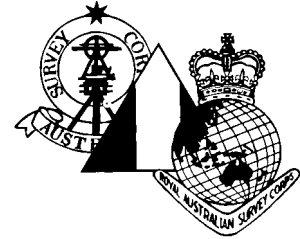

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS
ASSOCIATION
Queensland Branch



BULLETIN

CORPS DAY EDITION

JUNE 2001

CORPS DAY

Celebration of Corps Day this year centres on Bendigo and the Corps Day Weekend (30 June – 1 July) being planned and conducted by the Ex-Fortuna Association. Details of the Weekend were published in the April issue of our Bulletin. At least six of our members and their partners are attending, traveling by various forms of transport, private car mainly and air. This means that the Colonel Alex Laing Memorial Dinner at the United Service Club that was so well attended last year will not be held this year. Read on – there is another function planned.

In late July the 1st Topographical Survey Squadron will sponsor a Corps Day Dinner at the Enoggera Sergeants Mess (SSM WO1 Steve Winner is the current Mess President). It might be said 'we are on a winner! (sorry Steve!) It will be on a Friday night and details will be advised shortly by separate notice. Cost will be relatively modest – mate's rates as they say.

DON'T FORGET OUR TRADITIONAL REUNION ON THE 1ST SATURDAY IN SEPTEMBER – KEEP THAT DATE OPEN – LUNCH AT THE GAYTHORNE RSL. DETAILS NEXT BULLETIN

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Membership – our older members

It is a fact of life that our older members are becoming fewer in number and it is the desire of your committee to keep them in contact with our Association. Perhaps our Bulletin is less relevant to their interest, and some have indicated this, but even if the articles miss their interest it remains a means of keeping in touch. Many are our WW2 veterans and it is always our wish to honour them for the services they gave to our nation during those dark and uncertain years.

With this in mind your committee has decided to waive the annual subscription for members over the age of 75 years. Those who have had a long relationship with our Association, even if this has been broken and at times unfinancial, from the age of 75 will continue to receive the Bulletin and any other notices without further payment. Further, any member between the ages of 70 and 75 who has been financial for three of those years will be deemed to be financial beyond the age of 75 and will continue to receive the Bulletin and any other notices without further payment.

It is hard to frame specific rules to cover matters such as these and clearly your committee will need to exercise a level of discretion. It will do so with a view to holding on to and keeping in touch with as many members as possible. It is important to remember that we are all members of the Association by virtue of our service even if some are no longer financial.

Peter Bates-Brownsword

VALE – FRANK BUCKLAND

It is with sadness that yet again we report the passing of another of our Corps' leaders of past years. Brigadier Frank Desmond Buckland OBE died in Canberra on the 17th May 2001 after a protracted illness. During his time in a series of senior appointments in the Royal Australian Survey Corps, Frank contributed greatly and left his mark in each. Franks career is outlined in a valedictory provided by Clem Sargent on Page 7 of this Bulletin.

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	Stan Campbell (Ph 3285 3970)
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)
Squadron SSM	WO1 Steve Winner (Ph 3332 7564)

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

NOTICES

REGIMENT HISTORY

Historian Val Lovejoy has completed her thesis version of the history and it has been assessed and accepted. The History committee chaired by Gary Warnest has been working flat out on the version to be published, applying the finishing touches. The association has enough funds to produce the history through to negative stage ready for print and this will be completed by the end of June. However, a further \$20,000 is needed to have 1000 copies printed and reducing the print run does not significantly reduce the cost. The history committee is exploring every possible funding option. It will be printed but unfortunately not in time for the Corps Day Weekend.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2000 – 2001

Keep in touch with you Survey Corps mates by remaining in 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.

We consider all past members of the Corps to be members of our Association however, our Bulletin can only be posted to those members who are fully paid up or not more than 12 months in arrears. New rules apply to our veterans 75 and over. See President's message on front page.

RA SVY ASSOCIATION BOX NUMBER ADDRESS

Remember – our new Association address is:

PO Box 5784; Stafford Heights 4053

AN ASSOCIATION BADGE

Gary Warnest advises that the Fortuna Association has designed and produced an Association badge comprising a miniaturized version of the overlapping Corps badges featured on the front page of this bulletin and most other bulletins/newsletters produced by other state and unit associations. It will be suitable for wearing on a lapel or maybe as a tie-tack. Gary expects the badges to sell at about \$7.00 each. Those attending the Bendigo Corps Day Weekend dinner get one for free!

LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH DRINKS

This regular informal event continues at the Gaythorne RSL. The RSL is about half way between the Gaythorne and Mitchelton Railway stations and there is ample parking at the Club. The next gathering will be on **29th June 2001**. I will be at the Bendigo reunion but come nevertheless..... **Rock Thiselton**

BBQ AT TONY GEE'S BRIBIE ISLAND RETREAT

Tony and Loretta Gee kindly invited Association members and their partners to a barbecue at their very beautiful Bribie Island retreat* on Sunday 8th April 2001. To call the event a barbecue is to greatly understate the feast we were offered. It was magnificent. Many of the tasty dishes had been pre-prepared; however Tony did in fact barbecue and cut a very professional image in so doing at his very handsome outdoor kitchen.

Our Patron Ed Anderson who also lives on the Island was in attendance. It was a great opportunity to catch up with quite a few of our members we haven't seen at Association functions in recent times. The photo below reflects the conviviality of the occasion.

* Retreat it may be but with Tony now retired from Telstra and upon the sale of their Aspley home, Bribie is to become the permanent residence of Loretta and Tony.



Back row standing: John (JB) Barry; John Hook; Ed Anderson; Barry Lutwyche; Doug (Butch) Winterflood; Bruce Bowers; Bob Skitch; Peter (Blue) Blaskett; Irene Blaskett; Peter (Emu) Osterhage; Cheryl Hook; Robyn Smith (out of view)

Centre row seated: Alex Cairney; Ann Bowers; Tony Gee; Wendy Skitch; Kym Weston; Faye Weston; Jim Gill; Marie-Ann Gill (out of view)

Front row seated: Dell Osterhage; Loretta Gee; John Smith

ANZAC DAY 2001

Reported by Bob Skitch

It was a great day with record participation by veterans, the public and certainly our Association with 24 members participating in the principal Brisbane march. But first things first – there was the traditional dawn ceremony at the 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera.

Dragging one's self out of bed at 4.00am to attend a dawn service at 5.00am, an hour before sunrise is always a challenge but like most challenges, well worth the effort. That drive through empty suburban streets with just the faint glow of the impending day (as it turned out, an unseasonably hot one) on the eastern horizon may not be all that exhilarating, but it does give time for reflection on the day ahead. Anzac Day! Most of us can recall Anzac days of past years – back to childhood perhaps – being led by a parent to the town memorial for an event that had its own peculiar significance even if not fully understood.

Dawn services at Enoggera, held in the surround of gum trees, has a notably Aussie feel about it. The army is very evident and for us with past service that is a pleasant and slightly nostalgic added experience. The dawn service this year follows the format of previous years, not dissimilar to those held at army units and RSLs across the country. The catafalque party slow marches into position, outward turns and reverses arms. (Not rest on arms reversed with its several movements to the count of 12, or was it 16, but three simple movement with the Steyr – impossible to rest on that!). The guard silently moves into place and dresses. The watching audience remain hushed. The service is opened by the padre; it is essentially a religious service. The Anzac day address, given this year by Brig HV Macdonald RFD, reflects on the future of Anzac days – it is in the hands of the young people, very few of whom have seen war –, wreaths are lain at the memorial wall, the choristers from Mt St Michael College give appropriate and competent renditions of hymns (there

seemed to be one outstanding voice within the choir), the padre does his bit and a kookaburra on cue peals out his early morning claim to territory. Appropriately, a young lad reads the ode and we all respond '*we shall remember them*'. And indeed we will. The last post and reveille, the guard departs and the dawn service is over. Yes; a fitting and moving experience. The public depart as the dawn gives way to day. The fire drums glowing a warm and welcoming red as we arrived are fading as the day brightens. The 2CER sportsman's club is open and breakfast is being served – a fair-dinkum army breakfast – fried and scrambled eggs, bacon, fried tomato, baked beans, mince, hot tea and coffee from the big stainless steel urns. An army marches on its stomach someone once said. The Dawn Service – I will be there again next year.

Then there was the city Anzac Day parade. We had 24 marching – the best ever! We formed up in William Street almost on the corner of Elizabeth. It was a bright sunny day by 10.30 and quite hot too – 27-28^o C – a little unseasonable for Anzac day even in Brisbane. But it brought out the crowds – huge, and again the best ever. LVJ (Les) Smith was first to arrive soon after 10.30 and when I arrived with the marching theodolite at 11.00am, LVJ was wandering around, wondering where we all were. LVJ had volunteered to carry the theodolite at the slope in front of the Association banner and behind our march leader Tony Gee. And then in ones and twos everyone started to arrive, including Major Bill Thompson, OC of 1st Topographical Survey Squadron RAE, WO1 Steve Winner, the SSM, our banner carriers, Cpls Glen Hexley and Tony Dunton as well as three other members of the squadron, Sgt Brian Johnson, Cpl Phil Brooke and L/Cpl Glen Nossell. The roll-call of marchers is below. The forming up area can only be described as a melee, no more and maybe less than any other year, leaving one wondering how it will all come together. But it does, mostly on the march and by the time we wheel into George Street we are pretty well sorted out if not in step. That comes later when we pick up with the drumbeat of the nearest band.

