No, I'm not the only one as I have a team of 6 Pre-operation shaver volunteers as you can see from the photo below.

Plus, the place where we have it is vacated by the local Fire Brigade (Bomberos) for FREE - to allow us to have 20 Government sponsored vets and heaps of other volunteers to manage all the pre-op and recovery procedures. Again, see the photo below.



It's a full-on day - we did 187 animals by 11.30 am! However, the recoveries do take a while longer.

It's a tremendous community FREE event. All the equipment and medicals supplies are fund raised by an NGO called Amigos de Animales her where I live. Helen, my wife is on the board as the Fund Raiser, and I'm collateral damage. Paul".

Mike Butler - "Hi Paul

Thanks for your note - apologies for late reply. Michelle and I are travelling OK - no major dramas.

It's been a very wet November here in Melbourne - but good for the garden.

Took the caravan out a couple of months ago to Warrnambool to see my son who lives there (a great spot). Having a family get together down there in April next year with all the 3 kids and 8 grandkids?? Might get the van out just after Xmas but not sure yet.

Have kept in touch with a few 131's from my era (70/71) over the last few weeks. Doing the usual Xmas parties with TPI and VVAA at Box Hill RSL. Also going to a dinner at the RSL next week to raise funds for Veterans Bike Ride. Dave Sabben is the guest speaker so it should be a good night.

Just gone through the trauma of a bathroom renovation which took 5 weeks but the result was excellent so we are very pleased - now looking forward to decking painting etc etc before it gets too hot!!

All the best. Mike."

John Richmond - "Hi Paul

Am a bit behind with my responses.

Have been very busy with one thing or another.

Well summer is on the Way down here at last. expect to get to 30 today, with a possible storm.

Some time ago you suggested I look into DVA. I believe I may be able to get a white card. Have decided not to apply at this stage as my Cancer treatment is covered by Medicare.

But as part of my research was talking to one or two senior NCO's when we arrived at 131 in 66. One was WO2 Andy Anderson. He is now about 90 and still going strong. On the same train we also used to have former BSM 131 Keith Cossart. He died some years ago.

The big thing they both was they lived within one suburb of each other and just over the road from me.

If my spelling is worse than usual, had one eye operated on to remove a cataract a month ago. Until I get the other done at the end of January I am still using my old reading glasses

Thanks for the birthday message. I can at least say I now have my OBE (Over Bloody Eighty)

All the best for coming season, Regards, JR."

**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**



Committee members:
President: *Allen Morley*
Vice President: *Bert Blink*
Treasurer/Secretary: *Grahame Dignam*
Public Officer: *Gordon Malcolm*
Webmaster: *Bob Billiards*
Research Officer: *Ernie Newbold*
Designs and 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, WA - Bary Guzder, Shepparton Area (NSW) - Peter Dealy*

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



Presidential perambulations

Remembrance Day has come and gone for another year. In my local Sydney suburb of Lane Cove there was a special ceremony to celebrate the occasion. Turnout was excellent ranging from school children to silver haired old soldiers. The public showed support by turning up and thus supporting World War 1 servicemen in general, family relatives and the local community.

One difference this year was advice that an investigation involving staff from the local library and the RSL sub-branch President to identify WWI servicemen who had streets named after them. Not all had been killed in action although the majority had fallen in the war. Eleven former locals, ranging across several Privates, a major general and a lieutenant general were identified and a brief story read by current locals. This approach provided confirmation that the Ode message of remembering them was met and personalised.

I was honoured to be asked to place a wreath at the local Cenotaph on behalf of Vietnam Veterans. It was an absolute privilege to be involved in this important community dedication ceremony.

Regards

Allen.

