

# THE EYES and EARS

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

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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  
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



Looks like Christmas!



This is an "oldie"



Searching for what?



A traffic jam?

**DET 131 DIV LOC BTY NOTICE BOARD**

# 2025

**Best wishes for a  
happy New Year**

# 2026

**Stay safe and may  
2026  
bring you good  
Health and Happiness!**

Artwork: Ernie Newbold

## . Did YOU get to vote before you left Australian shores for South Vietnam?



### Some background...

Conscription for the Vietnam War started in Australia in **November 1964** with the National Service Act 1964, though conscripts were not sent overseas until May 1966. This scheme required 20-year-old men to register, and a random "birthday ballot" selected those who would be called up for service.



**Ernie Newbold** - The image, at left, is sourced from the AWM, showing the numbered wooden marbles that were used for the National Service Ballot. It's an interesting piece of equipment for those who may not have seen it previously.

- **National Service Act 1964:**  
Passed in November 1964, this act established a selective conscription scheme for men turning 20. [\[link\]](#)
- **Birthday ballot:** A lottery system

This is a follow-on thought provoker from the above for those of us that were 21 years of age after 1st January 1966 as the first elections after this date were on 20th November 1966.

Conscription for the Vietnam War started in Australia in November 1964 with the first soldiers were not sent overseas until May 1965. Conscript soldiers were sent in May 1966.

The Menzies Liberal Government introduced selective national military service during 1964. This differed in two main ways from the past. First, national service was not new but it had always aimed to be universal, that is to include all males of a particular age group.

Now it was selective being directed at eligible men turning twenty years of age during 1965, but only for those whose birthdate marble was drawn in a ballot. The required number of birthdate marbles to be drawn was determined by the estimated numbers of men required by the military during 1965 and the subsequent years.

Second, national servicemen or conscripts had never been compulsorily assigned to serve overseas. A limited precedent had been established during 1942 when the Commonwealth Government permitted national servicemen to serve with regular soldiers in the South-West Pacific. This was deemed to be Australian territory. National servicemen were integrated with the regular army and could be compelled to serve in wars anywhere. On 8 March 1966 the Australian Government announced it was sending conscripts to fight in Vietnam.

### Ok now let's move on...

The Labor Party, when in Opposition had introduced private members' bills in 1968 and 1970 to reduce the voting age but the Liberal-Country Party Government had declined to bring the bills to a vote.

Finally in 1973, Australia's voting age was lowered from 21 years of age to 18 years of age by the Labor Government headed by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam.

I couldn't vote when I was conscripted, in 1965, however, I was able to vote in the 1966 elections.

I can't remember registering or voting!

I'm not sure how it would have worked because where was my permanent residence address?

**I turned 21 in October and the elections were in November.**

**There were regular soldiers serving in South Vietnam at the age of 19!**

## Federal Election dates 1966-1975

| Year  | Registration Dates |                  | Polling Date     |
|-------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1966  | 31 October 1966    | 7 November 1966  | 26 November 1966 |
| 1969  | 29 September 1969  | 7 October 1969   | 25 October 1969  |
| 1972  | 2 November 1972    | 10 November 1972 | 2 December 1972  |
| 1974* | 20 April 1974      | 29 April 1974    | 18 May 1974      |

**Do you remember voting?**

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

### Gun Ownership - Australia - Just a comment

**Paul Dickson - The Bondi Beach "massacre"** has prompted the following -

The only state with a hard, set-in-stone limit on Gun Ownership is WA (5 guns for hunters, 10 if you are also a target shooter or farmer).

For the other states it's based on "Genuine Need", and while the legislation does not say "Thou shalt not have more than X number of guns", security requirements ramp up significantly after various (not all that high) numbers - for example, in South Australia, you have to have a stronger safe and install either CCTV or an alarm once you go over **20 guns**.

Various firearm registry policies are also in place, coming back to the Genuine Need thing, so that people can't easily get American quantities of guns just because they think they're neat.

**NSW has NO limit!**

**A question - Can hunters with guns go hunting anywhere in Australia?**

**Answer** - No, hunters with guns cannot hunt *anywhere* in Australia; hunting is highly regulated by state/territory, **generally** requires specific licenses/permits, and is mostly restricted to private land with landowner permission or designated public areas during specific seasons for pest/game animals, with strict rules on firearm storage and types. You need a valid firearms license, a "genuine reason" (like pest control or game hunting), and potentially specific licenses for public land (like NSW's R-license or Victoria's game license).

**I realise that gun ownership, is only part of the problem, the "Protest Marches" don't do much to reduce the level of insanity either.**

**What are my rights to have to cancel a walk around the Opere House on a Sunday as it is too dangerous?**

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

**Paul Dickson - I** had some afterthoughts, coming out of a general discussion on the opening article in November 2025's *Eyes & Ears* -

**"The Detachment was kept busy...Operations and Fire Support Bases (FSB) - South Vietnam..."**

with regards to what happened after 1969 - the Detachment didn't pack it in until 1971!

**I should have made the era being reported on only covering activities between 1966 and 1969.**

**Here's** the background of the article -

The basis for the article was extracted from the book by Keith Ayliffe called "AN/KPQ-1 Radar South Vietnam" which covered the Radar's involvement during the period 1966 - 1970 period. It not only covered the Radar's activity, but the Detachment in general.

For more information I searched the Detachment Operation Reports and found that there are none that cover the period post 1969, which in itself is disappointing.

I was informed that on the Detachment's departure from SVN that copious amounts of paperwork were destroyed, so possibly that could explain the lack of covering information.

Without "AN/KPQ-1" our historical activity in SVN would basically be nil except for diary notes etc kept by members. Geoff Jebb and Jeff Evans were prime examples of detailed archival recording.

However, based on the information available I thought that using the "AN/KPQ-1 Radar South Vietnam" coverage highlighted some of the activities the Detachment was involved in and it did show "The Detachment was kept busy" as per the lead into the article.

**The** continuing conversations covered "Why is there NO archival history on the blokes who served basically after late 1969 through to 1971?"

**The lights weren't turned off,**

**so does this mean everyone sat around twiddling their thumbs for basically two years!**

**Can anyone fill in some gaps??**

**1ATF** were kept extremely active continuously during the 1970-71 era. I have compiled a list and there were some 17 Operations that they were involved in, a lot with Infantry, but there was Artillery involvement as well, though no mention of the Detachment.

