
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS
ASSOCIATION
Queensland Branch (Inc)



BULLETIN

SPRING EDITION

OCTOBER 2002

MAPMAKERS OF FORTUNA – the History of the Army Survey Regiment

Don Swiney confirms that the History of the Army Survey Regiment will be launched on the 3rd weekend in March 2003, that is, Friday 21st March, at a civic reception in the newly restored Bendigo Town Hall commencing at 1700 hrs followed by a dinner at the Havilah Rd RSL. A luncheon BBQ will follow on the Saturday at the Eaglehawk RSL. There may be other activities and the next issue of Magna Carto will contain full details with nomination forms.

The History will be in A4 format, about 15mm thick with hard cover and contain 17 plates of maps and many photos. 1000 copies are being printed at a Maryborough printer and the cost is likely to be about \$50.00 a copy.

DEREK CHAMBERS AWARD PRESENTATION

SSM WO1 Barrie Craymer advises that the Derek Chambers Award for 2002 to the 1st Topographical Survey Squadron member who has made a significant and visible contribution to the *esprit de corps* of the Squadron will be made at a Squadron BBQ on Friday 15 November 2002 commencing at 1400 hrs. Please advise Mary-Ann your attendance for catering purposes. The award honours both the memory of a past Association member as well as the recipient and all Association members welcome.

COMMITTEE

Patron	Lieutenant Colonel EU Anderson MBE (Ph 3408 9179)
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	Michael Knight (3278 8331)
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	Hal Jones (Ph 3395 1404)
Squadron Liaison & Welfare	Jim Gill (Ph 3264 1597)
Member (unallocated)	Stan Campbell (Ph 3285 3970)
Squadron OC	Major WM (Bill) Thomson
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**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am very aware that in the lead-up to the Military Map Maker's Dinner this year some members of our Association were disappointed at being excluded from the list of invitees. Your Committee understands and shares their disappointment and apologizes to those members for promoting the function as open to all. Accepting the previous year's Military Mapmaker's Dinner as a precedent (whether or not that was intended) we assumed that the intent this year was to be the same – open to all members of the Association. We overlooked the strict rules of the Army messing system and perhaps imagined that those rules had been relaxed over the years. We held to the case that we do not carry rank in our Association – we left that behind when we left the Army. The truth is, of course, while we can hold to that position within our Association and in our normal civilian life, when we step back into the Army, we do so accepting that the Army's rules apply. It is entirely the prerogative of the Mess to invite whomever they choose according to their own rules. It is not for the Squadron or its OC or its SSM to pressure for a variation to those rules, even for a single occasion; they simply cannot do that. And finally, the Military Mapmaker's Dinner is not our function, it is their's, promoted by the Squadron and conducted by the Mess in accordance with the rules that apply. It is their 'call'.

We enjoy a lot of support from the 1st Topographical Survey Squadron. Other State's Survey Associations tend to ascribe our relative success as an ex-services association to that fact. Perhaps there are other factors as well but the support of the Squadron is important to us and it would be a matter of concern were we to lose it.

Is there to be a Military Mapmaker's Dinner in 2003? That remains to be seen. What is now clear is that it is a Squadron function held in an Army mess according to the rules of that mess. It is not an Association function and we should not present it as such.

Bob Skitch – Association Vice President

NOTICES

LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH DRINKS

This regular informal event continues at the Gaythorne RSL and Rock advises that numbers attending are on the increase. There is ample parking at the Club. When is it? The last Friday of the month of course. Check with Rock Thiselton (Ph 3353 1026) to be sure.

ASSOCIATION BADGE

All current stocks sold but 'Magna Carto' advises that there is to be a re-run – same size but in 'antique gold' or bronze finish. The cost is to be \$10.00. They will be available at the launch of 'Mapmakers of Fortuna', however, the Queensland Association will pre-purchase a number.

PNG MEDAL

President Peter is continuing to investigate this matter on behalf of all State Survey Associations. So those who are contemplating having their medals remounted after the plethora of medal issues since they were discharged and have a mind to apply – hold off for a moment until we resolve this matter

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2001 – 2002 & 2002 - 2003

This notice has to be a permanent fixture of our Bulletin, so here it is again:

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.

A LETTER – Val Knight

A very unfortunate thing happened recently! But before I get to that, some history....

Mike and I are both ex-serving members of RASVY. We did not serve twenty years nor did we attain senior rank; O.R. or officer.

We have strong beliefs in the value of our individual contributions to the defence of our nation, our families, our friends and the place it all played in the grand scheme of our lives. I personally have strong feelings about service within the defence forces – decisions about war, those who fought, those who sent them, those who didn't go.

I have been too close at times to the repercussions of all these things and have witnessed the grace and tragedy of it's indelible print in more than one life.

When I joined the army, the only thing I brought with me was a family, and a will to succeed. Ironically I am the senior ranked of the two of us; a female – fully qualified for corporal but only ever attaining the rank of lance jack. I stepped on too many toes!

Mike on the other hand was a fully qualified tradesman before he joined the army and at Kapooka was recommended for an award as leading cadet for his platoon although he did not get it. He participated in the army under two ECN's and topped both his IET courses taking out Corps awards both times. He then went on to top all the courses he ever participated in and later received for his services to the Corps an Exemplary Service Medallion, presented to him by the Head of Corps at a Corps birthday parade at the Regiment.

Despite all this, Mike's decision was not to further his career but rather to further his education and apply his knowledge within the trade.

