



Newsletter

*Royal Australian Survey Corps Association
of South Australia*

Number 59 - Spring 2014

Anzac Day 2014

The weather forecast for Dawn Services throughout Adelaide threatened the chance of light rain, always a worry, but it did not eventuate and conditions remained fine and mild for the entire day. Apparently the opposite happened during the parade in Sydney, with unpleasant rainy weather, according to the newsletter from the NSW Association.

Our group formed up as usual in Grenfell Street ably led by Bill Griggs with Dave Irving carrying the banner. As reported in our pre-march flyer, the RSL is attempting to shorten the length of the parade by amalgamating the numerous small groups of just a few marchers into single larger groups, and moving all ex-Vietnam members into Vietnam veterans only groups. We were advised that we could march as a Survey group with our own banner providing there were at least twenty marchers present, not including any Vietnam veterans. Close to the start we were well short of the twenty, but a late minute rush of members brought the number to twenty-two, much to the delight of Bill Griggs, although we were marching come what may. Before next year we will certainly lodge our objection to the RSL over the splitting of our group.

The spectators lining the route were as numerous as ever and just as responsive as always in showing their appreciation to the passing groups. At the end of the parade we all gathered for the usual photographs before heading to Torrens Parade Ground for a can or two, joining several hundred others from the parade and often meeting a few friends to exchange news. We then had a short stop at our Corps memorial behind Government House before moving on to the reunion at The Elephant and Wheelbarrow pub in Vaughan Place at noon. Around twenty six members gathered at the upstairs room to enjoy lunch and a very convivial few hours watching the Collingwood – Essendon game at the MCG. A very enjoyable day not to be missed.



I apologise for the odd name missed, but seen on the day were Mark Bates, Alex Czornohalan, Jim Dunn, Alex Munro, Peter Elverd, John Frith, Stevo Hinic, Neil Houston, Dave Irving, John Whitburn, Jon Dean, Bob Dikkenberg, Bill Griggs, Bob Mills, Steve and Janet McGuinness, John Nathan, Darcy Patrick, John Scharber, James Scharber, Lincoln Smith, Anthony Stephens, Mal and Kay Henderson (up from Mount Gambier), Ken Talbot-Smith and Stan Stephens (down from Port Augusta).



After the march - Anzac Day 2014

Corps birthday function

Our annual celebration was held at Keswick Barracks on Sunday 6th July 2014 from noon to late afternoon. It was held in the Sergeants' Mess, courtesy of the committee. The format was a casual BBQ lunch, as in previous years, with the only formalities being the usual toast to the ladies present and a toast to the memory of the Corps.

Our numbers were well down compared to previous years but that did not stop a very friendly group from enjoying a convivial and relaxed afternoon. Attending the lunch were; Rita and Jim Dunn; Alex Munro; Pam and John Harrison; Pauline and Stevo Hinic; Kay Trueman; Alex, Margaret and Bob Dikkenberg; and Rhonda and Bob Cooper.

100th Anniversary caps.

Costing \$15.00 each, the cap is dark blue in colour with the tri- badge emblem entwined with "100 Years" at the front, and "Royal Australian Survey Corps" embroidered at the back above the adjusting strap. The caps will be available for sale during the Bendigo celebrations or soon by postage costing \$8.50

Fortuna Villa

An article in the July newsletter from Bendigo reported on the progress of restoration to the villa. Paul Banks, the present owner, intends to restore the villa and immediate grounds to as near as possible to their original condition and colour scheme. So far work is proceeding at a steady pace with a lot already completed.

The initial business aim is to open a shop and cafe and conduct tours. Subsequently, it could become a wedding venue or eventually open as a boutique hotel. There are probably plans for the outer grounds, but they were not stated as yet.

There is now in place 24 hour live-in security and maintenance staff. Public objections to the overall development plan have been lodged relating to noise and traffic hazards in adjacent streets. They are presently being worked through by the council and with community consultation

direct to your address. They are fairly light in weight so about six can be sent in the same postage bag for \$8.50, which might be a practical idea for a group of members.

100th Anniversary Celebrations

Canberra

Bendigo

The celebrations in Canberra will begin on Wednesday 1 July 2015. Functions organised for the day start at 11.00am with a wreath laying ceremony at the Australian War Memorial, followed at 3.00pm by a gathering at the National Library for a display of mapping, photographs and other documents produced over the years.

The day will end with a mixed dinner at the Lobby restaurant (apparently a Canberra landmark) comprising a three course alternate drop meal, to include a reasonable amount of wine/beer/soft drink and coffee/tea. Chris Coulthard-Clark will be the guest speaker. The price for the dinner is \$98 per head and while a deposit is not required, full payment will be required by two weeks before.

