



SURVEY  
EX-SERVICEMEN'S  
ASSOCIATION  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



NEWSLETTER No 30  
APRIL 2001

**ANZAC DAY**  
WEDNESDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2001

MARCH

Our position in the march is similar to last year, near the tail-end of Group 3, behind buses carrying incapacitated ex-servicemen.

Our form-up point is on North Tce. on the south side, about in front of Scots Church, near the corner of Pulteney St., gathering by 9.15am for a step-off at 9.30am. Leading the survey group will be Bob Love.

All former members of RASVY are eligible to march, and the RSL have requested that as many as possible do so, so it would be great to see a good roll-up.

Free car parking is available to all members, identified by wearing a badge or medal/s, at the following car-parks-----Gawler Place and John Martins between 5.15am and 6pm, Hungry Jacks between 8am and 6pm. Please note there will be no entry or exit between 9am and 11am at the above parks because of the march.

Harris Scarfes car park is available through-out between 8am and 6pm.

REUNION

Meeting around mid-day at the Saracens Head Hotel in Carrington St. [north side not far from King William St.] where parking is normally good. Lunch is available at reasonable prices. About 2.15pm our AGM will be held lasting about the usual 35 minutes.

**REGIMENT HISTORY**

From the Ex-Fortuna newsletter----Valerie Lovejoy has completed the Regiment History, as her thesis for a Masters Degree, which has been accepted and well regarded. Well done Val. The Bendigo committee is still working on the reformat in preparation for printing, and while this is going well, everything will probably not be ready until June, therefore the proposed book launch will not be possible on the 30<sup>th</sup> June as the committee had hoped.

There is also another problem in finding the full amount of money necessary to complete the printing, estimated at about \$20,000. Pre-selling the history will go part way to raising the amount, but the committee is investigating alternate ways of raising funds. More later.

## SOCIAL NEWS

### First Friday Drinks

The first Friday in March at the Old Queen's Arms was attended by Neil Houston, Alex Munro, John and Pam Harrison, T.J. and Lea Wicker, Bob and Margaret Dikkenberg and Trevor Hann and his wife. My apologies to the lady as I cannot recall her name, although she was introduced to all. She and Trevor were holidaying in Adelaide from Thailand. At the April meeting were Stevo Hinic, John Frith, Lincoln Smith, Alex Munro, T.J. and Lea, John and Pam Harrison. Lincoln discussed a new business venture he was considering, which made Stevo prick up his ears, so it obviously had some money making merit.

### Corps Birthday Dinner

. Keep in mind for late June or early July, probably at the Rob Roy Hotel, although the planning has not been finalised as yet. Expect a letter from Dave Irving in due course giving the details, but in the mean time mark your calendar now

### Back To SME 2001

Enclosed separately is an invitation from the RAE Sergeants' Mess at Moorebank, N.S.W., to all former RASVY WO's and SNCO's to attend a function over the weekend of 28-30<sup>th</sup> September 2001. This might be an opportunity for a reunion between association members from each state. Worthy of a ring-around perhaps.

### A New Water Hole

Now that the old OR's Tavern has finally closed its doors forever at Fortuna, those who had a drink and a chat there each Friday after work, now attend the Golden Square Bowling Club. Visitors are welcome.

### Corps Day Weekend in Bendigo

As mentioned in our last newsletter, this event will be held over the weekend of Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June and Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2001. It was previously planned to be the launch of the Regiment History, but as things have turned out, the history will not be printed by the intended date. Because the response to attend was very strong, it was decided not to cancel, and proceed with the Corps Day activities.

A former Corps badge (triangle/theodolite) has been reproduced as a miniature in metal, suitable to be worn on a jacket or tie, and will be issued at the dinner, one to each couple or single person attending.

## Social News [ cont. ]

The cost of the badge is included in the dinner charge.

A tour of Fortuna has been confirmed for the Saturday afternoon, and the old WRAAC Barracks can be visited as it is now an antique shop.

