

THE EYES and EARS

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

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Vol 18 No 10 October 2025 No 207

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

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

Supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs



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

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

2025

**59 Years and the Detachment
Spirit Remains**



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



Birth of the Dragon



Relaxing SVN "70



Q Store '68



"Fitness" lot Holsworthy '68

- **1967:** The RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam (RAN HFV) was established in October and operated in South Vietnam until June 1971. 📍

- **1967:** The Australian government announced an increase in the Australian forces commitment (1 ATF) in October. 📍

some interesting events

- **1967:** The naval warship HMAS Perth was hit by enemy fire near Cape Lai on October 18. 📍
- This incident was the only time an Australian warship sustained casualties from enemy fire during the war. 📍

- **National Service Act 1964:**
Passed in November 1964, this act established a selective conscription scheme for men turning 20. 📍

October in South Vietnam...

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 1965 and the first soldiers were sent in March 1966. This scheme required 20-year-old men to register, and a random "birthday ballot" selected those who would be called up for service. 📍

- **1971:** The withdrawal of Australian forces from Vietnam was a major focus in October.
- The departure of 3RAR troops and vehicles from Vung Tau began on October 6, **this action by the Anzac Portal** marked a significant step in the drawdown of Australian forces, which would continue through 1973. 

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



This Project is being re-ignited for 2025.

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Date	Name	Regt No	DoB	SVN In	SVN Out	DVA Location
17	Jorge Kiene L/Bdr	3797963	1947	09 11 1970	05 08 1971	? Location
18	Desmond Ronald Bury	1411072	1946	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	Gympie, Q
20	Michael Edward Fletcher L/Bdr	352778	1945	29 04 1969	16 04 1970	E Malvern, Vic
22	Brian Harold John Ruddock Sgt	216134	1935	{29 01 1968	21 01 1969	Sydney
	" "			{03 02 1970	04 02 1971	4 Fd REGT
25	Stanley Norman Todkill	1201908	1946	04 11 1969	17 06 1970	Brisbane
30	Ronald Alfred Saunders L/Bdr	38516	1947	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	Wangaratta, Vic
30	Gary James Stratton	2788161	1946	08 11 1968	27 08 1969	Sydney

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

Paul Dickson

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

. Unknown/Known Dates of Deaths continues to be updated...as at 31.10.2025 –

A continuing Reflective Thought with regards to Vales as we progress on in years.

The following table reflects Members passings over the years since our 'journeys' into South Vietnam which began back in May 1966.

It reflects on 10-year periods since, and including, 1966. The figures speak for themselves, and if you exclude deaths in SVN, of which there were two, the initial period does show a dark period considering the ages of our mates.

Sadly, we've added **Clinton Neil MacNeill** to the list below as he recently passed. (See Vale below)

10 Year Detachment/131 Battery Death Periods

1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	Total
1	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	7
1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	
0	1	1	0	1	0	1	2	0	2	8
1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	
0	0	2	2	2	1	2	1	0	0	10
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
3	2	2	2	0	3	2	1	3	1	19
2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
1	4	4	4	2	9	4	6	5	3	42
2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
9	4	5	5	6	8	11	13	10	9	81

Unknowns*

1

Total

166

Please note that these figures represent data provided by Members, from what was, and is stated to be reliable sources (official notices/family/mates etc). Data as at **31.17.2025**.

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

This following sections have now been updated as of 31.10.2025 and show a clear picture of Battery/Detachment Members that have incomplete Date of Death details.