It was at this point in our careers with the looming disbandment of the Corps and an untimely posting to 1 Topo that the end came. Posted to Brisbane, both of us took

discharge, Mike without compunction and I with regret.

We are both presently employed within the industry as Cartographers/GIS technicians.

It is here that the real story begins.

We joined the Corps Association and enjoyed moving amongst familiar faces and like minded people, all of whom outranked us, both in length of service and worn rank on discharge; both non-commissioned and commissioned officers. Their wealth of experience and knowledge might have made us feel overwhelmed; but we were made welcome by this organisation, which honours comradeship above rank .

What a true Aussie sentiment that is for a bunch of ex-soldiers!!

But now it has been made known to us that we are to be excluded from a function based on our lack of rank.

- The fact that we left such considerations nearly ten years ago was of no account. - -
- That we had participated in a similar function the previous year and had not humiliated ourselves or anyone else in the process, nor drawn attention to ourselves, was of no account.

- That we were attending under the umbrella of the Association was of no account.

To say we are disappointed at the outcome is an understatement.

Yours Sincerely

Val Knight

Ed Note: Val's letter succinctly expresses a disappointment felt by many. The contribution of all who served in RA Svy is of equal importance and the achievement of rank became problematic as the Corps diminished in strength to its final demise in 1996. Many who left the Corps as sappers and corporals in earlier years went on to achieve high positions in public service, academia and private practice. But the Army has its rules and the Association remains a rankless organization.

RA SVY AT WOOMERA, MARILINGA & EMU PLAINS – setting the record straight!

A plea for all those who served at those or related locations to write an account of their experience.....read on!

The '50s and '60s saw many Survey Corps personnel performing their sacred duties in those Centralian civil and military cantonments of Woomera, Marilinga and Emu Plains. The Corps history (*CD Coulthard-Clark*) gives some account (pp 113-115) of the Corps' involvement at Woomera, the so-called *rocket range*, mentioning a few well known Corps identities in the ranks they held at that time. Brief mention is made also of the atomic site, Marilinga. But of course, there is little detail. Much of the early work was more of an engineering survey nature than topographic despite the original deployment being intended for topographic purposes. (Versatile lot, aren't we?) Some of the names mentioned are Maj Lindsay Lockwood, Spr Colin van Senden, Maj Wally Relf, Sgts Len Beadell, Frank Cohen and Harold Watts, Spr NRJ (John) Hillier, Lt JL (Jim) Stedman, Lt SW (Spencer) Snow. For those of us coming fresh into the Corps in the '50s, they are all legendary names.

One of those names became more than a legend, perhaps an icon of the Woomera survey especially associated with the '*Gun-Barrel Highway*' up the centre of the range. That was Lennie Beadell. He captured the attention of the national press and was written up in the early '50s as '*the iron man of the inland*'. Without disputing his personal contribution (actual, that is) to the project, Lennie's ability as a writer (he has written several books of his experiences that sold well) and raconteur has enhanced his role considerably. According Lennie he was personally responsible for the choice of sites and was a close confidant of Sir William Penny, the British scientist in charge of the project.

But what of the Survey Corps? Beadell certainly gives some credit to the Corps' work and makes reference to others of the

above-mentioned personnel. But certainly not in any comprehensive way.

Colin van Senden on a recent trip to Woomera found that a substantial monument commemorating Beadell's supposed achievements had been erected in the Woomera Cemetery. This caused Colin to reflect on the role of all those Survey Corps officers and men who participated at all three locations and beyond, and whose history has been only lightly touched upon. Colin met with two other stalwarts of the Woomera saga, John Hillier and Clem Sargent. To set the record straight they have together planned to produce a history of the Corps' involvement at all three locations – Woomera, Marilinga and Emu Plains – no mean undertaking! To this end they require input from all others who served there also – personal stories of what they did, how they got there – for what purpose. It was a long time ago but history is often written long after the event. Perhaps there are written reports that can be accessed somewhere within the Army's archives and no doubt they will be. But personal stories are essential also. The plea is to come forward and write your own account – a page or two – and send a copy to Bob Skitch who will forward it on to whoever is to undertake the compilation. Might be good copy for this Bulletin also.

Colin van Senden is a paid-up member of our Queensland Association although he is resident in South Australia. As a very young sapper at the end of WW2 he served a while with 5 Coy.....Ed.

5 COY IN SPENCERS GULF (SA) – a small reunion..... by Colin Van Senden

In early 1946 a small detachment from the 5th Field Survey Company stationed in Brisbane was sent to the Upper Spencer Gulf region to provide survey control for the RAN Survey Ship *HMAS LACHLAN* which was carrying out a hydrographic survey of the Gulf.

On January 2nd this year three members of this detachment, namely, Allan 'Doc' Jenner from Queenscliff in Victoria and

Bob Love and myself both from Strathalbyn (SA) together with our wives met for dinner at one of our local hotels and swapped a few yarns of this survey job.

Carrying a 15 foot length of 5" x 5" jarrah up some steep hills for trig stations was quite a feat.

The detachment was only eleven strong so we 'golden oldies' thought it was a good effort after 56 years.

We three were in different Companies during the war. Al Jenner was with 5 Field; Bob Love was with 2/1st Topo Coy and I was with 6 Topo Coy.

Following completion of the survey most of us returned to our respective States for discharge.

