

LOCREP

*The Newsletter of the Locating Surveillance & Target Acquisition Association
Inc.*

February 2013 Volume 52



NEW NAME – NEW BANNER!



The Eyes and Ears of the Battlefield

Co-Patrons

Mr Rusty Priest AM
Brigadier Don Roach AM

President

Allan Harrison RFD

Senior Vice President

MAJ Joe Kaplun CMC, JP

Junior Vice President

Phil Swinsburg

Secretary/Public Officer

Bob Morrison RFD

Assistant Secretary

Joe Fabri

Treasurer

Wayne Nash

Minutes Secretary

Tony Foster

Historian

Keith Ayliffe BEM

Web Master

John Posener

Newsletter Editor

Allan Harrison RFD

DVA Advocate

Kevin Maker JP

Merchandise Warehousing & Distribution

Phil Paton

Committee Members:

Ross Baker, Jim Bushel, Joe Elkus, Ron Hartmann, Graham Johnson, Ivan Mills, Allen Morley, Bob Owens BEM (Mil), Bob Smith

Web Site: www.locatingartillery.org

Email: info@locatingartillery.org

Branch Presidents:

Hunter Valley:	"Wheels" Campbell
Northern NSW:	Dave Auld
South East Queensland:	Joe Fabri
131 Locators:	Bob Billiards

Meeting Dates

The remaining meeting dates for 2012/13 are :

19 May 2013 at Paddington RSL at 1115 hrs
14 July 2013 (AGM) same time and venue

Greetings and welcome to the new look newsletter with our new title and logo featured on the cover. If all goes according to plan, this newsletter will be the first to which members of 20th STA Regt will have direct access, as Honorary Members and I welcome each and every one of you.

It was announced at the Gunfire Breakfast at the Regiment last year that the Association was planning to change its name and adopt a new logo (based on the 20th STA emblem) and that two new banners would be purchased in the format as shown on the front cover. Those banners are nearing completion by the manufacturer. On delivery and subject to meeting stringent quality standards, one banner will be handed over to the Regiment for safe custody and use as the Regiment sees fit (eg as a banner for use on ANZAC Day).

These processes have taken a little longer than we had hoped but things are nearing completion and plans will be made for a delegation of the Association Executive to travel to Enoggera shortly, to hand over the banner and to present membership badges to members of the Regt.

The Committee has been working toward migration of control of the Association to a committee based in South East Queensland. The obvious rationale for such a move is to develop closer ties to 20th STA Regt, where our future membership base lies.

As a step in that direction and following my discussions with Phil Swinsburg, he will now take over as President of the South East Queensland Branch of the Association and develop a Committee with the aim of assuming control of the Association at some time in the future. Phil has developed a Facebook Page for the Association and I commend it to you.

He is arranging a gathering of former 20th Regt personnel at present with a view to generating wider interest in Association matters and attracting people who might form the nucleus of the Committee of the future. I wish him well in his endeavours.

Phil has provided us with a brilliant piece on the withdrawal from service of the AN/TPQ 36 Weapon Locating Radar. That "must read" article appears later in LOCREP.

Finally, I wish to announce that with my forthcoming retirement from the business world, and the need to devote time to re-settlement out of Sydney, I will not be seeking re-election at the 2013 AGM. The Association has been a huge part of my life since its inception in 1998 and I will watch with unflinching interest, its development into the future.

Ubique

Allan Harrison
President

THE AGM

As indicated in the President's Report, a significant milestone in the Association's life occurred at the last AGM. A motion amending our rules was passed as follows:

"That Para 3.1 Membership Type be amended by the addition of sub-paras 4 and 5 as follows:

- (5) Service members:
- Are members of the Association who are current serving members of the Australian Defence Force.
 - Will not be required to pay joining or membership fees whilst a serving member of the ADF.
 - Will be on the mailing list to receive "Locrep" and other mailings.
 - Will not have voting rights.
 - Service members may apply to become Ordinary Members at any time".

The effect of this change is to admit any member of the ADF as an Honorary Member. It was initially intended to restrict Honorary Membership to members of 20th STA Regt., however, it was thought that with rapidly developing technology, other types of units might fall under the umbrella of LSTA and should not be excluded simply by a narrow wording of our rules.

The existing Committee was re-elected unopposed and thanks members for their confidence.

SERVICES AVAILABLE For MEMBERS

Contact details are as follows:

DVA Advocacy	Kevin Maker	02 4934 2172
Pensions	David Auld	02 6552 3560
Welfare	Geoff Carthew	02 6766 1593

2013 COFFS HARBOUR RE-UNION

The 2013 Coffs Harbour Re-union will be held to coincide with ANZAC Day. If you are receiving this LOCREP by mail, full details will be found in the enclosed program and booking form.

