



SURVEY
EX-SERVICEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



NEWSLETTER No 42
JUNE 2006

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Welcome to our first newsletter of the year, being about 6 weeks past the target date, but the good news is the remaining two will be so much closer ---maybe.

My thanks to those members who have made the time to contribute news items and articles, and thanks also to kindred Associations who have sent their newsletters to me, but I would like to see contributions from members who served in the later years of the Corps just to balance things a bit.

SOCIAL NEWS

First Friday Drinks

Still at the Saracens Head hotel at 5pm, so make that little extra effort to attend if in the area, just to say hullo. Bit of a punt sometimes on who you might find there, with only two for a convivial ale on one occasion, but eight on another being the maximum so far this year.

New Year BBQ

A very pleasant afternoon get-together held at the Sergeants' Mess at Keswick Barracks on Sunday 19th February from noon to 4pm, with a great roll-up of 34 members and partners accepting the invitation. Organising the function with Dave Irving and with Joan to advise and assist, the whole thing was straight forward and simple, or so I thought until the actual day.

I know better now, however, with assistance from Mess staff and members present pitching in everything went pretty well. In particular I wish to thank Neil Houston for his efforts at the BBQ plate, as there was more work involved than I had imagined, so well done Neil and you're on a six pack.

We had the use of the indoor air-conditioned facilities if needed, but that's hardly what a BBQ is about, so thankfully the weather was kind to us with the temperature hovering around 26C, at least ten degrees cooler than the heat wave conditions during the few days before.

From all reports everyone enjoyed the day, so that points the way to a similar function in the future, anyway, a successful afternoon gathering. Earlier in the activities a list of the apologies received for the day were read out, and listed below are the names of those who attended for

anyone interested-----

Joan & Alex Munro, Dave Irving & Pam Illert, Bob & Pam Ballard, Jim & Rita Dunn, Neil Houston, Moyna Briggs, Kay Trueman, Bill & Elizabeth Love, John & Pam Harrison, Stevo Hinic, Graeme Ragless & Carol, Allan & Judyne Adsett, Arthur & Barbara Henson, Bob & Margaret Dikkenberg, Neville Stone, John & Joanne Scharber, Bill & Jan Griggs, Dave & Susan Stephenson and Jim Nathan.

Corps Birthday Dinner

The date is later than usual on Saturday 19th August 06, so keep your options open for that date. A flyer will be sent out as usual notifying all details, well in time for you to decide.

ANZAC DAY REPORT

The March

A fine and mild day again this year, so conditions were very comfortable for the parade.

The roll-up was excellent and would have made the late George Ricketts very proud, as 30 members assembled to avail themselves of the occasion to show pride in their service with the Corps and even more so to give emphasis to the spirit of Anzac Day. I know many had attended their local Dawn Service before travelling into the city. We were again led by our senior member Bob Love, who insisted on doing the job even though not fully recovered from recent surgery, but Noel Sproles had kindly volunteered to step in should Bob have faltered. Well done Bob. I know the Corps was not renowned for regimentality but trying to organise the group into parade order was awkward, as some kept moving around to chat with friends, but thankfully we all stepped off together. The bandmen up front from our group were mainly all young musicians, which perhaps explained why they played latin style music at a fast beat, not the best for keeping in step, although possibly it would not have made any difference with us anyway.

As usual there were large crowds lining the route and as usual I felt proud of the applause given to each group of marchers as they passed along the route. We also received a reasonable amount of TV coverage from at least one station which was good for family and friends watching at home.

At the conclusion of the march we assembled again for group photographs and a further round of news swapping, before moving away to the reunion or other activities.

The Reunion

Held again at the Exeter Hotel in Rundle St. from 11.30am onwards and attended by a very chatty and lively crowd of around 30 bods. Being a public holiday the normal pub crowd was absent, so we had pretty much the place to ourselves, including the rough'n'ready indoor/outdoor beer garden where we all gathered for lunch and later for the AGM. Possibly early last century the hotel was a worthy up-market abode but now a trifle quirky, with bohemian style posters adorning the walls and piles of give-away newspapers scattered about, published by interesting but strange groups. The lunch served was counter style with a good variety of choices and reasonably priced, also the beer (mainly Cooper's) poured well, so no complaints there. Strangely, the wine list was very comprehensive with varieties available costing up to hundreds of dollars per bottle. Following lunch (and during) the AGM was held in the beer garden, over thirty minutes earlier than normal so as not to clash with the Anzac Day AFL game in Melbourne. Another strange thing, the management does not agree with TV in the hotel, so with the conclusion of the AGM numerous members shot down the side lane to The Wheelbarrow, about 100 metres away, where a large TV screen in the bar displayed the footy game in Melbourne, while the remainder stayed on at the Exeter or alternated between both pubs. I always enjoy the camaraderie that prevails on the day as I'm sure most others do also, but by late afternoon I thought it was wise to head for home, leaving several still enjoying the game at The Wheelbarrow and a small group at the Exeter, ending another enjoyable reunion.

