

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS
ASSOCIATION
Queensland Branch



CHRISTMAS EDITION

DECEMBER 2001

PRESIDENT'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE



Since the issue of our last Bulletin events have occurred around the world that see more personnel of the Australian Defence Force committed overseas.

The Nation's security has become an issue being discussed amongst past and current Defence personnel. High on the list would be the capacity for the Defence Force and other Government organisations to protect our land, its people, infrastructure and assets. Many of us disagreed with past downsizing of our Defence Force and the privatisation of specific Corps and functions including our beloved Survey Corps. We have noted that security of our Defence bases such as Enoggera is in the hands of a civilian organisation. The Federal Government's approach to security and surveillance over past years has left us wondering.

We can be proud of the part we played as military mapmakers in the past whether we were serving with units of the RAE or RASvy. We were people of many different backgrounds that combined together to execute the Corps motto: *Videre Parare Est* in every respect as part of our contribution to our nation's security – both in war and peacetime.

At the Military Mapmaker's Dinner held at the 1st Division Sergeant's Mess in September our Patron Ed Anderson

spoke of this attribute; the people that came together over the years with the skills and energy required to be a military mapmaker.

It was an experience to be part of that gathering and witness the traditions of the past being maintained by the members of the 1st Topographical Survey Squadron RAE. They stand ready to continue in the role of military mapmakers.

As Christmas approaches Barbara and I wish you all health, happiness and prosperity for 2002 and trust that your festive season will be enjoyable. We look forward to future occasions when our families can come together. Please spare a prayer for those members of the ADF that will not be home this Christmas. May God's blessing be with all our members, serving and retired...

Peter and Barbara BB

* The Christmas card portrayed was designed by Cpl Des Ceruti of Detachment (later A Section) 1st Topographical Survey Troop at Nui Dat for Christmas 1966. It was screen printed in two colours, sepia and cyan.

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)
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WW2 Veteran Member	Hal Jones (Ph 3395 1404)
Squadron Liaison & Welfare	Jim Gill (Ph 3264 1597)
Member (unallocated)	Michael Knight (Ph 3278 8331)
Squadron SSM	WO1 Steve Winner (Ph 3332 7564)

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

NOTICES

MORE ON MEDALS

Australian Service Medal

The August Bulletin gave an account of eligibility for the Australian Service Medal. The account was correct as far as it went, however, a more complete statement from Don Swiney was printed in Magna Carta August 2001 issue. This is reproduced in full on P3 of this Bulletin – getting it from the ‘horses mouth, so to speak!.

The PNG Medal

Nothing further has been advised and as far as we are aware 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

The *Courier Mail* (what better source) ran a small story in their ‘bottom line’ column on Thursday 6 December as follows: **Nasho honour** – *The biggest distribution of medals since World War II will start today. Application forms are available through either the RSL or the National Serviceman's Association. About 330,000 former 'Nashos' will be eligible for the gongs that honour those who had no choice about when, where or how they served.* – I will be in for mine; yup – I was in the Navy would you believe! - **Ed**

AN ASSOCIATION BADGE

Most have seen it and are aware of it so this is a **reminder**. 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 as a tie-tack. The price is \$7.00 – inquiries to Mary-Ann Thiselton.

LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH DRINKS

This regular informal event continues at the Gaythorne RSL. There is ample parking at the Club. The next gathering will be on **27 January 2002**. Quite a few members attended the September gathering: John & Cheryl Hook, Peter Tangey, Derek & Sandra Stanmore, TJ Wicker & Lee, Lyn & Mick Coventry, Wally Chillcott, Brian Cosford, Con & Rhonda Laybutt and of course, yours truly and Mary-Ann. **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 being a paid-up member of your Association.

Our financial year runs from September to September. Subscription is but \$10.00 per year. We encourage you to pay three years in advance (or more if you wish). Some have already done this.

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 but don't wait till then – **pay now if you are in arrears.**

REGIMENT HISTORY

Don Swiney is confident that the Regiment History will be printed before June 2002 and it will be on again then in Bendigo. As reported in the June 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 – More and less

Those who joined the 'Military Engineering Heritage Company' in July/August will have received a letter from Col Mike Hyde, Chairman of the Company with a 'membership package' comprising a constitution, a receipt for subscription and a letter of welcome containing their membership number. Dated the 2 August mine reached me in October. I know we all understood that we were to be given the opportunity to lodge a proxy vote for board members but at least in my case, no proxy voting form was received. Do we have a Survey representative on the board? I do not know! Our Association will pursue the matter further. **Bob Skitch**

AUSTRALIAN SERVICE MEDAL – CONDITIONS (from Magna Carto)

The Australian Service Medal saga continues. We had previously reported that those who were on the Mandau and Gading 1 operations were now eligible for the award of the ASM (1945- 75), SEAsia clasp. We can now add to that that those who were on the Gading 2,3 and 4 operations are now also eligible for the same award and that was promulgated in special gazette number 230 dated the 29th June 2001 The eligibility ceases on the 30 April 1975 in conjunction with the cessation of ANZUK service. We have now also been advised by the Director of Honours and Awards that the Chief of Army has also approved the recognition of the Gading 5 operation as a matter of equity as the service was predominantly the same as the previous four deployments and occurred almost immediately after Gading 4. This will require an amendment to the current Instrument of Declaration and Determination for the ASM with Clasp 'SEAsia'.

