

THE EYES and EARS

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Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery RAA

**Unit Citation for Gallantry (UCG) awarded to the Detachment and those who served at
The Battles of Coral/Balmoral in South Vietnam, 1968**

**Happy New Year
to everyone
2018 ... 2019**



**A genuine thanks to all of
you for making this
another great year.
Paul "Ed" Dickson.**

Remembrance Day continues...

David Dougherty helps keep our memories alive with the following from Remembrance Day in Mittagong -

“Hi Paul, I should have sent this photo (mine) earlier of Remembrance Day at Mittagong being the one showing the poppy cross. The poppy cross was made by members of St Stephens Anglican Church, the War Memorial is located off to the right.

The chap to the right holding the banner is one of 2 RAR Association that was holding a reunion that week, the 2/2nd was Dad’s 1st posting during WW2.

The local RSL, band and others attending are also off to the right in front of the memorial.



The local papers full gambit of photos can be seen at <https://www.southernhighlandnews.com.au/story/5751324/southern-highlands-marks-remembrance-day-photos/> if you are interested, I have included four of these.

There is another large “blanket” of poppies made by a friend, since deceased, that cover the centre of the memorial.



The flyover was by members of the local aero club, the pilots in this case being ex RAAF. HMAS Albatross Nowra are always generous in providing the Guard of Honour at services held here.

Regards, David”

. Insights and Recollections...

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

. 1967 – A “Lost Locator Project” ... NOW ONTO ‘66

Ed – Yes, I'm back on one of my “Pet Projects” trying to **Locate Lost Locators**. It's now onto the last hoorah as we arrive at 1966 – “The Pioneers” And, again, to my, sometimes erroneous accounting, I reckon there are about **15** Lost Locators from 1966. Now, age may have “wearied” some of them (no, not ALL), they are also a mix of Regs and Nashos, so some of you Regs must have soldiered on with some of them somewhere and the Nashos must have gone back to 131 or at least the same State in some cases. Yes, and like the rest of the groups/years I'm still clutching at straws, especially after some 50 +years.

NAME	Regt. No.	BORN	IN SVN	OUT SVN	COMMENTS
GARY WORRALL	43796	1945	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	
NEVILLE HASTINGS	1730813	1945	20 05 1966	03 03 1967	
DAMIAN McMANUS	3787689	1945	20 05 1966	29 05 1967	
EZIO LOMBARDO	216284	1946	20 05 1966	03 03 1967	
JAMES TOWNLEY Maj.	17072	1939	14 06 1963	22 06 1963	103 Fd Bty FARELF
" "			22 04 1966	19 08 1966	131
" "			30 04 1970	28 05 1970	HQ AFV
RAY SMITH	3787666	1945	20 05 1966	02 05 1967	
GARRY LUSCOMBE T/SGT	243144	1942	22.04.1966	09.05.67	RAEME
BOB TANNER	6708362	1945	21 05 1966	28 04 1967	
JAMES FITZGERALD	2782044	1945	04 05 1966	29 04 1967	
VIC MOREAU	1200577	1939	22 04 1966	23 01 1967	
ROY CLAUSCEN	214873	1941	20 05 1966	11 12 1966	
BRIAN CAMPBELL	2781310	1945	22 04 1966	30 04 1967	
BARRY FOLLINGTON	2783144	1945	12 12 1966	27 09 1967	
GEORGE LANE	2781630	1945	04 05 1966	11 12 1966	
EDWARD CHASE	2782043	1945	04 05 1966	11 12 1966	
LESLIE CAHILL	2412281	1947	20 05 1966	30 04 1967	
GRAHAM HISLOP Sgt.	15290	1935	22 04 1966	03 03 1967	
DAVID MARTIN	2781662	1945	22 04 1966	29 04 1967	
MICHAEL McDONNELL	2781377	1945	04 05 1966	11 04 1967	
BARRY CAMPTON Capt.	61270	1937	{14 07 1963	22 07 1963	
" "			{13 08 1966	28 04 1967	
WILLIAM CROWTHER	215416	1946	22 04 1966	02 11 1966	
RON MASON	3787154	1945	04 05 1966	03 03 1967	
KEVIN THORNTON	2781420	1945	04 05 1966	02 02 1967	
BRIAN KILLWORTH	2782129	1945	04 05 1966	02 03 1967	
PETER ROBERTSON	15543	1936	04 05 1966	29 04 1967	
DAVID CORNELL	5713808	1945	07 08 1966	30 04 1967	
JOHN ROBERTS	3787005	1945	04 05 1966	29 04 1967	
TERRY WEEKES	3787197	1945	20 05 1966	03 03 1967	
BRIAN TURNER	2412230	1947	20 05 1966	02 05 1967	
JIM SELLWOOD	1731045	1945	04 05 1966	30 04 1967	
KEN WHITTLE	2781996	1945	20 05 1966	27 03 1967	
SYTSE ELZINGA	3787318	1945	20 05 1966	11 12 1966	
LAWRENCE SAWYER	3787393	1945	04 05 1966	03 03 1967	
GERRY CARROLL	2781311	1945	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	
BILL FINLAY Sgt.	37818	1944	20 05 1966	01 05 1967	
KEITH HOLLOWAY	15851	1943	20 05 1966	10 10 1966	
RONALD DEAN	215527	1944	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	

ROBERT DAVID GOW	61644	1944	20 05 1966	03 03 1967	
NORMAN BULLEN	214545	1944	20 05 1966	11 12 1966	
IAN BOARD	213879	1943	22 04 1966	11 12 1966	
DAVID DOYLE Sgt.	17760	1943	{22 04 1966	11 12 1966	
" "			{24 09 1970	08 02 1971	
GRAHAM O'TOOLE	61497	1943	20 05 1966	11 12 1966	
BARRY UREN	214715	1940	28 10 1966	02 05 1967	
WILLIAM TAGGART		1946	00.10.1966	00.11.1967	US 1st / 83rd
DESMOND BURY	1411072	1946	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	
JOHN PERRY WO2	36026	1932	22 04 1966	07 09 1966	
TERRY WESTERWAY	215818	1945	04 05 1966	07 05 1967	
ANDREW OPIE 2Lt.	43611	1944	04 05 1966	06 01 1967	
THOMAS KING	1411018	1937	12 12 1966	12 12 1967	
JOHN MCGREGOR	3787376	1945	20 05 1966	30 04 1967	
BRIAN HAWKEY	1200572	1946	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	AACC

Here's the mix – the blokes with coloured background names are knowns, it's the white backgrounds we're looking for. I've had a bash at Death/Funeral notices and other online search engines, but of course blokes didn't continue to live in the same city that they were recruited from, let alone a suburb. Searching White Pages is a pain too.

I would really appreciate your help somehow or another? Paul

Rob Retrot got back to us with one of our "Lost Locators" from 1967 –

"Hi Paul,

I was just enjoying the current "Eyes and Ears" and noted that you have **Tony Dodds** in the "whereabouts unknown" category.

I am fairly sure that is a mistake, as Tony attended the Coffs Harbour reunion a few years ago and was, I know, in touch with a number of members who attended that event. In any case, Judith and I called in at his place four years ago while on a caravan holiday in the Coffs Harbour area. They live in North Woodburn NSW and have a mobile number as well (Rob provided the number).

They do not have an email address, or did not at that time.

Sincere thanks for your good work and best wishes for the Festive Season

Kind regards, Rob Retrot"



Tony and Helen waving us goodbye.

Ed – I replied to Rob, remembering his visit as we recorded it in *Eyes & Ears*. Will endeavour to contact him – watch this space.

. Here's the next in the "Unknown" series...

Who are these likely looking blokes? Did the two on the left drop into the Club while waiting for their shirts to get laundered?



. **Oddities – Ed** – An American friend of mine who dabbles in antiques and just recently received a bundle of items she had bought on-line in the UK and amongst it all was a badge, which, because it mentioned “Australia” with servicemen emblazoned on it, thought she’d give it to me. I have never seen the badge before. It got me interested because of its resemblance to an RSL badge.