A sad postscript: Col phoned me a few days after sending this report to advise that Allan Jenner passed away on Friday 9th August 2002 in Queenscliff.....Ed

VALEDICTORY – HANS KRAMER

After a long battle with cancer, Hans Kramer left this world on Friday 6th September 2002.



Hans in recent years

Hans was born in Hamburg Germany on the 5 April 1935, the third son in a family of five. By his accounts he had a happy childhood growing up in Germany during the Second World War. When asked

recently if he was frightened by the war as a young boy he replied "Are you kidding, a ten year old boy in a war? It was exciting" He recalled how he marveled when, prior to a bombing raid, planes would fly over Hamburg dropping millions of strips of foil which sparkled in the sunlight as they drifted slowly down.

But times were hard and he would hang around the army disposal bins hoping to get food for the family.

Hans was forever the adventurer. At the age of fourteen he stowed away on a vessel out of Germany, traveling the world at sea for two years. Hans with four of his shipmates had heard that there were many jobs to be had in Australia and they jumped ship at Balmain in 1952. As a result Hans became an illegal immigrant; however, at that time with tens of thousands of immigrants arriving on our shores, the authorities seemed less concerned than at present. He boarded a train to Narrandera and here his love of this great land began. Before he turned 23 yrs of age Hans had traveled the country extensively working wherever he was, in a total of 26 different jobs. These included timber cutting in Tasmania, steel working and crane driving at BHP in Newcastle, launch master of a vessel servicing remote Aboriginal communities in north Queensland, fishing and shark netting in and around Sydney Harbour.

After meeting his wife to be, Leona, Hans decided to embark on a career of more substance, preferably one which combined his love of maths, the outdoor life and travel. He had talked with Noel Fletcher a Surveyor in Narrandera (later Surveyor General NSW) and this led him to the Army and the Royal Australian Survey Corps in 1957.

Hans commenced the ten-month basic survey course at the School of Military Survey at Balcombe following which he was posted to the Eastern Command Field Survey Section at Randwick NSW. The Corps at the time was engaged in the massive task of mapping Australia and in the ensuing years Hans was engaged on

mapping operations in western NSW and beyond. He attended the sergeant's course at Balcombe in 1962 and was promoted to that rank soon after.



Immaculate Hans at the School with T2

Hans was posted to the newly raised 1st Topographical Survey Troop but 'loaned back' to his previous unit, a rather ambiguous concept then used by the Army to man its 'front-line' field force units on paper. In January 1966 the Troop managed to gather its loan back personnel together for a four week stint of solid military training at Holdsworthy. Hans took part and at the end of that, in the event, fortuitous training period, it was announced that Australia was to increase its commitment to Vietnam from a Battalion to a Task Force and a Detachment of the 1st Topographical Survey Troop, later to become 'A Section', was to be part of that.

Hans was not included in the first detachment of the Troop which left for Vietnam in May 1966 but in the second group, leaving Australia in May 67 and returning in January 68. Thus Hans became a Vietnam Vet together with some 59,000 Navy, Army and Air Force personnel who served in that theatre. Hans returned to Eastern Command Field Survey Unit (later 2nd Field Survey Squadron), and soon after was promoted to the rank of Warrant Officer Class 2. Later in that year Hans was detached on

field operations in the Northern Territory. His continuing service also included a period on the Survey staff of Eastern Command at Victoria Barracks with Major Bob Hammett and in 1971 Hans undertook the role of logistic liaison officer in Singapore for the first of the Indonesian Sumatran mapping operations.

In late 1974 Hans was posted as a WO1 to 1st Field Survey Squadron in Brisbane which then included the Topographical Survey Troop. In 1975 the Squadron mounted a major field survey operation based at Cooktown. With 120 personnel in the field this was the largest field operation undertaken by the Survey Corps in Australia. Hans undertook two important functions, the overall logistic support function and the data collection and collation function. The success of the operation turned largely on those two functions. This type of work was Hans's forte and his performance was predictably exemplary.

Hans had a great way with men best described as firm but fair. He was always approachable, a father figure perhaps, maintaining high personal values. He naturally thought well of people and they responded equally to him.

Leaving the Army after 20 years service in 1977 Hans returned to the sea. He purchased a fishing trawler and named it *Remark* which is Kramer spelt backwards. During that time Hans would turn up at the occasional Association or Squadron function with a bucket of fresh prawns and stories to tell. It was a rare pleasure. After two years he decided to sell up and retire and he purchased his life time dream his yacht *Argos*. He sailed up and down the Queensland coast and to Indonesia in the Darwin to Ambon race. He spent the last years of his life enjoying a relaxed life style, meeting wonderful friends in secluded anchorages.

I last saw Hans a few weeks ago and as we all know he was having a rough time. We talked about past times and clearly his military experience stayed with him till the end. Something he said to me said a lot

about Hans. He said to the effect – “I have had many great experiences in my life and this is the final one. I want to see it out to the end”.

Well, he did!

In closing I want to record the gratitude of the Association to Leona, who after years of separation took Hans back and nursed him at her home till his death. In her words and as an explanation Leona explained ‘He was such a good man’.

And he was!

Hans is survived by his four children, Paul, John, Janine and Michael.

This valedictory is compiled from two addresses given at Hans’ funeral one from his son, Paul, and the other by Bob Skitch on behalf of the Association.

REUNION – 2002 – Andy’s story



Our traditional Reunion on the first Saturday in November (this year the 7th September) was again a happy occasion with a good attendance of members and wives, although our WW2 veterans continue to diminish in number.

