



SURVEY
EX-SERVICEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



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Welcome again, this being our second newsletter for the year means we are one short of the usual three publications, but never you mind things will be better next year, as my old mother used to tell me, meaning our proposed new Association administration being younger, vigorous, dynamic and full of beans will save the day, however, I must admit my fingers are crossed.

Once more, my thanks to our local members for their contributions and also for newsletters received from other Associations, plus news items gathered from letters and telephone calls received.

What I have mentioned previously about the lack of items or news from members who served in later years, still stands, as members who served in earlier times are the main contributors.

With the festive season so close, I wish to join with all kindred souls throughout the country, to wish each other the very best during the coming Christmas festivities, hoping everyone has a restful and happy time, therefore to all I wish a... ..

MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR

SOCIAL NEWS

First Friday Drinks

The last few occasions at the Saracens Head hotel have been fairly convivial, never big numbers attending but regular, for a cheery yarn and a beer over one or two hours. If in the CBD on any first Friday, jog the memory to look in at 5pm. NB.. Our next meeting will be Friday 2nd February 2007. The last Drinks for this year was a fairly jolly occasion, with John Harrison, Mick Sarson, Stevo Hinic, Alex Czornohalen, Lincoln Smith, John Frith, myself and Noel Ticehurst visiting from Canberra, all enjoying a few laughs.

Third Friday Drinks

The Ex-Fortuna Association in Bendigo are now holding regular get-togethers on the third Friday of each month at 5pm, in the members' lounge of the RSL club on Havilah Road at North Bendigo. If you're uncertain exactly where the location is, the entrance gates to the Showgrounds are only about 100 metres away... . Well worth remembering should you be visiting Bendigo at that time. . . . Gary

Warnest has reported that the occasion has been very successful and very well attended, and to mention a few names seen in the photos provided were Doug Carswell, Buddha Ellis, Gary, Rowan Gillies, Brett van Leeuwin, Phil Smalley, Stuart Symonds, Colin Cuskelly and Steve Burke, just to name a few in the large crowd.

Last Friday Drinks

Mentioned previously, so just a reminder, that the QLD Association gather at the Gaythorne RSL each last Friday for an ale, so keep in mind should you be in Brisbane at some time.

Corps Birthday Dinner

Held to honour the 91st Anniversary of the Royal Australian Survey Corps, at the Sergeants' Mess, Keswick Barracks, at 6.45pm for 7.30pm on Saturday 19th August 2006. Much later than usual. The format this year was something new, a semi-formal/informal buffet dinner, which seems a bit of a contradiction, but it worked well and I would recommend it for future occasions.

I arrived 30 minutes early to ensure that everything was ready, only to find the dining room occupied by a group of officers having dinner, while attending a weekend training course, also the furniture was missing from the lounge having been cleared for a regimental dinner on the previous night. Oh Gawd. Mess civilian staff seem to have no concept of the importance of such occasions, but did assure me that the dining room and lounge would be reset in time, but only just.

However, things brightened up as everyone arrived for pre-dinner drinks, becoming a pretty happy crowd by the time dinner was announced. For once the catering could not be faulted, selections of hot and cold dishes, salads and desserts, all well presented and in generous servings were set out. Following seconds and thirds it was back to the lounge for tea, coffee and a cheese board, during which time all apologies received were read out, the loyal toast proposed, a toast to the Ladies given, and glasses raised to the memory of the Corps, so ending the formalities.

I thought the function was very pleasant throughout and enjoyed by all present, judging from later comments. Attending on the night were Judyne and Allan Adsett, Cheryl and Peter Cates, Pauline Mannix and Stevo Hinic, Julie and Peter Elverd, Susan and Simon Capp, Joan and Alex Munro, Pam Illert and Dave Irving, Victoria Delaney and Bob

Mills, Jan and Bill Griggs, Barbara and Arthur Henson, Pam and John Harrison, Luke Mills and a pleasant Scottish lass, Moyna Briggs, Kay Trueman and last but not least was Graeme Ragless.

