



# SURVEY EX-SERVICEMEN'S ASSOCIATION SOUTH AUSTRALIA



## **President**

Bob Dikkenberg,  
Email:

## **Secretary**

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## **Newsletter**

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Newsletter No 45 October 2007

## **WELCOME**

Welcome to our first newsletter in our new A4 format. It is sad to see the old A5 booklet format pass into history but we must keep up with changes in technology.

A number of members have indicated that they would prefer to receive the newsletter electronically via email rather than the hard copy via Australia Post.

Would you like to receive your newsletter or notification of important events that occur between Newsletters via email?

If yes to either or both, please send an email to Allan at [rasvysa@chariot.net.au](mailto:rasvysa@chariot.net.au)

Has your mailing address changed recently? If so, have you notified the Committee so the Association's membership database can be updated?

## **SOCIAL NEWS**

### First Friday Drinks

At the Saracens Head Hotel in Carrington St CBD at 5pm each first Friday of the month. Why not drop in and enjoy the company of fellow ex-RASvy members.

### Third Friday Drinks

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

### Last Friday Drinks

Should you be in Brisbane, join our Qld comrades at the Gaythorne RSL at 5pm.

## **NEWS ITEMS**

### ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE - Change of Secretary.

At our AGM on Anzac Day, Ken Talbot-Smith was elected as our secretary, although he was not present, on the basis that he had previously indicated his willingness to hold office. The nomination was confirmed later when Ken agreed to serve. However, a few weeks later Ken was offered a job at Gove in the NT, on survey tasks within the mining industry operating there with a salary increase too good to pass up, so reluctantly resigned his position. Ken did approach Ken Jeffery, who agreed to take over and has since been accepted. Consequently, the whole tedious business of changing

bank signatures had to be processed, including proof to the bank of our change to the AGM committee nominations, all of which takes time, but the committee is up and running.

### PNG MEMORIAL

The project to place a plaque in Port Moresby to commemorate the activities of our Corps in mapping PNG is progressing slower than the Queensland Association would wish.

Bob Skitch has reported that their main contact within the RSL Executive in Port Moresby has been very ill, requiring treatment in Australia, and until he can resume normal duties the project is on hold to some extent. Consequently, the money we have raised to help the project is being held pending the approval to proceed, hopefully not many months away.

Our appeal for donations started a little slowly, however, a bit of prompting among members has resulted in \$280 being held, thanks to Peter Rossiter(NSW), Roger Rees (ACT), Dawn Laing (ACT), Steve Rose (Qld), Peter Presser (Vic), Stevo Hinic, Bob Ballard, Alex Munro, Peter Elverd, John Wicker, Arthur Henson and Alex Czornohalan.

All donations will be acknowledged to the organizers when the money is forwarded.

### NOMINAL ROLL 1915 to 1996

Peter Jenson (still living in Canberra) has set himself the massive task of compiling a list of all who served in RASVY from 1915 to 1996 and possibly back to 1910.

Arthur Henson has already sent Peter the lists of members who served in Central Command Field Survey Section / 4 Field Survey Squadron, although our lists are not yet complete so more will be sent later. Peter hopes to have the roll completed by 2015 in time for the Corps centenary.

Last year Peter transferred from being on the Regular Army full time strength to part time strength, reporting that with the overall shortage of troops the present administration will not let soldiers go as easily as in former times, but even so he will now have more time to spend on his project.

### ASSOCIATION PLAQUE

The committee of the Ex-Fortuna Survey Association have designed a very handsome plaque similar to the old Survey Corps plaque, but incorporating the original Corps badge and WW2 colour patch with the present badge, produced with an antique brass look and set on a polished wood shield. The badge layout is similar to the miniature Association Badge still available from them, but in full size, and are available at \$50 each with limited numbers available, so if interested contact Alex Munro on 8277 7074, but keep in mind that stocks of the plaque are minimal.

### ARMY COMBAT BADGE

by Alex Munro

As mentioned in our last newsletter, staff at the School of Military Engineering are processing applications to wear the badge on to Army for approval, on behalf of all former RASVY members who consider they might be eligible. The instruction on eligibility received from Army thru SME did not specifically indicate that Vietnam service at Nui Dat in the troop was sufficient criteria to be eligible, but did hint that coupled with other activities it might. I rang SME to perhaps clarify the matter a bit more but the staff officer responsible was unable to help, except to say he thought the instruction was not well written and that it had caused some confusion.

