

THE EYES and EARS

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

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

**Detachment 131 Divisional
Locating Battery RAA
South Vietnam 1966 – 1971
2025**

**59 Years and the Detachment
Spirit Remains**



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



Pioneers digging in '66



Surveyors '67



Looking for spare parts '68



LP Nui Dat '69



**63 Years ago,
then 11 years later
= 52 Years ago**

1962 Vietnam...52 years ago -

The Australian Army's involvement in the Vietnam War began in July 1962 with the deployment of the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV). This marked the start of Australia's significant contribution to the conflict, which lasted until 1973.

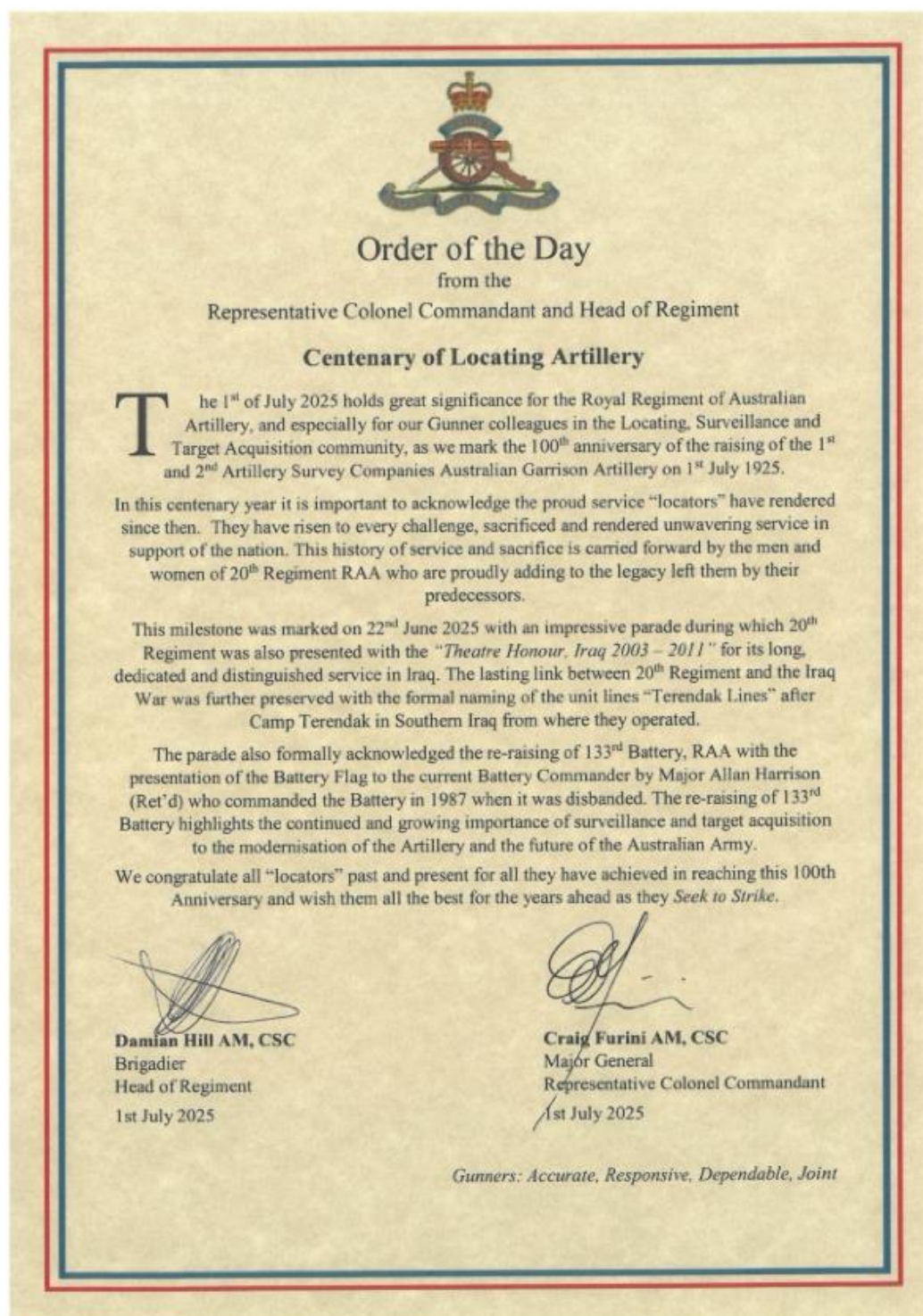
Over 60,000 Australians served in Vietnam, including ground troops, air force, and navy personnel.

Australian troops from the [Australian Embassy Platoon](#) remained deployed in the country until 1 July 1973, and Australian forces were deployed briefly in April 1975, during the [fall of Saigon](#), to evacuate personnel from the Australian embassy.

Australia's involvement in the [Vietnam War](#) began with a small commitment of 30 military advisors in 1962, and increased over the following decade to a peak of 7,672 Australian personnel

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Kevin Browning forwarded to following notice relevant to the **100th Anniversary** of the raising of the 2nd Artillery Survey Companies Australian Garrison Artillery on the 1st July, 1925...



Regt marks historic milestone

...Maj Carolyn Barnett



OC 133 Bty Cmdr Maj Andrew Penhaligon receives the battery flag from former battery commander Maj Allan Harrison (ret'd) during the regiment's Locating Artillery centenary parade Photo at Gallipoli : Gnr Jesse Barracks Linards .

20 REGT, RAA marked four milestones last month during a ceremonial parade at Gallipoli Barracks.

The June 21 ceremony commemorated the centenary of 'Locating Artillery' in Australia, which began on July 1, 1925, with the formation of the 1st and 2nd Artillery Survey Companies of the Australian Garrison Artillery.

