

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS
ASSOCIATION
Queensland Branch

BULLETIN



PO Box 5784 Stafford Heights 4053

WINTER EDITION – No 19

JUNE 2004

COMING EVENTS

CORPS BIRTHDAY DINNER – Thursday the 1st July 2004

By popular demand, at least from those who have attended previous dinners, the **Colonel Alex Laing Memorial Dinner** will take place at the United Service Club. We will be pleased to have Mrs Dawn Laing with us again this year.

Cost: The quality menu - not to mention the quality service and facility provided by the United Service Club will be as in previous years at a cost per head of \$60.00.

Timing: 1900 for 1930 (that is, for those who may have forgotten - 7.00pm for 7.30pm)

Menu

Entree: Soup of the Day

Main: Rib Fillet of Roast Beef with Baked Vegetables and Yorkshire Pudding

Dessert: Tia Maria Banana Crepes with Cream and Ice-cream

Tea/coffee and Club chocolates

Beverages

Pre-dinner in Military Bar - cash payment over the bar by members.

On the table including Port for formal passing - to a maximum of \$15.00 per head included in overall cost. This has been very adequate in past years.

Payment: Pay at the door. Alex Cairney has agreed to be exchequer again.

Accommodation is available at the Club overnight at the following rates: Single: \$83.00; Double: \$100.00; Breakfast is included.

RSVP - To Bob Skitch by 20 June 04. The United Service Club is located at 183 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane - close to corner of Wickham and Upper Edward. There is ample parking at rear of Club - enter from Upper Edward Street. Central Station is nearly diagonally opposite.

TONY AND LORETTA GEE'S BBQ – Sunday the 8th August 2004

Tony and Loretta have again this year extended the hospitality of their home to Association and other ex-Survey Corps members from 12.00 midday. BYO drinks. The Gee's address is 50 Bibimulia St, Bellara, Bribie Island. RSVP Mary-Ann Thiselton before 30 July.

REUNION AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – Saturday the 4th September 2004

Our traditional reunion event at the Gaythorne RSL on the first Saturday in September.

MAPMAKER'S REGIMENTAL DINNER – Friday the 15th October 2004

All are invited. Again this year the dinner will take place on neutral territory. Cost will be about the same - \$35.00 (to be confirmed). The band will be in attendance and it will be a grand night. More details next Bulletin.

DEREK CHAMBERS AWARD PRESENTATION – November/December 2004

A BBQ lunch at the Squadron following an escorted tour of the Squadron's technical areas. Details to be advised next Bulletin.

WHAT DID WE DO OVER ALL THOSE YEARS – 1946 – 1996?

Believe it or not – we don't really know. There is no composite record of what the Field Survey Sections/Units/Squadrons did from year to year from 1946 onwards. The Corps history makes occasional passing comment on a particular operation undertaken by a particular unit of the Corps and lists all overseas operations, but without any detail. It seems that the only record we may have is that locked up in the memories of those individuals who participated. Most of us if we think back can remember what we did and where we went from year to year in the unit in which we

were serving. Further, we can remember who the principal persons were taking part, officers, warrant officers, NCOs, perhaps our mates.

To address this historical deficiency I propose to compile a matrix of field survey units from 1946 through to 1996 and against each unit and for each year a brief statement of the principal activity (project, operation) for that year, the location of the activity (base camp locations), what the activity was (eg, 1:250,000 mapping using 3rd order astro control or EDM traversing from X to Y), principal persons taking part (eg Capt Tom Chinstrap OC, WO Dick Bloggs, Cpl Harry Goodenough etc) and any particularly significant event that may have happened (eg base camp wiped out by tsunami).

To do this I need help in the form of input from anyone who served in any field unit and who went anywhere.

Alex Cairney is already working on his years of service and Clem Sargent in Canberra has undertaken to reflect back on his years. At some point in the future it may be possible to publish the outcome or put it on the website that Kym Weston has promised to create. Of course, I can make my own contribution. I am forwarding this request to survey associations in the other States and hopefully they also will pick up the challenge. **Bob Skitch**

COMMITTEE

Patron	<i>Lieutenant Colonel EU Anderson MBE (Ph 3408 9179)</i>
President	Peter Bates-Brownsword (Ph 3289 7001)
Past President	Jim Houston (Ph 3351 4952)
Vice President	Bob Skitch (Ph 3265 1370)
Secretary & Asst Treasurer	Mary-Ann Thiselton (Ph 3353 1026)
Treasurer	Ross Smithwick (Ph 3356 5786)
Functions Member	Alex Cairney (Anzac Day, Reunion) (Ph 3397 7583)
Bulletin Editor	Bob Skitch (Ph 3265 1370)
Membership Records	Kim Weston (Ph 5445 6927; mob 0427 377 226)
WW2 Veteran Member	Jim Houston (Ph 3351 4952)
Squadron Liaison & Welfare	Jim Gill (Ph 3264 1597)
Member (unallocated)	Stan Campbell (Ph 3285 3970)
Squadron OC	Major Adrian Harding
Squadron SSM	WO1 BL (Barrie) Craymer (Ph 3332 7564)

Note: Refer Veteran's Affairs matters to Peter Bates-Brownsword and Stan Campbell
Association address: PO Box 5784; Stafford Heights 4053

NOTICES

PNG MEDAL (a repeat from our last Bulletin)

The situation remains the same. We haven't given up yet! Further advice from a knowledgeable source is that there is no reason why many of our members cannot be considered eligible for the medal. The letter to the Commander of the PNG Defence Force, Brigadier General Peter Ilace, stating our case and asking for his approval in principle has not produced a response and no doubt the General has matters of greater importance on his mind. Perhaps we could try the PNG High Commission in Canberra. Christies are prepared to release the medal on the cognisance of the Association and if the Commander PNG Defence Force or his delegate is prepared to accept this we may proceed on that basis. The Medal should not be mounted with Australian medals but worn separately.

VIETNAM – A TECHNICAL TOUR by Bob McMillan-Kay.

Your Association has one copy left for purchase at \$36.00 including postage. To obtain a copy please make cheques payable to the RA Svy Association. Further copies can be obtained from Bob McMillan-Kay. Bob's book of his Vietnam experience continues to attract praise from all quarters. See review on page 7.

LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH DRINKS

This regular informal event continues at the Gaythorne RSL. As advised in our last Bulletin, by invitation of the OC Major Adrian Harding and SSM WO1 Barrie Craymer, this month (May) we are joining our colleagues at 1 Topo Svy Sqn for drinks in the Squadron's Murray Bar on the 28 May at 1600 hrs till whenever. We hope for a good roll-up.

ASSOCIATION BADGE

Magna Carto advises that the Ex Fortuna Association has had a further 100 badges produced in antique gold. The cost is \$10.00 each. Place your order with Mary-Ann and we will order a few from Bendigo.