Here are the names and details –

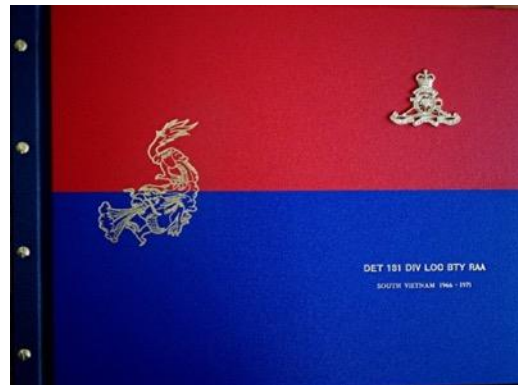
Name	Rank	Regt No	Section	SVN	DoB	DoD
Robinson, Marcus Lee	Gnr	2791229		1970	14.02.48	Unknown

If you can help in any way to update this data it would be greatly appreciated – You can send information to Paul Dickson at email 131eyesandears@gmail.com Subject: Vale update

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

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

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



Paul Dickson - Late September and into October saw us get away for a wander through Paris (hadn't been there for 20 years), then it was onto Egypt for a cruise up the Nile. It was certainly a different venue a trip. We didn't redo the major venues but did go for a wander through Notre Dame and seriously you'd never know the damage that the fire back in 2019. Egypt started with a stay in Giza where we had great views of the pyramids and the Sphynx - the first night there was an event on and two of the pyramids were illuminated - amazing! The cruise up the Nile from Luxor to Aswan was on a 6-cabin sailing boat and it was incredible. However, after 5 full on days of temples, more pyramids and ruins we were totally confused with the history, but the actual sites were amazing - how did they build them by hand! The Grand Egyptian Museum was absolutely stunning - the building and the display of the contents. It was a great trip - one to remember the 80th! Here's a few photos out of the hundreds taken.





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...

John Vitkovsky - "Hi Dicko, boy, you must have struck the lottery with all your gallivanting around the world.!

Our only trip of minor interest was the annual caravan/motorhome outing to Mannum (on the Murray River) with the South Coast Vets. About 30 - 40 couples turned up and we spent 5 days eating, drinking and fishing. See pic at right of our camp.



Other than that, my regular trip to Point Turton to give my ailing brother a hand.

Last weekend was the annual Port Elliot Show. We represented the South Coast Vets with a stand which was manned for the two days, sponsored by DVA. Sold lots of lottery tickets. We give the proceeds to charity. All the best to you and Helen.
Cheers, JV."

Ken Osborne - "Dear Paul, It was good to hear from you with your brief synopsis of your travels.

If I ever had the opportunity, seeing Egypt and all of its pyramids and temples would be one of my top priorities. I am amazed at what they achieved that even with our present-day technology we cannot match.

The people in Central America and South America did things very similar but nature has taken back their achievements and it is only now they are coming to light.

I watch quite a number of TV shows on Egypt and the Middle East but with today's technology I am getting swamped with false news and AI generated images that makes it difficult to separate fact from fiction and no one seems to police these matters much to my disgust.

I am also amazed at the amount of misinformation we get pushed down our throats by supposedly reliable sources from Gaza and Ukraine and another dozen or more places that are in conflict. In Gaza both sides are now saying that the terms of the ceasefire are being breached, the Israelis saying that the bodies of the dead hostages haven't been returned, yet after two years with the destruction and the possibility the kidnapper may not be alive, how can anyone be expected to achieve that goal? Some things may have the best intentions but become goals that cannot be achieved.

On the home front things are just as bad with all the problems we have with the weather and global warming, cost of living, power prices, Medicare, NDIS and a number of other problems.

Locally we have problems with roads and youth crime. Victoria keeps saying that it has the toughest bail laws, yet youths on bail commit more crimes and continue to get bail, it is like a revolving door. They might be OK if the magistrates had the balls to enforce them.

Well, that is enough on the bleeding-heart side, I am still doing family history and I hope to get it as up to date as possible before I lose my marbles. I reckon it is about 95% correct but I want to add photos of places and people to add a bit of colour to it.

My 2nd cousin in England did a lot of research on the English side during Covid and has traced our lot back to Anne Boleyn is my half 1st cousin 13 times removed and Elizabeth 1st is my half 2nd cousin 12 times removed and Sir Thomas Howard the 2nd Duke Of Norfolk is Annes grandfather, and Lady Agnes Tilney is Annes mother and so on and so forth. Being a sceptic, I checked all the steps back and if the Ancestry details as per the internet are correct, her info is 100% correct. However, in doing the research I found nearly every family had several husbands or wives and great bunches of kids, so there are probably thousands out there that can say that they have a common ancestor with me.

