At last it has happened – we have a history! And it was launched with fine pomp and ceremony. The history of Australia’s Military Map-Makers by eminent military historian, Dr Chris Coulthard-Clark, was launched at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra on Friday 8th September 2000. It was a memorable occasion. There were so many of our Corps comrades present – perhaps two hundred, maybe more. The launch was organized by Clem Sargent – as only Clem could do it – with a fine and fitting sense of occasion. There were so many of our comrades of past there; maybe 200, maybe more. It was all too short a time to connect with them all – faces familiar within a sea of faces. Of course there were the those whom you would expect – Don Macdonald, Frank Buckland, Don Swiney, Clem Sargent, Jim Stedman (all past Directors and Colonel Commandants) – but many others who simply came. On another page I have tried to list as many as possible. (Continued on Page 2)

VALE – JIM STEDMAN
It is with great sadness that we advise that Jim Stedman, our past Director, Colonel Commandant friend and mentor of many, died of a sudden stroke in his home in the evening of Monday 9th October 2000. Details of Jim’s funeral are not to hand at the time of publication, however, we understand that it is likely to be on Monday 16th October. For many of us, Jim was the Survey Corps. His values were the Corps’ values and the values we all adopted. It is hard to think of any significant achievement of the Corps during the post WW2 years in which Jim Stedman did not play a prominent role. His passing closes a chapter as certainly as the passing of the Corps itself.
The Association extends its heart-felt condolences to Joan, Mervyn, Robert and Barbara.
The official launch address was given by Major General John Hartley who as Deputy Chief of Army authorized the history project. General Hartley’s address is reproduced in full on Page 3. Of course others spoke as well – Don, Clem and Dr Chris Coulthard-Clark, our historian author. Popular Canberra singer, Colin Slater, in his fine baritone led the gathering in a rousing rendition of the Corps Song – Wandering the King’s Highway.

Another surprise – we all noticed a young lady in army uniform amongst us and perhaps assumed her to be the daughter of one of our number. Well, in a sense she was – not the daughter, but the great-granddaughter of WO (later Major) HA Roseblade who, as L/Cpl Roseblade came to Australia from Britain in 1912 to join the RAE Survey Section which later became the nucleus of the Australian Survey Corps. Ariane Roseblade was discovered at ADFA as a result of her photograph appearing in the Canberra Times performing in a light opera. Clem was quick to act and Ariane was presented with a copy of the history by Brigadier Don.

Needless to say, the History sold well. The formalities over, we, or most of us, crossed the lawns of the War Memorial and made our way along Limestone Avenue to Olin’s Canberra Hotel (formerly the Ainslie) for dinner. A very convivial night followed and ‘lights out’ must have been some time after 1.00 am at which time my own lights were well and truly out.

Bob Skitch

Who attended

Charlie Watson, principal organizer of the launch, provided the following list of attendees. (Ed note: I apologise for those names missed – not all advised their attendance in advance)

Paul Pearson and Bruce Keeley
Paul consults in project management and Bruce is now the Post Master at Braidwood.

Grahame and Hode Joo Baker
Ann Barbour
Karen Binstead
John Brock
Simon Buckpitt
Duncan and Sandra Burns

Mike Banham
Peter and Barbara Bates-Brownsword
Graham Brassil
Frank and Joy Buckland
John Bullen
Lyall and Cheryl Camp

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

Firstly, thank you for the privilege of being asked to launch this book.

In doing so, I must firstly acknowledge that many of you have travelled long distances to be here. I also recognise the wealth of service that exists in this room, which clearly attests to the considerable interest displayed in this project.

I should also recognise the efforts of Roger Lee and his staff for arranging this occasion and thank General Gower and the staff of the Australian War Memorial for allowing us to use this facility. I think it is entirely appropriate that the launch should take place here – the centre of Australia's military heritage and history.

For a book of this nature to be a success, I believe there need to be three ingredients.
Firstly, there needs to be a desire to produce it. I suspect there are many who have had that desire for sometime. Indeed, I have seen a very readable regimental history at Bendigo. But the decision to amalgamate the Corps with RAE undoubtedly was the primary catalyst. I recall several years ago, not long after I became DCGS, and shortly after the decision was taken, receiving a telephone call from my old friend and Duntroon classmate, Charlie Watson, wishing to see me on an urgent matter. I was somewhat surprised to see not only Charlie but a delegation of Corps notables who looked particularly grim and determined. Certainly Clem Sargent was present. And what was scheduled to be a discussion on a class reunion turned out to be a well placed ambush.

Thus the project was launched.

This was not a difficult decision. I suspect if we had not taken it then, we would have no written record of a number of unofficial records which would not have given the complete story or which would be subject to the vagaries of individual memories and perceptions.