*****MAPMAKERS OF FORTUNA*****

Copies may be purchased from the Ex-Fortuna Survey Association (PO Box 865 Bendigo 3552) at \$60.00 plus postage of \$11.50 including cost of a padded postal bag. If a substantial number request copies, bulk delivery from Bendigo can be arranged.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2002 – 2003 & 2003 - 2004

This notice has to be a permanent fixture of our Bulletin, so here it is again:- 'Don't go to sleep on your membership!'

Keep in touch with you Survey Corps mates by being a paid-up member of your Association.



Our financial year runs from September to September. Subscription is but \$10.00 per year. We encourage you to pay three years in advance (or more if you wish). Some have

already done this. Subscription is waived for veterans 75 and over who have been standing paid-up members of our Association.

ANZAC DAY 2004

by Bob Skitch

What is there to say about Anzac Day that hasn't been said before? Yet each year the experience retains a freshness and an enduring relevance.

A number of our members participated in the dawn service at 2 CER Enoggera, one of several dawn services in the Enoggera military area. In my mind it is the best conducted and most moving dawn service I have ever attended – each year it is. The choir and its lead singer accompanied by the bag piper with their rendition of 'Amazing Grace', the evocative rendition by Spr Lazzaro on guitar of 'The Band Played Waltzing Matilda', the gradual onset of dawn with the chorus of magpies in the gumtrees, the kookaburras proclaiming their territory and the karking of crows in response – all

made it a most memorable occasion. The CO of 2 CER, Lt Col McGuire in his address spoke of the dawn of the dawn service itself; how it started from a small beginning at the cenotaph in Martin Place in Sydney where a lone woman was moved to reflect on the loss of her husband at Gallipoli and was joined by others and so it spread around Australia with similar beginnings in the other states – throughout the country – an emotive response from the grass roots in remembering those who failed to return from the abominable carnage of the Great War – the war to end all wars. It is a uniquely Australian response, requiring no legislative enactment – it just happens. The service ended with The Last Post, a two minute silence and Reveille perfectly performed by an un-named bugler from the Australian Army Band. The crowd of two hundred or so quietly dispersed to their homes or to the 2CER Sportsman's Club for a hearty breakfast – we Survey types down to 1 Topo's Murray Club for an equally hearty breakfast, with the opportunity to toss a couple of coins in the air or a couple of cans down by now parched throats.

At 0930 the chartered bus took us all into the city for the march and having debussed we wended our way through the throngs of marchers finally finding our allocated position at the corner of George and Charlotte Streets – but no banner! LVJ Smith was already there to assure us that we were at the right spot and a number of phone calls assured us that the banner was on its way in the unit staff car. We had brought our icon theodolite with us on the bus, LVJ having volunteered to be the theodolite bearer. The banner arrived and all thirty one of we survey marchers stepped off at 1115 and somehow order ensured from the incredible confusion of the forming-up area. With Les Wellins leading us followed by LVJ with the theodolite and our banner carried by Cpl Tony Purton and Spr Tim Elliot and then the rest of us, we progressed falteringly up George to Adelaide Street with, thankfully, an excellent marching band directly behind us. This was the band of the Mackay Senior High School playing a medley of Waltzing Matilda, Road to Gundagai and other well known Aussie tunes. Wheeling into Adelaide we got into our step although found ourselves having to mark time at fairly frequent intervals as we progressed. Les gave us a commanding "eyes right" at the saluting point and LVJ butt-

saluted the theodolite, the salute being taken of course by the State Governor Mrs Quentin Bryce. We received an especially big smile and wave from our Governor, no doubt directed to her son Rupert, marching with us, proudly wearing his grandfather, Tom Bryce's medals on his right breast. The ABC camera man found a fascination with the white be-whiskered LVJ carrying the theodolite, giving him a good 10 second close-up with the Survey banner behind and this was about all the ABC TV watchers saw of our Survey contingent this year although I am told there was a more general view of us all on Channel 7. And so we made our way down Adelaide Street and into Creek Street and finally Elizabeth for dispersal. It was a great march and by the time we got there we were well and truly ready for a jug or two of the amber fluid. Most of we Association members made our way to the Sapper's bash at the Jubilee, some walking, some travelling in Peter Osterhage's car and LVJ, Brian Cosford and me taking the train from Central to Brunswick Street, then a short walk to the Jubilee. There, of course, we all well and truly slaked our thirst in the appropriate manner and munched into a quite generous barbecue lunch. At 1415 the bus departed with many of our members back to Enoggera and soon after I made my way to Brunswick Street Station and the train home to Boondall – veterans having free travel by train on Anzac Day.

So ended a really great day. Next year – let's have sixty marchers!



There we were!

Roll of Marchers

Les Wellins (leading)
 LVJ Smith (theodolite bearer)
 Mary-Ann Thiselton
 Wally Chilcott
 Brian Cosford
 Barry Lutwyche
 John Hook
 Jim Gill
 John Ashby
 Bob Skitch
 Peter Osterhage
 Dave Johnson & son Sam
 Alex Cairney (not marching but with us in spirit)
 Tony Gee (miscalculated start time but caught up later)
 Dianne Souter
 Ian Reid
 Peter Malone
 Brian Johnson
 Lee Palfrey
 Dave Ingham
 Michael Carroll
 Lee O'Shea
 Steve Jones
 Glen Huxley
 Wade Huxley
 Dan Wellins
 Rupert Bryce (representing Grandfather Tom Bryce)
 Hamish Goetz
 Phil Brookes
 Capt Jason McCarthy
 Tim Elliot (banner bearer)
 Tony Purton (banner bearer)

End notes:

(1) Peter and Barbara Bates-Brownsword exercised their musical talent marching with the National Service Band – twice around the circuit! As in most years Jim Beard caught up with us at the dispersal point and later at the Jubilee (Jim marches with his Vietnam Artillery unit); also Kalen Sargent who marches with the WRAAC contingent.

(2) We are indebted again for the support given to the Association by the OC and members of I Topo Svy Sqn, for the superb squadron breakfast, in providing banner bearers and in swelling our marching contingent.

(3) Who listened to the ABC televised broadcast of the march? What was that about the Survey Corps establishing the location of graves at Gallipoli? What rubbish! We must give them a more appropriate brief next year.



1st TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY SQUADRON –

As we draw closer to the half way mark of the year, we find the Sqn missing a large proportion of its members. 1 Topo seems to be almost down to half strength, due to the number of members currently absent for a variety of reasons. Currently, there are approximately 30 people away, either deployed, attending promotion or specialist courses, on return to work programs (due to injury) or on some form of leave. When we gain our senior corporals back from their promotion courses, we will lose some of our senior sappers to start their promotion courses. The support responsibilities required of the Squadron haven't changed and there have been a number of exercises and overseas deployments that have still gone ahead with a number of junior soldiers performing higher duties (and performing very well).

Anzac Day was once again well attended and it was great opportunity for current serving members to catch up with members of the RASvy Association after the dawn service. Cpl Tony Purton and Spr Tim Elliot volunteered to carry the banner on the Association's behalf for the march.