Christmas Function

For the second year running, our plans for a Xmas get-together have fallen through again.

It seems that approaches to about-town venues for a suitable function date must be made by at least September, these days, as my efforts in mid November proved fruitless, although I'm sure some place might have been available if I had the time. Another plan was to use the Mess at Keswick, however, same as last year the committee have yet to decide on when the Mess will remain open to, prior to the Xmas close down. Our festive season get-together has been held for many years now, so this is very unfortunate, but not to worry as my mother used to say.

New Year BBQ

The BBQ held early this year in lieu of the previous Christmas function being cancelled, proved to be very popular, so a repeat seems in order. More on this about three weeks beforehand, when all details have been planned and will be notified by the usual circular.

PEOPLE NEWS

Gordon Haswell

Around three months ago Gordon was enjoying an ale at the Bendigo RSL club when he suddenly became ill, sufficiently so to scare bar staff into fearing a heart attack was a strong possibility. An ambulance was called for, whisking Gordon away to the Bendigo Base Hospital for tests and observation. All was well, as no immediate threat to life and limb was found, because he was back at the club the following day for another ale.

The last edition of Magna Carto showed a photo of Gordon's pride and joy, -- a Toyota dual cab 4WD complete with a heavy roll bar fitted into the tray at the rear of the cab. Not all that rare you might say, except for the number plate ---RASVY-1. He and Dot have also registered their other vehicle as ---you guessed right---RASVY-2, a unique combination without doubt.

Alex Czornohalen

Alex and Glenda departed Adelaide in late October, flying to Nth Queensland for a two week break. Driving a hire car they did the tourist bit, sight-seeing everything of note from Townsville to Cairns, Port Douglas, Daintree and Cape Tribulation, enjoying every minute even though the trip was rushed a bit. Alex was impressed at the way Cairns had expanded since his last visit and also by the increased acreage of the sugar cane plantations. The guest house at Cape Tribulation met his approval to the extent that he might return there for a longer stay.

Another thing that caught his eye were the number of signs around offering employment to anyone passing by. Alex had hoped to meet up again with Coos Dahlberg, after many years, but with a half-baked address he failed to do so, finally tracking him down at a small place about 30/40 kms from Port Douglas when it was too late. Chris operates a tourist venture offering bird watching tours.

Alex did meet up with an old friend from years ago by sheer accident, bumping into Graham Hepple. Graham was posted to the survey troop at Nui Dat as the cook, around 1967/68, so would be remembered by many. Thanks for the information Alex

Marv-Ann Thiselton

Due to domestic commitments becoming a bit much and biting into her spare time, she has had to relinquish her position as secretary to the Queensland Association, having held the position for many years in a dedicated manner. Well done Mary-Ann. She was in Bendigo not long ago, visiting her daughter and one year old grand daughter.

Mick Rice

Today I spoke to Mick by telephone, for the first time in around 37 years, having received his work number from Alex Czornohalen. Just in time it appears as he leaves work tomorrow (1st December) to become semi-retired, a few weeks short of his 60 birthday. I served with Mick in the survey troop at Nui Dat about 1969. He settled in Adelaide close to thirty years ago, unbeknown to most of us it seems, taking up a position as a union secretary representing several small unions and holding the job until thirteen years ago, when he entered his present position administering industrial superannuation funds. He has been offered work for a few days each month, hence semi-retirement, so best of luck for the future Mick. His address is PO Box 537, Yankalilla, 5203 and phone

number 85582208

Barry Lutwvche

He has taken up the position vacated by Mary-Ann Thiselton, as secretary of the Queensland Association, so well done Barry, although old mate I thought you had the age and wisdom not to volunteer for anything that entails work, at least not willingly.

I understand Barry is not as well as he would like, with a touch of emphysema.