These units were unique because they comprised civilian professionals, including land surveyors, who not only brought their expertise but their own equipment.

A highlight of the day was the formal recognition of the regiment's role in Operation Catalyst with the awarding of the Iraq 2003–2011 theatre honour.

CO 20 Regt, RAA Lt-Col David Hickey said this distinction reflected the unit's critical contributions during its inaugural deployment, with all three capabilities.

The unit deployed radar and two types of uncrewed systems.

"We were able to deploy all our capabilities into Iraq and support a variety of operations," he said.

"The awarding of the honour is a privilege and is recognition of the unit's close relationship with the Iraq deployment."

Another key moment in the parade was the official re-raising of 133 Bty, which now joins the regimental order of battle as one of three tactical uncrewed aircraft system batteries, supported by combat services support and operational support batteries.

Former 133 Bty Cmdr Maj Allen Harrison (ret'd) said it was an honour to hand over the battery flag to the current OC Maj Andrew Penhaligon.

"To see what is happening today and the equipment these men and women now have gladdens my heart," Maj Harrison said.

Lt-Col David Hickey said the parade not only celebrated a proud history but reaffirmed the regiment's commitment to evolving and supporting future operations with cutting-edge capability and enduring tradition.

He said the technology may have advanced a century later, but the core mission – Seek to Strike – remained the same.

"We are the eyes and ears forward. We are looking for the enemy wherever they might be, often in the deep battlespace," Lt-Col Hickey said.

The regiment also celebrated the official naming of its home lines to Terendak lines.

The parade was attended by Cmdr Avn Cmd Maj-Gen David Hafner, Head of Regiment Brig Damian Hill, along with veterans, families and serving members.

<<<<>>>>



Victoria Cross awarded posthumously to late Vietnam War veteran Richard Norden...

extracted from a Current Affair story -

Richard was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia (VC) on 11 November 2024 for his bravery during the Vietnam War more than 50 years before. (Note: actually just over 56 years)

The Victoria Cross is Australia's highest military honour.

The VC was awarded for Richard's actions on 14 May 1968 during the Battle of Coral-Balmoral.

Richard Norden was just 19 years old when he tempted death three times to save two mates during the Vietnam War. What's followed has been a six-decade-long fight to get the boy from Gundagai the recognition he deserved. Today, history was finally rewritten.

Norden has at long last been awarded the Victoria Cross (VC) for his bravery in the Vietnam War.

A late Australian veteran who rescued wounded comrades under enemy fire in the Vietnam War has been posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross, Australia's highest military honour.

Private Richard Norden received the award for his extraordinary "acts of gallantry" when he ran into enemy fire on May 14, 1968, during the Battle of Fire Support Base Coral.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Governor-General Sam Mostyn made the announcement during today's Remembrance Day ceremony in Canberra. (11.11.2024)

During Operation Toan Thang, Norden's platoon was ambushed and came under heavy fire from a squad of North Vietnamese Army regular soldiers.

Their section commander and a scout were wounded, and Norden ran forward under heavy fire to reach them.

Norden killed a Vietnamese soldier and seized a machine gun which he turned against the enemy squad.

He then half-carried and half-dragged the severely wounded section commander back to safety.

Norden was seriously wounded but moved forward again in an attempt to rescue the scout, who he found dead.

After collecting some grenades, the private returned to the enemy a third time, clearing the way for the recovery of the scout's body.

Norden's actions meant the enemy's position could be secured and likely saved the lives of others in his platoon.



DVA Roll details -

1 Australian Reinforcement Unit	05 Dec 1967 30 Jan 1968
--	--------------------------------

7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment	31 Jan 1968 09 04 1968
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1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment	10 Apr - 13 Aug 1968
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The late Private Richard Leslie Norden. 2412437 Private
Date of Birth 24 Aug 1948
from GUNDAGAI NSW AUSTRALIA

Norden returned to Australia and after the war, joined the Australian Capital Territory Police. He died in a traffic accident while on active service with the police force in 1972.

May He Rest in Peace and Never be Forgotten.

. **Graham Dignam** forwarded a link to the following article which appeared in the **latest issue of 'Contact'** - Persistent presence at long range...



Australian Army soldiers from the 20th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery launch a RQ-21 Integrator Tactical Uncrewed Aerial System (TUAS) at Shoalwater Bay Training Area in preparation for Exercise Talisman Sabre 2025. Story by Corporal Michael Rogers. Photo by Leading Seaman Susan Mossop.

Persistent presence at long range...

In the skies above Shoalwater Bay, a lone aerial vehicle glides over rugged terrain, camera payload trained on the scrub below.

The footage it captures is received by its operators in a Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicle (PMV) over 25 kilometres away.

Operators inspect the feed looking for any movement or shapes that indicate an unwanted presence.

In this case, no sign is a good sign, according to Captain Harry Gray, battery second-in-command of Task Element Dragon from 20th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery.

"We are conducting trace clearances for a combined joint live fire exercise, and we will be observing the fall of shot for HIMARS when they fire," he said.

"But after that it will be normal operations for us, conducting intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance in support of the division, as well as target acquisition."

The gunners are operating the RQ-21 Integrator tactical Uncrewed Aerial System (UAS) during Exercise Talisman Sabre 25, the second major exercise since the RQ-7B Shadow UAS was retired last year.

The new system provides numerous advantages, including a longer flight time, better camera payload and most importantly for the operators, a smaller footprint on the ground.

Being able to maintain a more mobile and tactical posture was a key advantage, according to Captain Gray.

"We can operate our ground control stations as laptops in a PMV, whereas with Shadow it was basically a large green box on the back of a truck," he said.