The AGM (In brief)

The president declared the meeting open at 1308hrs.

Present

29 members were present ----- A. Munro, D. Irving, J. Dunn, J. Frith, R. Love, K. Jeffery, A. Adsett, J. Nathan, R. Cooper, D. Collins, B. Knuckey, S. Hinic, P. Elverd, W. Griggs, A. Czornohalan, S. McGuinness, E. Jacobs, D. Miller, J. Phillips, R. Mills, P. Rossiter,

F. Bryant, G. Ragless, M. Coletti, S. Stephens, P. Cates, K. Talbot-Smith, J. Scharber, R. Griffin.

Guests----- Janine Coletti, Cheryl Cates, Joan Munro, James Scharber.

Apologies

A. Henson, M. Davey, S. Lemon, C. van Senden, G. Timmins, R. Langley, J. Harrison.

The president welcomed Peter Rossiter, visiting from Ballina NSW.

Previous Minutes

Copies were circulated and read by members.

Moved B. Knuckey, Seconded S. Hinic That the minutes be accepted.

Carried.

Business Arising

The annual donation of \$20 to the RSL was confirmed for this year.

Moved R. Cooper, Seconded A. Adsett That the donation be sent to the RSL. Carried

All other matters were referred to general business.

Correspondence

Read out by the secretary but not requiring confirmation.

President's Report

The president reported on Association activities for the previous year.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer reported that unencumbered funds held were \$112.81 in the general account and \$344.58 in the history fund at the 24th April 06

Moved D. Collins, Seconded G. Ragless That the report be accepted.

Carried

Election of Office Bearers

The president outlined a plan to increase the numbers of office bearers and suggested that the present committee remain in office until the proposal is fully augmented. This was agreed to by the meeting, and letters will be sent out soon to seek volunteers.

General Business

History Funds

The treasurer suggested that the history fund account be closed and transferred to the general account but still administered separately, to simplify banking and reduce signatories.

Moved S. Hinic, Seconded S. Stephens That the history funds be transferred to the general account Carried.

Corps Memorial Project

The president detailed progress made with the memorial, incorporating the Corps badge that was fixed over the front entrance to 4 Field Survey Sqn for many years, and the location of sites available within Keswick Barracks.

Moved A. Adsett, Seconded F. Bryant That the site at the northern end of the parade ground be selected for the memorial, if approved by HQ. Carried.

Unit History

A list of members who served in the unit on posted strength from 1945 until disbandment in 1996 has been compiled, and questionnaires are now ready to post out to selected members, at first to addresses now known and progressively to others as addresses are sourced

Subscriptions

Due to increased costs it will be necessary to increase subscriptions for our interstate members by a small amount to be notified, but local subscriptions will remain the same for this year.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 1340hrs.

CORPS MEMORIAL PROJECT

The situation now is ----- I attended an appointment with the manager of the civil group responsible for all works within Keswick Barracks, to enquire on the possibility of a memorial site within his jurisdiction. He very kindly showed me several sites that he thought might suit our purpose, but I had to decline for various reasons such as signage by present units, however, I did accept the final offer of a site on the lawned area at the north end of the parade ground adjacent to the rear of the Officers' Mess. Approval would be subject to a drawing of the proposed monument with dimensions, sufficient to allow

management staff to decide whether it would be suitable for the area. I have since sent a drawing to the manager but have yet to receive a reply, so early days yet. He did mention that the surrounds to the site are serviced regularly by garden staff, which is important. I enquired if he could arrange the laying of the concrete base at public expense, a cheeky request judging by his wry smile, but you never know so maybe.

I also inspected sites along the "Path of Honour", a walkway dividing the Torrens Parade Ground from the rear of Government House in Adelaide, to admire the numerous memorials to various military units bordering the path, jointly administered by the Adelaide City Council and the State RSL.

I approached the OIC of the Parks and Gardens Dept. at the Adelaide Townhall and he offered to show me what was available, very kindly I thought, on the proviso that the RSL approved the project later. He then told me the maximum dimensions allowed for each monument, which I thought were a bit on the small side and unsuitable for our needs, so I had to decline with thanks.

The bronze Corps badge we have is looking very weary after about 25 years exposed to all weather conditions and needs refurbishing, which I'm sorry to report is extremely labour intensive, so the quote I have is for \$850. The quote for a bronze cast plaque measuring 400mm wide and 300mm deep with appropriate text is \$740, so nothing comes cheaply these days.