Lt Reynolds attended the Dawn Service at the Kilcoy RSL and was later joined by Lt Gaynor and an MGI Troop who made the trek to Kilcoy to continue the tradition of marching through the streets. After the march, they were invited to join with the locals for lunch and a few 'quiet' drinks prior to returning to the Squadron. From all reports, all went well and once again we were well received at Kilcoy. I've heard that something may need to be done about the choice of drummer (apparently, the drum beat was not conducive to keeping in step !)

There have been a number of promotions since the last Bulletin and congratulations go to the following: Cpl Carthew, Cpl Smith, Cpl Stafford and L/Cpl Varidel. Congratulations also go to Sgt Terry Malone (currently working with DJFHQ). With the amount of personnel due to return from promotion courses, it shouldn't be long before there will be more 'money over the bar'.

The RASvy Association adds its own congratulations to the recently promoted.

MGI – Military Geographic Intelligence
DJFHQ – Defence Joint Force Headquarters

PERSONALIA AND OTHER JOTTINGS

Bob and Wendy Skitch plan to visit their son Christopher in the UK leaving Brisbane mid August and returning sometime in October. Extended trips to Scotland, Wales and Ireland are planned with time in England with Chris visiting some other Skitches (yes – they exist) and some Brit Army friends from Singapore and Fortuna days. No great tours of the 'continent' are planned but Bob and Chris will visit Berlin (Berlin holds a gothic fascination for Bob) and Gay Paree for Wendy – with Bob of course. And what of the Bulletin while Bob is away? Maybe with help from others an early August one may happen and no doubt a Christmas issue after Bob gets back.

Pat O'Connor wrote with the sad news that wife Patricia passed away recently after a long and debilitating illness. Pat comments that it leaves a hell of a big hole. Pat is leaving shortly to visit daughter Dianne in the US. Son Dennis lives at Redcliffe and teaches in a girl's school at Nundah and Daughter Gaile lives and teaches at Nerang. Pat has lived at Labrador in retirement for quite a few years.

I particularly remember Pat being our chief negotiator and respondent with the Command Architect in 1976 in the design of the new accommodation for 1 Field Survey Squadron in the present location of 1 Topo Svy Sqn at Enoggera. The Field Survey Sqn was then located in the Ordnance sheds at Gaythorne.

Jim Brock who lives at Mount Eliza, Victoria, had recent contact with Jim Houston. Jim Brock had been passed a copy of our Bulletin and this prompted him to drop a note back to Jim Houston commenting on how few names mentioned in the Bulletin he knew. Nevertheless he enjoyed the Bulletin and wondered why he had been left off the membership list. Jim enclosed a cheque for \$20.00 'to help keep the Association afloat'. I have written to Jim thanking him for his donation (as a WW2 5 Coy veteran Jim is excused annual subscription) and assured him that he will receive the Bulletin in future. I sent him a few back copies. Jim turned 80 on the 1st April 04 and at that age would be one of the younger 5 Coy veterans I suspect.

Jim Houston and wife Val celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on 22 May 04 with

a family get-together in the Lighthouse Room of the Gaythorne RSL following a celebratory church service. Jim says that it is 50 years to that very day. Val's sister is coming out from Canada for the event and Jim says that all of his wedding party are still alive and mostly well although not all will be at the celebration. Next time you see Jim call him 'de Valera'. Therein lies a story somewhat reminiscent of the Banjo Paterson poem '*the Bush Christening*'. Congratulations Jim and Val from all of us in the Association.

Allan Metcalf is a 2/1st Topo Svy Coy man who joined the Company in 1942 soon after it returned from the Middle East to go to New Guinea. Alan served with the Company through its New Guinea campaign and was eventually medevaced to Australia. Allan at 79 now lives in retirement, and has for many years, at Virginia with his wife and both are in moderately good health. He was never aware that the 2/1st had formed an association in Melbourne nor that Brig Lawrence Fitzgerald had published its history in *Lebanon to Labuan*. I happened to meet Allan when we were both assigned the same white car to bring us to our respective homes from Greenslopes Hospital the other day.

Bill Griggs has been visiting lately from South Australia. In a telephone chat with Bill (he was visiting Graeme Dowd) he told me that he had 28 years with RA Svy starting with the 33/68 Basic Course and finishing when the Corps disbanded in '96. Bill left the Corps as a captain closing on major – not a bad career and one that Bill recalls with a great deal of satisfaction. Bill's last appointment was as QM of the Regiment. John Hillier told Bill he (John) was the first QM appointed to the Regiment and Bill Griggs the last. Bill did six months with ATSE digitising maps but gave that away in disgust to return to SA and Defence at Keswick Barracks as a training officer and then as manager clerical and admin. He keeps in touch with the SA Association, especially Darby Munro. Bill dons a uniform as an A Res major and continues to enjoy his military involvement.

Brian Mead of the WA Survey Association following receipt of our last Bulletin has emailed a response. Brian reports that their annual dinner this year is to be on Saturday 3rd July at the Shenton Park Victoria League

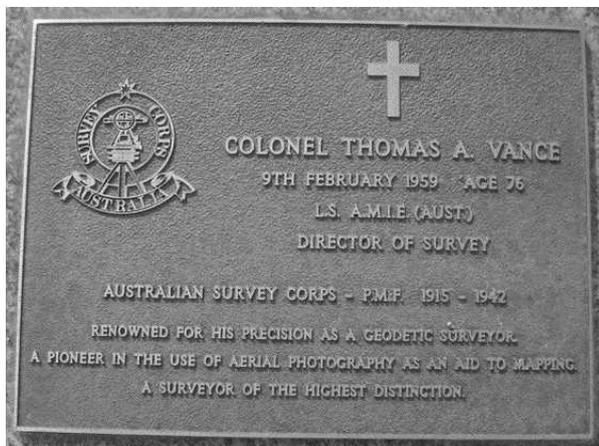
Club. It appears that Daryl Hocking is anxious to maintain contact with all his past Survey postings and is sussing out membership with the WA Association. Brian says that Jo Mazzarol, the original editor of their 'Westlink' bulletin, has provided Brian with a multitude of 'Survey Anecdotes' and old field trip photos. Jo's stories often make reference to Major Bill Sprenger and indirectly comment about the working conditions of the 1950s and 1960s. We can look forward to those in future 'Westlinks'.