Anyway, he’s what I dug up –

According to the **Australian War Memorial (AWM)**:

Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia Badge. The centre of the badge shows a sailor and a soldier in raised detail. A blue enamel circle surrounds the central detail and has 'RETURNED SAILORS & SOLDIERS / IMPERIAL LEAGUE' in gilt lettering. The outer edges of the badge are white enamel with a floral spray to the top left and right of the blue circle. At the bottom of the badge is a red enamelled scroll with 'AUSTRALIA' written in gilt lettering. On the reverse of the badge are soldered two brass lugs with a split pin attached for securing the badge to clothing. Stamped at the top of the badge is 'COPYRIGHT' and at the bottom of the badge is impressed a number (in this case 23148) and the maker's details 'STOKES & SONS MELBOURNE'.



Libraries Australia extract - Formed in 1916 the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia changed its name in 1940 to Returned Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia which changed its name in 1966 to Returned Services League of Australia. Works by these bodies are entered under the name used at the time of publication.

Does anyone know the significance of the number on the back, which in this case is 23148? It now joins my small cherished collection.

From the Advocate's Desk...



Our professional Advocate's contact details: -

Peter Pioro JP - email contact: piorowp@ozemail.com.au

Ken Foster OAM JP - email contact: khfoster1@bigpond.com

Disclaimer: Please note that all correspondence submitted will be treated with the total confidentiality between the sender and our Advocates. Printed submissions and responses that may be published in *Eyes & Ears* will be completely anonymous, just used as examples of help.

. Here's an interesting article that did the rounds in the Canberra Times sent in by my brother Jim Dickson -

Vietnam veterans pass the baton

The launch of Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling just before the Invictus Games was a timely reminder of the importance of mental health support for veterans and their families.

Representing Vietnam veterans at the launch, clinical psychologist and Vietnam veteran Dr David Cockram explained what the new name for the service, formerly known as the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS), meant to him.

'Each soldier who served in Vietnam had a different war experience,' Dr Cockram said. 'Mine was constantly patrolling in the jungle on search and destroy missions. The choppers were our lifeline.

'To guide a chopper to our position, one soldier would emerge from the jungle and stand vulnerably exposed to any danger with open arms to signal the aircrew to land. His open arms were a signal to aid or life.'

Back in Australia, though, the open arms which greeted veterans from previous wars were missing.

'Society was hostile to Vietnam veterans and PTSD was not yet recognised,' Dr Cockram said. 'There were no open arms for us, no lifeline, until a drop-in support service started in Adelaide in 1982, the embryo of the Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service. Our lifeline to safety was re-established.

'Once again, open arms embraced us in dark moments, supported our wives, partners and children, and fostered wellbeing.

'Vietnam veterans have been blessed by the counselling and support service that we founded, and with open arms of friendship, our desire is that the present and future generations of veterans and families will also experience healing and hope within Open Arms.'

Mark Donaldson VC attended the launch, representing contemporary veterans.

Mr Donaldson reiterated the importance of family support for veterans, but also support for families of veterans – a speciality of Open Arms.

'The beauty of Open Arms is the fact that they open their arms to

the family as well, and they support the children of veterans,' he said. 'We focus a lot on the veteran and a lot on the individual and that is extremely important. But the family also has a part to play.

'The ability for older children to be able to reach out to Open Arms and get that support [is] critical for their own mental health. It's important that they understand what their father, their mother, sometimes their brother or sister went through.

'There's no other organisation that I know of that supplies that service and supplies that service free of charge.'

Open Arms counselling services can help families deal with:

- living in isolation through deployment, and adjusting when a parent returns home
- helping children if they seem to be struggling, like making friends at a new school
- understanding, identifying and working through trauma
- transitioning from ADF to civilian life
- working through relationship breakdowns and challenges



From left: Mark Donaldson VC (representing contemporary veterans); Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester; Dr David Cockram (representing Vietnam veterans).

• building a blended family, and

• the trauma related to the death of a serving member.

Open Arms began life in 1982 as the Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service. It was created after intense lobbying from Vietnam veterans who realised that the psychological effects of war could be just as damaging as physical injuries.

Open Arms provides free and confidential counselling to anyone who has served at least one day in the ADF, and their families. Last year, more than 16,000 veterans and their families received more than 100,000 counselling sessions.

A service founded by Vietnam veterans is now their gift for all veterans.

To learn more about Open Arms counselling and wellbeing support, call 1800 011 046 or visit openarms.gov.au.

. Bert Blink – as a follow on to the above article sent in the following from the Canberra Times (also) relating to “pickle” the DVA is facing...

Inquiry urges ditching Veterans' Affairs

David Wroe

The Morrison government has been told Australia's \$13 billion-a-year system for supporting military veterans is broken and should face overhaul, including abolition of the mammoth Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Calling for "bold" reform to avoid further failure, a new report by the Productivity Commission has found the veterans affairs system should operate more like a modern worker's compensation scheme, with Defence taking more responsibility for ex-service men and women's lifetime care, including better preparing them for post-military life.

Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald said there had been a litany of reviews in recent years but none had produced enough change to

make the system fit to meet veterans' needs.

"The time for tinkering is over, and bold reform is needed," Mr Fitzgerald said.

"It's not that there hasn't been progress, it's just not sufficient to get us where we need to be.

"The commission is absolutely clear that unless there are bold reforms... it will not be a system that is able to meet the needs of future veterans."

The report states that the present system is out-of-date and not working in the interests of veterans and their families, or the Australian community.

It is complex, difficult to navigate, inequitable and poorly administered, which "places unwarranted stress on claimants" who are often vulnerable in the first place.

While the existing scheme paid out \$13.2 billion last financial year -

an average of \$47,000 each for Australia's 166,000 veterans and 117,000 dependants being supported - "money alone does not mean it is an effective scheme".

The report, which was prompted by a Senate inquiry into veteran suicide, states that the system needs to focus more on the well-being of veterans over their lifetimes. That means more focus on prevention, rehabilitation and transition support.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs would be abolished. Responsibility for veterans policy would go to a senior unit within Defence, while a new statutory agency, the Veteran Services Commission, would take charge of administering support.

The agency would process claims, rehabilitate injured and ill veterans, and pay appropriate compensation for pain, suffering

and lost income. It would also pay for and fund health and community services for veterans.

Defence would put money into a fund that would pay for rehabilitation and compensation for veterans. This means they would have a greater incentive to prevent injury and illnesses to serving personnel.

This fund would then have to be managed sustainably by the new agency, which would have an incentive to "focus on the lifetime costs of supporting clients", intervening early and finding cost-effective rehabilitation.

Richard Spencer, another commissioner who worked on the report, said the average veteran today was different from one in the past. Military personnel serve an average of eight or nine years and often leave in their mid-to-late 20s.

"The rest of their life is ahead of them," he said.

They needed less aged care and pension-style support and more timely rehabilitation and help getting into civilian employment quickly and effectively.

Mr Spencer said a particular danger period was the transition to civilian life, especially for younger veterans.

"One of the disconnects that's happening in the transition is that when veterans discharge they immediately shift to [the Department of Veterans Affairs].

"They don't have continuity of care. Programs can stop and restart.

"That's when things can go dramatically wrong," he said.

A joint command within Defence would be responsible for veterans' welfare for about six months after they leave the military under the Productivity Commission's proposals.

Mail Call...

Bill Taggart – One of our favourite "mates" from the 1st /83rd sent the following email in after reading **Ernie Newbold's** article in last month's *Eyes & Ears* –

"Hi Paul, every month I look forward to the *Eyes & Ears* Newsletter and this latest one was a particular favourite. I had a couple of things I wanted to ask and share with you:

1. I have a section on the 1/83rd website about St. Barbara, it is here...http://www.1stbn83rdartilleryvietnam.com/Artillery_Info/St_Barbara.htm I wanted to ask if it was okay with you if I took the material on St. Barbara that is on page 9 of the *E&E* that Ernie Newbold provided and add it to our site. I would attribute full credit to you, Ernie and the *E&E*. **(We said go for it)**

2. I enjoyed the material on your Armistice Day activities. Nov 11 is our Veterans Day and coincidentally my Birthday so it has special meaning to me. **(Yes, we sent him a "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" message)**

3. After seeing Ernie Newbold's item on spending Christmas 1967 at Nui Dat I thought your group might be interested in my experiences at Nui Dat for Christmas 1966.



The 1/83rd had only been in Nui Dat since Nov 1966 and on Christmas Eve I found myself on a 24-hour Guard Post (a not uncommon experience of mine). My Survey Platoon Sgt. Vincent Auzenne knew that I was Roman Catholic, as was he, and he arranged for me to be temporarily relieved from my post so we (and a few others) could attend midnight Mass at The Saints Club (Picture at right) on your base. We often had an Australian Priest come down to our base to say mass for us but going to his place was a new experience.

