



Newsletter

*Royal Australian Survey Corps Association
of South Australia*

Number 54 - Autumn 2011

Adelaide Anzac Day march

A picture perfect day in Adelaide for the 2011 march reports Stevo Hinic

Dawn Services throughout Adelaide were held under a clear but very chilly 11°C morning. The weather for the Adelaide Anzac Day Commemorative March turned out to be a picture perfect 24°C day. For those of us wearing coats we found that by the end of the march it was indeed quite warm.

Our group assembling point was on the northern side of Grenfell Street just west of Pulteney Street as we were part of the Ex-Service Association Group 12 (A). We stepped off at about 10.30am and the marchers were led by Noel Sproles, with David Irving as the banner bearer and Alice from Blackwood High School carrying our group sign.

With Easter and Anzac Day falling so close together it created a five day break which as expected gave people the opportunity to go away for an extended break so our march numbers were a tad down. I thought the spectators lining the march route were slightly down also, however still very appreciative and acknowledging of the marchers.

For the march last year, we had a band well in front of us and one behind us both playing loudly but out of step with each other. It made keeping in step an impossibility. This year we were fortunate to have a band immediately behind us with the result that we were able to step out like Guardsmen!



The traditional group photo after the parade.

This year the official instructions were for all units to march six abreast. The saluting points for the paying of compliments with the obligatory “eyes right” were given at the State National War Memorial, the South African War memorial and the Official Dias from which His Excellency The Governor of South Australia, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AC CSC RANR reviewed the march.

After passing the Official Dias this year the March Marshalls directed us to continue marching along King William Road towards the Cathedral and not turn into Sir Edwin Smith Ave as done on previous marches. This was obviously to assist in the prevention of a bottle neck at the point where the march disperses.

At the conclusion of the march our group photos were taken by Graham Ragless and Kay Henderson. After these were completed some of us then moved over to the Torrens Parade Ground for a refreshing beer. From there we walked to The Elephant Hotel only about fifteen

minutes away for our customary reunion drink and for those who wished to have a counter meal.

The following were seen on the day...Bill Griggs, Ken Talbot-Smith, David Irving, Bob Ballard, Peter Elverd, Noel Sproles, Graham Ragless, Bob Turnbull, Peter Smith, Mark Deer, Kay and Malcolm Henderson, Jon Dean, Bob Langley, Ken and Pauline Jefferies, Jim Dunn, John Frith, Stevo Hinic, Lincoln Smith, Neil Houston, Jim Nathan, and Alex Czornohalan. John Scharber was accompanied by son, James and his wife Bree. James had just taken discharge from Army Engineers after doing two deployments to Afghanistan. My apologies if I have missed anyone.

Apologies were received from Alex and Joan Munro on holidays in Europe. Peter Cates advised that he would be marching with his son in Sydney. Bob and Victoria Mills have headed north for the winter.

Annual New Year Picnic BBQ

Yet another picture perfect day for a BBQ in Adelaide, much to the relief of event organiser John Harrison

The weather on the weekend prior was a real shocker – (about 42°C), and it had me wondering if I had picked, (and insisted to the RA Svy committee to be on the first Sunday in February each, and every year into the future), the wrong date for this ‘inaugural traditional’, (this was our first!), Annual New Year Picnic/BBQ, which was on Sunday 6th February, at Willow Bend Reserve, Vale Park.

Commencement time was 1200hrs, and attendees arrived ad-hoc and after a pleasant afternoon started to depart about 1630hrs.



Pamela Harrison

Conceived at the last Association Meeting at Keswick as a very ‘low key affair’ no special planning was necessary. Just a few weeks prior a routine notice to ‘remind’ members of the date, and the selected venue. RSVP’s were considered unnecessary – just come if you could make it, but in saying this, my appreciation to those members who wrote, and/or ‘phoned in to let me know they couldn’t make it. Thanks fellas – and Moyna B!

Pamela and I, and dog Sheba arrived early by wheel-barrow from home just a couple of hundred metres away, to check out the area, clean the BBQ, confirm the site of the “Surveyor’s Folly Competition” previously surveyed reference points, and to secure (if necessary), a spot in the shade. The weather was just perfect, and although

we had to move about a little to keep in the shade during the afternoon everyone seemed content on the venue, facilities, etc.

Attending were, (in alphabetical order): Jim and Rita Dunn with grand-daughter Holly, Peter and Julie Elverd, Pamela, John Harrison and Sheba, Stevo Hinic and Pauline Mannix, David Irving, Ken and Pauline Jeffrey, Rob and Julie Langley, Liz Love, Alex Munro, John Shepherd, Ken Talbot-Smith, and Kay Truman, and friend Joyce.