A highlight for me is picking up Andy Steen at his Brighton home and taking him to our Reunion. Andy regales me with his stories of his WW2 experiences and this year I had a re-run of his North Barnard Island experience where he shot the shark and caught scrub typhus which almost led to his demise. (Reported in the April 2000 Bulletin)

The reason that story came up was: Andy was musing on the fact that at 96 years old he is still not entitled to a DVA Gold Card. Although our PM in his election speech in 1996 promised a Gold Card for all WW2 vets, the small print stated to the effect ‘for those who served in prescribed zones’. Andy didn’t go any further north than Townsville because he got scrub typhus and was med-evaced to Brisbane and discharged some time after. However,

it appears that if one was on sea-going duties off-shore from Townsville then that would count for a Gold Card. Andy’s musing was along the lines that he went by sea to North Barnard Island with Captain Bert Eggleton to recover an old trig station and would that count as sea-going duties and so entitle him to the Gold Card? My advice to Andy could only be ‘Give it a go Andy; at 96 you certainly deserve one!’ One problem remains – we can’t find North Barnard Island on the map! Andy tells me his daughter holds a Gold Card because she was married to a Vietnam vet who passed away and as a war widow she has an entitlement – which Andy certainly doesn’t begrudge.

Andy also reflected on the role of the Queensland Railways during WW2. In his estimation they gave exemplary service. While the wharfies went on strike at one time, the railway staff did nothing but work long hours and without additional pay having foregone overtime – and without complaint. At one time 37 trains were assembled and loaded and sent north in one 24 hour period. Andy believes this is a little known fact and deserves recognition. I promised Andy that for what it is worth our Survey Association Bulletin would give Queensland Rail the recognition they deserve.



**1ST TOPOGRAPHICAL
SURVEY SQUADRON**

Exercise Swift Eagle

Exercise SWIFT EAGLE 02 was the ADF’s test of its ability to conduct short notice evacuation operations. Mounted out of Townsville, the Ex scenario was based on the island of Capricornia, a fictitious place off the coast of north eastern Australia. In reality, the evacuation took place from Rockhampton and its surrounding towns in central Queensland.

1 Topo Svy Sqn sent a section to 3 Bde Townsville, including the Air Camera Det and the new flyaway team. A section was also attached to HQ 1 Div, who were playing exercise control based in

Rockhampton. The 3 Bde team deployed 'into country' via Hercules aircraft and set up for ops in an abandoned building at Rockhampton Airfield. Their primary task was to exploit the imagery captured by the Air Camera, and provide products to the 1 RAR group and 3 Bde HQ to allow for planning and the safe evacuation of the 'stranded' Australians.

Three days of air camera missions were flown in the 6 days of the evacuation, and the products delivered allowed for the successful evacuation of nearly 800 volunteer 'evacuees'. The 1 Div team provided a range of products to the exercise controllers that allowed the safe and successful conduct of a complex exercise.

The Sqn learned a lot of excellent lessons during Exercise SWIFT EAGLE 02 and has continued to confirm its role as a provider of vital information for the military decision making process.

Back to basics – A Sappers viewpoint

From 7 - 11 October 02 1 Topo Svy Sqn took part in Exercise Geo Sapper. This was an exercise to get us back to the grass roots of field engineering. For those of us who have completed the Basic Combat Engineering Course it was a refresher, and for those who had not, hopefully they learnt something new. As usual the Sergeants followed the Sappers in learning how to conduct basic engineering tasks with stands such as; bridging, demolitions, watermanship, field defences, field machines and survey. Each stand was arranged to encourage all members to get in and get dirty, following an instructional phase.

At the Bridging area we learned safety of the bridging site, followed by a demonstration on how to erect a 5 bay MGB. Each section then dug deep to see just how fast they could build it, the best time being 15 minutes. You could also hear a SGT say "this is 3 times heavier to dismantle than it is to erect." This may have been due to the age and fragility of some senior members of the squadron.

Demolitions as always went off with a bang. Before we actually started blowing things up we had a 'Safety with Explosives' lesson explaining safety distances and how to use elec detonators and non-elec detonators. We learnt to make sure that our explosives detonated or it's a 40min wait and a carton over the bar.

At watermanship everyone had a chance to bathe while learning about the water displacement of an arcmesh boat and how to make a pack float, and in some cases, sink.

Field defences consisted of building catwire fences, bastard wire, a sandbag wall and also how to site pits for best defensive position.

Mechanical advantage was a term widely used at the Field machine stand where the sections learned how to make a gin using 6 timber logs, cordage, rope and OPH.

The Survey stand saw the Sergeants come out with some of the shortcuts and tricks they had learned as Sappers to complete a feature survey of a small area including 1-metre contours.

When all of the work was done each section gave a short informative talk on a historical person in cartographic history. Overall the week was enjoyed by most and everybody gained from the experience of what our engineer brethren do from day to day.

Social

On 12 Oct 02 the Squadron hosted a Mixed Dining Out Night for WO1 Allan Virtue on his retirement. The dinner was enhanced by combining it with the Military Map Maker's Dinner. This is an annual event which provides an opportunity for ex-RASvy members and current serving members to socialise and maintain a link to our past whilst the trade is undergoing significant changes. WO1 Allan Virtue was dined out amongst a large number of his family and friends and many kind words were said. Lt Col Bob Skitch (Ret) in proposing the Toast to the Royal

Australian Survey Corps and its incorporated Association spoke of some of the traditions of the old Corps. His address is published later in this bulletin.