The dinner is of three courses, each of two choices, with port for the toasts included but otherwise drinks are extra. The cost will be \$70 per double or \$36 per single, with the Sunday BBQ costing \$5 per head. Enclosed is a separate sheet from the Fortuna newsletter, including a return form, giving extra details. Car sharing Adelaide/Bendigo might be an option. As of 12<sup>th</sup> April about 170 registrations of interest had been received by Garry Warnest, with the maximum number that can be seated being 200 persons or close. Consequently if you are interested in attending, I advise you to contact Garry as soon as possible on telephone [redacted], to book a spot prior to sending any cash.

## **CORPS HISTORY CRITIQUE**

Included below is part of a letter I received from Peter Rossiter, now living at Ballina in N.S.W., giving an opinion of the recently published corps history. Peter has raised a good point about the lack of input from the OR's viewpoint, something that others have mentioned also, whereby proven anecdote blended with researched facts would have produced a richer history.

' Well firstly, I thought the book gave a reasonably detailed picture of the operations of the Corps, then, after completing the first reading, I thought 'Hey, wait on, this is a real VANILLA type description of all the goings on that happened'. Now I admit that there are some, because of senile debility, a mention in the book, or even preference for a quiet life, who wouldn't want to upset the apple cart, or even thought that 'What's the use of trying to set the record straight', and who haven't said a word [that I've heard of, mind ] about all the bits and pieces which, I think, should have been included, even as anecdotal tales, but they weren't, were they? What I'm suggesting is that almost all of the trauma laid on the members of the Corps by politicians, public 'servants', other members of the Services and members of the public was excluded from the book, and the book-or its story-is by far the poorer for its exclusion.

From my own experience I can-and maybe will- [if some silly bastard would pay for it] detail quite a few basic-meaning OR type-instances, and I'm quite certain that some of those who were our leaders at the time could have provided even more such tales, BUT none of that type of thing was included in the book, and it was degraded by such omission. Was the author worried about political funding, or upsetting some Bum now well and truly retired, or what ?. I've no idea, but I do know that the story presented is far less interesting because such stories were omitted. So there, I've had a bit of a whinge, and I feel slightly better for it, but it doesn't make up for the loss that all of the members-sorry, ex-members-of the Corps should feel for the omission of the 'human' face of the operations of the Corps. I'm quite sure that there are many other ex-members of the Service and especially of the Corps who spent either all, or almost all, of their working lives in the Corps, and feel rather let down as I do, by the facile treatment of the effort they put into their time in the Service.'

Thanks for the letter Peter, and yes, you are well and truly ahead with your subscriptions.

Perhaps others would like to contribute their opinions of part or all of the history. Whatever your views, it makes great reading, so what about it.

### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Up until now our requests for payment of subs. through this newsletter has relied upon the memory of each member, which overall has proved unreliable, and meant that every year or two our treasurer would need to do a bit of reminding. However, from and including this year a notice will be sent to all members annually, detailing their financial position.

### AUSTRALIAN SERVICE MEDAL

Don Swiney reported in the Ex-Fortuna newsletter that the push for recognition of survey operations in South- East Asia and the South-West Pacific as eligibility for the Australian Service Medal, is still going on. The Operation Mandau field trips to Kalimantan have been approved, now awaiting promulgation through the office of the Governor-General. Don likens the review to an ongoing saga, with a long way to go as yet.

# ANZAC 2000

Noel Sproles

Early in 2000 I had to make a business trip to Canada, USA, and UK. On the way home I took the opportunity to fulfil a long held dream of going to Turkey and visiting the great Byzantine basilica of Hagia Sofia and to make a pilgrimage to Gallipoli. I did both and was not disappointed with either of them.

