



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS
ASSOCIATION
Queensland Branch
BULLETIN

PO Box 5784 Stafford Heights 4053
Website: www.rasurvey.org

REUNION EDITION – No 54

AUGUST 2013

CALENDAR 2012 (outline)

6 Sept (Saturday) Annual Reunion and AGM at the **Kilcoy RSL**
November (TBA) Derek Chambers Award presentation.

ANNUAL REUNION AND AGM

Again this year our Annual Reunion and AGM is to take place at the Kilcoy RSL on Saturday 7th September 2013.

It is important that to assist with our planning in conjunction with the Kilcoy RSL a clear and early response on attendance or non- attendance with any special dietary requirements will greatly assist us. If you know of any of our former comrades that are not currently members of the Association or were members of other Corps that accompanied us on our various sojourns, please feel free to pass this on to them with an open invitation and ask them to contact secretary Greg Knight on his mobile 0414 321 827

Some Details:

The meal will be provided by the Kilcoy RSL Ladies Auxiliary who did such a fantastic job in 2012. The Kilcoy RSL provides a friendly, relaxed atmosphere to enjoy good fellowship, good food and good company whilst having historic ties with our Corps and our inheritors.

Current plans are for fellowship & nibbles @12 noon in the **Cpl. Ashley Birt** bar and lunch at 1pm(ish). A main course will be followed by sweets which, by request, will include Beccy's famous "Kilcoy Pecan Pie"

Anticipated cost will be \$30 - \$35 per head which includes all food, and beverages (subsidised by XL Services) – wine included with meal (chosen by Sommelier Ross Smithwick)

Further details will follow when available.

Accommodation:

Should you choose to stay overnight we thought it prudent to advise you of accommodation details as apparently this is a busy period in Kilcoy so an early booking may be smart. Accommodation can be provided as follows:

Kilcoy Motel: 6 William St, Kilcoy (Approx 1 block from RSL) Ph: 5422 0092
Cost ranges from double \$120 to \$270 - www.kilcoymotel.com.au

Exchange Hotel: William Street, Kilcoy (Approx 2 blocks from RSL) Ph: 5497 1331
Cost ranges from Single \$40 to Triple \$70

Stanley Hotel: 46 Mary St, Kilcoy, Ph: 5497 1037 (Approx 3 blocks from RSL)
Cost ranges from \$40 Single

Kilcoy Gardens Motor Inn: 62 Hope St, Kilcoy (About 4k other side of Kilcoy) Ph: 5497 1100
Cost ranges from \$99 Single to \$147 Family (Double + 2 Single) www.kilcoygardensmotorinn.com.au

COMMITTEE

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

NOTICES

POST OUT OF BULLETIN

Post out of Bulletin will continue to those members who are not connected to the internet and cannot access our website. For those with internet access email advice will be sent that the latest Bulletin has been entered onto our website – www.rasurvey.org, – a good opportunity to check out our website and see what the other State Associations are up to.

For your convenience a hyperlink to our website will be provided on the email advice.

OUR HISTORY PROJECT – WHAT DID WE DO, 1946 – 1996?

Our 'What Did We Do' project remains open for further contributions. Contributions have dried up over the past 12 months. Have a look and see if you can fill a few of the gaps. Email your contribution direct to Bob Skitch bob@skitch.me or enter your data on our website – www.rasurvey.org .

BERETS – BERETS – BERETS

Our stocks of our ever popular beret are now depleted. However, stocks are held at Christie's in Sydney. Be distinctive in the RA Survey Association headdress. **Note:** Christies can be contacted as follows: Unit 4D; 1-7 Unwin Bridge Rd, St Peters, NSW 2044. Phone 02 9519 0784

MAPMAKERS OF FORTUNA

Copies may be purchased from the Ex-Fortuna Survey Association (PO Box 865 Bendigo 3552) at \$60.00 plus postage of \$11.50 which includes cost of a padded postal bag.

ASSOCIATION TIE or SCARF & BADGE

Cost of tie or scarf is \$ 25.00 plus postage. Association badges are still available from the Queensland Association. Place your order with the Queensland Association. Phone or email Greg Knight

VIETNAM – A TECHNICAL TOUR by Bob McMillan-Kay.

Copies can be obtained from Bob McMillan-Kay at a cost of \$36.00 including postage. We commend this highly successful book of Bob's Vietnam experience. Bob's address is 14 March Lane, Maryborough, Qld, 4650.

ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST BULLETIN

ANNUAL CORPS BIRTHDAY DINNER – 2013

A memorial to Colonel Alex Laing who initiated the first

Another very successful annual dinner was conducted in the Royal Room of the United Service Club on the 27th June 2013. Numbers were down this year with sixteen in attendance. Our guest of honour this year was Mrs Dawn Laing who made the effort to attend from Canberra. Of course Dawn is a frequent attender at our Annual Corps Dinners and always manages to speak eloquently of her memories of service as an army wife in Survey.

In attendance were Dawn Laing; Peter & Barbara Bates-Brownsword; Ross & Darelle Smithwick; Colin & Alisa Morehead; Barry Lutwyche & Jan Burke; Alex Cairney; Ian Hutchings; Rowan Shipley; John Smith; Brian Partridge; Ian Fitzgerald and John Gilbert.

As in the past the dinner was conducted along Mess lines but with an appropriate level of informality. Pre-dinner drinks were available in the Military Bar from 1900h and the dinner commenced at 1930h with Grace being said by **Ian Hutchings**. President **Alex Cairney** welcomed members and guests attending and read out quite a long list of apologies, mostly the 'grey nomads' who take advantage of the cooler months to hit the road.. After the tables were cleared and the port passed **John Gilbert** called for the Loyal Toast and then **Brian Partridge** proposed the toast to honour the memory of the late Colonel in Chief of the Royal Australian Survey Corps, Diana, the Princess of Wales. President **Alex Cairney** then called for the toast to the Royal Australian Survey Corps Association responded to by **Peter Bates-Brownsword** who followed with the toast to wives and partners, responded to by **Dawn Laing**. Finally the toast to departed comrades and absent friends was proposed by President **Alex Cairney** with special mention of Percy Long, well known by us all.