He did say that SME staff were anxious that applications did not dribble in for years to come, so would appreciate a consolidated list of our members.

As I have received only two replies so far, I will be mailing direct with further information to those members who served in Vietnam for a firm yes or no. Any queries, contact Alex Munro on 8277 7074

### WAR DIARIES

The War Memorial has digitised commander's war diaries and other documents such as duty officer logs etc. and put them on the web. A Sect 1 Topo Syy Tp's monthly reports are included. They are real memory joggers. Go to URL <http://www.awm.gov.au/> then click on Collection Databases/ Australian Army War Diaries/South East Asian conflicts and then make your choice.

## RASVY MUSEUM

by Alex Munro

Following the conclusion of the ceremony at the AWM, many adjourned to the nearby Olim's Hotel for an ale and a chat before going their separate ways later in the afternoon, including a group heading for the School of Military Engineering at Moorebank, an outer southern suburb of Sydney, about a two hour drive from Canberra. The purpose of the visit was to assess the Survey Corps Museum at Steele Barracks, to see what work was needed to bring the museum to an acceptable standard, and to this end a group of seven attended, as was notified in our last newsletter asking for volunteers.

A bit of a fun group came together including from Queensland Alex Cairney, Barry Lutwyche and Peter Bates–Brownsword, from Canberra was Charlie Watson, from Bendigo Gary Warnest and Don Swiney, and I represented our local Association.

Accommodated at the barracks for three nights and two days, the facilities and hospitality accorded to us by the OC and school staff was excellent, making our stay so much more pleasant.

A brief history of the museum situation at SME, as I understand, is about eight years ago RAE erected a building, specifically to be the Survey Corps Museum, with an equipment display based on the original at Bonegilla, and was officially opened with due ceremony at the time, as reported in our newsletter if your memory goes back that far. RAE have a separate museum nearby, very well set out with excellent displays of uniforms, weaponry and other items of a comparatively small nature, but completely inadequate to show large displays of field equipment, so somewhere along the way a decision was made to strip and store items from our museum, and extend that building fourfold, now being a very large building of which we have been allocated the rear quarter, with the forward section entirely for large displays of engineering equipment.

The survey collection has been replaced in fairly recent times by students at the school, on a volunteer basis under WO1 Bob Hopper, and guided by Peter Raue who lives reasonably close by, and while their efforts at creating suitable displays have been very commendable overall, it does need a complete rethink. So what did our group find on day one? The displays set out by the students, being quite good as such and done to the best of their ability and knowledge, are not entirely satisfactory for a Survey Corps showpiece of our history, and not overly ready for visitors, being surrounded by pallet loads of photographs, maps, albums etc, multiplex equipment, B8 plotters, a single colour printing press, theodolites, tripods, etc, just to name some of the equipment as well as a large pile of gifts and mementoes from various unit messes, including of all things a pair of Ken Slater's football boots from earlier days at Fortuna. In addition to this there were numerous pallet loads of equipment, rather jumbled, stacked in a large storage shed elsewhere on the barracks.

What did we accomplish in our two days? Firstly, the overall problems and sheer size of the project, not only with the displays but the proper storage of spare equipment, was assessed. A start at sorting the material held in storage was made. The miscellaneous items from the messes were sorted out, being mostly unsuitable for display purposes. The original lists of stores received at Moorebank for the museum were digitized. A basic proposed plan for the eventual layout and type of equipment to be displayed, within the space available, was discussed and adopted in principle. Possible display items laying around on the floor were sorted, noted, and placed on storage shelves backing the present exhibits. Maybe it doesn't seem a lot, only scratching the surface perhaps, but it was a good start.

## VIETNAM VETERAN NOMINAL ROLL

The Vietnam nominal roll was launched by the AWM on the 18th August. It is at the following URL <http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/veteransearch.aspx>

## WHY IS IT THAT WE HAVE TO SPEAK ENGLISH?

An Australian Navy Admiral was attending a Naval Conference that included Admirals from the English, U.S., French, Canadian and NATO Navies.

At a cocktail reception, he found himself standing with a group of half dozen or so officers that included personnel from most of the countries.

Everyone was chatting away in English as they sipped their drinks, when a French admiral suddenly complained that, whereas Europeans learn many languages, others in the world learn only English.

He then asked: "Why is it that we always have to speak English in these conferences rather than speaking French?"