Well, I was happy to get off Guard Duty for a while (maybe more so than getting to Mass) but I must admit I never dreamed of attending a midnight Mass in Vietnam, it never entered my mind as something that would ever happen. Anyway, we got in a 3/4-ton truck and drove up and were promptly stopped by some Aussies who were sure we were nuts being out on the road at that time of the night. After explaining where we were going they let us pass. We knew our way and went to Mass. Up to this point all was going well. After Mass, however I got my first taste of Aussie Hospitality. We Yanks were invited to have a drink in honour of the

occasion. Certainly, not wishing to offend, we happily had our arms twisted and were all handed canteen cups that apparently were bottomless!

I knew that when I returned to our camp I had to go back on Guard and did not want to do that falling down drunk. I tried to secretly dispose of my constantly filled cup without drinking much but every time I did an Aussie would appear to refill it. I did manage to retain a level of soberness but it was not easy.

I learned a couple of things that evening. One was that Aussie's do not know the meaning of one drink. The other more important thing I learned, in what was one of my first encounters with our Aussie Mates, is that there is no finer group of men and what a privilege and honour it was to serve alongside them.

I have retold this story so many times over the years always with fond recollections of that evening and my following 11 months serving with the men of the Australian Task Force. Your men played a vital role in keeping us safe and we all owe you a great debt.

I hope that all of you have many more Merry Christmas's in your future. May God, Bless you all.

Bill”

David Dougherty – sent in the following relating to the “correct” wearing of the UCG (remember Bob Billiards’ piece, with photos, in last month’s *Eyes & Ears*) and includes a letter he has sent to the Defence Honours and Awards. It’s an interesting read and no doubt the response (if we live long enough and have a law degree) will be of real interest –

“Hi Paul, In relation to the wearing of the UCG I had understood that it was worn above medals/ribbons when in civilian dress though I cannot remember where this understanding was from and a search failed to locate the source. However, Wikipedia has a reference but no credit to a source. If it was worn on the right breast then this would conflict with medals being worn in respect of other family members when appropriate. Sources do clarify that when in uniform it is correct to wear it on the right.

Following on from your article in *E&E* and Bob’s comments and my ramblings I have written to Defence Honours and Awards to see if they can offer a clarification as below.

‘Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Unit Citation for Gallantry

I am seeking clarification as to the correct wearing of the Unit Citation for Gallantry when in civilian clothes. I believe it is correct for persons in uniform to wear it above the right pocket or equivalent location but have had conflicting reports as to recipients when in civilian clothes.

Wikipedia (not necessarily reliable) states that: -

The following citations are not positioned according to the list above (ie: Australian Honours). For members of the uniformed services, they are worn according to respective Service dress rules. For civilians, they are worn centrally above any other honours or awards.

This to me would indicate in my situation now being a civilian and the recipient of medals in relation to Vietnam, the Army Combat Badge and the UCG, that on appropriate occasions I would wear medals/ribbons on the left breast with the ACB positioned above them and then the UCG above this. Further, being the custodian of medals for three family members I will on occasions such as Anzac Day wear one of their sets on the right breast. Positioning the UCG above these would, to me at least, not be appropriate.

It would be appreciated if you could provide a direction in the wearing of the UCG in relation to other awards when in civilian dress, or contact details of another relevant authority in regard to this.

Yours faithfully,

David Dougherty

Ex RAA, Det. 131 Divisional Locating Battery’

If/when I receive a response I will forward it on.

In the meantime, have an enjoyable Xmas.



...David gets a response...

"Hi Paul. Below is the response I received in respect of my query on wearing the UCG, or to be more pertinent not really an answer to my query.

The info supplied by Bob would appear to be correct in a situation where medals of a family member are not worn, but the reply still leaves it ambiguous in an appropriate situation where one is wearing a relatives medals. If worn on the right breast the UCG would appear to be a part of the relative's awards, not the recipient.

Therefore, my response is that if I am wearing medals at an ANZAC, Remembrance Day Ceremony or similar in respect of my father or 2 deceased cousins I will wear the UCG, in conjunction with the ACB, above my medals. I consider this a "*dignified and appropriate manner*" and not one that confuses the recipient of the UCG.

I will leave it to others to wear theirs as they see appropriate in their individual circumstance.

Regards, David"

The response -

Sent: Tuesday, December 11, 2018 9:16 AM

To: 'David Dougherty'

Subject: 181211 *9418181* Citation for Gallantry, wearing thereof [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Good Morning David

Thank you for your enquiry regarding the correct wearing of the 'Unit Citation for Gallantry' when in civilian clothes. Please see below the link to the *Defence Honours and Awards* website which may be of assistance for you.

<http://www.defence.gov.au/Medals/Hon-Decs/Gall-Dist/Unit-Citation-Gallantry.asp>

I can also advise the following:

- While in uniform, insignia should be worn in accordance with the appropriate service dress manual.
- In civilian clothes the insignia should be worn in a dignified and appropriate manner with placement similar to what is recommended in the appropriate service dress manual.

Further guidance can be obtained by contacting your local Returned Service League (RSL).

If you have any further queries, please contact us on the number below or via our email address, Incident No 9418181 refers.

Regards **Julie**, Customer Service Team Leader, Directorate of Archives and Service Centres

South East Zone / Service Delivery Division, Estate & Infrastructure Group **Department of Defence**

T: 1800 DEFENCE (1800 333 362) E: yourcustomer.service@defence.gov.au

Ed's response – "David, Whatever I say, and I concur with you - the citation was awarded to you and it is awarded for Gallantry, not for joining a club, though be it a very special one.

I wear a Combat BADGE (not a medal or citation) above my medals and if I had a Gallantry Citation (call it what you or they will) I would wear it very proudly alongside my Combat Badge, which to me is a in "a dignified and appropriate manner".

Thanks for keeping me in the loop and that was an amazingly quick response. Paul"

John Uniacke – "Hi Paul. I am curious what happened to "The Locating Artillery Association" after the Museum moved to Pucker do you know?

I was with 130 Gun Loc Bty when the Nashos disappeared, having arrived in Australia in may 1968.

Let me know if you are interested in my profile. John Uniacke."

Peter Suckling – "I wish all the committee, members, old and new, of the Locators Association a very safe Christmas season followed by a healthy and happy 2019. Look forward to the *Eyes and Ears* each month.

Peter Suckling."

Peter Bruce – "Dear Paul - All the very best for the Festive Season and good health and happiness for 2019.

Best wishes, *Pete & Susie BRUCE*"



Graham Williams - "A quick chat to say g'day, wish you all the best for the season and say well done for the past years "*Eyes and Ears*."

First, not sure if you are going to use the article on Vung Tau but if so there are additions (See July 2018's edition).

Have just returned from another tour of duty and found what I mentioned in the article at the time to well and truly come to fruition. As a result, Ned Kelly Bar which was in Halong Street on the waterfront is now a hole in the ground.



Further good news and bad news. The feature walls of vets' names over the years did not survive the demolition. Only a few small pieces left (see picture 2) in

Ned Kelly's NEW bar which surprise, surprise is now situated in the annex to, of all places the Grand Hotel. (see picture 3.)



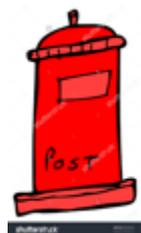
Have included a picture of back beach as it is today...on the beach in centre is a round pool of water which is close to where the "Badcoe Club" would have been. (photo 4)

Finally, as I type away here Jenni and the hounds are away on the annual gig acting as part time reindeer for Santa's sleigh in a local mall. Not proud to report the dogs at this time of year earn more



than me but I can live with it. (picture 5)

All that is left now I guess is to wish yourself and family sincere best wishes for a safe and happy Christmas or...not sure about this so will put it in Army speak..." Wheelbarrow Navidad" and a happy and prosperous 2019 with good things for all. Cheers, Graham Williams."



Mail Out



I started this in September, 2017 and have decided to continue running down the alphabet of names and sending some emails to blokes in general to say g'day and just to generally keep in touch. A lot of the blokes I've never met, so it's just to keep some connection alive. Plus, it's good to keep in touch, even sporadically, it may help to avoid any unpleasant unforeseen surprises. I actually send out approximately 90 "G'day" emails every month, so over a 12 month period everyone should get to hear from me.