58 Years
April 1966 – April 2024



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

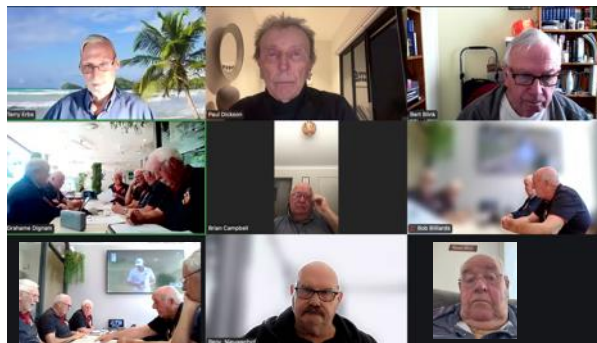
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the 131 Locators Association Inc.
 Held on Tuesday 18 th November 2025 commencing at 11.00 AM at
 Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club
 26 Humphries Rd, Wakeley NSW 2176

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

Attendees were: Allen Morley, Grahame Dignam, Ged Carroll, Ernest Newbold, Bob Billiards, Gordon Malcolm, and Ian Amos

Zoomed members were: Paul Dickson, Merv Nairn, Terry Erbs, Bert Blink, Rieny Nieuwenhof and Brian Campbell,

Apologies were received from: Kevin Browning, Steve Wynn, George Lane, Nick Proskurin, Peter Dealy, Warwick Brooker, and other State Reps



The Election of office-bearers for the 2025-26 year.

Allen Morley declared all positions vacant and election 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 chair of the meeting was passed back to the President- elect Allen Morley for the balance of the meeting.

The regional Representatives who were appointed and are not elected and so continue in their roles.

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.

Presidents report.

131 Locators Association Inc



President's Report for FY 2024 – 2025

This is the President's Report for the financial year 2024-2025, a year of ongoing operation. This period represents our sixteenth 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 financial report illustrates. Nevertheless, the ongoing 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 80th 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 and North Head remains incomplete, although there has been significant success with new contacts in the past year.

Although it did not produce any known direct health issues amongst members, in 2024 and 2025 the follow on from 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. 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 fallen. However,

through establishing a Facebook presence, the size of the Facebook group has showed pleasing growth.

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

The website statistics and inputs into Facebook demonstrate the ongoing interest in our activities, albeit at a reduced level. As previously mentioned in my 2023-2024 annual report, Facebook has directly resulted in some of our unlocated locators being located. Bob, your effort in setting up these e-communication 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 2025 edition was the 204th in the new series, post the 1960's editions.

Only a limited number of activities, meetings, reunions and events were possible in the year's program.

Highlights for 2024-2025 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 from the 131 cohort, this few in number unfortunately demonstrates that we have a declining membership base

Anzac Day 2025 saw the annual march take place, but the march saw only a handful of Sydney members of the Battery attending.

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 attendee at the new format meetings

Grahame Dignam, Treasurer/Secretary remains the vital 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, 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, Peter Meaney 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 2025

In line with Fair Trading rules for Tier 2 Associations, the committee has arranged for the financial statements to be presented to members at the meeting. This included a presentation of Receipts and Payments and Income expenditure reports scrutinized by the committee, and a copy of the financial statements and any resolutions about those statements in the AGM minutes.

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.

Annual General Meeting closed at 11.15 AM AEST

Minutes for the General Meeting of the 131 Locators Association Inc.

Financial Membership is currently ...**118**, plus Associates **2**, Affiliates **15**. Total **135**. Lapsed **37** members as of **1 November 2025**.

Presidents Report: Please refer to the attached yearly report for 2024-25.

Allen also referenced

- . The concern for the lower numbers attending public events for Remembrance Day and the 131 Centenary of Locating commemorations .
- . Advertisements for the proof coin celebrating the Vietnam Veterans
- . And commented on the growing ages of our members in relation to ongoing commitment to our cause.

Public Officer Report.

Gordon will attend to the lodging our report to Fair-Trading report and necessary

Winding up the Association and our future -

A discussion ensued covering the general feeling about this topic.

It as was decided to canvas suggestions from interested members via *Eyes & Ears* for their thoughts and suggestions. While we are required by Fair Trading to conduct an orderly exit from operations, how that will be achieved and in what form, may take time.