Without hesitating, the Australian Admiral replied: "Maybe it's because on two earlier occasions, the Brits, Canadians, Aussies and Americans arranged it so you wouldn't have to speak German."

### ACT STREET NAMES - MILITARY SURVEYORS

You may know that street names in the ACT are named after notable Australians, who may or may not have a direct link to the ACT. Some of you may also know that there have been occasions when the Directorate of Survey - Army (DSVY-A) and some of the Corps historians were involved in the early stages of identifying military surveyors and mappers who might be included in a submission for recognition by the ACT Place Names Committee (PNC). To the best of my knowledge the latest work done was in 1995/96 when the ACT did offer to consider names of military surveyors and mappers for street names in the suburb of Taylor. (Note that normal ACTPNC protocol is that only those deceased for at least 12 months are recognised in this way.)

The main reason that a proposal was not pursued at that time was simply that with the Army restructure, including the RASvy/RAE integration, the staff effort needed to complete the proposal was not available. Clem Sargent and John Hillier did provide very valuable input at that time. I have always regretted that we couldn't follow through with the proposal of 1995/96 and that individuals who warrant recognition have been denied such an honour. I recently wrote to the chair of the place names committee seeking advice as to whether a revived submission would be considered favourably by the committee. The response that a submission would be gratefully received is attached (a transcript as I do not have a scanner at the moment). Information about proposed development in the Molonglo valley downstream from Schrivener Dam and before the confluence with the Murrumbidgee River is at

[http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/topics/programs\\_projects/planning\\_studies/molongolo\\_planning\\_study](http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/topics/programs_projects/planning_studies/molongolo_planning_study)

In relation to timings I did mention the Corps centenary in 2015 in my letter. More info on the ACT place name process is at

[http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/tools\\_resources/maps\\_land\\_survey/place\\_names/place\\_name\\_processes](http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/tools_resources/maps_land_survey/place_names/place_name_processes) and

[http://apps.actpla.act.gov.au/actlic/places/search/originsSearch\\_new.htm](http://apps.actpla.act.gov.au/actlic/places/search/originsSearch_new.htm)

What now, and the purpose of this email. I believe that such a submission should have national input from all RASvy Associations with the blessing of Army, probably through Head of Corps Royal Australian Engineers. The work behind the submission would need to be coordinated for the various phases such as: scope and selection criteria, research of names against the criteria, research of biographical information required by ACTPNC. Most of this by volunteers, perhaps through a working party of Association members, with Army endorsement for some phases, perhaps scope and selection criteria, list of names. I am now asking for your comments, suggestions and advice on this proposal including whether your Association would endorse the project and indeed if there would be any volunteers for a working party if such was to proceed.

I look forward to your replies.

Peter Jensen <peter.jensen3@bigpond.com>

### **PEOPLE NEWS**

#### Coincidence

While staying for a few days in Bendigo, on his return to Adelaide from the plaque ceremony in Canberra, Alex Munro was having dinner at the RSL Club with his daughter, when a hand wave caught his attention at a nearby table where Bob and Anne Hayden were also having dinner, and to cap it off there was Roger Rees only a few tables further on. Roger had dropped in for a meal, while driving enroute from visiting his mother in Geelong back to home base in Canberra. A pleasant interlude to catch up with old friends.

### Tom Sawyer

Tom and Pauline were recently in Adelaide for two days only, to attend the funeral of Pauline's uncle in Murray Bridge, before returning home to Perth, by air.

Alex told Tom about a current list of former Corps members who had served in Vietnam, and who were now deceased, mainly because his name is on that list, very obviously wrong. Although Alex didn't actually see Tom but only spoke to a voice on the phone, but he is sure it was him---just joking. Tom was also joking when he reckoned that a few people might be disappointed if he wasn't on that list.

### Maj Fred Brown

Late on a recent Friday afternoon, Alex visited the Officers and Sergeants Mess at Keswick for a social drink with friends, when an officer in uniform called to me by name. He was a bit surprised, although the face was vaguely familiar, anyway, it turned out to be Fred Brown showing signs of a good lifestyle, since they first met at Fortuna in the early seventies. Besides time at Fortuna, his career was mainly spent in Perth, mostly in Army Reserve positions and over a period of about forty years has only been out of the service for eight years. Although now aged 59, he reckons that under present regulations he might remain in service for another five years, reinforcing what Peter Jensen claimed about the Army holding on to experienced soldiers. Fred also did a stint in East Timor, as a defence attaché at the Australian Embassy, offered out of the blue but why look a gift horse in the mouth.

