

Magna Carto



EX- FORTUNA SURVEY ASSOCIATION INC

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NEWSLETTER MARCH 2009

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Fortuna Spared on Black Saturday



Victoria was subjected to the worst ravages of fire in history on Saturday 7 February this year. Across the state many houses were destroyed and almost 200 lives lost. Bendigo was not spared with Eaglehawk losing many homes and one dead. Fire lapped the Rose Hotel on Eaglehawk Road, the adjoining BP service station, the rear of the old John Brown's clothing Factory and it got close to the Goldmines Hotel (Ed's Pub). The one that did not get publicity however was just how close the fire got to the St John of God (Mt Alvernia) Hospital and Fortuna. The land adjacent to Fortuna covered in Pampas grass was set alight by flying embers but luckily Fortuna was spared. All Fortuna duty officers will remember that their worst fear was not the marauding masses (not that the piquet SLR with the bent barrel would have held them back) but rather the threat of fire. For if fire took hold in the "Villa" there would be no stopping it and had that occurred then that would have ended the current debate about its future.

The DIGO Departure Functions

The Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation (DIGO) Social Club located at Bendigo did a great job in hosting functions over the weekend of 6-7 September to farewell and to mark it's departure out of Fortuna Villa. This brought to a close 66 years of Defence mapping association with Fortuna beginning with the arrival of the Land Headquarters Cartographic Company in 1942.

Some may not be aware that the Lansell family also had strong military ties prior to the arrival of the Survey Corps. Lt Lansell served in charge of the AWAS at Fortuna during WWII and George Lansell's son, George Victor Lansell had a full military career. In 1904 Victor joined the 8th Infantry Regiment and in 1916 he was commissioned Captain in Bendigo's 38th Battalion AIF. During WWI he served in France and was wounded. He later became the CO of the 38th Battalion as a Major. He retired as a Hon Colonel in 1942 after organising the NW Victorian section of the Volunteer Defence Corps. He was president of the Bendigo RSL for nearly 30 years and donated the Bendigo Cenotaph in honour of those who served.

Saturday dinner dance held at "Fortunes" at the All Seasons International

The DIGO function was strongly supported by past members of the Corps and as with other large gatherings it was hard to get around and catch up with all who came, some from long distances. Mr Clive Lines and I spoke during the evening before the band and dancing started up. On request, an extract of my speech follows:

It is an honour to be asked to say a few words on behalf of those who served in the Royal Australian Survey Corps at Fortuna, but first of all I would like to thank the DIGO Social Club for allowing us to be part of these farewell functions. In particular I would like to thank Tracey Ash and Tracey Phillips for all the work that they have done towards making this weekend one to remember.

What is it that brings together some 400 people to mark Defence's leaving of an old building? Defence often leaves old buildings and many of us have moved many times as part of our military service, so what makes this move so special?

Is it just that significant and romantic historical aspect of George Lansell the Gold King of Bendigo and his family home or the chance to experience some of the surroundings that were reserved for the extremely wealthy and influential elite in years gone by?

Is it the story of gold and of the intrigue of tunnels under Bendigo and from the battery underground to the vault deep inside the Villa?

Is it the building's unique mixture of architecture with the imposing turret, the Pompei fountain, baths inside cupboards and hidden staircases?

Is it the Lake and diving board and the golf course that went over it, when it still had water?

Is it the beautiful lead light window art of birds in vivid colour?

Is it "George" the ghost and tales of things that go bump in the night or misty apparitions?

Things like the message in the Turret stairwell lead light windows "East or West home is best" may hold the key.

The Survey Corps that was a relatively small Army Corps with a big responsibility has often been described as a family and the members of that family as relatives. Many members of the Survey Corps served more than twenty years and there are instances where three generations served the Corps, some all at the same time. This family bond will be evidenced over this weekend as many who have not seen each other for many years will pick up conversations as though it was only yesterday that they last met. Fortuna Villa was very much the family home.