In the interlude Ross Smithwick spoke of the changing fortunes of our sponsors over the past several years starting with the Queensland based Pioneer Surveys PL, then national with Conics Ltd and international with the RPS Group. Our sponsorship now rests with Ross's own company. Ross's interesting address reflected the changing fortunes of the survey industry in Australia.

If all this toasting and formal addresses suggests to you that our annual Corps dinner is somehow stilted and not much fun then you are very wrong. It is not at all. Tales tall and true or not true at all are swapped around the table with much good humour and perhaps even ribald comment. The menu and the quality of the food and service was acclaimed by all to be the best ever. Here it is...

Entrée: Wild Mushroom Risotto Balsamic Onion & Goats Cheese Tart

Main: (1) Oven Roasted Lamb Rump, PortWine Jus with Olive Crushed Potato & Buttered Sugar Snap Beans
(2) Fresh Tasmanian Salmon, Lemon Buerre Blanc with Potato Rosti, Sautéed Baby Spinach & Buttered Asparagus

Dessert: (1) Apple Crumble & Vanilla Bean Ice-Cream (2) Sticky Date Pudding with Brandy Sauce
Tea, Coffee & Club Chocolates

For those who were not there.....eat your heart out! – Unfortunately no photos this year – no one thought to take a camera.....*Reported by Bob Skitch (who for the first time, wasn't there)*

I have stopped calling this most enjoyable occasion a barbecue – it is much more than that. It is a feast. I doubt whether any of those attending would have been too interested in an evening meal at home. As far as I am aware Loretta prepared the many splendid dishes. At one point on poking my nose into the kitchen Tony was wearing his 'chef's hat' with something sizzling producing all sorts of inviting aromas. I think some of the ladies had brought all sorts of deserts very little of which was left by the end of the afternoon. Some bloke brought a 'Salad to Die For'.

Those attending were Bob and Wendy Skitch, Peter and Barbara Bates-Brownsword, Barry Lutwyche and his brother Bob, Bruce and Ann Bowers, Phil Bannister, Grant and Beth Small, Rowan and Joanne Shipley, Stan and Helen Campbell, Jim Beard, Dave and Julie O'Shannessy and of course, Tony and Loretta Gee.

As on all previous occasions lots of stories exchanged (tales tall and maybe true) at the Gee's lovely Bribie Island home on their very pleasant terrace overlooking a duck pond that probably has a name but I am not aware of it. Wendy and I departed about 4.00pm but I am told that many stayed much later.

To Tony and Loretta many thanks from all of us who were privileged to attend.



Tony Gee & Bob Skitch



Grant Small, Bob Skitch, Loretta Gee' Peter BB, Stan Campbell



The Ladies



L to R standing – Bob Skitch, Wendy Skitch, Barbara Bates-Brownsword, Peter Bates-Brownsword, Barry Lutwyche, Bruce Bowers, Ann Bowers, Alex Cairney, Mrs Bannister, Tony Gee, Grant Small, ?lady, Phil Bannister, Joanne Shipley, Rowan Shipley, Helen Campbell, Stan Campbell.

L to R sitting – Jim Beard, Dave and Julie O’Shannessy, Loretta Gee, Beth Small.

Photo taken by Barry Lutwyche’s brother Bob

PERSONALIA and other jottings

Fortuna (again) – various reports

May 09, 2013



Fortuna in Bendigo has been sold for \$2.21 million to Mr Paul Banks according to a statement released by the Defence Department. There are expansive plans for the historic villa, including a boutique teahouse, an aged care facility and a brewery. Mr Banks, a Sutton Grange hobby farmer, owns a marketing company and plans to restore Fortuna and develop parts of the 7.5-hectare site. “We have to protect this villa,” he said. “The way to protect it is to complement it and that’s what we intend to do.” Some of the buildings will be converted into

apartments he said. “That might become a retirement village or something like that.”

Mr Banks intends to discuss options with Fortuna Action Group, Friends of Fortuna and the Bendigo Historical Society. The \$2.21m sale is substantially lower than when Fortuna went for auction in April at \$3 million.

An ABC doco..... I watched the ABC Statewide (Vic) program sent to me by several and many may have seen it. It featured a video of Fortuna Villa led by the new owner, Paul Banks who gave a commentary as he and the ABC cameraman progressed from room to room. His commentary was rather hit and miss – more misses than hits and I emailed Gary Warnest of the Ex Fortuna Association and suggested that he might present Mr Banks with one of our later versions of ‘Lansell’s Fortuna’, our

touring handout in days past. I also commented on a *Bendigo Advertiser* interview with Mr Banks where he makes very light of the Army's use of the Villa for 55 years. Arguably had that not happened Fortuna Villa might have fallen victim of the developer's demolition ball of the 1950s. In fact I was very impressed by the beautifully restored interiors of the Villa although the grounds are a mess. Gary replied... *Thanks for the suggestion; I am planning to be in contact with Paul very shortly to try to gain access to Fortuna for the 100th Anniversary.* Regards Gary.
Best of luck Gary. It will be great if you can pull it off.....Bob

Bill Forrest – Brian Mead emailedFound this article on Bill Forrest in today's *Bendigo Advertiser*. Bill was well known in Bendigo during the 1960's as a star footballer with Golden Square and North Bendigo. Sgt Forrest was in charge of the gardens at Fortuna during this time. Later he served at the School of Military Survey at Bonegilla.