This year the parade marshals, who do a remarkable job, advised (forcefully) that we were to be a minimum of five abreast. This compressed the parade somewhat and we stepped off perhaps 15 minutes earlier than expected, leaving insufficient time for the girls marching with the WRAAC contingent to join us. However, we did have one lady in the march and that was Lorraine Chambers, widow of Derek Chambers. Derek was a great supporter of our march until ill health prevented his participation. Another marcher, but not with us, was our President Peter Bates-Brownsword. Peter plays the drums with the National Service Association Band (they're the ones with the Khyber Pass khaki pith helmets) and Peter had to complete the march circuit twice as well as two other performances earlier in the day.

Our WW2 veterans are thinning somewhat in our marching contingent and this year we had but two, our Patron, Ed Anderson (whom we sometimes overlook as a WW2 veteran – it must be his stature and bearing) and the Rev Phillip Armstrong, our Association padre. We haven't seen Phil for a couple of years and he tells me that he thought the Association died with the Corps. (I wonder how many others of our WW2 veterans have that misunderstanding?) Phil is not in robust health but he made the distance and then with some 20 of our number repaired to the Jubilee Hotel for a post-march jug or two and a bbq at the invitation of the Sappers Association. Phil's wife Ann and his daughter Trish keep a good eye on him and they too were at the Jubilee.

The follow-up at the Jubilee Hotel at Spring Hill was most enjoyable and this year well patronised by our members and their supporters. With beer at \$1.00 a glass or \$4.00 a jug and a \$2.50 bbq; where could one get better value? In fact the function is subsidised by the Sappers Association and our own Association will contribute pro-rata. It was very convivial and we thank the Sappers Association for their hospitality in including we survey sappers.

In summary; it was a great march and a great Anzac Day.

Roll Call

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Tony Gee (leader) | Bruce Bowers |
| Ed Anderson | Phil Brooke |
| Bill Thompson | (1 Topo) |
| (OC 1 Topo) | Barry Lutwyche |
| Les (LVJ) Smith | Phil Armstrong |
| Brian Cosford | Glen Nossell |
| Jock Kay | (1 Topo) |
| Howard Gadorer | Michael Kelly |
| Bruce Gordon | (grandson of Jullian |
| Lorraine Chambers | (Ned) Kelly) |
| Steve Winner | Banner Bearers: |
| (SSM 1 Topo) | Cpl Glen Huxley |
| Alex Cairney | Cpl Tony Dunton |
| Jim Gill | Marching with |
| John Smith | WRAAC |
| Brian Johnson | Barbara Bates- |
| (1 Topo) | Brownsword |
| Perc Long | Kalen Sargent |
| Peter Osterhage | Nola Strawbridge |
| Stuey Hibbert | |



Jock Kay, Alex Cairney and Howard Gadorer in the marshalling area



In the marshalling area – LVJ Smith with the theodolite, Michael Kelly, Jim Gill, Sgt Brian Johnson, Bob Skitch



Our banner unfurled

LES (LVJ) SMITH – HIS STORY
(he carried our theodolite)

as told to Bob Skitch

Who is this fellow we call LVJ who carried our theodolite on our Anzac march? This is his story.....

Les Smith has been an on-and off attender at our reunions for quite a number of years; every so often, Les turns up. Les had left the Corps before I joined and yet on my first meeting with him in the mid 1980s I felt as though I had known him throughout my 26 years of RASvy service. His reputation lived on long after his departure, through people like Laurie Arnold, Chris Lancaster and others. And what was that reputation? In a word – a character – and perhaps further expansion



In Adelaide Street – eyes left at the saluting point

of that description should be left to Les. And why 'LVJ'? Les tells that in his previous service and also in his Corps service there were always several Smiths in his unit, at one time, seven. So on roll call Les was always 'Smith LVJ'. Les has divulged to me a little of his background. Incidentally, Les claims to be the oldest hands-on practising engineering surveyor in Queensland. He celebrated his 75th birthday recently.