Although about ten months away, it is essential that Rob McHenry is advised now whether you intend to be there (and numbers), considering the amount of organising required for the day. If you advise that you also wish to attend the dinner, please be reasonably sure of your intention because of the finances involved. Rob can be contacted by email at rob@mchenry.net.au

If you plan to attend the RASvy 100th Anniversary celebrations in Bendigo, you can find an attendance notice on the Fortuna website, at exfortunasy.org.au The email address, Rasvy100@gmail.com, has been created specifically for correspondence associated with the anniversary weekend and it is requested that everyone correspond through it. The activities planned over the weekend are listed below.

Friday 3 July 2015

Casual gathering at the Bendigo RSL after 5.00pm. Bistro meal and drinks by own arrangements.

Saturday 4 July 2015

10.30am - Civic Reception

Held at the Bendigo Town Hall, with a Mayoral address and group photographs intended as the main official photo record of the 100th Anniversary. Appropriate attire to be worn with medals; banners of kindred Survey Associations and Corps memorabilia to be displayed.

7.00pm - The main function

Held at the All Seasons Function Centre, being a partly subsidised two course dinner and drinks on arrival, (other drinks by own arrangements) with a former Corps Director as the guest speaker. A small display of technical and historical items is intended as well as a slide show.

Sunday 5 July 2015

12.00 noon.

Gather at the Gold Mines Hotel for a limited cost BBQ lunch.

3.00pm at Fortuna Villa

A commemorative service will be held followed by the unveiling of a story board and brass plaque at the Memorial Cairn. A special birthday cake will be cut and afternoon tea provided.

Accommodation can be sourced through the Bendigo tourist information centre, with discounts offered at the All Seasons Function Centre.

Faces of the Corps—100th anniversary

A presentation of photographs of all former members of the Corps is hoped to be produced as a continuous in-loop slide show, to be displayed on a large screen during the celebration dinner in Canberra and later in Bendigo. It would be near impossible to show everyone during our 100 year history, so naturally some cannot be included, but the aim is to get a photograph of as many former members as possible, preferably in a Corps activity situation but not essential, to be shown on the presentation. John Mobbs will produce the presentation so all photographs/emails must be sent to him for processing. A maximum file size of 2Mb per image would help John, and if anyone with photos cannot get them scanned, he has volunteered to do that and return by mail, especially if a stamped and addressed return envelope is sent. Remember, John will not appreciate anything received too late to process.

Vale

Michael Dunian

Michael's many friends who served with him in the Corps will be saddened at the passing of Michael in Gympie on Sunday 10t August 2014, aged 60 years.

He enlisted in the Corps in 1971 and served in 2 Field Survey Squadron, the Army Survey Regiment, and in 8 Field Survey Squadron before electing discharge in 1980. He was diagnosed with cancer about twelve months previously, and given perhaps a year or so to live, so was able to accept and prepare for the end, being contacted and visited by old friends.

His wife and most of his ten children were with him at the end, later followed by a private cremation. He was an active member of the Jindalee Golf Club, where a gathering of friends and family was held to see half his ashes buried with a tree planted in his memory at the 9th hole, followed by a wake in the clubhouse for all present, including several old Corps mates. Michael was a Tasmanian born and bred, and the remainder of his ashes will be scattered near Southport in Tasmania.

Peter Saunders

We report with sadness the passing of Peter Saunders in Bendigo, after a long illness, late in March 2014.

Perhaps not that well known to our younger members, but those who knew Peter well would agree with me if I described him as a no-nonsense roughnut character.

He enlisted in the Corps in 1956, as a printer in Litho Sqn at Fortuna, serving twenty years before retirement in 1976 with the rank of sergeant.

Peter was well regarded for his ability as a printer and as a sportsman, particularly in earlier years playing Aussie Rules football and later playing lawn bowls with Golden Square Bowling Club as a life member.

A Service of Thanks held at the Mulqueen Family Chapel was very well attended by members of the bowling club and old mates from his Fortuna days, followed by a wake at the club during the afternoon.

News in Brief from Alex Munro

This news is in response to casual enquiries received from members.

Max Coletti has reported that his recent cancer tests have proved negative, so the disease is still in remission and hopefully will remain that way.

Pat Cox is still living at his old address in Crystal Brook, but unfortunately his health problems have not improved over the years, so he is pretty well restricted in moving about much.

Eva Gruszka sounded as chirpy as ever during a telephone conversation recently, and is still very active, particularly as a member of the Polish Club.

Colonel Simon Lemon has moved interstate after residing in Clare SA. for many years, and will be missed on Anzac Day.

No forwarding address is known as yet.

When recently speaking to **Tracey Phillips** by telephone, she mentioned that **Tony Spurling** had visited Adelaide from Bendigo only a few weeks before, and by coincidence had met **Frank Bryant** and also **Noel Sproles**.

She also mentioned that John had ruptured a tendon in a kneecap, which required surgery to put right, so will be restricted with his movements for some time. She and John have planned a trip to Europe, and will be away during October and November of this year. Tracey also intends to visit her father in Adelaide, early in October before their trip

Marj Ricketts has recovered from the stroke she experienced two years ago, but now requires daily medication which has to be finely balanced with the diet she is restricted to. As a 90th birthday treat last December 2013, she visited her birthplace in Halifax Qld, her first visit back since leaving as a young 16 year- old. She was amazed at how little the place had changed, with many old neighbours still in the same residence, including her two cousins.