"The skyhook recovery system also means we are not runway dependant; we just need an open area for it to glide into. The Shadow lands on its wheels, so we needed a graded surface."

The system allows for a greater operation range, with operators launching the Integrator in a safe location before handing off control to a forward element closer to the area of operations.



An Australian Army soldier from the 20th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery prepares a RQ-21 Integrator Tactical Uncrewed Aerial System (TUAS) at Shoalwater Bay Training Area in preparation for Exercise Talisman Sabre 2025.

“We push our controllers forward, extend our range and again, they’re more survivable and mobile. Once that aircraft is running out of fuel, they hand it back to us, we recover it and we get them a new one,” Captain Gray said. The drone is launched by a catapult and recovered using a skyhook, a line system that snares the wings of the craft, instead of touching down to land.

Getting the vehicles into the sky and accumulating flying hours is one of the best parts about being in the field, according to drone operator Gunner Ishaan McNeil.

Operators are more involved with Integrator from pre-flight to retrieval, a change from the Shadows which relied on aviation maintenance trades for some checks.

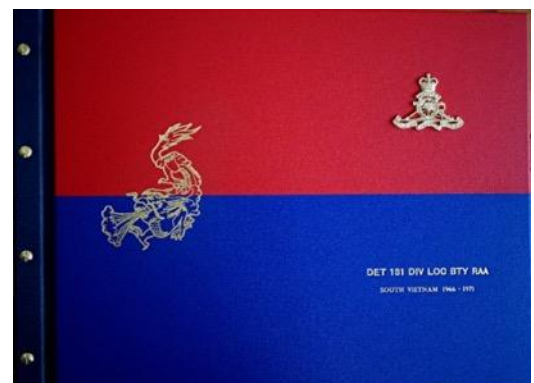
“In my role, I control the drone as well as take care of all the ground crew components such as wing assembly, fueling, defueling, launching and recovering the UAS,” Gunner McNeil said.

“The most rewarding thing about operating the RQ-21 is being able to work in a close-knit team, and support the mission and be successful in that task.”



Australian Army soldiers from the 20th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery prepare a RQ-21 Integrator Tactical Uncrewed Aerial System (TUAS) at Shoalwater Bay Training Area.

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



. Insights and Recollections...

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

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

Paul Dickson at - 131eyesandears@gmail.com

. Here are some Anniversaries for JULY...

. the 8th July - 15 years for the Loc Assoc Inc - a collage of photos...



At left - 17.03.2010 Original meeting



At Right -
17.12.2010 - A
Christmas get
together



At left - 1.11.2011 AGM



Left and
right -
22.12.12 a
pre-
Christmas
gathering





At left - 20.04.2013 a country gathering in Goulburn

At right - 09.07.2019 Meeting
Christmas gathering



...then -

. the 10th July - 73 Years establishment of 31 Locating Battery, RAA it became 131 in 1954

The Battery was first raised in 1952 as 31 Battery and was re-designated as 131st Locating Battery on 10th July, 1954. Our role in South Vietnam began when the advance party of Detachment 131 Div Loc Bty RAA departed Sydney N.S.W. aboard H.M.A.S. Sydney on 22nd April 1966; two days after the fourth intake of National Servicemen had commenced their military training. The remainder of the advance party departed from Richmond R.A.A.F. base on the 4th May 1966.

The Detachment formation remained in South Vietnam until May 1971 and was disbanded on the 31st July 1971. The Detachments' role in South Vietnam got its roots back in World War 1 when the task to identify enemy artillery became more necessary, then with the establishment of our predecessor, 31 Battery; in 1954 the world of Locating took on a professional edge.

The Battery in the 1960's continued the development of the art of "enemy artillery" detection with various methods and equipment being employed along the lines of – Observation through outposts called Listening Posts (LP's) where muzzle flashes, suspicious movements were noted and bearings from the LP relayed to the Artillery Intelligence (Arty Tac) centre for collation and response action. Radar became an integral part of early warning and tracking of enemy hostilities along with Sound Ranging which used a system of microphones to track the same activities. Intermingled amongst these activities was the necessity for Artillery Surveying which heightened the need for exactness in positioning and measurement. As a post activity exercise actual physical Crater Analysis was carried out to determine the direction that the projectile came from, also distance calculations from projectile entry angle and the type of weapon that was used. Later sensor equipment has included infra-red, thermal imagery acoustic and seismic devices and add to that today's technology of unmanned drones – Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), hence the development of Surveillance and Target Acquisition (STA), which evolved with the new 131 STA Battery, which is part of the 20th Surveillance and Target Acquisition Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery. This Battery currently serves in Afghanistan.

Detachment 131 Divisional Locating Battery became the longest continuing serving Detachment in the Royal Australian Artillery having been deployed for 5 yrs 2 mths with 463 Locators serving on a rotational basis, with some completing multiple tours during the 1966 to 1971 period of the Vietnam War. The Detachment endured one Locator Killed in Action (KIA), one Killed by Accident (KBA) and another eight Wounded in Action (WIA) during the time in South Vietnam.

And then...

. the 22nd July - 58 years ago the first ever *Eyes and Ears* was published...

THE EYES AND EARS.

South East
Asian Edition

Nui Dat's answer to Playboy.

Liberty is Freedom — we have the liberty to print, you in turn have the freedom to ignore. On this basis we offer to you, the Reader, a picaresque view of the "Unsung Heroes" at work and play in the Task Force. We hope you bear with us and allow our communication with one another to prosper.

The Editors.

THE FIRST ROUND : It was with mixed feeling, namely alarm and despondency, that I was compromised into agreeing to the foundation of this paper.

It is to be an arena for free thought and expression, where all are equal; bearing in mind that in this Democratic Army system of ours some are more equal than others.