My Granddaughter who said quite a while back that she was never going to have children, had a daughter, so now I am a Great Grandfather. Have only seen photos at this stage but she is growing well and at last report is getting ready to crawl, so before I know it she will be ready for school. How time flies.

I am still at home, still furniture surf to get around, have some home help once a fortnight and trying to get a gardener to clean up the backyard and that's it. Read a few books, so its eat, read, view and sleep and every now and then someone calls in and we discuss things that are mutual subjects but not always from the same viewpoint, however,

keeps the mind active. First item for the day however is to complete Wordle, then breakfast and start the day, so keep, well, stay safe.

Regards, Ken O."

Rieny Nieuwenhof - "Hello Paul,

Thanks for the 'catch-up'.

I followed your pictorial journey through the Nile Valley, great pics!

Glad your health is good and feeling on top of things. We are as well as can be expected given our age. It seems all our friends are in the same situation with constant trips to the doctor for check-ups, blood tests and specialist appointments, but we remain as active as possible.

There are no long trips planned for me, I am quite content to stay close to home and enjoy what comes.

I am still heavily involved with the Vietnam Veterans (I am Vice President) and now currently part of a reference group planning the establishment of the Veterans and Families Welfare Hub in Geelong. We hope to see this Hub open in the middle of 2026. There is still much to do to assist veterans, it is estimated there are about 9,000 veterans (of all conflicts) living in the Geelong region.

I am also involved in my local RSL and attend their 'Happy Hour' nearly each week.

I am also a member of the Portarlington Tourist Information Centre and provide local regional information to visitors - wineries, fishing trips, mussel festival, special events (eg Celtic Festival) etc.

So, I am not "sitting on my hands".

As we approach Christmas and the holiday period we are bracing for the influx of many thousands to our small fishing village, parking in the main street will become a real problem, but it is good for the local businesses.

That's about brought you up to date. Until next time.

Regards,

Rieny."

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>

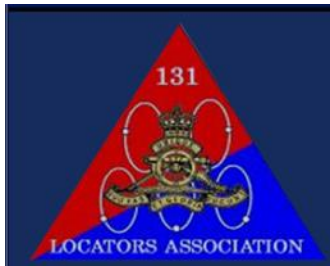
Ernie Newbold forwarded in the following link – copy paste and read October's edition -

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 local council recently offered a presentation on low risk driving for seniors. I first received my licence in Melbourne when I was 18. Many years had passed so after checking the details I signed up. There was no actual driving involved, more an update of road rules, safety inside and outside the vehicle and advice re many aspects of driving.

In the interim period since my easy driving test, feet had become metres, there were a huge number of new signs, bus lanes have been born, air bags were now standard as are seat belts. I well remember the Victorian amphotometer for speed checking which had its demise decades ago.

Random Breath Testing had not been considered until more recently. It seems that I was badly out of contemporary rules knowledge.

Since the presentation I have become aware that I had become somewhat complacent behind the driving wheel. The advice provided by Rob the instructor is now being applied practically and makes a lot of sense.

Regards

Allen.'

59 Years

April 1966 – April 2024



find us on

Facebook

<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 14 th October 2025

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

Attendees were: Allen Morley, Grahame Dignam, Gordon Malcolm and Merv Nairn

Zoomed members were Bert Blink, Bob Billiards and Rieny Nieuwenhof.

Apologies: Paul Dickson, Terry Erbs, George Lane, Jim Fitzgerald, Nick Proskurin, Ian Amos, Steve Wynn, Ged Carroll, Ernest Newbold, Warwick Brooker and other State Reps

Financial Membership is currently ... 117 plus Associates 2 plus Affiliates 15 Total 134

Plus Lapsed as of 1 October 2025 37 members

Presidents report.

Allen referenced.

. NSW RSL is in turmoil after 4 Director's resignations. Resolution will be protracted.

. RAAHC has requested support to cover cost of extending the Mount Pleasant memorial to include Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. A suggestion we donate \$500.00 was made and the meeting unanimously agreed

. Allen confirmed that Nick Proskurin had been discharged and was resting at home.

