

NOTICE TO MARINERS

Newsletter 32 Small Ship Squadron Association Incorporating RAE Tn

Patron: Colonel K.L. Duncan (Rtd)

President's Message

Last year the government approved the relocation of the School of Military Engineering from Moorebank to Holsworthy so developed into a large transport reduction of about 2000 truck Botany through Sydney suburbs. Work at the Holsworthy site planned to open the new SME in Commanding Officer, Lieutenant that staff at SME have been that they can be proud to call the that project management team the school's future training needs meet the needs of the Army.



that the Moorebank site could be terminal. This would achieve a movements per day from Port

started earlier this year and it is the first half of 2015. The Colonel Allan Hollink, reports working hard to achieve a design 'Home of the Sapper'. He said would be continually updated on so that SME is best postured to

Whilst the move will provide the school and Corps with exiting new opportunities, there is no doubt that it will be sad to leave the location where Sapping has occurred for over seventy two years. He said it was also worth noting that the move will also occur in a significant year as Army commemorates the centenary of ANZAC Day

As you would be aware, the Australian Army has a system of theatre and battle honours in place to recognise exemplary service by Arms Corps Units in combat and combat- related roles. Until recently, there was no provision for such recognition for outstanding service in dangerous operations short of war. The Army Battle Honours Committee, recognising that the Army now fights in ways different from the past, has amended the battle and theatre honours system to provide for the recognition of outstanding service in operations other than declared theatres of war. Under the new system, actions by units in non-warlike but still hazardous conditions, and actions by non-Arms Corps Units, can now be recognised by the award of an Honour Distinction.

The Chief of Army, Lieutenant General David Morrison, AO recently approved a recommendation for the award of the first Honour Distinction to 17 Construction Squadron for its work in Namibia in support of the United nations Transition Assistance Group in 1989-90.

To mark this achievement there will be a parade at SME at on Saturday 11 May 2013 where the Governor General will present the Honour Distinction to 17 Construction Squadron.

This is a big achievement, not only for 17 Construction Squadron but for the Corps in general. No other Engineer unit has ever received an honour such as this. On behalf of all our members I would like to offer 17 Construction Squadron our congratulations.

Jamais Etre Remorque

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ANZAC DAY ACTIVITIES – THURSDAY 25 APRIL 2013

I'm sure members will check the details of ANZAC Day dawn services and marches in their own area so I'll just put in details for Sydney for those who are visiting or attending.

DAWN SERVICE – SCHOOL OF MILITARY ENGINEERING

A Gunfire Breakfast will commence at 0450 hrs in the vicinity of the RAE Monument. The Catafalque Party will mount at 0510 hrs and the service will commence shortly after. On completion of the service a breakfast will be available at the Other Ranks Mess. Note that this service is very popular so if you are attending please try and get there by 0430 hrs. Ample car parking is available. Also be aware of the strict security requirements. You will need to have photo ID (drivers licence is OK) to gain access to SME.

DAWN SERVICE – GEORGES HEIGHTS

The service will be conducted on the parade ground of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust precinct commencing at 0530 hrs. Following the service there will be the traditional Gunfire Breakfast for those who require to be fortified by a beverage manufactured in Bundaberg, and also a light breakfast will be provided by the Mosman Lions Club for a nominal charge. Parking is available under the control of the SES.

ANZAC DAY MARCH – SYDNEY

Assemble on the corner of Phillip and Bent Streets in front of the Legal and General building by 1000 hrs. Step off time is usually around 1100 hrs which will give us time to renew acquaintances and take refreshment before the long march to Hyde Park. The Banner Party has been appointed in advance, and after it has formed up we will assemble behind it. Coat, tie and medals please.

ANZAC DAY REUNION AND LUNCHEON – SYDNEY

As usual the reunion will be held at the Hunters Hill RSL Sub-Branch Memorial Hall on the corner of Alexander and Ady Streets, Hunters Hill. A high quality spit roast lunch with vegetables and salads, desserts and fruit platters will be served at 1300 hrs. Please try and be there by then. Again we have managed to keep the cost down to \$50.00 per head which includes drinks (beer, soft, spirits and wine). To put it on at this low price we need to know early the numbers attending, so please submit your return slip as soon as possible. **For those who turn up unannounced the cost will be \$70.00 a head.**

ANZAC DAY RAFFLE

The raffle is on again and your tickets are enclosed or will be posted. The prizes are:

First Prize: 3" ships clock and barometer.

Second Prize: 6" ships porthole clock.

