



SURVEY
EX-SERVICEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



NEWSLETTER No 44
MAY 2007

NEWSLETTER No 44 MAY 2007

Hello to everyone and welcome to our first newsletter for this year. This will be the last newsletter published in our A5 format, which we have used continually for the past fifteen years, which is a sad thing in many ways but after lengthy consideration the decision to use an A4 format in future has finally been made, not really a case of an old habit hard to break but one of necessity.

Future newsletters will be produced by Bob Mills and Allan Adsett and I wish to thank both for volunteering in such an important matter. I will continue to have my ten cents worth of input whenever I can, providing Bob and Allan will allow me.

SOCIAL NEWS

First Friday Drinks

Still at the Saracens Head Hotel in Carrington St. CBD at 5pm each first Friday of the month.

Only Stevo Hinic and me on the 4th May, which is fairly normal so soon after our Anzac Day reunion, but an enjoyable sojourn just the same.

Third Friday Drinks

Just a reminder if you happen to be in Bendigo on the day, to call in at the RSL Club on Havilah Rd., to meet up with the DIGO crowd at 5pm.

Last Friday Drinks

Another reminder should you be in Brisbane, to call in at the Gaythorne RSL at 5pm and join our Qld comrades.

New Year BBQ

Held at the Keswick Barracks Officers' and Sergeants' Mess two months ago on 11th March, from 12pm to 4pm. The function was intended for earlier in the year but with so much hot weather we finally settled for what was hoped to be a cooler March day, however, although cooler than the previous few days, everyone moved by mutual consent into the air-conditioned Mess to have lunch.

The BBQ was cooked by volunteers I'm glad to say, Neville Stone and Bob Dikkenberg doing a first class job, as well as Stevo Hinic acting in lieu of treasurer Dave Irving who was forced to remain at home by a

bout of gout. I thought the function was very enjoyable, with good company in a relaxed mood, so what more can be said.

The roll call was pretty good for the day, so I've included the names of the 23 attendees for those who might be interested, also, the twelve apologies received for the function were read out during the day.

Moyna Briggs, Kay Trueman, Stevo Hinic and Pauline, Arthur and Barbara Henson, Graeme Ragless and Carol, Neil Houston, Alex and Joan Munro, John Nathan and Jan, Bob and Margaret Dikkenberg, Neville Stone, Dave Collins, John and Pam Harrison, Bill and Elizabeth Love and Mick and Rhonda Dempster..

Corps Birthday Dinner

The dinner will honour the 92nd Anniversary of the Royal Australian Survey Corps and is intended to be held in July, so keep it in mind, pending a notice being sent to members.

ANZAC DAY REPORT WEDNESDAY 25 APRIL 2007

The weather was kind again this year, with the day remaining fine and warm throughout. The possibility of heavy rain had been forecast, but held off until the following day.

The March

Another good roll call this year with 28 members lining up at our form-up point on North Terrace.

Bob Love again led our group, and by coincidence his grandson was assigned to carry our unit ident disc with another youth group volunteer assigned to carry the banner.

The bands played well and the crowds lining the route were impressive in showing their enthusiasm for the importance of the occasion and those marching, but I've said it all before, however, it did seem that the spectators were more numerous than in previous marches. I was told later that our group appeared well on the TV coverage, which was good for family members and friends watching from home. If you're interested in knowing who was there, I've included names below---
Allan Adsett, Bob Ballard, Frank Bryant, Dave Collins, Bob Cooper,

Alex Czornohalen, Jon Dean, Peter Elverd, John Frith, Bill Griggs, John Harrison, Arthur Henson, Stevo Hinic, Dave Irving, Neil Houston, Eddy Jacobs, Bob Love, Steve McGuiness, Bob Mills, Alex Munro, David Bowyer, Daryl Miller, Jim Nathan, Darcy Patrick, Graeme Ragless, Noel Sproles, Stan Stephens and John Wicker, hopefully not missing anyone.

A group photo was taken after the march in Pennington Gardens. See pages 12 and 13.

The Reunion

Held this year at The Elephant Hotel, a British style pub, situated off Rundle St. East.

We had the use of a large upstairs entertainment area , complete with our own bar, and tables set for lunch, which suited our needs very well. What a turn out it became as members and partners arrived, with a total head count of around 40 or so, becoming a very convivial and chatty occasion. Too many to name except for those who had travelled fairly long distances----Bob Love and Arthur Henson accompanied by Barbara and Becci from Strathalbyn, Stan Stephens from Port Augusta, Del and Tony Balkauskas also Lea and John Wicker from Stansbury. With still a fair crowd remaining in the late afternoon, I departed for home ending an enjoyable day.

