



Address: PO Box 613 Golden Square VIC 3555

Patron: Don Swiney MBE

President/ Editor : Gary Warnest (03) 5446 3171 (AH), Email grw@netcon.net.au

Secretary: Tracey Phillips (03) 5442 0263 (03) 5449 6330 (AH) phipsys@bigpond.com

Treasurer : Bob Thrower (03) 5442 0280, (03) 5442 5780(AH),

Public Officer : Bob Thrower Committee : Phil Smalley, Stuart Symonds

Melbourne Rep: Dave King (03) 9893 1644

The RASVY Museum Collection, Back on Course ?

The wheels of progress turn slowly but there is a least movement at the station.

Don Swiney has recently travelled to Moorebank and the School of Military Engineering (SME) to have a meeting with the CI of SME about assistance that Ex Survey Corps Association members could possibly provide to enable the Survey Collection to again be on display and accessible. Whilst Don Swiney's open letter follows it is obvious that all Survey associations need to seize on this opportunity to restore the Survey Collection to its former significant glory. We need this historical collection to be re-established as it not only records the history of the Royal Australian Survey Corps and the history of us, it is a fine technical record of the advancing technology through the surveying and mapping fields that underwent such a revolution of change and development over that period.

Collectively we have the technical knowledge and potentially a window of opportunity to achieve this. All we need is the commitment and the will to make it happen. Potentially we have a number of our members with the appropriate technical experience who are now retired and who could possibly come together and quantify what is needed and what is possible. A RECCE needs to be done so that we can properly organise a work force on the ground and or possibly identify tasks capable of being completed on your own turf. If we can get over 400 to the Corps 90th Anniversary reunion then we must be able to mount a sizeable response to this significant need. I have attached a return slip at the end of the newsletter for you to indicate your willingness and capacity to help.

Whilst there is work to be done please also consider the technical satisfaction of getting your hands on some of those instruments again and the comradeship relived when we come together again on a technical task. Undoubtedly social aspects will be incorporated into any get together, "all work andetc, etc."

Please seriously consider your ability to help and pass this request onto anyone who you think maybe also be interested in helping.

Ed.

From our Patron, Colonel Don Swiney MBE

Dear All,

I have seen a number of emails and it has been raised with me on occasion that there is some concern about the RASvy collection now housed at the RAE Museum at SME. I must say that I share that concern and took it on myself to raise the matter with Brigadier Bob Slater who is the current Colonel Commandant of RAE in the Southern region and someone I have known for a long time. He, in turn, organized a meeting with the CI SME at SME on the 18th March with both he and I. The Engineers as it turns out have their own problems in trying to keep in contact with past members and maintaining their associations, as they no longer have a head of corps, few state based regular army units, and certainly none of the old Chief Engineer networks that they once had.

Bob and I with wives separately hauled ourselves off up the dreaded Hume Highway (the new Albury bypass is just great, by the way,) to meet with Lt Col David Rye, the CI SME, and as it happens is an old Bendigo boy with his folks still living in Flora Hill. The meeting lasted for an hour and a half and the bits pertinent to us; I list as follows with my comments in italics:

- The proposal to move SME to Puckapunyal has been shelved and will be taken out of the 'Green Book' and so the Museum stays where it is (*our plan to sit on our hands and wait until it moves to Pucka and move in on to the museum should equally be shelved*).
- SME and by inference, the Museum would welcome and assistance that could be provide by any ex RASvy members on some sort of organized basis.
- I pointed out to the CI that Survey has never been a Sydney-centric organization and very few of our ex members are Sydney based and therefore find it difficult for any reasonable level of assistance be maintained. I proposed that we conduct a meeting and workshop at SME with delegates from each of our associations and this be done over a number of days provided that SME could provide some form of accommodation. The CI answered that accommodation is fairly tight at SME but for say a group of ten (*two from each association*) it should be no problem but there will have to be a charge for meals (*as it always was and you would expect*).
- We discussed timings and he recommended that the week following Anzac day or the week following the Waterloo Dinner. I thought that Anzac day was a bit soon for us to get organized. The Waterloo Dinner is on the 15th of Jun, a Friday, so we would have the week 18th – 22nd of Jun to do what ever we thought necessary. It would also give the delegates the opportunity to attend a Waterloo dinner at SME should they be inclined.
- I raised the matter of turning up in mobile homes or caravans as many of us are at the 'grey nomad' stage and may prefer to do that. This has evidently been done before and would not present a problem to SME. Site, power and ablutions would be made available.