They spent a very pleasant hour reminiscing, before Alex had to leave, a pity because Fred was only in Adelaide for one night.

### Peter Jensen

Peter's last Corps posting was in capability development Knowledge System as Deputy Director Imagery and Geospatial Intelligence. In that capacity he sponsored new capability acquisitions - everything from the national/strategic level to the tactical level - through the government/defence approval process ie. getting the money. After hogging that job for 5 years he was posted to help establish a new office of the Inspector-General ADF (IGADF) to provide the Chief of the Defence Force with an independent view of the health and effectiveness of the military justice system. Peter was posted as the reasonable person amongst a bunch of lawyers. There he project managed the development of a performance measurement system and developed and ran a unit audit program where a small team would visit units of all types and Services for a day or two to look at unit arrangements for military justice including discussions with CO's, ADJT's, RSM's etc, focus groups with all ranks and document audits. Of course the justice system is very different to what it was 20 years ago, but sailors/soldiers/airmen still see the need to exercise their right to complain, much as they have since the Articles of War in 1752. Peter transferred to the Standby Reserve in April 2006 and in that capacity has been working from time-to-time with IGADF mainly on performance measurement and unit audits. Peter is a Queenslander and Jenny is a Victorian, so Canberra is where they will stay, at least for a while. No real plans for other employment as it would not fit with their travel plans.

### Rene van den Tol

After retiring from the Army, Rene studied at a Lutheran Seminary and is now a Pastor at parish in Naraweena in Sydney.

### Stu Symonds

Stu still lives in Bendigo and is a member of the DIGO team

### Mark Heinrich

Mark retired from the Army a few years ago after working in Materials Branch in Canberra for a number of years and has taken up a civilian position in the same area.

### Bill Black

Bill joined the Victorian Lands Department after taking his discharge and spent some 30 years working there. He specialised in Survey Records in the later years. Bill now splits his time between travel and part time surveying. The gas company sends a sophisticated robot along the pipes and it analyses the pipe quality and identifies potential weak points. From the data gathered by the robot Bill and his partner survey in those weak points for the repair crews. Bill recently passed through Adelaide calling in to catch up with old friends.

### John Bateman

John was a printer in Litho Squadron for 20 years and joined the Queensland Government Printer when he left the Army. A couple of years ago he decided to join the grey nomads and is taking his time seeing Australia in his Mitsubishi Pajero and caravan. A few weeks ago John was in Adelaide catching up with Laurie Sutton, Dennis McCarthy and Allan Adsett. When he was in Eden on the south coast of NSW recently, John met a couple from Adelaide and when he said he was ex Survey Corps was amazed to hear that they were friends of Allan's. Just proves it's a small world.

## **MEMBERS CONTRIBUTIONS**

### The F24 CAMERA

Further yarns by Dave Collins

The article in the previous newsletter by Noel Sproles has reminded me of other experiences using the reliable F24.

During a 1970 tour of Vietnam several sorties using the camera were undertaken in a Beaver aircraft ex 161 Recce Sqn over various locations to capture the progress of land clearing operations, to enable overlay updates to existing 1:100 000 map coverage. This process had started several years earlier, and each successive topo troop continued the revision.

The new photographs were compared to the existing photo coverage set up in the Ziess pantograph (?) and new boundaries added to the most recent overlay, and handed to the Carto/Litho sections to reprint using the ever reliable silk-screen process. One could hardly say the most accurate of processes when compared to current imagery conversion. However, I don't recall any direct grumblings from our map users in the battalions. On one occasion George Graham (Litho) accompanied me on a photo run and during exposures we unknowingly captured a high speed bombing aircraft flying below. As the bombers were USAF from Long Binh or Saigon or somewhere, our prior knowledge of their sortie was probably never known by either our pilot or air controllers, however George was quite "chuffed" to find the image when processing the film. During a photogrammetry course at Bonegilla, Peter Davis and myself were tasked to undertake a series of photo runs in the vicinity of Bonegilla/Albury, (do not recall the exact area but suspect it was associated with Bandianna) as we both had some previous experience using the F24 at 4Fd Svy Sqn during ops in NT in the mid sixties. We had the use of a Pilatus Porter, a STOL multi use aircraft which allowed a camera holding frame to be mounted in the seat floor tracks. The aircraft was quite roomy for a small plane and as a "swan" the late Geoff Briggs and an Education Corps officer (can't remember his name) accompanied the flight to see two "experts" at work. We left the briefing of how this sortie was to take place, etc, to our school masters who planned the exercise.