Third Prize: 3" ships porthole barometer.

These popular prizes are made of solid brass and mounted on polished hardwood. The tickets are still only \$1.00 each or ten for \$10.00.



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NEW MEMBERS

Welcome aboard the following new members:

Eddie Edstein comes from a long line of family members who served in RAE including his father and two brothers. One of his brothers, Mick was a 32 Small Ship Squadron member when it was at Kangaroo Point, Brisbane in 1960. Eddie graduated from the Army Apprentices School in 1955 and served in 1 Company RAASC before he corps transferred to RAE a year later. He then served in the following units: SME, 2 Field Troop RAE, with 11 Independent Field Squadron, Royal Engineers in Malaya, HQ 5 Engineer Group, 198 Chief Engineer Works, 14 Field Squadron, 33 Port Squadron, 30 Port Squadron / 30 Terminal Squadron, 11 Movement Control Group, 4 Water Transport Troop, 35 Water Transport Squadron, Detachment 30 Terminal Squadron in Vietnam, Directorate of Transportation Army HQ, Engineer-in-Chief Army HQ, Port Detachment ANZUK Traffic Management Agency Singapore and Movement Control Office Canberra.

Alexander (Sandy) McLean served in 1 Royal Victorian Regiment, 2 Recruit Training Battalion, School of Military Engineering, Transportation Centre and 32 Small Ship Squadron aboard *AS3051 John Monash*. He lives at Deception Bay, Qld.

Bruce McLean served in 22 Construction Squadron and 32 Small Ship Squadron aboard *AV1353 Harry Chauvel* in New Zealand, *AV1354 Brudenell White* in Papua New Guinea and *AS3051 John Monash* in Vietnam. He lives at Great Western, Vic.

David Fryer served with 32 Small Ship Squadron aboard *AV1354 Brudenell White*, and on *AS3051 John Monash* in Vietnam. He lives at Berkeley, NSW.

DONATIONS

Many thanks to the following members who made donations: James Cable, Derek Auld, David Tooos, Charles Gillman-Wells and Ken Small.

LOOKING FOR PETER HODGES

Jeff Hodges is looking for his brother, Peter John Hodges who served in the Army from about 1964 to 1972 and in 32 Small Ship Squadron aboard *AS3051 John Monash* in Vietnam from 25 October 1969 to 7 December 1969 and *AV1354 Brudenell White* from 22 September 1970 to 24 October 1970. If anyone knows the whereabouts of Peter could you contact Jeff Hodges at PO Box 268 Meekatharra WA 6642 or phones 08 9980 1846 or 0419 041 421 or email him at jeff1124@bigpond.com



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ALF WOOLLEY

Corporal Alf Woolley was a member of 32 Small Ship Squadron and served on all four LSMs and the *John Monash* in Papua New Guinea. Then *Clive Steele* and *John Monash* in Vietnam. Most of us would have known Alf and remember him for his good (?) sense of humour and friendliness to all. Alf passed away on 26 November 2002.

His biological son, Ashley Giles, is researching Alf's Army service and he would like to hear from anyone who served with him, particularly in Vietnam. Any comments about him would be appreciated.

If you would like to contact Ashley is details are: Phone 08 8389 9161 or 0407 204 220 or email kezash6@gmail.com or:

Ashley Giles
25 Jacaranda Drive
WOODSIDE SA 5224

BACK TO MIDDLE HEAD REUNION

Because of the popularity of last year's reunion it has been decided to follow it up with another one over the week-end 15 - 17 November 2013. It will be open to all personnel who served in the Middle Head area, and includes Termites who have served in Townsville only. Of course partners are encouraged to attend.

The program is still being finalised but will probably be:

Meet and Greet at the Buena Vista Hotel, Mosman on Friday 15 November starting at 1800.

A walk around the old Middle Head area on Saturday 16 November at around 1000. That evening a dinner will be held at the Mosman RSL.

Something else will be arranged for Sunday 17 November. Details will be advised in the next newsletter. So, put it in your diaries!

PHOTOS REQUIRED

John (Speedie) Sahariv would like to hear from anyone with photos of the Wardrooms and Sergeants' Messes of LSMs and the *John Monash*. He's doing some research on 32 Small Ship Squadron and he's missing these photos.

If you can help please contact him on 02 6254 6112 or email: sony1@bigpond.com



VALE - GEOFF GALLAGHER
1945 - 2012

We are sad to announce that one of our popular members, Ex-Corporal Geoffrey Francis Gallagher, RAE passed away on 13 November 2012. He was conscripted in 1967 and served in Vietnam with 11 Movement Control Group in 1968. Geoff lived at Coombabah on the Gold Coast.