The next task was to visit the brickyard at Littlehampton. When inspecting sites at Keswick it was suggested to me that brick construction might be the best way for the monument. The manager at the yard showed me a decorative brick which I considered would be suitable and then volunteered to donate all we needed, which was very generous of her, so a small win.

I arranged an interview with the gentleman responsible for project grants at the Department of Veterans Affairs and spent an informative hour with him, however the final application cannot be sent to Canberra for approval until all details are fully arranged, but he did say that in his opinion we had a fairly strong case. I'm also positive that any shortfall in funds will be subscribed by our members, going on the reaction at our AGM on Anzac Day. Next problem is the right brickie.

MEDALS

PNG Defence Force 50th Anniversary Medal

Fourteen members indicated their interest in purchasing the medal, so I posted all regimental details and service in PNG to Christies Medals in Sydney, under the auspices of our Association. The arrangement was organised by telephone conversation with Christies. All members who then liaised directly to Christies received the medal by post within three weeks from application. The details of three other members received on Anzac Day have yet to be processed.

Australian Defence Medal

Frank Bryant rang me about six weeks ago to say he had received his medal, so obviously distribution is underway at long last, although the delay as I understand was caused by changes to the initial eligibility criteria. If you have yet to apply, enclosed is an application form that might be useful courtesy of Arthur Henson.

PROPOSED COMMITTEE

Over the life of our Association off almost thirty years, there has only been a small committee to administer the needs of our membership, and while this has worked fairly well on most occasions there were times when things could have been handled much better. Just for the record, during the last fifteen years or so, the committee mainly comprised of two active members assisted by one or two others when required, a situation which can no longer work, when considering that each year now we have established functions and publish a regular newsletter (well mainly), plus an overdue unit history to compile, as well as a Corps memorial to complete.

No big deal in each particular activity perhaps, except when handled by one or two members only, so my proposal is to expand the committee considerably where each member will have no problem in fulfilling his role. Attempting to organise such a group at our AGM would be hopeless, as most would remember those times when nominations for office bearers were called, when blokes did their best to become invisible or raced to do in anyone or scrambled to second any name bandied about, by and large avoiding a position as if it meant contamination with the black death. Very funny at times and raised

many a laugh, but was unfair and unproductive, and certainly farcical. I intend sending letters out to members outlining the proposal, to seek volunteers for the new committee, so please give the matter some serious thought. Briefly, I would like to see a vice-president and a separate treasurer and secretary added to the executive committee, and sub-committees formed for social activities, the newsletter, the unit history and special projects as required, with several members in each group because at any given time many will not be available due to reasons too numerous to mention.

Everything proposed will be subject to discussion at a special meeting held later, however, I'm sure the objective will be achieved. As I mentioned at the AGM I intend to relinquish all positions I hold by the end of this year, with no maybe's, but will still remain a very active member and able to help out whenever I'm available. Anyway boys, cheer up and be in it.

NEWS SCRAPS

Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Fund

The Federal Treasurer announced during his 2006/07 budget speech, that benefits paid from funded super funds would be tax free from 1st July 2007. This would not apply to benefits obtained from the DFRDBF, being an unfunded scheme, however, such funds were referred to as attracting some tax relief. As most of our older members retired under that scheme, the Treasurers speech sparked a bit of interest that some tax concessions would be forthcoming, but precisely how much was not clear.

Noel Sproles decided to find out how much, a bit like a hound on the heels of a hare, not easily put off. His pursuit of an answer is detailed below in essence only, always polite though.

The first email was to DFRDBF requesting an answer.

Reply : Don't know so unable to help.

Noel's next email was direct to the Treasurer for the real answer.

Reply : We're too busy, go to our website "simplersuper"

Noel did as directed and read all the relevant sections, but was still unsure.

The third email was to "simplersuper" for clarification.

Reply : All a bit confusing, but we value your enquiry on this important

issue.

Noel was still confused and not amused by all this, so sent a final email to DFRDBF, suggesting they raise their game considerably as others will surely want to know.

Reply : None, and not expected.

Thank you Noel for trying on our behalf, although someone out there might know the answer by this time, so the only good news is that there appears to be a tax concession of some sort.

Ex-Fortuna Survey Association wares.

