ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS
ASSOCIATION
Queensland Branch

BULLETIN

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

CHRISTMAS EDITION – No 37 DECEMBER 2008

<table>
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<th>PROPOSED CALENDAR FOR 2009</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday 15 March</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Saturday 25 April</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Friday 26 June</strong></td>
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<td><strong>October date TBA</strong></td>
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OUR HISTORY PROJECT – What did we do over all those years – 1946-1996? Email your contribution direct to Bob Skitch on bob.skitch@runbox.com or enter your data on our website – www.rasurvey.org. Our website contains state summaries of what we have compiled so far. There are plenty of gaps – have a go at filling them in! An excellent contribution has been received from Frank Fischer – next page.

The Royal Australian Survey Corps Association (Queensland) acknowledges the generous sponsorship and support of Conics Pty Ltd
## From Frank Fischer

<table>
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<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>OPERATION/PROJECT</th>
<th>DURATION</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>NATURE OF WORK</th>
<th>PERSONS TAKING PART</th>
<th>OTHER INFORMATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>2 Fd Svy Sqn</td>
<td>Cenderawasih 2</td>
<td>May to July</td>
<td>Indonesia – Irian Jaya – Main Base Biak</td>
<td>Survey control – Geoceiver, air photography, and high altitude air photography flown by RAAF</td>
<td>OC Maj Don Swayne, S/Sgt John Scharber; Sgts Alan Derby, Peter Jensen; Cpls Danny Galbraith, Frank Fischer; Sprs Nev Kelly, Lamie Lyle, Bruce Hammond (camera operator).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>Cenderawasih 3</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>Survey control – geoceiver, Air profile recorder (APR)</td>
<td>OC Maj Don Swayne, Cpl Frank Fischer, Spr Ken Talbot-Smith</td>
<td>Civilian Queen Air aircraft for APR unit.</td>
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## COMMITTEE

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**1 TOPO SVY SQN**

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Squadron SSM WO1 Peter Coles (Ph 3332 7564)

Note: Refer Veteran’s Affairs matters to Peter Bates-Brownword and Stan Campbell
NOTICES

BERETS – BERETS – BERETS
Our Association still has berets in the following quantities & sizes:
19 x medium;
5 x large; &
2 x extra large.
Total 26
Be distinctive in the RA Survey distinctive headdress. Contact Alex Cairney email cairneyalex@hotmail.com

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS PLAQUE: The Ex-Fortuna Association has purchased some of the original RA Svy plaques. These are available from Ex-Fortuna Secretary Tracey Phillips, 03 5449 6330 (AH); email phipsys@tpg.com.au Price on application.

ASSOCIATION TIE or SCARF
Cost is $20.00 and $7.00 postage for each. We suggest you place your order directly with the Ex Fortuna Association, Tracey Phillips, email phipsys@bigpond.com or phone Barry Lutwyche.

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.

ASSOCIATION BADGE
Association badges are still available from the Ex-Fortuna Survey Association. Place your orders with Barry Lutwyche and we will try to satisfy them.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2008 – 2009
‘Don’t go to sleep on your membership!’
Keep in touch with your Survey Corps mates by being a paid-up member of your Association.
Our financial year runs from Sept to Sept. Subscription is but $15.00 per year. We encourage you to pay three years in advance (or more if you wish). Subscription is waived for veterans 75 and over who have been standing paid-up members of our Association. Pay-time was at the AGM 13 Sept 08 – but it is not too late now!

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.

NSW COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE DEDICATION
Ed: This is worth a reprint with a few additions from our last Bulletin.

On Tuesday the 1st July 2008 at 1100 hrs an event of significance took place in the historical precinct of Victoria Barracks, Sydney. On that day a commemorative plaque was unveiled and dedicated to those Survey Units who served in WW1, WW2 and the Vietnam War. The event was hosted by the Royal Australian Survey Corps Association (NSW). A perusal of the beautifully produced program and order of service makes it clear that the event was well planned and well supported. The plaque itself was identical with the AWM plaque,
appropriate given the august location in Australia’s oldest military establishment. President Richard Jackson-Hope welcomed the gathering; WW2 veteran Ted Hunter presented memories of the past, Chaplain Yossi Segelman offered prayers and music that included the Corps March was provided by the Australian Army Band.

![The commemorative plaque installed in Victoria Barracks Sydney](image)

**COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE FOR PNG (Report by Bob Skitch)**

For some time now (at least three years) the Queensland Association, has been working towards obtaining permission from the PNG Government to have a Survey Corps plaque commemorating the units of the Corps that served in Papua and New Guinea during WW2 dedicated and placed in a suitable location in Port Moresby. A number of letters have been written to various PNG government luminaries (Sir Peter Barter MP and the Hon Paul Nerau – Consul General) suggested to me by supporters of the concept, Mr Mike Larmer and Mr Masang Bangindo of AL Surveys P/L (once Armin and Larmer) in their capacity as office holders of the Surveyor’s Association of PNG Inc, John Mudge and Garth McIlwain – men about town with some influence. No reply or acknowledgement has ever been received. It was then suggested that I write to the National Capital District Commission (NCDC) and at last something of a break-through occurred when a letter was received by Mr Masang Bangindo from Ms Leslie Alu, Acting City Manager giving concurrence in the project provided that she receives a letter of support from the RSL. I immediately contacted the recently appointed RSL President Mr Joe Filippi and he assured me that the concept has full RSL support and a letter will be sent to the NCDC forthwith. Perhaps ‘forthwith in PNG means ‘within the next month or two’.

I envisage the plaque being very similar to the AWM plaque concentrating of course on the New Guinea campaign of WW2. The proposed dimensions of the plaque would be 50cms by 50 cms, similar to the plaque we installed at Rocky Creek on the Atherton Tableland in 2006. The plinth on which the plaque would be mounted would need to be provided locally and the suggested location is the Koki Remembrance Park. I have photos of Koki and it appears to be an appropriate location. Timing? I have suggested Anzac Day 2009 but this might be a bit ambitious given that things take quite a while to happen in PNG – so I am told.

The Queensland Association contends that the placement of a plaque in PNG should be seen as a national project rather than a Queensland project. The NSW Association has raised a very credible amount towards the project, mainly from their WW2 veterans who are keen to see it happen. The WA Association has also promised their support and an approach has been made to the Ex-Fortuna Association and the SA Association.

A ‘guesstimate’ of the overall cost is likely to be in the vicinity of $2,000 which includes the production of the plaque in Brisbane and PNG in-country costs. Contributions from individual members would be welcome also.

