

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS
ASSOCIATION
Queensland Branch



BULLETIN

PO Box 5784 Stafford Heights 4053
Website: www.rasurvey.org

REUNION EDITION – No 36

AUGUST 2008

CALENDAR FOR 2008

6/7 Sep (weekend)	Farewell to Fortuna at Bendigo
13 Sep (Sat)	Reunion Lunch and AGM at the Alderley Arms hotel
October	Mapmaker's Dinner
November	Derek Chambers Award



Yes! It is Reunion time again – not to forget our all important AGM! This year it is at the Alderley Arms Hotel, Enoggera Road, Alderley and note the change of date. To avoid conflict with the 'DIGO Farewells Fortuna Function' in Bendigo on 6/7 September 2008 (some of our members are going) we have moved the date of our Reunion/AGM to the following Saturday, 13 September 08. Our 'traditional' Reunion is an important event on our calendar and has been held annually since soon after WW2. Although our WW2 veterans are few in numbers these days and even fewer can attend our functions it is up to we 'young fellows' to keep it rolling on. **Timing** is 12.00 midday for pre-dinners, 12.30 lunch and we are assured of an excellent two course menu at the modest cost of \$25.00. Your Association is meeting the cost of beverages. RSVP

Alex Cairney by 1st September. See you there!

DIGO Farewells Fortuna. The Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation (DIGO) Social Club has planned functions over the weekend 6/7 September to farewell and to mark its imminent departure from Fortuna Villa. This will bring to close 64 years of defence association with Fortuna since the arrival of the Land Headquarters Cartographic Company in 1942.

On **Saturday 6 September** there is a **dinner dance** to be held at 'Fortunes' located at the 'All Seasons International', Mclvor Highway. An **Open Day and Barbecue Lunch** held within the grounds of Fortuna will follow on **Sunday 7 September**. The main 'Villa' building will be open for tours on that day. Both functions are open to all past and present employees and their partners including all past Survey Corps members and their partners. For Survey Corps members arriving on Friday 5 September drinks and casual bistro meal is to be held at the Havilah Street RSL from 1730h onwards. Cost of the dinner dance is \$45.00 per person. Book with Tracy Ash or Tracey Phillips, DIGO, PO Box 2793, Bendigo Business Centre, Bendigo Vic 3550. All bookings and money needs to be received by **22 August 08**. For further information phone Tracy Ash 03 5442 0317 or Tracey Phillips 03 5442 0337 or email tracy.ash@defence.gov.au or tracey.phillips@defence.gov.au.

The Royal Australian Survey Corps Association (Queensland) acknowledges the generous sponsorship and support of Conics Pty Ltd

COMMITTEE

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1 TOPO SVY SQN		
Squadron OC	Major David Sapparth	
Squadron SSM	WO1 Peter Coles (Ph 3332 7564)	

Note: Refer Veteran's Affairs matters to Peter Bates-Brownsword and Stan Campbell

OUR HISTORY PROJECT – What did we do over all those years – 1946- 1996? Email your contribution direct to Bob Skitch on bob.skitch@runbox.com or enter your data on our website – www.rasurvey.org . Our website will soon contain state summaries of what we have compiled so far. There are plenty of gaps – have a go at filling them in!

Our latest entry from Chris Dahlberg – *Thanks Chris*

YEAR	UNIT	OPERATION PROJECT	DURATION	LOCATION	NATURE OF WORK	PERSONS TAKING PART	OTHER INFORMATION
1970 CD	D Svy AHQ	Beach Surveys	1970 through 1971	PNG based at Manus Island	Recording of beach landing sites of PNG coastline for civil defence	Capt James Bounds (OIC) Capt Charlie Watson, Sgt Chris Dahlberg, Sgt Jock Kay & others	RA Svy members were hosted by HMAS Madang, a RAN Attack Class patrol boat with gun removed and that if painted white could pass as a millionaire's yacht. The RA Svy pers would join the Madang for 4 mth stretches while the Aus crewed navy ship was based at Manus Island.

NOTICES

VIETNAM – A TECHNICAL TOUR by Bob McMillan-Kay.

Copies can be obtained from Bob McMillan-Kay at a cost of \$36.00 including postage. We commend this highly successful book of Bob's Vietnam experience. Bob's address is 14 March Lane, Maryborough, Qld, 4650.

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 which includes cost of a padded postal bag.

ASSOCIATION BADGE

Association badges are still available from the Ex-Fortuna Survey Association. Place your orders with **Barry Lutwyche** and we will try to satisfy them.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS

PLAQUE: The Ex-Fortuna Association has purchased some of the original RA Svy plaques. These are available from Ex-Fortuna Secretary Tracey Phillips, 03 5442 0263; 03 5449 6330 (AH); email phipsys@bigpond.com. Price on application.

RA SURVEY ASSOCIATION PLAQUE

Magna Carto advises that the plaque has been finished and is ready for distribution. The final design incorporates the three badges overlapping, the theodolite badge of pre-WW2, the wartime colour patch and the Post WW2 RA Svy badge. The cost of the plaque is \$50.00 plus postage. Place orders with our Secretary, Barry Lutwyche.

ASSOCIATION TIE or SCARF

Cost is \$20.00 and \$7.00 postage for each. We suggest you place your order directly with the Ex Fortuna Association, Tracey Phillips, email phipsys@bigpond.com or phone Barry Lutwyche.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2007 – 2008

'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 Sept to Sept. Subscription is but \$10.00 per year. We encourage you to pay three years in advance (or more if you wish). Subscription is waived for veterans 75 and over who have been standing paid-up members of our Association. **Pay-time was at the AGM 1 Sept 07 – but it is not too late now!**

LAST FRIDAYS

Last Fridays continue at the Gaythorne RSL but numbers attending have dropped away. Pop along and have a beer or a softie with your mates.