The aircraft had a "bomb bay" in the floor, approx, a metre along and just under the same across, with the camera mounted above.

As we approached our dummy run to allow the pilot to check drift etc, preparations were made by Peter and I which commenced with calling for the pilot to open the floor doors, but for some reason the doors were stuck or whatever, so the pilot told Peter to kick them open with his foot allowing a square metre of floor to now become open space.

Well, to say this was a surprise to our Ed officer is an extremely gross understatement. The immediate hole in the floor, his feet dangling in space and the blast of fresh air was way too much shock, so we had to scrap the sortie and return to the airstrip to disgorge a very pale and shaken man, who on reflection must have flirted with heart failure earlier. It would not be inconceivable that he would be reluctant to fly in a small aircraft again.

In addition to "shooting" minor order control panels as described by Noel, I can recall taking shots of a Haflinger (?) vehicle in various terrain trials during 1966 field ops in the NT. The miniature jeep type vehicle was allocated for trials under NT conditions. What became of the vehicle and the conclusions made

from the trial I don't recall. Some 10 years ago I did spy a neglected Haflinger in a car space at the rear of a block of units in Rose Park, but couldn't locate the owner to discuss its origins.

### UNDERSTANDING CRICKET

by Alex Munro

Browsing through a bookstore a few months ago, my eye was attracted to an interesting and colourful book cover with the engaging title of "Understanding Cricket", so immediately intrigued; I picked the book up for a look-see. Thumbing the first page, none other than the name of our new president sprang out----Bob Dikkenberg. Bob was the illustrator for the book, providing all the art work of diagrams, caricatures, cartoons, etc, and very impressive too, so well done Bob.

Most of us who read the Army newspapers that came out each month in days gone by, will remember some of Dikko's cartoons, which appeared fairly often

For anyone interested in learning a bit more about the rules and history of cricket, I can recommend this book written by Bernard Whimpress, an historian of note and Curator of the Adelaide Oval Museum. The book is readily available through most bookstores, and you never know but Bob might get a cut of the sale price-----well maybe.

### DEDICATION OF COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

by Alex Munro

The dedication of the Commemorative Plaque to honour the service of Survey Corps units during WW1, WW2 and Vietnam was held in Canberra, at the Western Courtyard of the Australian War Memorial, at 11.00 am on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2007, and what a brilliant occasion it was, attended by about one hundred and thirty former members with families and friends, in fine sunny weather. The event was thoroughly planned and the organisers are to be congratulated, although there was an element of luck with the weather, as the weekend before hand was bitterly cold, wet and overcast, for the most part.

The cast bronze plaque as the centre of the occasion was set on a flag covered lectern out front from the seated assembly, with invited dignitaries seated to the left, and to the right was a contingent of the Band of the Royal Military College resplendent in their red tunics and white helmets, alongside members of the Australian Rugby Choir wearing bright blue tops and Akubra style bush hats, together providing the musical items.

Formalities included an informal speech by the Governor General, Major General Michael Jeffery, followed by prayers led by the officiating chaplain, the Reverend Gary Kenney, before the plaque was unveiled by the Governor General and Clem Sargent as President of the Canberra Association. The dedication of the plaque was conducted by the chaplain in a very impressive manner, and Gary really has developed a fine voice for such occasions, since his time at Fortuna as OC Litho.

Further formalities continued with The Ode read by Don Swiney, Last Post, One Minute's Silence, etc, The National Anthem, the Royal Australian Survey Corps Prayer and the Benediction, again by Gary, to finish with a trade mark speech by Clem Sargent, being brief and to the point and spiced with humour, giving thanks and farewell to all present

At the conclusion of the ceremony everyone adjourned to an adjacent hall in the AWM for a lunch of sandwiches and finger food in copious supply, and to mingle with old friends, but sadly like all such functions with limited time and so many to see, quite a few are inevitably missed which is a shame but can't be helped.

The Governor General was present for most of the lunch, and appealed to all those who had the pleasure to be introduced to him, by his easy going and friendly nature.