A similar plaque in Lae has also been suggested but perhaps this is a project for another day.
Taking place for the first time at the Alderley Arms Hotel in Samford Road it was the best attended and perhaps the most enjoyable Reunion and AGM we have had for some years. An excellent three course meal was provided and as with most get-togethers of this kind, reminiscences flowed freely. There were quite a number of new faces, many with wives or partners and our diligent treasurer was quick to sign them up as fully paid up members.

The AGM followed with our President, Peter Bates-Brownsword welcoming guests and members, commenting on the change of venue and the events of the year. He forecast the membership fee increase from $10.00 per year to $15.00 per year (later confirmed by our treasurer) pointing out that the annual subscription had stood at ten dollars for just about as long as he could remember. Treasurer Ross Smithwick acknowledged our strong financial position resulting from the generous support given by our sponsor ‘Conics Pty Ltd’. Ross also gave a brief background on the sponsor’s history and the reasons for their sponsorship, reflecting on the strong feeling Dennis Gregor of (previously) Pioneer Surveys has for his RA Survey experience.

Bob Skitch gave an update on the move towards a National Association and the outcome of a meeting held at Fortuna the previous week (see separate report). Bob also commented on the New Guinea plaque project.

The Election of Office Bearers followed and not surprisingly all current holders were re-elected.

The President closed the meeting at 1540h.

Those attending were:

Dave Anderson
Peter Bates-Brownsword
Barbara Bates-Brownsword
Alex Cairney

Rob Chapman
Jim Gill
John Gilbert
Robyn Gilbert
Colin Hargreaves
Ian Hutchings
John Hunter
John Kay
Chris Sparrow
Alan Kavanagh
Greg Knight
Percy Long
Dell Long
Barry Lutwyche
Brian Partridge
Sue Partridge
Peter Rodriguez
Christine Rodriguez
Bob Skitch
Ross Smithwick
Ian Thiselton
Mary-Ann Thiselton

Apologies
John Ashby
Peter Blaskett
Wally Chilcott
Peter Cross
Michael Duniam
John Hook

Worthy of special mention considering long distances travelled are:
Alan Kavanagh from Blackwater
Brian and Sue Partridge from Wollongbar (NSW)
Peter and Christine Rodriguez’s from Gympie
John and Robyn Gilbert’s from Toowoomba
Dave Anderson from Tallabudgerra
Greg Knight from Nerang
John Hunter from Robina

FAREWELL TO FORTUNA – Bob Skitch

Four members of our Queensland Association made the trip to Bendigo on Friday 5th September to farewell that grand lady of the Royal Australian Survey Corps, Fortuna Villa. Our Queensland stalwarts were Barry Lutwyche, Alex Cairney (with a bag full of berets of course), Ross Smithwick and me (Bob Skitch).

Speaking personally it was both a fun and a sad occasion. My own association with Fortuna was a significant part of my Army and Corps career and I had a particular
regard for the Villa and its fascinating history.

We four arrived late afternoon on Friday (Barry, Alex and Ross stayed in a cabin in the Golden Square caravan park – I wisely chose the Golden Square Motel). Friday night we joined the throng at the Havelah St RSL. It was hard to pick the Corps members from the DIGO types and of course there was considerable overlap. Nevertheless, Alex who seems to know everyone caught up with many of his old cohorts. We left the RSL and headed for the Hibernian Hotel (as we knew it – now has an up-market new name) for a meal. Plenty of style and atmosphere but my ‘lamb’ steak would have gone well as a second sole on my shoe. But it was fun!

On Saturday we decided to take in a bit of nostalgia and drove out to Eaglehawk and wandered around the old shop-fronts, sadly many no longer occupied. The Eaglehawk RSL where we had a previous ‘back to Bendigo’ get-together seems to be in a state of demolition. We had caught up with Alex Munro earlier that morning and arranged to meet him at the Rifle Brigade for lunch and a glass or two. This we did and it turned out to be an enjoyable hour or two. In the afternoon we decided to find the new location of DIGO on the general understanding that it was at Longlea, about twenty minutes out of town off the McIvor Highway. After driving for about an hour we realized we had gone far too far and headed back to Bendigo. Alex had the bright idea that since it was on defence land it was more than likely at the old ammunition dumps and that’s where it turned out to be. There it was, a sand coloured oblong structure with rows of small dark windows facing the road surrounded by a high (in both senses of the word) security fence. Hmmm! A bit different to the charm of Fortuna.

Saturday night saw us at Fortunes Restaurant for the dinner function and there we saw many of our old colleagues. It does help when all are wearing name tags. The night started well with some thoughtful addresses, one from Gary Warnest and one from the general manager of DIGO, down from Canberra. Dinner was served and then the band started up, At about 100 decibels I left. Our other three retired to a bar out the back and perhaps I was wise not to join them.

And then it was Sunday and the Fortuna BBQ. Well, that certainly made up for the previous night (at least for me). For me the highlight was having my old Corps mates Kevin Moody and his wife Myrie and Lou Sommer and his wife Gillian come to the Sunday event. I think it might have been their first trip back to Fortuna since leaving the Corps in 1959 (for Kevin) and 1961 for Lou. But it was also great to pick up with Tommy Royle, Len Davies and so many others – all good blokes from the past. For me it was particularly special meeting Lindsay Rotherham with whom I served in Vietnam. Lindsay was then the young nashe, a screen printing expert (apprentice of the year I recall) sent to Vietnam for six weeks to get us out of the bind with the screen printing process. He did and we never looked back. I took a group on a tour of the Villa, looking very empty but otherwise in pretty good repair. The gardens were well maintained but the lake is no longer a lake – not a drop of water in it!

So that was the end of ‘Farewell Fortuna’. We departed and on Monday morning headed back to Tullamarine and thence to Brisbane and home. What is to happen to Fortuna Villa now that Defence has left? Surely this unique old home, this graceful but somewhat bizarre old girl will survive and enter a new chapter in its history. There is nothing else like it anywhere!