WO2 Mark Donnelly who unfortunately couldn't attend the dinner is also being farewelled from the Army this month. On behalf of the Corps I wish Mark Donnelly and Allan and Elizabeth Virtue all the best for his future.

Ed – The RA Svy Corps Association also wishes both Allan Virtue and Mark Donnelly and their families all the best in their retirement and trusts that the Squadron's loss will be the Association's gain.

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS' HANDBOOK – 1940 – courtesy Kev Moody

Approximate Method of Finding the True North by a Watch

In the Southern Hemisphere

Hold the watch face upwards, point the line from the centre of its dial to 12 o'clock at the sun and bisect the angle between this line and the hour hand. The line so found will point to north.

In the Northern Hemisphere

Hold the watch face upwards, point the hour hand at the sun and bisect the angle between the hour hand and 12 o'clock. The line so found will point to south.

'R' BADGES

A query has been raised on the wearing of 'R' badges – who is entitled and how do you get them. The RQ at Enoggera tells me that only commissioned officers with 20+ years of service on discharge have an automatic entitlement to wear the Queen's uniform on approved occasions and hence use the 'R' badge. To be issued, one needs to front up to the Q Store with proof of rank on discharge and years of service. NCOs and WOs can be so authorized also but a letter of authorization is required – presumably from Head of Corps or his/her representative.

SICK PARADE

Perhaps this should be called the 'get well parade' because we trust that the below mentioned are doing just that.

Kev Walsh is home after having a pace-maker and fibulator fitted. Kev says the device has improved his overall condition a little but with an incredibly low blood pressure he doesn't have the 'bounce' he used to have. Kevin's great spirit keeps him going.

Jim Houston has returned home after a quadruple by-pass and valve repair. A sudden heart attack after admission kept him in intensive care for a number of days. Now at home he feels great – best in years and has shed 7 kg, back to his army days weight.

I had a visit from **Brian Berkery** recently. Brian is not in good shape suffering with advanced cancer. Brian has been through all the treatments and now faces the inevitable with remarkable equanimity and courage. Brian, traveling with an old work colleague, was visiting familiar places and friends. He called on John Cattell and Garney Cook. Brian served in the Corps from 1955 to 1961 mostly in Queensland but went to New Ireland on Project Cutlass in 1956/57.

PERSONALIA ITEMS

Ken and Nance Shaw sent an email in response to the July Bulletin. Ken says he and Nance flew to Darwin in June to celebrate the 50th birthday of his son Darryl as well as his own. Ken doesn't say which one that was. According to Ken his own BD was low key at the Jockey Club at the racecourse but Darryl's was a gala affair with 150 guests. Darryl is a paramedic and at one stage all Darwin's three ambulances were at the party with flashing blue lights and all! Ken and Nance visited the sights of Darwin – Lytchfield Park with its numerous waterfalls, Howard Springs with huge barramundi; across Darwin Harbour to Mandoura and the air and military museums. Now its back to bowls again.... And the AFL on telly. Ken sends his regards to all members who know and remember him.

A note from **Noel Fletcher** tells a little of the Survey Servicemen's Association in NSW. The Association Secretary is Bill Lafferty who lives now in Cooma. Noel and Don MacDonald are great mates and in Noel's words, "Don is Don and still the same – he likes to get a copy (of our Bulletin) and I also." Noel sold his house last December and moved to his present address at North Turramurra – a good one he says but a bit far out. The NSW Association celebrated Corps Day on 1 July at the George Street RSL opposite Anthony Horder's "which

is very good – food, beer and wine. Noel sends his regards to all our Queensland members.

Mick Symmons phoned recently to advise a correction to his postcode. Mick enjoys receiving the Bulletin – it keeps him in touch. As always he is flat out at his nursery enterprise (plant nursery that is) at 183 Eggersdorf Road, Ormeau. In the rural addressing system that now applies throughout much of Australia that means he is 1.83 kms from the start of Eggersdorf Road. He welcomes visitors, especially those who intend to make a purchase – fair dinkum – he would just love to see you.

Peter Bates-Brownsword. Now that's a familiar name! Peter has just returned from Melbourne having participated successfully in the International Veterans Games in the basket ball team. And it was **GOLD GOLD GOLD** for the team – winners are grinners – just ask Peter!

Phil Armstrong Remembered.

Since publishing Fr Phil's obituary in the July Bulletin some comments from old comrades of Phil's have been received.

Col Van Senden states; Very disappointed to learn of Phil (*Pimy*) Armstrong's passing. We went through the training school at Darley together.

Lionel Devencorn (Devey) writes: So sorry to hear about Phil Armstrong's passing. I remember the day they came to our unit, Armstrong, Pike, Putney and Henry. They were very studious boys and were given a lot of time off to study and spent many hours in their tent. I used to do a little comic sketch for the front of our tents so the one our boys got me to do for the four was called the 'NEST' because they were always in it. But they made good use of the time spent in study and greatly appreciated the opportunity.

Ed note: Devey's sense of humour reflected in his 'comic sketches' and clearly inspired by his little story above can be seen with the membership notice on Page 2 of this Bulletin.

Max Neil. An email from Bill Boyd reports on the wedding of Max Neil, resident in Tasmania, to his second wife, Anne. For those who remember Max, here is a photo of the happy couple. Max looks younger than when I last saw him, 20 odd years ago!



