



SURVEY  
EX-SERVICEMEN'S  
ASSOCIATION  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



NEWSLETTER No.35  
NOVEMBER 2003

## Newsletter No 35 November 2003

Apologies again for the late distribution of this newsletter by about 3 months. With December so close, there is no hope of producing our usual late year copy. So only two newsletters this year, which is beyond my control to do otherwise. At the moment I hope the next newsletter will be out early next year (about February) but no promises.

All is not gloom though, as Allan Adsett has kindly offered to type and set out our newsletter on a trial basis, for which I am extremely grateful, so thank you Allan.

Please note—we need news items badly so advise me of anything by phone, typed script, scribbled note or even by carrier pigeon, providing you can borrow one from Robin Wilson. Queries to email your notes to [allan.adsett@flinders.edu.au](mailto:allan.adsett@flinders.edu.au).

### Social News

#### First Friday Drinks

Please note the changed venue, as we now meet at the **Saracen's Head Hotel, Carrington St.** It is the same hotel where we meet for our Anzac day Reunion.

Some thought went into changing from our former venue when it became too noisy. Two alternative venues were inspected as suggested by members.

So remember— now the **Saracen's Head Hotel** each month at 5pm.

#### Corps Birthday Dinner

The dinner was held this year on Saturday 5 July at our usual spot the Rob Roy Hotel. As only a small group of 25 attended, we all sat down at a single long table which worked out very well and convivial too. The meal provided was probably the best we have ever had at the Rob Roy, with all three courses being delicious and well presented. Washed down with a couple of wines, and everyone being unanimous, the young chef who had prepared the dinner was invited into the dining room, introduced and applauded for his efforts.

Welcomed to the dinner were Barbara and Arthur Henson, now living

back in SA, and Paul Haese and partner formerly from 2 Fd Svy Sqn. Formalities were minimal, with Stevo Hinic proposing a toast to the 'Ladies' and I proposed a toast to the memory of the 'Royal Australian Survey Corps'. Apologies received were read out during the function. Memory is a bit vague after four months as to all who attended, so I'll not include names this time.

### Christmas Function

To be held at the Rob Roy Hotel, Halifax St, City on Fri 12 Dec 2003 at 7 for 7.30 pm. Everyone should have received notification of the function from Secretary Dave Irving well before this, so with this reminder please reply to Dave ASAP. Why not ring around and make up a table as it is always a breezy night out and a good opportunity to catch up with everyone. Hope to see you there.

## **Anzac Day 2003**

### The March

A fine mild day, with attendances at various Dawn Services throughout SA reported as larger than usual. I attended my local service as dawn broke. It was great to see the very large crowd attending particularly the younger families and their children. Back at the local RSL Club Rooms afterwards the crowd was in excess of a hundred. I celebrated the service with two glasses of the traditional rum and milk before setting out for town.

At our Association form up point on North Terrace, 24 members turned up to represent Survey. A good turnout for us although I again remind members that all former members of the Corps are eligible to march. Unfortunately on this occasion we missed our resident photographer, the late Bernie Watson, so no photos this year and I am unable to list those who marched. The banner was carried by Dave Irving and our group was led by Bob Love.

I am always amazed at the large crowd lining the parade route and the enthusiasm they show for Anzac Day. National flags being in

abundance.

At the end of the parade there was a further chin-wag, before everyone moved away to the reunion or their own activity. As the reunion was not until mid-day, I had the chance to visit George Ricketts for about 40 minutes at his nursing home. Marge was able to set up a TV set with some privacy, so George was able to watch the Survey group during the march.

### The Reunion

A very good attendance at the Saracen's Head Hotel from mid-day on, with about thirty members there. The bar service was excellent, which helped bring out the anecdotes and "Do you remember" stories. A very convivial hour or so until lunch. I must mention two visitors, Phil Bray from Perth who was visiting his father in Adelaide and Brian Turner—not seen for about twenty years now—en-route from Melbourne to his farm somewhere west of Port Lincoln.

Just after 1 pm everyone sat down to lunch in the dining room, an a-la-carte meal with plenty of choices, following which the AGM was held after 2 pm.

We always keep the AGM to about one hour, or as brief as possible, returning to the bar afterwards, as wives begin drifting in to pick-up members for the homeward trip. This year, from memory, most had departed by late afternoon, ending an enjoyable day.