I believe that the aim of this meeting/workshop/recce should be to:

- To form a National Association or Committee (albeit maybe an informal one) whose primary aim is to provide a forum for matters of common interest and to allow the larger and more affluent associations to assist those who are less so.
- To assess the type and extent of tasks needed to properly display the RASvy collection and organize groups to carry them out.

I was able to visit the museum on the day I was there. At the moment it is 'a blank canvas' with most of the survey gear still packed up. It seems that all the security and climate control work has been completed and the more delicate equipment can now be safely displayed. Whilst I was there, Bob Hopper with a team of students from the Geomatics wing was in the initial stages of setting up a display for ANZAC day. From what I saw then and from subsequent discussions with Peter Raue (who is on the museum committee), it would seem to me that what needs to be done (in priority order) is:

- complete the accession register, so that the collection can be re-displayed and where appropriate items released on temporary loan,
- photograph each item and describe it's use,
- identify, describe and scan the vast quantity of slides that is part of the collection (Peter tells me that the museum is to get a slide scanner),
- identify, sort and list and scan the operational reports and other documentation, and
- so on.

For those of you who might think that the old spirit may be dead, I spent a little time with a group of students from the Geomatics wing whilst I was looking at the museum. It seemed to me that they are just as keen and just as smart as we ever were.

I did check around the officers mess that is no longer exclusively RAE but now shared with an Army Reserve Training Group. and apart from the photo of Diana, Princess of Wales on the wall, the Clews bowl is displayed among other RASvy mess silver I could identify. David was interested in the background to the bowl and I promised to send a copy of the 'Major's history. I can't find the one I thought I had, so I would appreciate some assistance if any one has a copy.

Should any or all of you want to react to the forgoing, I am happy to be the contact and liaison in the short term.

Cheers

Don Swiney

Work starts on the new DIGO building site

Construction has begun on the \$11 million Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation building at Long Lea. Liberal Party candidate for the federal seat of Bendigo made the announcement in the Bendigo Weekly article on 23 February this year.



CONSTRUCTION SITE: Liberal Party candidate for Bendigo Peter Kennedy at the DIGO site.
Photo: ANDREW PERRYMAN

Despite weeks of political argy bargy about the project he said, "The future of DIGO in Bendigo was never in question."

He also said "I am glad, as are so many others in our community, that DIGO is here to stay and that Bendigo will continue providing our frontline service men and women with the information they need to remain safe when undertaking their vital defence duties."

Defence Department secretary Sandy McDonald said early last year that the project would be well underway by 2007. Heavy machinery has just started clearing the site so that the building to house DIGO can be constructed and car parking provided.

Joss constructions were awarded the contract on January 18. The project is expected to be complete by the end of 2007.

A further \$2.5 million has been allocated for the fit out, which will allow personnel to be relocated from Fortuna Villa in 2008.

FAREWELL TO LITHO AS WE REMEMBER IT

Many Ex-Fortuna members will remember the extensive Lithographic area that existed for many years at Fortuna. Alas those days have long gone with the advent of high technology and the digital age. The Klimsch Commodore camera went many years ago along with the remainder of the Photo capabilities that ceased operation only in the last few years. Only Barcro remained, albeit inactive like some time warp on the other side of the building.

Some people may have heard that the print facility at Fortuna had also recently been wound up and all printing was being contracted out or plotted on large format inkjet printers (see picture at right).

Somewhat less of you may have heard that all the printing equipment had been put up for sale by auction in February 2007.