The Gallipoli Peninsula is some distance from Istanbul and it took about four to five hours each way by car along a freeway and well made country roads. At one stage the road approaches The Narrows where the Turks fought off a Royal Navy just prior to the Anzac invasion. The lasting impression is of how narrow the sea lanes really are and how difficult it would be for a naval force to force their way through such a choke point. Just prior to arriving at the national park holding the area of Anzac lies the town of Gelibolu after which the peninsula is named and from which we get the name of Gallipoli.

On the way to the Anzac beaches we passed Gaba Tepe where the landing was originally intended to take place. It would have made an ideal landing area as the beach is long and flat with a wide hinterland suitable to establish a support area. On the western edge of the beach is a long low ridge leading gently up to the area of Hill 971, the ultimate objective, and through the areas where the battle eventually raged. This was initially called Third Ridge but became known later as Gun Ridge. It would have been an easy climb and our survey parties would routinely drive Land Rovers along more difficult features! It was however well covered by Turkish artillery and this is put forward as a reason why the plan was changed at the last minute although it is difficult to see why some of the many British battleships present could not have soon dealt with a few coastal batteries.

The road is carved out of the hillside and sweeps north around a spit of land (Hell Spit) that protected the landings from the guns of Gaba Tepe. The first landings took place at Ari Burnu, a small headland separating

## ANZAC 2000

Anzac Cove itself from North Beach. At this point one can look to the left and see the familiar landscape so vividly depicted by the Canberra War Memorial dioramas. Here is The Sphinx and Walkers Ridge and Russel's Top. To the right is the emotive scene of Anzac Cove itself with its narrow beach facing straight into the steep hillside leading up to Plugge's Plateau that the very first Anzacs had to climb all those years ago. At Ari Burnu is a small cemetery where, up until 2000, the official Anzac Day ceremony was held and where Pte Simpson, of Simpson and his donkey fame, is now buried.

Due to the large number of people attending the services each Anzac Day, a larger site has been prepared at North Beach for the official ceremonies. It was a few days prior to Anzac Day when I visited and final preparations of the site were furiously underway. It was being supervised by a giant of a man who, by his manner and accent, was clearly an Aussie and the boss. As I was leaving North Beach I passed close to him and said 'G'day'. He replied, stuck out his big hand for me to shake, and said 'Gary Beck' to which I replied, 'Not Air Vice Marshall Gary Beck?' and indeed it was. He was CO of 2Sqn RAAF flying Canberras out of Biak during Operation Cenderawasih in 1978. I was then SO1 (Svy) in Jakarta and on a visit to Biak, flew with him in a Canberra to see the glacier on Puncak Jaya. We had a great chat talking about old times and mutual acquaintances and what a small world it is.

From the beaches it is a climb along narrow but sealed roads onto the ridge where most of the fighting took place. First stop was at the Australian National Memorial at Lone Pine where the Australians winkled the Turks out of their log-covered trenches with bayonet and bomb. Someone, only a few days before, had left a photo and a poignant poem on the memorial near the name of a soldier who was killed at Lone Pine and whose body was never recovered or identified. After all these years, he was still part of the collective memory of a family from the Victorian high country.

## ANZAC 2000

From Lone Pine the ridge becomes flatter and wider as it stretches past places with names etched into our history. Nearby is Johnson's Jolly where remains of Australian trenches can still be made out as narrow depressions in the ground. Further up is Quinn's Post where both sides were within grenade (and insult) throwing distance of each other. At The Nek, there are panoramic views back to the beaches along Monash and Shrapnel Gullies and North to Suvla Bay. It was here at The Nek that the charge of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Horse Brigade, so vividly depicted in the closing scenes of the film 'Gallipoli', took place. The Australian positions are marked with a small cemetery and a depressingly short distance away lies a memorial marking the Turkish positions. Standing there in the peace and the quiet of a mild Spring day, it is difficult to visualise the enormity of the events that took place there in 1915.