Les entered the world in 1926 at Northgate, Victoria and grew up in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne and western Gippsland. Les was twice married with four children from each marriage. He left school at the age of 15 to work and during the early WW2 years (1941/42) he was in charge of the mail section at the Department of Information. Les tried to join the RAAF in 1943 but was rejected when his age was revealed and it was not until 1944 that he was accepted into aircrew and trained as an air gunner. Perhaps fortunately for Les, the war ended and Les with a number of others did an unusual thing. They transferred to the British Army in India, the Somerset Light Infantry. In 1946 Les returned to Australia and joined the AIF and started training as a Japanese interpreter at the School of Languages at Point Cook. This experience was to be short-lived because after an altercation with management Les and two others, one of whom was Englishman Frank Murphy, were invited to leave the language course. Les and Frank transferred to the Australian Survey Corps, a move which set Les on a career path that has continued with occasional breaks for the rest of his working life. Les's introduction to the Corps was learning something about surveying at a three month training camp at Chatswood in Sydney. Les was then posted to 5 Field Survey Section at Karrakatta, Perth and recalls that Major RK Rule was the OC and Lt Bill Harrison the adjutant. (Major Rule enlisted as a warrant officer topographer in 1936.

Lt Col Bill Johnson had been appointed Chief Instructor of the newly raised School of Survey at Balcombe, Victoria, and had set about developing a training regime for

the Corps starting with initial basic training for surveyors and draughtsmen and promotion courses beyond the rank of sapper as well as specialist courses such as multiplex operation. Johnstone determined that all serving sappers, whose initial training had been a little 'hit and miss', should also do a period of consolidation training at the School to bring them up to the standard of sappers graduating from the new basic survey course. Les joined such a course, the 5/49, following which he was posted to the Southern Command Field Survey Section at Albert Park Barracks. Names Les recalls in that unit are OC, Major Barney Herbert, Captain Harry Raisbeck and WO Fraser Matthews. By now a corporal, Les was posted back to the School of Survey and then to the CMF/national service unit 2nd Topographic Survey Company at East Melbourne commanded by Lt Col AF Kurrle as their first survey instructor. Also with that unit were Capt John Nolan and WO1 Keith (Acki) Barbour. Finally Les was posted back to the (now) Western Command Field Survey Section under the command of Major Frank Buckland and it was from that unit that Les took his discharge in 1954 after just ten years of military service, first in the RAAF, then the British Army, then the AIF and finally the Survey Corps.

An incident that occurred in 1949 in which Les and a large number of Survey Corps personnel participated was the coal strike. The strike was considered to be communist inspired and after a number of weeks Prime Minister Ben Chifley called in the army to take over truck driving duties on the coalfields of Cessnock and Maitland. Driving skills were a relatively rare commodity in those days and few in the army held army driving licences. However, Survey Corps personnel were the exception with nearly all being licensed drivers. As a consequence Survey Corps had the greatest proportional representation on the coalfields. Others serving with Les were Garney Cook, Dave Renneker, Chris Lancaster, Glen Anson, Laurie Arnold, Snow Ralston and many more. The army participation continued for about six weeks and is the only peacetime

occasion when the army was used to break a strike.

Les's civilian career has been equally varied. After leaving the Corps he joined the WA Department of Main Roads; in 1957 the Northern Territory Department of Works; in 1958 Mount Isa Mines as an underground surveyor; in 1959 underground surveying in Vatoukola, Fiji; from 1960 to 1967 as a surveying and construction supervisor in Canada, returning to Australia in 1967. Les continued working on various projects, which included Main Roads, Westpile P/L, Westfield shopping towns, Forest Place retirement villages. I recall seeing a Gold Coast newspaper article in the mid eighties featuring Les Smith operating the first ice cream vending watercraft on the canals, selling icecream to boaties.

Les continues as a practising engineering surveyor and his current job is setting out a 1500 acre olive grove of some 75,000 trees near Grandchester.

Reference has been made to *'Australia's Military Mapmakers'*, the history of the Royal Australian Survey Corps by Dr CD Coulthard-Clark for verifying unit designations and relevant dates.

VALEDICTORY – FRANK BUCKLAND
Provided by Clem Sargent of the Canberra Association

Brigadier Frank Desmond Buckland OBE, Commanding Officer, AHQ Survey Regiment from 1 Dec '62 to 29 Jan '65, Director of Military Survey from 23 Mar '67 to 31 Aug '72, Colonel Commandant RA Survey from Jan '73 to Jan '76, Patron of the Canberra Survey Corps Association, died in Canberra 17 May 01 after a protracted illness.