A few scarves and ties are still available at \$20 each, also copies of Mapmakers of Fortuna at \$60 a copy , so if you are interested in procuring anything or just enquiring, contact their secretary Tracy Phillips by phone on (03)54420263 or (03)54496330 AH or email phipsys@bigpond.com

Purple Beret

The Queensland Association have ordered a batch of purple berets costing about \$30 each as I understand, to be worn on appropriate occasions. Members in WA have been wearing purple caps for around two years now on Anzac Day, displaying an embroidered Corps badge as opposed to the berets which are intended to show a metal or plastic badge. (This bought back memories about an incident at the Regiment. I'll include it in the next edition)

The Curta Calculator

Remember the Curta Calculators used in the bush many years ago to do the various computations required on station? At a guess they went out of use about the early 1970's as electronic equipment was introduced. There were two models available, both hand held with one slightly larger than the other, the only difference being the number of decimal points provided otherwise they were identical, but a marvellous piece of engineering.

One was shown on a TV programme recently, as the mystery object, to be identified by members of the public at large and an expert panel, on a show named the "Collectors" about collecting antiques and so called collectables. Strangely, no one could identify what it was, possibly a

coffee grinder said one person jokingly, another said a camera attachment, being some of the attempts.

It was later that the show's presenter announced what it was, and then gave a few background details; apparently it was invented and produced by a prisoner in a German POW camp during WW2, encouraged by the camp commandant, who intended presenting the finished article to Hitler.

It was later perfected and went into mass production in 1947.

New location for DIGO

The Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation will eventually move from Fortuna to the Longlea site near to Bendigo, at present home to all the Army Reserve units in the district. The move will take place some time following the construction of a proposed purpose - built building on the site, suitable for the 111 staff still at Fortuna. The old mansion will remain, but as what is anyone's guess, ideas ranging from an upmarket hotel, convention centre, museum, B&B, whatever.

Answering Machine Message

"Thank you for calling the Australian Defence Force. We are sorry, but all of our units are out at the moment, or are otherwise engaged. Please leave a message with your country, name of organisation, the region, the specific crisis, and a number at which we can call you. As soon as we have sorted out PMKeys, SDSS, East Timor, Bougainville, Afganistan, Iraq, Bali, Refugees, the Defence Efficiency Review, the Commercial Support Program, and compulsory 'Fraud Awareness' and 'Workplace Equity and Diversity' training, we will return your call."

"Please speak after the tone, or if you require more options, please listen to the following numbers:"

"If your crisis is small, and close to a secure domestic airport, press 1 for the 3rd Brigade."

"If your concern is distant, with a tropical climate and good hotels, and can be solved by 1 or 2 low risk bombing runs, please press 'Hash' for the Royal Australian Air Force. Please note this service is not available after 1600 hrs, if it is overcast, at weekends or Public Holidays."

"If your inquiry concerns a situation which can be resolved by either overpriced and expensive submarines without combat capability, or by World War II relics that cannot keep up with Indonesian fishing trawlers, or by a really good marching band, please write, well in advance, to the Chief of Navy, Russell Offices, Canberra."

"If your inquiry is not urgent, please press 2 for the Rapid Deployment Force."

"If you are in real, hot trouble please press 3, and your call will be routed to Sandline International."

"If you are interested in joining the ADF and wish to be shouted at, paid little, have premature arthritis, put your wife and family in a condemned hut miles from civilisation, and are prepared to work your arse off daily, risking your life, in all weathers and terrains, both day and night, whilst watching the Department of Finance eroding your original terms and conditions of service, then please stay on the line. Your call will shortly be connected to a bitter passed-over Recruiting Sergeant in a little office down by the railway station."

"Have a pleasant day, and thank you again for trying to contact the Australian Defence Force."

Understanding Engineers

Two engineering students crossing the campus when one said, "Where did you get such a great bike?"

The second engineer replied, "Well, I was walking along yesterday minding my own business when a beautiful woman rode up on this bike. She threw the bike to the ground, took off all her clothes and said, "Take what you want."

The first engineer nodded approvingly, "Good choice; the clothes probably wouldn't have fitted."

New Email Address

Please note my new email address for newsletter items:



Standing L-R: Peter Rossiter, Alex Munro, Stan Stevens, Bob Mills Dave Collins, John Frith, Max Coletti, Alex Czornohalan, Bob Love, John Harrison, Bob Cooper, Noel Sproles, Dave Irving, Bill Griggs, John Scharber, Eddy Jacobs, Steve McGuinness, Darren Miller, Stewart Adrain, Neil Houston, Stevo Hinic, Peter Elverd.
 Kneeling L-R: David Bowyer, Graeme Ragless, Allan Adsett, Jim Nathan, Ken Talbot-Smith, Peter Hammer, Peter Cates, Frank Bryant



Formed up

Eyes Right





Before and after the March



The AGM



PEOPLE NEWS

Bob Dikkenberg

Bob is still a reservist with HQ 9 Bde, but presently on full time strength, and claims he is the only SSGT in the trade of Geomatic Technician (still a Survey Tech until very recently), and therefore can be considered a "one-of" at Keswick Barracks. He administers a small map and plan store, does minor survey tasks, is involved in training and instructing as required, and prepares special maps if required, in an area covering South Australia, Tasmania and Broken Hill.