The presses have been idle for many months since all large print runs have been contracted out to various civilian printers around Australia. Many of the staff at Fortuna have been hoping that the decision would be reversed and the print facility be retained and reinstated at Fortuna. The Roland in the main print hall is pictured recently at left.

Well the auction has been conducted and the remnants of the litho equipment have been sold and will be totally removed from the print area at Fortuna by the time you read this. The Commonwealth was fortunate to realise more than was expected, as there was some spirited bidding on some items especially the Heidelberg press. The Roland press fetched more than double that of the Heidelberg.

Almost everything "Litho" that remained at Fortuna was put up for sale, but not the last remaining "Troggs" still employed here from the Army days. The eager buyers snapped up all but one lot; the only lot not sold was all the equipment in Barcro that has sat largely untouched since 1996.



The photo at left shows the 50 tonne forklift moving the first of the two Roland decks out of the Litho Despatch door. Note the bricks missing where the doorway had to be enlarged after the rolla-door was removed to allow some larger pieces egress. The heaviest piece of equipment is said to have weighed approximately 30 tonne.



The photo at left shows the main print hall after the Roland was removed. The print halls will provide some valuable space for the future tenants of Fortuna (whoever they may be).

This photo shows one of the Heidelberg 5-colour press print-decks being loaded onto the awaiting transport truck. They don't weigh quite so much as the Roland decks!



The photo at left shows Wayzgoose Hall with the Heidelberg removed and the area mostly cleaned up. Maybe the staff at Fortuna can use all this empty space as an indoor sporting facility – cricket nets; fly-fishing practice; tennis?

The sign says it all – 3 cheers for Litho !!

Submitted by Stu Symonds



Fortuna Villa's future usage

As we have previously reported the future use of Fortuna Villa is very unclear, however indications are that some mix of public and commercial uses are likely. No real advances are known to have been made on this front however it is worth noting that the City of Greater Bendigo Council in its Major Projects wish list announced on Wed 7 March it included an item for "Support for the future development of historic Fortuna Villa." Of the 18 projects outlined by the council for federal funding the Fortuna development appeared to be eighth in priority confirming the high level of commitment to the project.



This photograph was featured in the Bendigo Advertiser's "The Way We Were" early in February, but no details were available. Barry Hogan was able to supply most of the names and the picture re-appeared in the Feb 23 Edition of the Advertiser. Unfortunately there were some unknown faces and errors. The complete and corrected details appear below:

The photo was taken at the Army Survey Regiment December 1982. Pictured is the **Cartographic Squadron**, outside of what was then called the Air Survey Squadron building at the Fortuna Villa grounds. Pictured are:

Back Row: D. Williams, K. Regan, D. Marshall, D. Thomas, I. Fitzgerald, A. Staley, A. Godden, J. Tempest, D. Cirsky, R. Marshall, J. McRae, S. Hibbert, D. Lawler, B. Hogan, G. Gates, W. Hall, P. McCurdy, T. Bloxham, B. Tarasenko, D. Upton, S. Payne.

Middle Row: J. Minchin, M. Reynolds, G. Humphries, C. Dell, G. Holland, R. Bright, F. Mackie, I. McKenzie, B. Peppler, V. Nielsen, G. Amato, V. Rowe, J. van Bukering, T. Ash, C. Butler, K. Skidmore, G. Else, D. Learmonth, T. McIntyre.

Front Row: B. Rogister, B. Friswell, S. Thaxter, C. Cuskelly, J. Bennett, S. Robinson, B. Williams, J. Barrie, M. Byrne, R. Rix, G. Warnest, I. Rose, K. Byrne, R. Gillies, D. Critchlow (UK Exchange), N. McNamara, B. Lutwyche



Mick and Carol Flynn's new house warming recently had a big turn up, some notable attendees caught on camera were:

Andy Lucas, Dave Lambton-Young, Paul Cheater, Mick Flynn, Wayne Rothwell, Fred Cowie, Bruce "Hap" Hammond, Mick "Budda" Ellis, Marg Ellis, Sherri Burke.

The fluorescent sign in the background reads "ARMY SURVEY REGIMENT >"



The recent wine tasting function at Fortuna is an event run annually since 1996.

