

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS
ASSOCIATION
Queensland Branch



BULLETIN

REUNION EDITION

AUGUST 2001



It's on again this year – our traditional annual reunion luncheon and general meeting. This event has been held by the Queensland Association on the first Saturday of September since soon after the end of WW2. This year it is Saturday 1st September 2001 at 12.00 midday. So come along and catch up with old friends.

Venue: Lighthorse Room Gaythorne RSL

Cost: \$25.00 per head (3 course meal and wine)

RSVP: Alex Cairney on 3397 7583 or send in the slip at the bottom of the notice at page 16.

Especially we want to see our WW2 veterans. Transport can be arranged for those who may need it. Simply tell Alex of your need.

The annual general meeting of the Association will be held in conjunction with the Reunion Luncheon.

DINING-IN-NIGHT
FRIDAY 16TH NOVEMBER 2001

WO1 Steve Winner has offered to hold a dining-in night for our Association in the Engineers Sergeant's Mess, Enoggera on Friday 16th November 2001. Steve is the PMC of the Mess. The overall cost of the dinner is not expected to exceed \$30 including wines. The invitation is extended to all Association members and their partners. Remember – there is no rank in our Association.

Please mark this date in your diary and advise our functions coordinator Alex Cairney of your intention. Steve Winner needs near firm numbers by 1st September 2001 to allow planning to proceed.

Dress is summer mess kit for those who can still fit into it or alternatively, dinner suit (black tie), or lounge suit or jacket and tie.

To hold your place for the dinner a deposit of \$20 per head is required not later than the 15th September 2001. Cheques should be made payable to the RA Survey Association (dinner) and forwarded to Mary-Ann Thistleton, PO Box 5784 Stafford Heights, 4053.

Be quick and book early. A high attendance will show our appreciation for the organization of this dinner by the 1st Topographical Survey Squadron.

RSVP: Alex Cairney
PO Box 5784
STAFFORD HEIGHTS QLD 4053
Phone: (07) 3397 7583
Email: cairneyalex@hotmail.com

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

AUSTRALIAN SERVICE MEDAL & others....

From our President – a late inclusion for the Bulletin.

I have just been advised by Don Swiney that all Sumatera Ops, that is, Gading 1 to 5, up to 1975 have been recognised for the SE ASIA clasp to the ASM 1945 – 1975. Operation Mandau in Kalimantan Barat was previously recognised.

Also Cenderawasih Ops have been acknowledged for a clasp (IRIAN JAYA) to the ASM 1976 - . This is a major break-through because it introduces the post '75 ASM to survey operations and clears the way for the recognition of subsequent survey operations. It is understood that vet affairs entitlements will apply to the Irian Jaya operations.

This is great news for the Survey Associations that have worked so long for this recognition, but we still have a long way to go, i.e.; post 1975 Ops in Indonesia and the SW Pacific. Don said that he expects Gazettal to follow shortly.

Peter Bates-Brownsword

The PNG Medal

The word is that separate application by individuals may need to be made to the PNG authority to establish eligibility. Apparently there are four versions of the medal. Following this, permission from the Australian Government may be required to wear it! Sounds complicated and one might need to be keen to follow it through.

The National Service Medal

Apply in the normal manner to the Soldier Career Management Agency, GPO Box 5108BB, Melbourne Victoria, 3001

AN ASSOCIATION BADGE

The Association badge was launched by the Fortuna Association at the Corps Day Weekend. It is a neat job, 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 is suitable for wearing on a lapel or maybe as a tie-tack. At the modest price of \$7.00 it will be available for sale at the Reunion.

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 **31st August 2001**.
Rock Thiselton

RA SVY ASSOCIATION BOX NUMBER ADDRESS

Remember – our new Association address is:

PO Box 5784; Stafford Heights 4053

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 in our last Bulletin. Annual subscriptions are traditionally collected at our Reunion. See Reunion notice attached.

REGIMENT HISTORY

As reported in the last Bulletin a further \$20,000 is needed to print 1000 copies of the now completed history. Reducing the print run does not significantly reduce the cost. The history committee is exploring every possible funding option. On the Corps Day Weekend at the dinner and other functions advanced copies of the history were being offered for sale at \$50.00 each. Sales were going well and more are needed. So: **purchase your advanced copy of the Regiment History and help ensure its publication - \$50.00 to our Treasurer.**

THE CORPS MUSEUM

Many of us would know it simply as that – The Corps Museum. Once located with the school of Military Survey at Bonegilla it is now incorporated into the **Australian Army Museum of Military Engineering** located at Moorebank and holds the historical collections of both RAE and RA Svy.

The funding and running of the Museum has been problematic for years and to address this, the **Military Engineering Heritage Company** has been set up and registered with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission. The purpose of the company is to support the operation, management and development of the Museum.

It should be of interest to Association members that the Military Engineering Heritage company uses the insignia of both RAE and RA Svy, that is, the Engineer Corps badge and the Survey Corps badge, so giving proper and full recognition to our beloved Corps.

The Company is at present managed by an interim appointed board but on 29 August 2001 the Company's Annual General Meeting will be held at the School of Military Engineering and at that meeting a board will be elected. **It is important that we have a Survey Association member elected to the board.**

To have a Survey member on the Board we need to quickly develop a Survey based membership of the Museum Company. *(My reading of it is that it acts like a registered club.)* To be a member one must join by paying an annual subscription of \$15.00 and for this purpose the Membership Application Form is attached at the back of this Bulletin. **It is important to act quickly – now. Send in your \$15.00 – nothing ventured, nothing gained!**

Who is to be our Board member? We are at present canvassing around. Obviously to attend meetings that person needs to live in or close to Sydney; perhaps Canberra where the Association has a number of active members.