We need to consider what form the new entity will take :

- . A social club with Facebook type format
- . The less formal with reduced meetings (as above) with formal defined gatherings - Anzac Day :Remembrance Day: Vietnam Vets Day plus some social days.
- . All aspects of financial affairs: Website continuance and cost to be provided for
- . Any other item that may come up.

Webmaster Update.

. Robert advised Facebook members are 552. The website generated 218 visits for *Eyes & Ears* and the AGM notices 168 visits.

General Business and around the grounds:

Discussions ensued on the following:

- . Terry advised that there would be a request to assist funding the cost of a brass plaque to honour the UAV Shadow 200 service to the Australian Army.
- . Donations from Assoc funds could be made to VV National Museum to house 131 specific display cases for smaller items as well as the Radar set etc.

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 General Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 9th December, 2025 at 1100hrs

Venue: to be advised

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, Vic
1	Neville Angus Smith A/LDdr	1734352	01 07 1969	25 03 1970	† 27.05.2025
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	† 13.07.2025
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, Vic
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 – 6 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 **181. Ed** – Maybe we need to draw in a deep one so as to hold our breathes for a while longer.

. Located...

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

Vale

Peter Meaney has received confirmation of **William Alan Thomas** passing from **Australian Vietnam Veterans Mortality Listing** from the information we discovered on an earlier search via our own research - see following -

[Home](#) **Search for Notices**

Primary Search Fields: (enter at least one)

Surname ☐ Sounds like

Any Given Name(s)

Any Location (must match the notice exactly)

Secondary Search Fields: (optional)

Year Earliest: Latest:

Newspaper or FD

State

Updated since

[Search Ryerson](#) [Print Results](#) [Show Search Tips](#)

The Ryerson Index contains 9,717,491 notices from 499 different Australian newspapers, publisher websites and funeral director websites.

1 notice found

Surname	Given Names	Notice Type	Date	Event	Age	Other Details	Publication	Published
THOMAS	William Alan (Bill) (Tomo)	Death notice	24MAY2017	Publication		at Royal Darwin Hospital	Northern Territory News	24MAY2017

Our Partners







DEATH NOTICE FOR

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Publication: NT News Date Listed: 24/5/2017

IN LOVING MEMORY OF WILLIAM ALAN THOMAS BILL or TOMO 1944 - 2017 Passed away peacefully at Royal Darwin Hospital 1915...

 Send flowers
 Light a candle
 Support services



Name: Thomas, William Alan

Service No: 16727 Rank: Gunner

**Australian Reinforcement Unit
SVN In: 07 01 1967 SVN Out: 20 03 1967
131 Divisional Locating Battery RAA
Detachment HQ Driver
SVN In: 21 03 1967 SVN Out: 27 09 1967**

DoB: 16 10 1944

DoD: 24 05 2017

Lest We Forget



Bill Taggart (1st/83rd) - "Paul, passing along the condolences of the 1/83rd. While lost, a brother is not to be forgotten, Lest We Forget.
Bill."

Charles Brewer - "Thank you Paul; & yes, may William Rest in Peace.
Appreciate your care & dedication Paul.
Charles, ex 133 Div Loc. Blessings."

Ernie Newdold - "G'day Paul,
Sad news, unfortunately time is gradually catching up with all of us one by one.
I remember Bill Thomas as he was there at the same time as you and I, unfortunately I don't have any photos Of Bill.
Regards,
Ernie."

Ernie continues - "G'day Paul,
I have a vague feeling that he may have been a driver and been attached to the transport pool.
I am having coffee and lunch with Allen and Nick on Wednesday so I'll check with Allen and see what he Remembers."

Allen Morley - "Paul,
Interesting notification re Bill Thomas. He was one of four of us, tented together. The late Ray Hutchinson, Bill, John Vitovsky and yours truly.
Bill was the owner of an Akai reel to reel tape, a device that I had never seen before. And for the first time, I heard the delightful voice of Marianne Faithful singing "*As Tears Go By*" and "*Scarborough Fair Canticle*" via Bill's speakers.
Bill was a Regular soldier, I think originally from Queensland. He was the driver for the Q store and Office. A fairly taciturn but friendly soldier, Bill just disappeared after leaving Nui Dat and as far as I know, was never in further contact..
Vale Gunner Bill Thomas."