A NATIONAL RA SVY ASSOCIATION

For some time our various State Survey Corps Associations have talked around the possibility of forming and incorporating a national RA Survey organization. To some extent we imply that such a body exists but of course it doesn’t. While all of the State Associations generally agree that it is time to form a national organization, nothing ever eventuates.
Our President, Peter Bates-Brownsword decided to bite the bullet taking the matter up directly with his other State counterparts the outcome of which was to be an informal meeting of representatives in Bendigo coinciding with the ‘Farewell Fortuna’ event. The meeting took place at 1100h on Sunday 7th September. State delegates were: Gary Warnest and Don Swiney representing the Ex-Fortuna Association; Alex Munro representing the Survey Ex-Serviceman’s Association of South Australia; Ian Miller representing the RA Survey Association (Canberra); Fred Brown, the RA Survey Association (Western Australia) and Alex Cairney and Ross Smithwick the RA Survey Association (Queensland). Bob Skitch was appointed independent chairperson. NSW unfortunately couldn’t be represented, however, Richard Jackson-Hope had given Peter an assurance of support. The Chair made a number of points to start the meeting:

1. Should it proceed and in order for it to start – a firm commitment must be made by each of the State/unit Associations.
2. The RA Survey Corps Associations are not going to last forever. Eventually we all fall off our perch or become too old or too few to care and the structure collapses.
3. Some of the WW2 unit associations have already done so – I am aware of the 2/1st folding its tent a couple of years ago. Others are close to it.
4. The Ex-Servicemen’s Association of NSW being largely WW2 oriented came close to it. It has been rescued by Richard Jackson-Hope and a few others in creating a phoenix association – the RA Survey Corps Association of NSW. Queensland went through a similar process about fifteen years ago.
5. A National Association would undoubtedly give our Associations greater strength both in presenting issues of concern and interest to government (perhaps) but more in maintaining the esprit de corps of the whole.
6. A National Association would NOT take over the State Associations.
7. Associations; members would join and belong to their individual State/unit associations and in effect in so doing become members of the National Association. There may need to be an additional national or federal capitation fee on top of each State’s annual subscription.
8. The National Association must be incorporated to exist.

Following this each of the State delegates stated their position. Without going into a lot of detail it can be said that all delegates supported the initiative although some had reservations about the individual State bodies being separately incorporated. (both Ex-Fortuna and WA are already incorporated)

Our Queensland delegate, Ross Smithwick offered an alternative solution. Recognising that the Ex-Fortuna Association is by far the largest and best funded of the State and Unit Associations (Gary and Don concurred), that body could transform into the National Association with a change of name. It has the bulk of membership – about 300 or so; many members of the Ex-Fortuna Association also hold membership of one or other of the State Associations. (Gary Warnest confirmed that this may be as many as 50%). Gary Warnest as President of the Ex-Fortuna Association supported this concept and agreed to put it to the membership. We await the outcome.

In further discussion it was suggested that the issue of incorporation for State associations might be overcome by the national organisation (ie, the transformed Ex-Fortuna Association) being incorporated to give blanket incorporated coverage to the state bodies. The implication is that all memberships would transfer to the national organisation and thereafter new members would join the national body with all fees paid to the national body with a capitation paid back (probably the lions share) to the state/unit association. In effect the fee would be

1 (Ex-Fortuna is a Unit Association)
collected by the state association with the capitation amount retained by them.

More complete minutes of the Fortuna meeting are held by Bob Skitch (copies also went to all State Associations) and can be provided to any member who may wish to peruse them. Those so wishing – contact Bob who will either email or post them separately. (Photo in Photo Gallery)

**PERSONALIA and other jottings**

**Our Website – www.rasurvey.net**
I commend our website to our members in all state associations (including the Ex Fortuna Association) who may wish to find out a little more about each other. The Western Australian RA Survey Association now has several issues of ‘Westlink’ on the website and the South Australian Association has its Newsletter in its new A4 format under the SA heading. I have stopped extracting from those publications items of personalia which I found to be a very time consuming process. I do not need to because you can see for yourself simply by entering our website and, as they say, following the prompts. Good Luck!....Bob Skitch

**Bill Baker** lives at Longford in Tasmania. Bill was recently called upon by fellow Taswegian Barry Lutwyche who reports:

Bill was away playing golf but I spoke to his wife Robin for a short time. Both are well. Robin reported that Bill had a hip replacement op in the last 12 months. Bill and Robin own a B & B establishment named ‘The Racecourse Inn’, circa 1840’s. By coincidence my father and two brothers, all builders, had done some renovation work there about 30 years ago for the previous owner. Robin told me that they have had a number of Queensland based visitors over the years including Cheryl and John Hook, Faye and Kym Weston, Ros and Bruce Gordon and Loretta and Tony Gee who are regulars. Bill and Bruce Gordon remain in reasonably frequent contact.

The Baker’s enjoy a visit. Their email address is innbaker@vision.net.au

**John Lewothy** emailed Alex Cairney with: “Just got home from our ‘get out of town and do something useful’ trip to Phillip Island”. John comments…”during our last trip there in May 2008, I discovered that there was not even a hat badge for the Corps at the National Vietnam Veterans Museum. I can now confirm, the Royal Australian Survey Corps is now well and truly represented at the Museum. By safe hand delivery yesterday, one RA Survey plaque (thanks Tracey), one RA Survey hat badge and a preliminary listing of A Sect 1 Topo Svy Tp Vietnam personnel, have now been presented to the Museum staff”.

“I intend to try and create a framed version of the nominal roll with the Corps badge over the top for a future version to go on display”.

**Ed:** John asks that this information be passed to all other State RA Survey Associations and by this Bulletin it is so passed. Who is John Lewothy? Alex Cairney recalls that John was on his Basic Course and Cpls and Sgts courses and was on one of the PNG trips with the Regiment. I was prompted to email John and ask him to provide a short run-down on his service and what he has done since then. John’s story is later in this Bulletin.

**Bruce Bowers** emails “I finished working on 30 June and subsequently cancelled my old email address. Getting ready to travel the country and have a new broadband email and postal address as follows:- Email: bruceandann@bigpond.com Postal: P.O. Box 266 Burpengary, Qld. 4505.

I would appreciate a copy of any news and notices in that period if possible.

Hope to see you at the November get together. Regards…..Bruce Bowers

**Bob and Wendy Skitch** have had a change of circumstance. Having sold their home ‘Tanglin’ of 27 years with effect from the end of March they moved into a retirement villa at Chermside on the 3rd July. Bob is delighted that he no longer has half an acre of lawn to mow and a pool to keep pristine – all that is now done by others. The Villa has a pleasant outlook
over the pine forested Down Fall Creek. The great plus is that now Wendy and Bob can go adventuring in their (new) car or tripping overseas without having to think about who is doing the essential chores at home. They lock the front and back doors and they are off.

Wendy had her second hip replacement operation in mid July and is making slow but certain progress – no dislocations this time.