ACT NOW – FILL IN THE FORM ATTACHED AND SEND IN YOU \$15.00. PROXY VOTING DETAILS WILL BE SENT OUT OUT TO ALL PAID-UP MEMBERS BEFORE THE AGM.

LETTERS

DEVEY

We have all seen examples of Lionel Devencorn's cartoon work in past copies of our Bulletin, an example of which announces our annual Reunion luncheon on the front page of this Reunion edition. These cartoons and other humorous renditions helped maintain unit morale during those dark years of World War 2.

Lionel has sent me a copy of a small publication of army humour produced by him called 'Army Laughter - 1939 - 1945'. In a covering letter he writes....

Many thanks for the Bulletins. They certainly bring back memories. Sorry I cannot get along to the Reunions but at 84, although keeping in good health, I do not like driving at night. I will keep myself busy doing paintings which I display at Gallery 119, Bennetts Road, Brisbane.

For the half-centenary of WW2 I decided to bring out a little book called 'Army Laughter' a copy of which I have enclosed. You might find something in it for the Bulletin. At the time I sent a copy to Veterans Affairs thinking they might help me to publish it, but I did not hear from them.

All the very best to the boysLionel Dev

Lionel - our reunions are no longer at night - see our notice. We certainly will make good use of your little book and regret that Vet Affairs did not assist in its publication. Perhaps there are other ways of achieving that!

Devey's humour - as Devey saw it!



"GLAD TO SEE YOU, JONESY..."



"I'M NOT EATING ANYTHING UNTIL WE FIND FATTY?"

More to come....Ed

LLOYD TWINE

Lloyd in past years was a frequent contributor to our Bulletin and was often seen at our reunions then held at the State Service Club. On such occasions Lloyd would win the 'traveled furthest' award. The re-emergence of the Bulletin has inspired Lloyd to drop a line to all his mates and this follows:

"Having arrived in Atherton in 1948 most places and odd incidents are often brought to my notice.

In past years I have had a steady stream of old No 1 Section visitors call on me when they were visiting this area. There were also some others from 5 Field and on one occasion a couple of post-war surveyites called as requested by Jim Stedman. They camped in the Railway yards at Mareeba and were flitting around in a light plane.

Our old camp at Wongabel is known locally as Cattle Camp. I cut it into two parts many years ago - each part to two

brothers. The 'bull-ring' across the small creek was growing potatoes when I came here and then became the main supply of blue couch for Atherton lawns. It is now heavily vegetated with light timber.

Once took a 'position line' observation there – now you are flat out seeing the sun.

The various trig and resection points are still there and still hold the names we gave them. One of particular interest to me is 'Worseley' – named after John Joseph Worseley, the boy from Bankstown. The soil experts have classified a soil type in the vicinity as 'Worseley'.

I was very pleased to see that you have given Bill Kitson some well deserved recognition for his services to historical records. (Ed – Bill was made an honorary member of our Association and the Institution of Surveyors named him Surveyor of the Year for 2000)

The Cairns Historical Society are arranging a night in September with the Survey Unit as their subject. Bill Kitson is bringing his display and should be well received. Their secretary rang me to see if I could come and also did I know of any old members in this area.. Only ones I knew are in Tully and Innisfail and recently found that Rod Asher is in Cooktown. Would appreciate the names and addresses of any old survey unit personnel living up this way.

Glad to hear of George (Andy I presume – Ed) Steen still going strong. I came from Sandgate originally and knew his area well. Only came in contact with him a couple of times as he was in a different section. I spent my youth at Sandgate and have many relatives living there. As a boy we spent many hours riding our bikes in your area. Roghan was our milkman and we used to tease his pet bull. There was no development around there in those days. Back to unit matters....

When we first came to Atherton there was a very small moth with a perfect survey insignia on each wing.

At Kairi a base line was put down north of the town. The southern end was on top of the silo (now covered by four inches of concrete) and the metal trig station still stands at the northern end.

Would appreciate names etc of any surveyites in this area and if you have any particular queries I may be able to answer, do not hesitate to ask.

Have attached cheque for \$50.00 – may help to pay for postage.”

Regards – L Twine

OUR ICONIC THEODOLITE

We now own it – our parade theodolite carried on our last two Anzac Day parades – by courtesy of Bill Kitson the four screw 'Cooke Troughton and Sims' vernier theodolite has been gifted by the Museum of Mapping, Surveying and Land Information to the Association. Its vintage? – I would say 1930s. The four screw jiggers were replaced by three screw about that time – easier to level but also less stable. So, how do we describe it (apart from being bugged – it was dropped, which act ended its working life)? It could be our mascot, but mascots are living things. I think of it as our '**Icon**'; hence our '**Iconic Theodolite**'. Sorry draftees – what can we carry to represent you – a crowquill or a scribe tool on a cushion perhaps.

THE CORPS DAY WEEKEND

From all over Australia we went to Bendigo for a giant reunion to celebrate our Royal Australian Survey Corps Day and re-unite with old friends. And what a weekend it was! Some 300 plus attended with 205 seated at the Saturday night dinner at the Havelah Street RSL.

It would be true to say that the drawcard to Bendigo was the opportunity to meet old friends. The more that went, the more that wanted to come – a sort of snow-balling effect. But that is not to understate the achievement of the organisers nor the quality of the events that took place. The whole weekend went like clockwork and if there were any hitches they were certainly not apparent to those who attended. Organiser Gary Warnest (and no doubt his committee) did a remarkable job –

attention to detail was magnificent! Well done Gary and well done all those involved in making it happen. Enough superlatives – what actually did happen?