Webmaster Update.

. Robert advised Facebook members are 546. He also will post the AGM notices on the website and Facebook.

Health.

. The usual "old men's" issues are prevalent and are of concern, but no new members have come to notice.

General Business and around the grounds.

Discussions ensued on the following:

. Private operators claiming a speedier service for processing DVA claims have been touting for business on the net and in newspapers. However, a commission is usually charged for this service which can be provided free by approved DVA advocates. Once lodged, the claims are placed in date order by DVA, and the wheels fall off at that point. Be aware!

. Bob Biliards reported that Original data files for the Surveyors website are still being sought. This will greatly assist restoring the display on our website.

. A warning that Vets should check the expiry date on their NSW OPAL Travel concession cards.

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 –

Next General meeting will be following the AGM on:

18 th November 2025 at approximately 11.15 AM

Also, available via Zoom link to be advised



Birthdays in the Battery...November –

Date	Name	Regt No	SVN In	SVN Out	Comments
1	Denis William Smith	2789286	15 04 1969	17 12 1969	† 13.12.2012
1	Vaughan William Miller L/Bdr	3411742	27 11 1967	26 11 1968	
1	Wayne Jeffrey L/Bdr	2794772	04 11 1970	29 07 1971	† 26.10.2017
2	Trevor Leslie Prideaux (Waghorn) Sgt	52837	05 05 1967	06 02 1968	
2	Russell John Carsburg	1205673	N/a	N/a	† 07.05.2009
2	Kenneth William Halligan T/Bdr	2788319	16 09 1968	27 08 1969	
4	John William Henshaw	3793057	20 01 1969	28 11 1969	
4	Harold Philip Little T/Bdr	2789038	21 02 1969	28 11 1969	† 24.04.2003
4	Ean David Thomas		N/a	N/a	131GLB † 02.04.2018
6	Peter John Whertheimer Cpt OAM RFD	355747	N/a	N/a	† 23.11.2019
10	Barry Thomas Uren T/Bdr	214715	28 10 1966	02 05 1967	† 24.10.2023
11	William Taggart		00.10.1966	00.11.1967	US 1st / 83rd Arty Survey
12	John Richmond	2784289			
12	Thomas Charles Lempriere	3412000	02 12 1968	21 01 1969	
13	Michael Lewis Campbell	6708462	05 05 1967	13 12 1967	† 20.03.1988
16	Kenneth Clive Long	2783232	04 05 1967	28 10 1967	
16	Allen William Morley	3788972	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	
17	Warwick Ronald Hamilton Capt.	235190	17 04 1967	12 02 1968	† 26.08.2019
17	Terence James "Lofty" Hayes Bdr	214973	{04 05 1966	29 04 1967	† 14.12.2011
	" " "		{10 12 1968	10 12 1969	
17	Jorge Kiene L/Bdr	3797963	09 11 1970	05 08 1971	? Location
17	Barry John Williams	3796729	16 12 1970	08 02 1971	† 29.09.2004
18	Desmond Ronald Bury	1411072	20 05 1966	29 04 1967	Gympie, Q
19	Frantz John Perry WO2	36026	22 04 1966	07 09 1966	† 17.10.2016
20	Michael Edward Fletcher L/Bdr	352778	29 04 1969	16 04 1970	E Malvern, Vic
20	Leslie John Bates	218053	27 11 1969	05 11 1970	† 07.08.2013
22	Murray James Poustie Bdr	3787941	04 05 1967	14 08 1967	
22	Brian Harold John Ruddock Sgt	216134	{29 01 1968	21 01 1969	Sydney
	" "		{03 02 1970	04 02 1971	4 Fd REGT
24	Donald Victor Simmons Sgt.	212769	22 04 1966	21 12 1966	† 25.04.2015
25	Stanley Norman Todkill	1201908	04 11 1969	17 06 1970	Brisbane
25	Brian Leslie Parker T/Cpl	3793586	20 01 1970	27 05 1970	AACC
	" "		28 05 1970	14 01 1971	1st Amoured Regt
26	Michael Francis O'Keffe Pvt	2787168	08 01 1968	14 01 1969	AACC † 1980
26	Frederick Lionel Walter Sgt.	342848	11 05 1967	23 04 1968	RAEME
26	Jeffrey Thomas Schafer	2788886	12 02 1969	17 12 1969	
	Colin Waletr West	2152525	20 01 1969	21 01 1970	
27	Paul Hobson	2799714			