Country boy Bill Forrest receives NAIDOC honour

By Kristen Alebakis.....July 15, 2013, 1 a.m.



KANGAROO FLAT resident Bill Forrest was recognised for his tireless work in the community at a prestigious awards night on Friday night. The Loddon Aboriginal Action Group hosted a dinner and awards night as part of NAIDOC Week celebrations.

Event organiser Aunty Louise Sinnappan said it was an important night for the community. She said Mr Forrest was a deserved winner. "He has worked with the traditional owners of Bendigo, he has done a lot for our community," Ms Sinnappan said. "He has a wonderful history and it was great to see him get acknowledged for the wonderful

work he has done. The 79-year-old said he was surprised to have won the award.

"I was lost for words," Bill said.

Mr Forrest, originally from Western Australia, has lived a long life filled with many ups and downs. He was a member of the stolen generation, taken away from his mother when he was only a couple of weeks old. Mr Forrest said he was bought up in a children's home alongside former VFL champion Polly Farmer.

Ed I well remember Bill at the School in 1972-74. Amongst other duties he was the Sergeant Steward for both messes and looked pretty good in his white mess jacket etc. Bill had a stand-off relationship with the sergeant cook such that the sergeant cook had a white line drawn on the floor over which Bill and his coterie of stewards were not to transgress. This imbroglio came to an end when Bill discovered that the said cook had been flogging rations and concealing them in the ceiling above his accommodation room. The miscreant cook said he had them there for safe keeping. He disappeared under escort of a couple of provosts from Bandiana.

After Bill left the army and returned to Bendigo he did quite well as a general handyman. In the new house I bought at Strathdale. I had a need for a shed and contracted Bill to build it and lay a concrete floor and path. Bill worked with his son and did a great job – had it all finished in two or three days.

Lost and Found - Bryan Henshaw was seeking out David Averay having found his name on Peter Jensens's nominal roll. Bryan emailed.....

I served in with David Averay at the Regt and we became very good friends, keeping in contact for many years afterwards. Sadly, I have lost contact with him. Do either of you have an email address for him? **Ed**He was found – in Castlemaine Victoria.

Corps Birthday is recognized and celebrated by other State Survey Associations.

- **The Canberra Survey Corps Association** held a Corps Birthday Luncheon Friday 28 June at the Kingston Hotel Bistro, Griffith. Charlie Watson was the organiser.
- **The RA Survey Corps Association of South Australia** held a Corps Birthday Function on Sunday 30 June at Keswick Barracks from mid-day onwards, a BYO-BBQ in the Sergeant's Mess outdoor area. Alex Munro was the organiser.

Les (LVJ) Smith phoned to report on the annual lunch with his Basic Course contemporaries. Les was senior to the rest and they came under his tender tutelage in the old Southern Command Field Survey Section. They have been lunching at Gilhooleys but never again. Les said the steak they had was 'saddle leather steak'. Perhaps that reflects more on the state of their teeth – artificial or real. After all, they are all OBEs. Les said the main topic of conversation was the inimitable WO2 Jim Rennaker. Jim served in the Corps from 1948-60. I never served with WO2 Rennaker but heard many stories about him that I suspect are best forgotten. He was quite a remarkable mathematician, self taught. We have had a few of those in the Corps; Flatty Davidson comes to mind.

Attending the Lunch were Jeff Lambert 1951-60, WO2; Mike McCarthy who now lives on the Gold Coast to escape the Tassie weather, came into the Corps in 1948; Dennis Cox – Dennis was a sergeant instructor on my Basic Course; Jock McCarthy who used to attend is very unwell and cannot make it. Les tells me that Jock and Mike were Pommy surveyors in the Royal Artillery and came to Australia and joined the Survey Corps.

Les's own military career is an interesting one. Enlisting in the RAAF in May 1944 he was in a group seconded to the British Somerset Light Infantry to serve in India with the rank of 3rd Class Pilot Officer (non flying). He returned to Australia in May 1946 and attended the RAAF Language Course at Point Cook but his high spirits saw him depart in July and leave the RAAF to join the Survey Corps. He was posted to Chatswood and then in October to the W Comd Field Survey Section under Major Rule. He attended the 5/49 Basic Course at Balcombe, mainly for serving sappers and on which was Jeff Lambert, Jock Campbell, Dennis Cox and Mike McCarthy. He was posted to the Southern Comd Field Survey Section and as a sergeant and became instructor to I Topo Survey Company (CMF) training national servicemen who had completed their initial three months continuous training. Les departed the Corps in July 1954. Many of his stories appear in past Bulletins.

A SPECIAL OCCASION.....Bob Skitch

John and Sue Collins (John was British exchange officer at the Regiment 1975/76) on an 'around the world' air ticket had a very pleasant week in July staying at Caloundra, perhaps time to relax a little after a very full routine since departing UK and with much more to follow.

They arrived on Monday 15th July, took a hire care at the airport and headed north to Caloundra. Departing UK several weeks before they had some time in Cape Town (friends there I think) then to Perth to stay with John and Jess Winzar visiting by car both Broome and Kalgoorlie each for a few days before resuming their very flexible RTW flight to Adelaide, catching up with Frank Bryant and Noel Sproles (and Kate the Kelpie which John swears can walk across the ceiling), then on to Brisbane. John emailed me in June suggesting that he would like to catch up with some past Aussie colleagues that he remembered from either his exchange time in Australia or their exchange time in UK, namely Stan Campbell and Peter Bates-Brownsword and as it turned out, Peter (Blue) Blaskett and of course their wives Helen, Barbara and Irene. (Bob and Wendy Skitch also) And so a luncheon was organised on Wednesday 17th July at the Caloundra Power Boat Club attended by all. If the PBC lacks in finesse at least the fish is good and plentiful if you can find it under the pile of chips and salad and the view is magnificent. After early morning rains the day turned out to be sunny and blue.