Kym Weston and Faye have recently returned from a camper van trip south visiting Melbourne, the Mornington Peninsula, Bendigo (where they stayed with the Swineys), Beechworth, Yackandandah (see below) and no doubt other locations. The camper van is a recent Weston acquisition after looking at caravans and deciding that a camper van was the way to go. At home Kym and Faye have been exceptionally busy, building a house, moving into it and establishing a garden on a difficult site. When all that is done, Kym promises us an Association website. Thanks Kym and thanks for that little bit of Yackandanda cemetery research. (below)

Colonel Thomas A. Vance. Kym and Faye Weston on a recent trip south visited the small Victorian picturesque town of Yackandandah and there they visited the gravesite of Colonel Thomas A. Vance. Who.... you might ask? Thomas A. Vance joined the Australian Survey Corps in 1915 at rank of lieutenant. He was 32 years old, a qualified surveyor and had worked in New Guinea, the New Hebrides and on the transcontinental railway and the ACT border survey. His initial service was in Western Australia and in 1918 with a small group, shipped to England and saw service on the Western Front. Vance returned to Australia and continued Survey Corps service between the wars in Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia. He was a pioneer in the use of aerial photography for mapping in the late thirties and in precision baseline measurement. In 1941 Lieutenant Colonel Vance was appointed the first Director of the Survey Corps and stepped down from that position a year later in 1942 with the retired rank of Colonel. He was 59 years old on retirement it is said his reason for stepping down at that point was the decision of the

army to appoint to commissioned rank persons without professional survey qualification. Without doubt, Vance was one of the early greats of the Survey Corps, advancing its technology and ensuring its continuation through those difficult years of the twenties and thirties.

Vance's grave at Yackandandah is marked with the family's headstone as well as a military memorial plaque bearing the badge of the Australian Survey Corps. The plaque carries the statement '*Renowned for his precision as a geodetic surveyor, a pioneer in the use of aerial photography as an aid to mapping. A surveyor of the highest distinction*'. The placement of the plaque was initiated by Colonel NRJ Hillier. **(Historical detail from the Corps History by Dr CD Coulthard-Clark)**



Col Van Senden in South Australia has written, enclosing a donation for the Association to assist with production costs (thanks Col) and commenting on Noel Sproles' article on plane tabling. The article has stirred Col's memory of his own introduction to the Survey Corps at the Survey Training School at Darley near Bacchus Marsh in Victoria in the middle of winter 1943 under the expert instruction of Lieutenant Jack Cullen, a topographer of renown. Col has provided an interesting account of his early days in the army and this will appear in a future issue. Thanks Col, both for the cheque and the story.

Brian Murray that remarkable old gentleman of the WW2 New Guinea Survey Section (that later became 8 Field Survey Section, AIF) has probably sent us his last newsletter and with that, the last of his fascinating little stories of his WW2 New Guinea experiences. Brian is very infirm and in his own words often drifting in and out of a medication

induced coma. Without Brian as the key correspondent for that association I suspect we will see its ultimate demise. Brian's newsletters started with a quote: *No matter how many years have passed or our physical condition altered, the memories and mateships remain.* – RL (Bob) Roche – one of the 1942 Colac volunteers.

Bob McMillan-Kay's book, *Vietnam, a Technical Tour with the 1st Topographical Survey Troop* was reviewed for the February issue of the *Army Newspaper* by Lt Simone Heyer. Simone wrote: 'This book is a gem. Many self-published books are of narrow interest, but a *Technical Tour* is an exception. Reading it from cover to cover in one sitting, interest was piqued with every second picture, article, letter or map. The book follows 1 Topo Svy Tp's tour of Vietnam from 1966 – 1972 and is a perfect-bound collection of memories. It's definitely one of the better Vietnam oriented books, focusing more on the troops and the communities than tactics and bravado. This book is available from the author for \$30.00 plus postage of \$6.00 in Queensland and \$8.00 for the rest of Australia. The address is R McMillan-Kay, 14 March Lane, Maryborough, 4650.'

'Magna Carto' – ferment in Bendigo: the newsletter of the Ex-Fortuna Association reached us both in hard copy via snail mail and electronically via email in the second week of April. MC's lead article is headed 'Don't buy a house – the Regiment is moving'. Well, not yet it seems; and of course it is not any longer the Regiment, it is the 'Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation' (DIGO) in about its third name change since the demise of the Regiment. (Who thinks up these fancy names?) DIGO is undergoing a review. MC states that the decision to cease the DIGO involvement in the Commercial Support Program was taken in April 03. This was followed by a printing capability review that has now been linked to the latest review. Options that are being considered are (1) remain in Bendigo, possibly moving to a new 'greenfield' location, (2) part move to Canberra and (3) full relocation to Canberra. What's new? As MC points out there have been many reviews in the past and any suggestion of a move for Bendigo's mapmakers has always had its political dimension and this review is no different. Many members of DIDO are past RA Svy members and these days more than in the past their roots are well established in

Bendigo soil. They have formed a committee to keep DIGO in Bendigo. (Imagine the response had we done that in Army days!) Petitions have been circulated and they have a website – savefortuna.org. Bob Garrity and Geoff Wiley accompanied local member Steve Gibbons to Canberra to put their case. They have produced a 'Don't close Fortuna – keep DIGO in Bendigo' badge. The Ex-Fortuna Association's concern is with the members and especially those past RA Svy members now long established in Bendigo. MC states 'the uncertainty of the outcome of this review has been hanging over the heads of the Fortuna Mapmakers for some time now causing anguish and concern. Members have in many ways had to put their lives on hold'. MC also raises the point 'what would become of the gracious Fortuna Villa (albiet with its nearly dry lake). Who could use it and for what?'

Postscript: Fortuna saved.... Defence Minister Senator Hill has announced that DIGO in Bendigo will be enhanced following a comprehensive review. "DIGO's role in providing imagery and geospatial intelligence is of growing importance in the modern battlefield and in Australia's complex security environment. A new purpose-designed facility will be constructed for the Geospatial Analysis Centre. The historical 'Fortuna' building, a local Bendigo landmark, is listed on the register of the National Estate and should be accessible to the people of Bendigo and all Australians".
(Ministerial release supplied by Noel Sproles)

'Magna Carto': I have often wondered why the Ex-Fortuna Association calls their publication 'Magna Carto'. The name does seem a little portentous for such a modest publication. Then some time back past WW2 Fortuna member Les Anderson (lives at Slacks Creek and has been to a couple of our reunions) loaned me two issues of the LHQ Cartographic Company Magazine 'Magna Carto'. They are chock-a-block full of amusing stories and wonderfully executed cartoons and drawings that really deserve re-publishing. Not surprising, given that the artistic talent available at Fortuna in those days included people such as the Boyd brothers but I don't know that they lent their talent to cartooning. Perhaps re-publishing is something the present 'Magna Carto' management should do. The first issue (July 1943) contains a forward by Major Bill Sarll in which he presses his point on the need for security of information, not surprising given the nature of the work being carried out at

Fortuna in those years. As the Regiment's history comments, security was paramount and the fact that it was so well maintained led the folk of Bendigo to believe that Fortuna housed a lot of 'chocos' left out of action. It wasn't until after the war that the incredible effort those 'chocos' made became public knowledge. So....there it is. 'Magna Carto' has quite a long history.