Lindsay Rotherham
[lindsay.rotherham@gmail.com]

Ed: I was delighted to receive a brief email from Lindsay Rotherham a little before the ‘DIGO Farewells Fortuna’ event to say that he would be attending and would he see me there. I hadn’t seen or heard of Lindsay since he left Vietnam in January 1967. The screen printing equipment had been brought to the theatre in October 1966 with Evan Giri and Ken Slater as operators. We were having limited success with the equipment but there were many problems mainly associated with the very high humidity that we were having great difficulty in addressing despite the efforts of Evan and Ken. Then out of the blue I had a message from Survey Directorate that one Sapper Lindsay Rotherham was being sent to Nui Dat to help us out. Lindsay was a recently allocated National Servicemen who in the previous year had been awarded ‘Apprentice of the Year’ in silk screen printing. He arrived and we never looked back. Lindsay had to return to Australia in January to undertake his battle efficiency training at Canungra. He returned to Nui Dat some months later to complete his tour. I asked Lindsay to give me a run-down on his life and career since Vietnam. This is it:

“Great to hear back from you. I can sympathise with your wife; I have been through the total hip replacement operation four times, twice for both hips, first was 15 years ago for both sides which subsequently wore out!

I have had an interesting career since leaving the army in 1968. I stayed with my trade and returned to my old employer for a couple of years during which time I did another apprenticeship (Litho Camera Operating) under the Defence Department retraining program for returned service men. I went on to start my own printing business in a partnership which grew to be the largest of its kind in Australia employing over 100 people at its peak taking full advantage of the surge in popularity of the printed Tee Shirt. This took me around the world looking at design and studying print techniques and procedures in Japan, USA and Europe. We sold out to a very large International packaging group who wanted a base in Australia to spring board into Asia. It was during that later period a group of us started a wine business manufacturing a drink ‘Island Cooler’ which was an alcoholic lemonade - big hit with the younger female generations at the time - subsequently sold out to Mildara wines.

I left the print operation side of the business and commenced a new business specialising in the technical supply and support of textile printing inks, systems and machinery. At the time of leaving the print operation we were very innovative with design and print techniques so I was able to capitalise on my past experiences in servicing the industry. This business grew to where we had our Australian Head Office in Melbourne with offices in Sydney and the Gold Coast. One thing led to another and we were purchased by a large USA company who I represented here in Australia and New Zealand with the proviso being we used Australia as a base and developed the market in Asia. I was then responsible for all of Asia and the Pacific with the supply and technical support of our products. For the last 10 years prior my retirement in 2002 I was away overseas on an average of every 3 weeks travelling to Asia, Europe and as I was an Executive board member of the US parent company I was in the States 3 - 4 times each year as well. Hard work but very satisfying.

Since retiring from business I play golf, I have a great workshop for wood work where I make bits and pieces in timber as a frustrated artist. I am also involved with Legacy as the local Pensions Officer for war widows which also entails courses
with DVA and spending a lot of time on War Widows claims.

That's it in a nutshell !! Good to hear you're fit and well. Best regards, Lindsay.

**Rob Thompson** emails: While undertaking some research for a paper that I was writing today I had cause to Google the word ‘Geoceiver’. Imagine my amazement when up came your Bulletin No 33 of April 2008 and an article by Jeff Turner that mentioned the name Eddie Schultz. I was on that trip in 1974 and part Eddie’s team. So...who am I?

My name is Robert (Bob) Thompson and I was the RAEME tech on that trip. I had completed the first Geoceiver course at the School of Survey at Bandiana in 1974 (run by the intelligent American fellow that Jeff mentions in his letter) and then we took the two (American) Geoceivers to PNG for trials. We completed a number of survey sites over about a three month period starting at Daru and ended up at the main base in Goroka.

Some more history regarding the Geoceiver. After that trip I went to the USA in 1975 to work with the US National Mapping Agency. My task was to receive the six Geoceivers that had been purchased for the Australian Army, test them and return them to Australia. On return to Australia I was posted to Sydney Workshop Company as a Staff Sergeant to set up the Survey Support Section, a group of some 15 tradesmen dedicated to the maintenance of survey equipment and providing support on Survey operations.

In 1976 I went to Irian Jaya in Indonesia (Operation Cenderawasih) for the first of the operations using this new technology.

Unfortunately this was the only other field trip that I completed as I spent the rest of my time training staff and running the support section.

In 1978 I went to Canungra and completed the last A and T course and there ended my involvement with the Survey Corps.

Great to read the article by Jeff. It certainly brought back some very old memories. Regards Robert R Thompson (Major Ret)

rr.thompson@bigpond.com

Ed: In a reply I asked Robert where he now lives. He replied:

I am now live at a small place called Walwa in North East Vic where I have a winery along with a number of other family members - Lankeys Creek Wines - so if anyone is passing through drop in and say hi.

My wife and I also have a small business in Holbrook - Simply Boutique - right on the Hume Highway until they move it so if Walwa is too far off the beaten track stop off in Holbrook. Regards Robert

Robert R Thompson
Director
Lankeys Creek Wines Pty Ltd
Murray River Road, Walwa Vic 3709
(PO Box 194 Holbrook NSW 2644)
Ph: 02 6037 1577
Mobile: 0429 411 582
email rob@lankeyscreekwines.com.au

**THE NOT SO WELL**

Frank Thorogood is not what you would call fighting fit. I called on Frank recently and his run of mishaps since having both hips replaced at the same time with resulting dislocations, a pinning of the spine that came to grief and now a dislocated right shoulder means that Frank has well and truly been in the wars. Nevertheless, we had a pleasant day together reminiscing and destroying a few reputations. All good stuff! Nan is fit and well – walking the dogs and swimming (not with the dogs). Frank is good company and enjoys a visit. Ph: 07 5504 7981.

Bill Jeffrey lives with his wife Edie in a pleasant retirement villa on Kiwana Island, 10k north of Caloundra. Bill suffers with advanced asbestosis and having had all the treatments known to medical science he is now letting nature take its course. Bill as always remains in remarkable
spirits. He says he has had a wonderful life. His first wife Jean passed away in 1998 and two years ago Bill married Edie, an old school friend of 70 years past. Edie is devoted to looking after Bill. Bill delights in telling the story of how he and Edie came together again – it is a great story! Should anyone wish to visit, Bill and Edie’s phone No is 07 5437 8168.

VALE

Jack McMahon

Charlie Watson advises that sadly, one of our remaining WW2 veterans, Jack McMahon passed away in Canberra on 24 Oct 08. He was 92 years old the previous day. Jack Served with No1 Section, 6 Aust Army Topo Svy Coy during WW2, most notably in the Northern Territory and was stationed there for close to two years. Post war Jack served for many years as a Registered Surveyor with the Australian Survey Office in Canberra in the grade of Supervising Surveyor. Jacks funeral service was at St John the Apostle Church, Blackham St Holt on Tuesday 28 Oct 08..... Charlie Watson

JOHN LEWORTHY’S STORY

It wasn't just the group 7 pay In 1961 when my flat mate and I chose to join the permanent army, I was granted an interview with a very special person in the Corps, DAD Survey Southern Command Major Harry Raisbeck at Victoria Barracks, Melbourne. He Corps enlisted me to the Royal Australian Survey Corps.