As always when past survey colleagues get together lots of stories and experiences are swapped, mutual friends and colleagues (do you remember?), maybe a few ears left burning around the world but all in good taste.

It was a very special occasion for all. John and Sue departed Brisbane on Monday 22nd July for Auckland (relies there I think) then to the US for more visits before returning to UK. They live in the University City of Cambridge.



L to R around the Table: Peter Blaskett, Stan Campbell, Bob Skitch, Helen Campbell, Sue Collins, Wendy Skitch, Barbara Bates-Brownsword, Peter Bates Brownsword, John Collins, Irene Blaskett.
The great view behind the photographer is reflected in the glass panel behind the opposite end of the table, that is behind Wendy Skitch.

A LETTER FROM LINDA BIRT – Mother of Ashley Birt - KIA Afghanistan 29 October 2011

I am writing to you to ask if you would support me in a cause dear to my heart. As you know we lost our son Ashley when he was murdered in Afghanistan in October 2011. Ashley was a wonderful son and brother to Dale, a good athlete, a great friend to many and a soldier who served his country with great pride.

Since losing Ash, the community of Gympie has been amazing and offered us wonderful support. This tragic preventable event has made Don and I become more aware of the importance of after care for our soldiers on their return from the battlefields. We, like many defence families have one or more children serving in the Defence Forces and we do worry about their health and physical well-being on their return from active duty.

Australia is a very proud country and thus far in Afghanistan has lost 39 great men – 39 lives that should never have been lost together with a myriad of soldiers who may suffer some sort of illness, depression etc in the years to come as a result of being on the front line.. However that is War and this is what our sons and daughters chose to do to protect us and our country.

As a result of our life changing incident I will be walking the Kakoda Trek with a number of wounded returned soldiers in July this year on the RSL Centori Soldiers Kakoda Trek Challenge. This Trek will (I hope) be a healing mechanism for me. It is a huge challenge to walk 96 kms in 7 days but I am determined to do it.

In walking this Trek I am seeking the support of all my friends, family, workmates and the Gympie community to raise funds for a group called “**Soldier On**”. “Soldier On” is a not for profit organization which supports servicemen and servicewomen of the Australian Defence Force who have been wounded, physically or mentally, in the service of their country. More details about “Soldier On” is attached hereto or go to their web page www.soldieron.org.au

This letter is to seek financial support from you and your fellow staff or family, via a donation, to “Soldier On” thus enabling them to continue providing this wonderful support to our soldiers.

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

In closing, I ask that you give favourable consideration to my request for a monetary donation and I will walk the Kakoda Trek knowing that we, Gympie, has supported a very worthwhile cause – “Soldier On.” My goal is to raise \$20,000 for “Soldier On”. I know I can do this with the support of this great community.

Our contribution

Dear ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS ASSN (QLD),
This receipt AUD28008710 for **\$200.00** is issued by Everyday Hero Pty Ltd, A.B.N. 21 117 080 430 as an agent for **Soldier On**, 24 811 760 786

ABOUT US.....



Soldier On is a charitable organisation that supports Australian servicemen and women who have been wounded, physically or mentally, on contemporary operations. It exists to allow Australians to come together to show their support for our wounded. It's about telling our wounded that we will always have their backs; that we will remember those who have come home, as well as those that have died. Soldier On will work to

give our wounded the dignity they deserve and the chance to do and be whatever they choose. Mateship and the ANZAC spirit have shaped Australia, and we want to continue the tradition of looking after those who have looked after us. This means giving our wounded the world's best care to help them to achieve the same goals and dreams they had before they were wounded.

Soldiers are physically talented men and women, with a set of skills that takes years to hone and develop. Once these skills and abilities are taken away, through physical or psychological wounds, soldiers can be left with very little they consider worth living for. Guilt and depression are common in those who survive, as they wonder why they were left behind, why they survived when others did not. It is also uncharted territory, with most soldiers who suffer from psychological wounds, such as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), not understanding the symptoms as such.

Soldier On is run primarily by volunteers and is always exploring opportunities to collaborate and cooperate with the ADF, Legacy and other organisations that share our objectives. Soldier On is inspired by other organisations caring for Defence personnel based in Australia and overseas. One of these is the group *Help for Heroes*, a UK based charity that enhances the facilities for wounded UK servicemen and women. H4H has achieved amazing success in allowing the UK community to get behind their 'blokes' so that they can have the best possible care.

History

The idea was born from the death of friend.

Captain John Bale joined the Australian Army with schoolmate Michael Fussell in 2002. Both completed their training at the Australian Defence Force Academy and then the Royal Military College. However,

soon after graduation as Army Officers, the reality of working within the armed forces made itself known when Michael was killed by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan in 2008. Following Michael's death, John looked for a way to give back to those mates who survive the blast and others who might be wounded in the future. It was then that he realised there was no easy or accessible way for members of the Defence forces, or the public, to show their support for those wounded in battle.

Patron-In-Chief – CPL Mark Donaldson VC

In 2012 Victoria Cross recipient, CPL Mark Donaldson, was named Soldier On Patron-In- Chief.

OPERATION MANDAU – the first phase – Singapore, 1969.....Bob Skitch

Operation Mandau was the first of the Indonesian mapping operations that were to consume a substantial proportion of the Corps' capacity for fourteen years. Mandau was set in Kalimantan, the western side of what we previously knew as Dutch Borneo. The initial phase of Mandau was the acquisition of aerial photography of the area of operation by the Royal Air Force in 1969 the year before the field phase commenced. The following account rests on my diary entries during my time as the Australian officer posted to the 84th Survey Squadron Royal Engineers in Singapore (located at Dover Road, Pasirpanjang) 1969 – 1971. It also comments on the sometimes strained relationships between both British Army personnel both internally and with the Royal Air Force.