Thus it is with great pride and humility that I declare open this, the official organ for all Australian Locators wherever they may be in SVN, the...
...HEM... the...-ERY... what did you say it's name was going to be ?

The O.G.

OPERATION PADDINGTON :

If on the surface an operation is valued on its "kills", Paddington was a failure. But this is not so, for "Paddo", like its predecessor "Lecton", has given "old Charlie" a great deal of heartburn. For he is now faced with months of rebuilding all that was destroyed during those two Ops. "Paddo" also showed to him that the 'hut' is no real deterrent to us.

L.F.J. proved their worth ten fold, by being the only reliable "Eyes and Ears" of the F.S.D.

Our Survey Team worked diligently and weren't without rewards. Murray Foustie is believed to be in the throws of writing a booklet on "How To Reduce Whilst Hoelining" and Pete Hopper has expounded a theory, that a compass isn't really necessary to find Nui Dat III.

WEATHER : Forecast for the next 142 days — Sure, Sure!.....this can be verified by the increased stock of rain gear the local shop owners have on display.

LEADS to the BATHY :

Three arrests in as many weeks — Well done fellas. Maybe next week the Brigadier will let us wear our black pyjamas too !



Give me a Name?

The “Lost Locator Project”

This Project is being re-ignited for 2025.

Our current list contains the names of **72** Locators (as at 31.07.2025) that we have not had contact with since, basically, commencing communications in 2012, so, we are going to focus a little more on this programme to try and reduce this number.

Let's have a look at August's Birthday List, below, where there are 5 Detachment and Battery Members listed as Lost Locators – see the names below.

So, we've done some great discoveries with Members Dates Of Death, I'm hoping we might muster some enthusiasm for this difficult task. I've added some more details as to full DoB's and places of birth according to the DVA Nominal Roll for, maybe, some help.

However, this doesn't mean that we still have contact with the total number of Battery/Detachment members we have Located over time as continuing correspondence has lapsed in a lot of cases. **I have 252 recipients (Association).**

We regularly check bereavement/funeral notices and this does not locate members in the way we really want to.

So, we're appealing for **YOUR** help in scouring all sorts of sources – local RSL's may be a good starter.

Date	Name	Regt No	DoB	SVN In	SVN Out	DVA Location
1	Phillip Francis Ross T/Bdr	3794468	1947	06 05 1969	30 04 1970	Melbourne, Vic
2	John Douglas Greenway	3790617	1946	24 10 1967	22 10 1968	Melbourne, Vic
9	Terry Leslie Welsh	4721779	1949	03 03 1971	29 06 1971	Prospect, SA 131
	" "			30 06 1971	30 10 1971	12 Fd REGT
						Paddington, NSW
9	Garry James Grimwood	2795771	1949	24 03 1971	01 07 1971	131
	" "			01 07 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt.
15	John McDonald Pollock Bdr	53860	1939	17 04 1967	24 05 1967	Cottesloe, WA 131
	" "			05 02 1971	07 04 1971	12 Fd REGT

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

Paul Dickson

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

. Unknown/Known Dates of Deaths continues to be updated...as at 30.07.2025 –

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 **Clive Leslie Dreis** 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	12	10	7	77

Unknowns*

1

Total

163

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 **30.07.2025**.

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

This following sections have now been updated as of 31.01.2025 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

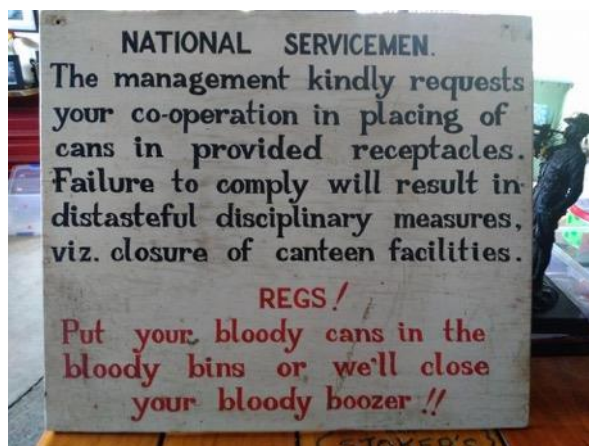
Ed - As a closing thought, can YOU give some thought to completing YOUR Locator Profile, which do add a personal background and also keeping in touch as it keeps us up to date with you and mates.

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

. Odessey Time.



This is not necessarily a typical (whatever that means) "Odessey Time" article but one with questions included, so let's get started...



Detachment Locations – South Vietnam, 1966 – 67 Listening Post call signs/location - (Article in June 2025's Edition of *Eyes & Ears*)

The following has been extracted recently forwarded to me (Paul Dickson) and the "LP" alpha id's interested me as to who served and most of interest where were the LP's located.

The following is a response from Jim "Hoggy" Hogno who served in SVN from 03.01.67 to 27.09.1967 and gives us some reflections of his Listening Post (LP) times...

Jim Hogno - "G'day Paul,

Hope you and Helen are well. My apologies for being so slack over many months and no contributions to *E & E* newsletter.

That said, I eagerly digest every edition and the article in latest (June 25) newsletter re LP locations evoked many memories for me.

During 67 I was posted to 31B at the Horseshoe from, I think, February till 14th May (that date is on a photo taken when leaving).

Then it's back to 31C till RTA on September 27.

The Horseshoe was very basic at that time with limited comforts and we built as we went. We didn't fill sandbags more like rock bags as the ground was so hard and stoney.

In the four months there I can only recall serving with BDR Maurie Arch, Brian (Wirey) Hackett and Des Spencer. Lots of happy memories spent with the three of them.