Mail In -



Here are the responses...

Terry Erbs – "G'day Paul. Good to hear from you and congratulations on your continuing great work with "Eyes & Ears". Lesley & I are well, enjoying retirement and spending quality time with our growing family in Brisbane. All three children are now married and belatedly we have several grandchildren!!

My last few months have been focused on to the Locator's reunion - sorry you couldn't be here, maybe see you at the 2020 reunion!? After so many successful Locators' reunion at Coffs Harbour it was a hard act to follow. However, with the efforts of LSTAA SE Qld committee and with the great support of 20th STA Regiment, we managed to host the biennial reunion, although numbers were down. It was opportune that UCG recipients for the Battle of Coral & Balmoral attended the radar dedication and fittingly they were publicly acknowledged - still no decision about the legacy issue for current members of 131 Bty! Fortunately, the very welcome rain arrived after the dedication – must to have been the presence of 4 clergymen! I know we're all getting older and that's been reflected in the dwindling numbers attending reunions. So, we need to encourage the younger Locators' to fill our ranks or we'll "fade away" like so many associations.

After reading the many interesting travel stories in "Eyes & Ears" - here's another, a bit away from the usual locations!

Our son, after two years living in Fiji, is now based in Brisbane, but continues to provide Information Technology [IT] support and development to several Pacific nations' education departments. One of those nations is Kiribati and when he was recently in Tarawa, the capital, we stayed with him. AusAid are funding, amongst many programs, his contract work providing IT support and development to the Kiribati Education department.



A bit of history - Kiribati was originally a British colony called the Gilbert Islands and gained independence in 1979. A nation of coral atolls, it covers an area as large as Australia but with population of only 116,000, of which 50,000 live at Tarawa. SolAir and Fiji Airways have weekly flights, via Honiara or Nandi, to Tarawa which is located north of Fiji, at 2 degrees north of the equator.

It's one of the low lying the Pacific nations threaten by rising sea levels and they received wide international attention when they went to the UN to plead for help. Driving around the capital we could see evidence of the damage from saltwater inundation from storm surges to crops and villages. To combat the inundation, they are rebuilding and raising the protective seawalls, at great cost, using imported volcanic rock. In fact, most of the building materials used in Tarawa are imported by sea, such as timber, concrete blocks & corrugated iron sheeting.

However, there are still the traditional huts being maintained from local materials but most new construction uses imported materials.



Tarawa Atoll – runaway 09/27 middle right.

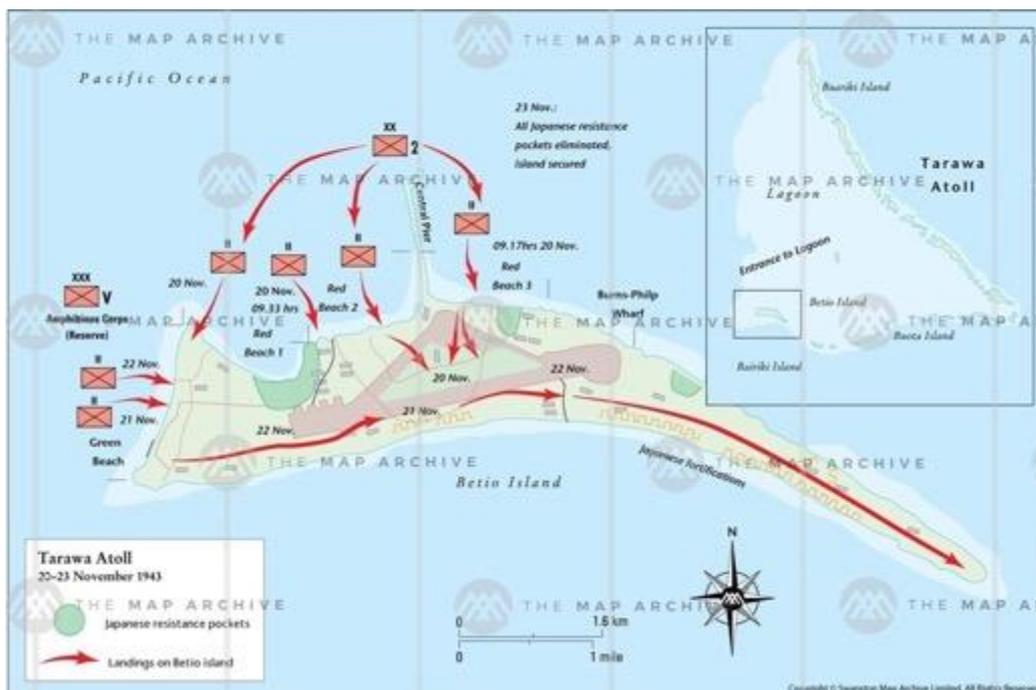
Beito Island – top left far distance.

Beito Island – now linked by causeway.



Our visit coincided with the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Tarawa Nov 1943, which was fought over a 76 hour and incurred massive casualties. The invasion force of 35,000 marines from 2nd Division and soldiers from 27th Division fought an entrenched & tenacious 5000 Japanese marines & engineers. Over 76 hours nearly 6,400 Japanese and

Americans died in the fighting, mostly on and around the small island of Beito, which is only about 3000m long and 800m wide, in the extreme southwest corner of Tarawa Atoll. This was the first United States' amphibious landing that had faced serious Japanese opposition. Previous landings had met with little or no initial resistance, but on Tarawa the Japanese defenders were well prepared and they fought almost to the last man, exacting a very heavy toll on the invading U.S. forces.



Beito Island – far left end of Tarawa atoll and now linked by causeway.

The nations of USA and Kiribati commemorated the 75th anniversary with a service at their War Memorial at the Sports Complex, attended by representatives of Japan, Australia and New Zealand. The service was long with much singing by the local choir and prayers by the clergy. The most heartfelt and moving speech was by the Japanese representative, whose government has given much money to help the Kiribati nation.

After the service, everybody walked to “Red Beach” where the Marines had first landed at 9am on the 20th Nov 1943. There Brig. Gen. Sean Salene of the US Marine Corp gave a very moving graphic account of that first morning. There were several serious planning failures, the worst being the use of incorrect tidal forecasts. Although an NZ Army advisor, Major Frank Holland, warned of insufficient depth of water for the landing craft to cross the reef, the Marines were ordered ashore. As a result, their landing craft were stranded in the shallow waters on the reef and the Marines had to wade 300m to Red Beach while exposed to murderous enemy fire, suffering huge losses.



Marines assembled at Red Beach. That afternoon we were invited to attend a moving repatriation service on the tarmac for two “unknown” marines being flown back to Honolulu, to hopefully be identified using DNA testing. The Americans have recovery units, which operate world-wide, wherever their troops have fought. They told me that an estimated 500 were still missing at Tarawa. Interestingly the Japanese are similarly recovering their fallen from Tarawa for repatriation home.

“Finally going home”
A large group of Americans flew in for the service and repatriation, led by tour guide Clay Evans, whose grandfather had died during the battle of Tarawa. If you use the link below, I think you’ll find

Carl’s story of searching for his grandfather very interesting and moving.....
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/07/02/golden-ending-how-one-man-discovered-his-war-hero-grandfathers-long-lost-grave/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.ff6e043e5b7f Cheers Terry”

Terry Bruce - "Paul, Thanks very much for your e-mail.

Your trip to East Africa sounds like it was a very exciting time with plenty of things to see and do.

We are both keeping well, although I've had a few medical matters to attend to – including ongoing physiotherapy on my right knee, now thought to be a 'Iliotibial Band Syndrome' matter, otherwise known as 'Runners Knee' – a bit of a joke in my case.

Judith and I had a good day in Sydney recently when we attended NSW Parliament House where I (along with many others) was presented with a certificate by the NSW Attorney General for achieving fifty years as a Justice of the Peace for NSW. We don't travel to the city very often so it was a very interesting experience all around.

We've had some rain recently which has greened up our place and the surrounding areas somewhat – in fact we are getting quite a heavy downpour at this moment which will put water into the house and shed tanks and go some way to bringing up the dam levels in preparation for the summer (irrigation, bush fire protection, cattle water, etc.) I'm looking forward to checking the rain gauge later in the day – having already emptied 25mm from the overnight downpour.

