

# Magna Carta

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EX- FORTUNA SURVEY ASSOCIATION INC  
NEWSLETTER APRIL 2004

Apr 4, 2004

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## “Don’t buy a house the Regiment is Moving!!!”

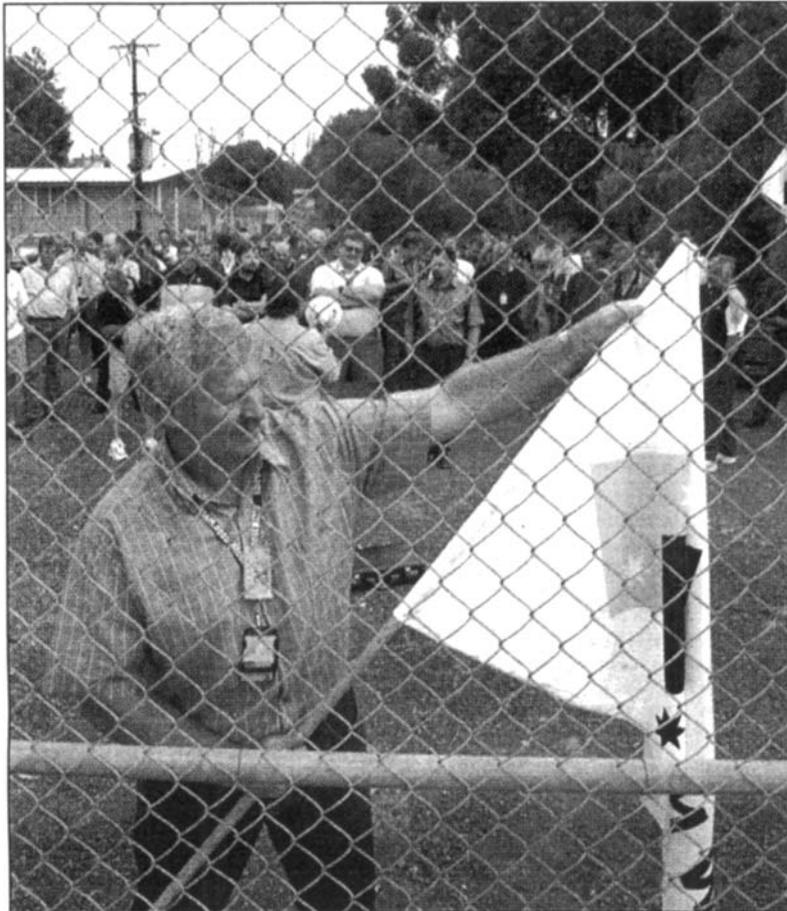
**How often have we all heard that quote!** Well, whilst it is not the Regiment any more, the Defence Public Service, Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation (DIGO) comprising many past Survey Corps members and currently located at Fortuna maybe up for a move. The occupants of Fortuna are certainly not new to the threat of relocation. There is an internal review currently underway to determine the most effective and efficient location for the DIGO capability.

“Review!” A standard quote in these times of change is that the only thing that is certain is change, however in the Fortuna case it appears that the only thing that is also certain is also “Reviews”. To quote from Romans “ It appeared that anytime we advanced and had a chance at victory we would stop, withdraw and regroup”. How history repeats itself. For those of you have read the “Mapmakers of Fortuna” you will see the endless barrage of “Reviews” that came along. For DIGO and its predecessor the Army Topographic Support Agency (ATSE) the reviews continue to roll on. I wonder what the cost really was for all these reviews in dollar terms and in productivity that the disruption and uncertainty caused. The decision to cease the DIGO involvement with the Commercial Support Program ceased in April 2003. This was followed closely by a Printing capability review that has now been linked to this latest review and was to be completed by December 2003. The review is yet to be completed. Some of the uncertainty started when planning commenced to explore options to build a new DIGO facility on a greenfield site located in the Bendigo area. What are the possible outcomes from the latest review?