Keith Barber

Keith rang me very recently from his abode at Kangaroo Flat in the early evening--- "Hullo, finished your dinner yet" "yes Keith" although I had barely started, I was able to finish during the next one hour plus of fascinating conversation, mainly from Keith. At the age of 85 years he still has a razor sharp memory. Anyway, the reason for the phone call Keith had read in the latest edition of Magna Carta that a history of RASVY activities in South Australia was in the making, so offered his memories as a strapping 18 year old Sapper, fresh from SMS training, being sent to assist a Warrant Officer Lightfoot (? later Captain) in surveying mapping control south from Adelaide, both departing from Woodend, Victoria, in 1941 for the task. On arrival in Adelaide, they were provided with a utility vehicle for the job by SA Lands Dept, but no more of the story for now. I knew that Keith had been this way in early WW2, and mentioned to Arthur Henson that I would contact him for information, but no need now. I only wish that I could have recorded Keith's story right there and then, but he has volunteered to tape his memories of that trip in the near future.

Rob Langley

Rob, Julie and son Damon are taking a well earned break touring Europe. To quote Rob, "Isn't long service leave a wonderful thing". After indulging yourself in such a way Rob, we insist you pen a few lines of your impressions of the highlights of your trip.

Allan Adsett

Allan and Judyne are flying to New Zealand in early December, for a six weeks holiday, returning in late January 2007, so we might reasonably expect a few lines for our modest newsletter on their return,

detailing their activities in the land of the long white cloud.

Jim Dunn

Jim underwent surgery for bowel cancer, in mid August this year, which fortunately was successful and naturally a great relief to Rita and the family. However, the following weeks of treatment and recuperation didn't go so well at all, and it was about nine weeks before Jim could return to work, still a bit wobbly, although he is now beginning to feel a lot better. Still early days with such an illness with follow up testing no doubt required, however, the outlook is positive at present and I know all our members will join with me in wishing Jim a total recovery.

Sam Chambers

I think I reported this matter about two years ago when Sam had emergency surgery, following the discovery of an aneurism about to happen on one of the abdominal bits, so pardon my lack of medical knowledge. The condition was found by chance during an annual medical examination, which was lucky for Sam, but as of now he reports being as fit as ever.

Sam was recently away from Bendigo for about a month, visiting an old PNG mate in Qld, to plan the recovery of wartime relics, possibly of considerable value, ditched by the American forces in their haste to depart from Papua New Guinea after WW2. He and his partner have visited the area in PNG, and have located the probable site by using old WW2 air photos, landmarks and GPS equipment. They have also liaised with the local area chiefs for permission to search the area, once suitable metal detectors now on order arrive in Australia. A big gamble, but worthwhile if all goes to plan.

Ian Thomson

Ian rang from home-town Gympie, Qld, about two months ago to have a long chat and as usual we solved most of the political problems current at the time. He sent regards to Bill Love, Ted Bear etc, and all the good old boys at Keswick in the early 1960' s, enquiring about their well-being. During our conversation Ian mentioned Brett van Leeuwin in Bendigo, who it appears is related to Ian, so once again what a small world. Best of luck Ian.

John Frith

Talking about the weather during our December 'Drinks, John mentioned how humid it was in Singapore during a recent visit to attend the International Map Trade Conference, held there.

The conference was attended by delegates from many countries around the world. Prizes were awarded for maps judged as the best in their category, and John was pleasantly surprised (modest as you know) to win a prize with his entry of a tourist map of Kangaroo Island, he produced last year. So far he has sold a thousand copies to the local tourist industry, so well done John.

Ken Shaw

Ken recently celebrated his 79th birthday, while he and Nance were staying with Stan and Helen Campbell in Qld. A small party was organised to mark the day, attended by Bob and Wendy Skitch, Alex and Donna Cairney, Grant Small and Peter and Barbara Bates-Brownsword. (Qld Bulletin)

Bob Mason

Met Bob in the Bendigo RSL dining hall about to order dinner, so it was a short chat. He still lives in Moran St. and is still self employed in the lead lighting trade, something he went into on leaving Fortuna. Bob has also become something of an authority on orchids, having developed an extensive collection, which is still being enlarged, but in addition he often serves as a judge at the various orchid shows around country Victoria as well as giving lectures on the subject.