## Operations 1970

|                  |                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                     |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Jan 10 – Mar 10  | Operation Napier <sup>[2][3]</sup>                                      | 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment/Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (ANZAC) cordon and search and reconnaissance and ambush operation                                                                                                                                          | Ngãi Giao, Đồng Nai Province                        |
| Jan 15 – 26      | Operation Matilda <sup>[2][3]</sup>                                     | 5th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, B Company 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment/W Company Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, A Squadron 1st Armoured Regiment reconnaissance and ambush operations with South Vietnamese Regional and Popular Forces                     | Phước Tuy Province                                  |
| Feb 10 – Mar 9   | Operation Hammersley <sup>[3]</sup><br>(the Battle for the "Long Hais") | 8th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment reconnaissance and ambush operation in the western side of the Long Hải Hills to protect quarry operations being undertaken by 17 Construction Squadron, to establish Fire Support Base Isa and ambush likely VC routes leading from the hills | Long Hải Hills                                      |
| Feb 28 – Mar 10  | Operation Gisborne <sup>[2][3]</sup>                                    | 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment/Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (ANZAC) reconnaissance in force operation east of Nui Dat                                                                                                                                                  | Phước Tuy Province                                  |
| Mar 3 – 24       | Operation Hamilton <sup>[3]</sup><br>[5]:278                            | 8th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment search and destroy operation                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Xuyên Mộc District                                  |
| Mar 9 – Apr 7    | Operation Finschhafen <sup>[2]</sup><br>[3]                             | 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment reconnaissance and ambush operation                                                                                                                                                                                                            | east of Nui Dat, Phước Tuy Province                 |
| Mar 23 - Apr 24  | Operation Townsville <sup>[3]</sup>                                     | 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment/Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (ANZAC) reconnaissance in force operation                                                                                                                                                                  | northeast Phước Tuy Province                        |
| Apr 7 – 19       | Operation Phoi Hop <sup>[3][8]</sup>                                    | 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment security operation                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | villages of Hoa Long, Suối Nghê, Dục My and Bình Ba |
| Apr 19 – May 7   | Operation Concrete <sup>[2][3]</sup>                                    | 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment and 8 RAR operation to establish blocking positions while 6 RAR/Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment reconnoitered in force towards these ambush positions                                                                                      | east of Phước Tuy Province                          |
| Apr 20 – June 11 | Operation Nudgee <sup>[2][3]</sup>                                      | 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment/Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (ANZAC), 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, 8th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, A Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment and B Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment reconnaissance and ambush operation    | Xuyên Mộc and Đất Đỏ Districts                      |
| May 15 – 25      | Operation Ashfield <sup>[2][3]</sup>                                    | 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment/RNZIR (ANZAC) reconnaissance and ambush operation                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                     |
| May 26 – June 11 | Operation Capricorn <sup>[2][3]</sup>                                   | 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment/Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (ANZAC) battalion reconnaissance and ambush operation                                                                                                                                                      | Nui Dinh hills                                      |

|              |                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                    |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| June 12 – 28 | Operation<br>Cung Chung<br>[2][3] | 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment/Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (ANZAC), 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment and 8th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment reconnaissance-and-ambush mission to deny the VC access to villages along the main roads | Phước Tuy Province |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|

### Operations 1971

|                |                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| June 6–7       | Operation Overlord <sup>[8]</sup>            | 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment<br>pacification operation in Long Khánh Province                                                                                                   |
| Jul            | Operation<br>Iron Fox <sup>[9]</sup><br>[10] | 2nd Squadron SAS, 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment and 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment/Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (ANZAC) operation against the VC 274th Regiment |
| Sep 18 – Oct 2 | Operation<br>Ivanhoe <sup>[14]</sup>         | 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment/Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (ANZAC) security operation in northern Phước Tuy Province                                                      |

**Richard Chaplin - Had been contacted for some input into the 1970-71 Detachment "Activities" and the following is his response...**

"Hi Paul,

Unfortunately, I do not have any more information beyond that provided to Keith Ayliffe and included in his document you refer to (AN/KPQ-1 Radar South Vietnam) and in your newsletter of March 2023.

Just for completeness relative documents are attached.

Sorry I can't be of any more help.

Kind regards,

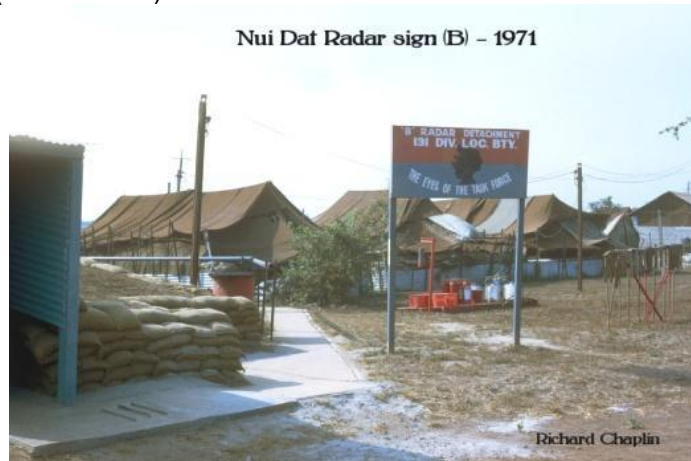
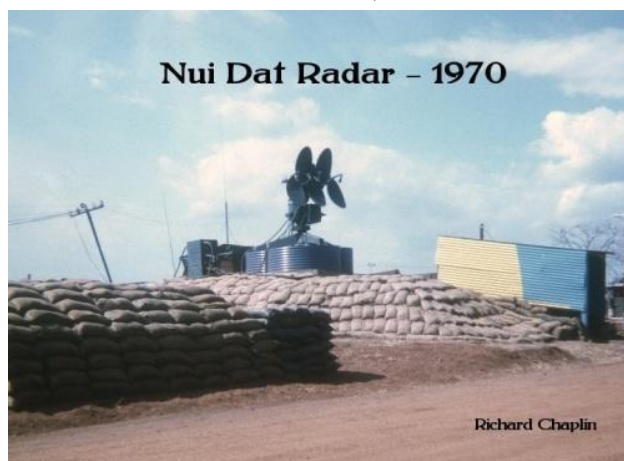
Richard Chaplin."

**The following article was contained in *Eyes & Ears* Vol 16 No 03 March 2023 No 176, but I have added it again to allow those who do not have access the Association's archived website...It's a very concise diary type insight to Richard's SVN 1970 tour -**

## 1970 - The end of an era.

Official records of the AN/KPQ-1 radar lack necessary detail for this period and I am grateful to **Richard Chaplin** for allowing me to use extracts from his diary, these extracts are identified in italics and RC at the end.

**January – May** – An AN/PKQ-1 radar located at HORSESHOE feature.  
An AN/PKQ-1 radar located at NUI DAT (AWM 3-6-22)



Not much changed over the years, the sign remained the same, the lines never changed only the command post seems to have acquired new sandbags and a coat of paint.

**18 January** - 12 to 15 enemy mortar rounds (no calibre recorded) fired into Horseshoe, mortrep obtained by Det 131 LP and locreps produced by radar and sound ranging. CB fire conducted by C/2/35 US 155mm SP onto suspected mortar base plate position - YS394716. No further information recorded

**2 February** - At 0145 Hrs four (4) Radar operators at Nui Dat, are affected from gas from an unknown source near the radar. Investigations failed to find the source or identify the gas. The operators were fully recovered 24 hrs later and reported no ill effects.

"In the evening, just after I had completed the 1st Shift manning the Nui Dat Radar Unit I had retired to bed at 0130. After about 15 minutes I felt a horrible feeling in my nose like breathing pepper or something acidic, made me feel nauseous, and my eyes started to water. I heard Burt Jacka sniffing as well and realised that it wasn't just me. It was then that I realised that it was probably gas. I grabbed my gas mask, and by then the alert had been given and everybody headed to the bunkers or command post with rifles and ammunition just in case it was a ground attack – it wasn't as it turned out and we were stood down." – RC

**4 February** – "Burt Jacka and I travel a Shotguns on a convoy with the Engineers and a crane to Xuyen Moc where Australian Engineers were building a new Town Hall for the village." - RC

9 February – "Caught the 0715 helicopter into Nui Dat from the Horseshoe FSB and built a covered entrance to the Nui Dat Radar Unit Command Post, paint it yellow, and installed a red light at the entrance. Caught 1745 chopper back to the Horseshoe FSB." – RC



Nui Dat, South Vietnam. March 1970. Adelaide Army sponsored concert party's finale at Luscombe Bowl. The entertainers on stage are, left to right: Tammy (of the brother and sister act, Ricky and Tammy), Bev Harrell, Ricky, the Wills Sisters, Ann and Sue. The show was rated tops by hundreds of off- duty troops who packed the bowl. Copyright AWM.