- a. Remain in Bendigo
- b. Partial move to Canberra, or
- c. Complete relocation to Canberra.

Obviously there are arguments that can be put for each of the alternatives, but it would appear that the chance of a move is more likely this time than it has ever been in the past. The relocation of Fortuna’s mapmakers has always had a political dimension and this review is no different with the local member

Steve Gibbons being involved especially in such a marginal electorate as Bendigo. The potential cost to Bendigo has been calculated by the La Trobe University as up to \$37 million and predicts the loss of 250 jobs, directly and indirectly. Members of DIGO have formed a committee to try to keep DIGO in Bendigo. They have established a web site at [savefortuna.org](http://savefortuna.org) and have been working to ensure that the reasons to retain DIGO in Bendigo are well known and publicised. They have achieved some publicity and local coverage in the Bendigo Advertiser and have produced the badge (above) \$3.50ea and car bumper stickers to raise awareness. They have also circulated petitions throughout the Bendigo region. Bob Garrity and Geoff Willey accompanied Steve Gibbons to Canberra to meet with the Minister of Defence to put their case and from all accounts it appears their trip was successful as they were able to raise new issues and clarify others.



**ANGRY:** AMWU delegate Bob Garrity with fellow workers in bendigo.  
(A photograph appearing in the Bendigo Advertiser)

It is however the human costs that concern the members of the Ex Fortuna Survey Association. The financial effects that relocation would cause to those members with young families trying to establish themselves causes concern. The cost of living and the cost of housing in Canberra in particular is substantially more that it is in the Bendigo region. Many would loose close family support networks. Many more senior ex Survey Corps individuals have now firmly established themselves in Bendigo and at a time close to retirement would be very disadvantaged should they now be required to relocate and as a result of the Canberra cost of living take on new mortgages.



The review at this stage opens more questions than it answers. What would become of the gracious Fortuna Villa building (albiet with its nearly dry lake). Who could use it and for what?

The uncertainty of the outcome of this review has been again hanging over the heads of the Fortuna Mapmakers for some time now, causing anguish and concern. Members have in many ways had to put their lives on hold. The Ex Fortuna members offer support to those involved.

# PETITION

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ASSEMBLED IN PARLIAMENT

This petition of residents of the Bendigo region and other interested persons points out to the House the strong concern of the possible relocation of the Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation (DIGO) away from the Bendigo region.  
Your petitioners request the House to consider this concern and ensure that DIGO remains in the Bendigo region for the benefit of the Australian population, the Department of Defence, the Bendigo region and the individuals employed at DIGO Bendigo.

	Name	Signature	Address / Organisation
1			
2			

## ANZAC DAY Sunday 25 April 2004

There has been discussion over the past several years about the Association participation in the Bendigo Anzac Day March and in particular at last years AGM. The Association has been invited to march as a body representing the Survey Corps in this years Bendigo Anzac Day March.

Dear Sir,

RE: ANZAC DAY 2004

The Bendigo District RSL Sub-Branch Inc will once again be holding its Anzac Day Services at 6.30am and at 11am. The later service will be preceded by a march commencing at 10.45am.

We would be greatly honoured to have your association march as a group in the 10.45am parade if this could be arranged.

We will be having the 15<sup>th</sup> Transport Squadron and the 8/7 RVR Unit marching as a formed body in this parade and we hope that your association will be also participating as a group in this parade.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on 03 5443 4013.

We look forward to a positive reply.

Yours sincerely



The committee has prepared a Survey Corps Banner and as many members as possible are requested to attend by being at the RSL Memorial Hall by NLT 1030hrs on Sunday 25 April. It is requested that you also provide feedback by 20Apr to Tracey Phillips or one of the Committee that you will be marching. Members marching are encouraged to wear their Corps tie, their Association badges or other Survey Corps identification. Following the march it is intended that we would then move to the RSL Club Complex 73-75 Havilah Road, Bendigo for lunch and socialising.