Vale

Paul Dickson has confirmation of **John Andrew Brewer** passing from **Australian Vietnam Veterans Mortality Listing**. No confirmation of his Day/Month Date of Death has been able to be confirmed



Name: Brewer, John Andrew

**Service No: 16220 Rank: Temporary Sergeant
Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery RAA
Location: Detachment Orderley Room
SVN In: 05 02 1968 SVN Out: 07 02 1969
4th Field Regiment RAA
SVN In: 12 03 1970 SVN Out: 25 02 1971**

DoB: 24 05 1944 YoD: 04 05 2023

Lest We Forget



Bill Taggart (1st/83rd US Artillery) - "Paul, please convey the condolences of the 1/83rd on John's passing, Lest We Forget.
Bill."

Bob Billiards - "Hi Paul,

I remember Sgt Brewer as he replaced "Chalky" Royal in the orderly room. He seemed a good bloke and could take a joke. I asked him a couple of time when I was to go home and got the same answer "when did you arrive?" and the answer was 12 months from that date. He wouldn't give us the resignation form either and he wouldn't accept my verbal resignation.

After returning home I worked at Fairfield Municipal Council where we paid staff in cash so had Armaguard as the cash supplier around the mid 70's. I was out at lunch and walking back to the entrance, Sgt Brewer was waiting at the front door as he was one of the security guards. We had a conversation for a short while and that was the last time after that chance meeting.
Bob."

Eddie Tricker - "Hi Paul,

This is terribly impacting upon me!

For it was because of John Brewer and all his personal writings on the Unattended Ground Sensor programme, which he sent me a copy of, that I was able to complete detailed work (chapter) on his and the D&E platoon's work on implanting all these devices for my manuscript, (nearly completed).

Sgt John Andrew Brewer's MID was as the result of his UGS (sensor) work and his role in the successful ambush that D&E platoon had on the early morning of 11th August 1970. This ambush was the result of UGS's that D&E platoon had implanted to the Suoi Chau Pha Valley.

A Vietnamese woman Chieu Hoi on the 5th September 1970, indicated under interrogation that D&E platoon had actually KIA 7 VC of the Chau Duc unit that morning.

His Citation for the MID can be found in: Alexander M. Palmer's "Vietnam Veterans, Honours & Awards, Army," on page: 26 to 27.

Copy of this MID citation below with End Notes and Footnotes from my manuscript.

For the highly successful Unattended Ground Sensor emplacement work carried out in the Suoi Chau Pha valley, and many other areas of Phuoc Tuy province, during his tour of duty, including his involvement in the D&E platoon ambush of 11 August 1970; 16220, Sergeant John Andrew Brewer was awarded a 'Mentioned in Despatches' on the 16 December 1971.

[i]

The citation for this award reads:

Sergeant John Andrew Brewer enlisted in the Australian Regular Army on 27 June 1961 and was allotted to The Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery. He joined 4th Field Regiment on 5 February 1969 and arrived in Vietnam with the Regiment in March 1970.

Since the acquisition of sensor devices by the 1st Australian Task Force, Sergeant Brewer has been largely responsible for the installation of the unattended ground surveillance sensor program within the Tactical Area of Responsibility of 1st Australian Task Force.

He has personally led many of the sensor laying teams and has volunteered for several ambush patrols deployed as a result of information gained from the sensors. In one particular ambush he initiated an action which resulted in the deaths of three enemy. [1]

During this action he also acted as an artillery forward observer and adjusted the fire of field and medium artillery onto likely enemy withdrawal routes.

By his devotion to duty and his professional competence Sergeant Brewer has brought great credit upon himself, his Regiment, and the Australian Army.

[ii]

[1]

Author's note: This is incorrect. The initial outcome of the D&E platoon ambush was 2 enemy dead (KIA) by body count, (BC), and 3 enemy Wounded in Action, by blood trails, (BT). See the chapter in this book that deals with the actual 11th August, D&E platoon ambush, in which Sergeant Brewer participated.