Having completed recruit training at Kapooka, I travelled to Balcombe with Harry Newman and Hans Lieskar in 1962 to commence a BasicCourse in Military Surveying.

I still have memories of the day WO2 Bernie Snell greeted us when we got off the bus and some days later calling us on parade only to have his shining boots shined even further by his pet dog.

The 1/62 Basic Survey Course was a mixture of complete teamwork and very individual young guys. Alex Cairney would remember when, after I made the statement that I had lifted the back end of a taxi off the ground, due to no jack being available while the wheel was changed, I was subsequently challenged to prove it and I did.

Posted to AHQ Fd Svy Depot (Air Photo Library) at Albert Park Barracks after graduating, I worked with Brian Jordan, Dave King, Andrew McLaughlin, Dave Christie and Barry Parker. Soon after I was posted to Broadmeadows Driver Training to undertake licence testing for all forms of Army vehicles.

I was posted back to the School of Military Survey staff when Major Stevens replaced the retiring Major Harry Raisbeck as DAD Survey Southern Command. Major Stevens was the only person I have known in my life who wrote letters to himself. I should explain by stating the protocol: Major Stevens – DAD Survey Southern Command to Major Stevens OC AHQ Fd Svy Depot (Air Photo Library).

At the School things flowed pretty smoothly, working with mainly Paul Billings and Theo Mulder. However when I undertook the corporal’s course I totally stuffed up my Astro and had to repeat all observations back in my unit this being the AHQ Survey Regiment at Bendigo in 1964. Enter Joe Farrington and freezing nights in my backyard at Bendigo. Joe sorted that out for me.

At the Regiment I spent some time annoying batsmen as a fast bowler in both local Bendigo competition and in the annual ‘Bones of Contention competition with the RAAF. Finally real work was imposed when I went to New Guinea with Topo Squadron in 1965.

How do I remember this posting? There are many individual indelible memories.

1 The Jump Master on the Herc inferring that it was our fault that one of their doors was not sealed on take off from Richmond RAAF base.
2 The Herc pilot going ballistic at Moresby when the Canberra bombers parked next to our Herc were servicing their engines and punching holes through the skin of our Herc with yonnies off the unpaved area of the tarmac.

3 Seeing the birth of an Island off-shore from AA 060 and Mick Soltis and myself being covered in volcanic ash. It was both brilliant and yet another stuff up. It poured rain soon after, so Mick and I soapied up for a shower in the wild. Then the rain stopped as quickly as it started. You don’t want to know the rest.

4 Being told by Bob Emmanuel (CDO - NG) that when we headed to Mt Karoma, we had no problems because the nearest Kuka-kuka (head hunters) were 35 miles away, then on our next day heard a dog bark at 13000+ feet up?

The list goes on. Is there anyone in the Corps who hasn’t got spectacular memories of similar on job experiences?

I left the Corps after completing the inaugural Bonegilla Sergeant’s course and was discharged in WA. For those who remember my illness it turned out after my terminal diagnosis to be a product of the medical time; an inability to diagnose during my military service, radio translucent kidney stones. Finally a new found medical capacity was eventually able to identify the problem.

Summing up the ensuing forty years, I have spent this time in a variety of roles from Engineering Surveyor, Heavy Construction Estimator, Civil - Structural Designer, Project Manager, Detail Draftsperson and some other roles that I am unable to divulge. Positions took me to every state in Australia and overseas.

During that time I took two sabbaticals, I became Chief Instructor with the Academy of Advanced Drivers and undertook to get my pilot’s licence in fixed wing aircraft (Since lapsed).

I am currently Vice President of the Institute of Steel Detailers (Vic) Inc and on the Sub-Committee of the Board of Manufacturing Skills Australia.

In my fifty years of working so far, I am unable to adequately describe to anyone, both the value or personal affiliation I feel to my days with both the Corps or those I met as part of it.

I should apologise to many but as the attached photo shows, I have dedicated my traditional ”Civvy” time to honouring my Father and his Gallipoli mates as official Colour bearer of the 7th Battalion (WW1) which has left me little time for Survey Corps involvement. Regards to all, John Leworthy.

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FAREWELL TO FORTUNA 6TH September 2008 – John Hogan’s reflection

ATTENTION –Why? I asked myself would I want to attend a function celebrating the end of map making at Fortuna. There would be no FRIENDS to meet, only ENEMIES, after all I used to be that OLD BASTARD the R.S.M. Well that was a good enough reason, one last chance to spoil everyone’s party!!

But oh what a difference 30 or 40 years can make, people get OLDER and WISER as they experience life's ups and downs, it is known as growing UP or OLD, I don’t know. But I do know it was very surprising, though also satisfying, to have so many of you ADMIT that I hadn’t been such a terrible OLD BASTARD after all.

It was also great to be greeted with “It’s great to see you looking good”. Thanks for that, though I can only say “FLATTERY will get you nowhere, and you are obviously getting to the age when you should have your EYES tested, you may need glasses”.

GLASSES!! Ah yes, a couple of glasses of beer would go down well. I’ll drink to that. CHEERS MATE.

STAND EASY – Well done to both Traceys…..Hoges.
Bronette Minelli (Kinsman) purchased an old surveyors measuring band she found in an antique dealer in Townsville and decided to find out a little more of its origins. She emailed this photo to the Heritage Museum Moorebank asking ‘if you cannot help me with any information could you please forward this on to any of the very much more mature ranks of ex-surveyors you may have contacts for in the hope that someone may be able to give me some information on this wonderful piece.

I have already sent a copy to Alex Cairney and Bob Skitch and am hopeful that you will know more. The research I have done so far tells me that this is an American ‘chain’ by way of measurement.

I am in the process of cleaning it up and am now very uncertain as to the alloy of the tubing. I thought it was copper originally but the more I clean it the lighter (and shinier of course) it becomes to the point where it almost looks like a chrome but it tarnishes rapidly to something more copper looking??….It is branded simply ‘Chicago’ and is a 100 ft measure. If you can help me I would like as much information as possible on it esp. approximate age. The tubing appears to be brass and the tape steel – the graduations possibly a silver/lead solder?

I have been in touch with CST Berger in the States but they have no history of their older equipment which is very sad.

Bronette’s email attracted some interesting responses; Bob Skitch replied ….. The band certainly looks like a surveyor’s measuring band although the length of 100 feet seems odd but it may well have been used for property work in the US. In Australia pre-metric days surveyors on property work measured in links; 100 links = 1 chain = 66 feet = 22 yards = one cricket pitch. Hence the term ‘chain’ and the old Gunter chain actually comprised 100 links – actual links – short pieces of steel one link in length (201.2 mm). To the best of my knowledge the Americans did not adopt this essentially British form of measurement but instead used yards and feet. Hence a 100 foot measuring band would not have been unusual in the US.