### The AGM

With President Bob Cooper away travelling, I asked permission from the members to chair the meeting, which was granted, to get things moving.

1. One minute's silence was observed in tribute to former members Bernie Watson and Mick Hansen, who passed away since our last meeting.
2. Apologies were received from Bill Love, Colin van Senden, John

Harrison, Peter Elverd, George Ricketts, Stan Stephens and John Whitburn.

3. A formal welcome was extended to visitors Phil Bray and Brian Turner.
4. It was agreed that Alex Munro arrange for the printing of a new Association Banner, costing about \$260.00, and all members to be levied equally for the cost.
5. It was agreed to change venue for our 1st Friday Drinks, and committee to investigate and decide.
6. It was agreed to increase subscriptions for interstate members from January 2004, committee to decide.
7. Election of Office Bearers.  
President: Alex Munro  
Secretary/Treasurer: Dave Irving  
Asst Secretary/Treasurer: Bob Mills  
History Funds Trustee: Allan Adsett
8. Subscriptions: \$10:00 annually for ordinary members, and \$5:00 for WW2 members and widows of former members
9. The unit history of 4 Field Survey Sqn was discussed and members noted who desired to assist.

With no further business the AGM was declared closed.

Dave has misplaced his list of attendees at the reunion and AGM, but I did notice Brett Knuckey, Ken Jeffery, Ken Talbot-Smith, Neil Houston, John Scharber, Steve Hinic, Dave Collins, Jim Nathan, Jim Dunn, Mark Bates, Lincoln Smith, Bob Dikkenberg, Alex Czornohalan, Bob Love, Jason Phillips, John Firth, Allan Adsett, Bob Mills, Steve McGuinness and apologies for those I missed.

### **People News**

For news items extracted from Magna Carto and the RASvy Association (Qld) newsletters, I extend my thanks.

#### Clem Sargent

Clem was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in June this year for service to Military History. He is very well regarded in this field and has presided over the Military History Society in Canberra for some

years. Congratulations Clem.

### Greg Oaten

Now promoted to lieutenant-colonel, it is rumored that he has been appointed CO of 8 Combat Engineer Regiment. If so congratulations Greg.

### Steve Ellis

Now posted back to Puckapunyal, and with Bendigo not all that far away, it is hoped he might be able to attend some Ex-Fortuna functions in the future.

### Chris Mazur

Now living in Canberra, he has recovered from a recent gall bladder operation. Adding further to his medical problem, he also crashed off his pushbike damaging several vertebrae. You need to be more careful Chris, but hope you are fully recovered by this time.

### Ian Thiselton

While on the subject of bike prangs, Ian was hit by a car during an exercise run on his bike a few weeks ago. He was not badly injured, mainly severe bruising. But the aches and pains are lingering still.

### Ian Thompson

Ian reports that he had a cataract removed from his left eye last June and is now fully recovered. Ian also spoke in glowing terms of a natural herbal substance called "Mannatech", which he now takes. Apparently it's a preventative medicine helping the immune system and he has never felt better since starting on it. Ian has also had contact with Steve Rose and Dick Small. Steve suffered a minor heart attack but is now OK. He also said his mango tree has 'fruit by the thousand', worth a fortune in Adelaide.

### Helen and Stan Campbell

Both have spent most of this year doing the 'Great Aussie Tour' bit. Starting earlier in this year, they travelled with friends for about two months into SA, Victoria and NSW. When in Adelaide Stan visited George Ricketts, before moving on to stay with Don Swiney near

Bendigo. The last bit was close to three months, moving through WA, NT and Qld before returning to Brisbane. No caravan or trailer for Stan, he prefers a mixture of camping, caravan parks and motels for accommodation while on the road, carrying everything in the car boot or on the roof rack. Seems a great way to go.

### Robin Wilson

Old news now, but earlier this year Robin spent time in hospital with angina, including 4 days in intensive care. OK now, but he still requires daily medication and the odd medical check.

### Bill Boyd

Met up with Bill at the Bendigo book launch last March. He now lives in Gosford, NSW and works for a company making maps depicting specified ecologicistic aspects of an area.

### John Hook

John has now fully recovered from major heart surgery performed earlier this year in Brisbane.