[i]

Australian War Memorial, Canberra web site: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R1505881>, on 7 September 2021; Commonwealth of Australia Government Gazette, 16 December 1971, page 7596, position 29; [The] London Gazette, 21 December 1971, page 13968, position 55.

[ii]

Palmer, Alexander M., *'Vietnam Veterans, Honours and Awards, Army,'* Military Minded, Mosman Park, Perth, 1995, pp. 26 and 27.

LEST WE FORGET!

I think Kevin Browning may have a colour slide photo of John Brewer, check with him."

Kevin Browning - "Hi Paul,

Attached is a photo of John taken in the Sound Ranging command post around November 1968. John was my survey sergeant when I first arrived and apart from a number of survey jobs we did he was also one of the duty officers in the sound ranging command post so we spent many nights on shift together. His second tour in Vietnam he was the Regimental survey sergeant with 4 Field Regt and was heavily involved with the sensors. It was during that time that he was awarded the MID.



The citation for his award follows:

Commonwealth of Australia Gazette: 16 December 1971

London Gazette: 21 December 1971

Sergeant John Andrew Brewer enlisted in the Australian Regular Army on 27 June 1961 and was allotted to The Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery. He joined 4th Field Regiment on 5 February 1969 and arrived in South Vietnam with the Regiment in March 1970.

Since the acquisition of sensor devices by the 1st Australian Task Force, Sergeant Brewer has been largely responsible for the installation of the unattended ground surveillance sensor program within the Tactical Area of Responsibility of 1st Australian Task Force.

He has personally led many of the sensor laying teams and has volunteered for several ambush patrols deployed as a result of information gained from the sensors. In one particular ambush patrol he initiated an action which resulted in the deaths of three enemy. During this action he also acted as an artillery forward observer and adjusted the fire of field and medium artillery onto likely enemy withdrawal routes. By his devotion to duty and his professional competence Sergeant Brewer has brought great credit upon himself, his Regiment and the Australian Army.

Whilst our paths crossed on numerous occasions in the following years we were not posted to the same locality. He replaced me as BSM 131 in 1983 and took discharge at the end of that year.

When Jeff Evans commenced writing his history of Australian artillery in Vietnam, a work not completed before he passed, we contacted John for his input on the sensor program. He was very helpful. John was a private person but on the occasions we spoke he was happy for the conversation. I last saw him on Anzac Day in Brisbane about four years ago. He is a sad loss.

Regards,
Kevin."

...Kevin continues - 6th November 2025 -

"I just spoke with John's wife Lola. John passed away from cancer on 4 May 2023.

Allen Morley - "Paul, the only pic I could find of Bill. Obviously in the wet season. L to R - Ray Hutchinson, Chalky Royal, me obscured behind Chalky and Bill. am."



Steve Boutlis - "I remember John Brewer. His favourite drink was a Bloody Mary. He would regale us during the survey course with tales of his service against the Indonesians during the Confrontation. "They would pop their heads above their weapon pits, wave and greet us good morning. We would pop our heads above our weapon pits, wave and greet them. Then we would all pop our heads below the weapon pits' lip and shoot at each other". Weird way to fight a war! Cheers, Boots."

David Doyle - "Hi Paul, John was Svy Sgt with 4 Field Regt and as we all know 131 carried out all Svy Tasks in the Dat and Fire support Bases this left John without a job so we seconded him over and John carried out all the hidden microphones along with our SAS as support for our Sensors bases. I was always led to believe that is what John received his MID for and deservedly so. John was a credit to our Bty, the Regt and all involved in the secrecy of implant of equipment during 1970/71. It was due to this that we set an ambush outside Dat Do on Christmas Eve and had a large victory over our enemy that night for no loss of our own, John was a good leader and Liked by all who worked with him. Cheers, DD."

May They Rest in Peace and Never be Forgotten.



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



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

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



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL COMPANY

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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