With the Council electric BBQ fired up, the smell of BBQ’ing chops, sausages, etc was soon wafting over the Reserve, and it took a very strong disposition not to commence on what we had come for – picnic or BBQ food, drinks, and good fellowship which seemed to bring forth tales of escapades enduring over the years. From what I overheard it’s a wonder we ever had time for map-making – all of us were just having a good time – especially if you took the time to look through Jim Dunn’s photos from TPNG circa 1972!



David Irving

The “Surveyor’s Folly Competition” then got under way. The task! - Estimate the angle, pace the surveyed distance, and at only a dollar a shot (guess/estimate), with 50% being prize money, and 50% to go to Association funds soon saw some innovative pacing, arm swinging - for angular measurements, etc. Surveyed



Ken Talbot-Smith

accurately only two days prior, it was a setback to find one of the surveyed reference poles – a steel pole with sign, had been removed by ???. The post-hole was found though so the competition could proceed with revised accuracy criteria.

Eventually – after tallying up the results the winners were;

Distance

Jim Dunn – only 0.21m off the correct distance of 64.42m – a truly remarkable feat when the next closest was Rob Langley with an estimate of 63.1m, and

Angle

Alex Munro – within 3°30’ of the correct angle of 129°00’, just pipping at the post Stevo, and Jim at 4°00’ off the true angle.

I can’t speak for everyone, but I’m sure their efforts to be there were well worth it! Some mug shots follow. Negatives of the more embarrassing shots can be purchased from me with large amounts of cash in small denomination unmarked notes.

Next year? Same place, but on Sunday 5th February. There’ll be a reminder notice in the post, or for the more capable technocrats – by e-mail. In closing - my thanks to Noel Sproles, and Jim Dunn who managed to get my ideas into a form for distribution to members! Mucho appreciated!

Vale

When near enough was nearly good enough

HARRY WRIGHT

It is with sadness that I report the passing of Harry Wright. He was the secretary of the Rats Association in Melbourne for the last some years. His passing is reported through his daughter to Stu Symonds. Harry had a distinguished military record being the youngest Rat of Tobruk and a member of AATTV as well as Survey Corps. Harry retired as the Transport WO2 of the Regiment in 1975.

A more detailed account of Harry's life and career can be found in the April 2011 edition of Magna Carto at: <http://exfortunasvy.org.au/index.htm>

EDWARD FRANCIS HUNTER

NX106453 (N49413) Edward Francis Hunter passed away peacefully - notified in the Sydney Morning Herald of 18 Dec. I had the pleasure of talking with Ted before I re-published his war-time story from Morotai in our Newsletter Issues 2/10 and 3/10. He was in hospital at the time and was confident the stay was only temporary. A very nice bloke to talk to and will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

BRIAN REDSTON

From Charlie Watson

Sadly I have to report the death of our esteemed friend Brian Redston. Brian was a WO2 Printer who worked for many years in the JIB/JIO /DIO printing Detachment in Canberra. I first met Brian in 1969 when I joined the Beach Survey Team in Canberra (attached to DSVY) but tasked by JIB. I found Brian to be very friendly, a relationship which has lasted for many years, although we did not meet often in later years. Sadly, most of the members of the Survey Regiment Detachment of those years have now passed away.

Gordon Haswell

From Alex Monro;

Gordon sadly passed away in Bendigo on 14 April 2011 after a long illness. For those who knew Gordon well, the words of his son the the finsh said it all. 'Dad, your suffering is over. So strong willed and bloody minded until the end. Soldier on Dad'.

Noel Sproles and measuring lines with a wooden ruler

Jim Dunn's close estimate of the distance at the February BBQ 'Surveyor's Folly' competition brought back memories of a comparable feat many years ago in Cape York. Sam Chambers and I had to measure a line by tellurometer. Without going into the details, the nature of the method of determining distance by tellurometer necessitated knowing how many eleven mile lengths were contained in the line. We guessed the line to be in the order of forty miles but it could be thirty three or forty four miles, but which one? We had to do better than that, and there were no maps - not even Shell road maps - to help us. What to do?

After some discussion, Sam noted that we had aerial photo coverage of the line and could we do something with that? So we laid out the photos on the ground under a tree, overlapping them carefully as necessary. We had a fifteen inch wooden army ruler and used it to measure the distance of the line on the photos. There was enough information on the photos for us to get a scale and we adjusted that for the slope of the ground between the stations. A bit of calculation, and the odd bit of argument between us, got us a distance between the stations which we considered good enough for us to eventually compute the tellurometer readings.

In due course, having measured the distance carefully and for the required number of times, we were able to compare our measurements with our guesstimate using the aerial photos and wooden ruler. There was virtually no difference! For a line which proved to be over forty miles in length, there was less than a yard variation! If we had known this at the beginning, we need not have stayed on that hill in the heat straining our eyes interpreting the trace for hours!