The Cenderwasih series of operations between 1976 and 1981 will be recognised by an award of the ASM with clasp 'Irian Jaya'. Approval was not given for the award of the AASM (Active service Medal) as it was considered that it did not meet the established criteria for warlike service.

The Nusa Barat and Pattimura/Nusa Timur series of operations along with the operations in the South West Pacific will not be recognised.

For those that approval has already been given and have a gazette number, application can be made now. For the Gading 5 and Cenderwasih series, the gazette has yet to be published. We understand that application forms are available at local RSL branches and we will try and get copies of the application forms for distribution For those who were on those operations that are not eligible and feel that an injustice has been done, you should make contact with the committee and we will see if we can act on

your behalf. We would need to make it a combined application if we are to be successful. The partial success of the representations that we have made is due in no small part to the efforts of Clem Sargent and Phil Chapman (for the Cenderawasih series)

The question has been raised that if someone has gone on one or more of the Gading series operations and then on one or more of the Cenderawasih series, are they entitled to both the ASM 1945- 75 and the ASM. In order to cover all cases (we think), we have had advice that:

- if you were on the Mandau operation and then on the Gading 5 operation then you would be entitled to both medals, if however you were on any of the other Gading operations and then Gading 5, you would be only entitled to the ASM 1945- 75, the principal being, one medal per operation despite the fact that Gading 5 was after the 30 April 1975.
- if you were on the Gading 5 operation only then you would be entitled to the ASM with clasp 'SE Asia'. Should you have been on any of the Cenderawasih series then you would be entitled to the additional clasp 'Irian Jaya' .
- if you were on any of the Cenderwasih series but had been previously entitled to the ASM 1945-75, perhaps as a result of PNG service then you would still be entitled to both medals. – **Don Swiney**

MILITARY MAPMAKERS' DINNER – A PERSPECTIVE by Kym Weston

As I sit writing this I have two trains of thought. One, how did I let Bob talk me into this and second what can I say other than the dinner was really enjoyable and an innovative idea that all I spoke to, hoped to see repeated.

Anyway back to what I remembered of the start. For Hank Opdam, myself and our

wives it started with a comfortable drive from Buderim of a little over an hour. However, the closer we got to Enoggera the heavier the rain fell so that the first sight of the Sergeants Mess was of people making the mad dash from the car park to the foyer followed by the immediate greetings from old friends, who like us were still shaking off the rain.

One of the differences from our usual gatherings was the sight of the current senior NCOs of 1 Topo Sqn (RAE) resplendent in their mess kit. It was really good to see such a mixture of the old, the not so old and the new altogether as well as their partners.



As we moved through the reception line into the Mess proper we were immediately aware of the Squadron's efforts in decorating the Mess with enlargements of old photos as well as a display of equipment mixed with the table silver. During the night these props provided a common talking point for members across the generations.

It was interesting to note that not everything changes – the Mess sherry was the usual blend of varnish remover and hair of the dog – don't take this personally but I have yet to have a really good Mess sherry.

Pre dinner drinks were taken undercover in the outdoor area. For most, this was a time to say a quick hello to friends. I also noticed the wide range of members from the Association – a definite indicator of the

popularity of such an occasion. Mary-Ann was her usual active self as she raced around collecting monies from us while managing to smile and remain un-hassled. Thank you, a great job as always.



Kym and Faye Weston

Moving in to dinner, there was the usual crowd around the seating plan. These days it is made more amusing by those who need their glasses but did not bring them.

There were at least 25 members together with ladies and while I am still waiting for the complete list of all attending (the complete list will be published elsewhere in the Bulletin) we would not have been far short of a hundred. Thus for most we alternated with an association member with wife and a current Sqn member and wife or husband. Thus after introductions and the entrée, everybody was able to talk both about the past and the present.



Grant and Beth Small

I know I found this interesting again for both what had changed and what had not.

It was also interesting to talk to current wives and find how they survived being an army wife, especially today when many families depend on two incomes; partners have their own careers, as well as the strains imposed by six months service in Timor. Interestingly, later in the speeches there was wide comment on the reliance many of us, both past and present, have had on our partners.

Dinner was a leisurely affair, formal yet relaxed. Both the food and wine as well as the service were of a high standard, but for mine the company was the better. We had the usual quota of toasts and speeches. Ed Anderson on behalf of the Association emphasised that it was people in his mind that evoked memories and humour, far more than tasks and projects completed.