Our youngest son Scott and his wife Melissa are expecting another child (second) early next year – bringing our total number of grandchildren to six. A very exciting time for the whole family.

Our other son Craig is about to commence building his house in the outskirts of 'The Oaks' village so they will be moving from our house sometime mid-2019 (I think I previously mentioned the current arrangement whereby Craig and his family are occupying the 'big house' on the property whilst Judith and I are living in the 'fold out caravan/technological marvel (three-bedroom house) adjacent). This will be a big change for them and for us too. Other than my few current medical issues, we are still living 'the good life'. The recent and current rainfalls are certainly brightening things up somewhat, at least in our neck of the woods.

Again, great to hear from you Paul.

All the best to you and Helen

Regards, Terry"

Paul Hobson – "Hi Paul, I am so embarrassed, so unbelievably sorry for not getting back to you much earlier. My excuse is that life has been extremely hectic here - the wife has had surgery to remove a relatively large tumour from her spine that was encroaching on her spinal cord and starting to cause difficulty with her left foot. Mercifully the tumour was benign and she is gaining strength in her foot/leg in a fairly lengthy recuperation.

On top of that, as a function of the estate, with her father's passing, the sisters' (my wife is one of five sisters) have had to sell their houses (it's a long and complex story...) and then buy new houses (don't ask...). Through their father's estate, they have been lucky enough to be able to purchase houses before selling the original houses. So, we are now in the process of trying to sell the house we have just moved from. As you'd know, buying and selling is all consuming. Even though not living in the house we have had to keep the house and gardens in pristine condition for the twice weekly inspections - very draining.

And on top of that, the wife's son (32 years of age!), my stepson, has just had a heart attack. He has had a stent put in to open up a 95% occluded main artery. He is on the road to recovery - a very lucky boy.

I have been kept busy making repairs (buyer beware...) to the new house, just minor things but time consuming none the less. Some good news at last, the wife's old house has just been sold, so that's a load off our minds.

The above is old news as I started penning this some time ago and distraction led to further distraction and so on.... November is a busy time for us - so many birthdays in November, and then there's a bit of a lull before the Christmas season gets under way.

Temps are warming up here and the kids and grandkids come over some weekends to have a BBQ and a splash in the pool (yes, the wife wanted a pool in the new house...) which is really nice to have everyone together, especially with their busy lives. I don't seem to be getting up to my house in the Mountains much lately, but it has been hectic here and it is that busy time of year.... First world problems....

Anyhow, again I apologise for the tardiness of my reply, and I hope all is well on your side of the world, and hope you have a Merry Christmas. Cheers for now. Paul Hobson"

Tony Goldsmith - "Hi Paul. Trust this finds you and Helen well and happy as this year draws to a close. How are you celebrating X'mas in Mexico?

Chris and I are both well and will be celebrating X'mas at her brother's place with all the family. Hoping to get away to Girraween National Park on Boxing Day for about a week or so camping with family/grandkids (bit of an annual event for us – cooler than beach-(hopefully.)

Have had some really hot weather with lots of bush fires in Qld (not near us yet) - did have one insurance company tell us we were a bush fire risk at The Gap – refused to insure us – thank goodness for Defence Service Homes Insurance.

Haven't been up to much else, but at least I'm mobile again.

Trying to win Chris over on the idea of a Greek Island Cruise, but the thought of long flight/no virus/crowded shore excursions, doesn't seem to be working. Might have to settle for something else.

Good to get the latest *Eyes & Ears* and catch up with all the latest happenings.

I was particularly interested in your "bank unravelling's." I have a similar set up to yours but with a couple of additions.

You may be interested to look at the following links: -

<https://www.28degreescard.com.au/card-details/>

<https://www.ubank.com.au/banking-overview/transaction-accounts>
<https://www.rams.com.au/savings-and-transactions/rams-saver/>

Not that you can get a lot of interest these days, but every little bit helps. And, who likes paying conversion/transaction fees when travelling, let alone an annual card fee (God Forbid).

All the best for X'mas and Happy New Year.

Cheers, Tony"

Peter Bruce – "Hello Paul. Your latest edition reminded me I still owe you an email from 7 November. Apologies for the late reply but life just does not get any slower these days. Your trip to Wilbur Smith country sounds fascinating. Something I have always wanted to do since I read his first novel. Perhaps I have left my run a bit too late but, you never know.

In November, we were heading south to Victoria on a three-week caravan trip but wife Susie got pretty sick on day one so we only got as far as Fingal Bay (Nelson Bay north of Newcastle). Stayed there two days hoping she would get better but no luck so we came home on day three. She had a 'massive infection' which laid her flat for a couple of weeks. Nearly back to 100% at this stage and we managed to get away to South West Rocks for a few days to help recovery. It's a wonderful spot and we will certainly be going back again. It's also only just over an hour travel time – with the van on too.

As the silly season approaches, I am busy with Legacy Xmas parties and the like. We are hosting the Legatees and staff Xmas party here at our place. Nothing too flash, just bring a plate type of function.

I flew down to a dinner hosted by Reg Shepherd on the 12th of November. The theme was the 100th anniversary of the Armistice and several of us spoke about relatives who had been involved in the Great War. A good night was had by all.

I have also put myself under a bit of pressure in that I am collating the history of our Port Macquarie Hastings Legacy Club. At a recent function, our local member offered to get funding to get the thing printed and I have now had to commit to a March 2019 deadline to get it to the printers. Nothing too flash but more a compilation of events around our club.

Our Mexican connections who I think I have mentioned, now live in New York will be out here in February. Their adopted daughter (from an orphanage in Mexico City) is really starting to show her Mexican looks. They have also adopted another baby girl in the states who is also of Mexican origins. Apparently, her birth father is an illegal apparently thus part of the need to put their baby up for adoption. Like the first daughter, her life will be so different to what it could have been.

I am still having issues with getting my 4th Field Regiment (SVN) Old Boys newsletters out. A few issues with PDF structure and those who use Apple hardware. The other issue is some recipients can't receive because "too many recipients".

I notice you use a Gmail account and I have been told that this may be the way to go. I am also looking at mail Chimp as an option.

Well mate, have a wonderful Christmas and all the very best for the New Year. Australia is at its best at the moment with floods in NSW and bushfires in Qld! All good here so far and the grand kids are coming around this afternoon to "decorate the Christmas tree".

Best wishes, Pete"

John lanson – "Well Paul nice to hear from you again. I am still in Thailand and enjoying it very much, however I have moved again into a condo in a place called Jomtien. I am only 200 metres from the beach and there is a pool on the roof with fantastic views out to sea.

I spent 5 years in Africa after Vietnam and discharge from the Army. I spent time in Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Angola, Botswana, South West Africa (now Namibia), South Africa and what was then Rhodesia now Zimbabwe which was my base and where I spent most of my time. I loved it and I could have stayed there except for the war and Mr Mugabe which is a story for another time.

I hope life is still good to you in Mexico.

All the best, John lanson"

Barry Campton – "Hello Paul. Not much happening in Canberra at the moment unless the political scene is of interest to anyone.

The weather is warming up a little bit and the season to be jolly has arrived with lightning speed.

Could you change my email address to barrycampton@gmail.com

Have a restful time and enjoy life to the fullest we deserve it at our age!

Kind Regards, Barry"

Russ Hamsey – "Paul. Good to hear from you mate. I am pleased that all is well with and the Africa trip is something my wife and I want to do in the near future.

The Regt is travelling well. 132 Bty just returned from PNG, supporting APEC. They did really well. I hosted a working group looking at our next unmanned aerial system. I included GNRs and BDRs, much to the chagrin of the project staff. It didn't take long for our troops to dominate discussions. This week I have another group and the project guys want the young folks back. Apparently, they get more "real" info from the troops than they get from Army HQ staff. Go figure.

It is also my last week in the Regular Army. Yep, after 41 years in two armies, it is time to slow down. So, on Saturday, I retire from the ARA and on Sunday I am a reservist with a new posting. I am going to stay in 20 STA and will be the 2IC again. How I'm going to do that on three days a week I have no idea but I guess I'll figure it out. I hope Christmas treats you and yours well. Keep enjoying life my friend.
All the best, Russ Hamsey"

Brian Killworth – “Hi Paul, nice to hear from you, hope all is good!