28	John Alwin Bayford	3791019	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
30	Ronald Alfred Saunders L/Bdr	38516	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	Wangaratta, Vic
30	Gary James Stratton	2788161	08 11 1968	27 08 1969	Sydney

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

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

. **Locator Profiles** – we've received **181. Ed** – Maybe we need to draw in a deep one so as to hold our breathes for a while longer.

. **Located...**

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

Vale

Peter Hopper advised us of the funeral for MacNeill, Clinton Neil...

"Paul
This morning (26/9/25) in Subiaco, WA, I attended the funeral of Clinton Neil Kessey.
He served in Vietnam with 131 Div Loc Bty from 26th Sept 1967 to 17th Sept 1968. He changed his name to Neil MacNeill and this made it difficult to track him down.
He was born on 10th May 1946 and passed away here in Perth, WA on 12th September 2025.
He ended up with quite a distinguished career in education.
The following was written under his name on the funeral program.
Dr Neil MacNeill
BA, BEd (Hons), MEd Admin,
MEd, PhD, EdD,
Education Consultant,
Editor, Author, Educational Analyst,
Teacher.
Best Wishes
Peter Hopper"



Name: MacNeill, Clinton Neil

Service No: 5714922 Rank: Gunner

SVN In: 26 09 1967 SVN Out: 17 09 1968

DoB: 10 05 1946 DoD: 12 09 2025

Lest We Forget



Peter Binns - "Hi Paul

Sad news
I have fond memories of Neil and have been trying to find him for many years and a sad way to find out with his passing
Rip Neil
Sorry no photos
Regards
Peter."

Bill Taggart - "Paul, please pass along the condolences of the 1/83rd to the family, Lest We Forget.

I see his time and mine in-country slightly crossed paths as well.
Bill."



Vales and Locator Profiles...

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

Let's keep a memory alive.



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

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

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

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

May He Rest in Peace, and Never be Forgotten.



131 Locators Association is always on the lookout for new financial members. With the establishment of the web site we continue to be burdened with the ongoing cost of maintenance etc and we need to be able to support this effort equally.

So, if you're a non-financial Associate receiving emails and the *Eyes & Ears* regularly you could bite the bullet and email Grahame Dignam:sectreas131locators@gmail.com and he could forward you the relevant forms to join - Memberships are available for 1 year or longer deposit a DONATION direct (add your name) to the associations account at "A/c Name: 131 Locators Association Inc. Bank: Westpac, Kingsgrove NSW BSB No: 032 166 A/c No: 264133"

Hope we hear from you?

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

. Other related sites...

. Locating, Surveillance & Target Acquisition Association...



LOCATING, SURVEILLANCE & TARGET ACQUISITION ASSOCIATION
The Eyes and Ears of The Battlefield

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



Australian Artillery Association – www.australianartilleryassociation.com



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL COMPANY

www.artilleryhistory.org



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

. VETERAN'S AFFAIRS WEBSITE

The Dept of Veteran's Affairs has launched a new mental health initiative to assist veteran's experiencing the affects of mental illness and their families. Providing information and fact sheets about understanding mental illness, links and contact information for accessing support, and online resources for health professionals, this website focuses on helping veterans identify early warning signs of mental illness to effectively manage their mental illness and seek treatment. For more info or to access, please visit www.at-ease.dva.gov.au

. 1st Battalion 83rd Artillery...



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



We also welcome our Australian and New Zealand Allies to whom we owe so much. It is also dedicated to those members of the 1/83rd who did not return. We will never forget their sacrifice. Website: [http: www.1stbn83rdartyvietnam.com](http://www.1stbn83rdartyvietnam.com)



The Royal New Zealand Artillery Association

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

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