John Hillier

2006 has not been a good year in regards to health for John, a year he would prefer to forget.

He was diagnosed with an ulcerated duodenum and almost didn't make it to hospital for immediate surgery on the 26th of April, but a top specialist combined with a top intensive care unit at the Wodonga Hospital brought about a successful recovery.

If that wasn't enough, on the 19th of September he had a total right hip replacement at the Albury -Wodonga Private Hospital, followed by a lengthy rehabilitation programme all extended when he proved allergic to drugs being administered, but formally discharged around mid October. Not permitted to drive for the next six weeks was an added

nuisance. He also has to have his left hip replaced soon in the coming year, hopefully being the last big health problem, so our best wishes John.

Derek Stanmore

Derek had the misfortune to have his car written off at an intersection by a one tonne ute running the red light, almost writing Derek off at the same time, with a busted knee, a fractured pelvis and a cracked rib. The busted knee required a bone graft from his hip, so pretty serious injuries. The local Association is watching his recuperation very closely, as Derek is intended to carry the theodolite on Anzac Day in Brisbane next year. We hope for a speedy recovery Derek. (Qld Bulletin)

Bill Harvey

Bill reported in the Qld Bulletin that he has not been in the best of health in recent years and although there is no great prospect of a full recovery, his overall health has improved in recent times. Bill commented on the freezing conditions in Canberra, and thought the Queensland members did well in going north to settle down. Philappa still loves to travel and was about to leave on a trip to Singapore, unfortunately without Bill due to his health.

GENERAL NEWS AND REPORTS

A visit to Bendigo

I recently visited Bendigo for three days to attend the annual RSL Dinner on the 11th November, plus to spend time with my daughter Susan and grandsons. While in town I had lunch with Sam Chambers, and very pleasant too at the Tyson's Reef Hotel (old memories for some) to catch up on local news. Sam told me he had telephoned Alex Cairney that morning, while Barry Lutwyche was visiting him, so chatted to both of those scallywags. I also tried to contact John Hogan to no avail, so reckon the phone number I had was wrong. When attending a late afternoon function at the RSL club I met up with Bob Mason for a short chat and same place the following afternoon I bumped into Gary Warnest and Phil Smalley, but no such luck when I rang DIGO about 4pm Friday hoping to arrange an after-work meeting with a few bods, only to be told it would have been better had I rang an hour earlier. The usual Fortuna crowd was noticeable by not attending the RSL Dinner on Saturday night so I missed out again, however, what was of interest was an address by a group of TS (Training Ship) Bendigo sea

cadets on their recent trip to Brisbane, paid for by the RSL, to attend the decommissioning of HMAS Bendigo after many years of service. A quick trip but enjoyable.

Unit History

Moving along steadily as replies to our circulars trickle back to Arthur Henson, so I implore anyone who has yet to reply to please do so soon. We thought initially that sending requests to about five members listed in any particular year would be sufficient, but if their replies are short of information then extra circulars will need posting out, a big problem there being lack of addresses.

The names of all ARA members have been extracted from photocopied roll books, the last five years by Dave Collins, but the names of ARES members have yet to be done so a volunteer is needed, but it would need to be someone who actively worked with them. Please, pretty please ring 8277 7074.

I very much doubt if anyone knew the enormity of routine research required to produce an authoritative history, so our long term project seems to becoming a longer term, but things might speed up.

The Qld Association is also researching their history, so if any local member was posted to Queensland at some time, I'm sure Bob Skitch would be interested in what you did. Bob can be contacted at his Brisbane home on 073265 1370

Corps Memorial Project

Six months ago I was confident that the project would be completed by this time, but not so.