Peter Bates-Brownsword, Stan Campbell and Alex Cairney (at rear)

Had I known that Bob was going to ask me to write this I may have taken more notes but again I find that people are what draws me to these occasions.

In reference to people it was pleasing to see so many who have not been to functions recently – I hope we will see more of you. As has been said before, any ex member of RASvy is automatically a member of the Association and is always welcome – paid up members, however, get notices and the Bulletin.

Special thanks to WO1 Steve Winner our host, and Major Thompson for

encouraging ties between the Association and the Squadron.



Maj Bill Thompson and Mrs Allison Thompson

Well that's my lot – for those of you who could not attend I hope it gives some insight to an enjoyable occasion. I'm sure there are as many perspective's on this dinner as there were attendees. I look forward to seeing you at our next event. Best regards – **Kym Weston.**

ATTENDANCE

RA Survey Association Members and Partners

MEMBER	PARTNER
Ed Anderson (Patron)	
Peter Bates-Brownsword	Barbara Bates-Brownsword
Barry Lutwyche	
Kim Weston	Faye Weston
Hank Opdam	Anna Opdam
Greg Anderson	
John Holden	Sue Holden
Tony Gee	Loretta Gee
Lorraine Chambers	
Derek Stanmore	Sandra Stanmore
Peter Blaskett	Irene Blaskett
John Hook	Cheryl Hook
Peter Tangey	Robyn Tangey
Charlie Kovacs	
Russell Larsen	Kerrie Larsen
Jim Gill	Marie Ann Gill
Jim Cook	
Bruce Bowers	Ann Bowers
Ian Fitzgerald	Jacinta Haynes
Wally Chilcott	
John Ashby	Julie Ashby
Michael Knight	Val Knight
Stan Campbell	Helen Campbell
Alex Cairney	
Ian Thiselton	Mary-Ann Thiselton
John Foxwell	Kaye Foxwell
Grant Small	Beth Small

1st Topographical Survey Squadron Members and Partners

Maj Bill Thompson	Allison Thompson
Capt Dave Sapparth	Lisa Ferguson
Lt Paul Byrne	
Lt Margaret Chambers	
Lt John Pollard	Janelle Smith
WO1 Barry Craymer	
WO1 Steve Winner	Julie Allwright
WO1 Steve Hill	Jill Stewart
WO1 Alan Virtue	Elixabeth Virtue
WO2 Brian Bunnay	
WO2 Mark Donnelly	
WO2 Barry Miller	Ailsa Miller
WO2 Ian Read	Rose Read
WO2 Darryl South	Helen South
Sgt Ian Baldwin	
Sgt Peter Ball	Denise Ball
Sgt Mick Carroll	Marcia Carroll
Sgt Paul Einam	Sandria Einam
Sgt Ron Fairhill	Jodie Coenraad
Sgt Graham Jones	Sonja Jones
Sgt Stephen Jones	Bernadene Wardle
Sgt Mick McConnell	Gail Badke
Sgt Brian Paul	Elizabeth Paul
Sgt Charlie Tran	
Sgt Matthew Arnold	
Mr Cec Florence	

REUNION 2001 and ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



The 2001 Reunion and Annual General Meeting took place as always on the first Saturday in September, this year the 1st of September.

Thirty one members were present as well as some of our ladies. Our Patron, Ed Anderson was present. Again this year the event took the form of a luncheon at the Gaythorne RSL in the up-stairs function room. Drinks and tasty nibbles were served before the start of a somewhat informal AGM during which the present Committee was re-appointed with the addition of Michael Knight as a committee member. Then followed an excellent lunch, a seafood salad, main course of chicken or beef and fruit salad for sweets.

Thirteen apologies were received several from members who find the spring month of September a favourite for tripping around Australia. And, of course, many of our older WW2 veterans simply can no longer make it, especially those who live some distance from Brisbane. Nevertheless, some did and we were delighted to have with us our honorary Association Padre Phil Armstrong accompanied by his son Cliff. Bob Skitch brought Andy Steen, now 94 and as sprightly as ever, from Brighton. On the trip in Andy told Bob of one of his war-time secrets and this is reported separately in this Bulletin. Artie McClure came down from Caboolture, his first reunion for a couple of years. Making his first appearance at our reunion was Les Anderson, a veteran of Fortuna during WW2. Les was introduced to our Association in the August Bulletin. Les brought with him some memorabilia of Fortuna including a number of his CDs which, unfortunately, we had no means of playing. Spread out on a table, Les's collection attracted a great deal of interest. His collection also included two wartime issues of 'Magna Carto'. (I have always wondered how that most un-military name for the Fortuna Association Bulletin came to be adopted!) Arthur McIlwain was another WW2 veteran able to be present. Lets not overlook the fact that our Patron Ed Anderson is also a WW2 veteran. Ed's fine stature and bearing tends to belie his advancing years.