Items from 'Magna Carto'

- The Ex-Fortuna Association plan to march this Anzac Day for the first time ever.
- Don Swiney has accepted the position of Patron of the Ex-Fortuna Association in recognition of his Survey Corps and Association achievements. Gary Warnest has stepped into Don's shoes as President and Tracey (the quiet one) Phillips is the new Secretary. Bob Thrower is the new Treasurer taking over from Doug Carswell who has done a magnificent effort since taking over from Tony Ellis many years ago. Doug is still around when he is not sailing (when there is any water).
- There has been some questions raised as to when is the next big Bendigo bash, especially seeing that 2005 marks the 90th Anniversary of the Survey Corps.
- **Don Ridge** has injured his leg in a boating mishap. It unfortunately became infected and has caused him some grief along the way, but he is now on the road to recovery. Both Don and I am very pleased to report that the grapevine was wrong and that it is not more serious. Ruth is also recovering very well after an operation.
- **Rob Bogumil** having had to cope with the recent loss of his wife Alison has had the further misfortune of a fairly serious horse riding accident badly damaging his shoulder. Although recovering well enough from the surgery Rob is unlikely to ever successfully get through the metal detectors at the airport. We all wish him a speedy and full recovery.
- **Rohan Hill** having recovered from his severe motor bike accident is unfortunately back in hospital. We think he maybe in for the 10,000km service on all the nuts and bolts installed last time. Rohan, we hope that it all goes well and you are back up and about soon.
- **Jann and David Lambton-Young** served in RASvy at Fortuna and have now returned as members of DIGO.
- **Ken Johnston** saw service at Fortuna for a short while in Litho Sqn. He is now a Senior Project Officer, Department of the Premier in Cabinet, WA. Ken is keen to catch up with his survey contacts and has already got his

Association badge and Corps tie. Welcome aboard Ken.

- **John Greys** dropped us a line to say that now that he has resigned from the army he is working for DSTO and has a 60 acre farm in the Yass area to keep him busy.
- **Brenton McDonald** who was teaching GIS at the Bendigo Regional Institute of Tafe (BRIT) with **Peter Biorac** has now moved over to join **Ralph Chant** at ADI in Bendigo.
- **David Dufall** is the Managing Director of Brunswick Ltd in Bangkok; however, he reports that he likes keeping in contact and was even back in Australia recently catching up with old Survey Corps mates.

Items from the South Australian Association Newsletter No 35

by Alex Munro

- **Greg Oaten:** Now promoted to lieutenant-colonel, it is rumoured that he has been appointed CO of 8 Combat Engineer Regiment. If so congratulations Greg.
- **Steve Ellis:** Now posted back to Puckapunyal, and with Bendigo not all that far away, it is hoped he might be able to attend some Ex-Fortuna functions in the future.
- **Chris Mazur:** Now living in Canberra, he has recovered from a recent gall bladder operation. Adding further to his medical problem, he also crashed off his pushbike damaging several vertebrae. You need to be more careful Chris, but hope you are fully recovered by this time.
- **Ian Thompson:** Ian reports that he had a cataract removed from his left eye last June and is now fully recovered. Ian has had contact with Steve Rose and Dick Small. Steve suffered a minor heart attack but is now OK. He also said his mango tree has 'fruit by the thousand', worth a fortune in Adelaide.
- **Robin Wilson:** Old news now, but earlier this year Robin spent time in hospital with angina, including 4 days in intensive care. OK now, but he still requires daily medication and the odd medical check.
- **Pauline and Tom Sawyer:** Pauline and Tom flew into Adelaide from Perth about a month ago, renting a hire car at the airport. During their two day stay in Adelaide, I had the pleasure of reminiscing with both for an hour or so, helped by a decent bottle of red. They then drove to Bendigo to visit Pauline's relatives for a week. On their return trip back to Perth, they stayed overnight with Pam and John Harrison also meeting up with Alex Czornohalan.
- **Sam Chambers:** Still living in Bendigo, Sam has been bitten by the racing bug. My informant was not overly sure but thought that Sam had purchased a race horse or was a part owner perhaps. Either way, he now has a keen interest in the sport and regularly

attends meetings held at the country racecourses. Bendigo.

- **Stan Vote:** Stan and Maureen now live at Moama, across the river from Echuca. Their house is near the front gate of the Rich River Golf Club where, naturally enough, Stan is a leading player and also the Club handicapper.
- **Keith Barber:** I had the pleasure of spending an afternoon with Keith during a recent visit to Bendigo. Keith is still as sharp as a tack, with a keen memory of events during his long service career. He has assembled an impressive display of Corps and military memorabilia including photos, medals, badges and numerous other items of interest. His old hip problem is still with him, requiring two walking sticks for mobility but otherwise looked in good shape for an 82 year old gentleman.
- **John Hogan:** I had lunch with John in Bendigo during my recent visit and thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. John has a bung knee which slows him down a bit and he might also require hip surgery at some later date. Otherwise seemed his old mischievous self.
- **Ron Weinert:** I had the pleasure of attending Ron's 70th birthday party last 21st June accompanied by Margaret and Robin Wilson, Pam and Bob Griffin and Pam and John Harrison. Ron's son Mark and daughter-in-law Tanya hosted the party at their house in Gawler for family and friends. Ron's curly locks of yesteryear are thinning a bit but he still looks fine. He has completely recovered from his heart surgery of about a year ago. Ian Thompson phoned down from Gympie Qld during the party to wish Ron all the best. Congratulations Ron and lets hope there are many more birthdays yet to come.
- **John Scharber:** I received the following note from John about his recent trip to Queensland:

Joanne and I recently went on a two week trip up to Byron Bay and Sunshine Beach (near Noosa Heads, Qld). We spent a week at each destination but I thought it may be of interest to yourself and association members that we spent a couple of nights at Albany Creek with Lorraine Chambers. She is thinking of selling her house as she finds that a 4 bedroom house and swimming pool is too much to care for. Interestingly though I was delighted to hear that members of the Qld Association arrange working bees to help her out in the house and garden. She has marched on Anzac Day with Survey for the past few years proudly wearing Derek's medals.

While at Lorraine's we made a couple of phone calls and booked a dinner at the Kedron-Wavell Services Club where we met up with Barry Lutwyche, Jimmy Gill and John Hook. Jimmy is working as Property Manager

with a Real Estate firm whilst John is working for the same mob as the maintenance man. It turns out that John used to be the property manager but got tired of the job. John however, has had his share of dramas having recently undergone a double bypass operation on his heart. He was still a bit tender when I saw him and was at least another month before he could return to work. Barry has got himself an ice-cream van! He works long hours and occasionally gets help from John and Jimmy but is doing very well. I remember when the only ice-cream Barry would have been interested in would have been the froth on the top of his beer. An additional surprise at the club was the unexpected appearance of Lyall Camp. Lyall is working with National Mapping and has the job of visiting all of their map sales outlets to check for any problems. Sounds pretty cushy doesn't it? Lyall is living in Canberra. A few other names came up in conversation such as Jim Beard and Dennis Duqueman who are both living in Caboolture. We also met up with Greg and Margaret Chambers who live at Moorina near Caboolture where they have a small property and run cattle. Greg hasn't contemplated retirement at this stage and has a contract to clean the local school a couple of times a day and Margaret is busy with tele-marketing.