Most of us arrived either the preceding Friday or on the Saturday morning staying with friends or in motels and caravan parks. The first event was the tour of Fortuna and in groups of 15 or so, guided by past Corps members who now work for the Defence Topographic Agency, we drifted through the old building from its highest point to its lowest and the surrounding gardens looking and recalling past years and the things that happened. First impression – the grand old building seems to have little use; a few administrative offices on the lower level and on the upper floor a number of computer work stations. Gone is the congestion of draughting tables, filing cabinets and the like and I suspect gone is the frenetic bustle of people engaged in that business of making maps. It is different now; very different! One assumes that most of the activity occurs in those buildings on the eastern boundary we used to call Air Survey Squadron (or before that Topographic Squadron). Further, it is all high security. An ugly 2.5 metre high chain wire fence cuts across the road at the point where the path runs up to the slope to the parade ground, follows that path to go where I do not know and in the other direction hacks across to the corner of Air Survey Squadron or thereabouts. The guard house is contained within the fence alignment at the side of the road, controlling ingress and egress. We were indeed a privileged few! It must be said that Fortuna Villa and the grounds are well maintained.

And then there was the dinner in the evening for 210 diners at the Havelah Road RSL, a very splendid new facility with a large functions room well removed from the pokey hall. Unfortunately not all attending the weekend could be accommodated and some, including a group of WW2 veterans (some AWAS) ate in the adjacent bistro. The tables were set for a formal dinner; low light with candelabra aglow and T2 theodolites as

table centre pieces. We sat with groups of old friends, in my case Nance and Ken Shaw, Merv and Ina Marks, Don and Ruth Ridge, Frank and Naomi Bryant (having moved from SA and now Bendigo residents). Nearby was Steve McConachie's daughter (now a young grandmother) and many others of past acquaintance. The courses proceeded smoothly, but with much merriment. The tables were cleared for the loyal toast and the port was piped in by a piper (bagpiper that is) of the Fortuna Pipes and Drums. Yes, after their splendid performance at the Fortuna Last Parade in 1996, they have continued from strength to strength with more commitments than they can handle. Our piper was magnificent both in dress and performance and a very nice bloke to talk to. Following the loyal toast, and a toast to honour the memory of our Colonel in Chief, the late Diana, the Princess of Wales, a few brief speeches were made – Steve Hinic in a toast to the Corps and Don Sweeney in an update on the Regiment history. At some point we attempted a couple of verses of the Corps marching song – Wandering the King's Highway and the kitchen and waitering staff of the RSL – all 17 – filed in and were given a well deserved round of applause. The evening was over, at least for me and with the clock on midnight we quietly departed.

And then on Sunday it was party time again – at the Eaglehawk RSL at midday for an extended BBQ; BBQed sausages, sags and venison hamburgers with the usual trim. (if that's venison give me beef any day!) On sale also were vials of 'velvet' powder from the antlers of the deer – and we all know what that is for! I am waiting for a report from anyone who has tried it out. Again what a great day it was. Albums of old Regiment photos attracted much interest. Some 900 such photos have been digitised and burnt onto a CD and which were being projected onto a screen as a continuously running slide-show. (also shown at the dinner the previous night). Come 4 o'clock and it was time to leave (the relief of the organisers was palpable) and even as the crowd thinned I was still meeting colleagues of

the past, young soldiers who are young no longer. Wendy and I hit the road, the Calder Highway this time, and back to Tullamarine for our flights to Brisbane carrying the memories of two wonderful days and 26 years of a lifetime.

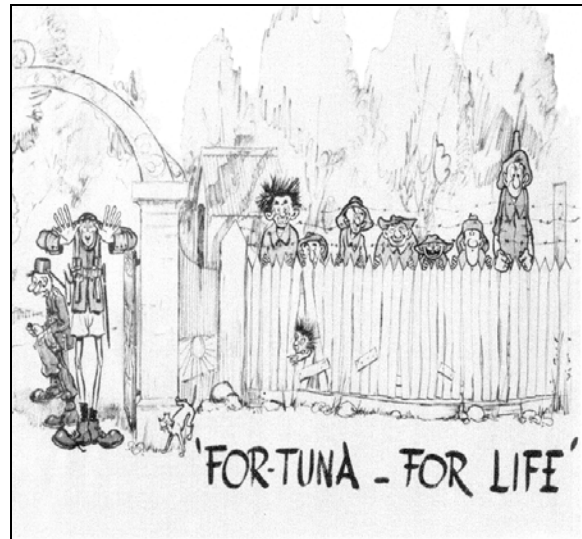
A nominal roll of attendees supplied by Gary Warnest with apologies to those who may have been missed is appended to this Bulletin. Ed

LES ANDERSON – A WW2 VETERAN OF FORTUNA

On our inspection of Fortuna Villa at the Corps Day Weekend I noticed a small group of quite elderly people taking part. On introducing myself I found that they were WW2 veterans of the LHQ Cartographic Company that in 1942 occupied the old Lansell home known as Fortuna Villa in Bendigo. Three of the ladies were AWAS and were, I suppose, the first of our cartographic draughtswomen to serve in the Corps. They were Pat Edards, Val Edwards and Judith Charlton of Bendigo with her husband Jack. Apart from the partners of the ladies, there was one gentleman present, who had also been a member of the LHQ Carto Coy. He is Les Anderson, now 79 years of age and a resident of Slacks Creek, Brisbane. In civvy life Les has been a designer of illuminated signs (eg, 'neon') and a screen printer. His great hobby over the years continues still. It is sound recording and keeping up with the technology Les now laser burns his tracks onto a CD. The CD described below tells its own story.

The next day at the BBQ I talked to Les again. He is somewhat deprecatory of his service at Fortuna. He felt that they were not really in the Army. Few had been taught military skills and when issued with Lee Enfield 303s, stored them in their packing grease under their beds for the duration. Not quite true because on one occasion they had to be cleaned up for a parade. Les tells a good story and I hope to get a few from him. Hopefully he will be at our September reunion.