VALE - KEITH BROWN
1935 - 2012

Ex-Sapper Keith Allan Brown, RAE passed away on 17 December 2012. He was called up for National Service in 1953 and immediately after this served in the Citizen Military Forces until 1958. He enlisted in the Australian Regular Army in 1959 and elected discharge in 1965

His overseas service included Japan in 1960 and Borneo as a crew member of *AV1355 Vernon Sturdee* in 1964. Units he served with were 11th National Service Battalion, 9th Infantry Battalion, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, School of Military Engineering, Transportation Training Centre, 4 Water Transport Troop and 32 Small Ship Squadron.

Keith leaves behind a twin brother, Bob and a daughter, Suzanne who recently gave birth to twins herself. Keith lived at Coondoo, Queensland. (near Gympie).

Here is a short note on Keith's escapades since leaving the Army. It was written by his brother, Bob.

A TRUE AUSSIE - 1410579 Sapper Keith Allan Brown

After leaving the Army Keith returned home, and joined his twin brother Bob and his younger brother Bryce "contract" cutting timber in the State Forest for Pattersons Pty Ltd, a timber merchant. He finally joined Pattersons' work force on the snigging and hauling side of the business. Keith by this time had bought his own residence at Beerwah.

After some years in the job Keith met and married Patricia who already had two sons and a daughter by a previous marriage, however Pat still produced a lovely daughter to Keith, Suzanne who he idolised.

Finally Pattersons closed their mills and this allowed Keith and his extended family to venture into the hotel business. They took on the management of the Mayfair Hotel Motel in Warwick and this lasted for several years. Keith's marriage failed by this time and he left Beerwah and moved to Coondoo near Gympie with his treasured Fordson tractors etc. His next job was driving machinery for a large macadamia nut farm in the same area.



Keith had a valve replacement in his heart and in recent times had a severe illness and had his gall bladder removed from which he recovered. Suzanne presented Keith with lovely twin grandsons six months before he passed away on 17 December 2012.



Keith in his logging days.



Keith, holding one of his grandsons about a week before his passing.



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VALE - REG HAMANN

1948 - 2012

John Bryden reported the passing of ex- Corporal Reginald Hamann, RAE on 10 December 2012. "Hammer" served in 4 Water Transport Troop, Tropical Trials Establishment (Tully Qld) and in 32 Small Ship Squadron where he was aboard *AV1353 Harry Chauvel* in 1967 and *AV1356 Clive Steele* in 1968/69 in Vietnam. Whilst in 32 he also served in Papua New Guinea and Singapore.

Reg served six years in the Army. After he elected discharge he spent some years truck driving and then bought a trawler and worked out of Innisfail. He was a respected citizen of the Innisfail community and a member of the Vietnam Veterans' Motor Cycle Club, Far North Queensland and also the President of Innisfail RSL Club.

Reg had been ill for many years. He believed it came about from his tours in Vietnam where he was exposed to Agent Orange. (Editor's Note: He would have been right because LSMs would occasionally carry 44 gallon drums of the stuff and the drums were often rusty and leaking. Also at one time we got sprayed with it from aircraft and were told it was mosquito repellent! I suppose 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D did keep the mosquito population down a bit).

Ironically, Reg was involved in Agent Orange again but this time near his home town of Innisfail where it is alleged that between 1964 and 1966 the Army used an area of jungle near the town's water catchment to test the effects of this chemical. Obviously this had an effect on the local residents. Queensland Health Department figures show Innisfail, which has a population of almost 12,000, had 76 people die of cancer in 2005. That is four times the national rate of cancer and ten times the Queensland average.

Reg had cancer of the oesophagus and stomach. He has also suffered heart attacks and had a quadruple bypass. In the last few years he contracted leukaemia. He was not a well man.

Reg's funeral service was held at Innisfail. His coffin was mounted on a Harley Davidson and attended by a large contingent of members of the Vietnam Veterans' Motor Cycle Club who escorted him through town to the cemetery. Over 300 people attended. Our Association was represented by Garry Edwards and Ken Loadman.



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Reg Hamann's last ride



A recent photo with Reg in the middle and Garry Edwards on the left



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COMMEMORATION OF THE DEPLOYMENT TO BORNEO

As advised in our last newsletter there are will be two functions to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the deployment to Borneo in 2014. One will be organised by the National Malaya and Borneo Veterans' Association and it is proposed to hold a Commemoration Service and Anniversary Dinner at garden Island, Sydney on 24 and 25 May. If any Borneo veterans wish to attend these functions please contact me and I'll send details.