This is a fairly long account but I believe it is worth committing to the record..... Bob Skitch

Soon after returning from Tana Rata I became involved in a role that was probably the most significant job I was to have throughout my whole time with 84 Squadron. It was to continue in one form or another until late in 1970.

On the 9th July my OC (Major Tom Farmer RE) called me into his office to discuss the establishment of a Photo Liaison Unit at the RAF Base at Tengah on the northern side of the Island under the control of 84 Squadron. The task to commence in early August was photography of part of Western Kalimantan to be flown by 81 (Photo Recon) Squadron RAF. Major Peter Andrews had been sent out from MID (Ministry of Defence) to set up the section and ensure that it was functional. Tom Farmer obviously felt that this was an imposition; however, Peter Andrews had had apparently considerable experience in this type of work on Malta. Final detail of the job had yet to be decided by Royal Engineers and the Indonesian Government who was to provide an officer to 'sit in' at Tengah. The original film was to go to Jakarta after it was flown and processed. Major Andrews came in to the OC.s office and further discussion took place on specifications.

The following morning Major Andrews called in at 9.00am and we drove out to Tengah with Sergeant Lyno who was to be the OIC of the Unit. We first went to 81 Squadron RAF and looked at the flight planning chart done by Major John Hillier (predecessor to Bill Child as DAD Survey at HQ FARELF) the previous year. A few minor modifications were added such as coastal strips. We then went to another building; the Photo Engineering Squadron and met Flying Officer John Heayes, an enthusiastic and helpful young fellow who had been in Singapore only a few weeks. Also met a Flight Lieutenant (army rank equivalent Captain) who was also very helpful. All were very friendly and before returning to Dover Road we called into the RAF Mess for a beer at the bar.

That was to be the first of many, almost daily visits to Tengah and other RAF establishments. On the 10th in a unit vehicle I picked up Major Andrews again and thence to Bukit Tima Road 6 Mile to pick up John Heayes at 8.30 to visit JARIC (Intelligence) at Seletar. My diary records that after getting lost on the way we first called at the Photo Processing Wing and the problem of processing polyester based film and maintaining dimensional stability was brought to our attention. Dimensional stability of the primary source of data in mapping is essential. The Photo Processing Wing was certainly well equipped with two 'Logetronic' processors – then state-of-the- art equipment. I doubted that we would have any problems with them. I was proven to be wrong – we did. At JARIC the OC, a Squadron Leader (army

equivalent Major) suggested we establish our Photo Liaison Unit (PLU) there and not at Tengah. We drove across to Tengah and put that proposal to the OC, Squadron Leader Watson who was less than impressed and that situation remained unresolved.

I should at this point explain what had to happen. The original film from the aircraft after processing, as stated before had to go to Jakarta as soon as it had been processed, that is, developed as a negative. But of course the British were hardly going to go to the trouble and deploy resources to fly photography of West Kalimantan as a gift to the Indonesian Government so soon after 'confrontation' without retaining something for their effort. That something had to be in the form of a duplicate negative. To obtain a duplicate negative first of all a duplicate positive film has to be made from the original negative. The process was therefore negative > positive > negative. Each time the film is processed through a continuous processor some dimensional stability is lost – a certain amount of stretching occurs along the flight line (X axis) but not across the film (Y axis). This produces a distortion which for all intents and purposes in general intelligence work is not significant – but for mapping it is. Furthermore, the Indonesians were not to know that we were producing a duplicate of their film. I sometimes wondered if they were stupid – surely they would realise that we would do that!

On the 11th Peter Andrews called in and discussed all aspects of running an Air Survey Liaison Unit with Tom Farmer and I started to wonder whether the project would get off the ground. But of course it had to – I was beginning to realise that there was a lot at stake and I started to become aware that it was going to involve the Australian Government and the Royal Australian Survey Corps, but not until 1970. The issue of film distortion received an airing; however, it was still unresolved as to whether it was a real concern, having at that point no idea if it was occurring, its extent and whether it exceeded mapping tolerances. RAF showed largely disinterest – it was not their concern. We needed to measure it on a couple of samples of original film negative and duplicate negative but for that we needed a highly accurate measuring device that could measure in microns. I am not sure who suggested using a parallax bar, a very simple precise measuring device used in photogrammetry, but that proved to be the answer and 84 Squadron happened to have one. I had had some experience with its use in Vietnam and maybe it was me who made the suggestion. If not I certainly recognised its potential. Tom Farmer tended to keep clear of discussions of this nature – they were not his bag!

The following day Lance Corporal Brown and I checked the parallax bar on a few old air photo negatives we had in the defunct photogrammetry section of 84 Squadron and I became convinced that it could give us the answers we needed in comparing the original and duplicate negatives. On Wednesday the 30th July we went out to 81 Photo Recon Squadron at Tengah and spent some time with Corporal Wright checking original film against the duplicate with the parallax bar. My diary notes that the movement within the duplicate negative would render it very unsuitable for photogrammetric work. As we suspected the film was stretching along the X axis as it passes through the processor. There seemed to be some scepticism expressed by the RAF officers concerning the use of the parallax bar and the results it was presenting. There was little point in pursuing the problem at that point and I decided to wait until actual flying of West Kalimantan commenced later in the month. The RAF were taking some action in having sent out from UK better quality polyester film in larger rolls and large magazines and a better camera was enroute.