Our Survey Corps measuring bands pre-metric were 300 feet in length and we measured in feet and points of a foot and of course with the change to metric measure we measured in metres and points of a metre, ie centimetres with millimetres being estimated.

I suspect your Chicago band is made of hardened steel. Does it have measuring marks along its length at one foot intervals? From the photos it doesn’t appear to have. Of course it may be nothing more than a common 100 ft measuring tape used by builders and others in which case it would be marked in feet and inches down to 1/8th of an inch. The reel device is unusual (to me) but it might have been common in the US.

A further thought is it may be an ‘invar’ tape used for checking and standardizing ordinary steel tapes. Invar has a very low coefficient of expansion. In accurate measurement with a steel tape temperature was taken and a temperature correction applied.

That’s about all I can offer on the subject. Some of my colleagues may be able to comment further. You may find something on internet also. The Museum of Mapping and Surveying at ‘Landcentre’ Woolloongabba has measuring bands of the sort I have described including a Gunter chain.

Charlie Watson replied…Just a few extra comments to those from Bob. Is the cross section flat or round? How wide and thick? Invar standard tapes used by
cadastral surveyors were usually round (1/16 dia) and 100 feet long. Pre-metrication, town surveys were made in feet and inches and country surveys in links. Most of the invar standards used by RASVY are at the Museum. Peter BB and I saw them and identified them on our visit last year. We didn’t, however, note their manufacturer. They are mounted on a large wooden wheel in a wooden box similar to the best of British drafting instruments.

AN OLD BLOKE’S GRAVE

On survey operations in north Queensland (and no doubt in many other places where the Survey Corps carried out its mapping and geodetic work) the unusual would suddenly present itself, perhaps leaving one with a sharpened sense of the very remoteness of the locality in which we had found ourselves.

In 1960 the Topographic Squadron of the AHQ Survey Regiment was Tellurometer traversing from Mount Isa to Borroloola, connecting the 1958 Charters Towers/Tennant Creek traverse to the 1959 Borroloola /Mount Hensman traverse. It seemed initially to be a relatively short assignment, perhaps six weeks of work but difficulties of terrain and access extended that time considerably. My role as a fairly senior corporal (awaiting promotion to sergeant) was that of reconnaissance and station selection and then angle observation. Norm Vaughan ran the tellurometer measurement operation. Anyhow, all that is only background to the little account I am about to give.

At some time during the observing and measuring phase of the operation I broke a tooth and after a few days the pain became so excruciating I had to return to our Camooweal base camp and thence to the Isa to have the wretched tooth removed. I think Joe Farrington took over the angle observing job and with Major Jim Stedman’s concurrence I returned on the stores re-supply run, a Studebaker 2 ½ ton driven by Harry Wright. It was a miserable two day trip on roads that hardly deserved the name (Harry had brought with him medicinal cloves that I was supposed to pack the tooth with to ease the pain – it didn’t work) and the ‘Studies’ were not built for comfort. Well – eventually we arrived and next morning it was in to the Isa and a dentist who lost no time in removing the offending fang. After a day or so at Camooweal it was time to return to the traverse and this time, rather than taking the Lawn Hill-Doomagee route I opted to take what I was led to believe was better track that left the Barkley Highway some distance west of Camooweal and led north through Alexandra Station and one or two other quite famous locations of earlier days. I had with me one other (was it Dennis ‘Charcoal’ Woods? – I cannot remember) and on the second day we reached the northern escarpment of the Barkley. Here the track we were following degenerated into a rock strewn crumbling goat track down which we were slipping and sliding until finally rounding a rather precipitous bend we came across an old jeep lying on its side. Clearly it had come to grief doing exactly what we were doing in a Landrover – trying to reach Borroloola. There was an earthy pong close to the overturned Jeep and soon we saw the reason. A few yards away was a mound of stones supporting a cross made of old iron channel with the horizontal arm of the cross spot welded to the vertical post and on the horizontal arm a name picked out with spots of weld – Bill I think. Obviously it was the deceased driver’s grave and I suspected that the incumbent was only a few inches, a foot maybe below the ground under the rocks.

We continued on down the slippery slope now taking extreme caution not wanting to join whoever it was in the makeshift grave until we reached the grassy gulf hinterland plain below. It was a easy drive from there into Borroloola, then the forgotten seaport on the McArthur River.

A day or two later I happened to come across one of the locals and I asked about the grave on the crumbling slopes of the Barkley. The reply was along the lines
‘Awe – that must ‘ave bin old Bill. He were missin fer weeks – we thought ‘e would ave been back but ‘e wasn’t. We found ‘im up there and ‘e weren’t in good shape – full ‘o maggots and the crows an dingo’s ‘ad got to ‘im. Joe just digs a bit o’ a ‘ole and poked ‘im inta it. Put a few stones ova it t’ keep the dogs away. Joe said it took ‘im days t’ get the stink outa ‘is nose and a bottla rum as well!”

Dennis and I knew what he meant.

Ed: Borroloola had at one time been a thriving rambunctious river seaport community exporting cattle from the hinterland. It declined during the 1920s and ‘30s to a virtual ghost town. In 1960 there were no dwellings standing other than that of the NT Government representative, Mr Tas Festing at the end of the airstrip where he lived with his wife. The Borroloola pub was a collapsed pile of timber and iron, no doubt many years since it had served a beer. There was a shanty village on the banks of the McArthur River where some exceptionally colourful characters lived and a number of Aboriginals. Many of these ‘residents’ bore exotic and imaginative names. From all accounts the old town has come to life again with a population of several hundred thriving on tourist traffic. ‘Google’ in to ‘Borroloola’ for a fascinating read.

**WHO ‘DISCOVERED’ AUSTRALIA? – Bob Skitch**

I have always been fascinated by the ongoing debate on ‘who discovered Australia’ meaning really, who was the first European navigator to chart even a small portion of the coastline. Various ancient charts long pre-dating Dampier and even Torres have excited the imagination of researchers and none more so that the ‘Dieppe’ collection of maps dating from the mid 16th century. They are believed to be of Portuguese origin but the actual manuscripts were compiled in Dieppe, France and as was common practice at the time, substantial amounts of imagination was used to fill in the blanks. But one chart showed a substantial coastline roughly where Australia now is. It bears the name of Java La Grande. True; it doesn’t look much like Australia but our longest serving Director of Military Survey, Brigadier Lawrence Fitzgerald believed that there had to be a connection. He carefully dissected the pieces of the Java La Grande coastline and fitted them together matching shape to shape, sometimes enlarging a piece or turning it around and re-orienting it to make a very credible match. He researched every possibility checking charts and manuscripts and finally published his findings in 1984 in a book entitled ‘Java La Grande – The Portuguese Discovery of Australia’. Then he was descended upon by the academics who called his thesis bunkum, or words to that effect. Nevertheless, Brig Fitz had his supporters as well and many others have weighed in with supporting theses. Most would say today that even if the ‘jury is still out’ the likely verdict is that the first discoverers of the great south land – Terra Incognito – was the Portuguese.