Frank Buckland joined the Australian Survey Corps in September 1938 as a topographer and transferred as a sergeant to the 2/1st Australian Field Survey Coy (RAE) following its raising in 1940. He served in the Middle East with the 2/1st and was employed plane-tabling along the Trans-Jordan – Syrian border. On the

return of the 2/1st to Australia he was commissioned to lieutenant on 23 June 1942 and served in Australia in staff appointments and in New Guinea. In the immediate post-war years Frank was on the staff of Survey Directorate and in 1947 was selected to accompany Major Bill Johnson to UK and Kenya to study the application of radar-controlled air photography and the use of Multiplex.

A posting to the School of Survey followed, before an appointment on promotion to Major as OC Western Command Field Survey Section and Deputy Assistant Director Survey Western Command. Then followed a posting to HQ Far East Land Forces (FAELF) in Singapore where he was mentioned in despatches before returning to Australia as OC Central Command Field Survey Unit. Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, Frank became CO of the then AHQ Survey Regiment. This was followed by two years as Assistant Director Survey AHQ and then on promotion to Colonel, Director of Military Survey in 1967. He retired with the rank of Honorary Brigadier in August 1972, in his own words, 'to make way for younger officers'. During his service as Director, Frank Buckland was awarded the OBE, the citation noting his professional ability and his personal attention to the well-being of the members of the Corps. He was instrumental, during this time, in launching the series of operations in Indonesia which are now being recognised by the award of the Australian Service Medal with the clasp SE Asia.

Following his retirement Frank devoted his time to working for the Smith Family and Canberra Legacy, of which he was President 1977-78. Always a keen sportsman, he continued to play squash, tennis and golf into his late sixties. Diagnosed with cancer Frank fought a hard battle until he succumbed on 17 May 2001. Always a very private man who concealed his true feelings, he stipulated that he should be privately cremated. The service was attended by his family and a few close friends. The Corps was represented by John Hillier and Clem

Sargent. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Joy, son Graham and daughter Sue, his five grandsons and one great-granddaughter.

Personal note: In January 1955 in response to an advertisement in the *West Australian* newspaper under 'Commonwealth Vacancies' I fronted to the DAD Survey Western Command in Irwin Barracks to be interviewed for enlistment into the Royal Australian Survey Corps. So did some 15 others in what must have been the Corps' most successful enlistment campaign. Did we realise that joining the Survey Corps meant joining the army? I think not! That gradually sank in as the days passed – and then it was too late to pull back. That friendly avuncular major behind the desk in Irwin Barracks turned out to be Major Frank Buckland, known to all (somewhat affectionately) as 'Cranky Franky'. Certainly Frank Buckland had what is sometimes called a 'peppery' personality with small time for fools. Nevertheless, he held in high regard those who served the Corps honestly and well. His own achievements were significant and his term as Director saw the Corps develop in both technology and breadth of operation. It is true to say that you had to run to keep up with him.

After my recruitment I had no direct contact with Frank (occasional glimpses of him attending Corps Conferences at Fortuna when I was there as a corporal) until Vietnam. In 1967 soon after his appointment as Director he visited the Det I Topo Svy Tp at Nui Dat and stayed for two days. During that time I took him to visit his US counterpart Colonel Hritzco of the US Army Mapping Service at Long Binh. The visit was not without incident. The two Colonels got on well together. I think Hritzco (a Russian-American of large stature and a very genial man) was somewhat impressed by Frank's 'red tabs' (georgettes) and called him 'Sir' throughout the visit. Frank did not correct him nor did he seem embarrassed, but then Americans, particularly within the services use the appellation 'Sir' a little more freely than we.

Frank attended the history launch in Canberra and he suggested to me on that occasion that on his forthcoming visit to Brisbane in late September with wife Joy to see his son Graham who lives at Redcliffe, and with Jim and Joan Stedman, Graham and his wife and Wendy and myself, we might all meet for lunch at a venue of our choice. Jim organised the event at the Redcliffe RSL and a very pleasant afternoon ensued. Frank was in good spirits although well aware that his remaining days

were limited. The occasion was only a matter of weeks before Jim's untimely passing. Despite the infrequency of our meetings, Brigadier Frank Buckland will remain a larger than life presence in my recollection and perhaps, without his ever being aware of it, a person who had a marked influence on the direction of my own life and working career.

Bob Skitch

MEDALS GALORE!

Australian Service Medal

Clem Sargent advises that there has been some progress in extending the awarding of the Australian Service Medal to cover survey operations in Indonesia. Clem understands that the ASM 1945-'75 will be awarded to those personnel participating on Operations Mandau and Gading 1 to 5, that is, in Kalimantan and Sumatra and the award now only awaits the Governor General's authorisation. The extension of the ASM (post '75 – there are two ASMs) to Indonesian survey operations remains with Defence, however, the approval of the ASM 1945-'75 establishes a strong precedent.