If you are reading this on line, you can also go to the Association's Website Notice Board where you will find the necessary documents including a booking form which you can download and print.

The Coffs re-unions are now part of LSTAA Inc. folklore and not to be missed.

The Committee will meet during the re-union and all are welcome to attend.

BLAST FROM THE PAST



At last, Roy Clausen has dusted off the archives and produced a couple of B&W classics from South Vietnam days. The upper shot is of The Continental at Vung Tau where Roy assures us that he partook of some memorable refreshments.

There is some conjecture about the lower shot which is either a very early shot of the Blockhouse at Nui Dat or a similar structure at Binh Ba.

Opinions welcome: allan@harrisonsolution.com.au.

FORT SCRATCHLEY VISIT

The following report is provided by Ross and Lynn Baker. Thanks guys, much appreciated.

On Friday the 8th June 2012, Ross and Lynne Baker went to Fort Scratchley on the 70th anniversary of the attack on Newcastle by the Japanese in June 1942. The museum was open for inspection on Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday and on Monday there was further firing of the guns to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations for Queen Elizabeth II.

Of course one could not expect to go to such an event and not see someone you know. Bob Smith and Jim Bushel found us rather than us finding them. They had done the Tunnel Tours and then we all checked out the displays and vehicles on show.

At 7.30pm Premier Barry O'Farrell fired the eighty pound gun hidden from view in its gun emplacement below the observation area. Smoke billowing into view and a muffled rumble which shook the earth beneath our feet made for a most impressive experience.

There was then an excellent re-enactment by the volunteers of the Fort Scratchley Historical Unit, of the defence against the Japanese attack on Newcastle on the 8th June 1942.

Ross had found his way into the Observation Tower and Lynne waited mingling with the crowd, camera in her steady hand for the firing of the two six inch guns which were loaded with a black powder and sawdust charge. They fired two rounds each with a spectacular result.

A visit comes highly recommended.



6 inch gun by day



And by night.

FAREWELL TO THE AN/TPQ 36

LSTAA Junior Vice President Phil Swinsburg has provided the following report, announcing the withdrawal from service of one of the finest pieces of equipment we have seen in recent times.

AN/TPQ 36

It is with some sadness that I update the Locators on the current status of the AN/TPQ 36 Weapon Locating Radar. But before I bring you up to date some quick

history of the equipment and the excellent service it provided.

The AN/TPQ 36 Weapon Locating Radar was introduced into service in 1987, replacing the AN/KPQ-1 mortar locating radar. The radar was able to detect mortars, guns and rocket projectiles out to a range of 18km for mortars and gun and 24 km for rockets, with the aim of enabling Counter Battery Fire. The system was purchased from the US Army under a Foreign Military Sale, and represented at the time the best capability to detect Indirect Fire (IDF). Ironically, the system is still one of the best systems in the world. Since the radar was introduced into service with the US Army, in approximate 1980, the radar has been upgraded many times in order to maintain its current position as one of the world leaders. The Australian Army recently undertook an upgrade of the systems to replace ageing computers and extend the life of the radar until 2015.

One of the proudest moments in anyone's career in the Army is being part of a unit that deploys in role on operations. 131 Det SVN has a proud history of serving in Vietnam in role for many years, and was one of the longest serving units continually deployed. Just like their predecessors, the soldiers from 131 STA Battery deployed with two AN/TPQ 36 radars to Iraq in 2005 with the Al Muthana Task Force where they remained in Iraq until the end of the Iraq deployment in 2009. In Afghanistan, 20th STA Regt remains deployed with the Shadow UAV capability, making 2012 the seventh continuous year on operations. Since 1999, the unit has been deployed for 10 years out of the last 13 years, with support during this time being sustained in two theatres and sometimes three for short periods of time. An outstanding achievement for all involved.

An interesting note regarding the deployment of the AN/TPQ 36 back in 2005, was that during the planning and negotiations with the Japanese Self Defence Force (JSDF), regarding what capabilities the JSDF required of the ADF, the JSDF only replied with one absolute requirement; that the ADF was to provide a Weapon Locating Radar. (I think they might have also said, the wanted 'locators' from 131 STA Bty, but don't quote me on that !)

During the deployment of the AN/TPQ 36 radar to Iraq and many subsequent rotations, the unit was also accompanied by the pioneers of the current Unmanned Aerial Vehicle capability. Soldiers from 131 STA Bty Surveillance Platoon, manning the Skylark Mini-UAV, also deployed in December of 2005. One year later, the Scan Eagle UAV also deployed to complete the complement of locators deployed in role and on operations.