As you know we were promised a site at the northern end of the parade ground at Keswick Barracks, but required a written confirmation of this from the barracks manager and despite numerous requests on my part, this has not yet happened. Unfortunately we cannot proceed to obtain funding through the Department of Veterans Affairs until we have authorisation to use the site, which is a nuisance, so I'll just have to keep plugging away. Better news next time I hope.

A photo of the memorial recently unveiled in Perth by the WA Assoc is on page 10.



Rob Langley (still in uniform) on a field trip in his role as the Petroleum and Geothermal Group of PIRSA's Senior Environmental Compliance Officer



WA Corps Memorial



Australian Defence Medal



RAAF Hudson at the Temora Aviation Museum in NSW



Aerodist Station

RA Survey Website

Kym Weston has been organising a website for some time now, and has reported it is now up and running at www.rasurvey.org and should anyone want a -- @rasurvey.org email address he can create one on request and have redirected to your email address.

Kym resides at 82 Dixon Road, Buderim, Qld, and can be contacted by phone on 07 5445 6927 or 0427 377 226.

Rejected

I think the year was 1959, when C. Comd Fd Svy Sec. under command of the late Frank Buckland was camped at Mainoru Station, about 300 kms south from Darwin, when a photo was taken of Vince Sutherland, myself and Ron Weinert around the camp area, doing what I can't remember, but it was suitably captioned of surveyors in the bush and sent off to the Army Newspaper for publication.

It was never accepted because none of us were wearing shirts, also at least one slouch hat did not have a pugaree, obviously considered as ruffians and not soldiers. This trivia came to me recently but I can't recall who told me.

Signs of a new Army

Noel Sproles sent in a press release announcing that the ADF has taken a significant step forward in the improvement of permanent accommodation for single members, with contracts for building the new barracks being negotiated. The new accommodation will offer independent living styles for long term living-in service personnel, featuring self contained apartments with telephones and internet access, secure storage facilities and undercover vehicle parking.

Noel commented that we were a few decades too early and what was wrong with the good old tin huts of years gone by, good enough for us, being cool in winter and hot in summer with plenty of dust. Noel also remembers barracks accommodation in Port Moresby where the walls were half tin and flywire, with a big gap at the bottom so that mud and water could flow through uninterrupted in the wet season. And as for slouching over a keyboard on the internet each night in barracks, what's wrong with a good boozer and touring the town, and Noel definitely has a point there.

As a sapper and accommodated in Darwin, the OR's Lines were solid brick buildings considered pretty good for the times, with ablution facili-

ties on the lower level and sleeping quarters on top with about a dozen beds in each section placed six feet apart, and lots of fresh air and mosquitoes plus anything else that could fly through the huge window space, naturally no glass or flywire to hinder insects but there were wooden louvers to close if it rained. As a young soldier I loved it. We probably should not comment because conditions have changed so vastly within the Army, but I wonder with many others whether it will make for a better soldier.

Fortuna public meeting

A public meeting was held in the reception room of the Bendigo Town Hall last May, to canvass ideas as to what can be done with Fortuna Villa once Defence vacate the property and DIGO move to new premises. One idea that was put forward and accepted by the meeting was that the mansion and battery at least should remain in public ownership. Most of the ideas put around like converting to a convention centre, hotel, museum ,etc, lacked any sound business plan but it was a start, even though no definite proposals were considered.

Just recently in November, the National Trust of Victoria held another public meeting at the same venue, different this time in that it was an information session, with speakers informing the meeting of the history of the Lansell family at Fortuna, those years when RASVY held the property, the various architectural styles of the building, proposed plans by the council, etc, and the distinct possibility that only a commercial venture would sustain the property for public use.

In the meantime Defence Heritage Melbourne have started renovations on and around the villa such as removing old WW2 asbestos and re-cladding, the stables painted, fixing some rising damp problems, repairing the roman fountain, stripping the old gantry back to the bare metal and rust proofing before painting, as just a start. The total list of repairs that have been identified as necessary over a period is very extensive, although most do not require attention in the short term.