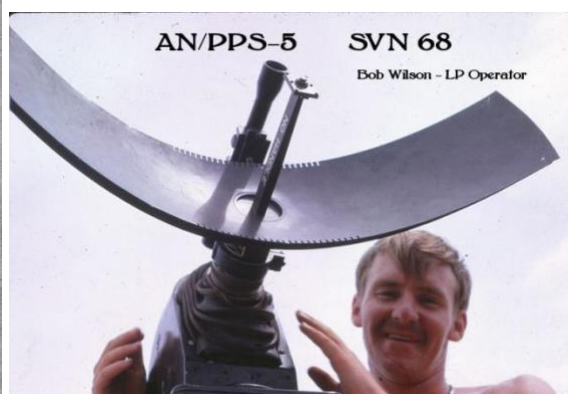
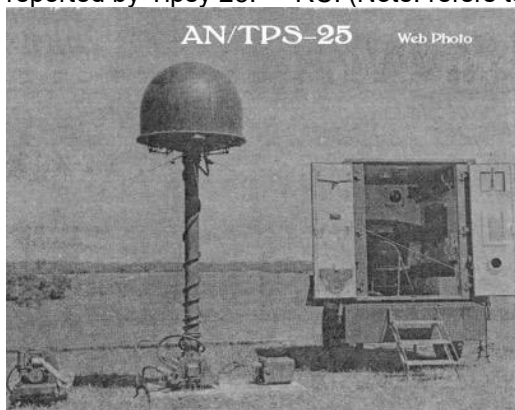


The Melbourne show 1967. L-R Bob Retrot, John Vickery, Miss Patti McGrath, Tony Goldsmith, Leigh Hemming. Photo supplied by: Kevin Browning

**20 February** – "Catch chopper into Nui Dat and watch the Show at the Bowl – Bev Hamel, The Wilson Sisters, and Ricky and Tammy. At night B52s conducted an air strike on the Long Greens after Aussie troops had large contacts during the previous days. The ground shuddered and the mountains glowed red." - RC

**21 February** - B52 strike on the Long Hai Hills in support of 8 RAR. Following the B52 strike and intensive artillery fire, three rifle companies, with tanks and cavalry still in support, redeployed to the Long Hai Hills

**22 February** – "On last shift we did some Impact Point identification for friendly mortars firing on suspected VC activity reported by Topsy 25." – RC. (Note: refers to a ground surveillance radar possibly AN/TPS-25)



Authors Note: The US had a number of types of Ground surveillance radar (GSR) systems in SVN among them were the aging AN/TPS-25 (sometimes referred to as Topsy 25) and the newer AN/PPS-5. Both had a range of about 10000M and were used to detect movement. (Vehicle, human and animal movement could be detected.)

**24 February** – Go out with a Protection Party for the 131 Div Loc Bty Survey Unit. Travel in APCs and have a very rough ride through the undergrowth. See 3 monkeys and a deer. During our clearing patrol, we nearly lost one of our men (Warren Jeanke) who got left behind but luckily, he was quickly noticed as missing. We retraced our tracks and found him. After we had been in the area for about 3 hours we heard firing about half a mile away and found out it was one of

our infantry patrols coming straight for us. We then found out that we had not had permission to be in the area. We immediately travelled hell for leather out of the area leaving clouds of dust behind us. In our haste the APC I was on hit a tree branch containing a large ants nest and they went everywhere including into the APC. A fumigating grenade was used to kill them but everything then was covered in yellow dust! Later in the day myself, Vic Cicollela and Lt Paul Tys went out of the base to check on a reported blind mortar that turned out to be an Illumination Mortar. “- RC

**1 March** – Battery BBQ – plenty of good food and beer followed by a football match between the Nashos and the Regs – punches and blood everywhere!” – RC

**6 March** – Part of a Protection Party for the Survey team – hot and very dusty.” - RC

**7 March** - 4 Field Regiment RAA arrived in SVN and in the first Commanders monthly report, there is a report that —one radar was located at Nui Dat and the other at HORSESHOEII

4 Fd Regt Standard Operation Procedures (SOP's) had an allowance for a Radar Section Commander and a Radar No. 1 to accompany their recce party. (AWM95 – 3-7-10)

“Watch the parade for the change-over from 1 Field Regiment to 4 Field Regiment. Film – Thoroughly Modern Millie. - 2200hrs – 77 degrees Fahrenheit.” - RC

**15 March** – “Service Horseshoe radar unit generator. Return to Nui Dat in jeep the long way and through (sic “Throw”!) tins of (FSB Horseshoe) C Rations out the back for the local children along the way – they love it! Test Nui Dat radar's ability to track US Battery 155 shells and it works reasonably well.” - RC.

**19 March** - “Go to Vung Tau (Peter Badcoe Club) for the day however, about a mile from the Nui Dat gates we are shot at from the rubber trees – a bullet passes very close to Chris Chapple's head. A short time later our vehicle breaks down and we need to be towed the rest of the way to Vung Tau. Spend the day in the pool and surfing. When we get back to Nui Dat we find that the Radar Unit had been in operation since 1400 as there were contacts in the Warbies and one New Zealander had been killed.” – RC

**20 March** - Van Kiep (YS3690) reports incoming mortars. Radars produce Locreps at Grid 381632 which is engaged by C/2/35 US Arty. Results unknown. This is the last known recording of an enemy mortar locrep by an AN/KPQ-1 in SVN. “Mal Musgrave gets a Locrep from the Horseshoe Radar Unit and choppers verify about 30 Vietcong. US Husky Charlie Battery fire 124 X 155 rounds at the target. The Commanding Officer is pleased with the Radar Units performance and at last we are getting some recognition.” - RC

**29 March** – “In afternoon prepare radar for an Air Burst Registration but the guns decide not to do it in the end – so play cards with Chris (Chapple) and Mal (Musgrave) down in the CP (Command Post).” - RC

**31 March** - “Go to FSB Anne with Sgt Peter O'Donnell as he had not seen a FSB (neither had I apart from the Horseshoe). Very dusty indeed – the worst I have experienced to date. Go through Ban Jar (a North Vietnamese settlement). Do Air Burst Registration in the afternoon.” - RC

**4 April** – “Come in from Horseshoe for 2 days as I have night off. Do an Air Burst Registration for the Yanks artillery, and they say they will do their calculations...so I leave. Then they change their minds, and Bdr Mal Musgrave has to follow my previous calculations as he could not find me – I was playing table tennis!” – RC

**25 April** - “After a short Anzac Day parade in 102 degrees Fahrenheit and high humidity the whole Nui Dat crew went out to the Horseshoe to set up a new Command Post on higher ground to protect it when the wet season arrives. A bulldozer helped by pushing large amounts of soil against the command post walls to provide added protection (and nearly destroyed it in the process!) The new CP is much larger than the original and much cooler.” – RC

The last new site for the radar at the Horseshoe. Completed **25 April 1970**, ceased operations on **18 May 1970**.

Pictured on right is Jeff Bassford doing what all good radar operators did – posed with the radar. Photos: Richard Chaplin



**27 April** - “Go back to the Horseshoe and move all the equipment from the old CP to the new CP including setting up the radar unit in its new location. Burn all old ammo boxes and sandbags.