Was it that many of us who came to Fortuna were young and impressionable, possibly, but also it was physically the family home for many of us. Those who initially came to Fortuna used the top floor rooms as bedrooms, those later had cardboard huts around the lake and even some were in tents on the parade ground. In relative luxury to that were those of us who were compulsorily required to live in the barracks on site when they arrived.

When I look back and put this into perspective I find that it really was my family home as I have spent more years at Fortuna than I did in my parent's home.

Valerie Lovejoy in her book "The Mapmakers of Fortuna" has eloquently and comprehensively recorded much of the Survey Corp's history and its association with Fortuna from the selection of the site by Major Bill Sarll in 1941 and its arrival on 23 March 1942 to the disbandment of the Corps in 1996. Even the last line in the book supports my point and I quote "Whether they retired, resigned, remained in the army or transferred to the public service, every member of the Army Survey Regiment had lost their extended family and a place they called home."



An example of the strong Survey Corps bonds formed is Judith and Jack Charlton who both served at Fortuna during WWII. They met at Fortuna, married and raised their family in Bendigo. Their son John later served at Fortuna as a national serviceman. Sadly Jack died in early August but Judith still made plans for about 20 of her family to be at Fortuna tomorrow, such was her connection with Fortuna and the friends she made back in 1942. Judith died suddenly a week ago but through Judith the family has also made such a strong bond with Fortuna that they will all be there tomorrow.

Fortuna was not only the home of the Survey Corps to its members but with the Corps strong affiliations with many overseas countries the world's mapping community also knew and recognised Fortuna as the home of the Survey Corps.

The consecrated stone cairn still proudly records the Royal Australian Survey Corps association at Fortuna.

Valerie's valuable contribution records the official history. As with all families it is the memories of things that happen along the way that may not have been recorded and quite possibly should not ever be recorded or the lifelong friends we make that are just as important. Many of us here today are here because of those unofficial history connections that military writers will call "esprit de corps"

Some will remember the magnificent functions held at Fortuna in dress uniform and the ladies in their long dresses, evening lights reflecting on the waters of the lake and the string quartet playing in the gardens or on the balcony. Others will remember the cold frosty mornings freezing on CO's parade, nights on guard duty or working on emergency mapping projects like cyclone Tracey and "Bones" days.

Having printed some 15 million coloured maps and over half a million ciphers and secret books those that served during WWII will remember Major Bill Sarll's very appropriate final address and I quote "The job we had to do was so well concluded that the name LHQ Cartographic Company can be regarded as a Hall Mark for service and efficiency throughout mapping organizations. Our fun was grand and ever with us and helped to cement those friendships which I trust will remain for all time." History confirms him to be correct.

It is hoped that DIGO will take with them to their new building some of the fine traditions set at Fortuna over the years.

What is it that brings back 400 people to mark Defence's leaving of an old building?

It's all of these things; it's the selling of the family home after 66 years and the ties and memories that are locked to it. It's part of our identity and it's our opportunity to say farewell to that great old classy Lady that is "Fortuna Villa."

I give you "Fortuna Villa"