CHANGE OF VENUE

It will be noted that our committee meetings have moved from the Gaythorne RSL to the Alderley Arms hotel on Enoggera Road. Also our Annual Reunion and AGM this year will take place at the Alderley Arms. You would be right in thinking that this move reflects a level of dissatisfaction with the Gaythorne RSL. Certainly the level of support that the RSL provides to the Association has fallen away over the past few years. It is time to move on!

NSW COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE DEDICATION

On Tuesday the 1st July 2008 at 1100 hrs an event of significance took place in the historical precinct of Victoria Barracks, Sydney. On that day a commemorative plaque was unveiled and dedicated to those Survey Units who served in WW1, WW2 and the Vietnam War. The event was hosted by the Royal Australian Survey Corps Association (NSW). A detailed report of the event has not yet been received, however, glancing at the beautifully produced program and order of service it is clear that the event was well planned and well supported. President Richard Jackson-Hope welcomed the gathering; WW2 veteran Ted Hunter presented memories of the past, Chaplain Yossi Segelman offered prayers and music that included the Corps March was provided by the Australian Army Band. We can look forward to a more complete report on the event and photographs.

COMMITTEE MEETING – FRI 27 JUNE 2008

Matters covered in the June Committee Meeting were;

- Army Combat Badge – RA Svy unlikely to be eligible.
- Recovery of manufacturing costs of Kilcoy plaque – negotiation proceeding.
- Incorporation of Association – Action has commenced.
- Reunion and AGM – firm booking made at Alderley Arms Hotel for 30 on Sat 6 Sep 08. (subsequently changed to 13 Sep.
- Proposed National RA Svy Association – discussed with SA Association – they

are supportive. Ex-Fortuna Assoc have nominated Don Swiney and Gary Warnest to discuss proposal. Alex Cairney and Ross Smithwick appointed Qld representatives. An inaugural meeting of State Assoc delegates proposed to take place in Bendigo during the DIGO function weekend.

- Patron of proposed National Association. Enquiries progressed – on hold until Association formed.
- DIGO Farewells Fortuna function is scheduled for weekend 6/7 September. To allow our members to attend our Reunion/AGM rescheduled for 13 September.
- RA Svy Museum Don Swiney is organizing another working trip to Museum. Mr Bill Kitson may be approached to act as consultant on the project.
- Purchase of a quality scanner for the Bulletin Editor approved.
- Brisbane Legacy Special Project contribution. Committee authorized a donation of \$100.00 to Brisbane Legacy to fund a tour of England and the Western Front battlefields for seven adult disabled children of deceased veterans who served in WW2, Korea or Vietnam. The project is to honour the 90th anniversary of the Armistice and the 80th anniversary of Brisbane Legacy.

ARMY COMBAT BADGE

Don't hold your breath fellows – it probably will never happen. Bob's letter to the RAE Head of Corps elicited a sympathetic reply but doesn't give much hope, Brigadier Budd wrote (relevant parts only)...

In regard to eligibility for the Army Combat Badge, as a Corps (ie RAE) we have some concern with the writing of the Defence Instruction. Army is currently reviewing the policy and I have personally reviewed the draft amended document. The revised policy, while making the eligibility criteria easier to interpret, will not change the current assessment of your detachment's eligibility for the badge.

The essence of the policy is that an individual must have been force assigned to a combat unit/sub unit and fulfilled a number of additional criteria like time

and classification of the type of operation. It is not awarded for simply being in the area of operations.....

.....The Policy does contain a clause which allows me to ask for a determination from the approving authority, and in support of your detachment's members I will raise your case. In saying that I do not wish to raise expectations as your detachment's service in South Vietnam is currently not eligible for the award of the Army Combat Badge. I will write to you again when I know more.

*WG Budd, CSC,
Brigadier,
Head of Corps Royal Australian Engineers.*

COLONEL ALEX LAING MEMORIAL DINNER – 4 July 2008

Numbers were certainly down this year, only 15 attending. Many of our stalwarts were nomading to remote parts of Australia or at least Queensland or attending to work commitments and others were affected by various lurgis or recovering from recent illnesses. Dawn Laing couldn't make it this year having arranged a trip to WA to meet up with Olive Taylor and thence a train trip from Moscow to Berlin – Wow! Nevertheless we fifteen had a very pleasant evening and enjoyed a remarkably fine dinner, perhaps the best I have experienced so far. Our President, Peter Bates-Brownsword, reported sick the day before so Vice President Alex Cairney was in the Chair.

Our newest member Peter Mitchell proposed the Loyal Toast, Bob Skitch the toast to honour the memory of our late Colonel in Chief, Diana the Princess of Wales, Barry Lutwyche handled the Toast to the Association and Bob Skitch responded. Finally Jock Kay toasted departed comrades and absent friends quoting Auld Lang Syme.

Our 1 Topo guest Warrant Officer Class 1 Peter Coles gave us a thought provoking address, published on page 8 of this Bulletin.

The port having been passed, many lingered on over the depleting decanters and yours truly having opted to take Club accommodation on this occasion reached his room up stairs only a little short of midnight. (Bob was

unaccompanied since Wendy was facing a hip replacement operation a few days later.)

Roll Call

Alex Cairney	Barry Lutwyche
Bob Skitch	John Lutwyche
Adrian Creedy	Jock Kay
Debra Creedy	Chris Sparrow
Peter Mitchell	Ian Hutchings
Carmen Mitchell	Dave Sankey
Dennis Gregor	WO1 Peter Coles
Elaine Gregor	

VALE

Bruce Coburn passed away on Thu 19 Jun 08 at Boggabri. The funeral took place on Tuesday 24th June at Boggabri, NSW. Stan Campbell attended.