Your African trip sounds great; I did a safari in Botswana about 10 years ago...loved it.

Your email reminds me that I should have contacted you earlier as sadly I must tell you that we have lost a pioneer.

Beau Roberts (see **Vale** below) died 2 weeks ago after a long battle with cancer. While I wasn't able to attend his funeral, I spoke to him on the phone 2 days before his death to say my goodbyes. **Damian McManus** and **Bob**

Tanner thankfully were at the funeral.

Paul, best wishes for a happy festive season and as always thank you for your continued efforts in keeping the line of communication open with your newsletter.

Cheers, Brian"

Russell Jackson – “Hello Paul. Thank you for your email and my apologies for having missed your last one.

In fact, we were in your part of the world when you contacted us and at the time we could receive email but not send.

We had a trip through the Western United States starting in San Francisco and ending up in Las Vegas.

On the way home, we managed to fit in four nights in Hawaii staying in a Waikiki Beach Hotel.

Great trip with some special places visited including Yosemite, Napa Valley, Alcatraz, Disneyland, Grand Canyon, Pearl Harbour amongst others.

We have not been to Africa but it is on the bucket list.

Your trip was certainly a wild life spectacular and with friends who have stayed in the Giraffe Manor I can see why you have so described it.

Home bound at the moment with Home Renos demanding a lot of our time and money.

We will be off to Sweden again in August next year to catch up with family there including our two grandchildren.

All is well with us despite the increasing frequency of skin cancer treatment for me.

Our group will be meeting in Sydney next year for Anzac Day following a great week in Melbourne this year.

Thank you again for the contact and keep up the great work you are doing with *Eyes & Ears*. Regards Russ"

Allan Harrison - Hi Paul. Nice to hear from you and about your travels. Been doing a little of the same albeit not so exotic as yours. Just back from my first ever cruise, a two-week effort around NZ anti clockwise. Rough crossings to and from Oz but our first landfall in NZ was Milford Sound. Fortunately, the seas had settled and we were able to enter the sound and go right to the end. Wow! Could have been in Norwegian fiords. Magnificent if bloody freezing. Spent too long on deck ogling the scenery and promptly went down with bronchitis borderline pneumonia. Spent the next week flat on my back and missed a shitload of stuff, not to mention nil value on my drinks package!

Golf Club presentation night last Friday and I came away as B grade foursome's runner up. Had a super partner who did all the work! Golf Club AGM today where I stood down as Treasurer after 4 years on the job.

Have just been elected President of Coffs Coast Legacy and that's a time consuming 2-year stint. Could not do justice to the Golf Club with that commitment. Legacy is a changing scenario with WW2 widows a dying breed but plenty of work to do with wives and families of young vets suffering PTSD with its attendant suicide prevention, alcoholism, wife bashing etc. Not a pretty sight at times but at the same time rewarding when guys come out the other side and fly right. They, wives and kids very grateful.

The Enoggera re-union went off very well and included an open day where we got to see the regiment's latest and greatest. The full report is on the website www.locatingartillery.org

That's it mate, Christmas parties galore and that's pretty damn good. Cheers, Allan Harrison."

Harry Lynas – “G'day Paul, well not much is different in my life and it doesn't feel as though 3 months have passed. This is a good way for everybody to keep a check on everybody's health and welfare. Still a few grumbles and groans about the back and knee but everyone has those. I will be having Christmas with my son, his wife and 2 granddaughters and then Boxing Day with my wife's sister, Carole and her family. Have not even thought about New Year's yet but I suppose I will get an invitation to someone's place.

Anyway, Mate to you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Cheers, Harry."

Warwick Hamilton – “Hi Paul, what a great trip. One that we are planning to do too.

We have been in NZ for 7 weeks now, with only a week to go. Have had a fab time except that I caught 'the wog' - and passed it on to Kate. This meant our 4 day stay in Nelson included a trip to the Doctor and rest...so that we never contacted your friends or went to the Mexican restaurant. The rotten thing hung around for about 2 weeks but we are fine now.

We arrive back in Oz on 17 Dec, just in time for me to start my next 14 day batch of chemo...what fun! This means that the Festive Season will be a bit quiet but this will actually be good as we have had too good a time here! Lots of interesting wineries and food, with not as much walking as we had thought.

Ohh, and no TV and little internet or phone coverage for the whole period. Hope Oz is still there and we still have some sort of government. Perhaps Pauline Hanson is now PM???

All the very best to you both for the Season, however you celebrate it. Warwick"

Ron Mason – “Hi Paul, nothing much happening in this neck of the woods at the moment. Your travels & viewing the great migration sounds fantastic, no such excitement here! It’s the time of year again to get bookwork up to date with the couple of ESO’s I’m involved in – membership reminders & statements to keep the HQ’s happy – not to mention Consumer Affairs. All very mundane.

All is quiet on the farm – hay & canola sold before the rain, got to be lucky sometimes.

Still trekking down to Warragul reasonably often although that has slowed down a bit, son & granddaughters seem to be coping, it’s always hard to know just how everyone is travelling.

Yes – Xmas is upon us again so a good bit of visiting friends & relatives for the annual catch-up. That part is all good.

Take care & all the best for the festive season. Ron”

Damian McManus – (Ed has extracted some of Damian’s email referring to “Beau” Roberts Vale notice below and transposed it to the Vale section) - “Hello Paul. Nice to read your newsletters and your own news. Keep it up, it is obviously a labour of love, where my one finger typing is a chore.

Brian Killworth and I are both still fighting the C beast. Killa is on chemo tablets and says the side effects are tolerable. I’m still on Immunotherapy infusions each fortnight. # 35 on 28/12/18.

A CT-scan on 31/12/18 with results on 9/1/19 will tell where I’m at with it.

But I am enjoying life, able to eat most foods (slowly) and drink what I want. (no speed restrictions)

So, I will raise a glass or two wishing you merry Christmas over the next week.

Cheers Paul and I’ll let you know in 2019 just what the all-important Scan tells.



Damian Mc.”

John Chilton - “Hi Paul, thanks for the email. All is well. Just came back from England Scotland and Wales. Was lucky enough to attend The Tattoo in Edinburgh,

A great experience. Getting ready now for Canada in 2019. Doing as much as I can before Old Mr Time makes a visit.

Good to hear you had a great time in Africa, a wonderful place, We were there in 2017 and would go back anytime.

Not much else to say Paul. Look after yourself, my best to all, John Chilton.”

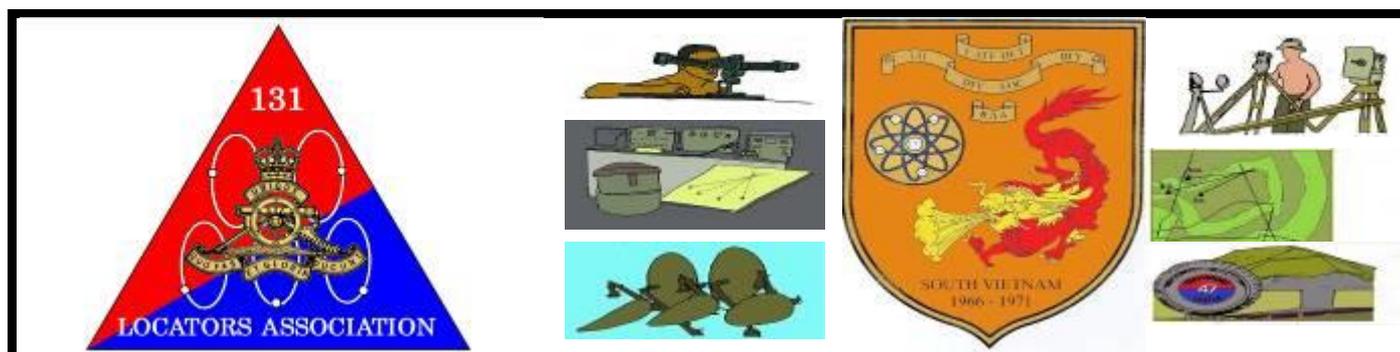
Iain Kennedy – “Paul, as you know we moved into a rental property in the middle of the year, to do a knock down rebuild. But it took three months to get the electrical companies and the involvement of the Energy Ombudsmen to get something to happen. within days of the energy removal, the house was flattened. Now it’s so close to Christmas that nothing will happen until late January.