I attended the occasion accompanied by Joan , but also from Adelaide were Allan Adsett and Colin van Senden, that I know of, so Allan will perhaps add a bit more of other aspects of his visit, considering he was ambushed into having a minor role in proceedings with Charlie Watson, both holding a flag while seated behind the lectern. The plaque has since been set into an approach path leading to the War Memorial on the west side, amongst other similar plaques, so be sure to seek it out when you visit next, as Arthur Henson did a few days after the event.

I have no hesitation in congratulating everyone involved, in particular John Bullen as the prime mover of the occasion, ably assisted by Charlie Watson with the administrative aspects, and on the day especially Clem Sargent and Gary Kenney. Well done.

## DEDICATION OF COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

by Allan Adsett

There is not much more that I can add to the report that Alex has written. It was one of those rare occasions that you are able to meet and reminisce with comrades in arms whom you haven't seen for many years. Charlie Watson was my OC in Vietnam and I haven't seen him since the Unit came home in late 1971. Another former member whom I haven't seen since the early 1970's is Bill Black, a fellow Vietnam Veteran. Like Alex there were many at the dedication that I didn't get time to meet, particularly when I perused the attendance list later. Charlie ambushed me into holding the Corps Flag for the ceremony when I reported to collect my name badge. The young lady in the photo holding the New Guinea Survey Section Banner is Julia Coote, School Captain of Radford College in Canberra. Students from Radford College carry the Survey Banners on Anzac Day. I've included the full attendance list on page 11 of the newsletter. I flew up to Canberra on the Saturday and spent Sunday exploring the memorials along Anzac Parade. Charlie organised two social gatherings in the bar at the Olims Hotel. I'm sure many tall tales were exchanged over a convivial ale or two and a couple of excellent meals.

John Mobbs filmed the ceremony and has produced a DVD of the day. I have a copy and it is worth watching. Charlie has advised that copies of the DVD would be about \$3 plain or \$ 5 packaged and posted and are available via the Canberra Association. The cost depends on the numbers produced. John is happy for the DVD to be copied so long as it is not done for profit."

## SERVICE MEDALS INSURANCE

by Alex Munro

Very recently Joan and I had the misfortune to have our house burgled during our absence, around mid afternoon, an experience we both could do without believe me.

It could have been worse though, however, among the items stolen were my court mounted service medals, both full size and miniatures, which had to be valued for the police report.

I was astounded when told that both sets might have been worth about \$2500 collectively, depending on their condition, something I was unaware of, thinking all along that the value was perhaps five hundred dollars only. The Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 (Vietnam) boxed in mint condition could fetch about \$600, or in lesser condition about \$400, as an example given me by an authorized dealer.

Regarding military medals, it would appear that there are far more collectors than recipients, meaning that demand outstrips supply as the reason for such prices, hence the attraction for thieves. The point of this story is, if you have any service medals at all whether yours or inherited, especially if they include a decoration of any kind, have them valued with the view to insure specifically, so there is no fuss with your insurance company if they are stolen or lost. This advice was strongly recommended by the dealer, a bit late now for me, although existing house contents insurance will cover fully---I hope---maybe. Replica medals can be procured through a dealer, and vary in price according to what is selected such as in metal and pressed one side or both, plastic, court mounted or not, etc, but both sets of mine produced fully in metal and mounted, were quoted at \$540 to replicate. Another interesting point is that regimental details cannot be inscribed on replica medals, not legally anyway.

Just to give another example, I was told by an old friend who served many years in military service, serving in the British Army, the Indian Army and the Australian Regular Army, that he also was astounded recently when his numerous medals were valued at about \$19000. Give it some thought.

## **VALE**

### Bob Griffin

It is with considerable sadness that I report the death of Bob Griffin, passing away in the Strathalbyn Hospital, after a short period of palliative care, in late May this year. He was diagnosed with a brain tumour only in January, which proved to be inoperable, leading gradually to a sad end aged about 75 years.

Bob was originally from Malaya, migrating with his family to live in Melbourne in the early 1950's, later enlisting in RASVY in 1957. He was duly posted to Central Command Field Survey

Section as a survey assistant in 1958, at Keswick Barracks, remaining in that posting until his retirement from the Corps around twenty years later, as the Transport NCO with the rank of sergeant.

As a sapper Bob showed a greater aptitude for things mechanical, rather than survey tasks, and was gradually guided to supervising the unit transport requirements by Maj Frank Buckland, our OC at the time. In those days, there were very few postings available for transport staff, hence Bob's lengthy stay at Keswick. Bob was dedicated to his job, always trying to improve our vehicle fleet with any modification that he thought would be useful in the bush, and without doubt maintained the best stocked spare parts store of any small unit, so being a bit of a bower-bird helped a lot in this regard.