John Willis in Western Australia reflects on the time he worked with Bruce and this makes a fitting tribute to one who was so well known to many in the Corps.

I worked with Bruce at Randwick in 1968-69 when I was posted to B Section 1 Topo Svy Tp in 1968. A Section was in Vietnam. I was to be a replacement but never went. Bruce and I went to northern NSW to carry out control surveys at the direction of Captain Ken Lyons. I was ostensibly in charge of several corporals and sappers. Bruce had the overall command as the Senior Sergeant Transport Survey. He taught me a lot about man management on that trip. Alex Cairney had carried the recce for the job. Stan Campbell was the WO2 with the unit at the time and Major Bob Hammett was OC.

In July 1969 we were seconded to Northern Command Field Survey Unit in Brisbane. Bruce was an amazing man. We went flying over the mapping control area in a chartered Cessna 172. Bruce had his pilot's license at that time. Bruce told me of his experiences in Papua New Guinea, especially his snake bite episode and his lonely survey work vigil on a hill carrying on regardless until relieved. Bruce was awarded the BEM for his service in Papua New Guinea. I am saddened by his passing. He left a big footprint behind and a dedication to his profession that is to be emulated by today's

techno-surveyors....

John Willis

Eric Brook passed away in early July. His funeral service took place at Karrakatta Cemetary on Wednesday 9th July.

Eric served in the Western Australian based - WW2 4th Aust Fd Svy Coy and was discharged in 1944, with the rank of Sgt. In his professional life, he worked in Perth as a surveyor, having completed his articles after the War. He was a stalwart of the 4 Fd Svy Coy Association from the time it was formed in 1946 and continued on once the merger occurred with our current RA Svy Association (WA). Eric also served his time as Secretary of the 4th Fd Svy Coy Association.

Brian Mead attended his funeral service as Association Representative

Carol Cross, wife of Peter Cross passed away on Saturday 14th June at the age of 60. Carol's funeral took place at the Pinaroo



Garden Cemetary on Friday 20th June and was interred in the veteran's section of the cemetery. Peter and Carol had been together for 42 years. Peter's working life was if nothing else, varied. It was of course

much more than that; in a word it was remarkable and all of it was shared and supported by Carol. Peter in his eulogy spoke a little of their early life together when Peter was a stockman on Douglas Downs in the Gulf hinterland. *'When we got married I still had a job droving cattle on adjustment in the Gulf. So I rang the boss and told him I was now married and we would like to come back up. That was OK, and the boss said I could now work back at the station, we could live in one of the married men's houses. So Carol and I took the "Sunlander" to Townsville, then the "Inlander" to Duchess. Waited a fortnight for the mail train to take us to Dajarra. Then another few days while the boss drove in to pick us up for the trip to the station, Douglas Downs.*

Of course I built up this station life, and Carol expected rolling green pastures, with contented friendly cattle! She was horrified to find Douglas Downs flat, dry, spinifex country with lots of red dust storms'.

Finally they returned to Brisbane, Peter joining the Army in 1966 and was allocated to Infantry becoming a bandsman when it was realized that he could tickle the drums.

I first met Peter and Carol when Musician Cross came to the School of Military Survey to undertake IET. Peter was allocated to the carto draughtsman course, duxing it and the rest is history as they say. Wendy met Carol through our respective children attending the Wodonga West primary school and they became firm friends. Carol was then and has always been a delightful person, and a great person to know. Unfortunately, as is often the case with Army postings, our families drifted apart after that.

Carol is survived by husband Peter, son Peter and daughters Mellisa and Leah and grandchildren. We send to Peter our sincerest condolences on the loss of Carol

Lorraine Clark, wife of Colin Clark passes away on Saturday 1st June. Lorraine fell critically ill two days before and was taken by ambulance to hospital but failed to recover. Many who served at the Regiment and especially with the Topographical Squadron would remember Colin as cook on a number of survey operations, a cook *par excellence*. In the field Colin could whip up a meal from next to nothing at any hour of the day or night. Colin and Lorraine had been married for 56 years, Colin from the age of 18. Colin told me once that he did not attend an Army cooking course but learnt all he knew about cooking from Lorraine. She must have been a great teacher because Colin was one of the best. He left the Army after 27 years as a sergeant cook.

Colin was not always a cook. He served in Infantry in Korea and Borneo (during confrontation), decided that there was not a good future in being shot at so went into catering assigned to Survey. He did a 12 month tour in Vietnam in '69/'70 at HQ 1ATF.

Colin then worked for the Police Department and a storeman/driver for 7 years until retirement. He and Lorraine have lived in the Melbourne suburb of Greensborough (near Watsonia).

We send to Colin our sincerest condolences on the loss of his wife.

Wilf Bennallack had been an early member of the Corps but would be most remembered as an honorary member of the Fortuna Sergeant's Mess. Wilf passed away in early May and his funeral was well attended by members of the Fortuna Association. (From *Magna Carto* – May)

Ester Michael (Rowbotham) and **Gwen Oldham** (McGowan) both WW2 veterans who served at Fortuna.

PERSONALIA and other jottings

Brian Mead in Western Australia reports (5th June) – Home from Glengarry Hospital after yesterday's operation. Had a cyst removed from my scrotum. The cyst measured - 6cms by 4cms - measured during an ultra sound that I had last week. Have the appropriate medication to help me sleep and "heal". Will see the Surgeon in a week for a review. I have a full week off before I return to work - which will do me the power of good. I seem to be a source of amusement for some - particularly Annette's craft friends !!! Quality time for some reading and work on Westlink and 4 Fd Svy Coy Research.... regards,Brian.

Ed: Phew!