Bob claims the toilets in the former 4 Fd Svy building, now home to 9 Bde, have not changed in the ten years since disbandment, still with the same graffiti and reading material.

John Hogan

Still living in Bendigo, John rang me a few weeks ago for a chat to let me know he is still enjoying life, although slowing down a bit with hip problems and not as sprightly as he was when RSM of the Regiment.

John, I hope to be in Bendigo about September or October, so perhaps we could meet up with Sam Chambers for lunch at the RSL club, where you could ease your conscience and pay for my lunch, in lieu of all those cigarettes you still owe me from many years in the bush.

Dawn Laing

During a telephone conversation with Dawn, she mentioned that in early April she had knee surgery done to correct a few problems, which was successful thank goodness. Post surgery recovery went well and she is now very happy with the outcome, being able to move out and about without trouble.

Mark Bates

At a First Friday drinks get-together just recently, I heard that Mark Bates required gall bladder surgery several weeks ago, which fortunately went well, including recovery. I understand Mark is now up and about I'm glad to report, living in different digs, so if anyone has his address please let Dave Irving know.

Peter Brunt

Peter was with 4 Fd Svy at Keswick for several years before electing to

discharge in about 1962, although his son Kim Brunt also joined the Corps in later years, so would still be remembered.

As a civilian Peter remained in surveying employment, eventually working on projects in the Middle East, based from England and later in the south of France for many years, until returning to live in Melbourne about three years ago.

Peter was in Adelaide over the New Year for a quick two day visit, so was able to meet several old friends for a pleasant afternoon at the hacienda of Pam and John Harrison, arranged with a quick phone around at short notice by John. By coincidence Steve Rose phoned from Queensland during the afternoon. Able to attend were Dave Owen, Lou and Beryl Bear, Bill and Elizabeth Love, Bob and Margaret Dik-kenberg, Arthur and Barbara Henson and Joan and I.

Dennis Wheatley

Remember Dennis Wheatley? Perhaps not you say. Well, if you spent time in base camp at Tennant Creek, Tindal or Borroloola and perhaps other places in the Northern Territory, around 1983 to 1985, he would have cooked for you at some time. They were big base camps set up to support large survey operations, mapping huge areas, and it was during that time that Dennis did a top job in charge of messing.

Since his discharge from Catering Corps (also disbanded) several years ago, he has concentrated on managing various bakeries and now operates the Old Bakery, circa 1874, he purchased with his wife Margaret at Stone Hut , a town with a population of 25 about a two hour drive north of Adelaide.

He has become famous in the locality for his delicious chunky steak pies as well as his other pies of rabbit stew, kangaroo, emu, venison, crocodile and Saeid's camel pie. Besides trade in the district, his main business comes from the passing tourist trade, keeping both he and Margaret busy.

So how do I know all this? Because I read a fairly long article about Dennis and his wife in the Sunday Mail, complete with a colour photograph of both in the bakery.

Tony Penna

A photograph appeared in the Advertiser two months ago of a Tony

Penna being canvassed at random for his opinion on a minor matter of public interest, and it appeared like the Tony both John Scharber and I knew in 4 Fd Svy about 40 years ago. Our Tony decided to discharge himself, so he went AWOL, and skipped back to his native Italy. We're wondering if it's the same Tony !!!

Peter Rossiter

It was a pleasure to meet up again with Peter on Anzac Day, in Adelaide with his wife to visit relatives, after travelling from Ballina in NSW. I think his last visit to Adelaide was in 1996, to attend the disbandment party at Keswick Barracks, where he had spent several years of service before moving east to other postings, finally as OC of the Map Depot in Wodonga.

Stan Stephens

It was good of Stan to make the five hour trip down from Port Augusta to be with us on Anzac Day.

If you've lost track of Stan, after retirement he purchased a house about 20kms south-east of the Port, at the far end of what was once known as the worst road in Australia, which was the bad news, but the good news was he doesn't get door to door salesmen nor any religious groups calling, and in particular the beach was at his front door with good fishing. Stan's pickled razor fish is a gourmet treat

Cheryl and Peter Cates

A pleasant surprise to see both Cheryl and Peter on Anzac Day, after being away from Adelaide for so long. Following Peter's retirement from the service, they lived in Canberra for many years, only recently returning to Adelaide for family reasons, possibly for good. Peter is still recovering from a shoulder reconstruction and will need to take things very carefully for a long time yet, before he can return to his former semi-retired life-style.