**29 April** - "Hear that Radar units may be pulled out of SVN with 8 RAR in August/September as will 27 men from our battery." - RC

**30 April**, most of the detachment again go to the Horseshoe for the morning to move the generators." - RC

**12 May** - "Catch chopper from Horseshoe to the Dat – pick up a carton of "goffas" and a box of C Rations for the Horseshoe crew. Also learn that one radar unit will be pulled out within 14 days and the other soon after." - RC

**18 May** - The AN/PKQ-1 radar at the Horseshoe was closed down/came out of action for the last time in SVN. "WO Perry advises that the Horseshoe FSB Radar Unit is to be pulled out that day, and Sgt Black and I go to the Horseshoe to assist and oversee dismantlement of the radar unit." - RC

**19 May** - The AN/PKQ-1 radar located at Nui Dat came out of action/closed down for the last time being the last operational AN/KPQ-1 mortar locating radar in SVN.

"Radar unit at Nui Dat pulled out. On the same day, the radar units' crew were advised that they would soon be on 107 Battery Strongpoint duty, work in Arty Tac, and may also have some role in Civil Aid." - RC

**20 May** - "Worked all day cleaning both radar units and then was advised by DSM (WO Perry?) and Sgt Black that they will need to be transported to Vung Tau by truck for steam cleaning and boxing up prior to shipping to Australia. I was advised that myself plus 6 others from the radar section would be going to Vung Tau with the radar units and would likely spend a few days there assisting with the final cleaning/boxing prior to the units being shipped back to Australia." - RC

**1 June** - All radars (although not specifically mentioned, believed to be Alpha, Bravo and slave radar Charlie) and their equipment including vehicles were RTA in accordance with the first phase of the Australian withdrawal from SVN. (AWM – 3-7-12) After the withdrawal of the radars, what happened to the radar operators can be summed up by the following statement from an ex Det 131 radar operator SVN;

"I was in the Dat from Jan 1970 at the time John Gorton announced staged withdrawal plans for the troops, resulting in 131 closing down the radar and returning some other equipment including vehicles. I remember cleaning all the local dirt out of everything to be returned as this was important for Australian quarantine purposes. One of the Landrovers was so hard to clean we painted it (over the dirt).

I remained on duty and ended up cruising with armoured, participating in protection parties and patrolling with the grunts including a night ambush operation. A group of us remaining 131 people also manned a forward observation post for a period in a bombed-out monastery on top of a small but steep hill called Dihn Co, near the Long Hai's. No radar but an infra-red searchlight, lots of fireflies and great views.

This was an active area with artillery rounds regularly going over the top and on one occasion machine gun rounds coming in from a grunt contact below. I believe that it was possibly at Dinh Co that 131 concluded its locating role in SVN" - Chris Chapple.



1970 - Monastery at top of Dihn Co. Photo: Richard Chaplin

1970 - Moving Searchlight into position.  
Photo: Richard Chaplin



**19 Aug** - Appointment: Officer Commanding Det 131 (TFAIO) Captain Timothy R. Ford. The Last Officer Commanding appointed to Det 131.

This was the end of the story for the radars but not for Det 131. The Sound Ranging Base closed in **October 70**, and during this period the Det Surveyors were transferred to 12 Fd Regt.

**Records show that Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery (SVN) officially closed on 31 July 1971.**

**Rieny Nieuwenhof** - I thought I should reply to your email about what might have happened to paperwork/files/documents in the last months of 131. I have photographic proof that paperwork/files were destroyed by fire in the final weeks of the battery. I have also attached some photos to highlight the written script.

"Dear Paul,

In response to your request for some insight into the last days of 131 I have penned the following.

**Timeline – Feb. 1971 to 5th August 1971 'Filling in the Gaps'**

I arrived at 131 DLB, like so many others, as a replacement in early Feb. 1971. As a (Temp) Bombardier I was placed in charge of the Arty Intel section, comprising 7-8 gunners.

During my time there were three sections operating – Arty Intel., Survey and Sensor section. Radar had been abandoned before I arrived.

Physically 131 DLB was located at what maps refer to as Locators Lane. It comprised a Q Store, the COs Office, the Menz Canteen and huts, occupied by Survey and Sensor gunners. The Arty Intel gunners were tented across the road, near where the Radar bunker was located. It was identified by a large sign "Spies of the Task Force".

The primary task of both Arty Intel and Sensor was to occupy the 'Listening Post' atop Nui Dat hill (32A) and the FSB 'The Horseshoe', (32B) 24/7 on a rotational basis.

The 'Listening Post' was a rudimentary observation above ground bunker with uninterrupted view west towards the Long Hais, Route 2, surrounding rubber plantations and paddy fields. The Sensor section was housed in a small timber hut a little below the top of the hill, but within view of the Observation bunker. There was a tent with beds for the night duty gunner's shift. (Within walking distance was the SAS compound)

The task of the Listening Post, both Arty Intel and Sensor, was to report movements in the designated area, Arty Intel by visually observed movements/fires and Sensor by movements on dials in the hut, emanating from placed sensors in the field. The Listening Post was equipped with binoculars and night vision infra - red binoculars. Observed movements were reported via landline to Arty Tac HQ for actioning.

The arrangements at The Horseshoe were the same as those on Nui Dat hill. The only difference was that the Arty Intel observation bunker was partially underground providing living and sleeping space for those gunners on duty. The Sensor section had their hut and a tent for sleeping.

The gunners, both Arty Intel and Sensor with one NCO, stayed at The Horseshoe for a 7 -10-day shifts, when they were replaced by gunners from Nui Dat.

Each new shift would stop in Dat Do to pick up ice for the coolers and some fresh provisions e.g. eggs. Interestingly, it was only later that I learned that Dat Do was a VC town and had been the scene of various clashes with Australian infantry. It was also the starting point of the barrier mine field. There was also a mortar troop and APCs located at the other end of The Horseshoe FSB. Water came from a large tank located adjacent to the Listening Post which was filled by water truck regularly.

Duty at both 32A and 32B was simple – see/detect movement and report to Arty Tac. When not on duty for their shift gunners were occupied with assigned tasks for the day and/or playing cards. Cards, especially 500, was the favourite game.

In June 1971 the Battery was informed that 131 DLB would be among the first units to leave South Vietnam, as the Australian PM had decided to withdraw Australia from South Vietnam.

The daily tasks now included dismantling tents and packing Q Store items for transport to Vung Tau and eventual return to Australia. **A group of gunners were tasked with burning paperwork/files, it seems almost every day fires were burning destroying documents/files.**

Among the first gunners to leave were members of the Survey and Sensor sections. As their bunks were vacated Arty Intel gunners took their place. This enabled tents previously housing Arty Intel gunners to be dismantled.

The last month of 131 DLB was occupied by duty rosters at 32A and 32B, vacating huts and tents, dismantling tents, **burning documents/files and paperwork** and 'departure' parties at the Menz canteen.

Gradually, the number of individual gunners decreased. Some were transferred, by request or by order, to 12 Field Regiment. Others left Nui Dat in groups of 4-5.

I left Nui Dat on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1971 with a group of gunners, including CO Capt. Tim Ford. By the end of August 1971, I believe all personnel were gone and 131 Divisional Locating Battery ceased to exist.

Rieny Nieuwenhof OAM

SVN – Feb. Aug. 1971



**Burning files: Gunners were tasked to burn files/paperwork in July 1971**  
- visible Jorge Keine, back of Rod Beasley, Ian Campbell? and others?