I would be interested to see how many coats of paint have been applied to the gantry over the years. The budget allocated for the renovations over the next few years is 1.2 million dollars for the entire site, most work being started after DIGO move out.

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Following Clancy

by Noel Sproles

Other than the first order traverse from Charleville to Bourke, I never had the opportunity to experience much of outback Queensland during my much too-brief stay with Northern Command Field Survey Unit. That is not to say that I did not see a lot of God's own country in that time. Quite to the contrary in fact because we worked on various projects all the way from the Lamington Plateau to Cape Flattery north of Cooktown. I even got to see the tip of Cape York and the Gulf when attached to the Regiment during my time in Papua New Guinea. But I never did see the vast sunburnt plains where Clancy of The Overflow went droving '...down the Cooper where the Western drovers go'.

I heard about it often enough of course when the 'warries' began to flow, along with the beer, in the bar at night or around campfires in the bush. Then place names such as Hughenden, Camooweal, Cloncurry, Normananton and the like were bandied about by the 'old timers' along with the gory details of the goings-on perpetrated in and around these far-off places. No wonder then, when planning the return route to Adelaide from a recent round trip to Darwin, that my eyes wandered east of the Stuart Highway and I splashed out on a new Shell roadmap to see if I could get home through western Queensland.

This was not my sole objective of course. Firstly, my wife and I had to complete the Oodnadatta Track. In 2005 we had travelled along the Track from Marla to William Creek before heading off it to Coober Pedy. This time we went via Leigh Creek to Marree and then to William Creek thus finalising our traverse of the Track. From William Creek it was back to Coober Pedy again and then north on the Stuart Highway. On the way to William Creek from Maree, we passed around the southern edge of Lake Eyre where the sun beating down on the great salt pan makes the horizon disappear in a shimmering haze of heat. As is the case along most of the Oodnadatta Track, we followed the path of the old Ghan line. Although the rails and sleepers have long been recycled, the earthworks of the original rail bed are still clearly evident. I was able to stand where those who rode the original Ghan got their first sighting of Lake Eyre. It was a nostalgic moment for me as my father, when in the

RAAF, came along this way on the Ghan in 1942. He had an enquiring mind and would have been as excited as I was at his first sighting of Lake Eyre. Standing there in the silence and watching the heat shimmering off the lake, I could not help thinking of him and the thousands of others who came this way in those dark years.

The run from Coober Pedy to Darwin along the Stuart Highway is simply a matter of switching on the cruise control, pointing the car in the general direction of Darwin, and waiting for the kilometres to be eaten up. Once in the NT, there is the added bonus of no upper speed limit on the open road. While the road trains are enormous they are not all that frequent now, possibly as a result of the new Adelaide to Darwin rail line. After a pleasant stay in Darwin, a city changed considerably since I first visited it in 1971, it was off to Kununurra in WA. While the road was not as wide and as open as the Stuart Highway, it was still a good sealed road all the way allowing for fast driving. The scenery along the way can be quite spectacular, especially as you approach WA and the East Kimberleys. From Kununurra, Lake Argyle with its stunning blue waters and the Ord River Irrigation Scheme with its sugar cane, mango, sandalwood, and banana plantations are just a short drive away. We took a one day trip to Wyndham where we could look out onto the West Kimberley across the West Arm of Cambridge Gulf from the Five Rivers Lookout. Again it was with a bit of nostalgia as my last field trip as a 'worker' was into the West Kimberley with Clem Sargent and 5 Squadron in 1971.