The cartoon below, 'For-tuna – for Life' by Sgt Joe 'Arry Wright is dated 1942 which means it must have been drawn shortly after the unit moved into Fortuna. No doubt after leaving the bright lights of Melbourne and its wartime night life, confinement to Fortuna in sleepy old Bendigo must have seemed like a life sentence.



For-tuna – for Life by Sgt Joe 'Arry Wright – 1942

Les Anderson uses this cartoon by Sgt Joe 'Arry Wright on the sleeve of his quite remarkable CD which features a track he recorded in 1942 of a concert given by Fortuna members at the Plaza Theatre, Bendigo. Les made the recording in a small studio in Allan's Walk shortly after the concert. Also featured on the CD are ten tracks of vocals recorded by WO1 Geoff Brooke, over a long career as a professional singer. Geoff is a crooner of the Rudi Valli tradition, preceding Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra. Finally there is a humorous track by Cpl Theo Batten whom Les describes as a well known Sydney artist/cartoonist and vocalist.

TRANSPORT NCOs, and one in particular. by Bob Skitch

One of the more stable institutions in a survey unit large or small has been the transport NCO. Nearly always a sergeant, the incumbent tended to remain in that role year after year while the rest of us went from posting to posting, sometimes returning, having progressed in rank from being a lowly sapper to whom the

transport NCO was a revered and respected person to being a more exalted rank to whom the transport NCO remained a revered and respected person. On field operations their ingenuity would come to the fore, keeping a convoy of Jeeps, Landrovers, GMCs, Studebakers – often clapped before we had even left base – on the road¹.

But their contribution to the general effort did not stop at maintaining the operation's mobility; it was far wider than that. Somehow they seemed to be possessed of a wisdom that was unassailable. Generally older than the survey sappers and corporals, married with a few kids, they possessed a maturity that earned not only the respect of the younger members but also their confidence – a person with whom they could share a problem, a grievance perhaps, and know that it would go no further. Perhaps it was because the transport NCO was an independent person who had little concern for the technical nuances of the job or its outcome.

When the field parties returned to the base camp and what passed for civilisation, in the local pub where fights were easy to pick, the local café, where after enough jugs the greasy steak and eggs tasted pretty good, the transport NCO was a steadying influence. "Time you went back to camp Bloggsie" was appropriate advice given to the young sapper who was about to take on a local ringer over some monumental issue or perhaps the blowsy barmaid serving the jugs of ale. And the advice was invariably heeded.

I knew three such transport NCOs well and another I knew from the many stories I had heard (met him once on leave). They were Garney Cook in the Northern

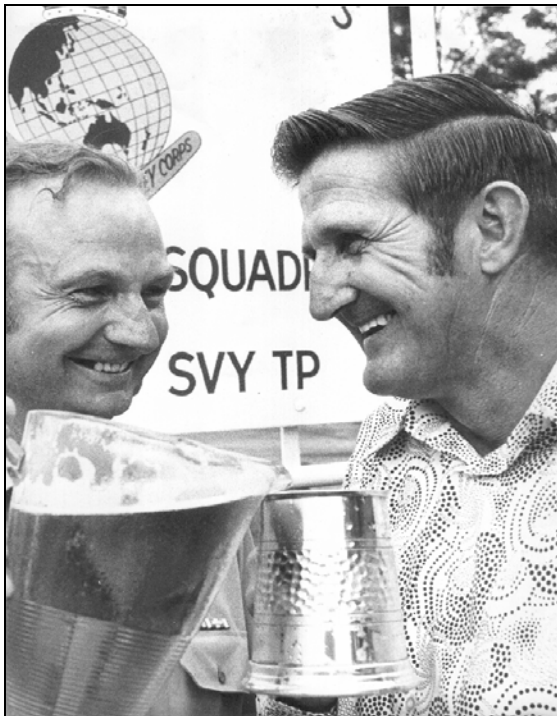
Command Field Survey Section (later Unit and later still, 1 Field Survey Squadron); Harry Wright at the AHQ (later Army) Survey Regiment, perhaps more especially the Topographical Squadron of the Regiment; Max Haworth at the School of Military Survey and the one I really only knew of, was Frank Mazarol of Western Command Field Survey Section (5 Field Survey Squadron). All had those qualities I have described; all were great characters but very different characters. Their voices still ring in my head, as clear as if they had just spoken. At that time, in fact until about 1978, all non-survey trades held against Survey establishments were Survey badged and wore Survey shoulder flashes. It was with regret on the part of many that in 1978 all such personnel transferred to their sponsoring Corps – Ordnance, Transport.

Why am I musing in this way on transport NCOs? Well – recently I had a few hours to wile away in Ipswich, that fair city on the western approaches to Brisbane. Wife Wendy was chairing a meeting and I was an accompanying person, a role I fill from time to time these days. It occurred to me to pay a visit on Garney Cook and after a warning phone call, I did. Garney lives with his wife Eileen in the Ipswich suburb of Booval in the house he and Eileen have lived in since they were married in 1953 – some 48 years; few could beat that! Garney met me on the front steps and invited me to park in his driveway. He looked much as he has always looked despite the appalling accident that befell him soon after his discharge from the army in 1975. Garney always had a great way of looking at a person; down that great beaked nose of his, head thrust slightly back. Morning tea was prepared and set to be consumed in their back entrance courtyard amidst the ferns and hanging baskets. We had a great yarn and maybe a few ears might have been burning on that morning as we recalled mates with whom we had served, some passed on but others still with us. In fact the comments were all very generous. Garney's the sort of bloke who would never have a bad word about anyone. I

¹ On one occasion, in 1959, Topo Sqn went to the field in Austen Champs, with a Rolls Royce engine. Transmission failure caused most of them to return on the backs of trucks. Even our intrepid transport NCO could not resolve that problem. They departed the Regiment in a sad convoy to Puchapunya never to be seen again.

learned a bit about Garney's background in the Corps.

