



SURVEY EX-SERVICEMEN'S ASSOCIATION SOUTH AUSTRALIA



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Newsletter

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Newsletter No 50 March 2009

WELCOME

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2009. I hope that you had an enjoyable festive season with friends and family. While the world economic situation is causing some concern, the Association can look forward to a year filled with a number of major functions. From all reports the BBQ held at Keswick Barracks was very successful. On Anzac Day, the march will be followed by the unveiling of the Memorial Plaque in the gardens between Government House and Torrens Parade Ground and then our annual reunion. Planning has commenced for the Annual Dinner in July. On 15 August, 1 Topo Survey Troop will be holding its first reunion on the Gold Coast. The Annual General Meeting will be held in early September. More details about some of these functions later in the newsletter.

SOCIAL NEWS

First Friday Drinks

At the Saracens Head Hotel in Carrington St CBD at 5pm each first Friday of the month. If you are in or near the city, why not drop in and enjoy the company of fellow ex-RASvy members.

New Year BBQ

Alex Munro

Our early year barbecue function was held as usual in the Sergeants' Mess at Keswick Barracks, on Sunday 8th March. With such hot weather this summer, and no long range forecast available for the day, it was decided to change the normal timings from noon onwards to 4pm until 8pm, just to be sure, which seemed to work well coupled with day-light saving and could be the way in future. The barbecue area could not be used for various reasons, but the Mess proper was available and provided very comfortable conditions for those attending. It was a pleasantly relaxed and sociable gathering, with our thanks to Joan Munro for organising the salads and sweets, etc, and also to Neville Stone (he even brought his own apron) ably assisted by Bob Dikkenberg for grilling the steaks and snags.

It was good to see Margaret Dikkenberg attending, after her recent long and debilitating treatment for cancer.

The function was very successful overall and was attended by a good group of twenty three members and friends/ partners, so for those interested a list is provided below.

Neville and Dianne Stone, Graeme Ragless, John Whitburn, Jim and Rita Dunn, Stevo Hinic and Pauline Mannix, John Nathan, Bob and Victoria Mills, Luke Mills, Alex Czornohalan, Bob and Margaret Dikkenberg, John and Pam Harrison, Moyna Briggs, Alex and Joan Munro, and two or three names I am unable to recall so my apologies.

NEWS ITEMS

Anzac Day - Saturday 25 April

The Parade

Our form-up point this year is the usual location, just west of Scots Church along North Tce from Pulteney St corner.

Assembly time is 9.15am, for a start time of around 9.30am.

For anyone not sure, please note that all former members of RASVY are eligible to march on Anzac Day, so a good roll-up would be appreciated.

Unveiling of the Royal Australian Survey Corps Commemorative Plaque

A long time in coming but at long last a plaque to honour the men and women of the Corps will be unveiled at 11.15am, following our part in the parade.

The monument will be situated on the border of the Pathway of Honour, at the rear of Government House and facing Torrens Parade Ground, about fifty metres along the path from Kintore Ave.

The ceremony will be simple and casual but important in providing a public memorial to the dedicated service of the Corps.

Annual Reunion

To be held at "The Elephant" hotel from noon onwards.

As for last year, we have the use of the upstairs bar area and lunch is available, and for those not familiar with the location, the pub is situated in Vaughan Place off the north side near the eastern end of Rundle St East.

Please note that the hotel does not open before noon on Anzac Day.

Parking

Never very good on Anzac Day morning. The car park at the corner of Pulteney St and Rundle St East (the street for entry/exit also) and the Harris Scarfe car park in Grenfell St have offered free parking in previous years to those wearing service medals or the RSL badge, but may not be the case or this year. Also, streets leading directly into the march area are usually closed off about 8.15am. Street parking near the perimeter of the parade area is usually reasonable.

PEOPLE NEWS

Anthony Stephens

3D Kokoda Map



Courtesy - Adelaide Advertiser Sat 21 March 2009

ANTHONY Stephens knows every inch of the Kokoda Track and yet he has never been there.

The Adelaide cartographer has joined forces with SA adventurer Duncan Chessell to produce a 3D map of the famous Papua New Guinea track.

Chessell has provided GPS data and photographs of Kokoda, while Mr

Stephens, above, works in the comfort of his city Map Shop.

Mr Stephens said he expects the map to be printed and distributed next month.

ITEMS FROM INTERSTATE ASSOCIATIONS

From Magna Carto

Victoria was subjected to the worst ravages of fire in history on Saturday 7 February this year. Across the state many houses were destroyed and almost 200 lives lost. Bendigo was not spared with Eaglehawk losing many homes and one dead. Fire lapped the Rose Hotel on Eaglehawk Road, the adjoining BP service station, the rear of the old John Brown's clothing Factory and it got close to the Goldmines Hotel (Ed's Pub).