During the operational deployment in Iraq the AN/TPQ 36 and crew provide hundreds of detection of IDF and heavy MG fire to the supported HQ. The long lost art of Artillery Intelligence and more importantly crater analysis was resurrected, providing valuable intelligence on the emerging and changing IDF threat. The AN/TPQ 36 radar was not just a Counter Battery radar, and the

intelligence team in the support HQ soon relied upon the AN/TPQ 36 radar crew to provide information on hostile MG and small arms fires in areas surrounding the base. This either confirmed or denied the presence of certain factions of enemy forces that could subsequently be used later on in intelligence estimates and aided in the overall threat assessment.



Bdr Barton checking antenna direction on deployment in Iraq

When I arrived in Iraq in October of 2006, as part of the UAV implementation team, I discussed the UAV and also the AN/TPQ 36 capability with the US Air Force Base Commander. Just like the Japanese before, the US Air Force Base Commander was extremely pleased to have two AN/TPQ 36 radar deployed. This was his only early warning and force protection asset that was able to observe outside the base. With the combination of the Skylark mini UAV and then the slightly larger Scan Eagle UAVs, the contribution that 131 STA Bty provided to the force protection at Tallil and previously at Al Muthana was well above any other single unit provided to the Iraq Campaign.



The AN/TPQ 36 deployed in Iraq

The deployment of the AN/TPQ 36 radar was not just a piece of equipment, but a living breathing capability, that was enabled by the personnel that deployed with it. Not only were there the radars: but also the Artillery Intelligence and the conduct of Crater Analysis. These aspects of interpretation and analysis of the information from the radar are often overlooked when referring to a Target Acquisition Capability.

The AN/TPQ 36 radar returned to Australia after the closure of the Iraq campaign in 2009. Many people have served both in peace and war on this wonderful piece of equipment. Every one of them I am sure will have many stories to tell. (If you do, please go the locating LSTAA facebook page a share your experience and photos).

The AN/TPQ 36 has now been withdrawn from service, interestingly 3 years before the end of its life of type. Army has decided to replace the systems with another Counter Rocket Artillery Mortar system operated by 16 Air Land Regiment (Previously Air Defence Regiment). Unfortunately, this is unproven and so only time will tell if this was a prudent decision.

For all of those locators who served with the AN/TPQ 36, and the wider Target Acquisition capability; those former BAIOS, DAIO, and TFAIO; those listening posts No1's and 2IC, those radar recon teams and the late night resupply teams; I wish you all the very best. It is sad to see the Target Acquisition capability and the AN/TPQ 36 removed from service, and I wish those who are trying to fill the shoes of the Locators in the new Target Acquisition capability all the best.

131 BATTERY – 60TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Few of us will forget the momentous occasion at Enoggera when the 50th Anniversary of the formation of 131 Battery was commemorated at a memorable dinner.

The energetic crew from our Hunter Valley Branch certainly didn't forget it and staged another fine dinner to recognise the Battery's 60th birthday.

Guest of Honour was a former Commander, Det 131 Div Loc Bty (SVN) then Capt, now Maj Gen Tim Ford AM, Representative Colonel Commandant.



The assembled Guests



Pres

PO Box 2433
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450

Sec/Treas

Phone (02) 6652 3560
Mobile 0407 523 561

REUNION 2013 REGISTRATION FORM

Mark boxes with number attending

Wednesday 24th April	Meet & Greet	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$15.00
Thursday 25th April	Dawn Service		
	ANZAC Parade		
	Luncheon (Non Service Personnel)	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$25.00
	(Please indicate all guests who are attending)		
Friday 26th April	Breakfast	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$15.00
	BBQ Lunch	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$8.00
	Reunion Dinner	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$27.00
Saturday 27th April	Breakfast at Club	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$15.00
	BBQ Lunch	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$8.00
	Regimental Dinner	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$27.00
	Band Cover Charge	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$25.00
Sunday 28th April	Breakfast at Club		\$15.00

NB: Please only mark the Functions you wish to attend. Bus charges will be charged on the day as required. Activities on Friday and Saturday are yet to be decided. Activities could include bowls, golf, croquet or ten pin bowling. Please pay on the day. This also applies for the Cartoon Gallery and bus tour – please pay on the day.

Payment by: **cheque/ money order** made out to Locating Surveillance and Target Acquisition Association

Direct Deposit. Westpac Coffs Harbour BSB 032576 Account # 203325

If paying by Direct Deposit, please send the Registration Form as we need this or email information to divloc131@hotmail.com

Name:

Address:

Contact Details:

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:

Service Details

Please return form before 1st April 2013 to Post Office Box 2433 Coffs Harbour 2450