Frank Bryant

Frank had his right hip replaced during last January, and I'm happy to report that his post surgery recovery went well, with few problems now. Until he reminded me, I had forgotten that Frank had both knees replaced about 14 years ago, but even so he can still walk reasonably well if only

for short distances. Accordingly, he now uses a jazzy red battery powered runabout for longer distances, like the march on Anzac Day.

The Birthday Boy

Sunday 26th March this year dawned fine and mild, just perfect to celebrate my 75th birthday, with a quiet BBQ at home. This was my choice over the offer of a much grander affair. It was a day of surprises beginning with the unexpected arrival of my daughter from Bendigo, a lovely surprise, then George Timmins walked in to wish me a happy birthday, and presented me with a very decorative nut bowl made from native timber, again, a truly beautiful surprise. George had driven from Swan Hill, leaving at 5am that morning. Later, there were telephone calls from Barry Lutwyche and Alex Cairney, both in Brisbane, to wish me well for the day. I was delighted with the present I received from my family, a flight in a hot air balloon at dawn over the southern vales near Strathalbyn, with breakfast and appropriate refreshments, to be taken early this coming spring. I mean delighted too, as it could have been a bungee jump, and I certainly don't need an adrenalin rush to enjoy life.

An enjoyable day all round which I really appreciated.

Max Coletti

Max and Janine were with us on Anzac Day, both looking very well. Since then Max has had extensive tests to check his cancer condition, all of which indicated negatively, but he still requires regular checks to ensure that there is no recurrence of the disease. His next appointment is in August for follow up tests. We're still with you Max.

VALE

Max Skeates

Max died in Canberra on the 28th December 2005. He was a camera operator in Litho Sqn for many years, before taking a posting offered in the litho section at Survey Directorate, where he worked for the remainder of his career electing to stay in Canberra on retirement, several years ago now.

Max was a bit of a character and his passing will sadden many of the old litho bods.

Pat Ticehurst

Pat died of cancer on Anzac Day this year, only a few months after being diagnosed.

She was the wife of Noel, and I still have a few memories of when both lived in the house at the back of mine in Wodonga, when Noel and I were on staff together at the old School of Military Survey.

A few of our local members were also there, and I'm sure they will join me in offering Noel our condolences.

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Rolling Stones

Dianne and I recently completed a 4WD trip in the Victorian High Country with six other members of the Toyota Landcruiser Club, a total of four vehicles. After our rendezvous at Tailem Bend we set off for Mount Melville, near St Arnaud, in the Kooyoorra State Park, for our first overnight stop and Dianne's first taste of camp stretchers and living under canvas. There was also a compulsory stop for a cool drink at the Logan Hotel, east of St Arnaud.

Next day, after a tour of the Melville Caves, we set off for Porepunkah. Very warm, humid weather greeted us at Porepunkah, so a drive into Bright for a couple of Caaaarrrlton Draughts was a good way to end day two,

Day three was our first day of serious four wheel driving, arriving at Lake Cobbler mid afternoon to enable plenty of time to set up and get ready for "happy hour" around four o'clock.

Next day's destination was Bindaree Hut Camp. Along the way we stopped at King's Hut, Craig's Hut and Bindaree Falls. It rained nearly all day but fortunately by the time we arrived at our camp, the weather had cleared.

Day five we headed for Wonnangatta Station Camp Ground alongside the Wonnangatta River. I will never complain about flies again!

Despite the flies and mosquitoes, a good night's sleep was had by all and next day we were off to Dargo, for a rest day, Day six provided

some challenging four wheel driving with a couple of river crossings and the very steep Billy Goat Bluff Track. The track is appropriately named. Along the way we stopped at the East Pinnacle fire tower for lunch. A couple of pub meals went down real well as did the relaxing afternoon under the hotel verandah, sipping lemonade and raspberry, of course. Our camp site was approximately eight kilometers NE of Dargo, alongside the Dargo River.

After the couple of nights in Dargo we headed NNE along the Birregun Road to Omeo, visiting the Dog's Grave, on the way. After devouring the best pies in Australia from the bakery, we continued NE along the Benambra, Limestone and Mount Misery Roads to our camp site at Charlie's Creek Hut.

Next stop O'Hagen's Camping Area alongside Wheeler's Creek. Today's driving provided some beautiful scenery with numerous wild flowers and the lush regeneration from the 2003 bush fires, which decimated the region. The country side around Tom Groggin Station is truly magnificent and the climb up Mt Pinnibar was exhilarating. The heavens opened up that night and our tent wasn't as water proof as we would have liked.

Wodonga was our next stop which was the end of the planned trip. A quick stop at Corryong to see if their pies were better than Omeo's and then onto Wodonga for another rainy night.