It wasn't until the 12th August that I made another trip to Tengah, this time with Sergeant Lyno who had been put in charge of the Photo Liaison Unit. I was quite impressed with David Lyno and over the ensuing months we developed a friendship (at least to the extent possible in the British Army between an officer and a NCO). I had a lengthy discussion with Flying Officer John Heayes on all the associated problems – film, cameras, proposed flying schedule, crew briefings and de-briefings and.....the camera window in the aircraft – is it optically flat? I gained the impression (a correct one) that Sergeant Lyno was very competent and very able to take part in a conversation with more senior people without being overwhelmed by rank difference. I often found in the British Army that that was not always the case. The opposite could sometimes be true with the soldier of any rank, NCO or below, adopting a semi belligerent attitude that could be quite embarrassing. Our Photo Liaison Unit had moved across to

JARIC (as previously suggested) putting it in closer association with the operation once flying commenced. I found they were proposing three missions each day, departing Seletar at 0700h, 1100h and 1500h returning 1100h, 1500h and 1800h with film being ready for duplication four hours after being unloaded from the aircraft. I thought this was an unrealistically optimistic schedule. It would commit our Photo Liaison Unit to a work period from about 1400h to 2100h each flying day and possibly later if there were any delays. Despite all this the operation remained uncertain but then the following day when I happened to be at Aust Arm I received a message to call on Lieutenant Colonel Tommy Tomlinson, the AD Survey HQ FARELF. He told me that the Kalimantan operation was about to start.

On the 15th August I went again to Tengah and spent the morning in Photo Engineering looking at photo defects – blemishes in the emulsion – not good but probably acceptable. The distortion problem was becoming even more complicated – at the instant of exposure the film in the camera is stretched but then of being released from the camera the film resumes its original dimension thus causing the image to compress along the X axis. The same thing happens in duplicating to positive and then again in duplicating from positive to negative. An operational briefing took place that afternoon, first by Colonel Tomlinson, then by me and then Sergeant Lyno and Flying Officer Heayes. The following morning (Saturday) I briefed my OC Major Farmer on the previous day's activities. His main concern seemed to be that of Lieutenant Colonel Tomlinson's role in going to Tengah. I left him to sort that one out.

On the 19th August it was back to Tengah again this time with Major Farmer. I think he wanted to establish some ownership of the operation. I will quote directly from my diary.... *There was an initial flap during the morning due to classification of certain aspects of the job which had been mentioned in an unclassified operation instruction issued by 81 Photo Recon Squadron. All copies retrieved and corrected. Subject discussed at Tengah with Sergeant Lyno, Flying Officer Heayes, Major Tom Farmer and me. A little later the OC of 81 Squadron, Squadron Leader Henderson joined in. The latter seems cool to the whole project, referring to it as an 'exercise' and obviously down grading it relative to his training programme. Returned to Dover Road about 12.45pm. OC decided not to go to Seletar during the afternoon as previously planned.*

Then the following day I visited Seletar and... *discussed the task with Squadron Leader Monk and Major Brennan (I am not clear what their role was – Monk probably OC of one of the associated units at Seletar and Brennan for JARIC).....I became convinced they were talking 'off the cuff'. There are still many unanswered questions and missions over Kalimantan had not yet commenced. Briefed OC on return to Dover Road. He phoned Lieutenant Colonel Tomlinson but responses were vague and led to nothing.*

Little transpired over the next few days then on the 28th I had a phone call from David Lyno at Tengah (or was he at Seletar?) to indicate that the job could be on the move again. Finally the first sortie over Kalimantan took place on 1st September 1969. I drove out to Tengah early – arriving 6.40am in time for the brief to the air crew. The Canberra bomber fitted for photo reconnaissance didn't get away until 1000h. I phoned Seletar in the afternoon. There was to be no afternoon sortie and the result from the morning sortie was small but at least the operation had commenced. Aircraft had been allocated. I was at Tengah again the following day for the aircrew briefing. My diary notes... *Some problems with previous day's flying – photos were taken that should not have been taken and FEAF (Far East Air Force) directs that the film be destroyed. I passed this piece of information on to Lieutenant Colonel Tomlinson via OC 84 Squadron and the order to destroy was rescinded – there was some gain from the film. The afternoon flight was taken by the OC of 81 Photo Recon Squadron, Squadron Leader Henderson.*

I continued with daily early morning visits to Tengah and Seletar, attending air crew briefings and checking flight line plots. The sorties were hit and miss. We were getting some photos but generally not on planned flight lines. The main problem was of course cloud cover.

A personal note: I previously mentioned that I had developed a friendship with Sergeant David Lyno. At the time of his appointment to the Photo Liaison Detachment his wife was seriously pregnant with the baby due any day. David confided that the appointment was at an awkward time in his life – baby due, just moved into a new married quarter and commitments to cricket at the district level (the British Army puts this consideration above all else), nevertheless, he was pleased to have been appointed. I do not recall how our friendship developed at the personal level but his wife had a baby girl – their first – and Wendy and I called on them with flowers in their home, saw baby Lyno and said all the things one says when inspecting a new baby. Mrs Lyno was a well educated and well spoken woman and I suspect a cut above the average soldier's wife (British that is) I had met – mainly at the Carlito Club (a sort of all ranks mess within 84 Squadron).

On Friday 12th September it was out to Tengah again to meet up with Lieutenant Colonel Tomlinson, Major Child and a little later Major Farmer and his successor, Major Mike Richards. It was the first meeting I had with Major Richards. Tom Farmer was to return to UK in a few days. My diary records that *I discussed the project with them in some detail, however, few of the points I made were really taken up. I had prepared and sent in to Colonel Tomlinson some days before a detailed situation report but I doubted that it had been read. The problems we were having at Seletar were only vaguely appreciated. It seemed to be a chaotic sort of gathering and achieved little if anything.* My next diary entry a few days later records that... *the Indonesian observer had actually arrived and I thought that his presence might have a salutatory effect on the RAF who had become quite dilatory in their efforts.* Nevertheless, flying efforts seemed to pick up after that and some good results were coming in. We continued to assiduously check the duplicate negative against the original with our trusty parallax bar for image distortion and at least now it was consistently within stated acceptably map tolerance.