Gary Warnest

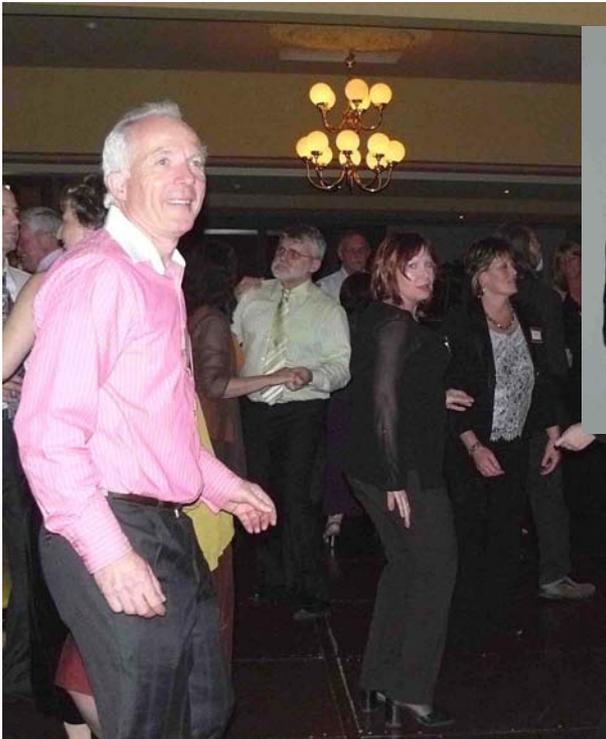


Great Table presentation by DIGO!

Leslie & Peter Presser, Peter & Jill Harrup with Judy Warnest
"Is that One more beer Peter?"



Sharron Trebble, Col Cuskelly and Steve Ellis



Pat Drury and John Hogan

Andy Capp and Harold Mai on the dance floor



Adrian Rynberk, Peter Harrup, Roger Green
and Al Hancox



"Litho"

Sunday Fortuna Open Day and BBQ lunch

There was a very strong attendance on the day where the main "Villa" building was open for inspection. In some ways it was great to be back in the building bringing back so many memories, but on the other hand most of the furniture had been removed and it was evident that the life of the Villa was ebbing. Thoughts of what the future would hold for Fortuna were always on your mind. The only distraction was the pleasure of catching up with those that came, all with our slightly more lived in familiar faces.



Adrian Rynberk and Bob Skitch



Trevor and Sue Bottomley over from WA



Rob Mc Henry has accepted the position as the president of the ACT ex-RASVY Corps Association and in spectacular fashion has published a newsletter. Congratulations



VALE John Hogan - 211016

John passed away suddenly on 11 Feb 09. John came to the Survey Corps from the British Army where he had served from 1948 to 1950. During that time he saw service in the Middle East. He enlisted in the Australian Army in 1952 and served on for twenty-four years.

John Bullen remembers him doing a Sergeants Course in 1955 at The School of Military Survey, Balcombe so he must have impressed very early on as he was promoted sergeant in 1957.

He served with the New Guinea Survey Unit in 1954/55 and was then posted to the Central Command Survey Section. He took part in survey operations in both South Australia and the Northern Territory. John moved onto the School of Military Survey as SSM first at Balcombe and then when the School moved on to Bonegilla. He was replaced by Acki Barber and moved on promotion to the Army Survey Regiment as RSM in late 1966 remaining in that position until his retirement in 1976.

Whilst John was RSM at the Regiment John Bullen recalls a children's Christmas party where all the WRAACS were co-opted to assist in running the entertainment. At the start of proceedings, in a cloud of dust coming up the driveway was a great herd of kids, Desi Asaris was heard to wail "God, someone has invited all the kids from the orphanage". It wasn't, it was the Hogan family. Two of his sons Mick and Barry also went onto serve in the Survey Corps. Following his retirement he went on to serve as the Navy Liaison Officer at Fortuna in a civil capacity and was relegated to the Officers Mess.

John was devoted to his wife Myrtle and his family of nine children. His service in the Army was guided by his set of high principles and he had little patience for those who didn't share them. John an avid Collingwood supporter was also one of the gentlemen of the Corps so let's not forget him.

Don Swiney



VALE Keith James Barber (Acki) - 31036 (VP6873)(VX 127715)

Died after a short illness on 21 Jan 09. Born 18 Feb 22 at Queenscliff" On 7 Mar 1940 at age 18 he enlisted in the Royal Australian Engineers (AIF). His dad was also in the RAE. Keith lied about his age and enlisted at age 16 but his dad found out and agreed that he could join, but only after his 18th birthday.

In 1941 he transferred to the Australian Survey Corps at the Survey Training Depot – Woodend and was posted to South Australia on the Triangulation of Gawler to the Coorong and the Murray Mouth.