The one that did not get publicity however was just how close the fire got to the St John of God (Mt Alvernia) Hospital and Fortuna. The land adjacent to Fortuna covered in Pampas grass was set alight by flying embers but luckily Fortuna was spared. All Fortuna duty officers will remember that their worst fear was not the marauding masses (not that the piquet SLR with the bent barrel would have held them back) but rather the threat of fire. For if fire took hold in the "Villa" there would be no stopping it and had that occurred then that would have ended the current debate about its future.

WHICH SERVICE IS THE BEST

A Soldier, Sailor and an Airman got into an argument as to which service was "the best." The arguing became so intense the three servicemen failed to see an oncoming truck. They were struck and killed instantly. Soon the servicemen found themselves at the Pearly Gates where they met St. Peter. They decided only he could be the ultimate source of truth and honesty. So, the four asked him, "St. Peter, which branch of the ADF is the best?" After a few moments he replied that he could not answer that and would have to kick it up to God for an answer the next time he saw Him. Meanwhile, thank you for your service on earth and welcome to Heaven.

Some time later the three see St. Peter and remind him of the question they had asked when first entering Heaven. Suddenly a sparkling white dove lands on St. Peter's shoulder. There is a note, glistening with gold dust, in the dove's beak. "This must be the answer from the Boss, let's see what it says." He opens the note, trumpets blare, gold dust drifts into the air, harps play crescendos, and St. Peter reads aloud to the servicemen.

MEMORANDUM:

FROM THE DESK OF THE ALMIGHTY.

TO: Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen.

SUBJ: WHICH MILITARY SERVICE IS BEST.

Gentlemen, all services in the ADF are honourable and noble. Each serves Australia well and with distinction. Being servicemen in the ADF represents a special calling warranting special respect, tribute and dedication. Be proud of that.

Sincerely,

GOD, WO1 (Ret.)

1 TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY TROOP (SVN) REUNION

Lloyd Patterson is organising a reunion for all members of 1 Topo Survey Troop who served in Vietnam.

General Peter John Cosgrove, AC, MC

is our guest for the

DETACHMENT FIRST TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY TROOP

and

A SECTION – FIRST TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY TROOP

Hereafter referred to as the unit(s)

REUNION

FOR MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

132 members are on the Nominal Roll for the above unit(s) as having served in SVN at 1ATF

WHEN: 15th & 16th August 2009

WHERE: Twin Towns Services Club, Tweed Heads NSW

\$110 per person for dinner and luncheon

\$60 per person dinner only

\$50 per person luncheon only

Dinner is on Saturday Night August 15th

Luncheon is on Sunday August 16th

PLEASE PAY A DEPOSIT TO THE BENDIGO BANK BSB 633-000 ACCOUNT 133297994
ACCOUNT NAME Lloyd Patterson

Please contact me on: 02 6056 1634 – or – 0402 222 844 or by email lloyd@bmp.net.au

The venue can sit 180 persons so *ex survey members other than Troop members are welcome to attend*. However in the case of those who were not in the Troop your attendance will not be confirmed until after the 1st of May.

Release 2 dated 22 Feb 2009

MARCH UPDATE – Hope its complete at least emails are free

Numbers dribble in with some more sending their money, but three (3) did not indicate who paid, silly sausages. Attendance as At 31 March

PAID

John Hunter
Barry Parker
Richard & Mary Barwald
Graham & Pauline Birrell
Peter & Nancy Rossiter
Tony Haseloff & Mrs.
Barry Lutwyche
alex cairney
Les & Jo Wellins
Brian Thomas
Ken Lyons
Grant & Beth Small
Allan Adsett
Billy Black & Mrs.
Lindsay Rotherham
Peter Aukstinaitis

** Cash no other details Date 10 Mar 2009

Dave O'Shannessy & Julie

** Cash no other details Date 17 March 2009

Graham & Pauline Birrell

** PLEASE SUPPLY A NAME

PERSONS ATTENDING BUT NOT AS YET MADE A FINANCIAL PAYMENT

Bob Kay
Brian Dunkin
David Collins
Des Ceruti
Eric Sorensen
Frank & Nan Thorogood
Garran Hill & June
George Graham & Pat
Graham & Mrs. Dowd
John Bullen
John Whitburn
Leon Griffiths
Max Neil Max.
Rocky Camps
Stan Campbell
Stan Stevens
Tom & Mrs. Stockwell
Trevor Marsh & Roybn (Shorty)

APOLOGIES

Bob Skitch – Overseas

Brian Firms is going to the Kimberly's, and cannot pull out as his taking friends.