Kevin Walsh came down from Caloundra with his niece Trish – no surprise, Kevin always makes it despite his precarious health. In fact to look at him on that day one would have believed he was as fit as a fiddle but unfortunately that is not the case. It is his remarkable spirit that carries him through. Kevin, always the great hobbyist – photography, glass cutting, aquariums to name but a few, has for years been a computer buff and a very knowledgeable one at that. Kevin runs an unofficial 'help-desk' for a number of like minded but less knowledgeable senior citizens at Caloundra and this keeps him busy indeed.

Barry Broad was another surprise. Barry now lives in retirement at North Buderim after many years working for Mount Isa Mines at Mount Isa – or 'the Isa' as the locals call that thriving desert community. Barry was a stalwart of both the Western Command Field Survey Section in the 50's and after that the Topographic Squadron of the then AHQ Survey Regiment. Barry was not the only Survey Corps member to shape a career with MIM. Jock Campbell was another and at least one or two draftsmen.

And there were others of more recent RA Svy service supporting our Reunion this year. Functions come and functions go but somehow our traditional Reunion continues from year to year.

Attendance

Ed Anderson (Patron)	John Ashby
Hank Opdam	Kalen Sargeant
Kevin Walsh	Pat Walsh
Graeme Dowd	Col Hargraves
Phil Armstrong	Lionel Devencorn
Ross Smithwick	Percy Long
Doug Winterfood	John Cattell
Barry Lutwyche	Col Moorehead
Les Anderson	Derek Stanmore
Art McClure	Jim Gill
Andy Steen.	Arthur McIlwain
Ian Thiselton	Brian Partridge
Alex Caimey	Charlie Kovacs
Bob Skitch	Frank Thorogood
Jim Houston	John Gilbert
Jim Cook	
Barry Broad	Unfortunately we have
Michael Knight	not kept a record of all
Kym Weston	accompanying guests.
	There were several.
Apologies	
Stan Campbell	
Tony Gee	
George Hann	
Hal Jones	
Brian Cosford	
John Hook	
Hans Cramer	
Peter Bates Brownsword	

INSIDE KNOWLEDGE or is it just – Andy Steen's KNOW-HOW?

The fog of war was ever present in the movement of personnel and materiel during the years of WW2 especially for those units traveling north from Brisbane

by Queensland Government Rail. Whither thou goest no one will tell! But there were some who knew! Ask Andy Steen.

Somehow Andy always knew where that train was heading, and not just 'north'. That at least was fairly obvious. Andy knew the destination – where those stores were going and by deduction where the personnel accompanying those stores were going. Of course Andy maintained an air of mystery about the source of his knowledge – kept his mates guessing. He knew and that was sufficient. Although there were doubters and those who believed they had better knowledge, Andy invariably had it right and if the others had disagreed – they, to their chagrin, were wrong.

Finally this well kept secret of WW2 has been revealed. The source of Andy's knowledge is out! ASIO and all those spooky organisations listen to this! Andy was his own source.

As an axeman and general survey hand, at times of movement Andy would be detailed to loading the unit stores onto the wagons at whatever railway siding was designated. Trains heading north had to be made up in a particular order according to the final destination of each wagon. Thus some might be heading for Rockhampton, some for Townsville, some for Cairns and so on. The wagons would be shunted around in the marshalling yard until they were in the correct sequence so that they could be conveniently dropped off as the train moved through that particular destination. Of course the shunters had to know the destination of each wagon and how did they know when there might be dozens of wagons to assemble heading for a dozen drop-off points. Simple – there was a small card inserted into a bracket on the leading left hand corner of each wagon with a roughly coded, in fact little more than abbreviated, destination shown, a bit like what the airlines use on air baggage today. Andy, ever sharp, quickly realised this and worked out the codes and..... there you have it! After all, the Queensland

Government Railways weren't all that interested in wartime security were they?

VALE

Peter Sadler

Peter Sadler would be known to those who served in the Corps with the Topographic Squadron of the AHQ Survey Regiment in the early 60s. This was the time of eight-month field operations mounted by Topo Sqn in the Northern Territory, Queensland and Papua New Guinea. Peter joined Topo Sqn in 1961 in time to go to Cape York with Clem Sargent and Tommy Tomlinson (UK). He was straight off a Basic Course with Don Swiney, Blue Warwick and others. In 1962 and 1963 he was with Jim Stedman and John Hillier on the PNG coast survey and the following year with John Hillier. In 1964 he attended OCS. Those who served with the Detachment of the 1st Topographic Survey Troop in Vietnam in 1966 would also have known Peter as the OC of the Artillery Survey Section, since seven of that unit's surveyors were attached to the Topographic Troop when the Troop took over the theatre artillery survey responsibility. Peter was a frequent visitor to the Troop at that time. After a long battle with cancer, Peter died earlier this year. Clem Sargent attended his funeral and the following is the valedictory read by Peter's brother Ray.