### Pauline and Tom Sawyer

Pauline and Tom flew into Adelaide from Perth about a month ago, renting a hire car at the airport. During their two day stay in Adelaide, I had the pleasure of reminiscing with both for an hour or so, helped by a decent bottle of red. They then drove to Bendigo to visit Pauline's relatives for a week. On their return trip back to Perth, they stayed overnight with Pam and John Harrison also meeting up with Alex Czornohalan.

### Sam Chambers

Still living in Bendigo, Sam has been bitten by the racing bug. My informant was not overly sure but thought that Sam had purchased a race horse or was a part owner perhaps. Either way, he now has a keen interest in the sport and regularly attends meetings held at the country racecourses.

### Bob Kay

Bob has changed his name to McMillan-Kay, probably by deed poll. He has written a book titled "A Technical Tour" of his experiences with 1 Topo Svy Tp in Vietnam around 1969. Allan Adsett discovered the book for sale at the Australian War Memorial during a recent trip. The price is \$35.00 and is possibly available thru the major bookstores in Adelaide.

### Stan Vote

Stan and Maureen now live at Moama, across the river from Echuca. Their house is near the front gate of the Rich River Golf Club where, naturally enough, Stan is a leading player and also the Club handicapper.

### Keith Barber

I had the pleasure of spending an afternoon with Keith during a recent visit to Bendigo. Keith is still as sharp as a tack, with a keen memory of events during his long service career. He has assembled an impressive display of Corps and military memorabilia including photos, medals, badges and numerous other items of interest. His old hip problem is still with him, requiring two walking sticks for mobility but otherwise looked in good shape for an 82 year old gentleman.

### John Hogan

I had lunch with John in Bendigo during my recent visit and thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. John has a bung knee which slows him down a bit and he might also require hip surgery at some later date. Otherwise seemed his old mischievous self.

### Ron Weinert

I had the pleasure of attending Ron's 70th birthday party last 21st June accompanied by Margaret and Robin Wilson, Pam and Bob Griffin and Pam and John Harrison. Ron's son Mark and daughter-in-law Tanya hosted the party at their house in Gawler for family and friends. Ron's curly locks of yesteryear are thinning a bit but he still looks fine. He has completely recovered from his heart surgery of about a year ago. Ian Thompson phoned down from Gympie Qld during the party to wish Ron all the best. Congratulations Ron and lets hope there are many

more birthdays yet to come.

### Alex Cairney

Alex suffered severe gastro problems several weeks back, requiring a stretch in hospital. Hope there is better news by now Alex.

### John Scharber

I received the following note from John about his recent trip to Queensland.

Joanne and I recently went on a two week trip up to Byron Bay and Sunshine Beach (near Noosa Heads, Qld). We spent a week at each destination but I thought it may be of interest to yourself and association members that we spent a couple of nights at Albany Creek with Lorraine Chambers. She seems to be bravely coping with the loss of Derek and managing to keep herself busy. She is thinking of selling her house as she finds that a 4 bedroom house and swimming pool is too much to care for. Interestingly though I was delighted to hear that members of the Qld Association arrange working bees to help her out in the house and garden. She has marched on Anzac Day with Survey for the past few years proudly wearing Derek's medals.

While at Lorraine's we made a couple of phone calls and booked a dinner at the Kedron-Wavell Services Club where we met up with Barry Lutwyche, Jimmy Gill and John Hook. Jimmy is working as Property Manager with a Real Estate firm whilst John is working for the same mob as the maintenance man. It turns out that John used to be the property manager but got tired of the job. John however, has had his share of dramas having recently undergone a double bypass operation on his heart. He was still a bit tender when I saw him and was at least another month before he could return to work. Barry has got himself an ice-cream van!!! He works long hours and occasionally gets help from John and Jimmy but is doing very well. I remember when the only ice-cream Barry would have been interested in would have been the froth on the top of his beer.

An additional surprise at the club was the unexpected appearance of Lyall Camp. Lyall is working with National Mapping and has the job of visiting all of their map sales outlets to check for any problems. Sounds

pretty cushy doesn't it? Lyall is living in Canberra. A few other names came up in conversation such as Jim Beard and Dennis Duqueman who are both living in Caboolture and Butch Winterflood who resides at Bribie Island.