Leaving SVN 5th August 1971- small groups (4-5) at a time



My tent at Nui Dat



Horseshoe LP (32B) with underground accommodation



Q Store (below) taken from adjacent water tower and at left 131 Battery HQ entry with Q Store and huts off Locators Lane, Nui Dat



Photo taken from the water tower.



Sign near old radar bunker "The Spies of the Task Force"



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    | Raymond Leslie Bailey Cpl | 1734305 | 1948 | 17 09 1969 | 27 08 1970 | Brisbane RAAOC |
| 6    | Allan Desmond Robotham    | 6709864 | 1950 | 25 05 1971 | 18 11 1971 | Burnie Tas     |
| 19   | Peter John Fieldon        | 3797872 | 1949 | 25 11 1970 | 12 08 1971 | England        |

**Paul Dickson**      **Get in touch with me via [131eyesandears@gmail.com](mailto:131eyesandears@gmail.com)**

**. Unknown/Known Dates of Deaths continues to be updated...as at 31.12.2025 –**

Sadly, we've added **Norman John Lindroos** to the list below as he recently passed. (See Vale below)

| 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   | 10   | 83    |

|           |     |
|-----------|-----|
| Unknowns* | 1   |
| Total     | 169 |

Here are the names and details –

| Name                 | Rank | Regt No | Section | SVN  | DoB      | DoD     |
|----------------------|------|---------|---------|------|----------|---------|
| Robinson, Marcus Lee | Gnr  | 2791229 |         | 1970 | 14.02.48 | Unknown |

Page 12 of 26

**Ok, detectives, here's more homework – still one more to find!**



## The *Eyes* & *Ears* of the Force





## DEFINING MOMENT - Cyclone Tracy 1974:

**Paul Dickson - I heard a comment on the ABC Radio re: Cyclone Tracy and couldn't help myself to have a Google and was amazed that it happened 51 years ago and the devastation and loss of life it caused...**

Cyclone Tracy hits Darwin suburb of Wagaman. Cyclone Tracy, which hit Darwin in the small hours of Christmas Day 1974, killed 71 people and devastated 80 per cent of the city. In the days and weeks following the disaster, most of the traumatized population left the city.



&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;

**A Quickie...**Are Test Matches extended limited over games now! Hey, and why would you buy a ticket for the third day and beyond?

????????????????

### Paul Dickson - another Facebook extract...

The extract at right was posted by **Ron Ryan** showing Christmas in 1970 with the Survey section - it's a great memory.

**Ron** mentions a few names, but can anyone help with the other members?



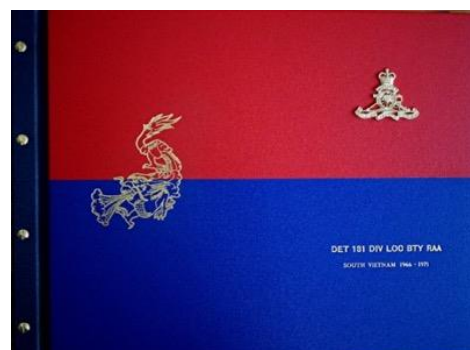
Christmas morning 1970 131 Survey  
Section Can not remember all the  
names. From the left "Tes Tickle", Arty  
Int Sargent, **David Doyle** don't  
remember, Norm Macmanus our BSM,  
Roger and last yours truly.  
I don't know how many of us are still  
here but Merry Christmas to all that are



  Robert Billiards + 14    3 comments

[illegible]

**. 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.





. Here's a continuing story in the series with regards to Locators' "passions" ...

(I had to go searching for this banner - it's been a while!)

**Bob Billiards has been easily persuaded to share his "love affair and passion" for a little German motor car...**

## **"Our Goggomobil Obsession"**

### **How It All Began...**



**"Goggomobil Adventures and Events -**

**Journeys in the Dart and Celebrating Australian Models" -**

**Memorable Adventures Across Australia continues in January's edition of *Eyes & Ears*...keep your eyes out for it. It's a fascinating read - it's sucked me in!**

People often ask why we own a collection of Goggomobils, and the story starts back in 1964, when I was preparing to get my licence. At that time, I was keen on getting a motorbike. My brother-in-law Les Brown, had left a Honda 50cc "step through" at our place in Cabramatta, and I had been riding it illegally. It turned out to be the ideal way for me to get around, allowing me to carry my school bag on the rear parcel rack and ride the 3KM to Cabramatta High School. Once I turned 16 and 9 months, I could start riding the motorbike on my own, which coincided with the end of my fourth year in high school. However, my parents were not fond of the idea of me owning a motorbike, which meant I would have to share the Zephyr MkII instead.

### **Finding Our Wheels**

Seeing my situation, Les stepped in and found a solution—not a motorbike, but a small car with a two-stroke engine similar to a motorbike: a Goggomobil Dart. The Dart was stylish, finished in white with a red stripe, and only four years old at the time. It cost £100, which was a great deal. I'm not sure I ever fully paid it off, but I was fortunate to have generous parents who spoiled me.



**The Dart back in 1965 with my mates Goggo Coupe**



**Stopped on a road trip up to Port Macquarie then Taree and Ellenborough falls.**

In 1969, my mate John Douglas, who is now my brother-in-law, and I purchased a Goggomobil Carryall van. This handy little vehicle quickly became our go-to transport for taking our Go Karts to race meetings around Sydney. Back then, there were three tracks we frequented: Narellan, Londonderry, and Granville at the south-eastern corner of the showground. All were within easy reach from Cabramatta, making the Goggo Carryall the perfect choice for these outings.

The van offered just enough space to fit two of the old sprint karts on their sides, along with the toolbox, oil, and petrol/methanol. It served us well for those trips. After a few years, the Carryall was put into storage in 1972, where it remained until 2008. That year, we undertook a restoration project in honour of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bill Buckle Goggomobils, bringing the van back to its former glory.

Cathy, having a brother and fiancé who owned Goggos, couldn't have any other car, so John and I built a restored Goggo sedan which she used regularly driving to and from Cabramatta to Royal Prince Alfred Hospital where she was doing nursing training. After a couple of years, she updated to a Renault R4 station wagon which we lowered so it wouldn't scrape the door handles in fast tight corners 😊. She and her nursing mate Bobby attempted a long-range trip from home to Adelaide but unfortunately only made it to Carcoar where it had a small problem. Next episode will show how in 2018 she eventually made that trip, but in her Dart.



**The Carryall van in May 1969 after it was registered**

**After restoration, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008**



**Cathys Orange Sedan**

**Cathy awaiting a tow at Carcoar**



## Goggomobil Dart Restoration

In 1989 or 1990, a friend asked me to check out a Goggo Dart he was interested in purchasing. We made our way to Westmead, where there were about ten Goggomobils gathered as part of a deceased estate. Among them, I found a Dart body in good condition, a chassis free of rust, and a substantial collection of parts suitable for rebuilding the car. The initial cost was \$1,500, followed by a further \$6,500 required for the restoration.



**The Chassis and engine completed and running 1991**

**Test fitting the body**



**Painted body fitted and now to do the interior**

**All done and Registered**



**The Bob Billiards "Passion" continues in January with - Goggomobil Adventures and Events  
The Journeys in the Dart and Celebrating Australian Models -  
Memorable Adventures Across Australia...**

**Some background on the "Goggo" just to put us all in the loop...**

The Goggomobil Dart proved that you don't need to have lots of power to have tremendous fun!