Tracey Phillips, Stu Symonds, Doug Carswell, Steve Burke and Dale Hudson are in the foreground.



Gary, Tracey, Mary-Ann Thiselton, Wayne and Karen Rothwell.



Bendigo water restrictions have sadly resulted in the Fortuna Lake being dry. This has exposed an errant golf ball from a past campaign of the either the 10th or 11th hole of the Fortuna 18 hole golf course



Monthly Happy Hours

The South Australian Association meets on the First Friday of each month at the Saracens Head, give Darby a call if you are in the area 08 8277 7074. The QLD Assoc meets at the Gaythorne RSL on the last Friday of the month. The Ex Fortuna Association meets at the Bendigo RSL on the third Friday of the month and bar snacks are provided. Some of us have been losing track when some months have had five Fridays, hopefully we can get our act together.

Personalities

Pat Drury has started his new surveying job with Goulburn Murray Water and will move to Tatura later in the year. All the best with the new job and your handicap. (His new house is on the golf course.)

Graeme Wastell now working for DIGO has not been well of late; we all wish you a speedy recovery.



The Association has recently purchased some of the original Royal Australian Survey Corps Plaques with scroll. If you are after one please contact Tracey.

The Association is in the final stages of having an **Association Plaque made**. The plaque resembling the current Survey Corps Plaque shown opposite uses a design similar to the Miniature Association Badge shown below. The final mockup is expected within days and should be available for viewing on Anzac Day.

The Association fees remain at \$10 per year. Magna Carto newsletters can also be distributed as pdf documents. If you would like Magna Carto distributed digitally in pdf format then please Email Tracey at phipsys@bigpond.com 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 are several Association ties left. Ties and scarves are available at \$20 ea, "Mapmakers of Fortuna" books are available at \$60. Miniature Association Badges are also still available.

The Bendigo RSL has again invited members of the Ex Fortuna Association to march as a contingent at this year's Bendigo Anzac Day Procession. The form- up point is the same as last year opposite the Bendigo Regional TAFE in McCrae Street and members are asked to be at this location by NLT 1030hrs on Wednesday 25 April for step off at 1100hrs. Members are requested to wear medals and some form of Survey Corps identification. I will be wearing the standard blue beret and Survey Corps Badge because there is a salute to be given during the march. You are encouraged to join me in wearing the beret if you wish or if you can find it again. The wearing of the beret is completely optional and at your total discretion.

About 25 members marched last year behind our new Corps banner, so that I ask you please to see if we can continue that number. The Havilah Rd RSL will again be the venue for lunch and refreshments following the march. See you there!! Please let the secretary know if you will be available to march. If you can't make the march then try to join us afterwards at the RSL.

Many of you attend the Bendigo Dawn service. It is a 0630hrs start at the Cenotaph followed by a gunfire breakfast at the Pall Mall RSL Hall.



The 2006 Bendigo Anzac Day March

The Secretary
 Ex Fortuna Survey Association
 PO Box 613
 GOLDEN SQUARE VIC 3555

Name:

Contact Details: Ph.....Email

I / we wish to march on the Anzac Day March:
 Wednesday 25 Apr 2007, 1030hrs Opposite Bendigo TAFE McCrae St Number Attending.....

I / we wish to attend the Post Anzac Day March get together:
 Wednesday 25 Apr 2007, 1200hrs RSL Havilah Road, Bendigo Number Attending.....

I would like to attend the RAE Museum RECCE at Moorebank to be held
 18 – 22 June 2007 Please tick

I request SME Meal support Cost TBA Please tick

I request SME Accomodation (Room) support Cost TBA Please tick

I request SME Accomodation (Camper van site) support Cost TBA Please tick

I would like to attend the Waterloo Dinner to be held at SME on 15 Jun 2007
 (IF IT CAN BE ARRANGED) dress formal, cost TBA Please tick

I would like to be part of a working group at the RAE Museum
 SME, Moorebank to help restore the RASVY Historical Collection
 subject to my availability on the dates recommended by the RECCE team. Please tick



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