We also met up with Greg and Margaret Chambers who live at Moorina near Caboolture where they have a small property and run cattle. Greg hasn't contemplated retirement at this stage and has a contract to clean the local school a couple of times a day and Margaret is busy with tele-marketing.

We had a great little holiday but the only regret was that we didn't have time to look up more of our old friends.

### Allan Adsett

Allan, Judyne and son Nathan visited Canberra during the July school holidays. They regret not catching up with their friends in Canberra but simply ran out of time as there is so much to see and do. While at the Australian War Memorial, Allan purchased Bob McMillan-Kay's book about his career in the Corps. It is a most interesting book and he recommends it to anyone who knows Bob and in particular those who served in Vietnam. It brought back many memories of his own tour of duty.

## General

### Fortuna Again Under Review

A regular occurrence for several years now, generally based on the rationale of whether Fortuna is economically feasible, or can output at the facility be better produced elsewhere.

It was tried first in 1970, from memory, when there was a plan to relocate the regiment at Wodonga/Albury or nearby, the aim being to centralise Federal Government bodies in the same area, thereby creating larger provincial cities and getting away from the coastal capitals. It didn't happen, except for the detachment at Bonegilla. Consider now the cost of relocating or duplicating the printing facility at Fortuna, and also

whether any political party is willing to risk losing the federal seat of Bendigo. Nothing is forever, so wait and see I suppose.

### Miniature Association Badges

A new run of 100 badges have been made of the miniature Fortuna Association badge and are available for sale.

Anyone interested contact me on

## VALE

### LTCOL George Ricketts

I must report the passing of another stalwart of the Royal Australian Survey Corps. George died in Adelaide, on his 82nd birthday on 14th October 2003. He was surrounded by his family to the end and they were able to sing "Happy Birthday" to him just after midnight.

George succumbed to a bout of pneumonia only days after diagnosis at the Lourdes Valley Nursing Home where he had resided for the previous 18 months or so following a series of strokes that began 3 years ago. A private funeral service was held in Lourdes Valley Chapel on 17 October attended by his family and a few close friends followed by cremation. A memorial service was held on 27th October in Scots Church attended by a capacity crowd of friends drawn from the many organisations that George was associated with over the years such as Legacy, Probus, sporting clubs, his church, professional and technical groups and the Corps.

George's daughter Cheryl paid tribute to her father during the service, reminiscing on his long service career and how the family responded to those times. In particular she told of an adventurous trek by train through Africa to Egypt while the family was enroute to the UK where George was to take up a new posting. On one occasion they were stranded at an isolated siding at night waiting for a train to arrive with wild animals roaming freely nearby.

A very touching tribute was given by a young Legatee Cameron Billinghamst whom George had guided from the age of five.

Arthur Henson responded on behalf of the Corps covering much of George's military career. Arthur's eulogy summarised at the end of the newsletter.

George was always approachable, a fair and kindly man who loved the social aspects of life, enjoying a good party to the full and a good joke. His service career was remarkable and distinguished in many ways yet he always remained a close family man. I think it is fair comment to sum up George Rickets as an officer and a gentleman.

On behalf of all former members of the Corps who served with George, condolences are extended to Marg and her family with their sad loss.

Noticed among those attending the service were Arthur and Barbara Henson, Joan Munro, Eva Gruszka, Frank and Naomi Bryant, Stevo Hinic, John and Pam Harrison, Desi Asaris, Allan Adsett, Peter Davis, Bob Mills, Bob Dickenberg, John Shepherd, Bill Griggs, Peter Elverd, Ken Talbot-Smith, John Scharber, Bob and Pam Griffin, Elizabeth and Bill Love, Jim Dunn, Rob Langley and Max Coletti.

### Ray Sargeant

I report with sadness the passing in Perth of Ray on 20 October 2003 after a comparatively short illness. He suffered a stroke late in 2002, greatly affecting his physical capabilities, but with time and a strong will to improve, Ray gradually returned to something like his old self.

Medical opinion was vague as to the reason for his stroke so further tests were conducted earlier this year. An inoperable brain tumour was discovered rapidly getting worse each week to an inevitable end.