Clem has submitted a new case for the awarding of the ASM to personnel serving on the SW Pacific survey operations. These commenced in 1978 and continued through to 1994. It is a matter of regret that the post operational reports covering these operations were confined to technical achievements and as a matter of policy at the time, failed to give any indication of the lack of logistic support and the extreme nature of the operating conditions imposed on those personnel taking part. Detailed narrative statements reflecting the nature of these operations have been provided in support of the submission to Army by three of our Queensland members.

Papua New Guinea Medal

All those who served in Papua New Guinea (or the Territory of) for whatever purpose now have an entitlement to the Papua New Guinea Medal issued by the Government of Papua New Guinea and approved by the Australian Government for wearing by Australian personnel. There

is a catch! The Government of PNG can't afford to pay for its minting and wearers will have to pay \$50 to receive it. Peter Bates-Brownsword is checking out how to establish an entitlement and with that, to whom to send the money to receive the medal. Details will be advised in the next Bulletin or by separate notice.

The National Service Medal

This has been a contentious issue, made more so by the newspaper beat-up and generally negative position*. It certainly has attracted a lot of publicity. The National Service Association has lobbied long and hard for its awarding and as reported extensively in the media, the Prime Minister has approved its minting. This is an official medal and should not be confused with the National Service Commemoration Medal worn by some on the right breast. The Commemoration Medal is issued by the NS Association and is not an official medal. Certainly some of our Association members will be entitled to the NSM; those older members who experienced the earlier form of National Service in the '50s and some who may have served as a national serviceman in the '60s and early '70s – two forms of national service. Your Association supports the concept of the NS Medal and recommends its wearing.

*Being a Nasho myself of the earlier vintage I was impelled to respond to the negative press resulting from the announcement of the award with a letter to the editor of the CM. My letter failed to get published – there is a lesson to be learnt in that! The letter is the 'endnote' to this Bulletin. BS



**1ST TOPOGRAPHICAL
SURVEY SQUADRON –
UPDATE**

by WO1 Steve Winner

ANZAC Day saw the Squadron turn out for the traditional Dawn Service held at the 2 CER cenotaph and the various activities after the breakfast. Later the OC, MAJ Bill Thomson, together with his SSM, WO1 Steve Winner joined other members of the unit to "follow the theodolite" and march with the RASvy Association (QLD Branch) in Brisbane City. Joining the march was

SGT Brian Johnson with the banner carriers, CPL's Tony Purton and Glenn Huxley. The group then wound onwards to the Jubilee Hotel for a luncheon together with the RAE Sappers Association. It was agreed that a great day was had by all. In recent months, the Squadron has remained very active particularly with its full involvement with the joint US- AUS exercise Tandem Thrust conducted recently in Shoalwater Bay.

Various squadron elements under the direct command of the Force Engineers HQ, including the new Project TOPOSS (Topographic Support System) sections, were involved in providing up to date terrain analysis, advice and visualisation products to the headquarter elements of 1 Bde (Darwin), 3 Bde (Townsville) and the Deployable Joint Force Headquarters normally based at Enoggera. This headquarters had the honour of being the HQ of the combined enemy task force.

The exercise gave the Squadron the opportunity to provide the full range of topographic capabilities to various units in a deployed setting.

After a period of stand down post Tandem Thrust in late June, the unit will continue to focus on upcoming activities much closer to home together with an intensive training program to fill the remaining months of 2001. This also includes our active General Reserve troop (GRES) who will deploy on Exercise Tripod with members of Force Topo Tp during the first weeks of July. This deployment will see members of GRES involved in geodetic survey tasks around the Roma area working closely with various local government organisations.

The Squadron will also play host this week to the Mapping Sciences Institute of Australia (MSIA) Qld Branch when it visits to gain information on the activities of the unit. It will be an ideal opportunity to showcase the capabilities of the Squadron and to foster future interactions with external agencies.

Out to you. **Steve Winner**

**NO RANK IN SURVEY ASSOCIATIONS
– a letter from Brian Murray**

Editor's note: Brian Murray is the President of the 'New Guinea Survey Section (8th Field Survey Section AIF) Association and lives in Canberra. The letter came addressed to 'Bob Skitch Esquire', Brian's quiet sense of humour to the fore, emphasising 'no rank in the Survey Associations'.

Dear Bob,

I agree with your Association President that there is no rank in Survey associations. Indeed, to have been a member of the Corps transcends not only rank but unit, age and whether we served in peace or war or were permanent army or what the navy was wont to call 'hostilities only'.