Attached photographs, photos of self in lavish kitchen and our five star accommodation. Like to be that thin again!
Stay well and thanks for all you do for the old unit boys.
Regards, Hoggy."



Mail Call...

Bert Blink - "I thought that this website by Dave Sabben is very, very interesting as it covers the 12 major battles in South East Asia during the time we served.



Home Page

Thank you for visiting my web site.
Please click on a link below to view the appropriate projects.
(Last updated 16 Nov 2016)

www.sabben.com

Books

- The Battle of Long Tan
- Through Enemy Eyes

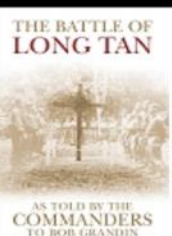
Battlefield Tours

- VN Long Tan Trek Tours
- VN Decisive Battles Tours
- Europe Battlefield Tours

Site

- Home Page
- About Dave
- Feedback/Contact Dave

Home Page



Aug 2004: Dave is one of seven contributing authors to this factual account of the battle. The book went into a reprint within 12 months of its release. Currently in its fourth print. Click on the cover to read more...

Available as a book from A&U (unendorsed) -
<http://www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=946&book=9781741141993>

Click on this link if you're interested -

<https://www.sabben.com/>

His PowerPoint presentations, in particular 05 Long Tan and 05b Coral Balmoral, are incredibly detailed.

Cheers
Bert."

Paul Dickson - After reading and connecting the link **Bert Blink** sent (in the above article) I managed to uncover some background on David - **David Sabben's veteran story...**

David Rae Sabben was born in Suva, Fiji, on 14 January 1945. He moved to Australia in 1958 to board at Trinity Grammar School, Sydney. After graduating from school in 1962, he was working as an advertising layout artist for a large Sydney department store.

[David Sabben and the Battle of Long Tan by Clair Hunter, 15 August 2018, Australian War Memorial, accessed 6 December 2022]

David was mentioned in dispatches for his actions during Long Tan and later awarded the Medal for Gallantry, but the loss of his men remained as a heavy burden.

After a 12-month tour, David returned to Australia and discharged from the Army, having completed his service obligation. He undertook training in computer programming and worked in the IT industry until December 2004. He retired to follow his passion of writing. He wrote and co-authored three books about the war in Vietnam.

This is an extract from [Australian at War Film Archive number 2585](#). The interview with David Sabben was recorded in 2000 for an ABC-DVA television documentary series called 'Australians at war'.

See also

Vietnam War 1962 to 1975

Further reading

DVA's Nominal Rolls

David Sabben (Australian Army), Platoon Commander

[illegible]

Mail Out



Ed - I started this section in September, 2017 and have continued to write to you on a quarterly basis, by breaking down the names alphabetically into groups of one letter. The list has diminished over time, but, in general, there is a good core of names that I can rely on to say g'day and just to generally keep in touch. A lot of the blokes I've listed have moved on, but I'll keep some connection alive. Plus, it's good to keep in touch, even sporadically, to avoid unpleasant unforeseen surprises.

Total Mail Out Members = 222 & Total Quarterly “Catch Up” Member Responders = 55

Mail In



- Here are the responses...

John Vitkovsky - "G'day mate, sorry to hear about your dermatological problems. We are about 7,000 kms into our trip. In brief, starting from home at Victor Harbor, up through the centre, Alice Springs, 3Ways onto the Barkly Highway. Mount Isa, Cloncurry then up to the Gulf of Carpentaria at Karumba. Then Cairns, Cape Tribulation, Cooktown. Presently at Longreach (Stockman's Hall of Fame, Qantas museum). Pics are of our camp at Winton at the Long Waterhole, last few days, and the biggest hotel I have ever seen in the bush. The North Gregory Hotel. Having fun... All the best, JV."



Rieny Nieuwenhof - "G' Day Paul,

Great to hear from you and the sharing of your news.

Life in Portarlinton is pleasant enough. We have avoided the storms experiences further north.

The tourist season is over and we have returned to a sleepy fishing village status. However, there is much building activity happening as a new residential estate 'Panorama' has opened up, increasing the population significantly over the next few years.

Personally I have been occupied with meetings and organising our Vietnam Veterans Day on Sunday 17th August. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Robert ("Bob") Webster OAM, recently retired President of RSL Victoria. August weather is always problematic, but we hope for a nice day. The memorial service commemorates not only Long Tan day but also our own Association's 50th Anniversary. We intend to unveil a plaque acknowledging that anniversary.

I always look forward to reading the *"Eyes and Ears"* and being informed of the various 'projects' underway, it is also good to keep up to date with member achievements/ travels and memories of their time in SVN. I note that very few correspondents are of my vintage (SVN Feb 1971 - Aug. 1971) although there are occasional updates from Mick Butler.

I was saddened to hear of Ron Mason's passing he was a wonderful guy and we often caught up at State Council meetings.

Personally, my health is OK but I am finding it harder and harder to do things I previously did easily eg. walking, gardening, going to the gym. My Doctor is having me go to Specialists too often! This seems to be the path for most of us as we age. I keep positive and involved.

Glad to hear your skin cancers are being spotted early and treated accordingly. Also interesting to hear about your new career as an apprentice vet.

My wife and I have no plans for any immediate travel, besides much time is occupied looking after grandkids and pets, especially during school holidays.

Will not catch up via Zoom at the next meeting. For now, bye! Rieny Nieuwenhof."

Merv Nairn - "G'day Paul,

Good to hear you are going well.

Since I got back from Thailand haven't had a lot of rain but icy cold south and south westerly winds, now that the winter solstice has come and gone its upward from here.

Not doing much at the moment a few games of bowls is about it. Too bloody cold to do much outdoors.