It is becoming very obvious that memories of the Survey Corps and its significant contribution are quickly fading. As it will be the first time that we have marched at an Anzac day in Bendigo it is strongly requested that you make yourself available on this occasion to make it a success. For the Survey Corps members at DIGO this will also be an ideal opportunity to be seen by the Bendigo public in large numbers. There has been a feeling among some members that they would not march as it in some way decreased the importance of the contribution made by those who saw combat. I assure you all that this is not the case as the invitation letter above indicates.

Please pass the word and encourage as many as possible to attend.

## **CPI or MTWAE**

For those members who are recipients of DFRDB Pensions or MSBS Preserved benefits you have undoubtedly felt comfort in the fact that your pension although not large would keep pace with inflation and the rising cost of living because it was indexed to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). That was a reasonable expectation and the way the schemes were originally setup, however the Government has changed the way that it calculates CPI and surprise, surprise its value has now been decreased. The information below is provided for your information.

In 1997 the government legislated to index Social Security pensions and veterans affairs service pensions to male total average weekly earnings (MTAWE) or CPI, whichever is the greater. Our pensions on the other hand have remained Indexed to CPI that was what was legislated for in 1972. In the six years since 1997 the increase in the wages index as compared to CPI is 14%. Furthermore since 1985 the wages index has increased by 23% compared to the CPI.

In December 2002 the Senate Select Committee on Superannuation in reviewing Commonwealth funded pensions recommended the government index Superannuation Benefits to MTAWE or CPI whichever is higher. The same committee in 2000 made a similar recommendation as to the inadequacy of the CPI as a measure of preserving living standards. Despite these recommendations the government's latest advice (Dec 2002) is that the government is not considering any change to Military Superannuation indexation arrangements, even though defence accepts that the CPI is not a measure of community living standards.

You and the 60,000 retired servicemen and women who served in the armed forces for 20 years or more, and their widows/widowers, are therefore being significantly discriminated against.

Commonwealth parliamentary pensions are wages indexed (rather than CPI) and the Commonwealth Bank has recently moved to wages-based formula. Moreover research by authorities such as the Reserve Bank reveal that Wages will remain ahead of the CPI for the foreseeable future.

It is also believed that while the RSL is aware of this issue they have not as yet raised any concerns with the Government. Maybe it is worth checking with your local MHR or Senator prior to the election as to their party's views on this matter.

## **Australian Service Medal with Clasp "Irian Jaya"**

Don Swiney advises that the medals have now started to be issued after some pressure and frustrating delays. If you have eligible service for Operation Cenderawasih then you should apply for the medal if you have not already done so. If you still experience problems after your application please contact the Association.

## **Museum Report**

In summary from the last report, there are no exhibits in the museum building, with only the brass Survey badge and opening commemorative plaque on the outside wall.

· The museum staff has been expanded with a major from the Army History unit and we believe three other warrant officers, two of which are Army reserve. Not all the positions are believed filled...

· Peter Raue is the treasurer of the Museum Company, an appointment that he holds for three years.

· The restoration of the RASvy collection is a major part of the business plan for the next twelve months

· The museum is supported by about 20 volunteers who over the last year have contributed about 600 days restoring exhibits and manning the museum on open days.

· It is likely that the New South Wales Survey Association will not be able to provide much assistance, however the help of past Survey Corps members now living in New South Wales should be sought.