Max and Anne Neil

Brig Don Macdonald. Don, our *pater-familias* as correspondent Brian Murray calls him, now at the age of 94 (I think) has given a paper to the Senior Surveyor's Group of the NSW Division of the Institution of Surveyors. (Don was National President of that august body many years ago when he held the office of D Mil Svy. The paper titled *The Life and Style of a Surveyor in the 20th Century* has been published in June 2002 issue of the *Australian Surveyor* and it tells a little of Don's earlier years. It also tells a great deal of the story of RA Svy – a potted history in effect. Anyone interested may obtain a copy from me – a phone call or email will suffice.

A letter from **Charlie Watson** of the Canberra Survey Corps Association tells us that the Canberra Branch is alive and well. Charlie says that he has been extremely busy and hence has been unable to edit a Bulletin in recent years but retires at the end of this year and will then have more time. So we expect better of you after that date, Charlie! The Canberra Association has three functions a year, an ANZAC Day march followed by a lunch; a Corps Birthday function at the Kingston Hotel and an evening dinner on Remembrance Day. Twenty members attended the last Corps Birthday dinner. Charlie also sent a nominal roll of all members with phone numbers and email addresses.

Lloyd Twine has written from Atherton – Last week I had a visit from AA Jones, an old member of 5 Field Survey. He had photos of various marks placed in 1942 on the baseline near the tip of Cape York. This aroused my curiosity on a baseline placed near Kairi. On the attached photo the beacon is over North Base and South Base is on top of a maize silo. I have seen the brass plaque on top but now it has been covered by 4' of concrete to stop a bad leak. Query – measuring the baseline on the ground – no problem but how did the

measure from the southern ground point to the silo mark, about 40' up?

Lloyd has sent a photo and a map segment showing the baseline. Lloyd – I will look into it....Bob

Members in Perth

Visiting Perth in April this year I had the opportunity of catching up with a few of our western comrades. Peter and Ann Eddy generously provided their home and hospitality for a get-together and a pleasant evening it was – despite Peter having to be rushed to hospital by Ann half an hour before we arrived with a huge reaction to a bee sting. (Peter was home two hours later fighting fit and a warning to desist from partaking the amber fluid for a bit – which warning he ignored!). Present at the function and accompanied by their wives were:

Ray Sargent – President of the Western Australian Association. Ray is fully retired and laments that the Association is in dire straits attracting little support from its members or potential members. Ray feels we are the lucky ones because we enjoy the support of the 1st Topographical Survey Squadron which gives our Association branch more relevance. Ray assures his own commitment and that their small nucleus will keep trying.

Noel Clutterbuck – Noel is little changed but rather more portly than we remember him as SQMS in 1 Squadron back in the 70s. On leaving the Army Noel continued his stores management role in civilian life and is now retired.

Barry Parker – I hadn't seen Barry since pre-Vietnam days when he was the orderly room corporal for the Troop. Barry of course continued in the Corps for a number of years and on departure forged quite a career in academia – as a bursar or registrar or some such similar role. Barry and his wife kindly drove Wendy and me back to our place of lodgings at Sorrento, north of Perth and not far from his own home.

Brian Firns – Brian and I served together in Vietnam in 1966-67 (we even get a joint mention in the Corps history) and it was a great delight to meet him again. Brian continued in the Corps after Vietnam achieving the rank of WOII before retirement. Brian brought with him his photo album and other memorabilia of his Army service from his attestation papers to his discharge certificate – well put together. He has sent me copy of

some photos of Vietnam times and I hope to use them in the Bulletin some time. Brian never married and looks after his ageing mother at Fremantle.

Peter Eddy – Peter retired from the Corps in the mid '80s and worked in a senior role in mapping (or should I say spatial data) in the WA Lands Department where he remains, albeit, contemplating retirement shortly. Ann has run a remarkable furniture restoration business 'Ann without an 'E'' and does all sorts of remarkable and artistic things – at a profit I think! Ann and Peter have sold their beautiful Shenton Park home and are building nearby in Subiaco a modern house more suited to their needs.

It was a great night with lots of stories and reflections on the past – and some embarrassment which no doubt I richly deserved! My comment above is purely from my imperfect memory so apologies for any inaccuracies. Heart-felt thanks to Ann and Peter for a memorable occasion. **Bob Skitch**

Found – One Survey Mark. A friend sent me a photo of a survey mark he chanced upon on Huon's Hill out of Wodonga. It was a brass plaque with the words Royal Australian Survey Corps – Survey Mark 11 132. No surprise, that! The School of Military Survey was just down the road at Bonegilla and no doubt many have tramped Huon's Hill. The friend is Peter Young, a friend to many in the Corps.....**BS**

THE COLONIAL GARRISON 1817 – 1824.....Clem Sargent

What, you may well ask, has the title of this item got to do with all things RA SVY? The answer: no direct connection other than it is the outcome of years of painstaking research by a member of our Association, Clem Sargent. Clem served in the Corps from 1946 till his retirement in 1974 both as a soldier and an officer, his final appointment being CO/CI for the School of Military Survey. I first met Clem on the New Ireland survey (Project Cutlass) in 1956 where he was 2IC to Spencer Snow and on return to Australia at the end of 1957 (field trips were longer at that time) he served as Adjutant of the Regiment. Clem was habitually on field operations; as OC 5 Fd Svy, in the Kimberleys and then the first of the Indonesian operations, MANDAU. It was

largely thanks to Clem that we succeeded in having Indonesian field operations recognised for the ASM.