Peter was born to Rose and Albert Sadler in Holme-Next-the-Sea, Norfolk, England on the 9th January 1941. He attended Wymondham College in Norfolk before the family migrated to Australia in 1958. The following year, Peter enlisted in the Australian Regular Army. Trained as a topographical surveyor, he served on mapping operations in Cape York and Papua New Guinea before attending the Officer Cadet School, Portsea. He graduated second in the class with the Staff Prize for academic achievement and was commissioned in the Royal Australian Artillery in December 1964.

In mid-1965, Peter joined his regiment in Brisbane and it was there that he met Annette. They became engaged prior to his posting to Vietnam. Peter was sent to Vietnam in 1966 in command of the survey section of 141 Divisional Locating Battery, part of 1st Field Regiment, RAA based in Nui Dat.

Upon his return to Australia, Peter was posted to the Proof and Experimental Establishment, Port Wakefield, South Australia. Annette joined him there after their marriage in December 1967. Christopher was born during that posting in 1969. In late 1970 the family moved to America where Peter undertook training mainly at the American Field Artillery School in Fort Sill Oklahoma. Nicole was born at the Fort Sill base hospital in 1971.

Returning to Australia, Peter took up a posting as an instructor at School of Artillery, North Head, Sydney. The family then moved to Canberra and established their family base in Hackett. Peter began a long and close association with the Holy Cross Anglican Church. In 1976-7 Peter commanded the 106th Field Battery in Townsville but during this posting he started to become dissatisfied with military life and, rather than seeking opportunities to further his career, he took long service leave and the family headed for the UK. Peter grew a beard, bought a pair of jeans and riding boots and the family spent a glorious nine months touring the UK and the Continent in a campervan, and catching up with family and friends.

The family returned to Canberra and Peter held various appointments at Army Office before retiring from the Australian Regular Army in 1983. However, he continued to serve as an instructor with the Army Reserve for another five years.

In 1987 Peter became a full-time university student, joining Christopher (and later Nicole) at the Australian National University and graduated with an honours degree in modern history in 1992.

Peter was always a very keen writer. Over the years he had written poetry, short stories, articles and letters -many of which were published. This developed his love of research and he commenced a long project which culminated in a biography of Major General Sir John Gellibrand, published in April 2000. His drive to complete the work on his mate Gelli, sustained him during his endless treatments.


Peter took great pleasure in the marriage of Nicole to Matthew and the birth of their two children Jamie and Jake; the marriage of Christopher to Tina and the birth of Jeremy.

Peter will be remembered for his quiet humour, his intellect and knowledge on a wide range of topics which he shared with his family and friends; for his love of music and the arts, and for the love of his family (including his two dogs, Bella and Monique).

Ted Burgess

Ted Burgess, aged 58, died in Cairns on Saturday 24 November 2001. We are a little short of background on Ted, the greater part of his career in the Corps having been spent at the Regiment. Nevertheless, Alex Cairney advises that Ted was on the 32/68 Basic Survey Course with Peter Tangey, Alan Tinker, Bob Atkinson, Terry Bernstone, Darryl Huggins, Chris Parkinson, Mick Wagland and Brian Taylor. Alex says he got to know them all when the group were waiting in the E Comd Fd Svy Unit for their course to commence. 1970 Ted was posted to the Regiment. He was promoted to corporal in 1973 and sergeant in 1975. He attended a WOs course in 1976 and was posted to 8 Fd Svy Unit (PNG) in that year. In 1979 he was posted to the Regiment with the rank of Warrant Officer and remained at the Regiment until his retirement in 1997. Ted moved to Cairns in retirement to be closer to his daughter Rachael.

I recall Ted at the Regiment from 1979 – 81 as a competent and reliable warrant officer serving in the best traditions of the Survey Corps. **Bob Skitch**

	1ST TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY SQUADRON NEWS by WO 1 Steve Winner, SSM
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As we move towards the end of another busy year, it's time to take stock of what the Squadron has been involved in recently.

The Squadron had a very active involvement with the joint US-AUS exercise Tandem Thrust conducted in Shoalwater Bay during May of this year. The exercise gave the Squadron the opportunity to provide the full range of its topographic capabilities to various units in a deployed setting, in particular with the new equipment and hardware acquired through Project TOPOSS.

Other unit activities of note since that time have included the annual ORES deployment; an exercise conducting control survey operations in and around Roma during July; preparations for the deployment of a small detachment to provide mapping support to 2RAR for a six month rotation in East Timor following the success of the support to 4RAR; an exchange visit to the 29th Engineer Battalion (Topographic) in Hawaii, and the acceptance of new hardware and software into the unit and associated training of members. Surveying support was also provided recently to 3 Combat Engineer Regiment in the siting and construction of a training facility in the High Range Training Area.

The unit was also very busy providing support to the Queensland Police and the ADF as part of the preparations for the conduct of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) before its demise in October following the tragic events in the US. This will again provide the opportunity to showcase the Squadron's capabilities in a wider defence role.

Individual and collective training continued to be a high priority for the unit including the introduction into service of new geodetic GPS receivers, vendor training in new mapping software and support to both the Intermediate and Advanced Officer Courses at Canungra.