Garney enlisted in February 1948 and went into recruit training at Greta, NSW. From there, after a short spell at Casula he went on to the newly formed School of Survey at Balcombe. He recalls his contemporaries as Laurie Arnold and Jimmy Williams. However, survey training was not Garney's bag and in 1949 after a stint of general duties (cookhouse mainly) he attended a driving school in Melbourne. He returned to the School but soon after was posted to Northern Command Field Survey Section as a driver.



Garney Cook (R) in 1975 – back for final jug proffered by Bob Skitch (L)

With army drivers from all over Australia, and Survey by its very nature had a large number, Garney found himself participating in what was to be seen as a small but unique chapter of Australian history. In 1949 the cold war was developing and international communism was on the march. Communist party leadership, notably in the coal industry and on the waterfront, was increasingly dominating unions in Australia. Strikes were frequent and crippling and impeding the process of post-war reconstruction. In 1949 the coal strike hit and raged for

weeks, mainly in the coalfields of the Hunter Valley – Cessnock, Maitland, Muswellbrook. The steel industry was at a standstill and the Labor Prime Minister Ben Chifley saw all this in a cold war context that justified the use of the Army to break the strike. Thus, for the first and only time in Australian history (at least until the pilots strike of 1989) the Army was called in. Garney travelled in convoy from Brisbane to Muswellbrook and spent the next few weeks carting coal from mine-site stockpiles to the railhead at Muswellbrook. The strike came to an end and army drivers returned to their units, Garney and the Queensland contingent by train to Brisbane.

Northern Command Field Survey Section under the command of Major JK (Jake) Herridge was located in 'L' Block of Victoria Barracks with a detachment at Indooroopilly in the old provost depot. The principal task at hand was 1 mile mapping and for this purpose a survey party with Garney was based at the Ipswich drill hall. Off and on, this continued until 1953 and it was in 1953 that Garney married Eileen and they moved into their house at 33 Pemberton Street, Booval, to be their home through to the present day. The Section continued with 1 mile mapping, after Ipswich at Emerald and those serving with Garney included Jim Stedman, Kevin Walsh, Snow Ralston, Jim Bounds, Sammy Watson, Chris Lancaster and Jim Renneker. At that time field survey sections served in the field continuously and only when operations required or on annual leave, did members return to headquarters in the capital city. Wives and families fitted in as best as they were able. At one time Garney was absent from home for 15 months. 1 Mile mapping continued, after Emerald to the Charters Towers area (Macrossan and Ravenswood) and then, after a short spell in Brisbane, to Boulia in 1957 for the start of the 1:250,000 mapping program. Also in 1957 a party commenced or continued clearing hill stations for triangulation between Clermont and Inkerman. Without rotary wing support this was incredibly hard work. Although triangulation never proceeded, the following year in 1958 the

cleared hill stations were occupied for tellurometer measurement in the first order traverse from Jondaryan to Ingham. Successive years saw the continuation of that work to the top of the Cape together with control for 1:250,000 mapping, the R502 series, on the Cape, the Gulf and Mt Isa region. But that is another story that needs to be told in a little more detail than in the present Corps history. Cookie was Transport NCO on all of that, year after year in north Queensland, spending long periods away from home. In 1968 the now 1 Field Survey Squadron took on the Papua New Guinea survey responsibility and Garney had three successive years on those operations. Survey operations in north Queensland continued in the early '70s, mostly aerodist, establishing control for the 1:100,000 series.

The responsibility sometimes carried by a transport NCO is epitomised in an incident involving Garney in the early '60s. The section had a civilian hired FW aircraft in support with an army pilot. The details are a little vague, however, it seems that Garney was signing for avgas from a contract supplier assuming that the Army would foot the bill, a perfectly reasonable assumption! Perhaps the bill was to be met by the company supplying the aircraft (that Company having gone out of business, a common enough happening with aircraft hire companies) but for whatever reason the contractor was not being paid so he took the matter to court. Garney was in the field at the time and in absentia he was named as a defaulting debtor and so listed in the trading gazette. It was only when the matter was taken directly to the GOC Northern Command that an ex-gratia payment was made to the contractor and Garney's name cleared. The incident took some two years to play out and no doubt caused Garney and Eileen more than a few sleepless nights.

Garney took his discharge from the army in February 1975 and went to work with the Ipswich City Council where another ex-Corps member, Ian Bryan was employed as a surveyor. It was on the second day of Garney's work with the Council that he and Ian were loading their vehicle in the

late afternoon in heavy rain when a vehicle from behind slammed into the back of Garney's vehicle pinning his leg between the two vehicles. The leg was broken in several places and had to have a steel pin inserted while it mended. The leg mended remarkably well and now, 26 years after that unfortunate event, Garney has no trouble with that leg although a few twinges in the knee of the other. Garney finally retired from the Council in 1991.

And now in peaceful retirement Eileen and Garney lead a well-deserved quiet life, making the occasional trip by car to visit daughters and granddaughters.

<p>VIETNAM – A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE An account by Noel Sproles</p>

Those who watched the recent ABC feature series 'Australians at War' could hardly help but be moved by the episode dealing with the Vietnam conflict. It did not pretend to be a piece of definitive military history; indeed, the series as a whole would fall short if that were the case. It simply set out to explain the impact the Vietnam conflict (it was not declared a war although our longest) had on those who served there; and, perhaps not so simply, to explain how this military involvement lost the support of the Australian population and even the veterans of previous wars. Personal experiences in Vietnam were many and varied – from the relative comforts of Saigon and the nightly entertainment in the BOQs and BEQs to that of the infantry digger on constant patrol searching for an invisible enemy. We surveyors were somewhere between these extremes, sometimes more one way than the other. It is true that no one served in Vietnam without risk – it was a question of degree.