So right from the start, there was a genuine appreciation of the need to produce a record of the work of the Royal Australian Survey Corps.

The second ingredient is the need for a process to produce the book. This has several components. In our case, it required some official basis. Roger Lee provided this, using the Australian Army History Series, of which this is the fourth volume published by Oxford University Press.

Of course, the publication with its attendant research, writing, editing, production and publication does not come cheaply. In our case, a good deal of sponsorship was provided by the Survey Corps itself but also by the Institution of Surveyors in New South Wales, and I should like to mention three people, all of whom are here today: Alan Cavanagh, the past-president of the Institution, John Brock and Charles Jerrard.

Next and a most crucial step, is the author. And here we were extremely fortunate to gain the services of Chris Coulthard-Clark. Chris is an experienced military historian and has been involved in the production of over 20 books, most of them with a military theme. A Duntroon graduate, he spent a number of years with the Australian Intelligence Corps. In his role as an author he has developed a detailed understanding of
how to use the labyrinth of research facilities, here and throughout the Department.

The third, and final element, is that there must be a story to tell. And what a story this is. I suspect – as is inevitably the case – this book will be read largely by those who have served in the Corps or who continue its work under different arrangements. This is a pity because the book has the potential for a much wider appeal. It is, in many ways, part of the story of the development of Australia itself.

The military aspects are well covered. The coverage of Survey in both World Wars and other campaigns is well documented. Those of us who have been involved in the planning and conduct of military operations cannot stress strongly enough the value of terrain presentations. Indeed, as the British found in the South African War, not to have current, accurate and detailed maps reduces the war fighting capacity of a force as much, if not more, than poor logistics, low morale or bad planning.

The Corps also played a major role in the mapping of Australia. It is almost impossible to imagine the development of this country without adequate mapping, especially in terms of population centres, communications, transport and mining and pastoral development without suitable mapping. Nor should the Corps’ role in developing national mapping be underestimated, both in terms of the leadership Corps members provided and the pioneering of new procedures and techniques, many based on the evolution of new technology.

To give some substance to these statements, let me provide a small amount of detail. Since the Second World War, the Corps has engaged in survey and mapping operations in Australia, producing over 50 percent of first map coverage of the nation at a scale of 1:250,000 and some 3400 maps at scales of 1:100,000 and 1:50,000. Furthermore, from 1954 to 1994, the Corps undertook some 50 survey and mapping operations in PNG, Indonesia and the South Pacific as far east as Kiribati. It produced 400 maps at scales of 1:250,000 and 1:100,000 to completely cover PNG.

The last chapter points to a difficult time experienced by the Corps in recent years. In a way the outcome probably was inevitable as Chris Coulthard-Clark points out. Certainly the expanded influence of National Mapping and the advent of new technology played their parts. But we should not underestimate the pruning of many capabilities over the last ten years, which saw Army's strength reduce by a third and the failure of governments, of all persuasions to increase defence expenditure in real terms. Any possibility to reduce manpower, or to consider outsourcing, commercialisation or the rationalisation of similar service capabilities, would be instantly grasped. This type of thinking undoubtedly played its part. Indeed, I suspect there is a good case for a further book to objectively analyse this whole aspect of Defence culture.

But the story of the Survey Corps is about its people. Small in number, highly trained and motivated, frequently deployed for extended periods, it had no shortage of characters, colourful personalities and visionaries. It played a vital but frequently understated role.

Brig Don Macdonald, Bob Skitch, Noel Fletcher

Chris has captured all of this in a most readable fashion. I commend the book to you and declare it officially launched.
HOW TO OBTAIN YOUR COPY

Copies of the History can be obtained from the RAE Corps shop at Moorebank NSW at the special price of $37.00 (GST included). Postage from Moorebank to QLD will vary, depending on location, however, these are the current Australia Post rates:

1. Brisbane (Q1 – postcodes 4000 - 4224, 4226 - 4299, 4500 - 4549, 9000 - 9299, 9400 - 9596, 9700 - 9799) - $7.46
2. Near QLD (Q2 – postcodes 4300 - 4449, 4550 - 4699, 9597 - 4224, 9880 - 4299) - $7.74
3. Mid QLD (Q3 – postcodes 4450 - 4499, 4700 - 4805, 9920 - 9959) - $8.29
4. Nth QLD (Q4 – postcodes 4806 - 4899, 9960 - 4499) - $8.40
5. Other NSW (N2 – postcode 4225) - $5.37

Ordering: The RAE Corps Shop order form is attached to this Bulletin. Also attached is the RAE Corps Shop price list which includes a number of RA Svy items that may be ordered – Corps ties and the like. As stated on the order form, payment may be made by credit card, or with prior arrangement (I suggest email or phone call) by personal cheque, bank cheque or money order. Postage must be included.