Turning to other matters, the enclosed notes, which I wrote for non-survey friends here in the Deep South may be of interest not only in themselves but as encouragement for a series in future Bulletins; there are many good stories out there which do not deserve to be lost, and this may encourage their telling. ('Kokoda Recalled – a different perspective' - Ed)

On a personal note, since collapsing on my 78th birthday and regaining consciousness — I use the word 'consciousness' loosely — in intensive care, I have been undergoing post-graduate studies in medical technology and hope to have a definitive specialist opinion next week. So there has been an interruption to our newsletter while, having rejoined the human race, I set about putting my affairs in order. (I did not realize that dying was such an involved business and, if given the option, I shall not go) At the moment, I am much more hopeful than I was earlier in the year.

Our unit marched in Canberra on ANZAC Day thanks to a Korean vet and old friend, Matt O'Brien (who fought at Kapyong), who arranged an honour guard of four Year 10 students from Radford College and Kevin Gill, the son of Joe Gill, who served with me, and himself a Vietnam vet. So many (37) Year 10 volunteered that they had to draw lots. The college,

which holds our unit banner in trust, has promised to continue to provide honour guards long after we few who still remain are gone, so that our mates will always be remembered.

With best wishes to you, the executive, and all your members.

(Brian Murray) 6 May 2001

KOKODA RECALLED – a different perspective – by Brian Murray

Navigators, explorers and topographical surveyors have long had the privilege of naming the features that they encounter. Frequently they have chosen to honour their monarch or some aristocratic sponsor of their journey. Sometimes they have chosen to commemorate their problems, as in Cape Tribulation. Today we can only guess at the stories that lie behind names such as Perisher and Blue Cow. Some surviving veterans of the New Guinea jungle campaigns may remember that Gullett's Castle in the upper snake valley between the Bulolo and the Markham was named in 1943 after Major "Joe" Gullett M.C. of 2 battalion A.I.F.. But is there anyone still living who can tell the story behind the name?

Wartime maps of New Guinea have other place names, the stories of which deserve to be recorded. This is one of them.

During the Kokoda campaign in 1942, a two-man army survey party was working in the Owen Stanleys as part of their unit's desperate attempt to map the fighting areas; mapping this appalling terrain when battle had already been joined was not the easiest of tasks. Which may explain their reaction when they came across an unusual mountain – two gently rounded features more than three thousand feet high. Well, gently rounded by New Guinea standards, anyway. With the bawdy humour not unknown amongst diggers, they promptly named it 'Cusack Balls', after one of their officers, NX131900, E.J (Jack) Cusack. However, armies seem sometimes to lack humour, and in Raymond Paull's 'Retreat from Kokoda', the feature is shown in the map of the

Kokoda Track at p.215 as Cusack's Twin Peaks.

Owers Corner on the Kokoda Track was also named after a member the New Guinea Survey Section, NX 369 Noel (Jerry) Owers, and marks the junction of the original Kokoda Track and the newer jeep track.

The two young army surveyors were 18 year old sapper Ray Ball, now of Benalla (Vic) and 19 year old corporal Brian Murray, now of O'Connor (ACT). As fieldmen in the New Guinea Survey Sec (later renamed 8th Field Survey Section AIF), they spent much of their time in forward areas away from their unit for extended periods and sometimes distant from other Australians.

Jack Cusack, Ray Ball and Brian Murray later went on to serve with the Wau-based Kanga Force, the longest air-supplied operation in World War II.

Neither Jack Cusack nor Jerry Owers survive.

<p>THE CORPS HISTORY – A CRITICISM With comment by Bob Skitch</p>
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Nine months have passed since the launch of the Corps history, *Australia's Military Mapmakers – the Royal Australian Survey Corps 1915 – 96*, at least sufficient time for some to have read it thoroughly and critically. Peter Rossiter is one such person and his critical comment has been published in the South Australian Survey Ex-servicemen's Association Newsletter No 30 – April 2001.

Undoubtedly there is room to criticise Chris Coulthard-Clark's history, but to do so without understanding his terms of reference is a little unfair. The history was severely limited by budgetary constraints – no more than a given number of words, a specific maximum number of pages – constrained also by the fact that it is one of a series of military histories on Australian military formations. Publication in fine style by the Oxford University Press was an expensive undertaking. When Chris was in Brisbane interviewing various members here who had something to contribute he confided in me that many would be

disappointed with the content. For one, it explodes a few of the treasured myths about the Corps, and we all love our myths, and secondly, it is an account of the units of the Survey Corps, not so much the people who served. Of course the units were made up of people and inevitably some get a mention. The history attempts to explore the 'where and why-for' of the Corps and it largely succeeds in this.