Sam and I were honest enough to admit that it was more good luck than good management that we were so close. Perhaps sixty percent good luck to forty percent good management would be close to the mark. However, it was a good example of the exponential amount of work we needed to do to go from near enough to good enough.

Graeme Priestley

Graeme passed away in Singapore on 12th November 2010 at the age of fifty seven. Danny Galbraith reports that Graeme had been living the past few years in Singapore and Cambodia teaching English. Graeme was a carto tech who served twenty years from the mid 1970s to the mid 1990s in several of the field survey squadrons including 1Fd Svy Sqn and the Regiment. He spent the last years of his army career in Canberra.

Kit Strunks

Kit was the widow of Major Pat (Paddy) Strunks, and she passed away late last year in Canberra.

(With acknowledgements to the other Associations from whose newsletters I gleaned these notices. - Ed)

Alex Munro, OBE



No, the Queen has not decided to ignore the Australian Honours system. Alex's OBE means that he is now Over Bloody Eighty. So, well done Alex and our best wishes for many more years to come. Alex is seen here relaxing at the New Years BBQ last February.

What a difference a little bit of rain makes!

Noel Sproles digs through his photo album to present some comparisons around a place we all once knew so well

The photos below were taken around Lake Hume and Kookaburra Point near the site of the old School of Military Survey. The first photos were taken in 2007 as the drought was getting under way in earnest. It was in the early morning and there was a thick haze from bushfires elsewhere in Victoria. The second set was taken in late March this year in the evening. I tried to take the second set as close as I could get to the site of the original 2007 photos. The difference in the amount of water is amazing - and gratifying.



Peter Jensen's history of the Corps

A special edition of the ACT Newsletter has been issued containing a paper by Peter Jensen titled 'Post-World War 11 Topographic Mapping by the Royal Australian Survey Corps.' Peter presented this paper at the Mapping Sciences Institute of Australia Conference '100 Years of National Topographic Mapping' on 29 March this year. It comprises some fifty pages so is

a bit too long for our newsletter. However, it can be read or downloaded from the ACT Branch's link to the Royal Australian Survey Corps Associations web page at; <http://rasurvey.org/index.html>

It received favourable comment from at least one member at the Anzac Day march, so why not have a look.

Magna Carto

Magna Carto is the newsletter of the Ex-Fortuna Association. Most of us had a posting or some connection to the Regiment in our career, so there is likely to be something there for everyone. Even if it is just keeping up to date with what is happening to the Fortuna villa. The newsletters can be found at the Ex-Fortuna Association webpage; <http://exfortunasvy.org.au/index.htm>

Roll Call

Alex Munro brings us up to date on some comings and goings

Neville Stone

Neville and Diane recently returned from touring both the North and South Islands of New Zealand by hire car. At easter they intended travelling to Melbourne mainly to watch the traditional AFL match on Anzac Day, all of which explains why it's hard to contact Neville on his home phone!

George Timmins

George rang me last Christmas Dau fro his camp site on the Darling River about twenty kms south from Wilcannia in NSW. Apparently he had a pleasant relaxing day, cooling off in the river at regular intervals to beat the 40°C heat and treating himself to traditional fare for the day from a good supply of up-market ratins. George made sure of this with plenty of camp refrigeration.

He was also looking after the homestead at Culpaulin Station during the absence on holidays of the owner. It was a pleasant surprise for a caht and an exchange of Christmas greetings. Georg also drove to adeladie from Swan Hill recently for my 80th birthday with a present of top-shelf port.

Barry Lutwyche

Barry had a mild heart attack a few weeks ago, spending a few days in hospital to stabilise the condition. If

that wasn't enough, he collapsed with severe leg pains not long after discharge from the hospital, so found himself back in again. A scan revealed large blood clots in each leg, requiring urgent surgery and a further five days in hospital. He has now pretty well recovered and feeling fairly fit again.

Allan Adsett

Allan is now set for a life of retirement with Judine. Allan stood down from his position as administration coordinator at JIinders University at 1.00pm on 24 Swxwmvwe 2010. following a few weeks leave over the Christmas – New Year period, he returned to clear up any outstanding paper work and finish his long service leave before the final break.

Jim Dunn

Jim recently played for South Australia in the RSL National Lawn Bowls tournament held locally in late 2010. he played almost be default when he placed his name on the list of reserves available to be sunnenly called on. RSL players from every state were represented at the tournament so well done Jim. Our last link with lawn bowls was a few years back when Bob Cooper was president of Bowls SA. Also Stan Stephens was involved with the bowling fraternity representing the Army and the RSL at different times.