- **Allan Adsett:** Allan, Judyne and son Nathan visited Canberra during the July school holidays. They regret not catching up with their friends in Canberra but simply ran out of time as there is so much to see and do. While at the Australian War Memorial, Allan purchased Bob McMillan-Kay's book about his career in the Corps. It is a most interesting book and he recommends it to anyone who knows Bob and in particular those who served in Vietnam. It bought back many memories of his own tour of duty..... **Alex Munro**

THE NOT SO WELL LIST

John (Jock) Kay has had a period of hospitalisation in St Vincents Hospital having a collapsed kidney removed. Apparently it has been a long standing problem and has adversely affected him for years. Jock had his air ticket booked to Brisbane (from Frankston Vic) for Anzac day but his doctor would not give him a leave pass. Jock's wife Barbara continues to fight cancer with chemotherapy, now in her 4th treatment. Jock remains hopeful. Our best wishes to Jock and Barbara.

Frank Thorogood is at last making good recovery progress from his hip replacement operation. There have been no further

mishaps. Nevertheless, it might be some time before we see Frank at our gatherings despite the good care he is receiving from a well recovered and energetic Nan.

Kevin Walsh is now settled in to his new home on the Bellvista estate at Caloundra. Kevin remains a walking medical miracle and his spirit keeps him going, albeit, slowly these days. Kevin's interest lies with his well developed computer system, his menagerie of two dogs and a couple of birds, his computer mates and generally maintaining his attractive Bellvista cottage. Kevin enjoys a visit from old mates but phone first. His number is (07) 5438 1710.

Percy Long has recently had a skin cancer removed from his eyelid resulting in a skin graft to his eyelid. It was sufficient to put Perc out of our Anzac day activity this year but I suspect he will not be down for long, knowing Perc.

VALE NOTICES

Charlie Kovacs died on the 11 April 2004. A well attended funeral service took place at the Albany Creek crematorium at 1330 h on 19th April 2004. Association and past Corps members attending were: Bob Allen, Chris Lancaster, Jeff and Judith Lambert, Grant Small, Hank Opdem, Garney Cook, Barry Lutwyche, Jim Gill, Mary-Ann Thiselton, Alex Cairney, Peter Tangey, Alan Brown, Bob Skitch and WO1 Barrie Craymer representing the OC and members of 1st Topographical Survey Squadron. The Eulogy by Bob Skitch and the Kovacs family is published on p 11.

The following two vale notices are from the South Australian Association Newsletter – courtesy Alex Munro):

LtCol George Ricketts I must report the passing of another stalwart of the Royal Australian Survey Corps. George died in Adelaide, on his 82nd birthday on 14th October 2003. He was surrounded by his family to the end and they were able to sing "Happy Birthday" to him just after midnight.

George succumbed to a bout of pneumonia only days after diagnosis at the Lourdes Valley Nursing Home where he had resided for the previous 18 months or so following a series of strokes that began 3 years ago. A private funeral service was held in Lourdes Valley Chapel on 17 October attended by his family and

a few close friends followed by cremation. , A memorial service was held on 27th October in Scots Church attended by a capacity crowd of friends drawn from the many organisations that George was associated with over the years such as Legacy, Probus, sporting clubs, his church, professional and technical groups and the Corps. George's daughter Cheryl paid tribute to her father during the service, reminiscing on his long service career and how the family responded to those times.

A very touching tribute was given by a young Legatee Cameron Billingham whom George had guided from the age of five. Arthur Henson responded on behalf of the Corps covering much of George's military career.

George was always approachable, a fair and kindly man who loved the social aspects of life, enjoying a good party to the full and a good joke. His service career was remarkable and distinguished in many ways yet he always remained a close family man. I think it is fair comment to sum up George Ricketts as an officer and a gentleman.

On behalf of all former members of the Corps who served with George, condolences are extended to Marg and her family for their sad loss.

Among those attending the service were Arthur and Barbara Henson, Joan Munro, Eva Gruszka, Frank and Naomi Bryant, Stevo Hinic, John and Pam Harrison, Desi Asaris, Allan Adsett, Peter Davis, Bob Mills, Bob Dickenberg, John Shepherd, Bill Griggs, Peter Elverd, Ken Talbot-Smith, John Scharber, Bob and Pam Griffin, Elizabeth and Bill Love, Jim Dunn, Rob Langley and Max Coletti.

Brian Trueman Brian died on 25th June 03 in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Adelaide at the age of 64 years. He died of a heart attack following surgery over two months for the removal of both legs below the knee, caused by vascular problems.

Brian spent six years with the Central Command Field Survey Section in the early sixties. On discharge he worked for a survey company for a short time before joining the former Dept of Civil Aviation for the remainder of his working life. His job in main was surveying and certifying airstrips throughout SA and NT. His biggest project was probably the international airport at Ayres Rock. Ill health forced retirement earlier than expected. Brian and Kay shared houses, she mainly in Adelaide and he mainly in Edithburg on the Yorke Peninsula, selected by him because of the great fishing. During his years in the town, Brian became well known socially and one resident saddened by his death paid tribute by saying "The town will never be the same again". Brian was a bit of a larrikin with a cheeky smile, a true character who loved a practical joke. He will always be remembered when old friends meet. Our condolences to Kay and her family.

EULOGY – CHARLIE KOVACS **by Bob Skitch and the Kovacs family**

It was with sadness that we past members of the Royal Australian Survey Corps learned of Charlie's passing. There would be few if any who served in the Corps during the years from Charlie's enlistment in 1955 through to his retirement in 1976 who did not know him having either served with him or simply served with others who knew him well. The stories and anecdotes, some no doubt greatly exaggerated, about Charlie were legion. He was one of our most unforgettable characters. His thick as treacle Hungarian accent that never seemed to diminish with the passing years was known to all. Charlie's voice coming through on a radio sched was unmistakable and in its way inspired confidence – all was well at the other end. Quaint though it sometimes was, we all understood Charlie's expression, some of which crept into our everyday language. Although a Hungarian, Charlie became more Aussie than any of us.

Charlie spent most of his military service here in Queensland. He came to the School of Military Survey in 1956 at the relatively old age of 29 having previously been employed on road survey. Mention is made of the time he spent on the Eulo to Thargomindah Developmental Road where Charlie had his introduction to surveying and this no doubt caused him to apply for Survey Corps in order to extend his training. Whether he intended to stay beyond his initial six year engagement is unknown to me, however, he certainly did achieve the rank of warrant officer after 15 years service in 1972. Graduating from the School of Military Survey in 1957 Charlie was posted to the Northern Command Field Survey Section, then based in Victoria Barracks on Petrie Terrace. It was not Charlie's lot to remain long in Brisbane. He was soon sent to join the field parties operating in northern and western Queensland; Ravenswood out of Charters Towers and then down to Boulia with only short periods spent at home in Brisbane.

Charlie's career progressed from sapper to corporal and then to sergeant, interspersed with periods at the School of Military Survey attending promotion courses and special technical courses as surveying technology increased. In addition to that, Charlie would have had to pass his military subjects in weapons skills, drill,

administration and military law for each step in rank.