We had to retrace our steps from Kununurra back to Katherine and down to Tennant Creek before turning east and into Queensland across the Barkly Tableland. Contrary to what I had imagined, this area was very well vegetated to the extent that, despite a strong wind blowing all day, there was not a grain of dust stirred up. We stayed several days at Mt Isa visiting the mine and enjoying the hospitality of the various clubs in town. One of these, the Irish Club, even has a former Melbourne tram inside the building where it is used as a coffee bar. I wondered if I had ever travelled in this particular tram in all the years that I lived in Melbourne. Again, I had the impression from my school geography books that Mt Isa was a dusty little town in an equally dusty desert but this was not so at all. It is a quite liveable place situated

amongst low rugged hills and is very clean and dust free. The whole region has its own beauty and charm and I could understand why the 'old timers' telling their 'warries' so appreciated surveying and mapping out there.

From Mt Isa we travelled to Winton and took a side trip to Lark Quarry to see the only known example in the world of fossilised dinosaur tracks left as a result of an ancient dinosaur stampede. Then it was on to Longreach and Windorah and finally to Birdsville and the Birdsville Track back to Maree. I did not find the Birdsville Track all that difficult to negotiate and indeed the unsealed portions of the developmental road from Windorah to Birdsville were rougher. The road surface on the Track varied from rough and stony to smooth clay and it was possible to safely travel at up to 100 kilometres per hour at times. The scenery with its sand hills, sometimes red and sometimes yellow, and vast red gibber plains made the journey worthwhile. At times there were wide open vistas with the Track stretching ahead to the horizon and at others the Track wandered over the top of ancient sand dunes or meandered through low rocky hillocks. The only break was at Mangeranie with its quite unnecessary traffic light, outback pub, and the remains of Tom Kruse's old mail trucks. I was particularly excited when we finally crossed Coopers Creek as I could imagine Clancy droving his mob of sheep or cattle across the wide flat channels.

All in all we spent 28 days on the trip and travelled 10312 kms in our Honda CRV, or 'Toorak Truck' as our daughter has dubbed it. In that time we journeyed through three states as well as the NT and crossed three time zones. The CRV averaged 28.6 mpg and, considering that we had a roof rack loaded with a second spare wheel and jerricans of water and fuel and took full advantage of the generous speed limits, this seemed a good mileage. The price of petrol being what it was, it was also much appreciated. Luckily we came through without incident and our 'Toorak Truck' took it all in its stride needing only a routine service and wheel alignment after we got home. We carried a full complement of camping gear that we used at both Alice Springs and Kununurra. On the other occasions we stayed in cabins in camping grounds as this is not only cheaper than motels but is just as comfortable, especially when the cabin comes with full kitchen facilities. My wife had a lifelong am-

bition to sleep in the open under '... the wond'rous glory of the everlasting stars'. We took the opportunity to do so on the banks of the Diamantina at Birdsville and it worked out well as I think that I have cured her of ever wanting to do it again!

We managed to gather a nice coating of red dust on the outside of our 'Toorak Truck' which my wife was keen to show to her 'stay-at-home' friends in Adelaide. But as luck would have it, just as we were completing the Birdsville Track and with home in sight, we had to ford a stream. As a result, all our lovely red outback dust was washed away much to our disappointment. However all was not lost as I finally got to see the real Queensland outback at last and become familiar with places heard about so many years ago. Also I guess reading Banjo Paterson will be that much more enjoyable having now seen '... the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended' and where men like Clancy drove their mobs down the Birdsville Track into SA so long ago.

Some trivia

by Noel Sproles

Now here are some interesting pieces of trivia to be stored away until the right moment arrives. In July 1914, the Kaiser made a decision that Germany would declare war on Russia if Russia intervened in the proposed Austrian attack on Serbia. Apparently he was in no hurry to tell his General Staff of the decision and when he did get around to it he told not his Chief of the General Staff but one General Hermann von Bertrab. So what, you may ask. Well, von Bertrab was not a member of the General Staff but was a surveyor responsible for the German army's cartographic service. It would be like Prime Minister Menzies in 1939 telling Brigadier Fitzgerald that Australia was at war with Germany before he told the CGS! Exactly why it happened this way we may never know as the relevant records were destroyed by an air raid in WWII.