The AGM

I must say it was a very casual and unusual AGM with so many present. With president Alex Munro and secretary/treasurer Dave Irving officiating the meeting started at 1350 hrs

Previous minutes: Circulated and accepted.

Business arising: Referred to general business

Correspondence: Read out by the secretary and accepted.

President's report: The president detailed activities for the year.

Treasurers report: Circulated and accepted. Bank funds at 24th April 07 being \$303.58 in the history fund and \$656.92 in the general operating account.

General business:

1. Subscriptions to remain at the present amount.
2. Notice from the Canberra Association advising the unveiling of a plaque at the Australian War Museum. Three members indicated

they might attend.

3. Erection of a Corps memorial at Keswick Barracks. Meeting advised that the site had now been approved.
4. Members advised on the present situation of the RASVY museum at SME.
5. Members advised on the conditions and eligibility for the issue of the Army Combat Badge
6. \$25.00 annual donation to the RSL approved
7. Unit history — Arthur Henson detailed progress to date.
8. Members advised of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Commemorative Medal 2002

Election of office Bearers:

President — Bob Dikkenberg.

Treasurer — Peter Elverd.

Secretary — Ken Talbot-Smith

Newsletter — Bob Mills and Allan Adsett

The incumbent office bearers will continue until a detailed handover is finalised

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 1445 hrs, lasting somewhat longer than usual.

PEOPLE NEWS

My thanks to Magna Carto from Bendigo, the Qld Association Bulletin and the WA Association Newsletter, plus the recently revamped NSW Newsletter, for providing many news items for our perusal.

Noel Sproles

A copy of one of the local suburban newspapers was handed to me at our BBQ, showing a coloured photo of Noel and two of his neighbours, trying to stir their local councillors through the power of the ever influential Press, into maintaining the footpaths in their area to the same immaculate standard as in other parts of the district. Not really true, was the council response, so good luck Noel.

While reading letters to the editor in The Advertiser recently, Noel's name sprang up from beneath an article titled "Grave of famous soldier neglected", following his trip to the Brighton Cemetery while in Melbourne recently, to visit the grave of General Sir John Monash,

perhaps the most renowned general in Australian history, also the view of military historian Field Marshall Montgomery.

Noel was extremely disappointed to find how neglected the grave site was, with the top covered by a thick mat of kikuyu grass, certainly not what should be expected for the grave of a man, as Noel pointed out, whose face has appeared on our currency and has had a university and freeway named after him. A well written article Noel, and well done for bringing to public notice.

Noel Ticehurst

Noel rang recently enquiring after the address of Ian Thomson and also Pat Cox, both being on his basic course in 1958, with a view to organising a 50th year reunion in a few months.

I was able to supply the information he required, so helped out a bit. Noel mentioned that he met up with Dick Jackson-Hope in Sydney about two months ago, and together they toured Victoria Barracks where Noel was stationed in 1963. He also mentioned the old guard house which is still in original condition, untouched since when first built.

Researching his family history, Noel was told by a relative that his great-great-grandfather came to Australia as a pommy redcoat, so passing the problem to our own military historian on early British Regiments, Clem Sargent, Noel discovered that his g-g-grandfather came to Sydney in 1845 with the 11th North Devonshire Regiment of Foot, accommodated at first in the George Street Barracks but later moving into Victoria Barracks in 1849. Noel reckons that both he and his g-g-grandfather did guard duty from the same guardhouse

Pat Drury

Pat will soon depart Bendigo and move to Tatura, to commence a new surveying job with Goulburn Murray Water, eventually moving into a house on the golf course there, hoping to improve his handicap. Best of luck Pat.

Graeme Wastell

Graeme now works for DIGO, but unfortunately has not been well of late, so we hope for a full recovery soon.

Ken and Nancy Shaw

Ken reported that both he and Nance are in reasonable health, taking everything into consideration, and still enjoy a game of social bowls. He also mentioned having a second cataract removed from his right eye.

Rohan Gillies

Travelling to the South- East area with my son-in-law last January, intending to beach fish for two days in the Southern Ocean within the Coorong National Park, our main entertainment along the way was the vehicle radio. The Adelaide stations were fading a bit and the country broadcasts were not much better, when suddenly Radio National from Bendigo cut in over all else, loud and clear.

It was at the moment that the announcer was preparing to interview the Commodore of the Bendigo Yacht Club, none other than Rohan Gillies, whose dulcet tones I was able to recognise even after several years. The interview lasted about fifteen minutes, with the main topic being the drought, the very reason why the yacht club was not able to organise the usual sailing season for the very first time in the history of the club. The usual huge expanse of Lake Eppalock had been reduced by the drought to a fraction of its normal size and was very shallow as well---- impossible for sailing. Rohan, you old sea dog, very interesting and well presented.

