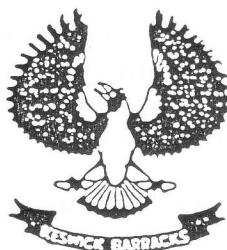


SURVEY EX-SERVICEMEN'S ASSOCIATION SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Committee for 1992/93.

President	George Ricketts	Ph.
Secretary/Treasurer	Alex Munro	Ph.
Bulletin Editor	Jim Dunn	Ph.



NEWSLETTER No 6
APRIL 1993

EDITORIAL

Once again we need to ask for your help in supplying us with information for our newsletter.

The newsletter is our only means of informing you of what is happening amongst our ex-servicemen members.

Our thanks go to people who have been regularly contributing to our newsletter and without their help it wouldn't be possible.

We also want to hear some feed-back on what we are producing. Do you find the newsletter interesting? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

We put out three newsletters a year, in April, August and December. To have an article included we need to receive the information at least 3 weeks beforehand.

We can be contacted through the front page phone numbers or contact us on the Anzac Day re-union day.

Happy reading!

JIM DUNN

SICK LIST

PETER PUCZKOWSKI

Peter's cancer condition has not improved during the last few months as he would have liked, and the chemotherapy treatment he was having has now been discontinued, so it is now a wait and see situation.

Peter returned from a holiday in Queensland last February, feeling very well, and reckoned the climate and lifestyle there suited his condition.

Because of this, he has decided to leave in mid April with his family, for an extended stay in Maroochydore on the Queensland Gold Coast, and we all hope that the break will be pleasant as Peter would wish.

GEORGE RICKETTS

Reported last issue with a broken ankle. George was happy to report that he is now up and about almost as good as new and although the ankle will never be the same again, recovery is near enough to complete.

PETER CONSTANTINE

Heard by way of a recent visitor to W.A. that Peter has had a few health problems with odd memory lapses, and recently entered a Perth hospital for tests. Good luck Peter.

A follow up on the out-come will be in our next edition.

VALE - TOM PATTISON

It is with considerable sadness that I report the news that Tom died suddenly of a heart attack, at his home in Bendigo on 17th January, 1993.

Tom was a printer at Fortuna until he left the Service just a few years ago, and will be remembered not only as a first class tradesman but as a very keen sportsman who competed in several sports around the Bendigo district, particularly as an axeman at wood-chopping events.

Tom will be missed by his family and many friends.

ANZAC DAY - 25TH APRIL, 1993

There seems to be some confusion as to what happens when Anzac Day falls on a Sunday, as it does this year.

The Dawn Service is always held on the actual day, so therefore it will be on the Sunday, but in South Australia the March is held on the Monday following, so the activities are held over two days instead of one as for all other years.

The rule that only servicemen who have served on active service can march has been gradually relaxed throughout Australia over the years, to the extent that now all former ex-servicemen are welcome to march. As our numbers are small at best, a good turn-up for the March is really needed.

Our form-up point is the usual one, by the SGIC Building on the corner of Grote St. in Victoria Square, at 9.30 a.m. For anyone wishing to park their car at Keswick Barracks or meet there beforehand, transport to the form-up point has been arranged, leaving shortly after 9 a.m. from the Survey vehicle compound. The same transport will return marchers to Keswick after the March at about 11 a.m. and again at about 12.15 p.m. for those remaining for the memorial service.

4 Field Survey Squadron members are again marching in the Parade and holding their usual Anzac Day B.B.Q. afterwards from about mid-day onwards, to which all ex-Survey people have been invited by the O.C.

The cost of the lunch is about \$3 per head, so I'll need to know the numbers attending to advise the caterers. As in the past, the unit conference room has again been made available for our AGM, by kind permission of the O.C.

Please let me know your intentions for the day by 20th April, whether it be yes or no for the march, the B.B.Q., or both, so that arrangements can be made. See you then. My home address is still

S.A. 5041

Ph.

ALEX MUNRO.

The Pre-Anzac Day Dinner

Now to be a post Anzac day dinner. Our organizer, Rob Langley has been tied up with his work at the Department of Mines and Energy of late, so the dinner will be a little later in the year than usual, and a circular will be sent out in due course.

A LIKELY STORY

The article printed below about the former Central Command Field Survey Section on a survey operation in Arnhem Land, was printed in "The Advertiser" about October, 1959, but don't quote me on the date, as memories of those years have faded a bit.