In 1883 Andreas Glas set up an agricultural machinery repair company, which passed to his son Hans in 1920. By this point the company derived much of its income from manufacturing farming equipment rather than merely maintaining it, but as business declined in the post-war years, Hans Glas decided that it was time to diversify into making cars.

Glas reckoned that the greatest opportunity was in the small-car market; vehicles that were built down to a price so they were also cheap to buy as well as to run. The result was the Glas Goggomobil, which came in two-door saloon and coupé forms, while there was also a van. Introduced in 1954, at first power came from a 245cc two-cylinder engine, with 293cc and 392cc units being introduced in 1957.

Very affordable to buy and run, eminently practical and well-made too, the Goggomobils proved very popular, with more than a quarter of a million of them being sold over a 14-year production run. By this time (in 1966) Glas had been bought by BMW, which initially continued to sell an array of Glas models, although the brand was killed off entirely when the final Goggomobils were made in 1969.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the world was Bill Buckle, who was a Sydney-based racing driver and car dealer/importer. He owned Buckle Motors, a large plant which prepared cars from Armstrong-Siddeley, Citroën, Borgward, Goliath, Lloyd, and De Soto trucks for the Australian market. While his business was a very large enterprise, Buckle didn't want to just import and sell cars; he wanted to be a manufacturer too.

Buckle had been inspired, as had many entrepreneurs in the early fifties, by the possibilities of glassfibre as a body construction material. He took two years to develop a high-quality car, the Cobra-like Buckle GT 2.5-litre coupe, based on Ford Zephyr components, of which 20 examples were built from 1957.

In Australia there was a ready market for a light, economical car, so Buckle travelled to Bavaria in Germany to meet with the director of the largest, most successful small car firm in Europe, Hans Glas in Dingolfing. Despite the language barrier Buckle managed to secure a licence for building Goggomobil cars in Australia. Rather than importing whole cars though, he would import only the chassis and running gear, which would save him plenty in import duties.

Using his experience with glassfibre from building his own cars, Buckle created moulds from original Glas Goggomobil cars and produced near-exact copies of the saloon and coupé bodysells, which were then turned into complete cars in his Buckle Motors factory; sales began in 1958. Incidentally, the slab-sided Goggomobil transporter received a much more bulbous unique-to-Australia body.

While the Buckle-built saloon and coupé were essentially Australian-built German cars (albeit with a locally produced bodyshell), the Goggomobil Dart and Carryall Van were Buckle's own creation. He designed the Dart in 1958, then gave his drawings to panel beater Stan Brown, who made an aluminium-bodied prototype from which the moulds could be taken. As with the other Goggomobils, the standard pressed-steel platform chassis was used, with just five months elapsing between Buckle's first sketches and that first running prototype.

The Dart was much easier to mould than the other models, due to its lack of doors, which made a big difference to bodyshell stiffness. The Dart's bodyshell was made in two halves, and they were bolted together at the waistline. A dashboard, headlight nacelles, a boot lid and air intakes completed the assembly. Quite a few parts from the saloon were carried over, including the badges, lights, and the boot lid grille, while the windscreen was a Renault Dauphine rear window.

The pressed-steel chassis featured swing axles front and rear, along with telescopic dampers and coil springs, while braking was by 10-inch drums all round. The rack-and-pinion steering was light and direct, and as with the rest of the running gear, the engines were borrowed from the Goggomobil saloon and coupé, which meant a choice of 293cc or 392cc two-cylinder air-cooled engines with either 15bhp or 18.5bhp. Just under 12 feet long and weighing a mere 761lb (345kg) thanks to its lightweight glassfibre bodysell, the Dart was quick and agile; with the bigger engine it was claimed to be capable of 70mph.

Even better, the Dart was eminently affordable; when launched it was priced at the equivalent of just £685, when an Austin Healey Frogeye Sprite was £1174. But the Dart wasn't just cheap to buy; it was brilliantly cheap to run too, as it was easily capable of 55mpg and it required a minimum of servicing, all of which could be done at home.

Once the Dart had been introduced in June 1959, Buckle's factory couldn't keep up with demand, with production peaking at seven cars per day. But sadly, the good times soon came to an end when a 40% sales tax was slapped on cars from 1960. Sales didn't grind to a halt completely but they slowed dramatically, and when the Mini arrived soon after, that killed off the Dart altogether, with the final cars being built in September 1961. The Mini was a completely different type of car in theory, but in practice it offered an immense amount of fun for not much money, plus it was a lot more usable than the Goggomobil, which is why production ended after just 720 Darts had been built, along with 1000 or so Goggomobil saloons, coupés and vans.

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



## Nick Armstrong - "Hello Paul.

Thank you for your last email, and the last '*Eyes and Ears*'. The pictures of your group of Sterilizers were impressive. It was a mixture of sadness and appreciation to read that you will be reducing your involvement with '*Eyes and Ears*'. I confess I have learnt a lot more about my time in Vietnam, than when I was there.

Thank you for all your efforts and commitments over the past years. I hope 'Eyes and Ears' will be published for a while yet. As the numbers of 'Det 131' diminish with time, there will be less contributors, and it will become another archive of the Vietnam war.

Best wishes for Christmas and 2026. I hope we can keep in contact into the future.

Cheers

Nick."

### Terry Erbs -

"Gentlemen, I hope you all, like us, will be enjoying Christmas with your family. Many thanks to the executive for their sterling efforts over the past years, particularly Paul & the team, for the monthly publication of "Eyes & Ears".

Hopefully 2026 will be a happy & healthy year for all of us. As a reminder of our past, I've attached a photo (see below) of several young locators in the Survey lines Christmas 1968... can you name them?

PS - Does anyone recall that after New Years Day celebrations, much liquor was confiscated from our lines!!!!

Merry Christmas

Terry & Lesley Erbs"

Can anyone help Terry with his - "I've attached a photo of several young locators in the Survey lines Christmas 1968... can you name them?" question?



### John Lucas - "Hi Paul,

I hope you are well.

Below is a photo taken of the 131 members who completed the Unattended Ground Sensor Course at the ARVN Signals School in Vung Tau in July 1970.

Sgt J Brewer is in the front row 3rd from the left.

I was jogged to search for this pic after hearing of his sad passing.

I remember him well from the course and his exemplary leadership in the field.

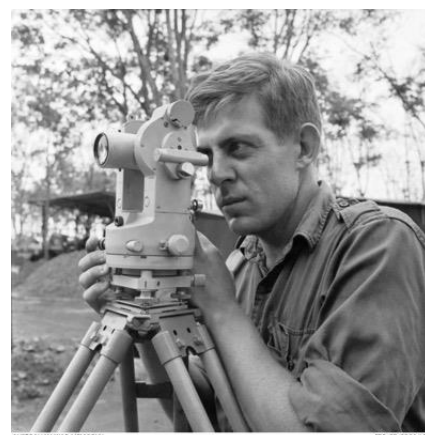
Warm Regards,

John."



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

**Kevin Browning** - a request involving the photo at right with Dave Dougherty operating a theodolite. He wants to know if people can identify what theo it is. It isn't our standard Wild T2?





## 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...**

**Joe Mollenkamp** - "G'day Paul, thanks for your email, you certainly did have a big year!

We've had a quiet one mainly due to Teena's many health issues but we're happy here at home.

We wish you all the best for Christmases and a happy and healthy New Year Cheers Joe."