The youngest of my grandchildren turns 7 this week and we had lunch with them yesterday, a good day.

Apart from meetings ours the TPI and sub branch and my usual Friday night at the club that's about it for a social life.

Bookings opened this week for the main shows at the Tamworth country music festival, so I have booked some of those, I have been going up there for the festival for the last 6 years, manage to book my accommodation from year to year otherwise you've got no chance. See you on zoom at the next meeting. Merv."

John Richmond - "Hi Paul,

How time flies these days.

Talking about health problems -

Have just paid close to \$3,000 dollars for new plate for only 3 upper teeth, That is after my Medibank rebate. Doesn't make me less ugly.

To add to my second current health problem have to go in for a cataract op in August . That might me be able to be so one eyed.

I suppose that goes with getting much older.

Will be able to get my OBE (Over Bloody Eighty) in November

Down here we have been through coldest (if not close to it) June on record Had several days with the minimum at -7 degrees. Obviously the air temperature was even colder

See you, JR.'

Graham Williams - "Hi Paul,

Like yourself I have no idea where the first half of 2025 has gone. It is like an oops moment....now you see it now you don't.

I have been laying low for the last couple of months after a number of consecutive health issues.

First removal of skin cancers closely followed by breathing problems due to asthma and emphysema....seems my lung capacity is now below 30% and topped off in mid-June by a heart attack. They tell me the right side of my heart had shut down so 3 stents inserted to get me back on the job. As it was often said...."piece of piss to a trained digger." I have recovered well from the latter.

Back at gym after 2 weeks and currently undertaking a course at John Flynn hospital at how to handle and cope with such lifestyle changes.

At the present time I am well, not overdoing the gym situation and that's about it. Seem to have lost interest on many things I have enjoyed in the past but currently working my way back to that.

Jenni and myself head back to Europe in September and expect that might find me out in places.

We fly into Nice for 6 days on the Cote D'Azur before travelling across to Arles to pick up the river ship for the 7 day trip to Lyon with tours all along the way in various towns and cities and then from Lyon by train to Paris for 6 days prior to flying home.

I never seem to look forward to these adventures until the day we leave but suspect from now on may have a need to cut down on any more strenuous aspects while touring. Whatever !!

That's about all the news from here Paul at this time. Hope this finds yourself and Helen well and perhaps planning another adventure after an R&R yet again in your major animal sterilization caper.

Stay Safe,

Cheers, G.W."

Ken Osborne - "Dear Paul,

I have just bought a new laptop the old one was starting to get temperamental, but all it has done is give me headaches, nothing seems to work like the old one and everything seems to be hidden that only appear if you right click or left click and reveal the hidden lists or whatever. So I am having trouble, still have my old one fired up until I can transfer all the data etc from it to the new one, if that ever happens.

In the last six weeks my hot water system went to god and last Saturday the freezer spat the dummy and it was pure luck that my old Tuckerbag bait freezer was sitting idle in the shed so I could transfer the goodie into it while organising the purchase of a new one . So hopefully at this stage I am hoping nothing else carks it including me .

My granddaughter, who told me years ago she was never going to have children, presented me with a great granddaughter at the end of May, it was 3kg at birth but is putting on weight and is healthy and growing so all is good there.

Whereas, in regards to myself I am still living at home and furniture surf as they say to get around but as they say it is better than the alternative. I spend quite a bit of time on the new laptop trying to solve how it works and when it gets so frustrating that I feel like chucking it out I shut it down and pick up a book. At least with a book if I miss something I can just turn a few pages and get my answer or where to go to to get the result I want.

Have been trying one of the companies that supply meals ready made that only need a couple of minutes in the microwave to heat up and be ready to go , but starting to miss cooking my own meals, so I am only getting a week's worth every fortnight. I think I will reduce or even stop them altogether soon. They are well prepared and quite satisfying but the spontaneity of making your own choice depending on circumstances is what I miss. Now and then, fish and chips, a good steak or even cheese on toast is all you want and sometimes it is only a slice of bread and butter and cup of tea. My daughter will be coming down next week and as usual will be like a tornado going through the house and cleaning up. I am amazed at the amount of things we have given away, taken to the op shops and other places and there still seems to be as much left behind still awaiting a new home and we haven't even started on the shed yet.

I have given one of my mates my big solid work bench, tools and timber that were not in the shed as I doubted that I would ever use them again. Just wonder where they all came from, maybe just a hoarder.

Anyhow, this is it for the time being, keep well,

Regards, Ken O."

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 August’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

We were destined to have a relaxed and enjoyable look into an area of the Mediterranean we had never visited before. Istanbul was planned as the first stop, then a cruise to Athens with a stop at historic Gallipoli. New to ocean cruising it was to be an exciting experience. On the Friday before departure on the following Monday I developed some mid-back pain which was identified as a probable kidney stone. As time was short I was sent off for a CT scan. News from the GP was that I had generated not 1, nor 2 but 3 kidney stones. His medical advice was to cancel the trip due to the possibility of more stones.

The next step as the pain continued was an appointment with a specialist urologist who ordered another CT scan. Voila!, kidney stones had been passed and two removal operations had been avoided. But the holiday cancellation was endorsed by the specialist. Cancellations were advised to the various travel organisations and now it was time for a travel insurance claim. And what a circus that was. Fortunately, I had access to all travel records, but the online application was far from easy. Of course after submission of the application more information was required. Then we waited. Finally the decision that the claim amount had been granted in full. What a relief. After all the planning, the kidney stones, insurance claim and associated frustration our decision was not to pursue a similar journey in September this year.

Cheers

Allen

April 1966 – April 2024



<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 8 th July 2025

Attendees were: Allen Morley, Nick Proskurin, Ian Amos, Gordon Malcolm, Merv Nairn, Grahame Dignam and Ernest Newbold.