We have been in contact with Peter about rallying the troops (that's all of you out there) to help setup the museum. Part of that plan is to do a substantial recce (hopefully with representatives from all Associations", formulate a plan and the resources necessary and then execute the Survey Operation "Parare Presentation" at an agreed suitable time by assembling as many as possible over maybe a five day period. The situation on the ground however is not quite that simple. Security and air-conditioning systems are not yet in place in the museum building and it is likely that a consultant will be tasked to prepare a museum display plan. The bottom line is that it is pointless even to organise a recce until these milestones have been achieved. We anxiously await the feedback from Peter so that ball can start rolling. As part of the plan it would be intended that a Survey social function would also be held to coincide with the gathering of the museum working party (all work and no play etc..etc..). Wait out for further updates to this important task. Check out their web site <http://www.aamme.com.au>

## Changes to the Ex Fortuna Association

Following the last AGM, Don Swiney has accepted the position as our Patron in recognition for his Survey Corps and Association achievements. Gary has stepped into Don's shoes as President and Tracey (the quite one) Phillips is the new Secretary. Bob Thrower is the new Treasurer taking over from Doug Carswell who has done a magnificent effort since taking over from Tony Ellis many years ago. Doug is still around when he is not sailing (when there is any water). The new contact details are on the Newsletter header.

Please note the new postal address:

**Ex Fortuna Survey Association  
PO Box 613  
GOLDEN SQUARE VIC 3555**

The Association fees remain at \$10 per year, with the currency year printed on your newsletter.

Some of the Magna Carto newsletters were distributed as pdf documents but unfortunately some of them did not get through. If you are able to accept your Magna Carto distributed digitally in pdf format then please Email [grw@netcon.net.au](mailto:grw@netcon.net.au) and let us know what Email address you would like it sent to. The pdf viewer called acrobat reader can be downloaded free from <http://www.adobe.com>

There has been some questions raised as to when is the next big Bendigo bash, especially seeing that 2005 marks the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Survey Corps. My immediate answer was when you come and help, however after some consideration, I thought it best to ask you the members what you think about another big Corps function in Bendigo near Corps Day to celebrate the occasion. Feedback please.

## Alison Bogumil

On 29 Dec 03 a subdued crowd congregated a St Killians church in Bendigo for the joint funerals of Alison, daughter of Rob and Judi, and her fiancée Damian Thomas. This young couple, tragically killed in a road accident just outside of Bendigo, had almost finalised their wedding plans that had been set for Feb 2004.

A large contingent of ex RASvy personnel, including former Litho Sqn OCs Terry Edwards and Terry Lord, attended in support of Rob and Judi.

Alison and Damian were buried in adjoining graves at Kangaroo Flat cemetery. Many RASvy members, including Len Thirlwell (Alison's uncle), gathered at the Kangaroo Flat Sports Club to offer condolences, support the family and to reminisce.

Colin Cuskelly

## Lost and Found

Does anyone know any contact details for **Caitland Courbould**, previously known as Gail Amarto. Caitland now married to a Canadian had pre-purchased a copy of Mapmakers of Fortuna but has moved from her contact address in Canberra. We like to get her copy of the book to her.

Lex McCawley of Maryborough contacted the Queensland Association looking for a contact for MN (Blue) Talbot as they served together in Vietnam with 1 RAR (1965-66). **Mick Talbot**, a brit transferred into the Survey Corps and served at the Regiment. I remember him as a small wiry red haired sergeant at Fortuna but have no recollection of where he went to after that. Can anyone help?

## The soon to be well list

**Don Ridge** has injured his leg in a boating mishap. It unfortunately became infected and has caused him some grief along the way, but he is now on the road to recovery. Both Don and I am very pleased to report that the grapevine was wrong and that it is not more serious. **Ruth** is also recovering very well after an operation.

**Rob Bogumil** having had to cope with the terrible loss previously mentioned is probably wondering what is go wrong next. He unfortunately had a fairly serious horse accident recently and badly damaged his shoulder. Whilst he is currently recovering well from the surgery he is unlikely to ever successfully get through the metal detectors at the airport. We all wish him a speedy and full recovery.

**Rohan Hill** having recovered from his severe motor bike accident is unfortunately back in hospital. We think he maybe in for the 10,000km service on all the nuts and bolts installed last time. Rohan, we hope that it all goes well and you are back up and about soon.