Next day the group dispersed so Dianne and I took the opportunity to catch up with Gordon Lowery and Laurene in Wodonga. Gordon suggested we all go to the Commercial Club in Albury for a businessman's lunch. What a great suggestion it turned out to be and we all enjoyed a delightful afternoon. Gordon and Laurene are both well.

Before heading to Melbourne we headed for a campsite alongside the Murray River near Howlong. We met up with my sister and brother-in-law who had also been with us in the High Country. A couple of very relaxing days including a formal dinner with a "bush" candelabrum adorning the dinner table (along with the flies). Whilst near Howlong I looked up Harry Hansen, ex 2 Fd Svy Sqn and SMS. Harry sadly lost

his wife Mary approximately four years ago, due to illness. His new wife Elaine is originally from Corowa. Harry says he now has a life once again after four miserable years. Harry looks extremely well, now back to his fighting weight, having tipped the scales at nearly 120 kilos approximately a year ago. If you want to catch up with Harry simply go to the Howlong Post Office and ask for directions.

Back on the "black top" we headed for Melbourne for a few days to catch up with family. All good things must come to an end so after a day at the Australian Open Tennis we drove back to Adelaide. A very enjoyable two and a half weeks and for all you four wheel drivers a visit to the High Country is a must..

Neville and Dianne Stone

Cameras are not just for taking photographs

As we were waiting around for the 2006 Anzac Day parade to commence, John Harrison told us of the time that Don Ridge wanted a unit photograph taken of the squadron at Keswick Barracks. The only camera available was the unit's F24 aerial camera so John arranged for it to be used for the shoot. He said that the photos turned out well and I believe him. My father was in the RAAF during WWII and our family album has several of his RAAF squadron photos taken with F24 cameras. The resolution is so good that, even after scanning, the photos can be enlarged on the computer to show not only the features of individuals but even fine detail such as aircrew brevets.

The F24, along with its US version the K24, was a mainstay of aerial reconnaissance during WWII. In the 60s they were used by the Corps for post-photography of survey stations to overcome the inaccuracies inherent in the then current method of field identification. Disposable panels of varying types of material were laid out in a pattern around the ground mark and then the station was photographed from the air. The resulting photograph could then be used to transfer the identification onto the mapping photography. In the days before cameras were fitted permanently to the aircraft, the technique was to hang out the window of the plane, or door of a helicopter, with a hand held F24. In Queensland we used Army Cessna 180s and we would bank sharply over the

station so as to get as close to vertical a photograph as possible. You did not want to suffer from acrophobia or fear of heights, but on those few occasions when the pilot lost it and stalled the aircraft, not even the strongest stomachs could avoid a sharp intake of breath.

My introduction to F24 cameras was in N Comd Fd Svy Unit courtesy of Kevin Walsh. He taught me how to load and unload the film magazines so well that I could do it blindfolded. This was to serve me well in 1966 when I was detached to Topo Squadron of the Regiment in PNG. We had our base at a place called Green River, on the bank of the mighty Sepik. Kevin Walsh was pretty wily as he had acquired several spare magazines for the F24 so as to avoid having to load film when in the bush, but we had no such luxury at Green River. There were no spare magazines so when we completed a roll of film, we had to reload it ourselves. The trouble was that dark rooms are hard to come by in the Sepik Valley so we had to improvise by erecting a one man tent in a dark spot in the jungle and use it as our darkroom. A dark night was also needed which was not too difficult as the clouds usually rolled in by the evening blocking out the stars and any moonlight. As an added precaution, the loading and unloading would be done under several army blankets in the tightly laced up tent. Unfortunately I was the only one who had even the remotest idea on how to go about the loading and unloading process, let alone being able to do it by feel alone in the pitch dark. I would strip off to my underpants, get into the tent and under the blankets while the tent flaps were laced behind me and then I would unload the exposed film and seal it in its container. Speed was of the essence as Green River was hot and sticky at the best of times let alone inside a closed tent under two army blankets. Once the film was unloaded it was out into the open to suck in relatively cooler air, dry off and get a drink and then back into the tent to load the magazine. I had to do this several times during the trip and reckon I lost a kilo or two of moisture each time.

We would panel not only new stations but also previously established control. One such occasion was in western Queensland in 1964 following the completion of the Charleville to Bourke first order traverse. The area around St George and Surat had been surveyed some 80 or so years previously and the majority of the timber pegs marking the surveys

were still in existence due to the dry nature of the country. Many of these stations had been connected to recent surveys and the entire system had been recomputed so as to provide third order mapping control. All that was needed was identification and we did this by recovering and panelling selected stations and then photographed them hanging out an aircraft window with a F24. We did this in two-man teams and it was a most enjoyable period working on warm cloudless winter days and camping at night by a campfire under silvery starry skies. People pay good money to go on 'safaris' just to enjoy the same experience these days. Grant Small and I became dab hands at recovering these stations and soon got to recognise the idiosyncrasies of each surveyor. Men long dead came to life for us and gained our respect as we recovered their work just where they said it would be. Once we knew who had done the original survey, we got to be able to recognise from a distance where the big timber post marking the point we were looking for would most likely be. Even today when driving in the bush I look at fence lines and corners and say 'I bet there is a peg just in there'.