Ross & Marie McMillan - Ross too ill to travel.

CONTACTED BUT YET TO RESPOND EITHER WAY

Alex Munro
Bob Scaddan
Bruce (Roadrunner) Grisdale Vicky
Bruce Appleford
Bruce Wetzig
Charlie Watson
Colin & Rhonda Laybutt
Clive Craddon
Peter Eddy & Anne
Geoff White
Jim & Nola Roberts
Joe O'Connor
John&Bev Walker
Lindsay Rotherham
Noel Sproles
Oreste Biziak
Paul Alderson
Terry Starr

Also attached is the Accommodation at the Outrigger Hotel/Motel (attached to the RSL) where the function is to be held. It is a booking sheet for the venue accommodation it has prices and options, if you choose to stay there.

Also if you have indicated that you are coming but have not paid as yet and your name appears in the Contacted but not committed yet don't worry I am just slack.

General Crosgrove is a definite and we have his plane details, the person who arranged for him to come is a Troop Member who wishes at this time to remain quiet about it however in the fullness of time he might let me reveal his name.

Two more National Servicemen have contacted me, or were contacted Oreste Biziak (68/69) and Bruce (Roadrunner) Grisdale (69/70) both were positive in their responses.

I will continue to give out email addresses with the Paid Not Paid and Contact List unless someone asks that their address not be released.

John Bullen is releasing a book on his recollections of Vietnam that is being pushed by his publishers so watch out for the CaptJB book tour.

APRIL is the last month that is revered for Troop members only from the 1st May any ex-survey member and partner and of course any serving ADF member may attend.

Regards

Lloyd

02 6056 1634 or 0402 222 844

VALE

John Hogan



John died peacefully in his sleep at his home in Bendigo in mid February 09. His family was looking forward to his eightieth birthday next year, so his passing was both sudden and unexpected given that his overall health was fairly good and he was still active and mobile.

A chapel service was held in Bendigo on Wednesday 18th February to celebrate and give thanks for his life, and such was John's standing within the community the chapel was overflowing with mourners, a bit like a regimental parade at Fortuna where John was the RSM for many years, going on the faces I could

recognise around me. I didn't realize how fond he was of Irish music, until hearing the theme music played during the service, which was conducted in a fairly informal and secular manner, bringing smiles and reviving memories of John among those present. Following the service there was a mass exodus to the RSL club at Nth Bendigo where a family wake was held, an event that lasted from about 2pm until well into the early evening which I can vouch for. Quite a party which John would have been proud of.

John grew up in Tidworth, Hampshire UK, until at about eighteen years old he joined the British Army, serving for two years before discharge and migrating to Australia in 1951, where he soon after enlisted in the Royal Australian Survey Corps. Following his graduation from the School of Military Survey at Balcombe as a topographic surveyor, he saw service in the New Guinea Survey Unit, then Central Command Field Survey Section in Adelaide, mapping in South Australia and the Northern Territory, at the School of Military Survey as an instructor and SSM, at both Balcombe and Bonegilla, and at the Army Survey Regiment, Bendigo, and throughout his entire career John was well regarded not only for his technical abilities but also his high standards of regimentality. John and his wife Myrtle were a devoted family couple and raising a family of five boys and four girls was no mean feat, until the unfortunate demise of Myrtle in 1981 due to illness, after which John remained even closer to his family.

He discharged from the Corps with the rank of Warrant Officer Class One in 1976 after twenty four years service, but remained at Fortuna in a civilian capacity as the RAN liaison officer for the production of their charts, until his final retirement about 1990.

I think all of our members who knew John will join me in offering our condolences to his family.

Alex Munro

Keith James Barber (Acki) - 31036 (VP6873)(VX 127715)



Died after a short illness on 21 Jan 09. Born 18 Feb 22 at Queenscliff"

On 7 Mar 1940 at age 18 he enlisted in the Royal Australian Engineers (AIF). His dad was also in the RAE. Keith lied about his age and enlisted at age 16 but his dad found out and agreed that he could join, but only after his 18th birthday.

In 1941 he transferred to the Australian Survey Corps at the Survey Training Depot – Woodend and was posted to South Australia on the Triangulation of Gawler to the Coorong and the Murray Mouth.

In 1942 he was posted to 3rd Field Survey Coy – Yarram and on 20 Jun 43 he volunteered for wartime mapping/surveying service with the New Guinea Survey Section.

Although Keith had relayed this story to me John Hillier was able to provide it in more detail.