During 1968 the Survey section's second officer, Captain Noel Sproles was on permanent detachment to the Task Force HQ for CP and LO duty. In that role Noel found himself on two occasions subject to heavy enemy attack. Historian Chris Coulthard-Clark records the first event in May '68 at the Australian Fire Support

Patrol Base (FSPB) 'Coral', east of Lai Khe where Noel had been sent as part of an Australian HQ contingent. At 0200 on the day after Noel's arrival the base came under heavy attack. As part of the Australian involvement in the '68 TET offensive, Coral became well known to the Australian public.

Noel gives a very personalised account of the second event (first published in the South Australian Survey Ex-Serviceman's Association Newsletter – No 30) The following is an edited version of Noel's account.

Noel recalls:

"In September 1968 the Australian Task Force (1ATF), the Thai Queen's Cobra Regiment, and the US Armoured Cavalry Regiment (ACR) just to the north of the 1 ATF area of operations were all carrying out operations in close proximity to each other. To avoid any problems, the commander 1ATF decided to put liaison officers with both the Thai and the US forces. I was assigned to the Thais. My general recollection from the distance of three decades or so is that it was like being in an old western movie – you know, being in the circle of wagons with the Indians whooping and circling outside taking pot shots all the time".

"On the 15 September with two signallers I flew by helicopter to FSPB 'Bearcat'. There I met the Thai commander, Special Colonel Pin and his staff, including the US adviser Major Long, a Southerner with a drawl straight out of 'Gone with the Wind'. Next day in the early morning we deployed with the Thais to FSPB Grey which was established around an old French villa. FSPB Grey had several medium and field artillery pieces plus two 'Dusters' – WWII anti-aircraft artillery consisting of twin 40mm Bofors mounted on a tank chassis. The sight of them engaging ground targets at night had been highly impressive at FSPB Coral in May and no less so on several occasions at Grey. We were allocated a spot in the villa and set up our radios and maps and were soon in contact with 1ATF and ready to go".

"Just after midnight that night, we sustained a rocket barrage and soon after a bridge on the road just north of the fire base was blown up. It was only about 1km away and the noise and shock wave was enough to wake the dead. Next morning we sustained a long and accurate 82mm mortar bombardment. Just before the mortars fell, I got out of bed to shave etc. but, observing no one else moving, decided to lay down again for a few more minutes. Lucky that I did as the first mortar bomb landed right next to the water trailer where we did our ablutions. An examination after the attack revealed the fin of a mortar bomb stuck in the ground marking the spot and water was pouring out of holes in the trailer like strings of spaghetti".

"During this bombardment, I crawled across to the radio and sent a message to 1ATF that we were under fire but on my way back to shelter I heard a sleepy voice on the other end requesting 'Say again'. I crawled back and started to repeat the message but never got to finish it. A mortar bomb exploded on the roof immediately above me and all I could feel were the red hot lumps of Chinese shrapnel going into my back and legs. Four Thai soldiers were more seriously wounded and had to be evacuated – some later died as a result.

One of the soldiers who died was a medic NCO. My signallers and I watched him crawl into the villa during the mortar attack very obviously seriously wounded in the chest. We could not get to him, as there was an open doorway leading outside between the medic and us and shrapnel was whistling through the door into the villa. When it was over, we went to assist him. We were all a bit shocked and this is where the training cut in. At that time, we were taught never to use our own field dressing on someone else but to go to the trouser pocket on the left leg and use theirs. I did this but, as he was Thai, he did not have a trouser pocket and for a while I was stymied. As it happened we were in the medic's medical centre with shelves full of dressings but that did not click for the three of us until Major Long, the US adviser and old war horse that he was,

joined us. With one of the signallers we lifted the wounded soldier, one on each of his arms, while Major Long wrapped bandages around the soldier's body where his chest should have been. In the process, the wounded Thai soldier's eyes and mine met and although we could not speak each other's language, we communicated. He died a short time later".

"You do get to laugh even in such circumstances. During one mortar attack, we observed Thai soldiers and members of the US advisory team scampering, backs hard-pressed to the wall, to a large bunker built just inside a doorway leading into the villa. After the mortars stopped falling, an examination of the bunker showed that it was incomplete. The wall facing outside, the enemy side in fact, was just a sheet of plywood! Nobody had got around to sandbagging it but needless to say, it did not take long after that for work to commence. On another occasion, a sergeant starting his third tour of Vietnam joined the US advisers. He was a big man who took life very seriously. One night, while asleep on his cot on the veranda, a mortar attack started. He was sleeping under a mosquito net that must have hindered his headlong dash to the bunker as he absolutely shredded it in his haste. Anyone who has wrestled with an Army mosquito net will know that this was a sterling effort!"

"The next day, the 18th, we were mortared again at noon. Standing on the perimeter, we could observe firefights in the clear ground to the east between the Thai infantry and the Vietcong. The Dusters engaged the enemy with fire directed by Major Long who had climbed a tree within the perimeter. After dark that night, mortars fell around the perimeter and the Dusters engaged the base plate positions".

"About this time, I suggested to Major Long a re-deployment of the artillery to assist in ground defence. He thought that it was such a good idea that he recommended it to the Thais who implemented it. Major Long, in a rush of bonhomie, asked what infantry battalion I

had come from as only an infantryman could have thought of such a splendid manoeuvre! When I told him what my background really was, he accused me of being 'A goddamn engineer!!' Was that praise or not? I have often wondered".

