

# 131 Locators Association Inc



## President's Report for FY 2016 – 2017

I am pleased to present the President's Report for the financial year 2016-2017. This period represents our sixth full-year of operation and generally shows a continuing growth in all aspects of the Association's activities.

The Association remains financial, viable and, sustainable for the foreseeable future as the financial report illustrates. The ageing of our members continues to be our limiting factor. Many of the early Nashos have celebrated their 70<sup>th</sup> birthdays and others will do so within a year or two of this meeting. Contact with those who served in the Detachment and those who served at Holsworthy remains incomplete, although there has been some success with new contacts in the past year.

The reporting period saw a highlight anniversary for the reinforcement group, the *secondi*, the second group to be sent to SVN 50 years ago. These Gunners continued setting the pace for others who followed up to 1971, as part of the 131 Detachment operational status.

The Association website, [www.131locators.org.au](http://www.131locators.org.au) continues to give us both a web presence and a defined identity. During the reporting period external access to the website has grown quite significantly. Bob Billiards has continued as our Webmaster, providing an essential role in doing so. Thank you Bob.

The site statistics are regularly reported in *Eyes and Ears* and demonstrate the ongoing interest in our activities. The days of access are interesting, with peaks about the release time of each *Eyes and Ears* edition.

*Eyes and Ears*, under the editorial overview of Paul Dickson, appears monthly, and still delivers editions of 16-18 pages. I believe that the size and frequency together 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 2017 edition was the 106<sup>th</sup> in this new series.

A range of other activities, meetings, reunions and events were part of the year's program.

Highlights for 2015-2016 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

- The 'lost' *Eyes and Ears* editions from 1967 were found
- a major turnout of 131 Veterans at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations at Enoggera in combination with our descendants 20<sup>th</sup> Surveillance and Target Acquisition Regiment around Anzac Day 2016
- we dedicated a 131 Locators Association plaque celebrating the Detachment role in SVN along with a plaque listing all those who served in the Detachment in the Enoggera barracks area; the Surveillance and Target Acquisition Association unveiled a restored radar
- the radar held at North Fort was packed up and delivered to the National Vietnam Museum on Phillip Island in Victoria
- production and publication of ten locator profiles; we need more to be submitted to assist our recording of 131 history
- at the end of June 2017 there were 151 members of the Association, which represents a slow, but nevertheless meaningful growth. There was a significant number of lapsed memberships
- a 131 paver was installed on the Memorial Path at North Head
- the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion was held in Coffs Harbour, with future reunions to be held and coordinated in Queensland
- regular Committee meetings to manage the Association and the involvement of Regional Representatives to help spread the load
- contributions from former Detachment OCs setting out their recollections of their time in SVN were published in *Eyes and Ears*
- national Anzac Day march attendances and social follow up in each State
- new 131 Locators Association banners were designed by Nick Proskurin
- a national Vietnam Veterans' Day event and dinner was held in Canberra, and
- Barry Guzder organised a most successful social dinner in Perth.

A special mention for the Committee members for making things happen for the Association. Bert Blink undertook the role of Vice-President and is generous of his time in attending our Committee meetings, driving from Canberra each month.

Grahame Dignam, Treasurer/Secretary, has been the 'super glue' for the Association's financial arrangements, records and operation of the membership database. Ernie Newbold, Nick Proskurin other Committee Members – Vic Danko (Public Officer), Ian Amos, George Lane 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 a Committee member), Al Adams (Vic), Geoff Blackwell (SA), Barry Guzder (WA), Stuart Sporn (NT), Terry Erbs (QLD) and forward scouts in rural Victoria, Ron Mason and Rieny Nieuwenhof, for their collective contribution. A note of appreciation to our Honorary Auditor, Jim Fitzgerald, 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  
November 2017