It was written by well known Adelaide journalist Max Fatchen, who visited the detachment for two or three days on a public relations exercise, arranged by P R staff at Keswick Barracks.

At the time we were observing astro fixes in Arnhem Land and on the adjacent islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria as control for proposed 1:250,000 scale mapping, as well as establishing a First Order Traverse northwards along the coast from Rose River, where the surveyors from the Survey Regiment at Bendigo had left off while traversing through from Queensland to Western Australia.

Our section of the traverse would eventually join again with the main network at Darwin. During his visit Max was able to see two or three field parties at work, and was moved around by aircraft and boat, to gain some insight into the work and the problems encountered and hence material for his article.

Since it was written about 34 years ago, I thought it wasn't too soon to re-cycle the article, and hope it will be of interest to all and perhaps rekindle the odd memory for some. Thanks to Geoff Briggs for reminding me about the article and providing photocopies from the original newspaper.

ALEX MUNRO

Except for the headlines, etc, Max Fatchen's article is written verbatim:-

The helicopter was busily chopping its way through the late afternoon sky over the brooding bush of eastern Arnhem Land. And my introduction to one of the Army's toughest peacetime operations had begun.

We were heading for a pinpoint of a clearing, deep among the scrub. Around us lay a great air of menace about its sullen horizons. But in it, men were working and working hard.

Through the plexi-glass bubble of the 'copter, the forbidding smoke-veiled distances stretched north and west, while in the east was the curve of shark-haunted Blue Mud Bay and the dark smudges of the islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

North, lost in the afternoon haze, was Caledon Bay where, in the headquarters tents pitched near the tiny airstrip, the deputy assistant director of the Royal Australian Survey Corps, Maj. Frank Buckland of Adelaide, a stocky, energetic man burned brick-red by the Arnhem Land sun, was directing the operations of 25 men of the Central Command Field Survey Detachment, with its attached engineers and pilots.

And out on the lonely islands, and in the bush, were the surveyors.

In four months they had manned more than 20,000 square miles of this harsh and remote area of the Northern Territory. Before the season finished, they would have completed 25,000 square miles.

Pat Long, the civilian helicopter pilot working with the survey was now flying me to where Sgt. John Hogan of Seacombe Gardens, Adelaide, and Cpl. Peter Brunt of Millswood, were setting up an observation post for taking star fixes to determine latitude and longitude.

A few minutes before, our 'copter had lifted from the strip that the aborigines had built by the Koolatong River for the Rev. Harold Shepherdson, the flying Methodist missionary of Elcho Island. Back there by the strip Spr. John Gaskell of Mitchell Park, Adelaide and Cpl. John Harrison of Melbourne, were preparing for tea and one more variation of bully beef. There were no frills in this Army surveyors' camp, with the camp stretchers and mosquito nets under the trees, the rough table of saplings, the pile of tinned rations and meticulously kept surveying equipment.

Always through the trees came the continual chatter of a small camp of aborigines.

And soon, the didgeridoo that was buried each day in the mud and water of the Koolatong River to keep its resonance would be brought out and a "playabout" corroboree would begin. Tonight it might be a shark dance, with the dancer stretching one arm behind him like a fin, with a dilly bag hung from his mouth representing a fish.

But now our helicopter was sinking rapidly toward a clearing. Two figures moved, a campfire flared. The 'copter slid past the pandanus trees and the clump of jungle and a creek with floating lily leaves. It settled gently on its rubber pontoons on the ground, and there we were.

Already Cpl. Brunt was setting up the theodolite, Sgt. Hogan tuned in to the radio network that bound the lonely parties of surveyors together.

A cockatoo screeched and the harsh cry faded over the silent bush. Close by an old buffalo pad led towards the creek. Last year an old half-blind buffalo had charged a survey vehicle and had been brought down by a couple of shots.

But the stars were coming out with their usual clarity. And Sgt. Hogan and Cpl. Brunt began their observations, one watching the star through the theodolite and calling, "Coming, Coming Up", as it crossed the vertical wire of the theodolite. Times were checked and readings jotted down by torchlight. And the night wore on, the dew fell, a chill came in the air, the starlight glistened faintly on the helicopter squatting in the clearing. The mosquitoes beat in a tiny frenzy outside my tent. And the ground was very hard. It had been a long, but enthralling day.