In 1942 he was posted to 3rd Field Survey Coy – Yarram and on 20 Jun 43 he volunteered for wartime mapping/surveying service with the New Guinea Survey Section.

Although Keith had relayed this story to me John Hillier was able to provide it in more detail.

In 1943 near Wau 8 Fd Svy Sect AIF located in weatherboard bungalows was attacked by Japanese aircraft. CPL KJ Barber and BL Murray manned a Bren gun in the open to fight back. They prudently abandoned the weapon and took cover moments before the building received the full fury of the enemy fire. Fortunately there were no casualties, although most of the unit's rations were destroyed. Worst hit was the unit latrine.

In Apr 1944 he returned to Australia and was posted to 6 Topo Survey Coy and then in 1946 to the Field Survey Section - Colac (PMF) doing field survey work around Victoria. John Hillier recalls that Keith was asked by a senior official what their job was, and his reply "Hunting, fishing and shooting." It is believed that Capt Barney Herbert had the job to field the answers to questions asked by staff from HQ S Comd.

On 22 Sep 47 he transferred to the Permanent Army at SGT Rank

In 1948 he was posted to Sth Command Field Survey Section at Albert Pk Barracks and in 1951 was detached as a Nation Service Training Instructor at Puckapunyal where his Platoon won the Drill competition. In 1952 he was posted as the ARA cadre at 2 Topo Survey Coy (CMF) located at Powlett St, East Melbourne and remained their until he closed the unit down.

In 1957 Keith was posted to Fortuna as a WO2 Draughtsman conducting mapping quality control.

In 1966 he was posted to the School of Military Survey at Bonegilla as the School Sergeant Major (SSM). I recall Keith telling me about the arrival of a large 4-door stainless steel refrigerator arriving at the School and being asked where it was to be installed. Keith immediately directed them to the Sergeants' Mess. Months later an individual arrived looking for a refrigerator that was intended to be installed at the Migrant Centre across the road but he was not able to find any sign of it.

In 1969 he was again posted to Fortuna as the WO1 Squadron Sergeant Major (SSM) and Tech WO of Carto Sqn

Keith took his discharge on 31 Jul 74 after 34yrs service.

Keith was always immaculately turned out and led by example. He insisted on extremely high standards of both military bearing and technical quality. Keith had a significant personal presence because of his many years as a military instructor (drill, weapons and military law) and he left a lasting impact on all those around him. Sport also played a big part in Keith's life and he was a life member of both the Kangaroo Flat Football and Cricket Clubs.

Keith was always a Survey Corps devotee and his love of maps and all things Survey Corps gave him great satisfaction. His excellent hand drawn copper plate calligraphy was one of his trademarks. Keith's nickname "Acki" came from a school day lecture on Anzac Cove in recognition of a locality nearby.

Gary Warnest

From the ACT Newsletter - A couple of gems by John Bullen

A couple of memories of Keith Barber that may not be generally known, deserve a wider audience. One incredible episode of Fortuna's history is the saga of the night-time poultry thieving raids led by Captain C E B Stewart amongst Bendigo backyard chook runs in the late 1940s. Teddy Stewart was apt to appear without warning in the Fortuna Tavern or anywhere else where he could conscript his team. He'd grab anyone who hadn't fled on sight and order them to come with him immediately - and that's an order! He would then lead his team on a raid of neighbouring chook yards. Chook raid veterans included Jack Owen (Medical Corps), Jack Gore and Keith Barber. As those who've tried it well know, it is impossible to steal chooks quietly. With chook yards in utter pandemonium, every dog in the neighbourhood barking hysterically, house lights going on and doors flying open, the raiders would be frantically trying to clamber over back fences, sorely hampered by flapping, squawking chooks under the arm. This led to at least one counter-raid on Fortuna by the Bendigo police. The culprits strenuously denied everything and honour was thereby saved. Fortunately, during the interrogation the police did not recognise the dripping sound behind a closed door as being blood from chook corpses freshly hung up to drain. Equally fortunately, no tell-tale blood flowed out from beneath the door. Keith Barber and Jack Gore both claimed afterwards to have been sweating blood, as they listened to the steady drip onto the concrete just behind them. Teddy Stewart was a renowned eccentric who was later promoted to major and posted to Victoria Barracks, Melbourne. It was in that posting that he suicided with a pistol in the 1950s. I first learnt of the chook raids from Jack Owen in the mid-1950s and Jack Gore confirmed it all in the 1960s. Jack Owen had a second stint at Fortuna in the 1970s as the RAP NCO. My second memory is of an event in 1972 when I'd just taken over from Keith Todd as OC Carto Sqn at Fortuna. Keith Barber was SSM Carto Sqn at the time. A week or two later, the SSM entered my office.