Ross McMillan and I were recovering and panelling mapping control in the mountainous area between Canungra and the state border around 1963. We were looking for a particular point and we thought that we had finally tracked it down but there was one problem. A pig sty had been erected over it and the area was a deep stinking morass. The pig farmer stated that he believed that the mark was in the yard somewhere, but how to find it? With some trepidation, we waded in to the mess and probed around for a while with our shovels until eventually we snagged a length of fencing wire used to support a bush beacon. It was still attached to a post in the ground so we fished around for others, which we eventually found. Then in the best tradition of plane tabling, we traced out arcs using the stay wires that we had found and where they intersected in the mire, we dug. Sure enough, in a short while, we uncovered the ground mark. We were rather chuffed at that one but needless to say we could not panel it. In this instance we established an off-set and panelled that instead.

But the big heavy F24 had other uses as I was to find out, again when with the Regiment in PNG in 1966. We had to find, panel and photograph one of the traverse stations established a few years previously by

the Corps. I cannot remember the exact circumstances but I ended up on a sand bar in the August River while 'Dutch' Mulder went in the helicopter onto the hill to clear and panel it. It was probably because the helicopter did not have enough power to get two passengers on the hill and I was along as I was the only one who knew how to operate the F24. As the noise of the helicopter died away in the distance I settled down on the sand bar to wait with just the F24 for company. Everything became quiet and peaceful and I started to admire the thick jungle, interspersed with imposing and impenetrable stands of two metre high kunai grass, which surrounded me. The August River flowed quietly by and although it was not a great slug of a river like the Sepik, of which it was a tributary, it certainly put the Torrens to shame.

My reverie and the silence were broken by the crash and splash of a crocodile, or *puk puk* as the locals called it, breaking cover on the opposite bank and diving into the August. That changed the colour of my day, I can tell you. I was on my feet in an instant backing into the kunai but knowing that I had absolutely no where to go if this big *puk puk* decided to come out and have me for lunch. I stood my guard for about an hour before the welcome sound of the returning helicopter could be heard. All the while I was scanning the river for a pair of beady eyes or a lazy wake on the surface of the water. My only weapon was the heavy F24 which I was determined to use with as much effect as I could. It was therefore with some sympathy that I read of the park ranger who was cleaning up a tree that had fallen into a crocodile pen as a result of Cyclone Monica last April. There a crocodile named 'Brutus' had rushed him and he ran along the fallen tree fending Brutus off with his chain saw. Brutus grabbed the saw and took it with him back into his pool and they are now thinking of renaming him 'Two Stroke'. I wondered what would be a suitable name for my *puk puk* if he had chased me along the sand bar and I had succeeded in fending him off with the F24. What would be a suitable name for a big ugly crocodile with a large camera? '*Paparazzi*' perhaps?

Noel Sproles

Adelaide Central Market

There are two food halls in the Adelaide Central Markets. One of them would make any old RASvy member feel at home. It has purple chairs and white tables!

Noel Sproles

Retirement Bonus

If this doesn't make you laugh, you are truly humour impaired!

The Navy found they had too many officers and decided to offer an early retirement bonus.

They promised any officer who volunteered for retirement a bonus of \$1,000 for every inch measured in a straight line between any two points in his body.

The officer got to choose what those two points would be.

The first officer who accepted asked that he be measured from the top of his head to the tip of his toes.

He was measured at six feet and walked out with a bonus of \$72,000.

The second officer who accepted was a little smarter and asked to be measured from the tip of his upstretched hands to his toes. He walked out with \$96,000.

The third one was a non-commissioned officer, a grizzly old Chief who, when asked where he would like to be measured replied, "From the tip of my weenie to my testicles."

It was suggested by the pension man that he might want to reconsider, explaining about the nice big cheques the two previous officers had received.

But the old Chief insisted and they decided to go along with him providing the measurement was taken by a medical officer. The medical officer arrived and instructed the Chief to "drop 'em," which he did. The medical officer placed the tape measure on the tip of the Chief's weenie and began to work back.

"Dear Lord!" he suddenly exclaimed, "Where are your testicles?"

The old Chief calmly replied, "Vietnam."

Stevo Hinic

Next edition

I have articles from Noel Sproles. How about a short article from others members. There must be lots of tall tales about the Corps out there.