Zoomed members were: Bob Billiards and Rieny Niuwenhof.

Apologies: George Lane, Terry Erbs, Paul Dickson Jim Fitzgerald, Steve Wynn, Peter Dealy Warwick Brooker and other State Reps

Financial Membership is currently ...**116**, plus Associates **2**, plus Affiliates **15** Total **135**
Plus Lapsed as of 1 July 2025 **37** members

Presidents report.

Allen referenced.

. Receiving an invitation from NSW RSL to attend the Premier's Veterans Reception at Government House on 16th August at 2.30PM

. The existence of the Veterans Legal services, Experts in Military compensation, who provide quick service but cannot expedite the DVA wait times.

. Allen has replied to LBDR Mitchell Holmes (Detach 2IC)and GNR Ben Kelly (media assistant) regarding contact for the photo album project. Further discussions will outline the shape and formation of the files required.

. On the 1st of July we received the official Order of the Day from the Representative Colonel Commandant and Head of Regiment noting the Centenary of Locating Artillery. The full version of the Order is found on 2 July 2025 at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/131divlocbtyraa>

Webmaster Update.

. Robert advised Facebook members are 534. No other issues to report

Health Report:

. Kidney stones were discussed and compared - Allen winning with 3 and Sec/Treas only 1 but his was 5mm in size.

. Allen noted that we continue to receive Vale notices and it is unfortunate that we do not have earlier advice regarding these situations.

. The Veterans Health program is having a resurgence with some offers to rejoin being received by vets.

General Business and around the grounds:

We experienced audio problems during the course of the meeting due to location and computer issues so all items may not appear here but will be relisted for next meeting:

. Grahame advised that he is booked for a colonoscopy shortly.

. Merv Nairn reported a hand issue after a fall.

. Bob reported a great trip to Germany. While he was great health wise on the outward journey, the return home produced a bout of jetlag lasting 3 days.

. Gordon reported that he has begun dancing classes to improve his mobility and hip swivel.

. Vietnam Veterans Day 18 th August 2025 at Bankstown Sports club has information under "Breaking News " at the following "copy and paste" link <https://www.vvfragranville.org/index.htm>

If you've got more photos that you want added, just send them to: - Paul Dickson – web Photos
131eyesandears@gmail.com– BUT DON'T FORGET TO ADD TITLES/NAMES ETC.

. Upcoming Events Calendar –

131 Locators Association Committee Meeting

Date: 12 th August 2025 at 11.00 AM

Venue and Zoom link to be provided.



. Birthdays in the Battery...August –

Date	Name	Regt No	SVN In	SVN Out	Comments
1	Phillip Francis Ross T/Bdr	3794468	06 05 1969	30 04 1970	Melbourne, Vic
1	Joseph Losiak	218302	04 11 1969	05 11 1970	
1	John Frederick Lucas	3796256	20 02 1970	11 02 1971	
2	John Douglas Greenway	3790617	24 10 1967	22 10 1968	Melbourne, Vic
3	Leslie Paul Smith-Lester	1201202	23 09 1968	24 09 1969	† 04.04.2025
3	Michael Hartley Butler	3796958	04 06 1970	09 06 1971	
3	Graham Warren Greenland	2792441	15 04 1970	29 07 1970	† 17.11.2014

4	Andrew John William Overall Lt.	235330	22 02 1969	21 02 1970	
7	Marinus Hendricus Maria Van Driel L/Bdr	38954	27 11 1967	13 03 1968	† 08.08.1998
7	Randall Miles Jones	2788775	29 01 1969	28 11 1969	
8	Arthur Gordon Luxford Sgt.	212803	20 01 1969	28 01 1970	† 01.01.2008
8	Edwin Leslie Lewis Sgt.	53909	18 03 1970	11 03 1971	† 26.08.1992
9	Terry Leslie Welsh	4721779	03 03 1971	29 06 1971	Prospect , SA 131
	" "		30 06 1971	30 10 1971	12 Fd REGT
9	Garry James Grimwood	2795771	24 03 1971	01 07 1971	Paddington, NSW 131
	" "		01 07 1971	18 11 1971	12 Fd Regt.
10	David John Troedel	326409	N/A		132DLB † 13.05.2021
	Alan "Big Al" James Thompson Bdr	42308	20 05 1966	22 06 1967	† 07.10.2015
13	Brian Hackett	2783449	03 01 1967	12 12 1967	
13	Stanley John Briggs	1731999	27 11 1967	17 09 1968	
13	Robert Andrew Bruce	4718049	11 06 1967	13 12 1967	
15	John McDonald Pollock Bdr	53860	17 04 1967	24 05 1967	Cottesloe, WA 131
	" "		05 02 1971	07 04 1971	12 Fd REGT
15	Kevin James Taylor	2791357	30 07 1969	23 07 1970	† 03.08.2023
	Norman Ronald Keith McManus WO2	26202	09 11 1970	19 08 1971	† 04.10.2016
17	Pierre Ramon Goss T/Sgt	213990	24 03 1969	25 03 1970	† 06.08.2011
	Kenneth John "Bluey" Peisley L/bdr	2787174	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	† 31.08.2016
20	Peter John Binns WO1	356367	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
22	John Robert Vickary	1732218	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	
22	Stuart Wyndham Sporn	4718471	04 05 1967	30 01 1968	† 03.01.2025
22	Anthony Patrick Coutts	1733291	29 01 1968	21 01 1969	† 31.08.1988
23	Robert John Etherington	66962	04 11 1969	19 11 1970	Hobart,Tas
24	Johan Molenkamp	2795074	03 03 1971	30 06 1971	131
	" "		02 07 1971	09 08 1971	12 Fd REGT
25	Leslie David Frost	215230	22 04 1966	28 04 1967	† 26.03.2014
25	Kenneth Barry Jones	2786931	27 11 1967	26 11 1968	
26	Yarema "Max" Troynar	3790244	05 05 1967	30 01 1968	
26	Stanley Edward Patterson L/Bdr	38451	29 01 1969	28 11 1969	
26	Michael John Uniakie		130GLB/13 3DLB	N/a	† 27.09.2021
27	Laurence Joseph Farr	1734257	27 08 1969	25 02 1970	† 05.01.2009
27	Kenneth John Peisley L/Bdr	2787174	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	† 26.03.2014
27	Gordon Malcolm	2785906	26 09 1967	17 09 1968	
27	Peter Francis Whitaker	2786848	27 11 1967	19 11 1968	
	Peter Desmond Creedon T/Bdr	2790207	31 01 1969	28 01 1970	
27	Grant Perrins	1734509	27 11 1969	04 06 1970	
28	David Leslie Pimm - Craftsman	215746	17 04 1967	23 04 1968	RAEME
29	Timothy Roger Ford Capt.	235300	19 08 1970	05 08 1971	
31	Stephen Edward Palmer T/Cpl	18820	12 04 1968	30 04 1969	RAEME † 03.12.1972