**Harry Lynas** -

"G'day Paul,

I am sorry for not replying to your missives over the last months but I am slowly getting back to the land of the living after my fall in November 2024. They reckoned after the first 8 days in hospital that 2 abscesses in my abdomen burst and then started eating into my liver. Well, they punched a drain through my ribs and it was still draining out the poison after 2 weeks. In the meantime, they were pumping penicillin from a drip stuck in my arm. Eventually they were both removed and I was able to roll over during the night.

Two and a half months later they let me out. So, in February 2025 I went to my son's place and looked for a good nursing home, which I found after a few days on the net. Put my name down, was accepted and I eventually moved in in late July. The place is in North Lakes near Kallangur near most of my family and I am being well looked after.

So that's my sorry tale and I hope life returns to normal soon. Very jealous of your gadding about the world and I would like to do the same. Cheers, Harry."

**John "Kanga" McFadden** -

"Hello Dicko,

Thanks for your contact.

I'm amazed at your tripping. Good on you both.

Yes, Summer has announced its arrival here with huge hailstorms and people burnt out of their houses. Don't remember such constant ferocity.

But I do remember tent lines in the rubber with pretty special people who honoured what was asked of them.

It is amazing that we've made 80! And with those years the changing public perception of our lot!

The indifference & embarrassment we shouldered alone for decades and eventually came some kind of realization with measured respect!

That has been worth waiting for!

"Collateral damage in a Garage Sale"?? Struth Dicko you're 80!! Can't you claim some kind of age exemption???

Look after yourself Little Buddy for our stories are still only half told!

Merry Christmas, Kanga,"

**Iain Kennedy** -

"Paul, Good to hear that catching up (age wise) and still mobile, that is a good thing.

Cruising down the Nile would be a wonderful experience.

Janet & I just came back last month from a cruise from Sydney to Hobart and Port Arthur. Hobart is just another big Aussie village, but Port Arthur is something quite special. Glad I wasn't around in that time conditions look very harsh. We are now closing in on Christmas and then the end of 2025 and my official retirement from the Flexible packaging industry after starting in it when I was 15 (2 yrs off for National Service) and now at 80, it's time to give the young ones a go.

Just got back from my visit to my Heart specialist and results of my stress test Echo Cardiogram, all good, all normal, see you in 18



months. How good is that?

Now time to do some Christmas shopping, for me, oh and others. Haha.

Trying to organise the cruise after next for 2027, have to book all that way in advance to get the prices locked in, next year already booked and half paid for. Singapore to Tokyo. Stopping at Saigon (my first time to Vietnam since 1968). Not sure how I feel about that.

All the best for Christmas and New Year. Cheers."



# 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

58 Years  
April 1966 – April 2024



**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...

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

Ernie Newbold forwarded in the following link – copy paste and read December's edition -

## SALUTE

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

The link below will take you to the TPI NSW's latest Newsletter – 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>



### 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

Our intention was a quiet summer break in Auckland, NZ. The night before our intended departure Air New Zealand advised that the intended aircraft had an engine problem, meaning a smaller aircraft. So, we were bumped and placed on a Qantas flight. No real problem there although not a good start.

We enjoyed catching up with our grown-up grandkids over Christmas. The weather was more autumn than summer. And many advised that we should have been here last week when it was much warmer!

We relaxed, walked a lot, enjoyed the food and company. Weather was variable and today was cold and very wet.

Nevertheless, it was an opportunity to catch up with friends, family and experience life in a country different to our own.

Now the flight home is due to depart soon, and it's back to Sydney life.

Best wishes to *Eyes and Ears* readers for a safe and relatively event free 2026.

Regards

Allen



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

**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 9 th December 2025**

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

**Present were:** Grahame Dignam, Ged Carroll, Ernest Newbold, Gordon Malcolm, and Ian Amos.

**Zoomed members were:** Kevin Browning, Bert Blink, Allen Morley, Merv Nairn and Brian Campbell.

**Apologies were received from:** George Lane, Terry Erbs, Jim Fitzgerald, Nick Proskurin, Bob Billiards, Steve Wynn, Paul Dickson, Warwick Brooker and other State Reps

**Financial Membership** is currently... **118**, plus Associates **2**, plus Affiliates **115** Total **145**

Plus Lapsed as of 1st December 2025 **38** members

**Presidents report:** Allen referenced he is unwell with a dose of influenza and..

. The DVA has been ranked as the lowest performer of the Federal Public Service organizations.

. The Anzac Day Sydney lunch venue for 131 has closed its doors, and a fresh site will need to be chosen for those who attend the Anzac Day March 2026.

. The government bill to restrict service recognition of Defense personnel to a shorter time period had been dropped by the federal government.

**Public Officer Report:**

Gordon confirmed the lodgement of the Fair-Trading forms A12 yearly and A9 outlining the correct address of the Public Officer. Acknowledgement has also been received from Fair-Trading

**Webmaster Update:**

. In Roberts absence, Grahame Dignam advised that Facebook members are **533**.

**Health:**

In the goods news department.....

. Allen Morley has a chit for Influenza.

. Bert Blink has been given a free pass for good behaviour in his Prostate Cancer progress.

. Nick called to say he was recovering well, felt good and just needed a checkup and hoped to be driving again shortly.

**General Business and around the grounds:**

Discussions ensued on the following:

. Preparations required to wind up our Association with member fees now a maximum of 3 years X \$15.00 to maintain website hosting costs.

. Final destination of remaining funds on wind up COULD BE – Cutler research Centre: National Vietnam Vets Museum: RAA Regimental Funds and/or LSTAA.

. Including a general notice to all members regarding the planning process involved.

. Moving meeting to every 2 months beginning Feb 2026. This would allow the major Military dates to be covered (ANZAC Day: V V Day in Aug: Oct prior to Remembrance Day: Dec to round out the year)

. As recognition of the part “Eyes & Ears” newsletter has played in fostering communication over the whole Locator population, we will ask if there is anyone who may be interested in putting together a bi-monthly “bulletin” containing contributions as the custom is now. The “Bulletin” would not be the same format but would have most features. Watch for the email in your inbox soon.

**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**  
**Next General meeting will be on:**  
**10 th February 2026 at 11.00 AM**  
**Venue and format to be advised.**