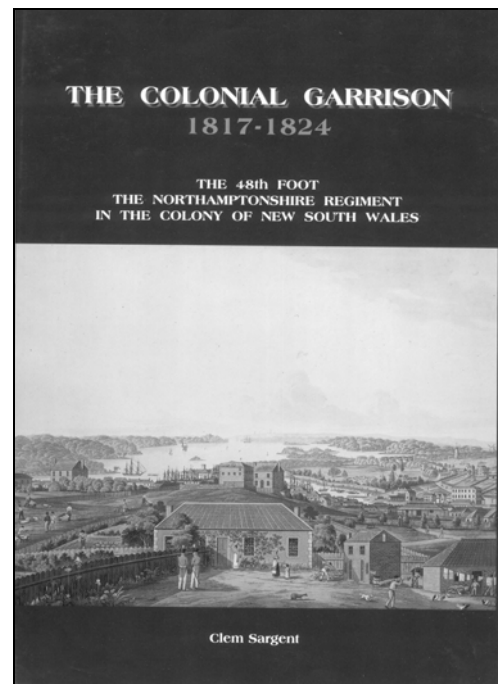
But this is not an obituary to Clem who remains with us alive and mostly well engaged in his historical research on many matters. His primary interest in military history research has been the British Colonial Garrisons assigned to NSW during the early 19th century. Many of these comprised officers and men who had served in the Peninsula Wars (Spain and Portugal) with Wellington against Napoleon. Of course, famous amongst all those was Sir Thomas Mitchell, Surveyor General of NSW¹ and intrepid explorer who bestowed Spanish names from the Peninsula on many Australian features. I remember Clem giving a fascinating address at the School of Military Survey one evening (more than that – a performance) on that subject and a somewhat Welsh-like interpretation of a day in the life of a British soldier of the period. Clem produced an array of weapons of the day² giving blood-chilling demonstrations of their use.

Clem's published book, sub-titled *The 48th Foot, The Northamptonshire Regiment in the Colony of New South Wales*, is beautifully illustrated in colour and in black and white, with maps, mostly from contemporary sources. It is very readable and, quoting from the dust cover flap, "shows how the military and colonial society interacted, the military role in the colonial economy, the contribution of individual officers and men to colonial judicial, administrative, religious and social life. *The Colonial Garrison* recounts the formation of the first settlements at the

¹ The only surveyor general to indulge in a duel over a matter of public honour. More importantly, Mitchell mapped the first nine counties of NSW.

² Clem's collection comprised a Brown Bess musket, a Spontoon (pike carried by sergeants), a light cavalry sabre, a heavy cavalry sword, a light cavalry officer's sword (like a sabre – Clem say they 'fancied themselves'), a cavalry carbine and a cavalry pistol – both muzzle loading with a swivel loading ram-rod.

notorious Macquarie Harbour on the west coast of Van Diemens Land and the more salubrious Port Macquarie on the north coast of New South Wales".



Copies can be purchased from Clem at \$50.00 including postage for the hard cover or \$35.00 for the soft cover.

BELL HELICOPTERS Peter Bates-Brownsword
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Barbara and I were married on the 24th February 1962 at St Mary's, Kangaroo Flat. And we honeymooned at Seymour, Victoria.

For our 40th anniversary Barbara was keen to do something different and go further north in Queensland than she had been before. So we went away for five days at Airlie Beach near Proserpine. We had a great time as tourists visiting the various resort islands and the barrier reef.

On Sunday 24th February 2002 we were on the famous Whitehaven Beach which is on the eastern side of the uninhabited Whitsunday Island. Ferries, launches, sailing boats and seaplanes take visitors to the beach; helicopters fly in also. I decided to check the RW aircraft out for

two reasons: first, they all seemed to be Bell G3 B 47s and secondly, I might have flown in one of them.

Seeing the helicopter on the beach reminded me of the role they played in military survey and mapping. There were two helicopters and they both looked the same from the distance – the characteristic bubble up front and light tubular framework supporting the tail shaft and tail rotor. On close inspection one was a Bell G5 and the other a Bell G3-B-47 with the call sign VH-UTX. Uniform Tango Xray identified it as a former aircraft from Helicopter Utilities. HU supplied aircraft on charter to the Army from the late fifties until the late 60's when Army Aviation support became more generally available to all RA Svy units. The first helicopters used in Australia for RA Svy work were Bell G2s with the wooden blades in the late 50s, mainly by Western Command and Central Command Field Survey Sections in northern Western Australia and the Northern Territory. The Topographical Squadron of the Survey Regiment used the Bell G2 in north Queensland in 1961.

Two Bell G3-B-47s were the first helicopters into Papua New Guinea (then 'Territory of'). The G3-B-47 was supercharged enabling it to insert survey parties onto the highest peaks of the PNG highlands. Both were used for the recommencement of survey and mapping operations in 1962. Their call signs were VH-UFG and VH-UFH. UFG was used on RA Svy work and was taken to PNG in a C130 (Hercules) transport aircraft in early '62. UHF was used by National Mapping on the inland (highlands chain) geodetic survey. It was taken to PNG on the back of an Army Landing Ship Medium (LSM) arriving about June. The helipad was specially constructed on the back of the LSM *Harry Chavell* (and eventually all other LSMs) to support the RA Svy geodetic traverse around the coastline of PNG undertaken in 1962 and 1963. The LSMs with rotary wing aircraft were also used on inland surveys and aerodist operations from 1964 to 1966.