The other one will be a Commemoration and Plaque Dedication ceremony near the Point Danger Light House. This will be organised by Bob Modystack, assisted by Steve Monk, in conjunction with the Gold Coast City Council and with assistance from our Association.

Details are yet to be fine tuned but the program will be along these lines:

Thursday 8 May 2014.	Meet and Greet
Friday 9 May 2014	Plaque Dedication and lunch at Twin Towns RSL
Saturday 10 May 2014	Boat cruise with dinner aboard in the evening.

Note that you don't have to be a Borneo veteran to participate. The activities will incorporate the 2014 mini Water Transport Reunion. As always, partners are most welcome.

TOWNSVILLE TIE-UP SEP 2013

It looks like being a great roll up for our reunion in September and will include those not seen for a long time. It is pleasing to see such a great response to what will be a memorable event.

The numbers are such that our dinner may exclude serving members, except for some unit representation. For the same reason, OC 30 Tml Sqn is suggesting that the Friday BBQ may be better held after the demonstration at Ross Island. Barracks where there is unlimited space. Logistic support will also be more easily managed. There will be other possible changes and updates on other activities associated with the reunion weekend. It is therefore necessary for all attendees to report to the Reception Centre for registration on arrival in Townsville. The Reception Centre will be located in the BBQ area opposite the Rowes Bay Caravan Park and will be manned on the Wednesday and Thursday prior to the reunion weekend.

As frequently happens when a staff officer issues an instruction, it can be misread. I have always taken the view that the 50% more or less that misread it are not idiots, the staff officer is. My hand is up. I am referring to the contingency fund. It has been included so we could avoid the usual raffles while we have serving members attending. The column heading stated per head for the functions and the intention was to include \$10 per head in the contingency fund. About half so far have paid \$20 for two attendees, the other half, \$10. There will be no formal follow up but please pay the additional \$10 at registration. Some of the shortfall has been made up by a few generously making donations. See you all in September.

John Purcell



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BOB MCLEOD'S STEAM BOAT

For the past 12 years Bob Modystack has run the Classic Boat Regatta on the Tweed River NSW. This year he reports that he had a sail in a little steam boat called "Freya". It was built by one of our members, Bob McLeod from Dorrigo. This is his story about its history...

"I had been wanting to build a steam boat since I was kid, and my interest in such things led me to spend a bit of time out on the Sydney Steam Tugs, and the Steam Yacht '*Lady Hopetoun*', in the early 1960s. Little did I realise that this experience would be a big help when conscripted into the Army...for it led me to Watercraft Workshops, and a stint on the *Clive Steele*, and the *John Monash*! Could there be a better way to be a "soldier"?"

I built *Freya* in a haze of red wine that lasted for a year or so. I had done all this technical research on Naval Architecture etc...and suddenly thought.."Oh stuff this! Half the best boat builders in the world are illiterate..and God didn't have an Engineer to design fish"...so, I just bought a lot of wine, some wood and glue, and got stuck into it. If it looks right, and it's beautiful...then it will work! I remember running my hand over the hull, and thinking it is like a beautiful woman...it just feels sleek and curvy...to hell with the theory!

The engine was made from the crankshaft and cylinder of a little Honda petrol engine...only 58mm bore and stroke, but puts out a lot of power at only 200 rpm or so. Steam gives two pushes per rev., as opposed to only one push in every two revs for a petrol engine. There is a condenser, and vacuum pump, for running in salt water, auxiliary steam donkey pump etc...all made in my shed with a hacksaw, file, and a 120 year old pedal lathe!

The boiler is a simple fire tube type, and supplies endless tea and coffee, as well as baking fish nicely!

I did quite a bit of running in coastal estuaries, and the big, slow revving propeller seemed to attract dolphins. I often had them come alongside, within touching distance.

It really is very civilised, tootling about in a nearly silent launch, that smells nicely of hot oil and wood smoke, and never have I seen such a "Chick Magnet". Women seem to find it irresistible, being quiet, elegant and pretty. Running off the beach at Coffs Harbour for example, I recall having to beat off all these bikini clad wenches, by smacking their knuckles with a lump of firewood, as they tried to climb over the gun'le. Boring!...

Maybe this attraction was because of the name *Freya* who was a Viking Goddess character, sort of in charge of the love, lust, and copulating department. Definitely a good name for a boat!