I finally met the Indonesian officer, an Air Force captain, on the 25th September at Seletar. My diary notes that... *he seemed a pleasant little fellow but only partly aware of what was going on.* Flying was down to one sortie a day and results had dramatically fallen off. Very few miles claimed. Flying conditions had worsened but it seemed to me that there was little enthusiasm for the job. Only John Heayes, now promoted to Flight Lieutenant, showed any real interest in the job. Again my diary records. *Two Canberras have been in New Zealand on a 'swan' type exercise for this past week. Two RAF 'Victors' came out from UK for no apparent reason but only one was fitted with camera. This one is flying a sortie this afternoon. On return to JARIC some confusion had developed at RAF HQ over reporting routine of miles claimed, remaining etcetera – more or less sorted out.*

I first became aware of the name Operation Mandau on the 9th October – I am not sure how, but it was being used to identify the photography acquisition programme. I had been aware of some planning for the survey mapping operation to take place in West Kalimantan next year (1970). Captain Dick Ellis was to lead that one for 84 Squadron. Mandau was to be a tri-national survey mapping operation – British, Australian and of course Indonesian. I was unaware of the full ramifications of Mandau at that time; that it was going to involve the Royal Australian Survey Corps in a 14 year mapping programme of Indonesia and I wondered why Indonesia; we had only just extricated ourselves from the troublesome Sukarno inspired 'confrontation' issue. Major Childs called in about other matters but discussed Mandau with Captain Dixie Dean (acting OC pending departure of Major Farmer) and me. He said that MOD (Ministry of Defence) was applying considerable pressure on Lieutenant Colonel Tomlinson on why Mandau was not proceeding. I had covered all those in my report of some days before which I suspected hadn't been read. I gave a copy to Dixie.

Made further trips to Tengah over the next few days; discussed MOD's concerns with Flight Lieutenant Heayes (they were really a RAF concern more than ours) and Sergeant Lyno. Sergeant Lyno had suggested a better routine for our Photo Liaison Unit that I agreed with and we put that to RAF. On the 21st advice was received that Major Peter Andrews from MOD was coming out again – to stay at Tengah. I comment in my diary that it will be interesting to see what that accomplishes. I doubted that RAF will be very impressed. Peter Andrews arrived a few days later and I met him at Tengah the

following Saturday. He had little to say and even less to contribute. With Sergeant Lyno we drove across to Seletar and JARIC where he looked at some film with little comment.

Next trip to Seletar was on 30 October. I will quote directly from my diary....Picked up at guardroom by 84 vehicle(I had been RE Duty Officer for the past 12 hours) – thence to Sergeant Lyno's place and 84 Squadron for Sergeant Ward, then to Tengah for Peter Andrews. Proceeded to Seletar with Peter Andrews and Sergeant Ward. Met by George Proctor and Maurice Mark (two RAF photo officers) came also. Things have moved somewhat in last day or so. Seletar now to go to duplicate stage. Peter Andrews checked out film distortion on master positive and was quite pleased with the results. Maurice Mark carried on about his pet subject – use of parallax bar for measuring film distortion – we heard him out but it must have been clear to him that his argument could not be supported by results. He is in fact a pain in the neck!

By Christmas 1969 we had photo coverage of the whole area to be mapped, albeit, a bit chaotic with few straight runs. But that is the nature of air photography in tropical regions where cloud cover rarely disperses, especially as the rainy cyclonic season progresses. I believe that had the RAF 81 Air Reconnaissance Squadron showed more interest in and commitment to the project during the early period when the weather was relatively clear over Kalimantan the whole task might have been finished with much less heartache and with much more regular flight lines. Major Peter Andrews returned to UK in the first week of October. Pleasant fellow that he was I don't think his two visits achieved very much. Perhaps his presence may have reinforced the rather weak commitment of the RAF to the project. Canberra bombers have an endurance of at least 18 hours; that is, they can stay over target for that length of time. The RAF never exploited their endurance, often returning to base after only a couple of hours if the cloud cover appeared more than 50%, never exploiting gaps in the cloud. Perhaps as the season progressed they became more inclined to do so. I can only assume that they were getting the same blisters from MOD that we were. Canberra bombers, a post World War Two bomber were recognised as one of the most reliable war planes of all times and following the end of their combat role many were converted to photo reconnaissance.

I saw little of the Indonesian officer and I do not know whether or not he remained in Singapore for the duration of the project. Certainly after a few days of wandering around Tengah probably being bored out of his socks (he had very little English) he retired to the Indonesian Embassy and maybe enjoyed the pleasures of Singapore. Certainly we had no problems with the clandestine aspects of the project; duplicating the film and sending the duplicate negative and probably the master positive to MOD-UK. We were able to deliver the original negative to the Indonesian Embassy most times within 24 hours of it being taken in accordance with the heads of agreement and if we were unable to do so there were always plenty of acceptable reasons why we could not. Nevertheless, I cannot recall a time when the Embassy questioned the process. Perhaps they guessed we were duplicating the film and retaining the duplicate but really didn't care – a risk they took to get the photography they wanted.