## **The Geomatic Engineering Wing, SME**

The Geomatic Engineering Wing here at SME has had yet another busy year with a significant number of courses being completed feeding yet more 'grist to the mill'. With a less than full compliment of staff, we have still managed to turn out:

- 2 x Tech Geo Basic Courses (IET)
- 2 x Tech Geo Intermediate Courses (Sub 4 CPL)
- 1 x Multimedia Technician Course
- 2 x Operational Support Photographer Courses
- 1 x Geomatic Managers Course (Sub 4 WO)
- 1 x Geomatic Officers Course

In addition to the support to the remainder of the SME and other wings. It is pleasing to note that many of the ex-trainees have gone on to serve recently in Afghanistan, Iraq and East Timor. They always said the proof is in the pudding !

Personnel Notes (ex RASvy)

**MAJ Peter Davies** is leaving at the end of the year stepping away from the trade to take up Long Term Schooling in Safety Science at UNSW to be followed by a posting to DSMA. He will be ably replaced by **MAJ Peter Crabbe** coming in from his sojourn in Canberra.

**WO1 Steve Winner** remains as the WSM for 2004. Still running marathons and ultra-marathons. " Rest is rust ! "

**WO2 Del Madge** is transferring to the 'dark side' and will be promoted to CAPT near the end of the year just prior to a posting to CSIO in Wagga.

**WO2 Bob Hopper** is finally transferring back to the ARA and is expected to remain on staff here for a couple of years yet delivering training to new Engineer Surveyors for RAE.

**WO2 Steve Coulson** remains in 2004 as the Operations WO. If you need it fixed, call Steve !

**WO2 Andrew 'Morrie' Morrison-Evans** has finally been forced to move out of his comfortable Sydney 'cafe latte set' and has been posted to 1 Topo Svy Sqn to get some much needed experience in an operational unit. Good luck in Bris Vegas !

**SSGT Bob 'Dikko' Dikkenberg** still graces us with his presence (and cartoons) a couple of times a year from HQ 9 Bde in Adelaide. Bob has been actively involved in the writing of trade related RAE doctrine.

**SGT Geoff Ingram** is posted back to 1 Topo Svy Sqn having only been 'on deck' here for awhile after time away at Defence Recruiting.

**SGT Kim Baker** is hoping to transfer to the RAAF as an Imagery Analyst in the new year. He will be missed.

**CPL Spencer Rigby** is discharging in late 2003 and together with his wife Jody, have purchased a small general store and craft shop at Nobby (Qld).

**SGT Matt Arnold** has taken over as the IC Remote Sensing Section following a very successful year of schooling at RMIT. Arnie was awarded a University prize recently for his outstanding performance in his post graduate course.

**SGT Charlie Tran** continues to soldier on as a GIS Instructor and IS guru. He has also recently taken up a new role as an interpreter for visiting Vietnamese delegations and training courses, particularly with the RAN at HMAS Creswell.

Some additional points:

Sandy Craig didn't attend Mark Host's funeral. MAJ Peter Davies, WO1 Steve Winner, WO1 Barry Miller , WO2 Bob Hopper, SGT Kasey 'Tiges' Northausen and CPL Roger Graf did ! He will be greatly missed.

From Bill Lafferty (Hon Secretary) of the Survey Ex-Servicemans Association of NSW, due to a declining membership, it has been decided that the annual Xmas get together and AGM is cancelled. The AGM will now be held at the ANZAC Day get together next year. Lunches are still held at the RSL Club in George Street Sydney on the last Thursday of every second month.

Steve Winner  
Warrant Officer Class One  
Wing Sergeant Major  
Geomatic Engineering Wing  
School of Military Engineering

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## New Members

We welcome **Jann and David Lambton-Young** in as members. They both served in RASVY at Fortuna and have now returned as members of DIGO.

**Ken Johnston** saw service at Fortuna for a short while in Litho Sqn. He is now a Senior Project Officer, Department of the Premier in Cabinet, WA. Ken is keen to catch up with his Survey Contacts and has already got his Association badge and corps tie. Welcome aboard Ken.