The ridge line goes past Chunuk Bair to Hill 971 and Baby 700. The New Zealand National Memorial is at Chunuk Bair and marks the only place where the Allies actually held positions that overlooked The Narrows and the Sea of Marmara. The Kiwis held Chunuk Bair for several days before being forced off. Near the memorial are reconstructed Turkish trenches where it is said Mustafa Kemal (later known as Kemal Ataturk) actually stood and looked back to the landing beaches.

The entire area is now a national park and development is strictly controlled. The roads in the park are narrow but are sealed and are negotiable by tourist buses let alone private cars. All the well-known sites can be visited using motor transport although some sites are in the scrub and can only be reached on foot by the more hardy. The natives are very friendly and seem to be able to pick an Aussie from a mile away! I was surprised by the number of times Turkish people asked me if I was Australian or just flatly declared that I was Australian. It is probably because of the increasingly large number of Australians who visit Gallipoli and Turkey each year. I was very glad that I have become one of their number!

## PEOPLE NEWS

### Mick Coventry

I heard recently that Mick lives in Sydney. I also heard that he has produced computer software for the efficient organization of a doctor's surgery, but it appears that a medical group in N.S.W. are using it as their very own. Anyway, the matter is before a court to determine ownership, and if Mick is successful with the ongoing litigation, he can expect a big big payout.

### Pat Graham

Pat has retired from her job of many years at Fortuna, looking after the switchboard and other clerical tasks, so is well known throughout the Corps. I understand she and George are now planning more travelling.

### Ray Sargeant

Ray is also retiring on the 4<sup>th</sup> July, after many years in the Corps and later in the CPS in Perth. Well done Ray and best of luck to you and Dora in the future.

### Trevor Hann

Trevor was in Adelaide during late February to attend his mother's birthday. He was accompanied by his wife, a lass of chinese background, who manages a business enterprise in their home town, north of Bangkok. Trevor still works on survey projects whenever he can, and presently commutes to a field project in north Malaya, working for a Dutch exploration company.

### The Wicker Duo

T.J. and Lea are presently touring Italy until mid May. On return to Adelaide, they intend to hitch up their caravan again for more travelling, the first stop being at the Peter Presser homestead.

### Keith and Kay Rose

Both were in Adelaide recently to attend a travel convention at Wayville Showgrounds, to push the tourist attractions of Tennant Creek in the N.T. If you cannot remember Keith and Kay, cast your mind back to about 1983, when 4 Fd Svy carried out mapping operations in the Tennant Creek area for around 3 to 4 months. They were our hosts at the Outback Caravan Park out on Peko Rd., where the squadron had its main base camp. Keith had installed a huge powerboard and graded a separate area for our use adjacent to the main park area. They looked after us very well, as did all the townfolk in Tennant Creek, and I can still remember the late nights at the Police Club and other facilities offered to us, with a great deal of fondness.

## PEOPLE NEWS

### Mick Hansen

Congratulations are in order for Mick's forthcoming 60<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 18<sup>th</sup> June next. He is still with the Enfield-Port Adelaide Council, being there since leaving 4 Field Survey many years ago. Better start planning for retirement Mick.

### Peter Brunt

Another June birthday, this time for Peter, who will be 71 on the 30<sup>th</sup>. An old boy from early days with 4 Field Survey, Peter has spent many years in Europe, mainly working on survey projects in the Middle East. During this time he and Barbara have lived mainly in the U.K. but also in France.

### Brig. Frank Buckland

Frank is not enjoying the best of health at the moment, so we all hope he has a speedy return to normal.

### Steve Rose

Steve was in Adelaide during late January for a week-long holiday, staying with John and Pam Harrison. I had the pleasure of meeting up with Steve at a BBQ, attended also by Bill and Elizabeth Love and Mick and Barbara Hansen, at J&P's.

### Bernie Watson

Not in good health lately, with a flare-up of his old cancer condition, which had been in remission for a long time. Chemotherapy treatment has left Bernie feeling the worse for wear, but he hopes for a successful outcome. Our best wishes are with you Bernie.