Bruce Cockburn

Bruce had a brain tumour removed about two months ago. The operation was successful and conducted in the John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle, but no further information at this stage.

Dan McLuskey

First mention of Dangerous Dan for ages, but with no idea of where he now lives, however, he did contact the Ex-Fortuna Association with his suggestions on the future use of Fortuna, post DIGO. Assuming his suggestions were not rude, I wonder what Dan had in mind.

Peter Biorac

Peter has invested in a property at Shelbourne, not far from Bendigo, to become another agriculturist or grazier of some sort I suppose, leaving his position in the GIS Department at the Bendigo Regional Institute of

TAFE.

Joe Mazzarol

If you were posted to 5 Sqn many years ago, or even further back to Fortuna, you would remember Joe as a top hand and a gentleman, always ready to help. Joe celebrated his 80th birthday earlier this year in a fitting manner as I understand.

Peter Demaine

Peter kindly volunteered his help to bring pressure to bear on the barracks manager at Keswick, to hasten his approval for a site for our proposed Corps memorial, even offering to round up support from all former 4 Sqn OC's. I'm not certain if the manager heard thunder in Canberra or not, but the day before Peter's email arrived I received the long awaited letter of approval, but thank you anyway Peter. He also mentioned that he would be moving from Canberra to Melbourne later in the year, in his position within the Department of Defence.

Peter, please accept condolences from the members of our Association on the sad passing of your father last March.

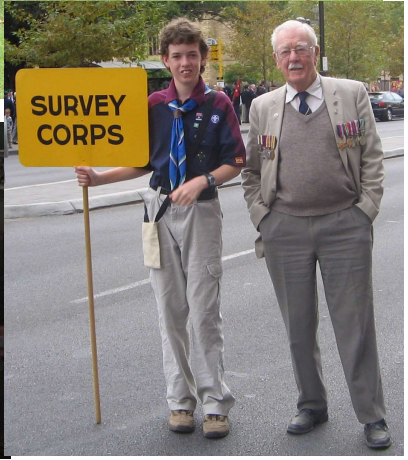
Stan Campbell and Peter Blasket

Stan and Peter accompanied by wives Helen and Irene have recently returned from an extensive trip to central Australia, visiting among other places Hadden's Corner, Poepels Corner, Cameron Corner and Surveyor Generals Corner.

Eva Gruszka

In the recent Australia Day Honours List, Eva was awarded the medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to the Polish community. Congratulations Eva and well deserved.

Her late husband George, even when OC of 4 Sqn at Keswick Barracks, was deeply involved in integrating Polish cultural activities within Australia and continued to do so until his sad passing in retirement, when Eva took over in full and carried on.



TJ Wicker, John Scharber and Dave Collins

Bob Love and grandson





Qld Assoc



Above — NSW Assoc

Below — Tony and Dell Balkauskas



Ian Thiselton

The following news was received from Mary-Ann Thiselton by email to a friend, then via T. J. Whicker and via Allan Adsett.

“Rock went to surgery at 0700 this am (Wed 16th May) and doctor rang at 1040 hrs to say all OK. Triple bypass done but needed quad but was unable to do. Just popped into ICU at 1500 hrs and he had just been taken off the ventilator. Will be heavily sedated until late pm. Tomorrow up in recliner to eat and will alternate between chair and bed. Hopefully all going well he will be back in the ward on Friday am.”

Bob Griffin

Pam rang me with the sad news that Bob has a brain tumour which is inoperable. He had been having eye problems for several months, with extensive testing failing to find the problem until a final brain scan discovered the tumour. Treatment with radiotherapy and chemotherapy failed to help.

Bob is now in the Strathalbyn Hospital, where he will remain until palliative care can be arranged.

NEWS ITEMS

Corps memorial plaque in PNG

Bob Skitch is presently negotiating the erection of a plaque in Port Moresby at some suitable location.

I think it's very fitting that some memorial should be in PNG, to give some recognition to all those years of hard work that RASVY personnel did in mapping the country in total.

To fund the project, Bob has appealed to kindred Associations to contribute whatever they can, and with a fair number of old PNG hands among our local members, we should be able to help out.

Consequently, I'm appealing to members to contribute whatever they can towards the project, sending donations to me directly, to send a consolidated contribution from our Association listing all contributors.