Peter Mitchell has provided this update on the short (and a little inaccurate) brief I ran in our last Bulletin. In an email to Kym Weston Peter says... 'You may or may not remember me. I joined the Corps in 1981 following my graduation from Portsea (where I was a Survey cadet - vetted in Sydney by LTCOL Frank Thorogood). I had a couple of postings at 2 Fd Svy Sqn, a couple at DSvy (including SO2 Equipment), one at SMS and one at the Army War Game Centre (a brilliant posting), but otherwise I was largely in non-corps postings (mostly capital procurement related) during my 20 years of service. I left the Army in 2000

from my posting with Defence Material Organisation (ie. the old Material Division) following many years with the Army Command Support System Project.

Since 2000 I have spent my time consulting in IT Project Management but of late have started working with some very smart fellows to build enterprise class NET business applications (the first is due out late this year).

I innocently attended the 2008 Brisbane ANZAC day parade as one of the crowd and was more than once recognised (including by Jimmy Gill) and closely questioned as where my medals were and why wasn't I marching! Needless to say, I am now a signed up member of the RASvy Association and have my purple beret bashed ready for next year (sans cap badge at the moment - I need to dig one up).

Getting to the point of the email. I have spent several glorious hours reading the various newsletters on the Association website but noticed that some of the newsletter PDFs are not downloading (ie. Queensland 28, 32 and 33) and some seem to be damaged according to my browser (ie. Queensland 17 and 22). I hope to meet you in due course at a function or two. Kind Regards.....Peter Mitchell

Ed: Kym has rectified the website problem. Peter and his wife Carmen attended our Corps dinner at the United Service Club on 4 July.

Adrian Creedy emails Thanks for the email and the time and effort you and the committee put in to association matters - much appreciated.

We departed Australia late April 08 to take up lodgings in Singapore and by all accounts we will be here for the long term. We moved in order to follow Debra's academic career. I am still a man of leisure, finishing off loose ends from the move. I have applied for a couple of management positions at the university and have had some positive interviews. Wait and see. The move went smoothly and the lifestyle is relaxing. I asked a bloke the time the other day and he said he thought it was July. The

cost of living is generally low although alcohol and meat are extremely dear.

We look forward to hosting visitors so make sure your passports are up to date. I came down to Brisbane strictly for the dinner. Debra was attending a conference on the Gold Coast so it was timely that she could attend. My daughter Alison attended last year. We have been missing in action from functions due to family commitments however times are a changing. Hopefully, the friends I made in Survey are friends for life (maybe because we don't see each other too often). Our address is 109 Clementi Road, Kent Vale Apartments, BLK E # 06 – 03, Singapore 129791. Phone numbers: Home +65 65198393 m +65 91017954.

Chris Dahlberg has provided an interesting entry to our What did we do historical project on Beach Surveys. This was and is a largely forgotten activity of the Corps. Chris's email to Kym Weston reads....

For the history part of the RA Svy website, I submitted to you an entry for Beach Surveys, which just may have been classified, and I am sure that I can add to it later. Is the Australian Defence Co-operation Group of interest do you think? It was based in Port Moresby and took over from the SO3 Svy at Murray Barracks. I can recall some details, in fact Paul Gilmour-Walsh was S02 Pers there in 1980 and went back as the Head in 1988. Paul lives at Maleny, is Queensland RSL Vice President and thoroughly good bloke.

Cheers for now (we last spoke at the Daintree Village jetty about 5 years ago.)

Chris Dahlberg www.daintreerivertours.com.au

Ed: Chris's website above is well worth opening. It says a lot about Chris and his Daintree venture.

Bob Mason: Adrian reports that Bob has been a bit crook - touch of prostate problems- but the op seemed to have fixed everything. I think he must have been in the maternity ward as he was complaining about being sore from the epidural injection.

Dave King mentioned in our December 2007 Bulletin is not in good health but typically makes light of it. He emails: ***To a few good friends of David King (from himself a-la-Goon Show) For the past 10 nights I have been***

in hospital(s) under "specialist" orders. From 23 June to 3 July The object was to change my medication to enable my breathing to be better. No noticeable change but I'll give it time. Back on deck again. Email is still madly downloading 76 messages so far Cheers to all..... DK

Ed: I served in Vietnam with Dave 1966/67. It is great to keep in touch.

Brian Mead is a frequent correspondent and a tireless investigator into the historical antecedents of 4 Fd Svy Coy has emailed this small item:

Exmouth Gulf - WW2 Units. A friend of mine, who spends a few months every year at Exmouth - enjoying the fishing / camping - has given me photo copies of key diagrams of WW2 Exmouth Gulf Units locations. I have attached a scan of a photo copy of an annotated Admiralty Chart that includes info on the Pot-shot US Navy - jetty / facility. He mentioned the existence of an Exmouth Library, which he intends to visit again next month - and extract a reference or two for me for the Research Project - 4th Aust Fd Svy Coy.

Ed: I have looked at the annotated chart segment and it is quite fascinating although no mention of 4 Fd Svy Coy.

David and Peggy Hebblethwaite some months ago sold their home at The Gap and have moved to Maleny in the Sunshine Coast hinterland. How many of our past Corps members now live in this part of our fair State? Quite a few I believe. David is more or less retired. Having spent the last few years commuting to and from Vanuatu on land titling work, in June he was making what he hoped would be his last trip.

Peter and Dell Osterhage have sold their home at Everton Hills and have taken to an adventurous life at sea. They were last heard of sailing the Torres Strait.

Address by WO1 Peter Coles to the 2008 COLONEL ALEX LAING MEMORIAL DINNER

Mr President, Members RASVY Association, firstly let me start by thanking you for the invitation to attend this dinner in memory of Colonel Alex Laing.

I was asked by the Secretary Mr Barry Lutwyche if I would be willing to address the

dinner and provide an update on the Squadron covering the last 12 months and its future directions. I thank him for this opportunity. I feel that if the Association wants policy, politics and flim flammery then you invite the OC but if you want guns, trucks, bullets and beans then you invite the SSM to do the address.