In a letter to the editor of the Globe (Australian Map Circle periodical) I commented: I have only lightly scanned Gavin Menzies’ 1421 – the year China discovered the World thinking at the time that I might pick it up later. I haven’t done so and probably won’t. Nevertheless, I have always been interested in the various theories advanced that surely the northern parts of our continent were known to others before 1606. As a military mapper working on the Cape I could not help but be fascinated by those Dutch names Duyfken Point, Cape Keer-weer, Coen River and even Torres Strait, named by the Spaniard Torres, venturing through that narrow strait in 1606 perhaps noticing the tip of the Cape but failing to recognise what lay to the south of it. The Chinese? – well maybe. Then we had Mr W.A.R Peters detailed article Eridia Map 1602 published in the December 2002 issue of Cartography making what seemed to me (a surveyor) a very plausible case that the Portuguese cartographer (and like all those of his era he didn’t know he was one) Emaneul Eridia that the islands Ouro and Luca Antara are Melville and Bathurst Islands respectively. Well, enlarged or not, they certainly look much the same.

But now we have Mr W.A.R Richardson telling us in the December issue of The Globe and again in the December issue of Spatial Science (formally Cartography) and even more expansively in his ‘Was Australia Charted before 1606’ that all this is a load of bunkum, or words to that effect. Pity. It is those interesting possibilities that excite our imagination and allow us to ponder a little. I remember Helen Wallis commenting at an international Cartographic Conference in Perth some years ago after a debate on the possibility of a 16th century discovery of the southern coast of Australia, by Portuguese navigators, notably Mendonca, leading to the enigmatic ‘Mahogany Ship’, assiduously searched for by Brigadier Lawrence Fitzgerald during his retiring years – but without success.
She said to the effect that perhaps it might be as well for the mystery of the Mahogany Ship to remain a mystery so that our imaginations may continue to be excited and that a 16th century European ‘discovery’ of the great south land continues as a possibility.

It might have been at that same conference that an Indonesian gentleman pointed out that we pompous Europeans like to believe that ‘discovery’ can only mean European discovery. Of course Indonesians were familiar with Australia’s northern shores and made their own charts thereof to suit their purposes. Certainly Javanese relics have from time to time been picked up on our northern coastline at what might have been fisherman campsites.

It is hard to accept that this huge continent lay just south of the early trade routes known only to its indigenous inhabitants.

Army people use a formal process of reasoning called an ‘Appreciation of the Situation’. Facts are identified and assembled, conclusions drawn finally leading to courses that may be open to achieve the aim. Some wag once coined the expression to ‘Situate the Appreciation’ and that is often the case. The selective use of facts, even pseudo facts are used to justify the outcome sought. Such reverse logic appears evident in recent attempts to authenticate European ‘discovery’ of the great south land pre 1606.

Perhaps it is appropriate to leave the last word on this erudite topic to a past work colleague of mine from public service days, Mr Les Isdale. He had this to say in a cartographic journal:

‘400 years, more or less: On the school ground, I would have bet my bag of marbles on it: Captain Cook discovered Australia. Education then was strongly Anglo-centric, and if there were foreign players in the drama they missed the spotlight. On our mental map of the world, the red bits stuck out like magnetic anomalies. I could locate the Tweed, Tyne and Tees Rivers of England with precision, long before I heard about the Fortescue, which is ten times as long and sometimes holds water. And the Ord River never existed until Bob Menzies said it did, when he opened the Dam. On my birthday, as it turns out, but I was busy with other things. Anyway, they weren’t even in Queensland.

Looking back past the Endeavour, there seems to have been a long queue of intrepid navigators in Australia’s vicinity, all operating under the position-fixing technology of the day, which often meant, lost. Dutch, Portuguese, Chinese - none of them has ever come back to claim the Mahogany Ship, perhaps because it too keeps getting lost.

The buccaneering Dampier in 1688 formed part of the passing parade, which was duly recorded in ochre in remote rock art galleries. He judged the aborigines to be ‘the miserablist people in the world’. They didn’t think much of him either, and would have been bemused that somebody had ‘discovered’ their country. After all, they hadn’t lost it - yet.

Fast-forward to the Colonial mapping offices, where a strange breed of men (as in ‘men only’) gripped their crowquills, smoothed their aprons, twirled their moustaches, wiped watery eyes and documented Progress. Perched on high stools they delineated (yup - that’s the word) the inexorable advance of a spidery modern cadastre, till finally Australia was not only Discovered, but Owned. For the very first time. After all, myalls had wandered over it for think-of-a-number millennia and never actually - properly - owned it, showing an appalling lack of initiative.

Sometimes it seems that the only way to discover Australia is to leave it. Home thoughts from abroad bring a new intensity and clarity to our perceptions, and like earlier residents we feel not so much owners of the land as owned by it. The realization is most acute and poignant in time of war, when Australians face the possibility of never seeing it again. The impact is not unlike our first satellite view of this lonely, lovely planet, when the world discovered itself in a new way, a personal discovery worth all the rest.’

Les Isdale

**A VETERAN’S TOUR OF VIETNAM**

Some may remember Phil Brookes who was Chief Clerk (Ordnance Corps) at the Army Survey Regiment in the mid 1980s. Phil is now the organiser and escorting person of tours to Vietnam. The tours of 15 days duration are arranged through Imperial China Tours which Phil says are excellent. He has used them previously. Phil’s next tour is planned to depart on 13 August 2009. An outline is provided below. Should anyone wish to have more detailed information, contact Phil Brookes on email brookes1@bigpond.net.au.
Day 1 Home city to Singapore then to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon).
Day 2 Tour of Saigon
Day 3 To Cu Chi to explore the tunnel complex then to Cholon.
Day 4 To Mekong Delta, return to Ho Chi Minh City
Day 5 To Vung Tau via Baria and Long Hai.
Day 7 Rtu Ho Chi Minh City, Tan Son Nhat to Danang and Ho An.
Day 8 Ho An.
Day 9 Ho An, Danang, Hoa.
Day 10 Hue
Day 11 Hue to Hanoi
Day 12 Hanoi
Day 13 Hanoi to Halong Bay via Hong Ngoc village.
Day 14 Halong Bay to Hanoi.
Day 15 Hanoi to Singapore then to city of origin