**Sec/Treas 0437 361 602**



## . Birthdays in the Battery...January –

| Date | Name                               | Regt No             | SVN In                       | SVN Out    | Comments               |
|------|------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| 1    | Victor Danko                       | 2783210             | 04 05 1967                   | 12 12 1967 |                        |
| 1    | Joe Librizzi                       | 5716081             | 23 09 1969                   | 04 06 1970 |                        |
| 1    | Christopher Chapple                | 5716208             | 20 01 1970                   | 13 08 1970 |                        |
| 1    | Richard Chaplin                    | 2791166             | 20 01 1970                   | 13 08 1970 |                        |
| 1    | Raymond Leslie Bailey Cpl          | 1734305             | 17 09 1969                   | 27 08 1970 | Brisbane RAAOC         |
| 2    | John Browne                        | 218367              | 27 08 1969                   | 13 08 1970 |                        |
| 2    | Kevin "KJ" Salter Capt             | 51470               | N/A                          | 02 01 1938 | † 25.03.2020           |
| 3    | Gordon Gaery Navas                 | 2793162             | 30 05 1970                   | 26 05 1971 | † 10.07.2022           |
| 4    | Peter Pettiford                    | 3792038             | 08 11 1968                   | 04 06 1969 |                        |
| 5    | Graeme Smith                       | 6708707             | 12 04 1968                   | 20 08 1968 |                        |
| 6    | Arthur Dove                        | 217348              | 13 01 1969                   | 28 11 1969 | Annandale, NSW         |
| 6    | William Broadbent Sgt              | 224024              | N/A                          | N/A        | † 24.11.2008           |
| 6    | Allan Desmond Robotham             | 6709864             | 25 05 1971                   | 18 11 1971 | Burnie Tas             |
| 9    | Peter Scott Sadler Lt.             | 15138               | 20 05 1966                   | 28 04 1967 | † 2008                 |
| 9    | Robert John Ness                   | 4717755             | 20 05 1966                   | 30 04 1967 | Strathalbyn SA         |
| 9    | (Gerard) David Pires               | 5717069             | 03 03 1971                   | 12 08 1971 |                        |
| 11   | Brendan Paul Travers Maj.          | 47027               | {09 09 1965                  | 19 09 1965 | † 18.02.1990           |
|      | " "                                |                     | {25 02 1967                  | 04 04 1967 | RAEME                  |
| 11   | Graeme Benjamin John Leslie S/Sgt. | 18614               | 1969                         | 1970       | RAEME † 26.08.1992     |
| 11   | Peter Pioro                        | 2790931             | 27 11 1969                   | 04 05 1970 |                        |
| 12   | Peter Selwyn Hopper A/Sgt          | 3787938             | 04 05 1967                   | 12 12 1967 |                        |
| 12   | David Keith Reilly                 | 3794901             | 24 03 1970                   | 13 08 1970 |                        |
| 12   | Brian Johnson                      | 4720991             | 29 05 1970                   | 05 05 1971 | † 31.01.2012           |
|      | " "                                |                     | 14 05 1970                   | 27 05 1970 | AACC/1 Arm Reg/Det 131 |
| 12   | Lazio, Falkai                      | 4721836             | 03 03 1971                   | 30 06 1971 | 131                    |
|      | " "                                |                     | 30 06 1971                   | 18 11 1971 | 12 Fd REGT.            |
| 13   | Holmes, Roger Francis              | 3795910             | 22 07 1970                   | 25 02 1971 |                        |
| 15   | Phillip Francis Endicott           | 2783419             | 06 01 1967                   | 27 09 1967 |                        |
| 16   | Kenneth Lawrence Osborne Capt.     | 48543               | 18 04 1967                   | 02 04 1968 | RAEME                  |
| 16   | Edward Bruce Cooper                | 44231               | 26 08 1969                   | 21 01 1970 |                        |
| 16   | Leslie Edward Saurine              | 2791863             | 24 03 1970                   | 17 12 1970 |                        |
| 18   | Peter Szabo                        | 38752               | 26 03 1969                   | 25 03 1970 | † 07.12.2007           |
| 19   | Barry Heard                        | 3788324             | 02 04 1967                   | 25 10 1967 | Honorary 131           |
| 19   | Peter John Fieldon                 | 3797872             | 25 11 1970                   | 12 08 1971 | England                |
| 21   | Peter Andrew Suckling Sgt          | 55141               | 05.02.1971                   | 15 11 1971 |                        |
| 22   | Kevin Douglas Browning WO1         | 217743              | 16 09 1968                   | 24 09 1969 | 131                    |
|      | " "                                |                     | 05 04 1971                   | 29 06 1971 | 131                    |
|      | " "                                |                     | 30 06 1971                   | 18 11 1971 | 12 Fd REGT.            |
| 23   | Donald Boyd Chalmers               | 3793171             | 01 07 1969                   | 03 12 1969 |                        |
|      | Donald Ian "Scotty" McNicoll       | 216327              | {12 09 1967                  | 17 09 1968 | 131                    |
|      | " "                                |                     | {09 04 1970                  | 02 05 1970 | VISIT                  |
| 24   | Terrence Harry Erbs                | 3791713             | 28 10 1968                   | 04 06 1969 |                        |
| 24   | David Grant Negus                  | 3794728             | 24 02 1970                   | 13 08 1970 |                        |
| 25   | Brian James McDowell Bdr           | 29303               | 19 05 1971                   | 29 07 1071 | † 24.01.2024           |
| 25   | Walter George "Wally" Franklin     | 1411285             | 29 01 1968                   | 28 01 1969 |                        |
| 26   | Raymond William Hutchinson         | 37669               | 17 04 1967                   | 02 04 1968 | † 01.12..2023          |
| 26   | Geoffrey Thomas Todd               | 54254               | 18 12 1967                   | 10 12 1968 | † 23.04.2016           |
| 27   | Wade Cooper                        | 5805611/<br>8216682 | Iraq/E.Timor/<br>Afghanistan |            | 20STA                  |
| 27   | Allan Melville Adams               | 3788792             | 04 05 1967                   | 27 09 1967 |                        |

|    |                        |         |            |            |  |
|----|------------------------|---------|------------|------------|--|
| 28 | Robin Anthony Torrissi | 1735572 | 20 08 1970 | 12 03 1971 |  |
| 29 | Peter Duncan Mackie    | 2184557 | 20 08 1970 | 08 02 1971 |  |
| 30 | Alan Ernest McDonald   | 511355  | 05 12 1967 | 03 12 1968 |  |

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

**Ed – 3** 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.



The following Vale notice of **Norman John LINDROOS** was supplied by **Peter Meaney** having found confirmation via Ryerson.

Norman, Temporary Sergeant (DVA Nominal Roll), 3410957, commenced his first tour of duty with the Detachment on 20th May 1968 concluding on 20th May 1969.

Norman was born on 14th October 1939 and passed on 27th August 2025, He lived in Peakhurst, NSW  
There are no further details as Norman was on our Lost Locator listing.



**Name: Lindroos, Norman John**

**Service No: 3410957    Rank: Temporary Sergeant**

**SVN In: 20 05 1968    SVN Out: 20 05 1969**

**DoB: 14 10 1939    DoD: 27 08 2025**

**Lest We Forget**



**Grahame Dignam** - supplied the following history on Norman -

1961- 63 Gnr 103 Bty Malacca 1961-63, 20.10.65 L/Bdr 'A' Bty Malayasia, 20.05.68 - 20.05.69 T/Sgt SVN Det 131 Bty 18.03.71 Sgt Discharged

**Bill Taggart (1st/83rd US Artillery)** - "Sad news on Christmas Day, please convey the condolences of the 1/83rd. Lest We Forget.  
Bill."

**David Auld** - "RIP Norman."

**May He 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.australianartilleryassociation.com)



[www.artilleryhistory.org](http://www.artilleryhistory.org)

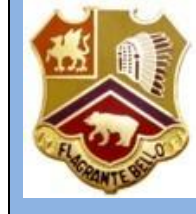


Website link - <http://www.vvaa.org.au/>

. 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](http://www.at-ease.dva.gov.au)

## . 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 83<sup>rd</sup> Artillery...



Dedicated to the men of the 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery who served in Vietnam from 1966-1971. We left Fort Sill in October 1966 for Vietnam. We originally were at Bear Cat, Nui Dat and Xuan Loc. We later were in many other locations in Vietnam.



We also welcome our Australian and New Zealand Allies to whom we owe so much.

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



### The Royal New Zealand Artillery Association

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

Editor contact email: [131eyesandears@gmail.com](mailto:131eyesandears@gmail.com) Ed – Paul ‘Dicko’ Dickson

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