After talking to Ian Amos and reading a bit in our newsletter, I applied for an increase in disability pension. Have done all the medicals, now just wait for their decision.

Not travelling until after the house is finished, need to be around. Oh, except maybe to New Zealand for a business trip. Since I have this new agency I represent in both Australia and New Zealand. The need to do some customer visits is high on the agenda.

Looking forward to a couple of days of high living, with Christmas at Janet’s family and the Boxing day at my daughters, down in Torquay. Then bang it’s New Year and here we go again.

Well let’s not rush through the next 10 days, enjoy them, savour them. Merry Christmas, Have a good one Cheers, Iain K”



Committee members:

President – Allen Morley, Vice President – Bert Blink, Treasurer/Secretary – Grahame Dignam,
Webmaster – Bob Billiards, Research Officer – Ernie Newbold, Designs and Development Officer – Nick Proskurin,
Eyes & Ears Editor – Paul Dickson

General members – Ian Amos, Ged Carroll, George Lane.

Regional Representatives: ACT – Bert Blink, Qld – Terry Erbs, SA - Geoff Blackwell,

Vic – Alan Adams, WA - Barry Guzder

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

Presidential perambulations

About now you should have decided whether Santa was kind to you ... or not. Personally, I did OK, and now I am just waiting for the short interval between the first hot cross bun appearing in the local supermarkets and the muzak Christmas noise being quietened.

We attempt to not allow the credit card to get too much of an airing. But have you noticed how quickly any cash slips through your fingers when purchasing items? I know that there are 5 x \$20 notes in a \$100, however they seem to melt away when sentimental, but 'necessary', Christmas purchases are made. A couple of toys for the grandkids and zoom that formerly big \$100 note has seemingly evaporated.

Most importantly was whether you, dear *Eyes and Ears* reader, had a good Christmas, celebrated well but not excessively, and overall survived unscathed.

When the latest *Eyes and Ears* edition appears about New Years Day will you be able to report a successful welcoming in the new year? What lies ahead for we ageing ex-131ers in 2019? Maybe the first great grandchild if you started early enough? A few more aches and twinges in the extremities? Looking at downsizing so as to cut down on maintenance of your home? An undertaking to contact that mate from the Battery from 50 years ago? Alternatively, no change.

Whatever your single and/or collective actions my personal wish is that it be a good year for all.

Au revoir, Allen.

. Upcoming Events Calendar –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: **Tuesday, 12th February, 2019** at 1100hrs

Venue: Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club, 26 Humphries Rd., Canley Heights Ph (02) 9604 9975 and for directions - <http://www.canleyheightsrsl.com.au/contact-us/>
You're all welcome

. **Pertinent Points** – extracted from the 131 Locators Association Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday, 11th December 2018 at 1105hrs...

Attendees were: Allen Morley, Ged Carroll, Grahame Dignam, Ernest Newbold, Ian Amos, Nick Proskurin, and George Lane.

Financial Membership is currently ... 117, plus Associates... 2, plus Affiliates...9
Total... 128

Plus, Lapsed as at 14//2018...38 members. Deceased...7 Members

Presidents report.

Allen advised:

. LSTAA will be having their Xmas meeting at Panania RSL on 16/12/2018.

. We should make the Photo album project our focus for 2019 with a concerted effort to advance the project.

. January will be meeting free but casual gatherings are encouraged if you wish.

. Bob is working on our website which was hacked by some nerds. This has necessitated a major repair and will involve a new contract for hosting which will cost \$25 per month. This was much more expensive than the previous arrangement. The details were circulated among the executive and all confirmed that we should go ahead with the agreement as discussed. There will be some changes to email addresses.

Public Officer's Report: The association received an advice from NSW Fair Trading that the 2017 report had a box left vacant in error. An adjusted return was submitted with the extra tick in the missed box without penalty or further ado.

General Business:

. The Sec/Treas has contacted the Marysville public school regarding the book prize we are sponsoring in the name of Jim Menz. We are waiting for a reply from the school who are very slow answering any mail.

. A change of Masthead has been suggested for the Association correspondence going forward as the "100 years of ANZAC" is drawing to a close. A couple have been suggested and a reworked version will be available shortly for consideration.

. Nick has obtained version of the UCG for use on the Association free standing banners. A version for the Marching Banner is being sourced.

. George Lane has mentioned that a number of Pioneer Vets are arranging a mixed casual gathering at Coffs Harbour over the weekend of 4/5 May 2019. No official events will be held but it is a great excuse to see some old mates in a nice location

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.

. Birthdays in the Battery...January –

Day	NAME	Regt. No.	BORN	IN SVN	OUT SVN	COMMENTS
1	VICTOR DANKO	2783210	1945	04 05 1967	12 12 1967	



1	JOE LIBRIZZI	5716081	1947	23 09 1969	04 06 1970	
1	CHRIS CHAPPLE	5716208	1948	20 01 1970	13 08 1970	
1	RICHARD CHAPLIN	2791166	1948	20 01 1970	13 08 1970	
2	JOHN BROWNE	218367	1949	27 08 1969	13 08 1970	
3	GARY NAVAS	2793162	1949	30 05 1970	26 05 1971	
4	PETER PETTIFORD	3792038	1947	08 11 1968	04 06 1969	
5	GRAEME SMITH	6708707	1946	12 04 1968	20 08 1968	
6	ARTHUR DOVE	217348	1950	13 01 1969	28 11 1969	
6	ALLAN ROBOTHAM	6709864	1950	25 05 1971	18 11 1971	
9	PETER SADLER	15138	1941	20 05 1966	28 04 1967	† 2008
9	ROBERT NESS	4717755	1945	20 05 1966	30 04 1967	† 01.01.2001
9	GERARD PIRES	5717069	1949	03 03 1971	12 08 1971	
11	PAUL TRAVERS Maj.	47027	1940	{09 09 1965	19 09 1965	VISIT
	" "			{25 02 1967	04 04 1967	RAEME
11	GRAEME LESLIE	1861 4	1942	1969	1970	† Unknown
11	PETER PIORO	2790931	1948	27 11 1969	04 05 1970	
12	PETER HOPPER Sgt	3787938	1945	04 05 1967	12 12 1967	
12	DAVID REILLY	3794901	1948	24 03 1970	13 08 1970	
12	BRIAN JOHNSON	4720991	1949	29 05 1970	05 05 1971	AACC
	" "			14 05 1970	27 05 1970	1st Armoured Regt.
12	LASZLO FALKAI	4721836	1949	03 03 1971	30 06 1971	131
	" "			30 06 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd REGT.
13	ROGER HOLMES	3795910	1948	22 07 1970	25 02 1971	
15	GEORGE STAZIKER Lt Col	2108436	1938	14 04 71	01 05 71	† 29.12.12
15	PHIL. ENDICOTT	2783419	1945	06 01 1967	27 09 1967	
16	KEN OSBORNE WO1	48543	1937	18.04.67	02.04.68	RAEME
16	EDWARD COOPER	44231	1950	26 08 1969	21 01 1970	
16	LESLIE SAURINE	2791863	1947	24 03 1970	17 12 1970	
18	PETER SZABO	38752	1947	26 03 1969	25 03 1970	
19	BARRY HEARD	3788324	1945	02 04 1967	25 10 1967	Honorary 131
19	PETER FIELDEN	3797872	1949	25 11 1970	12 08 1971	
21	PETER SUCKILNG SGT	55141	1943	05.02.1971	15.11.1971	
22	KEVIN BROWNING Sgt	217743	1948	16 09 1968	24 09 1969	131
	" "			05 04 1971	29 06 1971	131
	" "			30 06 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd REGT.
22	MICHAEL BARLOW	2792252	1949	19 08 1970	11 03 1971	4 Fd Regt.
23	DONALD CHALMERS	3793171	1945	01 07 1969	03 12 1969	
	IAN "Scotty" McNICOL	216327	1945	{12 09 1967	17 09 1968	131
	" "			{09 04 1970	02 05 1970	VISIT
24	TERENCE ERBS	3791713	1947	28 10 1968	04 06 1969	
24	DAVID NEGUS	3794728	1947	24 02 1970	13 08 1970	
25	WALLY FRANKLIN	1411285	1949	29 01 1968	28 01 1969	
26	RAY HUTCHINSON	37669	1940	17 04 1967	02 04 1968	
26	GEOFFREY TODD	54254	1943	18 12 1967	10 12 1968	
27	ALLAN ADAMS	3788792	1945	04 05 1967	27 09 1967	
28	ROBIN TORRISI	1735572	1948	20 08 1970	12 03 1971	
29	PETER MACKIE	2184557	1949	20 08 1970	08 02 1971	
30	ALAN McDONALD	511355	1947	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 – 12 blokes not highlighted is still not a great result. Ok, let's start the new year off coming up with a couple of "Locateds"

. Locator Profiles – We've received and sent out 157. Ed – let's see what 2019 produces?