Please, if you intend to donate do it soon, so that the matter can be finalised as quickly as possible. Endorse all cheques to the 'Survey Ex-Servicemens Association' and post to me at

6 East Parkway, Colonel Light Gardens, SA 5041 (phone 8277 7074)

Unveiling of a memorial plaque in Canberra

This must surely be the year of memorial plaques to the Corps. We have received an invitation from the Canberra Survey Corps Association to attend the unveiling of a memorial plaque to those who served in Survey Units on war service, in the western courtyard of the Australian War Memorial.

The unveiling will be conducted by His Excellency the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC and Lieutenant Colonel Clem Sargent OAM (Retired), with the dedication by the Reverend Gary Kenney, at 11am/11.30am Monday, 9th July 07

All former members of the Corps, their partners, relatives and friends are invited to attend.

At the conclusion of the ceremony a gourmet style sandwich buffet will be provided at a cost of \$22 per person.

RSVP: 1st July 2007, enclosing payment for lunch, preferably by cheque payable to the Canberra Survey Corps Association.

Reply to Charlie Watson, 7 Cleland Street, Latham ACT 2615. Telephone (02) 6254 3463.

Email: cbwatson@webone.com.au

The exact starting time has not yet been finalised, but will be one of the times shown above.

At this point Allan Adsett and Bob Cooper are going over, also I will if I am able to combine the trip with other activities. I understand that Charlie will organise accommodation at a nearby hotel if requested.

Army Combat Badge

The Chief of Army has initiated an Army Combat Badge to recognise any member of the Army who served for a specified time in a unit engaged on warlike activities. That is the situation very briefly, culled from the ten pages or so I received from the School of Military Engineering, detailing eligibility criteria and conditions. The badge is retrospective to 1948, including service in Malaya, Korea, Borneo, Malay/Thai border, South Vietnam, Somalia, East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq.

As I understand any member who served for 90 days in the troop at Nui Dat is eligible.

The badge is in the form of two crossed swords surrounded by a laurel wreath, in burnished bronze, worn on the left breast one centimetre above and central to medal ribbons or medals, and is a dress embellishment and not an award. Approval for the issue of the badge by Army, to eligible members of our Association, is being handled by staff at SME, on receipt of a consolidated list.

If you wish to apply I will need the following details from you----- service number, initials, name, unit, operation or deployment, dates of deployment and record /proof of service, eg, DVA file number. SME staff will accept the Association's word supported by a record of service or a signed statement that someone is entitled, as sufficient to recommend the application. I hope to have the matter finalised by the end of June, so if you think you're eligible let me know soon. See photo on page 13.

A nominal roll of Vietnam veterans is available on:
<http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au>.

Unit History

Arthur Henson addressed members at the AGM on Anzac Day, with a progress report on the history, detailing our acquisition of information to now. So far 72 questionnaires have been posted out, but only 25 have been returned, therefore this task has to be stirred along quite a bit because without basic information we cannot proceed further. About another 15 will be posted out soon, so please answer anything you can and return promptly.

As for those still unanswered, please reply soon even if you cannot remember much, as every little piece of information helps. I wish to thank Rusty Williams at DIGO for sending over a batch of post operation reports, that he chanced to find during the clean-out for their move to new premises, so if anyone has similar reports packed away we would appreciate having a look at them.

So far the emphasis on research has been mainly up until the early 1960's, but also we hold some records from then until about 1993, so will be shifting into that period fairly soon.

A long process believe me, that will need your assistance all the way.

Corps memorial at Keswick barracks

At long last some movement, when I recently received written approval for the monument site selected one year ago, however, I now have to redo the quotes for work involved before I can submit an application for funds to the Department of Veteran Affairs.

The RASVY Museum

I think most of us can remember the museum at Bonegilla, which had to close when the Corps disbanded in 1996, when all exhibits were packed to the School of Military Engineering at Moorebank in NSW. Eventually a building was erected there to house the survey collection, but not fully finished, although some equipment was displayed, but since then the museum has lapsed somewhat due to budgetary restraints and staff cuts within the Army generally.

Colonel Don Swiney visited SME in March to ascertain what the situation is, and found that the security aspects and the climate control requirements of the building have been completed, so that equipment can now be displayed safely, although most exhibits are still in crates.

The Chief Instructor at SME has approved a suggestion by Don for a recce to take place from 18th to 22nd June, attended by perhaps two delegates from each Association, to assess what needs to be done to fully organise the museum, and to make a start at preparing inventories, planning displays, sorting out problems, etc. Naturally some social activities would be included during the period. Limited accommodation and meals would be made available at a moderate charge within the barracks, also campervan/caravan sites are available for those who wish to travel that way.

