



# Newsletter

*Royal Australian Survey Corps Association  
of South Australia*

*Number 57 - Autumn 2013*

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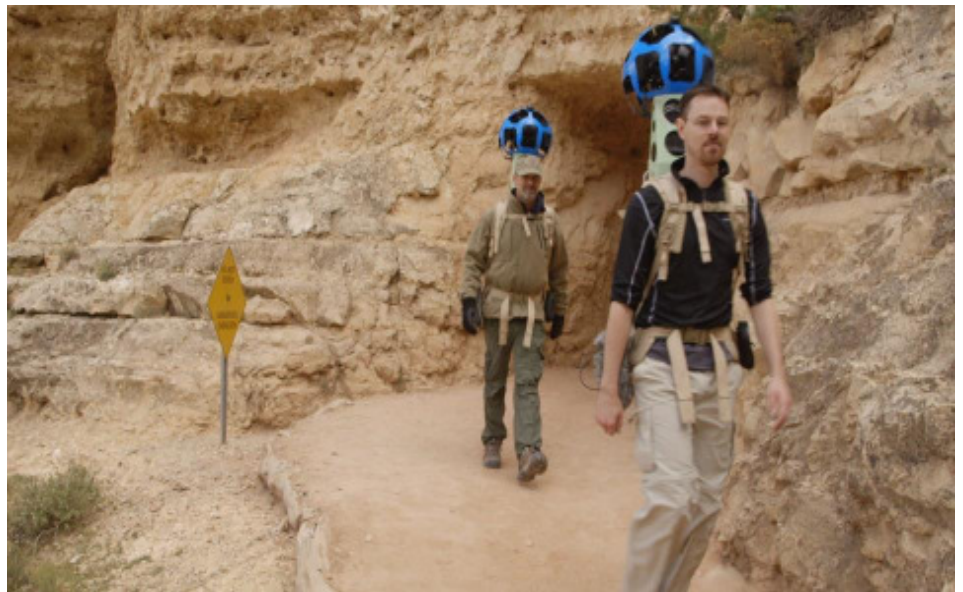
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## Better Late Than Never

**Alex Munro brings us up to date on events over the past few months**

**W**ith the best of intentions this newsletter was intended for last December, then January, but obviously good intentions were not good enough, so for what it's worth our best wishes for the remainder of the year. The period of time served by our members in the Corps until disbandment in 1997 spans over fifty years, so what is news to some may not be of interest to others and as most of our news seems to come from earlier times, some extra input from members who worked and played in later years would be appreciated.

Remember, we can only publish a newsletter from articles/news items/ anecdotes that you send to us.



*The above photo shows work in progress as Google Earth maps out the Grand Canyon in the USA. But some things never seem to change. Even with the latest and best technology, mapping still seems to demand that surveyors load themselves up with gear and back-pack it up and down hills!*

### **Corps birthday function**

The function was held at the Keswick Barracks Sergeants' Mess on Sunday 1 July 2012 from noon until late afternoon, attended by about twenty convivial friends, and the outdoor all-weather BBQ area attached to the Mess provided the perfect venue. It was a very pleasant and informal occasion enjoyed by everyone, with the only formality being a toast proposed to the memory of the Corps. Maybe you can remember a name or two of some attending; Moyna Briggs, Kay Trueman and Alex Dobie, Bob and Margaret Dikkenberg, Alex and Joan Munro, Stevo Hinic and Pauline Mannix, Bob and Rhonda Cooper, John and Pamela Harrison, Bill and Jan Griggs, Jim and Rita Dunn, and Bob and Victoria Mills.

### **From suburbia to the countryside**

After living for forty nine years in their home at Vale Park, John and Pamela Harrison have decided to shift south to picturesque Willunga. Organising such a move requires considerable time and effort so the actual move to Willunga into their new residence at 53 St. Andrews Terrace is perhaps a month or more away, although John has already indicated that old friends will be welcome to visit, especially those bringing a bottle of good quality wine, preferably two bottles, to ensure entry. Of all days to be involved in an accident, John and Pam were the last vehicle in a three vehicle collision on Portrush Road last Christmas Day, although with negligible damage to them the other two vehicles were not so lucky.