Bob was a definite character in many ways, and stories of his escapades in the bush while on mapping operations are too many to do justice to here; also, he rarely passed up an opportunity to make an extra quid from any abandoned item, or anything else found in the bush, sometimes with profit and sometimes not, but many will remember stories of those activities. He was also a camp fire raconteur, and I usually considered his stories had a greater element of truth than many other story tellers.

His funeral service was a fairly secular occasion, well attended by members of our Association, Bob's many friends and his family, several coming from interstate just for the day.

During the service several speakers, including John Harrison, reminisced at length on the life and times that they had with Bob, raising many a laugh and kindling many memories, simple and light-hearted, but something Bob would have approved of. Our condolences to Pam and family with their sad loss.

### Robin Wilson

Again with sadness, I report the unexpected death of Robin Wilson in late May this year at the age of 79 years, slipping away peacefully in his sleep, while at the local hospital for routine monitoring of a heart condition, during the previous one or two days.

He always considered himself a country boy, growing up in Parkes in central NSW, where he enlisted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF about 1946, something he was proud of, at the age of 18 years.

After his initial training he spent some time in the eastern states on field mapping surveys, mainly in NSW as I understand, before being posted to Central Command Field Survey Section at Keswick, to work on the old one mile maps being produced around Port Augusta at that time. During this period he met his future wife Margaret in Whyalla, perhaps while working on the Cultana 1 Mile sheet.

Robin was a well regarded and practical field surveyor and had reached the rank of warrant officer, when the section was tasked to begin 1:50000 mapping around the Darwin area in 1957, under the late Maj J. Nolan and then the late Maj F. Buckland, a task that continued for the next 25 years or so. Around 1961, Robin was posted to the Army Survey Regiment at Bendigo as the RSM, remaining in that position for several years before being commissioned to the rank of captain and posted to the School of Military Survey at Bonegilla as the Adjutant. Following his time at SMS, he was posted back to Keswick and during that period moved with the unit for a field season in PNG, under the late Maj G. Ricketts.

About 1970(?) Robin was sent to Canada for a two year stint as an exchange survey officer with the Canadian Army, accompanied by Margaret and their family.

Now with the rank of major, Robin returned to Bendigo to a posting at the Army Survey Regiment until his retirement around 1976, ending a fairly remarkable career.

Throughout his life he was a keen pigeon fancier, much to the amusement at times of the troops at large, however, at one time he was regarded as one of the leading breeders in Australia of racing pigeons, not to mention his weekly radio sessions on the ABC with current news to the pigeon fraternity. Robin was always community minded, and particularly in retirement he had the time to devote to church and community activities.

The funeral service was conducted at St. George's Anglican Church, Gawler, on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 07, a large church filled to capacity with mourners, including Joan and I, John and Pam Harrison,

Arthur and Barbara Henson, Frank and Naomi Bryant, Moyna Briggs and Peter Rossiter from Ballina, NSW.

It was a long and moving service, with touching addresses from Robin's daughters and granddaughter, culminating with the release of a flock of pigeons as the hearse departed from the church, followed by the mourners.

Robin was a dedicated family man and will be sorely missed by Margaret and her family; our condolences are extended to all.

Ted Laker

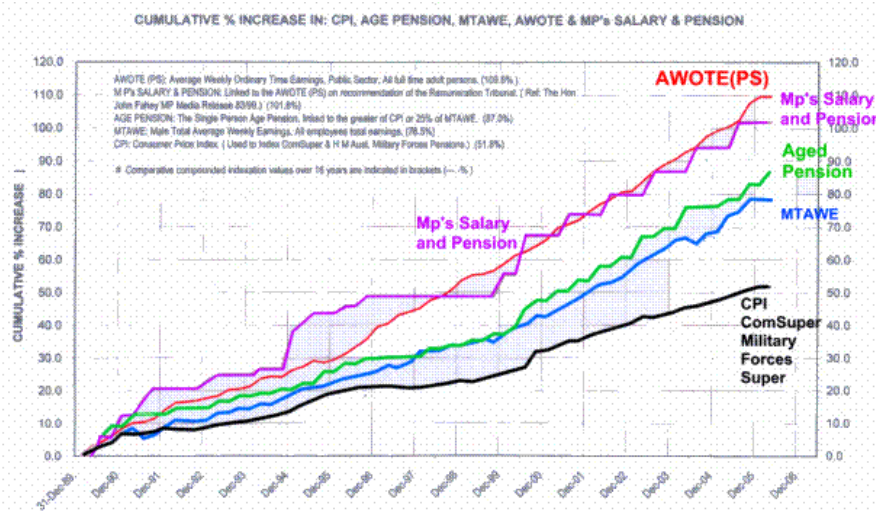
It is with regret that I report on the Passing of Major Edward (Ted) Laker on 18th August 2007. His funeral service was held on 23 August.