Early that morning I'd set out with Maj. Buckland and cheerful Army flier, Staff Sgt. Charlie Miller on a survey reconnaissance in a light plane. We flew south from Caledon Bay, with its memories of the massacre of a Japanese lugger crew by natives in 1932, then west from Rose River mission with its green winding river.

Then, like a lost world, a rugged range of rock pinnacles and twisted stone showed on the horizon.

We call it "the ruined city" the major said. The range of eroded sandstone was about 600 ft. high, six miles long and about a mile wide. When the surveyors had first seen it in the westering sun the light and shadow had thrown the strange towers and pinnacles into sharp relief. And it had looked like a ruined medieval city.

Now, as we flew over it, we could see the scores of 100 ft. high cones and pinnacles of rock. Here was a towering wall of stone like a castle, and there a great amphitheatre with scarred sides of rock and green scrub on its floor.

And as the little aircraft flew back toward Koolatong, Maj. Buckland again pointed downwards. Below, punched into the top of a low hill, was an egg-shaped crater, probably from some fallen meteorite. The crater, about 150 yards across, had sheer walls about 150 ft. deep. At the bottom was a small green lake.

Later Maj. Buckland told me of some of the survey's experiences and difficulties. There had been the detachment's long drive from Adelaide by convoy, one group going to Mainoru, Arnhem Land's northern most cattle station; the other, with a six-wheel truck as a battering ram, crashing a 90 mile track from Roper River Mission to Rose River. For two months the surveyors had worked through the clay pans to the south. Then drivers had been flown from Darwin to pick up the vehicles and the surveyors went onwards by foot, by sea, by plane and 'copter.

There had been the air-drops to survey teams with their electronic measuring equipment, working on the uninhabited and often waterless islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria. WO E.J. Laker, of Sydney, would drop food and water as the light aircraft went in, flaps down, a few feet above the beaches.

And there had been the episode of the folding boat- an example of how the combination of unserviceable aircraft, weather and the treacherous gulf could bring a sudden emergency. The pontoon type boat, powered by an outboard motor, had gone to Edward Island where its crew had to dismantle an observing tower and salvage a stranded barge. The men were weatherbound by heavy seas for eight days. Water ran short. So they distilled it from the sea with two four-gallon tins and a plastic hose Maj Buckland quickly improvised. Alerted by Northern Territory Command, the search and rescue organization dropped water and food to the men. And one more crises had passed.

I had a chance to see the moods of the gulf for myself. In a 25 ft naval cutter in charge of Sub-Lt. David Daish, of Murray Bridge, I spent the longest 18 hours of my life.

We'd set out from the RAN training frigate Gascoyne (Lt. Cmdr. J.M. Nicholas) which was acting in support of Army surveyors.

Five hours later, an Army heliograph flashed from the top of a long bay on Bickerton Island, between Blue Mud Bay and Groote Eylandt. Twenty year old Cpl. John Harrison (I saw him again at Koolatong) had been on the island for six weeks and Cpl. Stephen Rose, 21, of Hope Valley, for a few days less. And they were glad to get off.

They'd had air drops and lived mainly on bully beef and damper. In the granite hills behind their camp they'd found deep rock pools in the gorges. And on one rock face was the ochre imprint of a hand.

We loaded the cutter and cleared the Bay in a tumult of pitching water as the gulf switched on one of its sudden blows.

Seven bedraggled hours later, at evening, the dripping cutter glided carefully toward the beach at Morgan Island. Once more there was an urgency to land the two Army surveyors and get clear of these treacherous waters before dark.

Leading Seaman Peter Warburton, standing in the bows suddenly roared "Astern".

The diesel revved, the water churned. Our bow cracked a niggerhead of coral and then slid off. A moment later Cpl. Rose and Cpl. Harrison were wading ashore to just one more island.

And life on the offshore islands? Two other surveyors, Sgt James Maher, 27, of Melbourne and Cpl. Michael Thompson, 25, of Sydney, spent three weeks on Morgan. Some supplies were dropped to them from the air. Only casualty was a pot of pickles.

A small rock pool was the island's only water. The Army surveyors shared it for washing with the broilgas, pigeons, eagles, finches and bower birds.

While the surveyors worked, life on the island went on. A turtle laid its eggs on the sandy beach and a goanna crept out and dug them up. Small yellow birds drank the dew from the deep cups of pin tree flowers.