Ray was born in Manchester, England in 1936. Following the death of his father in 1946, Ray's mother decided to migrate to Australia. So in 1950 both boarded the *SS Moreton Bay* bound for Melbourne to join his brother Tom who had arrived in 1948. Ray was able to find employment as a junior mechanic until in 1953 the family moved to Perth.

In 1955, Ray was called up for National Service Training, probably the only 'lottery' he ever won but it shaped his future life and career. After several years in the CMF, Ray joined the Australian regular Army as a full time duty member of the CMF. He served with Western Command Field Survey Section as a driver. After two years full time service he was transferred from the CMF into RASvy in 1967 in Perth. Ray was trained in Q Store duties, developing an affinity for his new job to such an extent that he became very expert in the management of survey stores and specialised equipment, particularly in the movement and control of those stores on mapping operations throughout Australia and overseas. I considered Ray one of the best "Q Wallahs" that it was my pleasure to have served with, an opinion also held by senior officers within RASvy and all who knew him.

Ray served mainly with 5 Fd Svy Sqn but also had postings with 1 Fd Svy Sqn in Brisbane and 4 Fd Svy Sqn in Adelaide, in addition to many lengthy mapping operations in Indonesia and the Australian mainland, earning the nickname "Noddy".

He retired from the service in 1986, but it was not long before he rejoined again as a civilian storeman at the Midland Stores Depot, eventually rising to a senior position. Ray finally retired for good in 2001 to enjoy his life in full with house renovations, a new 4WD, his bowls club, planning trips with Dora etc until his sudden cruel stroke.

A funeral service and thanksgiving for his life was held at the Pinnaroo Cemetery on 27th October 2003. The Chapel was completely filled with over 150 friends and the service was conducted by an Army Chaplain. The eulogy was given by Barry Parker—a very touching reminiscence of Ray's life. "Noddy mate you have gone a'wandering the King's Highway again, but this time the road was just too steep and too rough". Ray was cremated wearing his bowls club uniform, with a can of beer and the Association cap embroidered with the Corps Badge. With detailed preparation to the last and not leaving anything to chance, he had planned his own service and wake. I understand his ashes are to be interred in the bushland within the cemetery and the plaque to be inscribed "Back to the Bush".

A large crowd of friends accompanied Dora and her family back to the family home to celebrate the wake. I was able to attend the funeral service and the wake and had the pleasure of meeting old friends and acquaintances after many years. To name a few that I can recall— Brian Mead, Cliff Webb, Phil Bray, Peter Eddy, Noel, Eric and Cedric Clutterbuck, Margaret Taylor, Yvonne Cocker, Alf Till, Leon Griffiths, Jim Roberts, Doug Bath (ex 4 Fd Svy Coy), Lance Barrell, Brian Firms, Frank Lenane and Peter Bowen. There were others but memory has faded a bit.

I am indebted to Barry Parker for his notes and assistance provided during my short visit to Perth.

All who knew Ray will join me in offering Dora and her family our deepest sympathy with their tragic loss.

### Mark Host

Mark served at the Regiment in 1993-94, the School of Military Survey and the MGI Pilot Project reaching the rank of SSGT. He passed away in Sydney at the age of 42 after suffering a stroke in June 2003. Sandy Craig attended his memorial service representing Survey Corps members.

### Mick Byrne

Major Mick Byrne passed away in Bendigo on 3 May 2003 while playing golf, something he enjoyed. Mick transferred from the British Army and served as OC Litho and Carto at Fortuna. He was very popular with a great sense of humour. He spent the last few years of service at Puckapunyal as OC 3 Trg Gp.

The Rev John South (Ex Corps) conducted the service and Robin Blackburn came down from Canberra to deliver the eulogy. A large gathering of Ex-Corps members attended the service.

## Brian Trueman

Brian died on 25<sup>th</sup> June 03 in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital at the age of 64 years. He died of a heart attack following surgery over two months for the removal of both legs below the knee, caused by vascular problems.

Brian was born in Peterborough and grew up in the bush. Because his father was a school teacher and posted to various schools fairly regularly, the family travelled widely throughout country South Australia. There was very little that Brian didn't know about catching fish, rabbits or any other creature that fitted into a cooking pot.

Brian spent six years with the Central Command Field Survey Section in the early sixties. On discharge he worked for a survey company for a short time before joining the former Dept of Civil Aviation for the remainder of his working life. His job in main was surveying and certifying airstrips throughout SA and NT. His biggest project was probably the international airport at Ayres Rock.