Without doubt the use of the parallax bar in measuring and controlling film distortion proved invaluable. It told us a great deal about how a film responds when passing through a continuous processor. The parallax bar was a very old item of photogrammetric equipment, mostly used in the field and it was remarkable that one could be found in 84 Squadron. Any criticism I might level at the RAF would not extend to the Photo Engineering Squadron and Flight Lieutenant John Heayes. That officer worked tirelessly to overcome the film distortion problems and he alone had total faith in our use of the parallax bar to measure distortion. On our side of the house it was undoubtedly Sergeant David Lyno to whom we can credit success. Implied criticism coming from Survey Branch HQ FARELF invariably directed against 84 Squadron was totally unwarranted and I made that very clear in the two reports I prepared and forwarded to Survey Branch, but probably not read.

My involvement with Mandau did not end there but in a somewhat lesser role I unofficially acted as the Singapore representative for the Survey Corps component of the operation during 1970.

As April 1970 approached and with it the start of the actual field survey component of Operation Mandau 84 Squadron started directing its attention to its role. This should be seen against the impending total withdrawal of the British Army from Malaysia and Singapore to be completed by the end of 1970. The field component to be undertaken by 84 was a perimeter Tellurometer traverse around the area to be mapped. The Australian component was the infill of Aerodist control and terrain profiling within the perimeter traverse. The third nation involved in this tri-nation survey operation was of course, Indonesia with helicopter air support, the positioning of survey parties by helicopter. I think they were using UHIB helicopters, what we called in the Australian Army 'Iroquois'. Indonesian observers (not in the survey sense) were to accompany Australian and British survey parties at all times. The operation was to be based at Pontianak, the only significant city on the west coast of Kalimantan. Pontianak was a swampy and disease ridden place so I was told.

The Officer Commanding the entire project was to be Major Clem Sargent. Clem spent a little time in Singapore and visited 84 Squadron accompanied by Captain David Hebblethwaite. I was never clear whether Major Sargent's command authority extended over the 84 Squadron components with Captain Dick Ellis. The base camp at Pontianak was set up by the Australian component on ground prescribed by the Indonesians and when the 84 Squadron team arrived they set up their own camp next to the Australian camp with their own support staff – kitchen, messing etcetera. I am not sure how the 84 Squadron team were rationed; I think they mostly used British combat rations supplemented by fresh from Singapore.

I was called upon to cost out an Australian Army ration scale at Singapore outlets (I chose Cold Storage and the NAAFI) and that was used to establish the per-capita ration allowance to allow the purchase of all foodstuffs, fresh and canned, in Singapore. (I was invited to leave Cold Storage by the floor manager – I explained what I was doing and that they may get a sizeable bit of business from it and they let me stay – it was NAAFI who got the contract) Sergeant, Dave Wicker, had been appointed to purchase rations and arrange their ferrying to Pontianak, no doubt assisted by Aust Arm, however, I was right out of that scene.

Early in 1970 we had a visit by Lieutenant Colonel Jim Stedman, recently appointed Assistant Director Survey Operations. Jim gave a very detailed briefing to Aust Arm staff, including the commander of Aust Arm and I think Tommy Tomlinson from Survey Branch HQ FARELF and the Brigadier Operations Commander of FARELF . My recollection of the briefing was that Jim Stedman carried it out extremely well. It was very detailed and it was Jim at his lucid best. I was quite proud of him. It extended beyond Mandau to continuing Australian survey operations throughout much of Indonesia year by year in Sumatra, the Celebes, Maluka and Irian Jaya (West Papua), a program that continued through to 1986.

MONOPOLY - I DID NOT KNOW THIS – IS IT TRUE?

Starting in 1941, an increasing number of British Airmen found themselves as the involuntary guests of the Third Reich, and the Crown was casting about for ways and means to facilitate their escape. Now obviously, one of the most helpful aids to that end is a useful and accurate map, one showing not only where stuff was, but also showing the locations of 'safe houses' where a POW on-the-lam could go for food and shelter.

Paper maps had some real drawbacks -- they make a lot of noise when you open and fold them, they wear out rapidly, and if they get wet, they turn into mush. Someone in MI-5 (similar to America 's OSS) got the idea of printing escape maps on silk. It's durable, can be scrunched-up into tiny wads, and unfolded as many times as needed, and makes no noise whatsoever. At that time, there was only one manufacturer in Great Britain that had perfected the technology of printing on silk, and that was John Waddington, Ltd. Leeds. When approached by the government, the firm was only too happy to do its bit for the war effort.

By pure coincidence, Waddington was also the U.K. Licensee for the popular American board game, Monopoly. As it happened, 'games and pastimes' was a category of item qualified for insertion into 'CARE packages', dispatched by the International Red Cross to prisoners of war. Under the strictest of secrecy, in a securely guarded and inaccessible old workshop on the grounds of Waddington's, a group of sworn-to-secrecy employees began mass-producing escape maps, keyed to each region of Germany or Italy where Allied POW camps were regionally located. When processed, these maps could be folded into such tiny dots that they would actually fit inside a Monopoly playing piece.

As long as they were at it, the clever workmen at Waddington's also managed to add:

1. A playing token, containing a small magnetic compass
2. A two-part metal file that could easily be screwed together
3. Useful amounts of genuine high-denomination German, Italian, and French currency, hidden within the piles of Monopoly money!

British and American air crews were advised, before taking off on their first mission, how to identify a 'rigged' Monopoly set -- by means of a tiny red dot, one cleverly rigged to look like an ordinary printing glitch, located in the corner of the Free Parking square. Of the estimated 35,000 Allied POWS who successfully escaped, an estimated one-third were aided in their flight by the rigged Monopoly sets. Everyone who did so was sworn to secrecy indefinitely, since the British Government might want to use this highly successful ruse in still another, future war.

The story wasn't declassified until 2007, when the surviving craftsmen from Waddington's, as well as the firm itself, were finally honoured in a public ceremony.

It's always nice when you can play that 'Get Out of Jail' Free' card.