Ted joined the Survey Corps on 20th November 1941 and worked his way up through the ranks until 5th November 1976 when he retired as a Major in 2 Field Survey Squadron.

**LATE NEWS**

DFRDB Increases

Have you wondered at how much less your DFRDB buys these days? Take a look at the graph below. Since Dec 1989 our pension has risen by 50%, the Male Total Average Weekly Earnings by 80%, the old age pension by 90% and MP's pensions by over 100%. Something to think about.



Latest Corps Plaque



DVD of the Dedication of the Commemorative Plaque at the AWM

Attendance List AWM Memorial Plaque Dedication

Clem Sargent	Margaret Sargent	David Sargent
Margaret Riley	Glyn Sargent	Liz Sargent
Charlie Watson	Barbara Watson	Jen Watson
Bob Purdam	Jenny Purdam	Rob McHenry
John Mobbs	Bryan Henshaw	Mark Heinrich
Peter Demaine	John Bullen	Yvonne Bullen
David Miles	Ray Redman	Colin Cuskelly
Marianne Cuskelly	Allan Adsett	Alex Munro
Joan Munro	Reg Smith	John Yarra
Hugh Sutton	Ross McMillan	Marie McMillan
David McMillan	Bruce Radcliffe	Vivienne Radcliffe
Bruce Williams	Charmain Williams	Bill Montague
Alex Cairney	Barry Lutwyche	Peter Watson
Bill Black	Jan Black	Colin Van Sendon
Margaret Kucharski	Len Bradley	Lorna Bradley
Richard Owens	Geoffery Owens	Megan Owens
Jodie Hodges	Bob Skitch	Wendy Skitch
Bob Williams	Kevin Miles	WO1 Stephen Hill CSM
WO1 Mick McConnell	Gary Warnest	Stu Symonds
Don Swiney	Peter Bates-Brownsword	Bob Thrower
Margaret Thrower	Tracey Phillips	John Phillips
John Hill	Alan Sharrock	Milan Govedic
Graham Baker	Hook Baker	Peter McCurdy
Robyn McCurdy	MAJ Simon Buckpitt	Matt Jackson
Stacey Jackson	Peter Ralston	Gary Drummond
Anne Drummond	Ross Jenkins	Evan Giri
Tony Haseloff	John Hillier	Joy Hillier
LTCOL Brian Sloan	MAJ Judy Friend	Ken Lyon
Howard Jones	Coral Jones	Ian Shepherd
Peter Jensen	Brian Reaby	Betty Dallimore
Frank Fischer	Lynne Fischer	Valerie Lovejoy
Colin Lovejoy	Bob Bruce	Bruce Daniel
Marcia Daniel	MAJ Geoff Ford	MAJ Graham Hales
Ian Miller	Bob Campbell	Phil Bannister
Jane Bannister	Len Kemp	Margaret Kemp
Sue Manner	Rocky Camps	Lloyd Paterson
John van de Graaff	Mary van de Graaff	Owen Moss
Di Chalmers	David Smith	WO1 Bob Hopper
Bob Stedman	Diane Stedman	MAJ Peter Crabbe
Mike Bodman	Matt O'Brien	Heck McMillan
Kevin Gill	Raffe Roche	Ian Gollings
Peter Raue	MAJGEN John Whitelaw	Dawn Laing
Gary Kenney	Jeannie Kenney	Sinclair Whitbourne
Anthony Lark	Julia Coote	Brig Bill Sowry
Alex Petro	Joy Buckland	Sue Hopman
Greg Goodman	Cathy Goodman	



Memorial Plaque



The Governor-General MAJGEN  
Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC



Before the Ceremony



Charlie Watson, Allan Adsett, Julia Coote



Lunch



View from plaque location



Army Memorial on Anzac Parade



Vietnam Memorial on Anzac Parade