Being a fairly long, narrow displacement hull meant that it was a pretty fast little boat, and easy on fuel, an armful of firewood would take you 15 miles and when just drifting along fishing, one stick on the fire every half hour or so would do.



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But the questions from the well educated public were interesting! So many people today have never heard of a steam boat.. (or much else for that matter!)..and I was asked..."Did I invent that?" "Why have you got a barbeque in your boat?" "Is that real steam coming out the top?" "Has it got an electric motor under the floor?"...and so on!

Some of my Army experience must have rubbed off..for I had to have a forward mounted gun...a brass, 3/4" bore swivel gun, usually fitted with a harpoon for sinking jet skis. Never used in anger, but we did manage to bounce a few wine corks off the Port Macquarie Ferry one afternoon, after emptying the uncorked bottles! Didn't seem to effect the ferry much, but we got a bit of abuse!

It was good while it lasted!"

Thanks Bob - what a great story. Unfortunately, Bob has since sold the boat but he assures us that it is still going strong.



Freya with Bob and the First Mate



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The "Freya" Chick Magnet



Steam engine made from a crankshaft and cylinder from a Honda.



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BARRY BAILEY – A LIFE

There are times in our lives that we wished we had kept a diary of our everyday activities and experiences so we could look back and remember things as they were; and not, in most cases, as we thought they were. Barry Bailey is such a person who did keep a diary or had a pretty good memory (or both). He recently joined our Association and those who read our newsletter would have noticed his entry in the November 2008 edition which stated..."He served in 32 Small Ship Squadron on *AV1379 Tarra*, *AS3051 John Monash*, *AV1355 Vernon Sturdee* *AV1354 Brudenell White* and in Vietnam on *AV1356 Clive Steele*. He also served in 24 Construction Squadron and the Tropical Trials Unit at Tully, Queensland."

I suppose that's a reasonable summary but it doesn't say anything at all about his daily life, his thoughts, his experiences, the good times, the bad times and everything else he packed into his 20 years in the Army, and life after leaving it. Barry sent me his story and although it's 13 pages of longhand I decided to type it out because those of us with vision a bit blurred may not be able to decipher some parts of it. Anyway here is his story...

Dear Ross,

I received my book. "Rolling Through 32". I will treasure it for the rest of my life and I thought I should tell you about my experiences whilst serving in the Army a span of 20 years. I don't know if I had mentioned in my application form that I had also served on the Tarra. I went to Kapooka in 1960 and made a good friend of Peter Bertram, a fisherman from Yepoon in Queensland. We both went to Engineering School together and then were posted up to 24 Construction Squadron at Enoggera, Brisbane.

After a few months the Squadron was moving up to Wewak, PNG. Our SSM was Nev Jones and he knew I wanted to go to Small Ships from day one so he put me on the advance party and we were to sail up to Wewak on the *Brudenell White*. Major Tanner was the skipper. We all boarded the ship and as we were leaving port he happened to gaze up the masthead and found that the "Cock O' the North" (rooster) was missing, so George Latter had to find it quick time and when it was located George had to hold it to the mast until we left port and then it was attached permanently.

The trip to Wewak via Port Moresby was great. After settling in at the base we worked pretty long hours to get things in order for the rest of the Squadron. My job was to oversee the native labour at the base and go with Major Phil Stephens and Nev Jones when they went out to see how the construction jobs were progressing. The reason I had this job was because I grew up in PNG and could speak Pidgin English. I used to put in for a transfer to Small Ships every so often, but to no avail.

When we finished our tour and back in Brisbane I called up to Phil's office and was told I was finally posted to 32 Small Ship Squadron at Chowder Bay along with Pete



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Bertram. We did our course on board the Broody Hen which also included a trip down to Jervis Bay. Ron Tanner was still the skipper. In those days the ships used to tie up at Watsons Bay because the wharf was long enough to cater for two LSMs at a time, but we used to live at Chowder Bay and had the best view of the harbour, seeing the ships coming and going. A lot of us used to read the signaling as a competition.

Whilst living at Chowder Bay I happened to be working in the Sergeants' Mess bar and at that time the *Tarra* was preparing to go to Brisbane to escort an ALC50 back to Sydney. Norm Holdsworth caught me looking at the goings on through the windows and asked me if I would like to go with them. What do you think? I would give anything to go with them and so a day later I was on board as crew. Doug Iffla was the skipper along with Spud Tate, Pete Bertram, Happy Reynolds, Boguest the Cook, myself, and a few guys in the engine room. The trip to Brisbane was OK and we were tied up at Bulimba but when the day came to depart we only got as far as Byron Bay when we hit a storm so Doug flashed up the light house and told them that we were going back to Brisbane. We stayed there a few days until the sea and wind abated then headed for Sydney without a hitch.