"On 20 September, intelligence reports indicated that a major attack was being prepared on FSPB Grey for that night. Major Long, now on his fourth tour, took it in his stride and prepared for the onslaught. I decided to throw in our lot with the US and we all established ourselves in a sandbagged bunker and parapet complex on a corner of the villa. It was something of a shock to the system to be placing fused hand grenades out in lines on the parapet ready for throwing, especially after the elaborate safety precautions that we take in peace-time training. At Coral, we at least had a ring of Australian infantry around us; here it was becoming a bit too personal and 'help yourself!"

"Next morning at 0320 the mortar barrage started and we said 'This is it!' We all got into our bunker and Major Long called the roll and one of my signallers failed to respond. Major Long said that he would go out and find him but I said 'No, he is one of my soldiers, I should do it'. He agreed! I crawled through the villa into every room calling his name and feeling in the dark for a body. Outside the mortars were exploding with the most brilliant pure white flashes imaginable. I could not find him and crawled back to the bunker only to find that he was there all the time in a corner of the bunker too shocked to respond to his own name. Somehow, I knew and understood how he felt! We had another mortar attack that morning but no ground assault as, lucky for us, the battalion coming to attack us stumbled across two companies of Thai infantry some distance away in an adjoining rubber plantation. The two companies fought them off all night losing four killed and 19 wounded".

"I went with Colonel Pin, the Thai commander, and Major Long to their position at dawn just after contact was broken. The ground between where we

landed in the US Army helicopter and the Thai position was strewn with nearly 40 enemy dead and the helicopter pilot refused to wait on the ground for us. The dead VC all had strips of parachute draped over one shoulder and under the opposite arm. The strips had quite obviously been twisted many times and used in an attempt to drag the bodies away. It reminded me of our tradition of Infantry sergeants and warrant officers wearing red sashes on parade as a left over from the days when it was their job to do the same for their own wounded. What was a tradition in our army was still a practice in theirs”.

That night we had a little celebration. Each night I ate with Colonel Pin, his Chief of Staff, and Major Long. Initially my signallers joined us but they were not too sure about this Thai food. Their mates had told them that bull’s penis was a Thai delicacy and to look out for ‘wheel meat with a hole’. The commissioned company and the stress of examining every morsel proved too much and they soon went and had their meals with the American GIs crewing the Dusters. Colonel Pin had a taste for Napoleon brandy which he bought by the case from France and we would drink a bottle a night between us. We had no glasses but used waxed paper cups although there was little wax left by the time we went to bed. The night after the failed attack on FSPB Grey, we had two bottles and we all knew about it the next day! Not a wise move considering the mind-set of the neighbours! However, that night saw the last of the attacks on Grey although other attacks did occur on the Thai forces in the field. On 24 September, 1ATF operations ceased in that area and we all packed up and went home to the relative civilisation that was Nui Dat.

The ten days that I spent with the Thais was a memorable time for my signallers and me. If we needed a reminder after Coral, we learnt that there is no glory in war. The dead soldiers on both sides were not much more than boys who should now be grandfathers, not someone’s dim memory.

Editor’s Note: Many of us in this northern region would remember Noel either in the old Northern Command Field Survey Unit where he served as a 2Lt in the early 60s when Jim Stedman was OC, or in other postings. Noel progressed through the ranks to retire as a LtCol after service in PNG, UK (where he attended with distinction the RMC of Science and met his wife Lynda), Canberra, Bendigo (as 2IC of the Regiment, administering command for a six month period), Indonesia as the Survey LO and Sydney in Field Force Command as well as his tour of duty in Vietnam in 1968. After retiring from the Corps in 1982 Noel worked in commercial management before returning to university, to undertake a double degree in Indonesian and Information Technology eventually gaining a PhD. He is now a senior research fellow with the University of SA seconded to the Defence Science and Technology Organisation and travels extensively in the course of his work.

**ATTENDANCE AT THE CORPS DAY
WEEKEND – BENDIGO 29 Jun-1 Jul**

Name	Surname	Partners Name
Allan	Adsett	
Les	Anderson	
Jim	Ash	Tracy
Bob	Aulsebrook	Dianne
George	Austen	
Mick	Banham	Cathy
Dick	Barwald	Mary
Peter	Bates-Brownsword	Barbara
Theo	Batten	
Hayden	Beer	Malcolm
Kevin	Berry	Janet
Terry	Bevis	Karen Purtle
Peter	Biorac	Margaret
Kevin	Boehm	
Rob	Bogumil	
Ian	Bootland	Pat
Cam	Bramich	
Noel	Brinsmead	
Geoff	Brooke	
Trevor	Brooks	(ch) Fiona, Felicity
Fred	Brown	
Bob	Bruce	Mary Morley
Frank	Bryant	Naomi
Steve	Burke	Sherri
Duncan	Burns	Sandra
Mick	Byrne	Susan
Alex	Cairney	
Stan	Campbell	Helen
Doug	Carswell	Chris
Ralph	Chant	Cheryl
Jack	Charlton	Judith
Neil	Charter	
Brian	Chinn	Pat
Alan	Choat	
Colin	Clarke	Lorraine
Bruce	Cockburn	Marjorie
Yvonne	Cocker	
Damien	Cole	
Lyn	Cooper	
Kaetlyn	Corbould (nee Robinson)	
Noel	Coulthard	Jenny
Col	Cuskelly	Mazz
Jodi	Cuskelly	
Terry	Danger	June
Mick	Davey	Lorraine
Peter	Davies	