From its humble beginnings as a small Survey Section within HQ 1 DIV, 1 Topographical Survey Squadron has become unique in that it is the only unit within the Army and probably Defence, dedicated to providing Military Geospatial Support to all Operations and Major Military Exercises whether at home or over seas.

Since June 2007 we have had 20 personnel on operations overseas, 12 personnel on mainland Australia operations and nearly 70% of the Squadron have attended one or more major exercises both in Australia and overseas with our ABCA partners. 1 Topo Svy Sqn members have received 3 US Army Commendations for outstanding service to operations in Iraq. Putting this into context the Australian Army have only received 7 such awards in the last 2 years.

In the previous 12 months we have had personnel in Iraq, Afghanistan, Timor-Leste, PNG, America, England, Canada, Solomon Islands and NZ on Ops, Exercises or exchanges.

But all of this is coming at a cost, although this is not a forum to air complaints, I will highlight that the trade is currently losing technician faster than we are recruiting, at nearly a ration of 2 to 1. Members who have or will soon depart the service are WO1 Barry Miller, SGT Shaun Byers, SGT Kasey Northausen, SGT Harvey, CPL Scott Duncan, CPL Wayne Arch and at least 8 other CPL and SPR by August 08. In the same time we have had 7 IET complete their training.

As to the future, well you will pleased to know that SGT Terence Malone will be leaving us on Promotion to WO2 to be an instructor at SME. All I can say is God help the trade and the Army. Other key unit personnel moving at the end of 08 are:

MAJ David Sapparth to 7 BDE
CAPT Tom Buckley to LTS
WO2 Josh Andrews to SME
WO2 Andrew Jackson to 7 BDE
SGT Glenn Norrell to 4 RAR
SGT Kim Baker to CATC
SGT Tom Allison to LTS
SGT Shellwyne (Cole) McGraa to LWC

And the usual plethora of LT, CPL and SPRs.
Coming in we have:

MAJ Tom Grice from JOC
CAPT Lisa Bush from LTS
CAPT Hargraves from LTS
WO2 Di Souter from LTS
SGT Fitzmaurice (on promotion to WO2) from
4 RAR
SGT Mick Muzeen from LTS
SGT James Martin from SME

And of course new TP Commanders, CPLs
and SPRs.

As for operations and exercises they go on and
despite the reduction by the Government of
troops committed to Iraq the demand for
geospatial support within the Division is
growing as Commanders are becoming more
and more aware of what the Geo can bring to
the fight. I have a positive outlook for the future
of the Geo trade, despite our current recruiting
problems. Demand on unit SEDs for Geo
Techs to be on the HQ of major units and
formations is growing. The trade being unable
to fill many of these I feel will be the catalyst for
the CA to direct appropriate recruiting
measures are taken to build the trade.

In summary let me just say that although
currently everything does not look rosy, the
future does not look bleak. As I have previously
mentioned in an article for the Association
news letter, the standard, quality and
commitment of our Geo Techs is no less than
that of the olds and bolds who have gone
before and forged a reputation of "can do"
people within 1 Topo Svy Sqn. We will only get
bigger and we will become a stronger influence
on Commanders decision making at all levels
when planning and conducting the fight be it,

war like, peace keeping or nation rebuilding. I
say the glass is not half empty but half full.

Thank you.....Peter Coles WO1, SSM 1st
Topographical Survey Squadron

THOSE THINGS WE COLLECT (and what do we do with them?) – Bob Skitch

In the course of our service life from time to
time, usually as a result of an unusual
circumstance that may be quite peripheral to
our main purpose we acquire items of some
interest that add to our personal collection. We
cart them around through army moves and for
a while (wives permitting) they may occupy a
place of honour carefully arranged on the
lounge room wall but inevitably they finish up in
a dusty corner at the back of the wardrobe –
even under the bed! What to do with them in
retirement – that becomes a somewhat vexed
question. My solution was to give them to 1
Topo for display in the Club. There is a story of
course with each one:.....

A Corroboree on Mornington Island

Sometimes on field survey operations in
remote parts of our country survey units might
be called upon to render 'aid to the civil
community' as army parlance puts it. Such aid
could only be given with the express
permission of the superior headquarters and
only after all circumstances surrounding the
request were fully detailed and documented.
Usually the cost of the aid would be charged
against the appropriate government
department and normally the request in the first
instance would be made by that Department
through the Office of the Premier. Canberra
clearance most likely would also be required.
Clearly all this would take considerable time
and the old army principle that it is sometimes
more expedient to say sorry than to ask
permission applies.

This was the case in 1975 when the 1st Field
Survey Squadron was engaged on a five
month (7April – 17September) operation
extending survey control for 1:100,000
mapping from the Torres Strait south and west
into the Gulf hinterland and the Wellesley
Island Group. Operation Sandy Hill was the
final mapping control operation using the

airborne 'Aerodist' technique of electronic distance measurement and trilateration to establish coordinate values of photo control points. The technique was used extensively from the mid 1960s to 1975 to establish control for the 1:100,000 map series with vertical control provided by laser terrain profiling. While terrain profiling continued for some years after 1975, Doppler satellite positioning overtook the Aerodist technique totally in 1976.