An interesting proposition indeed. Hopefully two volunteers from Adelaide would like to attend, so if you're interested contact me on 8277 7074 to discuss the matter and advise the secretary of the Ex-Fortuna Association to make arrangements at SME.

Museum Photo's

Peter Raue has distributed via email about 12 photos of the Museum. If anyone would like to receive them via email, please send me a message at rasvysa@chariot.net.au and I'll forward them. The message is about 1mb in size so I'll only forward upon request.

Plutonium clean up at Maralinga

During February/March 1979, the late Maj.(then) George Gruszka led a group from 4 Field Survey Squadron, including several attached support personnel, on Operation Desert Walk to Maralinga to upgrade mapping in the area. The QMS at the time was WO2 Bob Broadbent, who assisted in the initial insertion of the group and subsequently organised weekly resupply runs from Keswick to the operation area, generally by road transport except for one resupply run by light aircraft, during a rainy spell. Also during that period, the British Government was involved with Australian authorities in collecting soil contaminated with plutonium, from a previous unsatisfactory bomb test.

Bob noticed when on the airstrip at Maralinga, that three RAF C130 aircraft were parked there being loaded by RAE personnel, with quantities of the contaminated soil for return to who knows where and disposal later. Bob later assisted in the withdrawal of the group back to Keswick, and claims that neither he nor any other member of the group were cautioned on the dangers of being exposed to plutonium radiation, especially with field equipment being returned directly to the Q Store.

Protective clothing was not issued for use, and members were not advised to shower and change clothing before returning home.

Bob's frequent but short trips to Maralinga meant that he returned all his soiled field clothing to his wife Eileen, for washing at home on each occasion. In July 1980, Eileen was diagnosed with aggressive leukemia and died 14 days later from the condition, so Bob is certain that there is a direct link between his possible exposure and her death. As a matter of interest, George Gruszka died in hospital many years later, while being treated for leukemia.

Bob is now pursuing the matter at a federal level, not only for his sake but also for anyone who served at Maralinga during the period. History records held show that D. Maxwell, John Scharber, Ray Skuse, Barry Richardson, Butch Winterflood, Peter Dunn, Rob Langley, Harry Mai, Bob Quinlivan, Danny Smans, Ken Talbot-Smith, Peter Elverd, John Phillips, Mark Lander and Rob Warsing were on the operation with Bob.

His address is-----

H.R.Broadbent

Maryborough Qld 4650

The Queen's Golden Jubilee Commemorative Medal 2002

This magnificent Commemorative Medal has been produced in Australia for all of those men and women who have served their country during the 50 year reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

There is no qualifying length of service nor do you have to be currently serving.

The obverse was inspired by Pietro Annigoni's popular depiction of a youthful and beautiful Queen, painted in 1955 and which now hangs in Fishmongers Hall, London. The reverse shows the Queen's armorial shield and motto.

The commemorative medal was instituted in 2002 and is available to all service personnel, past and present, police, coastguard, ambulance, fire and emergency services.

The 36mm ribbon comprises broad gold bands at the edges with white and purple stripes at the centre. The medal is struck in gilt brass.

The medal satisfies the need for all those servicemen, women and para military services who were not able to be issued with the official medal.

The Official Medal has been issued to all UK service personnel who have served for five years or more during the reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

The medal is available from Medals, Mementos & More in Blackwood and costs \$60 for the full size medal and \$30 for the miniature. A photo courtesy of TJ Wicker is included on page 12/13.

RA Survey Website

Kym Weston has been organising a website for some time now, and has reported it is now up and running at www.rasurvey.org and should anyone want a -- @rasurvey.org email address he can create one on request and have redirected to your email address.

Kym can be contacted via email kym@westonsweb.com but is currently on a trip around Australia and won't be home until November.

Next Newsletter

I have a couple of articles already for the next newsletter. I ask members to put pen to paper and share some of their memories about the Corps or even what they are doing now since they left the Army. On Anzac Day we hear many funny tales so how about sharing them.

Send them to me via email rasvysa@chariot.net.au or by snail mail.

VALE

Jim Reneker

Jim passed away in January this year aged 82 years. He saw service in PNG on the Kokoda Track in WW2, later transferring to Survey to complete one of the very early basic courses at Balcombe, before a posting to Eastern Command where he spent most of his career, before finally retiring with the rank of Warrant Officer Class 1.

Association Committee

President

Alex Munro

Colonel Light Gardens SA 5041
Telephone (08)

Secretary/Treasurer

Dave Irving

Athelstone SA 5076
Telephone (08)
Email

Newsletter

Alex Munro

Colonel Light Gardens SA 5041
Telephone (08)

Allan Adsett

Aberfoyle Park SA 5159
Telephone (08)
Email