The unit successfully hosted the Land Command Geomatic Conference in late July, which was attended by representatives of all Joint Service mapping agencies. Numerous civilian mapping agencies and associations have

also been interested in the unit with the Squadron hosting visits from the Mapping Sciences Institute of Australia, the QLD Emergency Services, and the Institution of Surveyors (annual Survey Congress) recently. Also of particular note was the success of the mixed formal dining in night hosted by the Squadron for members of the RASvy Corps Association in the 1 Div Sergeants Mess on the 9th November with an attendance of 89.

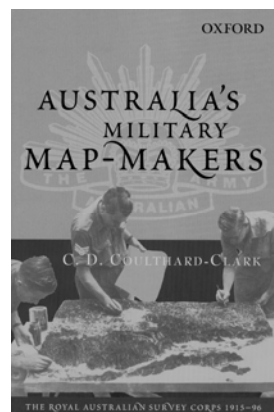
Other significant visits to the Squadron this year have included the Commander Land Command Engineers, Colonel Rod West CSC, RSM-Army WO1 Brian Boughton, RSM Land Command WO1 Steve Griffiths OAM, the RSM SME WO1 Graham Toll, and just this week the visit by the UK Engineer in Chief, BRIG Albert Whitley.

All work and no play makes the Sapper a dull boy and several adventurous training activities were conducted in the latter half of the year as a means of getting the troops together in a less formal setting. These activities including abseiling, rock climbing, snow survival training and a beach activity involving the practice of life saving skills.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the very best for the holiday season approaching. Until next year – out to you.....

WO1 Steve Winner SSM

THE CORPS HISTORY – a review



The February March edition of 'Stand-To', the national RSL bulletin carried a review of our Corps history by Hugh Collis. For the interest of members the 'review' is presented below:

This is the fifth book to be published in the Australian Army History Series.

While its theme is different to that of the four books already published, it is a competent and worthwhile contribution to the series.

It shows, as the other books have done, a meticulous attention to the subject, backed by the solid and reliable competence of the publisher. (Oxford University Press)

I learnt the value of accurate mapping when an out of date map put me in the middle of an airfield under construction rather than the open countryside that I was expecting.

In the days of a global positioning systems and the appearance of motor vehicles which instruct the driver on the route to be followed, it is a salutary reminder of the immense difficulties that used to be routine in the lives of map makers. I liked particularly the photograph of the 1934 car minus a front wheel somewhere between Millicent and Adelaide in 1934.

The Corps was not an organisation to attract a great deal of attention, and I have the impression that its members thought of themselves primarily as surveyors operating in a military context. That is shown by two examples quoted which say a great deal about the methods that were routine.

The first concerns Lieutenant Owers, whose name was used to mark Owers Corner on the Kokoda Track. Writing a report on his activities, an Army officer refers to him as 'Lt Owers – I think – because I have never seen him in uniform.' The second concerns the reception given to a detachment which arrived at the aptly named Raspberry Creek to provide support services for an Army exercise. The SO2 Ops at Divisional HQ greeted them with the inquiry 'Who the hell are you?' and when told gave the reply 'Never heard of you and didn't know you were coming.'

The author knows his topic well and covers it in depth. It seems inevitable that when military and civilian interests were on a collision course, the collision was spectacular and resulted in a prolonged period of acrimony which did little to advance the task of map-making that might have been the principal goal of both soldier and civilian.

It is a book with a great deal of interest and a worthwhile addition to the series.

I understand that Mr Collis is a regular reviewer of military publications and it is hard to describe his contribution as other than facile. One wonders whether he has actually read the history he is reviewing.

The Collis review has not gone unnoticed. Brian Murray, President of the New

Guinea Survey Section Association (8th Field Survey Section) penned the following reply to the *Stand To* editor. Unfortunately Brian's reply was not published – editor's prerogative I suppose.

The Editor – Stand To

Dear Sir,

*I have long held Hugh Collis in high esteem, and have enjoyed his book reviews. But he may, on reflection, agree that "putting the Army on the map" (*Stand To*, February-March 2001) falls short of his usual standard.*

Some one-third of his review is devoted to his "impression" that we thought of ourselves "primarily as surveyors operating in a military context". May I suggest that, in reviewing the 81 year history of our corps in peace and war, this is excessive.

In support of his "impression", Collis cites two external sources, the first being an apparently testy permanent army Lieutenant-Colonel who referred to a member of our unit as "Lt. Owers – I think – because I have never seen him in uniform".

NGX 369 Lieutenant, later Captain, Noel "Jerry" Owers m.i.d. was a member of the NGVR in Wau, the originals of the legendary Kanga Force (with which others of us were later to serve) before being transferred to our unit (the New Guinea Survey Section) when it was formed in Port Moresby in March 1942. Like the rest of us he wore khaki drill until we were issued with jungle greens late in 1942, after we came down from the Kokoda. We were one of the first units to cease wearing badges of rank in the: jungle, a practice which later became universal and this seems to have offended the colonel's sense of military propriety. He apparently saw Jerry's party on the lower reaches of the track. (Those of us in the second party committed to the Kokoda shortly afterwards never saw the colonel or we doubtless would also have offended him.)