HOTELS
Ho Chi Minh City – Majestic Hotel
Vung Tau- Anoasis Beach Resort
Hue-Imperial Hotel
Hoi An- Hoian Hotel
Hanoi- Melia Hotel
Halong- Indochina Sails / Bhaya Hotel

NETT COST PER PERSON:
Twin room          $4120
Taxes/Charges  $450 (approx)
Single Room supplement:     $1550.00

INCLUSIONS:
International flights with Singapore Airlines
Domestic flights in Vietnam: Saigon-Danang/Hue-Hanoi
13 nights in twin share accommodation at 4-5 star hotels with full buffet breakfast daily
One night on the boat in Halong Bay
Entrance fees to all activities
Most meals
Transfers
Local English speaking guide
Vietnam visa

EXCLUSIONS:
Taxes & Charges
Travel Insurance
Anything not mentioned in the itinerary.

NOTE:
Above costs are subject to currency fluctuation, airfare increase, availability and Imperial China Tours Terms & Conditions. Please note this is only quote and no space has been booked on behalf of the group. All space is subject to availability at time of booking. A minimum number of passengers travelling together is required. If the minimum number is not reached, the costs are subject to change.

MAPPING IN THE RED ARMY...... by
Dr Noel Sproles

During the time of the cold war, the Soviet Union released little if any information about the organisation and internal workings of the Red Army during World War II. However, now that the cold war is over, the Russian Federation has opened up its archives and it is possible to get access to documents that provide interesting details about the management of the Soviet war effort. Colonel David Glantz, a retired US Army officer, has translated many of these documents and has published them in a set of three volumes. The second volume, ‘Central Command and Control Organs and Leaders’ provides a brief glimpse of the wartime activities of the Red Army’s Topographical Service.

The Soviets apparently were appreciative of the importance of mapping as the military-topographical service was the 8th Directorate of the General Staff up to the beginning of the war. In mid 1941 all non-operational directorates were removed from the General Staff in order that it could concentrate on important operational matters. It is significant that the military topographical service was not removed but remained as the 6th Directorate along with other directorates such as Operations and Intelligence. In a document approved by Stalin himself in August 1941, the General Staff was charged, inter alia, with ‘Supervising the Red Army’s military-topographical service and supplying the Red Army with topographical maps’.

On page 158, Colonel Glantz provides a brief summary of the service’s activities during the war. In the paragraph titled ‘MILITARY TOPOGRAPHY’ he notes that:

The General Staff’s Military-Topographical Directorate [Voennotopograficheskie upravlenie -VTU] was responsible for preparing, maintaining, and distributing all maps for the Red Army at every level of
command. This included strategic-scale maps for Stavka and General Staff use, operational maps of 1:200,000 scale, and tactical maps of 1:100,000 and 1:50,000 scale for corps, divisions, and regiments. The directorate created maps in wartime using survey and aerial observation. Among the wartime chiefs of this directorate was Lieutenant General M. K. Kudriavtsev.

From the outset this directorate faced major problems. During the first 6 months of the war, the German Army seized more than 96 million maps in reserve warehouses of the Military-Topographical Directive. This had several distinctly negative effects. First, it negated careful prewar Soviet security measures designed to keep their maps secret. For example, the Germans, who were wholly deficient in maps of the Soviet territory, used these maps operationally and tactically by overprinting German place names over Russian ones. Second, the ensuing map shortages made resupply of Red Army forces extremely difficult, since most Red Army officers, soldiers, and drivers were not particularly terrain literate.

However, by the beginning of 1942, the General Staff had collected or prepared sufficient maps anew to support Red Army forces operationally and tactically. In addition to its efforts within the Military-Topographic Directorate, the General Staff included topographic sections in formations down to rifle and cavalry division level. Overall, during the war and under General Staff supervision, the Red Army's Military Topographical Service surveyed and reconnoitred 5.2 million square kilometres of territory, both within and outside the Soviet Union. It exploited this work by issuing 16,500 new map sheets and printing around 800 million copies of individual topographical and specialized maps, and other terrain documents.

Ed: I find this a fascinating account. I am currently reading Antony Beevor’s book, ‘Stalingrad’ and at two thirds the way through I have found no mention of mapping from either the German or the Soviet side. And yet the blitzkrieg invasion of the USSR by the German Panzer Divisions systematically taking out city after city until reaching the impenetrable wall of Stalingrad reflects the fact that they must have been in possession of detailed topographical maps. They certainly did not simply charge ahead on a compass bearing.
December 2008

Reunion & AGM at Alderley Arms Hotel – Saturday 13 September 2008

(clockwise around table) Barry Lutwyche, Kris Sparrow, Percy Long, Dell Long, John Hunter, Allan Kavanagh


Greg Knight, Bob Skitch, Allan Kavanagh, Barry Lutwyche, John Hunter, Mary-Ann Thiselton, Dave Anderson, Colin Hargreaves, Ian Hutchings, Jim Gill, Barbara Bates-Brownsword, Ian (Rock) Thiselton,

President Peter Bates-Brownsword addresses the gathering
Farewell to Fortuna – the grand old lady of the Survey Corps.

The Queensland stalwarts – Alex Cairney, Barry Lutwyche, Bob Skitch, Ross Smithwick – collect a car at Tullamarine

Blue Warwick (still ‘blue’), Don Swiney, Len Davies

Ross, Barry, Alex and Bob – at the Hibernian, Golden Square and that meal!

George Timmins, Adrian Rynberk and Les Dixon.

Alex Cairney, Brett Van Leuwin
From this……. to that!) ‘Fortuna’ and the new location of DIGO at Longlea

Glynis Swiney, John (NRJ) Hillier, Bob Skitch, Lloyd Patterson

Barry Lutwyche making a point to John (Hoges) Hogan

The National Association meeting at Fortuna – Bob Skitch (Chair), Ross Smithwick (Qld), Alex Munro (SA), Garry Warnest (Ex –Fortuna), Fred Brown (WA), Alex Cairney (Qld), Ian Miller (Canberra), Don Swiney (Ex-Fortuna)

Alex Cairney, Brett Van Leuwin, Peter Lefel, Peter (Jack) Elverd, Barry Lutwyche

‘From this……. to that!) ‘Fortuna’ and the new location of DIGO at Longlea
‘Fortuna’ – as we will remember it.

Myrie Moody, Gillian Sommer, Lou Sommer Bob Skitch (Kevin Moody taking the photo)