After that we were posted to LSMs and did trips up the coast on exercises at Port Stephens, and at Brisbane, dumping old ordnance over the side some ten miles off the coast. The fishermen were complaining that they were picking up some of it in their nets up to Bundaberg. We then did more trips to Jervis Bay and then PNG which included resupply, survey and PIR recruiting runs. I remember whilst at Chowder Bay, Jim Wilson was the OC and I did a few jobs for him in his office. One day he says, "Laddie, get the work boat ready – we are going up the harbour to check if the old show boat is suitable for floating accommodation for the crews, and then over to Morts Dock." On looking at the show boat it was at anchor and rusting up but Woolwich was a better deal, hence we moved there and put accommodation in the workshop area, and the ORs and Sergeants' Messes were built.

Later on in life Dezzy, myself and a few of the guys went up to Singleton with an exchange English major to do a bit of an exercise. He wanted all the tents in line and if one was a bit out it had to be pulled down and re-erected so it was in line. Haggis came up for a visit to see how things were going and after having a conversation with Dezzy the next thing I knew I was leaving with Haggis and bound for New Caledonia. We had young officers on board doing navigation training and marine engineering work in the engine room. Again, Ron Tanner was the skipper. We got there for ANZAC Day and had drinks at the Australian Consulate where Snowy Hider started a two up school. Then we all went back to the ship and had a grand lunch, set up on the well deck.

Sometime later I did a trip to PNG on the *Brudenell White*. It was a resupply trip to Cape Moem, then up the Sepik River. Wally Blumenfeld was the skipper. He was a real gentleman to sail with. When we entered the river the ship's dory was put over the side to take soundings and make our own charts as we went along ahead of the ship. At night we would tie up at a jetty or anchor up. Pete Bertram and I were offered two native girls at one village because we spoke good Pidgin. John Gadd was the coxswain of the Bell Buoy cruiser which was used in the survey work as well. Occasionally I would go with him. One day the fellers wanted to go croc shooting so



I was called upon to go with them. We went up a small creek and came upon a village. The natives didn't look too friendly. As we were coming closer to the village they were putting arrows in their bows and taking up positions to defend themselves. I saw this and said to the crew to get out of here. We did.

Other trips there included a ship load of AVGAS to Lae, then to Wewak, Vanimo, watering up at Kairuru Island. Someone once mentioned about the bulldozer breaking loose – that was when we were going through the Coral Sea. It was really rough. One could stand on the upper deck and just about touch the water because of the roll of the ship.

On return to Sydney we tied up alongside the *Sturdee*. Word had it that she had a ruptured fuel tank and if it couldn't be repaired we were to load her cargo and go to Borneo, but they managed to fix it so we didn't go.

I did a few more survey and resupply trips to PNG. Pepsi Pefferini was the coxswain of the Bell Buoy then and he ended up being the best man at my wedding. One thing comes to mind – when we were anchored near Milne Bay we were getting ready to watch a movie on the well deck. All was in hand when we heard a fire extinguisher being discharged near the bosun's locker. The bosun went up to see what was happening and found a survey guy making his can of ale a lot colder than it was. He was in big trouble!

Another part of that trip was to Madang where we did a burial at sea. The bow doors were open and the ramp down and over went the ex Harbour Master – a good way to go. One of our crew members, David Briggs, had a bad medical problem and was hospitalized but unfortunately poor David passed away in 1967.

In 1965 I paid off and went to Port Moresby to work for PDC Constructions for a couple of years. I used to go down to the LSMs and *John Monash* when they were in port. I had been invited down to the Sergeants' Mess aboard the *Monash* one night for dinner and stayed overnight. It was great to be on board once again.

When my contract finished with PDC I joined an American oil drilling ship, the *Gloman Conception* which had just arrived and was setting up in the Papuan Gulf. The skipper was a retired US Navy commander and we got on pretty well because of our service history. He even wanted to organize it that I go to the States and command a new ship with him but my wife said, "No".

When I left the *Gloman Conception* I went to Darwin and managed a job on board an ex Fairmile, going to Kupang in West Timor, and also to West New Guinea. I used to see the LSMs come in to Darwin on their way to and from Vietnam, and so talking to Dick Groundwater one day he organized it that I sign the dotted line because they were short of crews on the LSMs. I went to Kapooka for a short stint then posted direct to Woolwich.