The second source of Collis' "impression" was what he calls "the aptly named Raspberry Creek exercise when a survey party was told by the SO2 Ops at Divisional HQ; "Never heard of you and didn't know you were coming".

Setting aside what this may reveal about headquarters staff, there were other potentially more serious incidents in real operational situations. One mentioned on the same page as the comments of the irascible colonel refers to when some mates and I were on the way

back on a track off the Kokoda and encountered a patrol from 2/2nd Bn which had not expected to run into other Australians coming from the 'wrong' direction. This was always a potential problem in main force areas; trying to map operational areas when battle has been joined is not the easiest of occupations.

In fact, operational mapping in the New Guinea campaigns of 1942 and 1943 called for strong self-discipline and motivation from young army surveyors, routinely sent into forward areas, often in two-man parties, away from their unit for days and weeks at a time and sometimes also distant from other Australians.

These youngsters, most of whom were barely nineteen when they first 'went bush' were not and never considered themselves to be heroes. They did, however, receive a "high commendation" from General MacArthur for the job they did. They saw themselves simply as ordinary diggers, and earned the right to do so many times over.

Yours faithfully

(Brian Murray)
President, New Guinea Survey Section
Association (8th Field Survey Section AIF)

NEW GUINEA SURVEY SECTION (8th Field Survey Section AIF)
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Ed Note: Recently I received Newsletter No 20 of the New Guinea Survey Section Association edited, or perhaps I should say written by, Brian Murray. It is always a delight to read; Brian has a wonderful turn of phrase. The following little story taken from Brian's latest newsletter gives an insight into that remarkable unit's activities:

A story which deserves recording occurred when Barry Kemp and I were on the way down the Mubo Track* between Wau and Salamaua to do track traverses and caught up with a party of six to eight American officers and senior NCOs led by a colonel straight out of *'Gone with the Wind'*. They were wearing 'olive greens' and, unusual by Australian jungle practice, badges of rank. In over a year in New Guinea, they were the first Americans we had ever seen in the jungle and Barry could not resist it. "What happened to you blokes?" he demanded of the colonel. "Did

you get lost?" The Americans took it in good part, and we travelled together until our paths diverged. At one stage the colonel and I were taking a spell. It was over 5,000 feet and chilly, and the cold mountain water we had drunk had given me stomach cramps. Standing up I said "I'm going to kick on. Are you coming?" To which he replied in his soft southern accent: "Ah'm in no hurry sir. The war'll wait till I get there". For the record, it did.

Going back further in time, there were only three war correspondents, all Australians, on the Kokoda: Damien Parer, Osmar White and Chester Wilmot. Parer remained behind to shoot more footage when the other two came out. Bob Roche reminded me some years ago of how we met one of them on the track, but I could never remember his name, only his eagerness to talk and his statement that 'It's a bloody hell back there.' (The 'a' stuck in my memory.) I also vividly recall his bitter comments about correspondents back in Port Moresby writing 'front line despatches'. He was wearing a shirt, and White records in *'Green Armour'* that someone in the 2/27th stole his only shirt when it was drying by a cookhouse fire. So our war correspondent must have been Chester Wilmot who is remembered today only in the context of the war in Europe.**

What was it really like? The next time someone asks "what was it like", refer them to Osmar White's *'Green Armour'*, Penguin Books Australia Ltd, 1987, which I was re-reading recently. It evoked vivid memories. Bob Roche, Jim Miller, Stan Verey and others will agree that Skindewai was reputed to be – and was – the most comfortable staging point on the Mubo Track, and also that it was a 'miserable habitation'. (*'Green Armour'*, p 152) I remember that, when it was not raining, a thick white mist would come in about 3.00pm its tendrils wrapping themselves around trees like some sensate creatures. In that environment God help anyone who was even slightly claustrophobic.

* The Corps history, Australia's Military Map-Makers records that 8 Field Survey Section, AIF from January (1943) (was) sent in under Lt

FJ Cusack to assist with mapping operations.....The next day the first two parties of two men each were dispatched – as one member later recalled, ‘without even a rudimentary knowledge of the topography, the military situation or even what Australian units were in the area’ – along the Mubo Track to begin compass traverses.

** Chester Wilmot published the first definitive volume on the European war in about 1953, *The Struggle for Europe* in which he attempted to show how the western allies in their emphasis on the western front allowed Russia to dominate through eastern Europe and so win the struggle for Europe. Soon after the book’s publication, Wilmot was tragically killed in the first of the British pure jet airliner ‘Comet’ crashes somewhere over Arabia. – Ed

SON AND FATHER SERVICE TO THE CORPS – Submitted by Bill Boyd

An older looking corporal stood with his back to the wall at the Digger’s Bar across the breezeway from the billiard room at Fortuna. He offered his hand in greeting as did several others as they were introduced to Don Taylor and me. “Allan Pollard,” he said. “I know your old man”.