### **New Secretary required**

Rob Langley's one year tenure as Secretary ends in March at the AGM (a flyer will notify details closer to the meeting) so a volunteer is required to replace him. A great job but the pay is lousy. If anyone can help, please contact Alex Munro on telephone 82777074. Our thanks to Rob for all his work during the year.

*[Continued overleaf]*

# VALE

## George Timmins and others.

George reported that early December last year the fish were biting exceptionally well, when he fished at his usual campsite on the Darling River at Culpaulin Station south-west from Wilcannia. Within two days he had filled all his refrigeration space with fillets of perch including a cod that measured about 87 centimetres in length and weighed an estimated forty to fifty pounds, a really big fish. He still had a few fillets left in his freezer at home in late January. George also reported that John Phillips recently had a routine operation at the Bendigo Base Hospital to clear a urinary problem, which was successful so that John has now pretty well fully recovered. George does phone around quite a bit to old friends and reports that Barry Lutwyche has acquired a cottage property in Tasmania, not far from a good fishing lake, so what a great option to holiday there during summer and return home to Brisbane for the winter.

### Can you help?

A request has been received from Tiffany Bond to replace four maps belonging to her parents, that were destroyed by fire at their property in the South East fairly recently. The maps were the old R502 series (1:250,000) well and truly out of print and superceded. The maps requested are; Adelaide SJ 54-9; Pinnaroo SJ 54-14; Naracoorte SJ 54-2 and Penola SJ 54-6. I assume they had some sentimental value so if you can help please contact Alex Munro on telephone 8277 7074.

### Anthony Stephens

I rang Anthony in his office at the Adelaide Map Centre regarding the R502 series maps and he confirmed that they had not been available at any mapping outlet for many years, except the odd copies in private collections that are rarely sold.

Anthony is (or was) a very keen hot-air balloonist, so last year he participated in the national balloon competitions held in NSW, to try his skills in flying against the best in the sport. It appears a young international balloonist from Switzerland thrashed the local lads to be a convincing winner, so with his ardour dampened quite a lot Anthony returned to Adelaide, where his balloon still remains unpacked.

He mentioned a recent map that he had produced of the Kokoda Trail (or track) which had sold fairly well in PNG. Control for the track was established using GPS equipment which was not expected to work in the local conditions of dense jungle and heavy overhead foliage, but it did and very well too. As an innovation with the contours he colour coded the contour intervals, making the map easier to read.

Anthony considers his contours are perhaps better than those plotted at Fortuna during the PNG mapping programme, which is understandable as the original contours were plotted to the tree tops with an allowance for the average estimated jungle height, without consideration for the much higher trees in the bottom of the valleys.

### Phil Boyle

Phil died very suddenly and unexpectedly at his home about the 15th January this year, having suffered a subdural haematoma. This will be a shock to his many friends, especially those who had maintained regular contact with him, and who will remember Phil during his service in the Corps as something of a character.

### John Collins

John died in September last year in Perth. He was trained as a RAEME-RACT operator and in this capacity he was attached to 5 Fd Svy Sqn for a lengthy period and later was RSM of the RACT unit at Keswick Barracks, where he maintained contact with 4 Fd Svy Sqn and was well known.

### Laurance Kendall Hazlewood

Laurance passed away in June last year at the age of eighty nine years. He served in 2nd Field Survey Coy during WW2 from 1942 until 1946, at first surveying mapping control on Cape York, then posted to Lae in PNG engaged on aerial photo annotation and later to Torokina in southern Bougainville. He worked as a geographer in civilian life, obtaining degrees in his chosen field at both Sydney University and the Australian National University.

### John Cattell

John Cattell (pictured below in June 2010) died in Queensland on Sunday 24 February 2013. John joined the Corps in the late 1950s, and after completing his Basic Course was posted to the Regiment. He was selected for officer training at OCS Portsea graduating in June 1960. Following a period of civil schooling he served in various appointments in South Australia and in Canberra. In 1966 he was engaged in Aerodist operations along the Sepik Valley and the north coast of PNG. He was the Australian



exchange officer with Canada in 1969 -71 and subsequently was appointed OC Air Survey Squadron at Bendigo where he served for several years. From there he was posted as OC 5 Field Survey Squadron at Karrakatta before retiring to work on mapping in Tasmania. John is survived by his wife, Sally.