Barbara	Day	
Bohdan	Dazkiw	Geraldine
Alex	de Grauw	Kath
Marlene	Deine	
Rhys	Delaine	Joanne
Mick	Dempster	Rhonda
Alan	Derby	Anne
Peter	Dillan	Madaline
Sonny	Dingle	Libby
Les	Dixon	Sandy
Verity	Dixon	
Don	Driver	Gayle
Pat	Drury	
Val	Edwards	
Mick	Ellis	Margaret
Stephen	Ellis	
Peter	Elverd	Julie
Joe	Farrington	
Carmel	Fauth	
Pat	Fisk	
Ian	Fitzgerald	
Errol	Fletcher	Annette
Mick	Flynn	Carol
Bill	Forrest	
Greg	Francis Wright	
Elva	Gale	
Bob	Garritty	Deborah Frank
Rowan	Gillies	Cathy
Mr L	Golding	Mrs L
George	Graham	Pat
Joyce	Gray	
Graham	Hales	
Warren	Hall	Raeleen Gray
Bruce	Hammond	
Alan	Hancox	
Peter	Harrup	Jill
Gordon	Haswell	Dot
Tony	Hilbig	
Steve	Hill	
Stevo	Hinic	Pauline Mannix
Barry	Hogan	
John	Hogan	
Paul	Hopes	
Geoff	Ingram	
David	Jobe	
Jenny	Johnson (nee Haddow)	
Janet	Justin	
Chris	Kelly	Maria
Damien	Killeen	
Trevor	King	
Wayne	Lloyd	
Terry	Lord	Sharon

Valerie	Lovejoy	Colin
Andy	Lucas	Gloria
Harald	Mai	
Merv	Marks	Ina
Ian	Marner	
Dennis	Marshall	Joy
Warren	Matheson	
Wendy	McCarthy(nee Leitinger)	Tony
Pat	McConnachie	
Brenton	McDonald	Marg
Noel	McNamara	
Siggy	Mehling	
Dave	Miles	Pam
Bronette	Minelli	Pietro
Jim	Mitchell	Trish
Wally	Mooney	Eileen
Rosemary	Morris	Max
Andrew	Morrison- Evans	
Mick	Muzzeen	
Joe	Otto	
Lee	Palfrey	
Chris	Parkinson	Beryl
Lloyd	Patterson	
Roger	Pearson	Debbie Jones
John	Phillips	Tracy
Bill	Porter	Angie
Peter	Presser	Lesley
Don	Ridge	Ruth
Brian	Rogers	Marg
Bob	Rogister	Kathy
George	Ross	
Wayne	Rothwell	Karen
Virginia	Rowe	Greg
Adrian	Rynberk	Clare
Ken	Shaw	Nancy
Rod	Skidmore	Kristin
Bob	Skitch	Wendy
Brian	Sloan	
Phil	Smalley	Donna
John	Smith	
Daryl	South	
Neville	Stone	Dianne
Robert	Straube	Santina
Laurie	Sutton	Pam
Peter	Swandale	Jacinta
Don	Swiney	Glen
Stuart	Symonds	Jane McLennan
Peter	Tangey	Robyn
Adrian	Taylor	
Margaret	Taylor	
Stuart	Thaxter	

Ian	Thiselton	Mary-Ann
Bob	Thrower	Margaret
Alan	Timcke	Barbara
George	Timmins	
Peter	Treble	Sharon
Brett	Van Leeuwen	Juana
Mariane	vanderZee	
Stan	Vote	Maureen
Dennis	Walters	
Gary	Warnest	Judy
Graeme	Wastell	Julie
Jeff	Webb	
Kym	Weston	Faye
TJ	Wicker	Lea
Bob	Williams	
Rusty	Williams	Mary
Andrew	Wilson	Karen
Terry	Winzar	

APPOLOGIES

Gary	Ames	
Bet	Bengouth	Greg
Bob	Brewer	
Greg	Byers	
Bob	Comley	Carmel
Michael	Coventry	
Mark	Fitzgerald	
Arthur	Henson	Barbara
Paul	Hunter	Sharon
Mick	Knight	Val
Peter	Lefell	
Rob	McHenry	Tosha
Alex	Munro	Joan
Bob	Roche	
Peter	Saunders	Ed Reardon
Frank	Thomas	Lyn
Steve	Throssel	
Rick	Vanderbom	
Rob	Wilson	Margie
Ed	Wright	

**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS ASSOCIATION
(QUEENSLAND BRANCH)**

ANNUAL REUNION LUNCHEON & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2001

Dear Member

You are invited to attend the Annual Reunion Luncheon and General Meeting of the Royal Australian Survey Corps Association Queensland Branch. This is our traditional reunion function held as always on the first Saturday in September, nearly unbroken since the end of WW2. So come along and catch up with old friends.

WHEN: 12 PM SATURDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2001

WHERE: LIGHTHORSE ROOM, GAYTHRONE RSL

COST: \$25 per head (3 course meal and wine)

CONTACT: Alex Cairney
Functions Member
PO Box 5784
Stafford Heights Qld 4053

Nibbles and drinks will precede the Annual General Meeting, which will commence at 1300 hours followed by lunch at 1330 hours.

Especially we want to see our WW2 veterans and transport can be organised for those who may need it. Simply advise Alex Cairney of your need.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$10 - can be paid by post to the Treasurer at the postal address listed above or at the door on the day of the luncheon.

RSVP: We need to know numbers for catering so please advise Alex Cairney of your attendance by Monday 27th August 2001 by telephone (3397 7583 – he has an answering machine so leave a message) or send in the slip below. All apologies are recorded and read out at the meeting.

Please cross out as applicable:

I will/will not be attending the Reunion Luncheon

I have/have not enclosed \$25 for the cost of the Luncheon

I have/have not enclosed \$10 for my annual subscription

I do/do not require transport to be organised

Printed Name:..... Signature:.....