I personally served with Charlie in the years 1961 to 1965 and I recall one period during that time in 1964 when I was with Charlie, Grant Small and a Sigs Corps bloke whose name I have forgotten doing astronomical observations on a traverse line between Bourke and Charleville, in part along the general alignment of the Paroo River. It was pleasant winter weather – bright sunny days and bitterly cold nights and of course our work was largely carried out at night. During the day there wasn't all that much to do and Charlie found that the large pools of water constituting the Paroo were teeming with yellow belly and they were an easy catch. Having no fishing gear with us Charlie perfected the technique of catching yellow belly with a length of cord tied to the end of a stick and a bent pin for a hook and a piece of white reed as a lure. He would bounce the lure up and down on the surface of the pool and within minutes it would be taken by a hungry yellow belly, thinking no doubt it had in its teeth a succulent insect. Of course, there were a few misses but Charlie was soon flicking the fish up onto the bank and providing us with an ample supply of fresh tucker – much better than canned bully beef our more usual staple. I recall Charlie being a pretty good bush cook also, even with bully and tinned vegies. A project that comes to mind at that time where Charlie played a significant role was the development of supplementary aerial photography of targeted survey stations using a F24 aerial camera. It involved an army aircraft, a single engined Cessna minus the door on the passenger's side flying at an altitude of about 10,000 feet over the targeted ground station heeling into a sharp right hand turn so that the aircraft was virtually on its side with the camera operator, strapped in of course, hanging out the door taking a near vertical photograph. Charlie was that camera operator. It was more than I could do and most others I think.

I left the unit at the end of 1965 but Charlie continued and there wouldn't have been too many years when he didn't spend seven to eight months somewhere in north Queensland on survey and mapping projects. Charlie became eligible for promotion to warrant officer in about 1970 and as is customary he needed to take a posting away from his beloved Queensland. Charlie in 1972 was posted to South Australia and 4 Field

Survey Squadron then engaged in survey mapping work in Papua New Guinea. Charlie was on those long and difficult projects. In 1974 he returned to Queensland and after a further two years and having completed 21 years service he retired from the army in 1976.

Charlie was an unforgettable character. He was a great bloke to have in the field, intensely practical and resourceful. In any difficult situation you could be sure that Charlie would come up with a solution.



Charlie as many of us would remember him

I phoned Charlie a few weeks ago and asked him to lead our Anzac march in the city. Charlie said he would be greatly honoured to do so but had to decline – his back was giving him a bit of trouble and he hoped it would improve enough to allow him to visit Hungary again in June. Not a word about his cancer. But that was typically Charlie.

Charlie – we will all miss you. You were a great bloke.

The family's tribute

Charlie was born one of six children in the small town of Sumeg in Hungary on the 28th January 1927. The son of farming parents Jozef and Maria Kovacs, he spent his early years on the farm tending to cattle and horses and went to primary and high school in Sumeg. He was a good student and fine sportsman who excelled in gymnastics, skiing and water polo.

After WW2, because of his politics, he wasn't allowed to go to university so he decided to leave Hungary in 1948 with his friends. At that time he didn't know where he would spend his life. They moved to Austria and from there he immigrated to Australia as an 'assisted migrant' and was sent to the

Paroo Shire in SW Queensland to work on road building projects for two years. It was during these years that he met Delora Valerie Thomas who worked at the Cunnamulla Hospital and they were married on the 14th November 1950. During their life they were blessed with two sons, David and Peter. On 20th June 1974 tragedy struck with the sudden passing of David and again on the 17 March 1975 with the untimely passing of his wife, Del.

Charlie re-married in 1979 to Margaret and later retired from 'Wyuna', Cunnamulla to Arana Hills in Brisbane. During his early retirement he kept himself busy with Hans Kramer and Andy West off-siding on the prawn trawlers. Fishing was one of his greater loves and he shared that love later with his grandchildren.

Charlie is survived by his son Peter, daughter-in-law Roslyn, grandchildren David, Natham and Connie and his three sisters in Hungary, Rozika, Marika and Connie whom Charlie twice visited during his retirement, in one instance taking his grandchildren.

A RECOLLECTION FROM LVJ (LES) SMITH.....

Les writes:.....further to the article about 'Fitz' in the 1948 *Walkabout* ('personalia' in March Bulletin) I'm reminded of an amusing incident from that era.

The Western Command Field Survey Section under WO1 Bill Bocksette was sent to the Kimberleys in 1947 to survey the four mile map of NOONKANBAH. We had just measured a baseline not far from *Fossil Downs* homestead, and were setting up to observe a braced quadrilateral from the baseline. I was Boxy's booker and was responsible for the heliograph messages (our only form of communication) with the other parties. Just as we were all getting into position the RAAF photographic 'Mosquito' aircraft arrived to start the required aerial photography and unwittingly set into operation a search for a downed aircraft!

Fossil Downs received a radio message that a plane had crashed. They sent an aboriginal runner out to Boxy and me requesting the army's help in the search for survivors. Boxy had me send messages to our nearest crews requesting them to return to our base at Fitzroy Crossing. In the meantime we went to the homestead where Bill MacDonald (the owner) started to brief us on the situation; it appears that one of the

local stations had seen an apparent plume of smoke disappearing behind a range of hills, shortly afterwards a flashing mirror was seen on a hill nearby.



Artist—Michael Pope

At this point the penny dropped when further investigation found that the RAAF pilot prior to starting his photo run had dived down to get a positive location for the start of his mission and had then climbed back to his operational height leaving behind a vapour trail similar to a smoke plume.

The flashing mirror of the survivors turned out to be one of our crews sending a message to Boxy and yours truly. Hurried messages were then sent by heliograph cancelling the search and advising our crews to resume normal duties.

Regards.... LVJ

Ed note: Maybe with some exceptions it wasn't until 1956 that radio communications in the field were adopted by RA Svy On the mainland that was on the Bouli project (1956 – see Bulletin Aug 2000) although ANPRC 10 sets (VHF) were used on Projects Xylon and Cutlass in New Britain and New Ireland. It was said that Fitz abhorred radio as a time-waster – people would sit around all day wasting their time talking on the radio. Helios were to be used for communication as had been used since time immemorial – since the survey of India by George Everest! But that was Fitz! I am told he wasn't all that keen on photogrammetry either. And who was Fitz? – Colonel Lawrence Fitzgerald was Corps Director from 1942 to 1960 and arguably we wouldn't have had a Survey Corps for long after WW2 had it not been for the ministrations of Fitz.

COUNTRY DIRECTIONS by Jeff Lambert

One has to have traveled the outback to some extent to appreciate the peculiarities of outback directions. Sometimes fraught with excessive detail to the point of confusion, at times even boring, and sometimes so simple as to wonder if the direction giver may be a little vague or perhaps short on memory – perhaps it's the heat – or something. Whatever! Enough to leave one in a little doubt as to the successful attainment of one's destination. Not withstanding

the problems of the above and because of the scarcity of direction givers in these parts of God's domain and the sometimes serious, or at the least time consuming, consequences of taking a wrong turn, one should always seize the opportunity to cross-examine the direction giver as to how far, how long, plain road, track, fire plough track, faint track, no track, number and types of gates (easily identified from afar by stubby heaps – empty of course you fool), grids, jump-ups, wells, windmills, earth tanks, dams, etc. I would like to share with you one such request for direction.