REUNION 2000

Reported by Bob Skitch

History edition this may be but do not let us overlook our own very successful reunion and annual general meeting held at the Gaythorne RSL on our traditional first Saturday in September. Perhaps numbers were down a little on previous years, but this didn’t in any way detract from the conviviality of the occasion. Of course, Saturday 2nd September happened to be AFL Grand Final Day and with so many ‘displaced Mexicans’ in our numbers, some may have stayed at home glued to their boxes. Since the outcome was a foregone conclusion – well...

Cold beer from the bar put everyone in the mood to move quickly through the formalities of the AGM. Some changes occurred in our office bearers and we regretted losing Grant Small and Barry Lutwyche from our committee – both as a result of work pressures. Kym Weston has taken on the membership role, a task he will carry out remotely from Buderim. Kym seems determined to project the Association into the electronic future, which may well be the way ahead. Frank Thorogood gave us a brief on the advantages of incorporation and the meeting authorized the committee to move in that direction.

But the real purpose of the occasion was fellowship and there was plenty of that. A most enjoyable meal was provided, if indeed a little too much for many. Our WW2 veterans attending were fewer and we really are not managing to keep in touch with them. Our Patron, Ed Anderson, was unable to be with us this year. Ed is down with Ross River fever and is most unwell. There were other notable absences, however, we remembered them all in the appropriate manner. Those attending were:

Andy Steen
Kev Walsh, with niece Dana and friend James

Hal Jones
John and Connie Winsbury

Jim Gill
Des Husband

Frank and Nan Thorogood
John Cattell

Alex Cairney
Arthur McIlwain

Barry Lutwyche
Tony Gee

Charlie Kovacs
Hans Kramer

Kim and Faye Weston
Peter (Blue) and Irene Blasket

Rock and Mary-Ann Thiselton
Bruce and Mrs Gordon

Lorraine Chambers
Stan Campbell
NOTICES AND OTHER MATTERS

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2000 – 2001 ARE OVERDUE!
Our financial year runs from September to September and at the end of September less than 50 have paid and are financial. And yet we continue to send the Bulletin to all who have been financial at any time in the three years past. This cannot continue and from the next issue of the Bulletin distribution will be restricted to those who are presently financial or are less than a year in arrears. We encourage you to pay three years in advance. Some have already done this. Keep in touch with you Survey Corps mates by remaining in your Association.

LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH DRINKS
This regular informal event has found a permanent home at the Gaythorne RSL. The beer is cheaper without loss of quality. The management have agreed to reserve a table for our use and snacks are provided. There is ample car parking at the rear or alternatively, rail to Gaythorne or Mitchelton Stations. The RSL is about half way between. See you there… Rock Thiselton

THE GAYTHORNE RSL
Are you thinking of becoming a member of the RSL? The Gaythorne RSL provides a great service to your Association in the form of meeting rooms for your Committee, space to carry out post-outs and, of course, a venue for our annual reunion. Tea, coffee, biscuits or cake are provided at no cost on each occasion. The Club facilities are excellent. Gaythorne is a Club that truly supports the ex-serviceman. The cost to join both the Club and the sub-branch is $10.00 per year. Membership of one club confers reciprocal rights in all other clubs.

THE MARCHING SONG OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SURVEY CORPS

WANDERING THE KINGS HIGHWAY
I've always been a rover
Summer and Winter too
Wandering the wide world over
Seems like I always do
But when I start my journey
At the dawn of another day
I give a health to comrades
Pals of the King’s Highway.

Chorus
So long to you, gotta be on the road again
So long to you, gotta hitch up my load again
It's been great to meet you here
Right good company, right good cheer
Now then my lads, anyone like to come with me
A wand'ers life is free
I can say, night and day
Nothing ever worries me
Nights are cold, maybe I am growing old!
Yet I thrive
and the pals I meet, make it good to be alive
Comrades farewell, what if we never meet again
The memory will stay
As I go, rain or snow,
Wandering the King's highway.
Defence No, Rank, Name: ____________________________________________________

Unit, Sub Unit: ____________________________________________________________

Unit/ Home Address: _______________________________________________________

Telephone Number: ___________ Email Address: ________________________________

Army postal service (SDS) will be used wherever possible.

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ADD POSTAGE  $

Postage with GST will be charged when using Australia Post.
Do you wish insurance through Australia Post? Add $2.20 for orders up to $200.00 value.

YES/NO (Nil response will be taken as NO)

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No Credit Facilities are available.

We accept Bankcard, Mastercard and Visa.

(Minimum Credit Card order is $25.00)

Please debit my: Bankcard Mastercard Visacard

Card No: ____________________________________________

Expiry Date: ____ Card holders Name:_________________ Signature________________
## RAE Corps Shop Price List

Prices include GST

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