**MAJ Brian Sloan** has returned to Canberra after several years holiday at an exchange posting to the States. Sorry Brian, I suppose it was a working... holiday. Welcome back.

**John Greys** dropped us a line to say that now that he has resigned from the army he is working for DSTO and has a 60 acre farm in the Yass area to keep him busy.

**Brenton McDonald** who was teaching GIS at the Bendigo Regional Institute of Tafe (BRIT) with **Peter Biorac** has now moved over to join Ralph Chant at ADI in Bendigo. Peter is really appreciative of the extra workload.

**David Dufall** as the Managing Director of Brunswick Ltd in Bangkok is someone on the outer limit of our Magna Carto distribution, however he reports that he likes keeping in contact and was even back in Australia recently catching up with old Survey Corps mates. Regards David

## Vietnam, A Technical Tour with the 1<sup>st</sup> Topographical Survey Troop 174pp

This book published last year is written by R.M.McMillan-Kay, whom you may remember as Bob Kay. I probably owe Bob an apology for not giving his book a wrap before now, but we ran out of room, so better late than never. The book which was his "15 year labour of love" has received wide acclaim as this review written by Lt Simone Heyer in Airforce News confirms.

" This book is a gem. Many self-published books are of narrow interest, but A Technical Tour is an exception. Reading it from cover to cover in one sitting, interest was piqued with every second picture, article, letter or map.

The book follows 1 Topo Svy Tp's tour of Vietnam from 1966 – 1972 and is a perfect bound collection of memories.

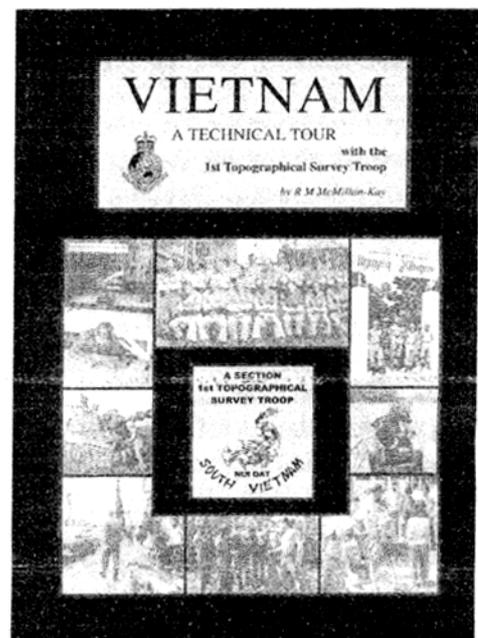
It's definitely one of the better Vietnam-orientated books, focusing more on the troops and the communities than tactics and bravado.

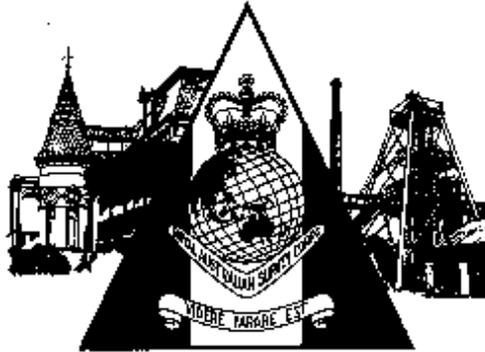
This book is available from the author for \$30 plus postage of \$6 in Qld and \$8 for the rest of Australia."

The address in the review is R. McMillan-Kay, PO Box 125, Malaney, QLD, 4552, however the Queensland Association reports that Bob has recently moved to Maryborough and has also moved his Light Horse Museum, Bob's other passion. Bob's new phone number is (07) 4123 3774



Bob Macmillan-Kay in the uniform of the Australian Light Horse at the dedication of the restored 25 pounder by Lt Col Rick Vickers (Ret) at the Maleny Light Horse Museum.





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# "Magna Carto"

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