Ill health forced retirement earlier than expected. Brian and Kay shared houses, she mainly in Adelaide and he mainly in Edithburg on the Yorke Peninsula, selected by him because of the great fishing. During his years in the town, Brian became well known socially and one resident saddened by his death paid tribute by saying "The town will never be the same again".

A service was held for Brian in the Florey Chapel at Centennial Park Cemetery, attended by a large crowd of friends, many travelling from the country including Alice Springs.

Brian was a bit of a larrikin with a cheeky smile, a true character who loved a practical joke. He will always be remembered when old friends meet. Our condolences to Kay and her family.

## Eulogy to George Ricketts

George enlisted in Melbourne in 1941 when he was 20. As a civvy he had trained and worked as a commercial artist. After his recruit training at Puckapunyal he was allotted as a sapper to the Royal Australian Survey Corps and it was in this Corps that he faithfully served until 1976.

His first posting was to AHQ Cartographic Company Bendigo as a draftsman so his skills could be put to good use there. In 1942 he was posted to Brisbane where his new unit 1 Mobile Lithographic Section was based - George remained with this unit for the remainder of WW2. Their work was the production of maps to support operations in PNG, particularly in readiness for the assault on Nadzab and Lae. He was promoted to Cpl in 1942 and to Sgt in 1943. In 1944 the unit was warned for overseas duty and George left Brisbane on the troopship *Duntroon* on 3 April 1945 and arrived at Morotai on 16 April 1945.

Although there wasn't much of the war left at this-time, George and his mates still had plenty to do in support of Allied operations. When August 1945 came, the surrender of the Japanese had to be formally recorded. His unit was tasked to produce for General Blamey the Instrument of Surrender of the Japanese forces of the area from what is now Indonesia to Bougainville. It is a well known fact that after the surrender ceremonies at Morotai were over George was asked to enter on the three formally signed documents the place and date of the ceremony. His handiwork was faultless as no difference could be seen between George's hand lettering of these additions and the adjoining printed letters. I've come across two photos of George at Morotai, one hand lettering the Instruments and the other in a unit photo where he is sitting at the front looking tanned and fit with his slouch hat on at the usual rakish angle.

George remained in the Army after WW2 and was posted back to Bendigo. In 1947 he won another promotion, this time to W02. The next year came another move, to the School of Survey at Balcombe where he joined the staff as the cartographic drafting instructor. He was promoted to Lt in 1953, which meant another move - back to

Bendigo, now called AHQ Survey Regiment.

He had a variety of work there in the next eight years. As well as running a troop of draftsmen and women, he was for a time also Adjutant. In 1957 came his promotion to Capt and in the years between 1958 - 1960 he spent some months away on field work with the Regiment's Topographic Squadron working on the 1st order traversing then under way in the Queensland/NT area. It was also during this time that scribing was being introduced to replace the old fair drawing methods and as an accomplished mapmaker he played a major role in this work.

In 1961 George was posted to the UK as the Australian Exchange officer at the British Army's School of Survey at The Hermitage in Berkshire. He fitted in well there as he had by now a good knowledge of surveying, cartography, lithographic procedures and instructing. Promoted to Major in 1963 on his return to Australia, George again spent time at Bendigo though this time as OC Cartographic Squadron. There was plenty to keep him busy as there was a major effort in place to finish off the 1:250000 series and the newer work in the preparation of aeronautical charts for the RAAF.

South Australia now beckoned and in 1968 George was posted to Keswick as OC Central Command Field Survey Unit and later as OC 4 Field Survey Squadron. He stayed here in SA until 1974. At the time when we heard that a Major Ricketts was to be the next OC some asked "whose that?" When told, some thought 'not a plastic scratcher'. Well we all soon got to know George and these people had to change their minds really quickly. The unit was busy working on 1:100000 map compilations which then went to Bendigo. The OC usually had a look at each before despatch. I had one ready to go, or so I thought. I left it on his table as was the custom - and the next day it was back on mine with 4 pages of notes from George. He had worked for a long time at Bendigo and had just got sick of all the brummy map compilations from the other units. He sat us back on our heels a bit but he certainly lifted our work standards to higher plane.