However, this brief is not about survey techniques and the foregoing is provided to explain why we were there. Our main base was at the end of the very dusty airstrip at Cooktown with forward mobile bases established as the operation progressed at Croyden, Weipa, Horn Island, Coen, Edward River (now Pompuaw), Munburra, and finally Mornington Island in the Wellesley Island Group. Two field teams were deployed, first the reconnaissance, station marking and clearing team (11-25 July) followed by the Aerodist measuring team (29 July – 13 August). The former established themselves on Mornington Island at the airstrip adjacent to the large and well developed Aboriginal township followed by the Aerodist team as the operation came to an end. The Aboriginal community on Mornington Island was still managed as a mission station by the Presbyterian Church. Squadron OC, Major Bob Skitch visited the base in July towards the end of the reconnaissance phase. Met by OIC Lieutenant Peter Ralston, Peter told Bob of a major health problem on the island for which the Mission manager had asked for Army assistance. The Aboriginal community was wracked by gastro enteritis especially the children for whom the disease can be fatal. Bob called on the Mission manager who confirmed the situation. The small community hospital was full to capacity with increasing numbers of new cases occurring daily. He explained that gastro enteritis is a fly borne disease and if the fly population can be reduced within the settlement the prevalence of the disease would decrease. Despite repeated requests over the previous two weeks, the Queensland Government had not responded. Bob was sufficiently convinced and certainly flies were in great and annoying abundance.

The chartered *Queenair* aircraft was due to arrive for the final Aerodist phase of the operation. Bob radioed the Cooktown main base and requested that it make haste and bring forward two swing-fog machines and drums of 'knock-down' fly spray, carried as camp stores. It arrived with the fly abatement equipment the next morning and a small volunteer team undertook to fog the community, particularly the accommodation lines. The settlement housing comprised several rows of bungalow style houses elevated some feet above the ground. They seemed well maintained and reasonably tidy although several families lived in each, some camped in the space beneath the house.

The fogging team went into action and over a two day period fogged everything in sight with knock-down spray including the inevitable refuse tip. The nozzles of the fogging machines were poked into windows and doors of houses and a good dose of insecticide inserted. The Aborigines themselves were very supportive of the operation and clearly had been briefed by their elders. The relationship between our survey soldiers and the community, especially the children was warm and friendly from both directions. Within 24 hours the number of cases of gastro enteritis presenting at the hospital started to fall. Within three days there were no new cases – a remarkable and serendipitous outcome.

Two quite remarkable Aboriginal elders were resident on Mornington Island. These were the Roughsea brothers, Lindsay (*Burrod*) the older and Dick (*Goobabithaldin*). Lindsay was without doubt the cultural leader of the community, a choreographer of all forms of Aboriginal dance and corroboree. Dick, was an acrylic artist, who, under the tutelage of a well known North Queensland identity, Captain Percy Tresize, himself an authority on Aboriginal rock art, specialized in presenting tales of the 'Dreaming' for children. The art and craft shop in the settlement had a huge array of genuine articles – decorated spears, boomerangs and bark paintings of Aboriginal creation, some of the latter done by Lindsay Roughsea. The shop was frequented by our soldiers most of whom finished up well armed with spears and boomerangs. (Who could

forget young 'Shep' Shepherd and his boomerang throwing prowess?)

The fogging episode came to an end when on the Saturday we were honoured with a quite remarkable evening corroboree staged by Lindsay Roughsea that depicted in dance the whole operation; the children falling over with the gastro complaint, the arrival of the aircraft (a whole squadron in fact), the fellows swinging the swing fog machines, flies falling to the ground and the children rising up well again. The dance was accompanied by the music of didgeridoo, rhythm sticks and wailing chorus, the latter two provided by the women. At the conclusion each member of the survey team was presented with an article from the art shop, some a spear, others a boomerang and some a painted didgeridoo.

The fogging episode came to an end. Bob was able to justify the man-hours spent fogging against the need to prevent the gastro infection spreading to the troops of the reconnaissance and incoming *Aerodist* teams although there were some raised eyebrows amongst the senior staff of Headquarters 1st Division in Brisbane. Bob was never sure whether news of the event ever reached Survey Directorate but felt quite sure that if it did the recently appointed Director, Colonel Jim Stedman, would have approved.

DALAT and Montagnards

Service with the 1st Topographical Survey Troop (Detachment and later 'A' Section) in Vietnam was a unique experience for most and one that lingers in one's memory, becoming almost part of one's psyche for the rest of life. Life at Nui Dat could be for many extended tedium overlaying an inner doubt and little expressed unease at the precarious nature of our presence. Opportunities to experience something of Vietnam other than the mud and dust of Nui Dat occasionally occurred and were to be taken when offered. If nothing else they helped to preserve sanity. Most, probably all, of our Troop members in 1966/67 were able on duty to visit the fair city of Saigon and some of the US bases at Long Binh, Bien Hoa and in the northern sector, Na Trang. The Americans, if nothing else were very hospitable and supportive.

I had had a call from Colonel Hritzko (Assistant Chief of Staff, Mapping and Intelligence Division, US Army Engineer Corps, Vietnam) somewhere in early April 1967 suggesting that I might like to visit Dalat with him to inspect the National Geographic Service, Vietnam's civilian mapping organisation. I recall him commenting some time before that he had in mind taking some of his officers and NCOs to visit the Service and would I be interested. Did I refer that one to our Survey Directorate? I think I may have and received their encouragement to do so.

My April monthly report states that having arrived at Long Binh somewhere mid morning on the 18th I spent the day first calling on Colonel Hritzko, now with the appointment Assistant Chief of Staff, Mapping and Intelligence Division, US Army Engineer Corps, Vietnam. He was of course his usual affable self, very inclusive and pleased to see me – almost to the point of embarrassment for me. He seemed delighted that I would be able to join his team to Dalat. Quite a number were going, some of his own terrain intelligence staff, Captain John Anthis with several officers and warrant officers from 66 Engineer Company, perhaps about a dozen in all.