In 1943 near Wau, 8 Fd Svy Sect AIF located in weatherboard bungalows was attacked by Japanese aircraft. CPL KJ Barber and BL Murray manned a Bren gun in the open to fight back. They prudently abandoned the weapon and took cover moments before the building received the full fury of the enemy fire. Fortunately there were no casualties, although most of the unit's rations were destroyed. Worst hit was the unit latrine.

In Apr 1944 he returned to Australia and was posted to 6 Topo Survey Coy and then in 1946 to the Field Survey Section - Colac (PMF) doing field survey work around Victoria. John Hillier recalls that Keith was asked by a senior official what their job was, and his reply "Hunting, fishing and

shooting.” It is believed that Capt Barney Herbert had the job to field the answers to questions asked by staff from HQ S Comd.

On 22 Sep 47 he transferred to the Permanent Army at SGT Rank

In 1948 he was posted to Sth Command Field Survey Section at Albert Pk Barracks and in 1951 was detached as a Nation Service Training Instructor at Puckapunyal where his Platoon won the Drill competition. In 1952 he was posted as the ARA cadre at 2 Topo Survey Coy (CMF) located at Powlett St, East Melbourne and remained there until he closed the unit down.

In 1957 Keith was posted to Fortuna as a WO2 Draughtsman conducting mapping quality control.

In 1966 he was posted to the School of Military Survey at Bonegilla as the School Sergeant Major (SSM). I recall Keith telling me about the arrival of a large 4-door stainless steel refrigerator arriving at the School and being asked where it was to be installed. Keith immediately directed them to the Sergeants’ Mess. Months later an individual arrived looking for a refrigerator that was intended to be installed at the Migrant Centre across the road but he was not able to find any sign of it.

In 1969 he was again posted to Fortuna as the WO1 Squadron Sergeant Major (SSM) and Tech WO of Carto Sqn

Keith took his discharge on 31 Jul 74 after 34yrs service.

Keith was always immaculately turned out and led by example. He insisted on extremely high standards of both military bearing and technical quality. Keith had a significant personal presence because of his many years as a military instructor (drill, weapons and military law) and he left a lasting impact on all those around him. Sport also played a big part in Keith's life and he was a life member of both the Kangaroo Flat Football and Cricket Clubs.

Keith was always a Survey Corps devotee and his love of maps and all things Survey Corps gave him great satisfaction. His excellent hand drawn copper plate calligraphy was one of his trademarks. Keith’s nickname “Acki” came from a school day lecture on Anzac Cove in recognition of a locality nearby.



Keith's Funeral was attended by many past Survey Corps members. His beloved dog “Sasha” led out his casket. As he had requested, he went out on a Harley to the Theme song of the Geelong Football Club.

Gary Warnest

From the ACT Newsletter - A couple of gems by John Bullen

Keith Barber, Warrant Officer, First Class, died on 21 January 2009 aged almost 87. Born on 18 February 1922 at Queenscliff, he was educated at Queenscliff and the Gordon Institute of Technology, Geelong. VP 6873 K J BARBER enlisted in the permanent Military Forces RAE on 7 Mar 40. He served during World War Two in the NG Survey Section. In Dec 42/Jan43 he was part of the UC Gerry Owers and Sgt Jim Miller party tasked with completing a Compass and chain traverse across NG, starting at Abau Is over the Owen Stanley Range to Safia. An extremely arduous task. He served in Wau in 1943 and finally retired on 31 July 1974. On less formal occasions he was known as Acky or Achi. No one knew how to spell it, though we all knew how to pronounce it. But where did it come from? My best guess (and I would welcome more reliable advice) is that it came from the well known Achi Baba (pronounced Acky Barber by the Anzacs) on the Gallipoli peninsula, and of course there were many Anzacs still around only 25 years later when Keith joined up. As School Sergeant-Major at the School of Military Survey in the late 1960s, and as Squadron Sergeant-Major of the Cartographic Squadron at the Army Survey Regiment, he had direct personal contact with a very large number of Survey Corps soldiers, each of whom will have their own personal memories of him. Some no doubt will be particularly colourful, especially any memories of the Mess President’s not so skilful employment of the time honoured football sock in the neutering of the Sergeants Mess cat at Bonegilla.