There does not seem to be much information available about von Bertrab although I have found a reference to his attending a geodesy conference in Budapest in 1906 when he was a colonel and Director of the Berlin Military Triangulation Office. He was also chairman of the organising committee for the 1911-12 German Antarctic expedition and there is a glacier and a nunatak named after him. All right, all right already; a nunatak is a piece of bedrock sticking up above a glacier. There is a faint Australian connection as well because Sir Douglas Mawson named a cape after Major Filchner, the leader of this expedition.

Atlas beats sat nav in race

It seems that there is still a future for all those old fashioned prettily coloured paper things that we used to produce all those years ago.

November 10, 2006. In a battle between old-fashioned brain-power and cutting-edge technology a popular satellite navigation system was beaten by a passenger armed with a humble road atlas in a test race by *Which?* The English consumer magazine said today a road atlas, if combined with a decent human map reader, was the most efficient and reliable way of getting from A to B.

Competing against the atlas was a Garmin Nuvi satnav unit, route-finding PC software Microsoft Autoroute 2006 and the government's official door-to-door travel website Transport Direct.

Under test conditions the car using the atlas took 1 hour and 35 minutes over a planned route, comfortably ahead of the one hour and 43 minutes for the car directed by the £220 Garmin Nuvi. The Microsoft Autoroute 2006 - which retails for £45 - took one hour and 49 minutes, while the website directed car finished in 2 hours and 19 minutes after a couple of mistakes along the way.

"With all the hi-tech software available to direct drivers from A to B, it's remarkable that the traditional road atlas came out top," said Abigail Waraker, editor of *Computing Which?*

The down-side of the road atlas - cost £8 (\$19.80) - was the time it took to plan the journey beforehand and the lack of detail once in towns and cities. As for the satnav unit, while it beat the atlas as the safe option for solo drivers, it was deemed to be a disadvantage that one can't listen to music in case instructions are missed.

"It's more likely that a combination of route-finding methods will be the quickest and best," Ms Waraker said.

Aerodist

by Noel Sproles

Anyone who ever flew in AGS doing aerodist will love this site;

<http://www.adastra.adastron.com/equip/aerodist.htm>

The views of the camp site at Mt Hagen were really taken at Kagamuga,

the then brand new airstrip a few kilometres outside Mt Hagen. We were camped right by the side of the runway and the RAAF C130 bringing in the first lift in 1965 was, I understand, the first user of the strip. As I indicated in my article on Aadastra, AGS is now fully restored as a RAAF Hudson at the Temora Aviation Museum in NSW and is the only air worthy Hudson in the world.

MEDALS

PNG Defence Force 50th Anniversary Medal

Any member who believes they may be entitled to receive the medal please contact Alex.

Australian Defence Medal

As noted in the last newsletter the distribution of the medals has commenced. It is interesting to note that the bureaucracy has not changed with the passing of time. Allan Adsett applied for his medal on 22 June, received it on Friday 6 Oct and then received a letter on Monday 9 Oct acknowledging the application and stating that they would contact him in due course when eligibility had been determined.

Surprised? Not really.

VALE

Warren Chadwick

From Magna Carto---- The Association acknowledges the passing of Warren on 10 April in a single car accident at Maiden Gully near Bendigo. Warren was another one of those 'Characters of the Corps' and was a strong supporter of the Association over many years. Warren an ex tanky with his indented scar across his forehead was the transport corporal at Fortuna. He was well known to all who served at the Regiment over those years. After leaving the army Warren worked at Empire Rubber in Bendigo for years before full retirement and sadly the loss of his wife Maureen a few years earlier.

I feel saddened at the passing of Warren as I'm sure many of our local members will be, and I always had a lot of time for him, some how always managing a chat with him during my yearly visits to Bendigo



The Editorial Staff wish you the compliments of the Festive Season and a very Happy and Prosperous 2007.

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