Barry Lutwyche

Alex Munro reports that he had reason to phone Barry very recently, and by coincidence Alex Cairney was visiting so he had a chat to both. Barry is now the proud owner of an MG sports car and is a member of the local MG club, which ruined Alex's opinion of Barry as a lifetime Ford fan.

His health has been fairly good of late considering the problems he has had in the last couple of years, and still moves about regularly. Barry had only returned the day before from attending the wake for Michael Dunian, and was able to give a few details of his passing.

Alex Cairney

After attending his grand-daughter's birthday in Sydney, Alex was driving home to Brisbane and was about nine kilometres north of Grafton when he dozed for a second, long enough to drive off the road and into a creek. The result was a car full of water and a lot of damage, sufficient to be considered a write-off by the insurance company, however, he was reasonably happy with the pay-out.

Alex didn't fare that well either, and was diagnosed with a fractured vertebrae of the lower spine, which he thinks has lowered his height by one inch. There was no surgeon available at the nearby Grafton hospital to perform the necessary surgery required, so Alex was transferred post-haste to the Greenslades Repatriation Hospital at Brisbane, where he spent the next month in recovery before discharge.

While in Greenslades, staff also discovered a few other health problems with Alex, one being sleep-apnoea, so he now sleeps hooked up to a CPAP machine each night, taking life very quietly.

To replace his former car, he managed to locate a 1989 model 525 BMW sedan which had been stored for many years, and was in immaculate original condition, which he bought for \$1000. Better luck driving in future Alex, and we all hope you have a speedy recovery.

Those involved in placing the dozen or so markers along the PNG-Indonesian border in the early 60s will be interested in this;

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMkYIIA7mgw&feature=player_detailpage



The text on this tombstone at Villers-Brettoneux War Cemetery states;

The remains of an unknown Australian soldier lay in this grave for 75 years. On 2nd November 1993 they were exhumed and now rest in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Thanks to Trevor Wicker who sent this to us.

Kym Weston advises that, thanks to Peter Bowen, copies 1-23 dating from 1990-2002 of 'West Link' have been converted to pdf, including pictures, and are now on the website.

An old man walks into the barbershop for a shave and a haircut, but he tells the barber he can't get all his whiskers off because his cheeks are wrinkled from age. The barber gets a little wooden ball from a cup on the shelf and tells him to put it inside his cheek to spread out the skin.

When he's finished, the old man tells the barber that was the cleanest shave he's had in years, but he wanted to know what would have happened if he had swallowed the little ball. The barber replied, "Just bring it back tomorrow like everyone else does."

The Travelling Wickers

from Trevor Wicker

We started planning an overseas trip some 18 months ago and this year instead of our trip north for the winter headed off to Paris, the Western front for an Anzac Day Dawn service at Villers- Bretonneux for the anniversary of the start of WW1. We then went across to London for five days and then headed to the USA for eight weeks.

Paris was great and had been a promise to my lovely wife Lea as a 60th birthday gift. Even though a few months late but my wish if we were going all this way was to attend the Dawn Service on the Western Front. What a day! We organized a 3 day tour to coincide with the dawn service. A very moving ceremony cold but well worth the effort. After the service had a talk to Julie Bishop and thanked her government for finally passing the fair indexation bill for DFRDB (be it somewhat late).

Took many photos and have included some with this article to be used if your organization so desires. (If you or anyone wants more just ask) The French really appreciate the service of Australian service personal. One school is devoted to preserving the memory.

We also visited the last resting place of Lea's great uncle who passed away two months before the end of WW1. So close yet so far. London was OK but did not have time to venture out into the country.



Lea and Trevor Wicker at the 2014 Villers-Bretonneux Anzac Day Service

We flew in to New York on 3 May and left the next day on an eight day bus tour of Canada, back through Niagara Falls and down to Washington. The falls were great especially from the Canadian side.

Heading down though Pennsylvania we went for a tour of the Gettysburg Battle fields. In Washington which we had been to before we went to Arlington Cemetery, the Vietnam Memorial and Korean Memorial. It was Mother's Day in the US when we visited the Vietnam wall so there was a lot going on. I wanted to go as I had a cousin, Captain Richard T Priddy a chopper pilot who was killed on his first day in Vietnam. The Korean Memorial was not there the last time and this was something to see. The way it was designed made a lot more sense once it was explained.

Back to New York for five days then down to Atlanta for ten days with my cousin and family then up through Nashville for three days and on to Chicago for about a week. On the train to Seattle in Washington State for three days and then Los Angeles for two weeks

with another cousin. In LA went to Disneyland, visited the battleship, USS Iowa, which is just enormous. Did a four day side trip to Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon and it was back home on 2 July for a cold winter