## People we know who passed through Adelaide recently

John Harrison reported that he had contact with the following Corps identities during the previous few weeks;

**Bill Black** and Jan passed through Adelaide enroute to home-town Melbourne, after touring Western Australia including the Canning Stock Route.

**Tom Sawyer** was over from Perth for a few days to visit relatives.

**Peter Rossiter** was down from Ballina in NSW to attend a family funeral.

**Evan Allanson** rang John from his home in Tanunda for a chat to catch up on local news. For those interested, Evan still farms lavender at his property near Lyndoch in the Barossa Valley.

### Stan Stephens and Bob Cooper

I was surprised to see Yvonne and Stan Stephens at my local shopping centre just recently, as Stan normally shops at home-town Port Augusta, but as he explained he was in Adelaide to play competition bowls during Country Bowls Week and intended returning home the following day, with his next trip down for Anzac Day.

He also mentioned meeting **Rhonda and Bob Cooper** during the competitions, as Bob is the secretary of the Ascot Park Bowls Club. I was glancing through the sports pages of the Sunday Mail when I noticed an article describing Ascot Park as the Manchester United of the bowling greens. It appears that they intend to fly in –with all expenses paid—New Zealand’s top ranked singles player for the Premier finals played next April and naturally have been accused of trying to buy a premiership title by the other bowling clubs. Bob was a trifle shy about a reply when asked, by the media, what it would cost. I’ll bet you thought it only happened with soccer clubs.

### T J Whicker

John Whicker was having a rough time with chest pains, out of breath and a general feeling of being unwell following his return home daily after his usual morning walk. This persisted for some time and obviously was not getting any better, so a visit to his local GP and a follow-up test revealed that there was a ninety percent blockage in an artery, so late in November last year he had an operation to insert a stent and open the blockage, at St. Andrew’s Hospital. The procedure went well and John is now as fit as ever.

John also reported that **Tony Balkauskas** has had an operation to remove his gall bladder and consequently lost a bit of weight, but otherwise has recovered reasonably well.

He also mentioned that earlier last year (2012) when touring the Top End with big brother Dave on an annual fishing trip, they met **Peter Presser** and Leslie in Katherine by coincidence on Peter’s 60th birthday, which they all celebrated in style with a slap-up seafood dinner. John will not be with us on Anzac Day next as he plans to be travelling interstate with his cousin, visiting from America.

### Trevor Hann

Trevor has lived in Thailand for many years now, at a town about six hundred kilometres north of Bangkok and close to the border with Laos, where he has a pretty well permanent home that he uses as a base when travelling away employed mainly on mining/oil exploration projects around Asia.

Trevor generally visits Australia each year, and is presently in Adelaide to celebrate his mother’s 90th birthday with family. He has managed to meet up with a few locals while here; lunch with Rob Langley, dinner with Mark Temme and late afternoon drinks with Alex Munro, John Harrison and Stevo Hinic.

## Here, There and Away

Dawn Laing sent our Association a flyer early last December detailing the publication and sales information of the book “Here, There & Away”, which Noel Sproles then e-mailed a copy to our members, so most will know about the sales pitch but certainly not all. Dawn is a member of the Defence Widows Support Group—ACT, a group of Canberra women who compiled the book through to publication, with the sole purpose of raising funds to support the widows of deceased service personnel, those widows in need who have no claim to any Federal Government or other benefits. To quote from the flyer, the book is about——“Voices of the families of those who served”——“The stories cover the period from World War 1 to more recent times, and celebrate the love, care and support given by and to members of the wider defence family as well as the resilience these families required in diverse locations and situations”——“The book paints a vivid picture of the ups and downs of everyday life for military families, but the stories also reflect many aspects of life that we can all relate to”, and as I understand the book also has input from former Corps members. The book can now be ordered from your local bookstore for delivery in late March, at a cost of \$20, so why not buy a copy for a good cause.

### Ted Morris —Service in Vietnam.

Shayne Morris is seeking information about the service of his late father Sgt Edward Morris (Ted to everyone) in A Section 1 Topo Survey Troop, Vietnam, from Jan 68 to Jan 69. Photographs, anecdotes, anything of interest to Shayne. If you can help please contact him on email: SMorris @gtlaw.com.au or contact Alex Munro on 8277 7074.

### Coming events

Keep the following functions in mind to be held in the next few weeks, and notified by flyers sent out with full details.