*"It's Private Wotsit's birthday sir, and I thought I'd check your policy." "Policy? A policy on birthdays?" I said, quite baffled, and stalling for time. "Yessir. When Major Todd took over from Major Ricketts, I did the usual and marched Private Oojum into the OC's office, announcing that it was her birthday. Major Todd looked up and said 'So?' So I explained 'Well, Major Ricketts used to give all the girls a big kiss on their birthdays.' Major Todd exploded, and yelled 'He **WHAT!!**' Private Oojum burst into tears. Major Todd bawled 'Get that bloody woman out of my office!' Private Oojum became hysterical, and really sir, it was all terribly difficult. So this time I thought I'd play safe and check out the OC's policy first before marching Private Wotsit in." "Thank you SSM. I don't see any need to change Major Todd's policy."*



Keith's Funeral was attended by many past Survey Corps members. His beloved dog "Sasha" led out his casket. As he had requested, he went out on a Harley to the Theme song of the Geelong Football Club.



SURVEY CORPS MEMBERS AT THE FUNERAL FOR KEITH BARBER, NAPIER PARK BENDIGO, 28 JAN 2009

L to R: COLIN CUSKELLY, DON SWINEY, PETER SYMONDS, BOB AULSEBROOK, JOHN PHILLIPS, JEFF WILLEY, ROB BOGUMIL, JOHN WAIGHT, STAN VOTE, ROGER PEARSON, GORDON HASWELL, BOB THROWER, ALEX MUNRO, MICK FLYNN, JOHN HOGAN, RUSTY WILLIAMS, GORDON LOWERY, DOUG CARSWELL, TRACEY PHILLIPS, GEORGE TIMMINS, GARY WARNEST, SAM CHAMBERS, ROWAN GILLIES, HEATHER SLATER.

FRONT ROW: HARRY WRIGHT, BOB ROCHE (Senior)

“Around the Traps”

We are going to try and give a brief update on some of the ex-survey personnel who have been seen around the traps and what they are currently up to.

John Shephard (aka Shep) – John & Tracey Phillips and also Brett van Leeuwen have caught up with Shep whilst holidaying in Cairns. Shep and Jacqui began an intrepid tour of the country in a fully kitted bus several years ago and somehow or another they have propped in Clifton Beach (about 20km north of Cairns). They have sold the bus and bought a house with Shep still in the survey business working for a local company providing technical assistance on survey and GPS equipment but looking forward to scaling down his workload to enjoy more time fishing and crabbing.

Stu Symonds - Most of Bendigo is still in shock with the news of Stu's recent engagement. Word is that Stu proposed to Jane on Valentine's Day. All the best for Stu and Jane but we won't really believe it until the knot is finally tied after all it has taken him 57 years to find the right woman.

Al Hancox – Al has had some recent surgery (like a lot of us older blokes) and all is well. Al is almost certainly retiring in the middle of the year and he and Linda are moving back to the Gold Coast.