A couple of memories of Keith Barber that may not be generally known, deserve a wider audience. One incredible episode of Fortuna's history is the saga of the night-time poultry thieving raids led by Captain C E B Stewart amongst Bendigo backyard chook runs in the late 1940s. Teddy Stewart

was apt to appear without warning in the Fortuna Tavern or anywhere else where he could conscript his team. He'd grab anyone who hadn't fled on sight and order them to come with him immediately – and that's an order! He would then lead his team on a raid of neighbouring chook yards. Chook raid veterans included Jack Owen (Medical Corps), Jack Gore and Keith Barber. As those who've tried it well know, it is impossible to steal chooks quietly. With chook yards in utter pandemonium, every dog in the neighbourhood barking hysterically, house lights going on and doors flying open, the raiders would be frantically trying to clamber over back fences, sorely hampered by flapping, squawking chooks under the arm. This led to at least one counter-raid on Fortuna by the Bendigo police. The culprits strenuously denied everything and honour was thereby saved. Fortunately, during the interrogation the police did not recognise the dripping sound behind a closed door as being blood from chook corpses freshly hung up to drain. Equally fortunately, no tell-tale blood flowed out from beneath the door. Keith Barber and Jack Gore both claimed afterwards to have been sweating blood, as they listened to the steady drip onto the concrete just behind them. Teddy Stewart was a renowned eccentric who was later promoted to major and posted to Victoria Barracks, Melbourne. It was in that posting that he suicided with a pistol in the 1950s. I first learnt of the chook raids from Jack Owen in the mid-1950s and Jack Gore confirmed it all in the 1960s. Jack Owen had a second stint at Fortuna in the 1970s as the RAP NCO.

My second memory is of an event in 1972 when I'd just taken over from Keith Todd as OC Carto Sqn at Fortuna. Keith Barber was SSM Carto Sqn at the time. A week or two later, the SSM entered my office. "It's Private Wotsit's birthday sir, and I thought I'd check your policy."

"Policy? A policy on birthdays?" I said, quite baffled, and stalling for time.

"Yes sir. When Major Todd took over from Major Ricketts, I did the usual and marched Private Oojum into the OC's office, announcing that it was her birthday. Major Todd looked up and said 'So?'"

So I explained 'Well, Major Ricketts used to give all the girls a big kiss on their birthdays.'

Major Todd exploded, and yelled 'He WHAT!!' Private Oojum burst into tears. Major Todd bawled 'Get that bloody woman out of my office!' Private Oojum became hysterical, and really sir, it was all terribly difficult. So this time I thought I'd play safe and check out the OC's policy first before marching Private Wotsit in."

"Thank you SSM. I don't see any need to change Major Todd's policy."

William (Bill) Athey Jeffery

Sadly I have to report the death of my good mate and Corps member, Bill Jeffery on 25 Feb 09 in Queensland. Bill was born 20 Sep 24 and spent his early years at Lockhart NSW close to the Vic border. Hence his favoring AFL over NRL. Bill served in 2/6 Commando Squadron during WW2. Actually 2/6 was in 7 Div not 6 Div as you may speculate from the numbering. 2/6 Motto was "Nothing over us" taken from a Woolworths advertisement which claimed that Woolworths stocked no item selling for more than 2 shillings and six pence (2/6). I'm not positive that it was Woollies it may have been Coles. I'm not sure of all the places that Bill served but I know that he was in the Markham Valley Campaign. Being a Commando Bill was always very fit and left many a younger bloke puffing up the hill behind him. After the war Bill joined the Survey Corps and rose to the rank of Sargent before taking his discharge in the late 60's. Some time before or after the war Bill trained as a sign righter and suffered in later life from the effects of the lead paint. Bill's printing was very good and he got a leave pass at the School because he was up to standard in lettering. However, the next week he missed out on leave because he had not improved on the last test. Bill made the cover for the Canberra Survey Corps Association Functions Attendance Book and kindly provided the autographs of those attending the Survey Corps Jubilee Dinner on 11 Nov 65. After taking his discharge from the Survey Corps Bill joined the Geodetic Section of the Division of National Mapping in Canberra. Bill was a very good observer and did a lot of first order and Laplace Astronomical Observations. With the wind down of Geodetic field work Bill went on to Bathymetric Surveys of the Continental shelf, which is where I met up with him having heard a lot about him from Frank White and the older hands at Survey Directorate. We spent many years surveying on the MV Cape Pillar. Bill got on well with people and provided a steadying influence on many a new or old field hand or surveyor.

After resigning from AUSLIG as NATMAP had now become, and the loss of Jean, his wife of many years Bill moved to Gumly Gumly near Kapooka and became involved in fostering esprit de Corps among recruits at Kapooka.

Some time after becoming ill Bill moved to Queensland to seek treatment. I don't know the precise details of his life in Qld so I will not speculate.

Bill is survived by many children, grand children and no doubt great grand children. I will only mention his eldest son Ken who also served in the Corps.

Charlie Watson

On behalf of our members, the committee extends our sympathies to Ken and his family.