I was assigned to work in the *Vernon Sturdee's* office. On walking around the area I met up with Tubby (I forgot his name) – he was Chief Engineer on the *Clive Steele* and he asked if I would like to go to Vietnam. I said, "yes" and he went and saw



Wally Blumenfeld, the skipper, and I was back on board. We loaded tanks and my job was to jack them up and put blocks underneath them then secure them with chains and turnbuckles then shore them up. We had a pleasant trip over to Vung Tau, crossing the International Date Line was a bit of fun, and having yippy shoots along the way. Coming into Vung Tau was something to see. There was a wrecked Italian ship on the beach and I believe the skipper shot himself. We did a few trips around the area and went ashore to 1 ALSG and also went to some of the US bases and the Australian base to see some live shows. When we had finished our tasks over there we headed back to Sydney via Darwin.

My next tour was in 1971 on board the *Clive Steele*. David Jupp was my watch officer and we were the best of mates. When we were laid up in Singapore we went everywhere together. We hired a taxi for the day and went sightseeing and even ended up at Raffles for a few drinks and that night ended up in Bugis Street at the markets and later saw the show everyone says is interesting. A lot of us used to go to the British Naval Base to watch movies or to have a swim or watch football and sometimes live shows.

Occasionally we would go for a run around the docks just to keep fit. The Monash was in dock for a refit before going back to Sydney. I think we were in Singapore for about five weeks. Jack Spry did a fine job trying to get us under way again. On our sea trial we went down to the Malacca Straights and a rain squall came in and when it cleared there was another ship very close to us. I mean very, very close! Back in Sembawang we refueled then up to Vung Tau. We finally unloaded the tanks at Nha Be then we loaded barrels of asphalt while we in the area and up to Saigon. Kevin Morley and I were closed up in the wheel house and we had to pass through a few check points. At one point we saw a Roll-on-Roll-off ship coming down river escorted by a couple of PBRs and gunships. Our skipper saw a bunch of rocks on our starboard side a fair way from the bank so he got the gunnery officer to get the Bofors crew to test their skills. One of the choppers came over to investigate and the old man told him to bugger off.

Once in Saigon we tied up to a mooring buoy for the night, then went up to Newport the next day. That night some of the crew went into Saigon. I and a couple of guys were invited to the movies at the US Base. Afterwards we had a few beers and on the way back to the ship we saw a very large convoy of trucks, APCs and other equipment ready to move out. It was the biggest convoy I had ever seen.

Next day we loaded fuel trucks and departed for Phan Rang and after that down to Cam Ranh Bay into a dry dock for some heavy maintenance and engine repairs. During our time there we were invited to a US Navy Base for BBQs. I got friendly with a US Navy Chief who was in charge of rations. Once when we left the base on a truck to go back to the ship he threw a few cardboard boxes to us and told us to stow them under the seats so the guards wouldn't see them. The ship was moored by this time and we got an LCM6 to take us back. I then asked the Chief what was in the boxes. He that they were sirloin steaks for the crew to thank us for our hospitality. We were all very thankful and had a few BBQs on the way back to Vung Tau and Australia because we would depart Vietnam in a couple of days.



On the way home we stopped off at Darwin to refuel then down to Lizard Island and while there we put the dory out and some of the crew went fishing out at a reef. They came back with a swag of fish. The Gunnery Officer and I spent some time cleaning them and we had fish for breakfast, lunch and dinner for a couple of days.

Coming down the coast the port bow door fell off. I was on deck watch and the door was heaving and groaning and I was told to go and have a look at it. It seemed OK and just when I reported this to the Mate it fell off. So much for my technical expertise on bow doors. We kept going, but slowly, and when we pulled into Bulimba they took off the starboard door, secured it to the deck and welded the ramp to the bow. We looked pretty untidy when we came alongside at Woolwich.

Sometime later I was posted to the *John Monash* to replace John Gadd as Bosun and after a short time I was posted to the Tropical Trials Establishment at Tully running a 26 ft boat. I think I relieved George Scorgie who had elected discharge. This was a real cushie job and it lasted a few years before I was posted back to Woolwich running the tug, *Joe Mann*, and LCM 6s and 8s during a few exercises. I met up with old hands along the way including Bob Modystack. Bob and I went to Colonel Ron Tanner's funeral. It was a sad day because I had sailed with Ron a few times and he was one of the best.