Speaking of retiring, **Roger Rees** has been seen on several occasions passing through Bendigo on the way to the Geelong precincts to visit family. Roger has virtually retired and I believe it will be official very soon (he has been expending his leave and LSL prior to retirement). Not 100% sure where Roger and Effie plan to end up but the rumour is somewhere in Victoria.

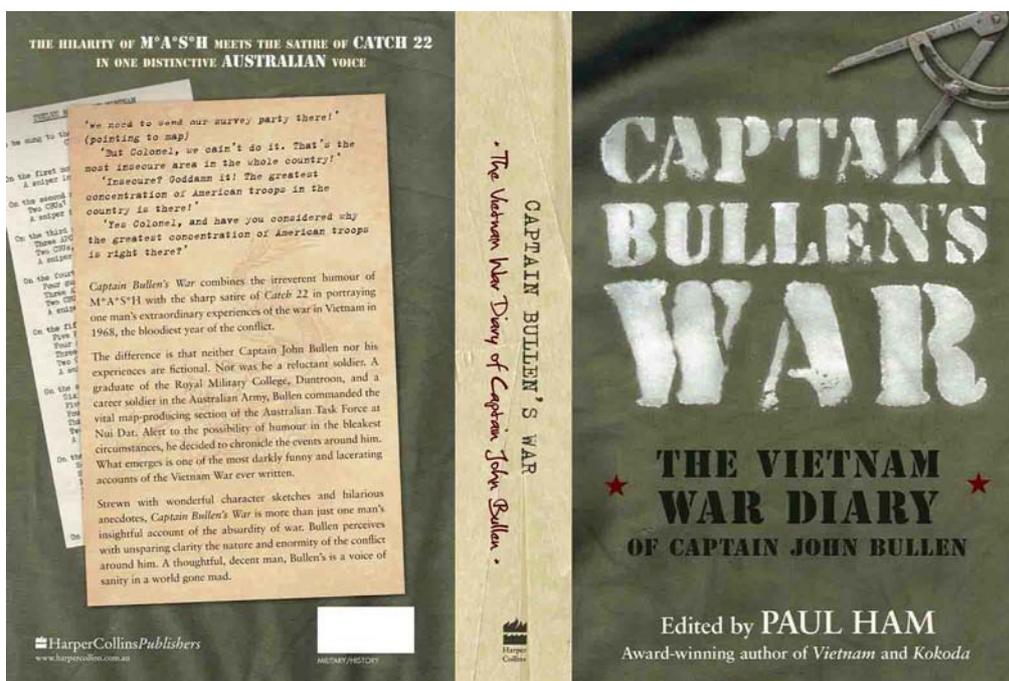
Also heard that they have finally managed to get **Steve Hansen** out of Darwin after 8 years and **Di Soutar** has arrived on promotion to WO1 as his replacement, congratulations.

Mark Fedden has just returned to Bendigo and taken up a position at the GAC. Mark was one of the original RASVY staff to commence at the then ATSE, but then moved on to private enterprise with ESRI for about 5 years but as mentioned, is now back in the Bendigo region.

Gordon Haswell hasn't been in the best of health recently and we wish him all the best and a speedy recovery back to his noisy self.

Tom Royle down at Mt Macedon has also not been well of late, we all hope that you get better soon.

Peter Presser – Peter and Leslie have also retired and have joined the grey nomads tripping around in their 4WD and caravan, good fishing!



John Bullen
– John is just about to publish a book on his Vietnam experiences. Looks like a good read.

Dave King is unfortunately pretty much now home bound (but still has his sense of humour), **Adrian Rynberk** has agreed to take over as the Melbourne Rep, his contact details are in the header. Thanks to Dave for years of support to the Association.

WARNING ORDER - WRAAC 60th REUNION – Sat 12 Feb 2011. More details in the next Issue. Speak to Tracey if you cannot wait to find out the details.

ANZAC DAY 2009

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 Saturday 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 as there is a salute to be given during the march. You are encouraged to join me in wearing a beret however it remains optional.