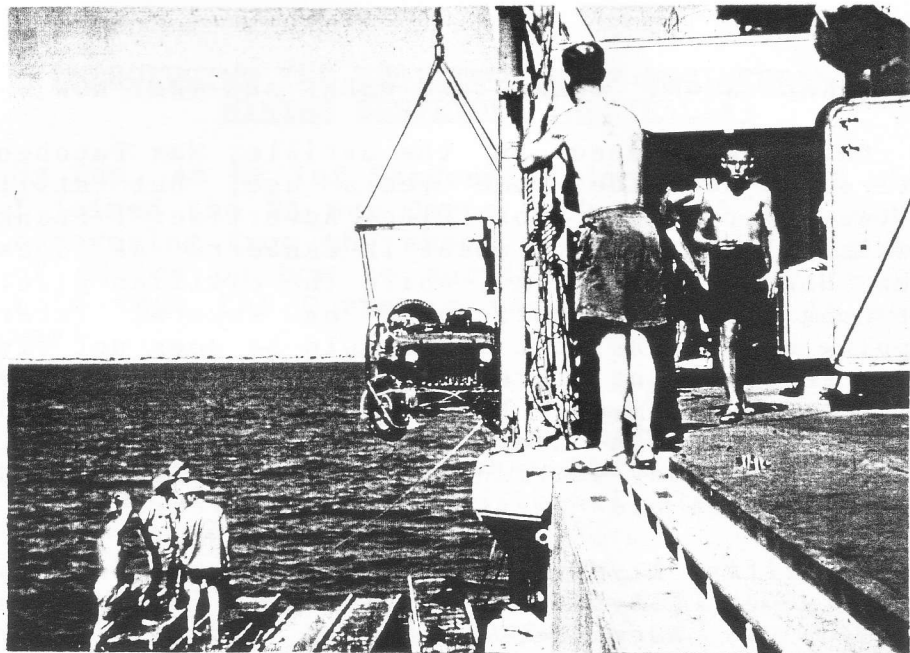
Sometimes big sharks(the gulf teems with them) swam lazily in the shallows.

One evening, Sgt. Maher had left a medallion hanging outside his shelter, and in the morning it was gone, the prize of some bower bird.

And so the survey continued. Other units were at work too, like the field survey squadron of AHQ Survey Regiment working in the south around Borroloola and along the coast.

When the Central Command Field Survey Detachment returns to Adelaide its results will be carefully compiled at Central Command and sent to Bendigo, to the headquarters of the Survey Regiment, the major unit of the Royal Australian Survey Corps.

There the maps will be printed within 12 months of the surveyors' return from the field. These maps will be of great importance to Australia because Arnhem Land can be considered one of the vital strategic areas of our north.



Loading a jeep back onboard HMAS GASCOYNE at Caledon Bay. Bob Griffin in centre of the group on the folding boat.



Astro party about to leave Mainoru Station for a distant control point.
L to R: Bill Love, Vin Sutherland and civilian helicopter pilot

THE 'LIKELY STORY' CHARACTERS-WHERE ARE THEY NOW

Of those mentioned in the article, Max Fatchen retired in Adelaide some years ago, but still writes every week for "The Advertiser". Frank Buckland lives in retirement in Canberra as does John Hogan in Bendigo, while the civilian pilot Pat Long flew his helicopter on several later mapping operations, but I was told he does not fly now. Peter Brunt later worked on various survey projects in the Middle East for several years, and now has a London address, while John Gaskell joined the survey section of the S.A. Railways and remained until his retirement about 4 years ago.

Bob Griffin lives in semi-retirement on his property at Clayton Bay, similarly for John Harrison in Adelaide, but both are still very active.

Cheerful Charlie Miller was later commissioned and continued flying, but I've no idea what has happened to him since about 10 years ago, while Steve Rose joined N.T. Lands in Darwin and is still up that way somewhere as I understand.

Ted Laker was commissioned about a year or so later, but retired from the service ages ago to live in Sydney, and Mick Thompson eventually disappeared somewhere in his beloved Queensland. If some-one knows his address or location, please let me know.

Unfortunately, I have to report that Jim Maher died in Adelaide a few years back, and I'm sure many would not have known. Ron Weinert is still working around Adelaide, but I lost contact two years ago, so if some-one knows his whereabouts I would be glad to know.