The year – about 1956 and the inquirers? – a few personnel from Northern Command. Field Survey Section stationed at the time at Ravenswood, south and west of Townsville. The object of our inquiry was the Burdekin Falls, which, at that time, was the selected site for the mighty Burdekin Dam.

Our inquiry for directions was directed to a Ravenswood resident who had been a driller's assistant on the preliminary drilling of the proposed dam's substrata and we were told that Jack, as he was named, was the only reliable informant with knowledge of the now over grown access to the falls. We conveniently caught Jack walking up the road to his residence and pulled over to ask him about the access to the dam. Jack was a tall gangly type, lean and big boned, this adding some horizontal angularity to his tall frame and, no doubt, effectively alienating him from the description of being a 'beanpole'.

"So it's the falls itself you want to get to?" his voice boomed and one could not but be impressed with the seriousness and importance he attached to our request and to his own demeanour in having been so asked. It soon became evident that we had made Jack's day. Striding to the road verge he selected a stick, examined it, then pressing it against the ground causing it to break, muttered something and flung the said stick into the scrub. Stepping further into the verge he selected a larger stick which, using Archimedes's principle of force and fulcrum, he trimmed to his desired length and after testing and with a nod of approval, three giant strides had him back in the centre of the road. He looked at us for some moments, no doubt to ensure that we were all paying attention, then the stick came into action, inscribing a circle in the dust and after a pause the voice boomed. "You are now here!" With the stick becoming an extension of his right arm he pointed to the right fork of a junction in the road immediately ahead of us – "and this is the road you will leave town by." Immediately the stick came back to the circle to commence the map to the falls.

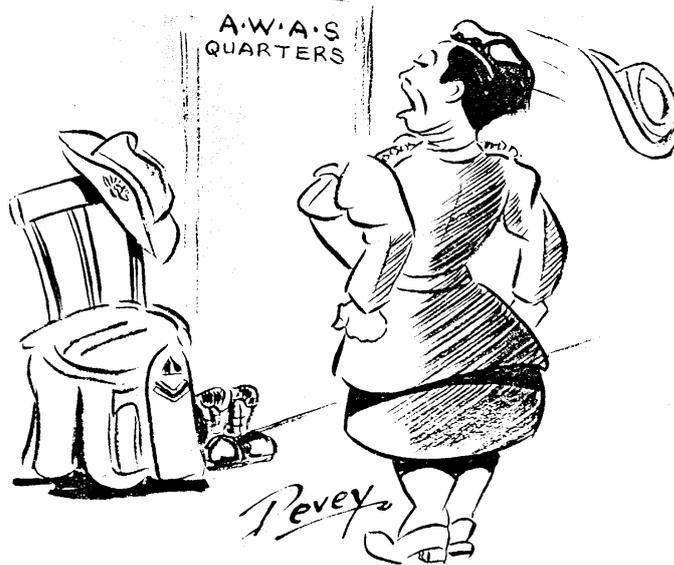
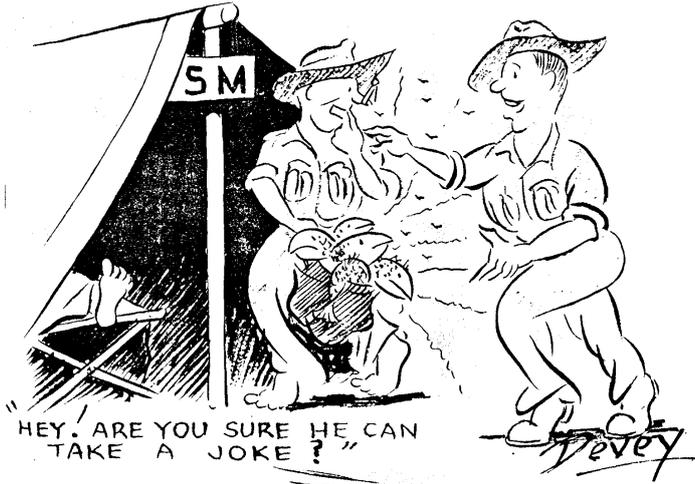
The necessity to curtail the description quickly became obvious and we hastily intervened that we were familiar with the track as far as the turn off to Rangeview Cattle Station. Jack looked quite disappointed at this, but then boomed "Oh

well you're nearly there; but here comes the tricky bit." The stick manoeuvred horizontally to erase the inscription thus far. "We'll start with a clean slate;" he boomed again. A 'T' was inscribed in the road to indicate a new start and the description ensued with the stick scribing the description on the road surface. We moved further and further up the road to accommodate Jack's large scale map. Jack continued – "..... the track across the black soil plain is easy followed, just follow the ruts, but when you get into gibber country the track is lost so head for the lowest saddle on the big ridge ahead – well now – you follow up and veer left down the ridge – follow it for, oh, I don't know; maybe five or six miles, till you come to a gate. About, say, two miles past the gate; you won't notice it cause it's all grown over, is a very faint track leading off to the right. Anyhow, you'll go past that and after a couple of miles you'll come to a bend to the right which leads you onto another ridge and you'll find the track will take you over, let me see, one, two, yes, three gullies before you strike a black ti-tree flat and there, at the far end, you'll come to a poison shed." There was a pause and Jack straightened up from his road map, scratching his back with the stick and turning to ensure he had everyone's attention, boomed again; "**When you get to the poison shed you'll know that you're on the wrong road.**" – The stick hit the ground again and the poison shed became the focal point for a 180 degree about-turn. "Come back over these three gullies and head back up the ridge and the track will lead you back to the long ridge you came down where this time you'll veer left and continue back until", Jack looked around and for the first time lowered his voice so that we somehow knew that the following was for our ears and our ears alone as we huddled closer "now remember that faint track I told you about heading off to the right? – well now it heads off to the left cause you're on the way back and another thing, cause everyone misses it on the way down, its much more worn and easily seen on the way back if you know what I mean".

"Well gentlemen, that track leads directly to the falls." Every one looked at Jack- expecting a grin or perhaps a burst of laughter to signify that he was having us on, but the stolid face reflected no such humour. Instead the air was one of serious contemplation as to our reaction to his description which we satisfied by thanking him in glowing terms. Afterwards we laughed loud and long, however a couple of months passed by before time permitted a journey to the falls whereat our mirth was jolted back to embarrassed reality, our cartographic skills severely dented when, before we reached the falls, we came to read (and add to) the many expletives, frustratingly inscribed, on the wall of the poison shed.

Jeff Lambert.

WW2 - AS DEVEY SAW IT.....



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"HEY! HAVEN'T YOU FORGOT SOMETHING?"

"YES, HOP ON MY BACK AND MAKE A LOAD..."

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