Knowing my father’s dislike for “the military” and particularly considering the distance between Cairns and Bendigo, the claim was bizarre.

“Yes,” I said flippantly, as nineteen year olds tend to be. “He’s dead.”

Allan seemed to, or perhaps tried to, ignore my statement and went on to say that my father drove the mobile crane in the Cairns Railway Goods Yard. I had to admit that this bloke either knew him, or was in a position to have read my personal file, you never know what information “they” have on you.

“Well, yes he used to, but he’s dead.”

Becoming more serious, Allan said “But I was working with him late last year.” I went on to explain that I had only just returned from attending the funeral after completing my basic course in December.

Settling back on a bar stool, Allan, visibly shocked and offering his condolences told me how another Bill Boyd did his bit for RASvy --- eventually.

Allan arrived driving an army truck, probably a left hand drive Stutebaker, at the goods shed to receive stores for a field party, in, or enroute to the Gulf of Carpentaria. It would seem that Allan had all the appropriate paperwork filled out to claim the stores, including some sort of order for the cost of the use of the crane. The crane, to the chagrin of Allan, was the sole domain of “Big Boydie”.

“No. It’s cash or it doesn’t get done.” Allan explained that the army did not use cash. It used a particular form so that the money could be claimed back. As I recall, in that instance, Allan paid for the crane himself. Moving Bilby Towers from rail truck to road truck by himself was not an option.

Allan was a frequent visitor to the goods shed during the field trip. On several occasions he was made to wait more than longer for his turn with the crane, and cash always had to be paid and duly receipted before the crane would move.

It would seem that one day, the recalcitrant crane driver asked Allan just what the army was doing with all this stuff, and where did he fit into the scheme of things.

Allan proceeded to explain the role of RASvy. He was stopped short with words to the effect, “My boy Bill is in Survey Corps. He’s at Balcombe in Victoria. Do you know him?” Allan said he didn’t but would probably meet me when he returned to Bendigo. “Yes,” said the Old Man, “Bendigo is where he will be going.”

Thereafter, RASvy never had better Queensland Government Railway support than at the Cairns Goods Yard. Allan was first in the queue every time, and waiting until smoko was over or even worse, a lunch break or union meeting was a thing of the past. All items destined for the 1961 Gulf trip, had first priority.

PERSONNALIA

Ed Note: Wendy and I took a trip to Sydney recently and motoring down the Pacific Highway we took the opportunity of overnighting with Bill and Ann Boyd at Gosford, visiting Ken and Nance Shaw for morning tea the following day. There are quite a few past members in the Gosford region and who can blame them. As well as Bill and Ken, Col Laybutt, Chris Parkinson, John McCullough and Thomo Thompson reside there – in retirement I presume. Enough to form a sub-group of our Association perhaps! Anyhow – Bill Boyd and Ken Shaw:

Bill and Ann Boyd: Bill is far from retired. Bill and Ann run a bridal shop on the main street of Gosford. Met by Ann at a chosen RV on the approaches to Gosford, Wendy and I were escorted to the Shop, 'Danamade'. Entering by the back door we were confronted by Bill, with tape measure professionally around his neck, advising a young male customer (Bill handles the blokes) to 'stick your finger in your navel son and hold it there'. The young fella did as he was told – reminiscent of the young soldiers at the Det! Ann makes an incredibly mean bridal outfit and the shop was full of them. Business seems to be booming. Bill dresses for the role as can be seen in the photo below.



Bill Boyd – at his residence



Ken and Nance Shaw at their residence
(Sorry about two of me – Ed)

Ken and Nance Shaw: The Shaws have not lost their sense of humour. At morning tea it was a laugh a minute. Nance told the most incredible story that only she could tell properly so I won't attempt to repeat it. Ken enjoys our bulletins – I sent him a selection of past copies – and wishes to join our 'northern' Association. No problem Ken – you're in! (subscription pending of course) Ken and Nance have a busy social/sporting life and advise anyone contemplating calling (they would be very welcome) to ring ahead.

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Other Personalia

Kevin Walsh: Kevin couldn't quite make the dinner although he had managed the reunion. He had a bad turn the day before – not too uncommon for Kev these days – and niece Trish who brings him to Association functions said 'no deal'. Kev lives from day to day. He enjoys a drop in call from his mates of past.

Don MacDonald: In travelling to Sydney it had been my intention to pay a courtesy call – more than that, a friendship call – on Brig Don MacDonald. However Don had taken a trip to Melbourne for the reunion of the 2nd/1st Company and we failed to connect. I talked to him on the phone and he seems remarkably hale and certainly as hearty as ever at age 92 years. (referred to by Brian Murray as 'our paterfamilias')