Peter Rossiter's criticism is quite trenchant and reads as follows:

'Well firstly, I thought the book gave a reasonably detailed picture of the operations of the Corps, then, after the first reading, I thought "hey wait on, this is a real VANILLA type description of all the goings on that happened". Now I admit that there are some, because of senile debility, a mention of a book, or even a preference for a quiet life, who wouldn't want to upset the apple cart, or even thought that 'what's the use of trying to set the record straight', and who haven't said a word (that I've heard of, mind) about all the bits and pieces which, I think, should have been included, even as anecdotal tales, but they weren't, were they? What I am suggesting is that almost all of the trauma laid on the members of the Corps by politicians, public 'servants' and other members of the Services and members of the public was excluded from the book, and the book – or its story – is by far the poorer for its exclusion.

From my own experience I can – and maybe will – (if some silly bastard would pay for it) detail quite a few basic meaning OR type-instances, and I am quite certain that some of those who were our leaders at the time could have provided even more such tales, BUT none of that type of thing was included in the book, and it was degraded by such omission. Was the author worried about political funding, or upsetting some Bum now well and truly retired, or what? I've no idea, but I do know the story presented is far less interesting because such stories were omitted.

So there, I've had a bit of a winge, and I feel slightly better for it, but it doesn't make up for the loss that all the members, sorry, ex-members, of the Corps should feel for the omission of the 'human face' of the operations of the Corps. I'm quite sure that there are many other ex-members of the Service and especially of the Corps who spent either all, or almost all, of their working lives in the Corps,

and feel rather let down as I do by the facile treatment of the effort they put into their time in the service.'

Others have also criticised the history although as far as I am aware, not in writing. Peter – you are the first – and I do not intend to respond to your points of criticism; nor the ungenerous way you choose to express them. Perhaps they are from the heart, but sometimes the heart is a little ungenerous. As for an OR's point of view (the term OR should be confined to unit statistics – soldier is better), that can be found in the unit histories and they are starting to emerge. It is in the unit histories that one will find the factual anecdotes, even the tales of hardship perhaps. Often those tales can be found in the pages of our Association newsletters and bulletins.

The History as it stands (and no one can change it now) has its faults, even given the constraints placed upon its writing. It is somewhat lop-sided – the post WW2 achievements are but sketchily covered, in far less detail than the pre-WW2 period. WW2 itself is well covered, as indeed it should be. I personally feel that the Vietnam period is patchy in its presentation and makes light of the contribution made by the Corps in that theatre. The emphasis given to one most regrettable incident that reflected no credit upon its perpetrator and the influence that person's views had on the presentation of that chapter of the history is most regrettable. However, given all that, the broad sweep of the coverage is impressive and if nothing else it provides an excellent framework for those who may be moved to undertake unit histories. Furthermore, I am finding it an increasingly useful reference.

Chris Coulthard-Clark commented to me that he had found the Royal Australian Survey Corps a fascinating military study, unlike any other he had undertaken and he was astonished at the Corps' achievements in the face of so many restrictions placed upon it.

ENDNOTE – NASHOS DESERVE RECOGNITION

After the beat-up by reporters McPhedran and Hamilton* and the negative editorial on Sat April 28 it is no surprise that the letters since then have been less than supportive of the proposed issue of a medal recognising National Service. I served as a national serviceman in the navy on corvettes in Western Australia in '53 and '54 and with national servicemen as a regular soldier in Vietnam in '66-'67 and in Australia off and on after that. At no time as a nasho in the navy or with nashos in the army was I subjected to nor did I observe or was aware of harassment, friction or enmity between nashos and regs. And as for 'coming to blows during training and on active duty' no such incident ever came to my attention and had it done so in my own unit, military discipline would have been brought to bear on the participants, as it would have in any other military unit either in training or on active service.

Do nashos deserve a special medal for their service? I think so and I will wear mine proudly with my six other medals, issued for service overseas both active and non-hostile and for long service. Many current medals issued are simply for having been there, in some cases for as little as four weeks. Yes, the nashos deserve a special medal, for the chunk of their young lives they unconditionally gave to their country and in the latter period of national service to compensate for the appalling way they were treated by the public at large when they were turfed out onto the street on return from Vietnam without a thank you and with the mental scars they carry as a result; more than the regular diggers who had the continuing compassionate and understanding support of the army around them.

** The CM article stated that an ex-army officer (anon) claimed that there would be brawling in the streets next Anzac day between 'regs' and 'nashos' venting a traditional enmity.*