The following morning (the 19th) after an early start we assembled at one of the many helipads in the Long Binh area for a rapid 'Huey' helicopter flight to Tan Son Nhut – most likely two Hueys. I was somewhat astonished on seeing the aircraft (fixed wing this time) that was to take us to Dalat. It was a twin radial engined 'Otter' I think, certainly very old-looking. The Americans in Vietnam had total air superiority – the Viet Cong had no aircraft and the only risk to US aircraft was from ground fire although that could be deadly. That allowed the US to use any type of aircraft available no matter how slow and lumbering. Once in the air above an altitude of 5,000 feet they were safe (apart from aircraft failure, a not uncommon happening). We loaded aboard the 'Otter' and it lumbered into the air for what was about an hour flight to Dalat, arriving shortly before lunch. There was a small American base at Dalat but I got the impression that at that stage of the conflict it was largely a de-militarised

zone or at least where some sort of unofficial truce seemed to exist.

The city of Dalat enjoys a temperate mountain climate typified by mild days, cool nights and clean fresh air. In 1967 the city appeared prosperous; it was clean, had delightful surroundings with lakes, gardens and many fine buildings, slightly reminiscent of Canberra. Prominent among the fine buildings was the building of the National Geographic Service, built on rising ground above the lake previously occupied by the Service Geographique IndoChine. It was a massive stone structure providing ample space for all of the many draughting offices, map libraries, plotting rooms and printing rooms. It may have been a private mansion – or chateau – at one time.

NGS was a quasi-military organisation controlled by Army Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) officers and staffed by civilians. NGS had a staff of 230, although it seemed apparent that they were very understaffed, largely due to the draft. Many of the technicians were female.

We spent a good deal of the day at NGS but gained very little from it. Certainly in traditional Vietnamese style hospitality was laid on with morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. Colonel Hritzko was treated with a good deal of respect by the two majors and all others. They all spoke excellent English, some with discernible French accents. I think I was probably the first Australian they had met and they quizzed me a little on Australia (they clearly had some knowledge) and military mapping in Australia. Heeding advice from Colonel Hritzko I made no comment about our Australian Task Force or my role in it.

We left NGS in the late afternoon. We had been billeted in an old French hotel which had been taken over as a BOQ. It was comfortable enough and we chose to eat in a nearby restaurant. Following that we visited a 'bar', my first and only experience of a Vietnamese bar. I guess I was pleasantly surprised. It certainly wasn't run as a brothel although I suspect that such services could have been provided. The bar girls or hostesses were pleasant, educated and happy to talk on a variety of subjects, but the war was certainly off limits on both sides.

Perhaps we stayed for an hour or so, having a couple of ba-mi-bas and then departed for our BOQ. That was the end of our Dalat night.

The following day we had the morning free to inspect the very comprehensive markets. Dalat is in Montagnard country and the stalls were run by Montagnards², small coffee skinned people very different to the Vietnamese we knew. They were the Aborigines of Vietnam. I was astonished at the range of produce sold, some clearly recognisable, some natural produce – nuts and fruit from the mountains. All sorts of artwork, musical instruments, carvings and hunting instruments were for sale. I bought a sort of cross bow and a quiver of fire hardened arrows and a musical instrument fashioned from a gourd that gave a range of organ like notes. I think we all bought something, simply paid the price and didn't bargain; it was all cheap enough. Our 'Otter' aircraft departed early afternoon and in reverse order I returned to Nui Dat having farewelled my American friends thinking at the time that I would probably not see them again. Colonel Hritzko was particularly warm in his farewell and perhaps he knew but I certainly didn't that he was yet to surprise me again. I arrived back at Nui Dat in the late afternoon.

Ed: WO1 Peter Coles tells me that the artefacts are to be mounted in the Murray Club and will be formally 'unveiled' later this year.

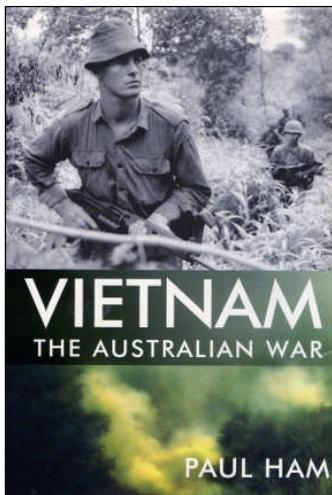
BOOK REVIEWS – VIETNAM

Books on the Vietnam War continue to be written and published and there now seems to be a legion of them. Many are published by the various unit associations, especially the Battalions that served in the theatre, others are privately published (for example '*Vietnam – a Technical Tour*' by our own Bob McMillan Kay) and Charles Mollison's '*Long Tan and Beyond*' reviewed in a previous Bulletin,. Some are of sufficient interest to be taken up by the big

² Montagnard translates roughly as mountain people. It is a generic term applied by the French to the mountain tribes in Vietnam. If not strictly Aboriginal they certainly predate those that were broadly refer to as Vietnamese. In fact there are a number of ethnic groups comprising the Montagnard tribesmen. The term is not used in current literature.

publishing houses and in this category are two books recently published; *'Vietnam – The Australian War'* by Paul Ham and *'The Minefield – An Australian Tragedy in Vietnam'* by Greg Lockwood. I do not claim to be a conscientious student of the Vietnam War, however, I was motivated to acquire and read both of these and I think it can be said that they say all that can be said about Australia's involvement in that conflict. The following are my impressions of both these publications:

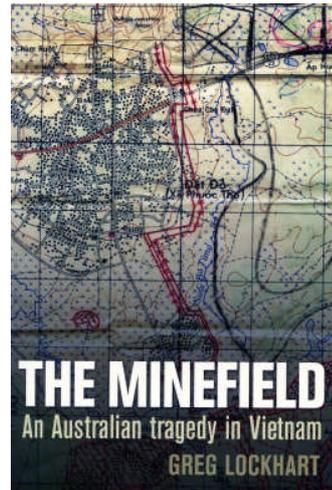
Vietnam – The Australian War comprehensively covers the entire conflict and the events that impacted on and led to