. 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.

Un-Vale – With a response from **Rieny Nieuwenhof** with regards to the livelihood of one of our Det Members, **Grahame Dignam** made a phone call and yes, we struck gold with a “Lazarus” response.

We had Valed **Rod Beasley** (Det '71) and now he has re-appeared!

Rieny had given Grahame the name of a bloke at the Swan Hill Veterans Centre - **Harold Heslop**, and Grahame did the obligatory phone call and bingo, that's all it took to breathe air into a Locator!

Ed – Thanks Rieny and Grahame for your efforts. Let's hope this sort of action gets contagious!

However, now to a more sadder Vale article...

Vale –

Name	Rank	Regt No	Locns SVN	SVN	DOB	DOD
Roberts, John “Beau” Leslie	Gnr	3787005	Survey/LP/Radar	1966-67	08.05.45	20.11.18

Damian McManus sent in the following note – “Sad about Beau, but we saw him off in a no frills but perfect service at his golf club in Brighton, with drinks served after the service while his casket was still amongst us. (the lid

was closed) 

It was a bit like I would imagine an Irish Wake might have been. Bob Tanner and I represented 131. Damian”

Locator Profile

Surname: Roberts **Given Name:** John Leslie **Nickname:** “Beau” **Dob:** 08/05/1945 **State of Origin:** Vic

Activity to the Army: Investigative draughtsman mainly allocated to the planning of Melbourne's Underground Railway.

Army service dates from: 30 June 1965 to 30 June 1967

Regt No. 3787005

National Service Intake No. 1

SVN Dates: May 4 1966 to April 30 1967 – “Pioneer”

Battery Activity: All associated with 131 Div Loc, primary responsibility was survey but without constant need for it was shunted around to LP's, radar, infantry operations, even to the Yank Battery in various roles.

Who were you in the service with: Brian Killworth, Bern Erica, Damien McManus, Ralph Pearce, Jed Carroll, Baldy Nairn, Vic Morrow, Des Bury, Dave Doyle, Paul Buss, Bob Tanner, George Lane and too many more to mention.

Last Rank: Gunner

What did you do after the Army: Went back to the Underground project, but nothing had happened, so left there and tried to complete my Industrial Design Diploma, but that was a bust also. Like so many of us I couldn't settle at anything, built and drove lots of race and rally cars, drove taxis, worked for car dealerships, worked out of friend's service stations, even had a go at running one. During most of this time I had stayed in touch with Chris Armshaw who would stay with me when he sold opals in Melbourne. Eventually did a deal to join him at Coober Pedy to operate a drill rig. Virtually on the eve of my departure came the news that Chris had been killed there. I had to pick up the traces again. But it's not all doom and gloom, got married, had 2 kids, 5 grandkids, but have been happily single for some time.

Anything else of interest: Later on, I assisted a friend establish a high-performance auto parts business which led to a totally new career of management and sales which took me to many places across the world, culminating in my moving to the USA as a Director of a manufacturing company. This lasted about 5 years, but eventually the need to come back to Oz was too strong and my kids were into their teens. Being over 50 and with my experience, nobody would employ me, so I volunteered for various tasks at the Brighton Golf Club. I've held lots of positions there (all unpaid) over the past 20 years until recent ill health has caused me to step back.

What city / town do you live in now: Sandringham, Melbourne, Vic.

Photos: Unfortunately, when I went to live in USA I left all my photos with a friend who sold up and they all disappeared.

Ed a p.s.: I have added the following, taken from the 131 Locators Association website (it was also published in an earlier *Eyes & Ears Long Tan Special*), as it possibly gives us more insight into a very special person, including his Mum.

“**John ‘Beau’ Roberts** has dug really deep to relate the following -
'131DivLocNews, Attn: Paul Dickson

I read your request for memories of locations etc on Thursday August 18, 1966 and feel I would like to share something with you and the others I haven't been willing to do outside of Bernie Erica and Damien McManus. I was fortunate that every letter I wrote to my parents my mother kept. She offered them to me earlier on in my life and I told her to destroy them, luckily, she didn't and recently I read them again and have compiled a document with the letters and comments.

The following are extracts from a letter dated August 19th 1966:

"Yesterday I returned from 10 and a ½ days in the donga.....the operation was codenamed Holsworthy and part of the operation was to pacify a village up the road about 8000 metres called Bihn Ba, treat the people with Doctors and leave a South Vietnamese Special Forces Commando unit in charge...On the first day out...the platoon to my left saw some Vietnamese and couldn't really tell what they were so they opened up with a machine gun...our score was one dead baby and seriously wounded mother who took about ½ hour to die...so we buried them and carried on...that night we propped ourselves up against trees, soaking wet, and about 2:30am we arose and through pitch darkness made our way to the edge of the village.....other companies had surrounded the village...We did the sweep...the result was 17 VC and 77 suspected VC along with quite a number of deserters from the South Vietnamese Army...the rest of the time we spent roaming around the bush...one afternoon we moved into position for the night when 3 VC simply walked down a path...one guy opened up with a rifle followed by a machine gunner...the VC got away but one of our guys (Kennedy) was relieving his bowels over the path and wore it in the neck...he died instantly...yesterday on our return there was a tremendous concert, Col Joye and Little Pattie...Col Joye came up to Battalion HQ and all of us at B Co decided to kidnap him, which we did and brought him to our canteen...eventually the CO broke it up as the chopper was waiting to take him away"

The significant part of this letter is of course, the date. I was sent to B Co 5RAR because the LP guys normally stationed with B Co were ill and myself and Bernie Erica were to form the LP on the operation. They did this with us surveyors when we weren't otherwise occupied. The parts of the letter are self-explanatory but what is not contained there is what happened on August 17 and 18 1966.

Perhaps the worst part of Kennedy's death was not that he was having a crap, rather that the jungle was so thick that there was no way the Medivac chopper could land and the area was now a hot spot. All they could do was to drop a stretcher, do a loop and come back and winch him out. However, they didn't want to hang around and just took off with him dangling and rotating on the end of the winch rope, one leg over the side.

The CO of B Co thought he knew where the VC or a North Vietnamese unit rumoured to be in the area was most likely located. This turned out to be the reason we were roaming around. On the morning after Kennedy's death the CO called us together and said he had worked out that the most likely place the VC would be was in the Long Tan area. He told Task Force HQ of his thoughts and intention to go there. From memory, I think we actually started off in that direction but HQ called him and told him not to proceed. He was so keen to go there that he called them up 3 times requesting permission to go and each time they told him to hold. Eventually they informed him that a Company from 6RAR was headed that way and we should return to base, which thankfully we did. The rest is history.

I am not sorry that we didn't proceed there, I don't have a desire to be a hero, but if we had gone there it wouldn't have been with a better CO or bunch of guys.

Beau (John) Roberts"

At right - Merv Nairn with Beau, Nui Dat





2009 ANZAC Day, Melbourne above and right L-R Al Adams, the late Bernie Erica, "Beau" Roberts and Paul Dickson.



Bernie Erica and "Beau" - 2011 ANZAC Day, Melbourne



2011 Veterans Day Melbourne – L-R Damian MacManus, Mike Butler, Al Adams and "Beau"



Again in Melbourne, 2011 with Al Adams, Paul Dickson and "Beau"

May He Rest In Peace



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: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...

Artillery Surveyors 131 Div Loc Bty...



ARTILLERY SURVEYORS 131 DIV LOC BTY

“Elements of 131 came wandering in from the bush” (A quote whose origins are lost, yet the sentiments expressed will not be lost on many who served with 131 Div Loc Bty SVN.)

. Locating, Surveillance & Target Acquisition Association...



LOCATING, SURVEILLANCE & TARGET ACQUISITION ASSOCIATION

The Eyes and Ears of The Battlefield



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL COMPANY

www.artilleryhistory.org



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

. 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/>

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