### Bob Dikkenberg

Still serving part-time as a Reservist, Bob has scored a couple of full-time stints at SME Moorebank N.S.W., instructing in photo-plotting. The first time was for 3 weeks and leaves again after Easter for a 5 week stay. He hopes for a full-time clerical position at Keswick Barracks later on, but this has yet to be decided upon. He is still drawing cartoons for the Army Newspaper.

### Dave Irving

Dave is also still serving as a Reservist, and recently completed a two week W.O. level course in movements administration with RACT.

### Bob Love

At the Mount Barker Caledonian Society annual highland gathering earlier in the year, the hot and windy conditions lifted a kilt or two during the knobbly knees competition, in which Bob warded off all competitors to win the event. Well done Bob.

## Never Volunteer!

Noel Sproles

It may be a strange thing to suggest that we should never be volunteers, especially in the Year of Volunteers, but it is a maxim that most soldiers are aware of. I first received this advice as a recruit when our platoon sergeant, 'Squizzly' Taylor, told us never to volunteer for anything in the Army. Why he bothered I am not too sure as, being a typical sergeant, he took the decisions about volunteering away from us anyway! However, even though I followed his advice for nearly ten years, I must have proved to be a disappointment to Squizzly for eventually I forgot his advice and did volunteer. To compound my error, I did it in the middle of a shooting war!

In September 1968 the Australian Task Force (1ATF), the Thai Queen's Cobra Regiment, and the US Armoured Cavalry Regiment (ACR) just to our North at Blackhorse were all carrying out operations in close proximity to each other. To avoid any problems, the commander 1ATF decided to put Liaison Officers (LO) with both the Thais and at Blackhorse. An OCS classmate of mine, Captain Geoff Auhl, and I put our hands up to act as LO. We tossed for who went with whom and Geoff, a tankie, got Blackhorse and spent the next ten days or so in boozy relaxation being feted by the Yanks. I, on the other hand, went with the Thais and to war. My general recollection from the distance of three decades or so is that it was like being in an old western movie – you know, being in the circle of wagons with the Indians whooping and circling outside taking pot shots all the time.

On 15 September 1968, accompanied by two Signallers, I flew by helicopter to the old US 1 Division (the Big Red One) base at Fire Support Patrol Base (FSPB) Bearcat. The Thais were operating from the same brigade headquarters facility that we used before we went to Coral in the previous May. A bit of deja-vu. There I met the Thai commander, Special Colonel Pin, his staff and the US adviser team led by Major Long, a Southerner with a drawl straight out of 'Gone with the Wind'. Early next morning we deployed with the Thais to FSPB Grey which

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was established around an old French villa. FSPB Grey had several medium and field artillery pieces plus two 'Dusters' – WWII anti-aircraft artillery consisting of twin 40mm Bofors mounted on a tank chassis. The sight of them engaging ground targets at night was highly impressive at FSPB Coral and no less so on several occasions at Grey. We were allocated a spot in the villa and set up our radios and maps and were soon in contact with 1ATF and ready to go.

Just after midnight that night, Charlie wished us 'Good night' with a quick rocket barrage. To add insult to injury, just as we got back to sleep, he blew up a bridge on the road just North of the fire base. It was only about 1km away and the noise and shock wave was enough to wake the dead. It certainly gets the heart racing to wake up like that. Next morning at 0700, he said 'Good morning' with a long and accurate 82mm mortar bombardment. Just before the mortars fell, I got out of bed to shave etc. but, observing no one else moving, decided to lay down again for a few more minutes. Lucky that I did as the first mortar bomb landed right next to the water trailer where we did our ablutions. An examination after the attack revealed the fin of a mortar bomb stuck in the ground marking the spot and water was pouring out of holes in the trailer like strings of spaghetti. We had a USAF Forward Air Controller with us and his jeep, loaded with radio equipment worth a king's ransom, took the full force of a mortar bomb. Charlie got a return on investment with that one!