Last year we successfully had contingents marching both in Melbourne with 3 Fd Survey and Bendigo, and although a number of our members were in Melbourne the numbers marching at Bendigo were equivalent to the first year we participated. Rhys Delaine led the march and David Lampton-Young carried the banner. See you there in 2009!! The Havilah Rd RSL will again be the venue for lunch and refreshments following the march. Please let Tracey 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.

General Peter John Cosgrove, AC, MC is our guest ***For the*** **DETACHMENT FIRST TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY TROOP** **and** **A SECTION – FIRST TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY TROOP** **REUNION**

FOR MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

132 members are on the Nominal Roll as having served in these units in SVN at 1ATF

WHEN: 15th & 16th August 2008

WHERE: Twin Towns Services Club, Tweed Heads NSW

\$110 per person for dinner and luncheon

\$60 per person dinner only

\$50 per person luncheon only

Dinner is on Saturday Night August 15th

Luncheon is on Sunday August 16th

PLEASE PAY A DEPOSIT TO THE BENDIGO BANK

BSB: 633-000 ACCOUNT: 133297994 ACCOUNT NAME: Lloyd Patterson

Please contact me on: 02 6056 1634 – or – 0402 222 844 or by email

lloyd@bmp.net.au .

The venue can seat 180 persons so ***ex survey members other than Troop members are welcome to attend***. However in the case of those who were not in the Troop your attendance will not be confirmed until after the 1st of May.



Survey Vietnam Reunion Saturday 15th August 2009 Accommodation Information & Booking Sheet

Guest name(s): _____

Adults: _____ Children (12 yrs & over): _____ Children (under 12 yrs): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Arrival date: _____ Departure date: _____

Room type: _____ Rate p/n \$: _____

Credit card no. for deposit: _____ Expiry date: _____

Credit card name: _____

Credit card holder's signature: _____ CCV: _____

(I hereby authorise for a payment of one night's accommodation to be deducted from my credit card above)

Please note: Rates quoted are valid for noted function only and all room type requests are subject to availability, you will be contacted if your preferred room type is not available. A payment of 1 night's accommodation cost is required to secure a reservation. Booking sheets can be posted, faxed or emailed. You are also welcome to phone to make a reservation or for further information.

Room rates: (All contain a kitchenette and bathroom)

- Studio Hotel room (1 queen bed) \$149.00 per night, for 1 person, including buffet breakfast
- Studio Hotel room (1 queen bed) \$165.00 per night, for 2 people, including buffet breakfast
- Deluxe room (2 queen beds in same area) \$170.00 per night, for 2 people, including buffet breakfast
- King room (1 King bed in separate room) \$196.00 per night, for 2 people, including buffet breakfast
- Spa room (1 King bed) \$201.00 per night, for 2 people, including breakfast

Extra person cost: \$30.00 per person, per night, including buffet breakfast

Suite rates: (All suites are fully self contained)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Bedroom Suites | |
| 1 night stay \$190.00 per night, room only | 2 night stay \$176.00 per night, room only |
| 3 to 6 night stay \$163.00 per night, room only | 7 nights or more \$138.00 per night, room only |
| 2 Bedroom Suites | |
| 1 night stay \$246.00 per night, room only | 2 night stay \$229.00 per night, room only |
| 3 to 6 night stay \$211.00 per night, room only | 7 nights or more \$180.00 per night, room only |
| 3 Bedroom Suites | |
| 1 night stay \$349.00 per night, room only | 2 night stay \$325.00 per night, room only |
| 3 to 6 night stay \$279.00 per night, room only | 7 nights or more \$242.00 per night, room only |

To send your booking sheet:
sheet:
Outrigger Twin Towns Resort
Attn: Group reservations
PO Box 2020
Tweed Heads NSW 2485

To fax your booking sheet:
(07) 5506 6199
Attn: Group reservations

To email your booking
twintowns.conf@outrigger.com.au

For further information or assistance please phone group reservations on 07 5506 6281



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