Australia's commitment. Early chapters delve into the early history of Vietnam itself; the early Chinese invasions, the period of French colonial exploitation, the Japanese WW2 takeover, the re-establishment of French rule ending with Dien Bien Phu, the Viet Minh and finally, what the Vietnamese now call the 'American War'. Ham details the Australian scene, the politics, the re-introduction of National Service, the initial support of the Australian public and its gradual disintegration; the Anti-Vietnam movements leading to the rejection experienced by returning soldiers, especially the 'Nashos'. The more significant battles are covered from those involving the 1st Battalion RAR with the US 173rd Airborne Brigade from Bien Hoa, Cu Chi, then the 1st Australian Task Force in Phuoc Tuy, the more significant battles, Long Tan (of course) and the little mentioned 'Coral' FSB. There are contributions and the recollections of veterans and pen portraits of task force commanders, their often difficult relationships with their US superiors who were critical of Australian tactics. Certainly the author (who did not serve in Vietnam) injects a good deal of his own point of view which readers may or may not accept and where one's own tour, for me 1966/67,

provides a parallel experience against which one can detect small inconsistencies – and surprising revelations. Nevertheless, it is a worthwhile and enlightening read that reflects great credit on the soldiers who were there and their junior leaders.

The Minefield – an Australian Tragedy in Vietnam is specifically directed to that single disastrous event and its appalling aftermath – the Dat Do – Long Hai minefield. Lockhart, who



had late service in Vietnam with the Training Team and is now an academic has a long hard look at what motivated the second Task Force commander Brigadier Stuart Graham to construct the minefield against all the contrary advice of his unit commanders and

especially that of Major Brian (Stumpy) Florence, the Officer Commanding 1st Field Regiment RAE. In theory the minefield was to act as a barrier to Viet Cong moving from the eastern side of Phuoc Tuy to the heavily populated areas in the west. As a barrier the minefield violated all the principles of mine warfare and became a deadly arsenal for the Viet Cong who skillfully lifted mines at will and re-deployed them against the Australian forces, most notably in the Long Hai Hills and east of there in what became known as 'The Box'. Of the 504 Anzac soldiers killed in action in Vietnam, 55 resulted from US M16 'Jumping Jack' mines taken from our own minefield. 250 were wounded in action from M16 mines. Lockhart describes in graphic detail many of the mine incidents which were never short of horrific and which apart from the physical injury they caused had a mind numbing psychological impact on soldiers forced to patrol in mined areas. Lockhart's book is a compelling read and a sad indictment of our military command at the time. At the same time it is a story of the indomitable courage and tenacity of the Australian digger.

'Fair Dinkum'?

This is purported to be an extract from a 2RAR guard post log from the 70's but I am not vouching for it..... **Noel Sproles**

Private Bloggs was on guard duty at the main gate of 2RAR. His orders were clear and simple; no car was to enter unless it had a special sticker on the windshield. A big Army car came up with a Colonel seated in the back. The following exchange took place

Private Bloggs: Halt, who goes there?

Driver (a corpora): Colonel Chinstrap.

Private Bloggs: I'm sorry, I can't let you through. You've got to have a sticker on the windshield.

Colonel Chinstrap: Drive on!

Private Bloggs: Hold it! You really can't come through. I have orders to shoot if you try driving in without a sticker.

Colonel Chinstrap: (again) I'm telling you son, drive on.

Private Bloggs: (walking up to the rear window) Sir, I'm new at this. Do I shoot you or the driver?

Ed: Names have been changed to protect the innocent.

WHAT MAKES AN OFFICER?

An officer should be comely, spratly and above all else, confident in his own dress and bearing. He should if possible eat a small piece of meat each morning with molasses and beans. He should air himself gracefully when under fire and never place himself in a position of difficulty when being shot at. He should eat his meals comfortably and ahead of his soldiers, for it is he who is more important tactically on the battlefield and therefore he who should be well nourished.

His hair should be well groomed and if possible he should adorn a moustache or similar facial

adornment. When speaking to his soldiers he should appear unnerved and aloof and give direction without in any way involving himself personally in the execution of arduous or un-officer like duties.

He should smoke thin panetellas except in the company of ladies where he should take only a small gin mixed with lemon tea. He should be an ardent and erudite gentleman and woo the ladies both in the formal environment and in the bedroom where he should excel himself beyond the ordinary soldier with his virulent love making prowess.

These I say to you are the qualities of an officer that set him apart from the lay person and the common soldier.

LTGEN Hubert Worthington
Commander in Chief
5th Royal Indian Mountain Division
Bombay
12th December 1907

PHOTO GALLERY



August 2008

ANZAC DAY in Adelaide



Alex Cairney, Mal Henderson, Barry Lutwyche, George Timmens



Frank Bryant (in wheel chair), John Scharber and in background Peter Treble and Darcy Patrick



Arthur Hensen, John Harrison, Graham Ragless, Alex (Darby) Munro



Alex Cairney, Barry Lutwyche, George Timmins, Mal Henderson at Anzac Memorial



ANZAC DAY in Adelaide - featuring our traveling salesmen Alex Cairney and Barry Lutwyche - berets of course!

Colonel Alex Laing Memorial Dinner



Ian Hutchings, Dave Sankey, Carmen Mitchell, Peter Mitchell, Alex Cairney



Bob Skitch, WO1 Peter Coles, John Lutwyche, Barry Lutwyche



Elaine Gregor, Alex Cairney, Debra Creedy, Dave Sankey, Chris Sparrow, Jock Kay



WO1 Peter Coles delivers his address, Dennis Gregor giving rapt attention



Dining President and Association Vice President Alex Cairney receiving cheque from Dennis Gregor on behalf of sponsor Conex Pty Ltd



KILCOY - 1940

The original survey group at Kilcoy Training Camp - August to November on completion of Militia Training