During this bombardment, I crawled across to the radio and sent a message to 1ATF that we were under fire but on my way back to shelter I heard a sleepy voice on the other end requesting 'Say again'. Like a mug, I crawled back and started to repeat the message but never got to finish it. A mortar bomb exploded on the roof immediately above me and all I could feel was the red hot lumps of Chinese shrapnel going into my back and legs. I was still picking pieces out of my body several days later. Four Thai soldiers were more seriously wounded and had to be evacuated – some later died as a result.

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One of the soldiers who died was a medico NCO. My signallers and I watched him crawl into the villa during the mortar attack very obviously seriously wounded in the chest. We could not get to him as there was an open doorway between us and him and shrapnel was whistling through the door into the villa. When it was over, we went to assist him. We were all in a bit of a state of shock and this is where the training cut in. At that time, we were taught never to use our own field dressing on someone else but to go to the trouser pocket on the left leg and use theirs. I did this but, as he was Thai, he did not have a trouser pocket and for a while I was stymied. As it happened we were in the medico's medical centre with shelves full of dressings but that did not click for the three of us until Major Long, old war horse that he was, joined us. I lifted the wounded soldier by one arm and one of the signallers by the other arm while Major Long wrapped bandages around the soldier's body where his chest should have been. In the process, the wounded Thai soldier's eyes and mine met and although we could not speak each other's language, we communicated. He died a short time later.

You do get to laugh even in such circumstances. During one mortar attack, we observed Thai soldiers and members of the US advisory team scampering, backs hard-pressed to the wall, to a large bunker built just inside a doorway leading into the villa. After the mortars stopped falling, an examination of the bunker showed that it was incomplete. The wall facing outside, the enemy side in fact, was just a sheet of plywood! Nobody had got around to sandbagging it but needless to say, it did not take long after that for work to commence. On another occasion, the US advisers were joined by a sergeant starting his third tour of Vietnam. He was a big man who took life very seriously. One night, while asleep on his cot on the verandah, a mortar attack started. He was sleeping under a mosquito net which must have hindered his headlong dash to the bunker as he absolutely shredded it in his haste. Anyone who has wrestled with an Army mosquito net will know that this was a sterling effort!

The next day, the 18<sup>th</sup>, Charlie mortared us again at noon. Standing on

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the perimeter, we could observe fire fights in the clear ground to the East between Thai infantry and Charlie. The Dusters engaged the enemy with fire directed by Major Long who had climbed a tree within the perimeter. After dark that night, mortars fell around the perimeter and the base plate positions were engaged by the Dusters.

About this time, I suggested to Major Long a re-deployment of the artillery to assist in ground defence. He thought that it was such a good idea that he recommended it to the Thais who implemented it. Major Long, in a rush of *bon homie*, asked what infantry battalion I had come from as only an infantryman could have thought of such a splendid manoeuvre! When I told him what my background really was, he accused me of being 'A goddamn engineer'!! Was that praise or not? I have often wondered.

On 20 September, intelligence reports indicated that a major attack was being prepared on FSPB Grey for that night. Major Long, now on his fourth tour, took it in his stride and prepared for the onslaught. I decided to throw in our lot with the Yanks and we all established ourselves in a sandbagged bunker and parapet complex on a corner of the villa. It was a bit of a shock to the system to be placing fused hand grenades out in lines on the parapet ready for throwing, especially after the elaborate safety precautions that we take in peace-time training. At Coral, we at least had a ring of Australian infantry around us; here it was becoming a bit too personal and 'help yourself'!