In 1970 the unit was warned for overseas work in PNG and this eventuated in 1972-74. George commanded these combined operations

mainly from Goroka. They were big tasks, lots of people, aircraft with their attendant logistic and command problems. They were nicknamed Sea King, Wineglass and Plastic Flagon. George had to work hard each year to plan, coordinate and then run each operation in the field, as well as keeping the unit at home running. It was continuous hard work for him for three years. He had to sort through all the conflicting priorities and advice from many sources, mostly received by telephone and to help him do this he arranged to fit a telephone recorder so he could at a quieter time listen again to sort everything out. George weathered these difficult years well. In the opinion of many, including me, he did not receive the proper recognition he deserved for all his efforts.

But there was one major problem he did sort out and that was the poor unit accommodation at Keswick Barracks. He spent many days with the architects designing a new building to house the expanded new 4 Field Survey Squadron and was able to be there when it was opened.

In 1974 George moved to Victoria Barracks in Sydney on promotion to LTCOL as Staff Officer Grade 1 in Operations Branch at what then was HQ Field Force Command. He was by now one of the most experienced officers in the Corps and he put it all to good use, being involved in all facets of the Corps' work, from planning the continuing major field operations in PNG and Indonesia to perhaps a minor map compilation problem over at Karrakatta in WA. In October 1976 he resigned his commission, retired and returned to Adelaide.

There was always one other thing he was good at - he made sure that the social side of his units went well, there were hails and farewells, unit parties and Christmas Trees for the families. These functions, especially in Adelaide, helped families get to know and support each other when the men were away. His office door was always open if someone had a problem. His advice or criticisms were always given in a well intentioned manner and there are quite a good few men around today who would have benefited from his words.

He may have left the Army but he still soldiered on. He made a continuous effort to keep in touch with all those he knew. He has been since 1976 a member of our Ex-Survey Association and for many years

was the President. When he was able he joined in the Association's social occasions especially Anzac Day, usually at the head of the marchers. For many years he was a member of the Australian Institute of Cartographers and you may today pick up an older copy of BP's Road Atlas of Australia and see George's name as their cartographic consultant for South Australia.

As a gentleman, soldier, surveyor, cartographer, administrator and a leader there were few who could match him.

Vale LTCOL George Ricketts.

*Arthur Henson October 2003*

### **General**

#### **Map Required**

Keith Barber is very desirous of obtaining a copy of the 'ADELAIDE 1 MILE', preferably in top condition. The map was first printed in 1937.

Must be one out there somewhere, so even if you only have a suggestion as to the location of a copy, please ring me on 8277 7074. Harry Raisbeck worked on the map and Keith wants to frame it alongside the 'COWES 1 MILE' produced by Harry's father John Raisbeck in 1910.

#### **The Lost is Found**

During my visit to Keith Barber recently, he gave me a Long Service and Good Conduct Medal to return to Robin Wilson. Many, many years ago in Wodonga, during the upheaval of shifting house between married quarters on posting, Robin somehow misplaced or lost the medal. Years later and by a stroke of good luck, the medal came into the possession of John Waight, who recognised the name on the rim and checked it out with Keith Barber, hence on to me for delivery to Robin.

## Chocolate Maths

Try this it works, weird!! It only takes a minute. This is pretty neat how it works out.

**DON'T CHEAT BY SCROLLING DOWN FIRST** It takes less than a minute.....

Work this out as you read.

Be sure you don't read the bottom until you've worked it out!

This is not one of those waste of time things, it's funny.

1. First of all, pick the number of times a week that you would like to have chocolate. (try for more than once but less than 10)
2. Multiply this number by 2 (Just to be bold)
3. Add 5. (for Sunday)
4. Multiply it by 50 - I'll wait while you get the calculator.....
5. If you have already had your birthday this year add 1753....

If you haven't, add 1752.....

6. Now subtract the four digit year that you were born.

You should have a three digit number ....

The first digit of this was your original number (I.e., how many times you want to have chocolate each week).

The next two numbers are .....

**YOUR AGE! (Oh YES, IT IS!!!!)**

THIS IS THE ONLY YEAR (2003) IT WILL EVER WORK, SO SPREAD IT AROUND WHILE IT LASTS. IMPRESSIVE, ISN'T IT?



ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

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