*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

Clive Leslie Dreis...

Grahame Dignam passed on messages from **Ian Amos** who had been advised by **Geoff Holden** who was in contact with Clive's son who wanted the message relayed to the wider Locator family.

Clive had been in a nursing home suffering from dementia for some time. No details yet were known regarding his funeral arrangements.

Clive passed on Sunday 13th July and the funeral was via White lady funerals Chelmer QLD and the venue was Centenary Memorial Gardens held on Wednesday 23 at Middy.



Ken Woodbine - "Clive Dreis was a 7th Intake Nasho along with Geoff Holden and myself. We did our recruit training separately and we all were allocated to Artillery, and 131 Div Loc Bty.

Bruce Irvine, Geoff Holden, Clive Dreis, and myself were all Survey Draftsman at the MWS&DB (old Sydney Water) prior to our conscription and we all finished up in 131 as Artillery Surveyors - must have been a natural fit!

Geoff, Clive, and myself did our basic Artillery Surveying course, very soon after that Geoff and I were flown off to Sth Vietnam to join Bruce in the Survey Section.

Clive was kept behind to do the Advanced Course and didn't join us in Sth Vietnam until February 1968. Clive was an intelligent person and after his discharge from the Army he started and completed his Civil Engineering Degree at UTS, not an easy course by anyone's standards. Clive was married to his first wife Denise and they moved to the Hawkesbury area where he worked as a Civil Engineer.

Geoff and I completed our 12 months and got home some 3 months before Clive. WO Jebb was placed in charge of Survey before the middle of the year and he found Clive an excellent 2 IC, it's my recollection that Clive had 2 stripes over there and was a great help to WO Jebb.

Clive's time in Sth Vietnam certainly knocked him around mentally and he never had the support that our Sutherland Shire group had. He and his wife separated, and he met his 2nd wife Disha and they moved up to the Hinterland near Cairns. Ian Amos and Geoff Holden would travel up to Clive's and Disha's house and then up to Kalpowar for the Viet Vets yearly get together.

Geoff, Mick (GH's twin brother), and our Shire group socialised with him on many occasions. Clive was a very good golfer also and Geoff, Mick, and I played golf with Clive. Whatever Clive took on he became very good at.

His later years weren't good to Clive and he and Disha separated, and Clive moved down to SW Rocks. He had many demons and they took their toll on him.

But those of us who knew him over many years have many fond memories of him. Goodbye old friend, RIP, and thanks for the memories.

Ken Woodbine."

Kevin Browning - "Hi Paul,

I was fortunate to have had the privilege to serve with Clive for just over two months. In that time he took me under his wing and tried to pass on the experience he had. I can remember him teaching me how to do synchronised sun shots. His initial explanation went right over my head but he persisted and I can still remember the drill. I remember him as a very approachable person and good to be around. Many years later he was still happy to assist with background information on the survey section in his time.

Have attached two photos that he appears in.

My apology those I do not recognise in the group photo:

At right - L-R. 1 Unknown. 2 Unknown. 3 Sgt John Brewer. 4 Unknown, 5 (in land rover) Lt John Martin. 6. WO2 Geoff Jebb. 7 Sgt Arthur Penn (Svy Sgt 12 Fd Regt), 8 Unknown, **9 Clive Dreis**, 10 Keven Bush. Front kneeling Dave Dougherty.



Photo at left: Clive booking, Keven Bush operating MRA2 tellurometer.

My condolences to Clive's family
Regards,
Kevin."

Bob Billiards - sent in a couple photos...



At right - The photo of the group has Clive kneeling at the front. So from left is me, ??, Garth Nichols, Jeff Gebb, ? the rest.

We were returning from an Op up north somewhere and it was 1968 sometime between June and September.

At left - L to R Me and Clive



Charles Brewer - "Across the miles Paul, from Coffs Harbour, Charles here, ex 133 Div Loc.

Thank you for your faithfulness in keeping so many ex Loc blokes, especially those from SVN, updated re past Members. I know that this is appreciated Paul; very much, the "Passing Parade".

Blessings & Ubique, Charles."

Bill Taggart (1st/83rd US Artillery) - "A sad one indeed Paul, please pass along the condolences of the 1/83rd when possible. Lest We Forget. Bill."

May He Rest in Peace, and Never be Forgotten.



Vales and Locator Profiles...

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

Let's keep a memory alive.



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

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

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

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



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/>

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

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