Next morning at 0320 the mortar barrage started and we said 'This is it'! We all got into our bunker and Major Long called the roll and one of my signallers failed to respond. Major Long said that he would go out and find him but I said 'No, he is one of my soldiers, I should do it'. To my horror, he agreed! I crawled through the villa into every room calling his name and feeling in the dark for a body. Outside the mortars were exploding with the most brilliant pure white flashes imaginable. I could not find him and crawled back to the bunker only to find out that he was there all the time in a corner of the bunker too frightened to respond to

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his own name. Somehow, I knew and understood how he felt! We had another mortar attack that morning but no ground assault as, lucky for us, the battalion coming to attack us stumbled across two companies of Thai infantry some distance away in an adjoining rubber plantation. The two companies fought them off all night losing four killed and 19 wounded.

I went with Colonel Pin and Major Long to their position at dawn just after contact was broken. The ground between where we landed in the US Army helicopter and the Thai position was strewn with nearly 40 enemy dead and the helicopter pilot refused to wait on the ground for us. As we walked across the killing field my foot went down into a hole and all I could think about in the eternity that it took was 'panji stake'. However, there were no panjis. It was probably where a post had rotted away and left a hole in the ground. The dead VC all had strips of parachute draped over one shoulder and under the opposite arm. The strips had quite obviously been twisted many times and used in an attempt to drag the bodies away. It reminded me of our tradition of Infantry sergeants and warrant officers wearing red sashes on parade as a left over from the days when it was their job to do the same for their own wounded. What was a tradition in our army was still a practice in theirs. I souvenired several hats from the bodies and gave one to John Bullen when I got back to Nui Dat. He tells me that he, in turn, has donated it to the War Memorial in Canberra. I still have the other one but, as it is blood stained, my good wife will not allow it to be stored in the house!

That night we had a little celebration. Each night I ate with Colonel Pin, his Chief of Staff, and Major Long. Initially my signallers joined us but they were not too sure about this Thai food. Their mates had told them that bull's penis was a Thai delicacy and to look out for 'wheel meat with a hole'. The commissioned company and the stress of examining every morsel proved too much and they soon went and had their meals with the American GIs crewing the Dusters. Colonel Pin had a taste for Napoleon brandy which he bought by the case from France and we

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would drink a bottle a night between us. We had no glasses but used waxed paper cups although there was little wax left by the time we went to bed. The night after the failed attack on FSPB Grey, we had two bottles and we all knew about it the next day! Not a wise move considering the mind-set of the neighbours! However, that night saw the last of the attacks on Grey although other attacks did occur on the Thai forces in the field. On 24 September, 1ATF operations ceased in that area and we all packed up and went home to the relative civilisation that was Nui Dat.

The ten days that I spent with the Thais was a memorable time for my signallers and me. If we needed a reminder after Coral, we learnt that there is no glory in war. The dead soldiers on both sides were not much more than boys who should now be grandfathers, not someone's dim memory. Maybe Sergeant Squizzy Taylor already knew this when he told us young recruits never to volunteer!

Thanks for both articles Noel, and I appreciate the effort.

## VALE

### Con Tsakalos

It is with sadness that I report the passing of Tsak in Perth, early this year. His death was not widely reported and the only details known are that he died of a heart attack while out walking his dog.

During his long association with the Corps, he was regarded as a bit of a character, and Tsak's little sayings and exploits will raise a chuckle for a long time yet. He was well regarded professionally, and served mainly in W.A. with 5 Fd Svy but also served with the Survey Regiment at Bendigo and at SMS Bonegilla as the RSM.

On retirement, Tsak took up a delivery service in Perth, remaining in the business until fairly recently. I think all will join me in extending our condolences to his family.

### David Hocking

Dave passed away in November 2000, ending a long and distinguished career as a surveyor and cartographer.

During WW2 he served with the Corps in the Middle East and New Guinea, and later transferred to a commando unit serving at Balikpapan in Borneo. After the war he joined the Dept. of National Mapping as a field surveyor, retiring in 1985. During his career he held office with several technical organizations and societies involved with the advancement of mapping, and was a Life Fellow of the Australian Institute of Cartographers, remaining active in all for many years after retirement. A remarkable man.

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