ALEX MUNRO

INTRODUCING THE INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERING AND MINING SURVEYORS (AUSTRALIA)

My Dad, an RA Inf Sergeant-Major was aghast when I joined the RA Svy Corps back in '56, but after recovering from the shock gave me just one piece of advice on how to survive in the Army, - I'm told that the Corps is vaguely related in some way!

He said, "never volunteer for ANYTHING!", - so why am I writing this article for the Newsletter?, - could be that I'm a bit stupid!, - or is it that the Editorial staff are very persuasive?

Anyway, lying awake wondering what the Editor would be happy with I thought of all the friends that I've made in my years in surveying, - nearly twenty four in the Corps, a dozen or so in the SA Public Service, and a few more since starting out on my own in late 1991.

What makes it all worthwhile is the comradeship even if you only get to catch up with friends, colleagues, and acquaintances every year or so at the national Surveying Conferences held all over Australia. Both Pamela and myself make the effort to be there, and to catch up with these dear friends.

However, what amazes me is that there are so many ex-RA Svy members about the place that have drifted into civilian life without maintaining the friendships that must have made their life in the 'service' just that so much more bearable, and this is where the Institution comes into play.

For those ex-members who are still into surveying, in its many forms, the Institution provides a forum to maintain and renew these friendships, - to catch up on old times, and to

enjoy each other's company. Without my valued Institution membership, and the opportunity to attend, and PARTICIPATE, particularly in annual conferences I suspect I would have lost contact with many of these colleagues.

On the IEMS SA Divisional Committee for this year we have, besides myself, ex-RA Svy members Peter Davis, and Harry Dunn, - and another ex-RAA member Bob Harris. Not bad on a Committee of only a dozen or so! Seems, (to me), that there are many others who have not heeded the advice on volunteering, and it's just as well for when crunch time comes it appears that the 'Corps has been well represented in IEMS Committees, and National Councils over the years. Geoff' Briggs, Pat Wood, Len' Davies, myself, all carrying out the role of IEMS(Aust) National Secretary.

Other ex-RA Svy, (and IEMS), members about the place that spring to mind are Wayne Gillie, (and Leslie), in Tasmania, Bill, (and Jan Black), in Victoria, 'Tom' Sawyer, (from Western Australia), many here in South Oz' all taking full advantage of their membership to maintain their contacts with friends in the profession.

To Conferences of late!

In 1990 I was fortunate to be involved in the organization of the Barossa Valley Conference. It was held at the Barossa Junction Convention Resort, an excellent venue which is built around a collection of old railway carriages. The railway theme is carried right through into the menu, and social activities. A few grey hairs for those on the Conference Committee but that's all part of getting old!

1991 saw Pamela and myself off to the Conference at Wodonga. A tour of the School' was one of the highlights of the whole event!, - especially the inspection, (a first for Pamela and myself), of

the RA Svy Museum. It was Bill Black that discovered a few old baby-face photos of myself amongst the memorabilia, - much to the amusement of all. Well that's life!

In early 1992 we packed the 'Rover and headed off to Cairns via the inland route through Normanton, and various outback towns, taking about a fortnight to get there, a week at the Conference where we caught up with Steve and Gill Rose from Darwin, and a couple of weeks to get back, running into Len Beadell and his charming wife Sue at a Broken Hill motel. As you can guess this encounter put us a few hours behind schedule.

August 1992 saw us at another Mini-Seminar at Bendigo. Our visit, though brief, allowed us to catch up with Ross Hyde, (and his twenty or so cats), for a chat. He doesn't get around too much now, and is content to mooch around his house, the local gym, (would you believe it?), and the local theatrical society.

Later in 1992 we, here in Adelaide, were treated to the First Australian Conference on Mapping and Charting which was reported on in the last Newsletter. There were many current RA Svy, and ex-RA Svy members attending this event!, and as reported earlier most of managed to get together over lunch at the Officer's Mess at Keswick.

This year both Pamela and myself have attended the Sydney Conference held over one weekend in February. The visit, though brief, again allowed us to renew valuable friendships.

Recently I was fortunate to be invited to address the IEMS Victoria Division General Meeting on the RA Svy's contribution to mapping, (and mapping control), techniques over my years in the 'Corps. Again valuable friendships were renewed, and it was especially gratifying to catch up with Roger Rees who journeyed down from the Map Depot at

Wodonga just for the evening. Just as gratifying was Bill Black's presence!