In the early 1980s I applied for a posting to the Brisbane Water Transport Unit. When I got there I ran into Dick Groundwater and Ted Fisher. It was like old home week. I also met up with a few officers I had served with. While there I took the tug, *The Luke*, up to Rockhampton during Exercise Kangaroo 81 which was the first big exercise I had been involved in. While in Brisbane I dined with Colonel Mike Holten one night. I had sailed with him around New Guinea and it was good to see him again.

I payed off again in 1984 and lived at Bangalow (near Byron Bay) for a while and then moved to Ballina. I got a job teaching Marine Studies at Lismore and Ballina TAFE. I could do this because when I was in Brisbane I sat for my Masters 4 ticket which helped me get the TAFE job. I then managed a job skippering a charter boat and a catamaran on the Tweed River. While there I met up with Happy Reynolds, Bob Modystack and Taffy Maggs. Old home week again.

A couple of years later we moved to Laureton on the mid NSW coast where I retired. I got involved with a gardening business and used to tend the gardens in the local Catholic Church. The priest there was ex navy who served in the Gulf War on HMAS Brisbane. We both got on quite well and would shoot the breeze about our experiences at sea.

Now my wife, Rosemary and I live at Medowie (near Port Stephens) and I am totally involved with 'Salability' where we take disabled people on the Grahamstown Dam and also sail with the local sailing club there. I also train and examine our members on handling the safety boat.

I only wished I could have stayed in the Army longer but circumstances change and you have to do what's best for you and your family. As I finally get to the end of this



story I try to remember all the people I served with. I can't name them all but here are a few:

Wally Blumenfeld, Doug Iffla, Bob Bailey, Charlie Bawden, Murray Neville, Archie van Arkell, Arnold van Leeuwen, Hans Kumpel, Porky Blazely, Benny Freeman, Jack Peel, Pat Scott, Bob Gunn, Joe Laxton, Jim Fletcher, Ken Duncan, Arthur Jackson, David Jupp, Vince Mannell, Jim McMahon, George Flint, Daz Graney, Dick Groundwater, Bob Modystack, Barry Woods, Bungy Waters, Col Wright, Jim Wright, Alwyn Parry, John Bonnett, Phil Cannane, Tony Hallet, Jim 'Haggis' Wilson, Ron Tanner, Beachy Shore, Les Dennis, Ray Blackburn, Rick Mercer, Happy Reynolds, Don Grace, Les Hocking, George Walker, John Coyle, George Latter, Pepsi Peferini, Jerry Davey, Brian Hart, Jeff Catt, Jeff Beech, Bill Brady, Jim Broughton, John McGregor, Graham Murray, Peter Bertrand, John Gadd, Bob Metcalf, Peter Caskey, Robbie Robinson, Max Carmichael, Garry Edwards, Bert Burrows, David Briggs, Alf Wooley, John Kerr, Bill Moll, Joe Joseph, Ross Fewster, Mal Campbell, Kev Morley, Peter Tierney, Bruno Butler, Taffy Evans, Ian Craig, Alf Smith, Len Fitzgerald, Bob Bennett, Wayne Summerhayes, Brian Willcock, Laurie Graham, Sandy McHutchison, John Boot, John Merrick, Snow Hider, Frank Johnson, Tony Harris, Peter Bayliss, Ken Shannon, John Bryant, Fluffy Willcox, Neil Hawkins and a whole lot more who I've unfortunately forgotten. I wish you all well and hope to catch up with some of you in the future.

I hope I haven't bored you with this long story Ross but it is something I had to get down on paper. A lot of us have changed over the years and looking at the photos in "Rolling Through 32" just confirms this. Could you please pass a 'well done' to Dave Perham and all those who were involved in the making of the book. It was a huge effort.

All the very best, we were a very close family in 32 Small Ship Squadron and we always backed each other up. Also, the same applies to 30 Terminal Squadron and 11 Movement Control Group where I had involvement with and appreciated their assistance and professionalism. You were second to none.

Yours sincerely,

Barry Bailey

Barry died on 20 September 2012. His obituary was in the December 2012 newsletter. He sent me this letter in 2010 and I intended to type it out and put it in a newsletter not long after I received it. However, even though I started on it other things seemed to be more important and I put it aside, thinking that I would still have time to work on it and get it out. Regretfully this didn't happen and I apologise for that.

Looking at all the names of the above shipmates he served with all I can say is, (and I think you would agree), "You were in good company Barry". Rest easy.



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Ties	\$25.00	LSM Lapel Badge	\$12.00
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Association Cap Navy Blue	\$15.00		
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