When rotary wing aircraft first arrived in PNG they created quite a deal of excitement and interest. Popular magazines of the day quoted that the locals in their idiom said that they were '*mixmasters bilong Jesus*'. That was typical media talk and anybody familiar with the local language, Pigeon, would know it was incorrect. Pigeon is a descriptive language and the locals said how it looked to them – an insect without any skin; "*em i olsen bin tang bones tasol!*" – which describes the advantages of this particular RW aircraft for survey work with its all round observation ability. These aircraft were used in preference to Army Aviation Kiowa helicopters for all PNG field completion (ground truthing) by 8 Field Survey Squadron in the mid to late '70s.

They are now flying out of Hamilton Island for tourists looking at the Great Barrier Reef and associated islands. The young pilot of UTX gave me an update on their history. His father was a pilot for many years with Helicopter Utilities. As it turned out I had flown in UTX; it was on charter for a couple of months in 1964 in support of survey work on 1: 100,000 mapping in central Victoria.. I was an F24 camera operator photographing paneled PCPs and existing trig points.

The last time I saw UTX in support of RA Svy was with Central Command Field Survey section in 1965 on the Woomera Rocket Range in northern South Australia.

<p>TOAST TO THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS AND ITS CONTINUING INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION....Bob Skitch</p>
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WO1 Barrie Craymer has called on me to propose this toast to the Royal Australian Survey Corps and in so doing we honour its remarkable history and achievement. That it came into being at all in 1915 is in itself remarkable. One of the Corps icon personalities Colonel Clews – the 'Major' – commented at an occasion similar to this at the School of Military Survey in 1974 in his rolling Somerset accent (which I don't profess an ability to replicate) – "I don't know about this Survey Corps business, but Clemmy (a WO) came into the section (in July 1915) and said

“Well lads, from today we are the Australian Survey Corps”. I don’t think I even heard mention of that title for another three years after that. We just got on with the job”.

And that is exactly what the Survey Corps did for all 82 years of its existence. It never looked for kudos or sought honours. Generally it was a reluctant starter when it came to seeking the limelight. It frequently had to fight for its continuing existence, sometimes a political fight although more times than not, simply a fight against the Army’s own hierarchy who often seemed prepared to trade it off against other priorities.

A personal instance of this was in Vietnam in 1966. The Task Force was critically short of administrative personnel – clerks, storeman etc – and a proposal was put to the Task Force Commander to return the Detachment 1 Topo Svy Tp – the predecessor of this present unit of the RAE – back to Australia in exchange for the aforementioned people – clerks, storemen etc. OD Jackson failed to support that one; he liked what we were doing – more than that, he considered what we were doing to be critically important to the success of the operation. And it was. We were at that time establishing theatre grid, putting position and azimuth into all artillery batteries, both our own and ARVN, including, where possible, fire support bases, producing large scale maps of all the villages within our area of operations, fixing the position of VC encampments and tunnel complexes for subsequent H & I fire, developing fully contoured cantonment maps of both Nui Dat and Vung Tau, and maintaining the TOC (CP) and Commander’s Battle maps on a daily basis. All this with one officer, two WOs, two sergeants and twelve other ranks and a sub-detachment of five surveyors from the locating battery. Recognition and kudos – none were forthcoming . No Survey Corps personnel received any sort of formal recognition for their service in Vietnam. Some clerks and storemen did though.

That, in 1965, was the first war deployment of Survey Corps personnel since WW2 and we re-established the fact that direct survey and mapping support is an essential component in undertaking successful military operations. It is hardly surprising. History shows that the topographical map of today – electronic or paper – was largely an invention for military campaigning purposes in centuries past. The spatial relationship of ground features shown to scale on a sheet of paper became essential for strategic, tactical and logistic planning.

Of course the Corps’ role went far beyond direct support mapping. It is a truism that the maps we produce in times of peace are the maps we use in times of war – on the battle field. Continental mapping is an important defence asset – perhaps the most important – sometimes referred to as a country’s soft infrastructure. WW2, when Australia really believed that it was under threat of imminent large scale invasion, drove this message home and the resources of an expanding Survey Corps were deployed in achieving that end – complete map coverage of Australia, first at the scale of 1:250,000 and then at 1:100,000 and finally, the tactical scale of 1:50,000, the latter being terminated with the demise of the Corps in 1996. Of course, we now have all sorts of sophisticated satellite imagery at our disposal and digitally displayed on a computer screen. Better or worse? Depends where you stand. 90% of users still prefer a paper product.

The Corps’ commitment went beyond the Australian mainland. It extended to total coverage of Papua New Guinea at 1:100,000, mapping control, aerial photography and aerotriangulation of 90% of Indonesia and most of the Commonwealth SW Pacific nations.

With all this, the strength of the Corps rarely exceeded 700 and was often close to 500. The Corps had to accept its percentage share of post Vietnam reductions in the overall army strength despite its continuing operational role. While the rest of the Army carried out exercises, the Survey Corps carried out operations.

The camaraderie of the Corps was legendary. Support personnel attached to the Corps for survey and mapping operations were often amazed at this, a camaraderie that continued despite often gruelling field conditions. Perhaps it was strengthened as a result. Many of those attached supporting personnel maintain a connection with Corps associations before their own parent Corps.

We do have a great deal to be proud of and with that I ask you now to be upstanding and toast the Royal Australian Survey Corps and its continuing incorporated Association. **BS**