Gold Card Now Covers Travel Vaccinations

(From the Qld Association)

The following email of interest to members was received via President Alex Cairney from Gordon Blake, Chairman, QLD State Advisory Council, Australian Veterans & Defence Services Council.....

“Earlier this year after submissions had been made to me at an AVADSC meeting in Brisbane I approached the Deputy Commissioner in the Queensland Consultative Forum regarding Gold Card holders being required to pay for Medical Vaccinations prior to overseas travel, I have now received a positive outcome. Prior to 1st Aug 2010 DVA has not provided coverage for medical vaccinations for DVA clients travelling overseas, the approach was that these were privately incurred expenses. DVA has now released a new Business Line where-in it now states that as from the 1st Aug 2010 all GOLD CARD holders are eligible for all required vaccinations to be covered under the Gold Card arrangements. Any Gold Card holders that may have incurred charges from 1st August 2010 are able to seek reimbursement via DVA. I would expect a fact sheet covering this to be issued shortly.

I ask that you make this information widely available to your friends and association membership, I will send you a copy of the DVA Fact Sheet once it becomes available. If you or anyone else has any questions ask them to contact their nearest DVA VAN office

The Major Clews Trail

Lynda and I went to a wedding in Canberra in March and decided to take the long way home through the Kosciusko National Park. On our way out of the Park and just seventeen kilometres from Khancoban I spotted a sign that pointed to the ‘Major Clews Trail’. Although Major Clews left the army before my time, his was a name that still rang a bell for me.

Major Clews was a well know identity in the Corps ‘way back when’. He served in the Corps between the wars as well as during WWII.

He finished his time in the army in the mid-1950s as a major and as OC of (then) E Comd Fd Svy Section. He went to work with the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Authority and eventually settled in Khancoban.

He was obviously well known in the area for a trail to be named in his honour. So, if anyone knows more details, we would be interested in finding out the story behind it. I would be happy to publish the story as it would be an interesting addition to our Corps history.



Noel Sproles at the start of the Major Clews Trail near Khancoban, NSW

John Collins

Many of you may remember Captain John Collins as the RE exchange officer at the Regiment in the mid-70s. He also spent some time with 4 Fd Svy Sqn in 1976 traversing across Arnhem Land on Operation Brass Key. John came back for a visit in April and May this year to reacquaint himself and Sue with old friends and old haunts. His trip took him from Perth to Adelaide and across to Bendigo where he was to join with the Ex Fortuna Association on the Anzac Day march. Then onto the Riverina and Canberra before heading back to Perth and the UK.

He now lives near Cambridge and has recently retired after 22 years service in the House of Commons where he was their printer and publisher, or 'Deliverer of the Vote'. It is an ancient office being established in 1684 and there have been only 25 holders of the office in that time. Incidentally, his successor is an Australian.

He notes that it was fantastic to see and hear Nelson Mandela, Boris Yeltsin and Mikhail Gorbachev close up as well as the Pope last year when he pulled a few strings with the Speaker so that Sue and he could go back for the visit. John was awarded a CBE for his work in the House of Commons. The photos show him receiving his CBE from Prince Charles at Buckingham Palace and dressed for the occasion during the State Opening of Parliament during his first year.



NearMap

For those of you who like to use Google maps and Google Earth, you may find a programme called NearMap a useful supplement to these.

Unlike the Google products, it is updated regularly and gives photomaps which are quite recent over the more populated areas of Australia. For example, those covering Adelaide as at the time of preparing this newsletter are dated 3 March 2011.

There is no facility such as Streetview as will be found with Google maps, but the quality and currency of the photomaps still makes it worthwhile. As well, it is possible to view your area of interest from any of the four cardinal points of the compass, and you can go back in time as well. Google <http://www.nearmap.com/>

Our Newsletter

The title of our newsletter is a bit bland and I would be interested if anyone could come up with an appropriate name. Something clever like the Ex-Fortuna Associations' 'Magna Carto'. Ribald names too can be clever, but we could not use them unfortunately. Something with an association to SA would be ideal such as incorporating Colonel Light's or Sir Robert Torrens name in the title. If you get a moment of inspiration then how about sending them to me and I will publicise them to see what members think.

We also need contributions. Alex Munro is a reliable and consistent source and we are not above plagiarising material from other association newsletters. In this edition we have contributions from John Harrison and Stevo Hinic so the talent is out there. It can be anything - news on old comrades, anecdotes from our days surveying in the bush, or just interesting things we pick up in newspapers and so on. For instance, the Chief of Army has stopped the wearing of berets for all but the SAS. That would interest most of us - it has raised the ire of serving members. So, why not give it a thought - your contributions will be appreciated