### Annual General Meeting

### Anzac Day Reunion.

# Training as a Surveyor

John Harrison tells of the rigours of the Basic Course at the School in the 1950s

The course was to last twelve months, - seven days, (and nights), a week with only a three week break at Xmas/New Year. Other courses which ran from January to December did not have the 'luxury' of this mid-course break!, and several students on these courses were removed due to 'stress'. Notwithstanding this mid-course break, of the twenty-seven or so students who commenced the 9/56 Basic Surveying course, only nine finished/qualified as Topographic Surveyors Grade I.

The daily routine after barracks inspection, then breakfast was a set, (or two), of sun observations for time/azimuth, classes, a mid-day sun observation for latitude, lunch, more formal classes, an afternoon sun observation for time/azimuth, dinner, and, (dependant upon the weather), star observations for time/azimuth/position/ etc., then to bed only to go through the lot the following day, every day. It's no wonder that cloudy days were welcome, - giving the students limited time to calculate longhand the various astronomical observations that were beginning to accumulate. Training modules/subjects included Astronomy; Plane and Geodetic Surveying; Plane and Spheroidal Map Projections, Computations; Theodolite and Chain Traversing; Baseline Measurement; Plane Tabling; Topographic, (Triangulation, Resection, Intersection, Short-Base, etc), Surveying; Observation Tower Construction; Signalling; etc. Countless days were spent in the Dromana Valley dodging cows, and other friendly stock. The Fairburn Paddock bull, in the paddock adjacent to the School' was a source of considerable vexation to the students. When sufficient lengths of chain, (steel band), were strung through the paddock fence between adjacent traverse stations he would rise from his place of rest under one of the cypress pines and amble along the fence-line dragging the many 300-hundred foot steel bands with him much to the chagrin, and shouting of the surveyors involved.

It was imagined by some students that the saying, - "*not knowing the difference between Arthur or Martha*" most likely originated at the School' as the majority of field surveying was carried out in the Dromana Valley that ran from the hills down to the sea between topographic features Arthur's Seat, and Mount Martha having a Trig' station established by the School' for student training, on each. On cloudy or foggy days, or when the young students were confused, - and it was often, it was not unusual to ask/hear "*is that Arthur or Martha?*"

Training was performance-based with students not able to keep up being given the option/s;

After three months: Revert to another Corps if a vacancy exists or remain in 'Survey' as a Driver/Field Assistant.

After six months: Convert to a Draughtsman on next available course in 'Survey' or a transfer to a Corps of choice if a vacancy exists.

After nine months: Convert/graduate as a Draughtsman in 'Survey', or a transfer.

After twelve months: Unsuccessful graduates qualify as Draughtsman in 'Survey'. Successful graduates were allocated to a Field Survey Section in either Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia or Western Australia, or the (then) AHQ Survey Regiment based in Bendigo.

Needless to say the need to graduate as a Surveyor was paramount. Who in their right mind would want to be a Draughtsman? Word had come back to the School that the Army Survey Regiment was just that, - regimented!, and to be avoided if at all possible! Anyway, - we had heard on the 'grape-vine' from the course immediately before ours, having mostly been posted to Queensland, taking sometimes weeks to cut down one of many rain-forest trees when clearing hills for triangulation observations. Alarmed at this effort we quickly, - after consulting our basic school atlas and learned that South Australia was described as having "*generally low, flat hills, and hardly any heavy timber*" which seemed a safe bet for a posting! Accordingly five of the graduating class opted for South Oz' and were (surprisingly) allocated our choice. We should have been suspicious but then .....

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## Major General 'Sandy Pearson' dies aged 94

Someone well known to many Vietnam veterans dies, 7 November 2012

Major General Cedric Maudsley Ingram "Sandy" Pearson AO, DSO, OBE, MC (24 August 1918 - 7 Nov 2012) was a retired Australian Army officer. He served during WW2 finishing the war as a LtCol and later commanded 1st Australian Task Force in Phuoc Tuy Province during the Vietnam War, (1968-69). He was Commandant of the Royal Military College, Duntroon and retired as Chief of Personnel (Army) in 1975. He was born in Kurri Kurri, New South Wales, and attended Newington College (1932-1936) before graduating from the Royal Military College, Duntroon, in 1940. He was a great leader, well known and will be remembered kindly by a large number of ex servicemen.