In May this year another National Conference will be held in Darwin where we will be catching up, (again), with the Rose's, Len Beadell who will be the Conference After-Dinner Speaker and many more ex-RA Svy members. I'm reliably informed that John Hillier will be presenting a Paper as will Maj Andrew McLeod, (from 4 Fd Svy Sqn). My job is quite simple, - that of Chairing one of the Technical Sessions!

Later in August a joint South Australia/Victoria Divisional Surveying Conference is to be held in Portland, (that's about a close as half-way between Adelaide and Melbourne), where an informative and social programme has been planned.

What more can I say! If you are still into surveying as an occupation/profession and want to take part in these tax-deductible Conferences, and many other social events then IEMS might just be able to accommodate you! After all what better way is there to keep up to date, and at the same time maintain your contact with those special friends who have, (in many cases), gone through thick and thin with you!

It's now up to you to make the next move! If you're interested then get in touch with me at home on 2614610, or through the IEMS Office on 3790444 during office hours.

John D A Harrison

PS The commercial! Any type of surveying carried out at reasonable rates. Give me a call - anytime

CORPS BIRTHDAY

As the 78th Corps birthday draws near, it's time once again to think about celebrations by travelling over the border to Bonegilla.

4 Field Survey squadron usually have representatives from Adelaide travelling first to Fortuna Villa at Bendigo, then Bonegilla for the Corps birthday dinner.

Depending on the number of serving members attending, there are usually a few extra seats for any ex-survey people who want to attend.

The cars usually leave early on the Thursday morning, travel to Bendigo, stay the night, and drive to Bonegilla on the Friday morning.

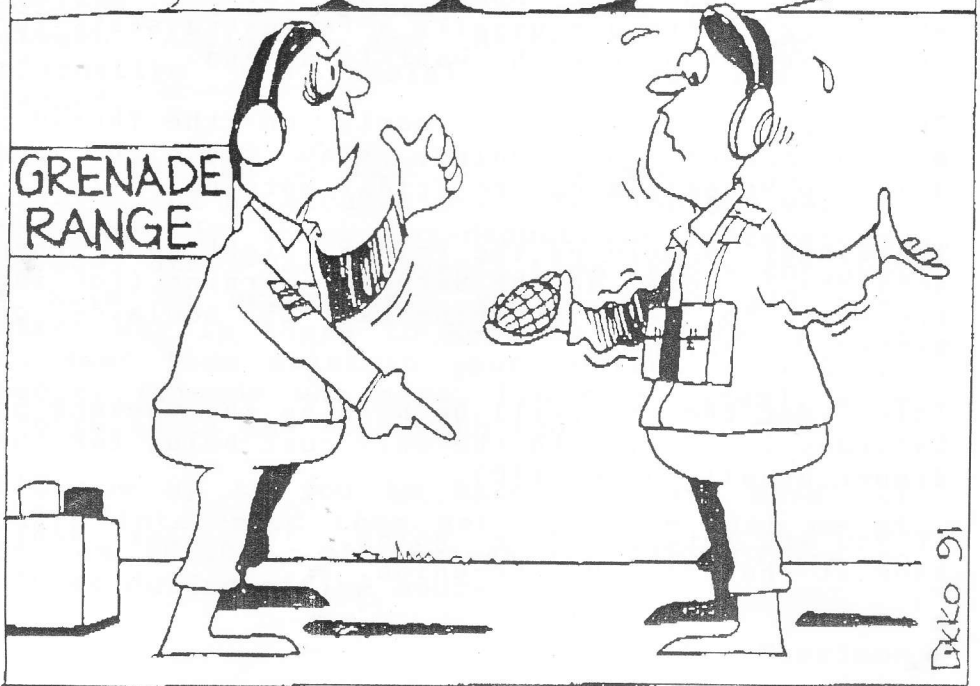
The dinner is held on the Friday night and then head back home on the Saturday morning, (feeling the worse for wear) arriving back in Adelaide on Saturday evening.

This year the trip will be held on the weekend of Saturday 3rd July with the only cost being for the dinner (usually under \$30).

If you are interested in going, let Alex Munro know at the Anzac Day re-union.

NOW LISTEN...IT'S QUITE SIMPLE...EVERYTHING
THROWN OVER THE WALL IS A PASS... ANYTHING
THAT LANDS ON THIS SIDE IS A FAIL!

GRENAD
RANGE



Dikko 91