

July 2021



# VicRoads Association

## Newsletter No. 225



Somerset House

Membership of the Association is available to all who have been members of VicRoads or forerunner organisations or the spouse of deceased members, and bestows on them all the rights of the Rules of Association. Cost of membership is a once only fee of \$50. Enquiries about membership or receipt of the Newsletter by e-mail should be directed to the Secretary, VicRoads Association, PO Box 80, Kew 3101 or by phone or e-mail as shown in the footer below. Visit our website at [vicroadsassociation.org](http://vicroadsassociation.org)

### Dear Members,

I am continuing to gather more information about ex CRB/RCA/RTA/VicRoads people who served during the wars. Peter Hosking rang me today with a new group of people to investigate. He berated me – gently – because he could not raise me on the number shown in the footer of the newsletter and I suddenly realised the reason why. When I connected to the NBN, I cancelled my landline because most of the calls I received on it were scams or sales pitches. My only phone now is my mobile. However I forgot to amend the information in the footer. It has now been done.

I will soon be placing on our web page a new document called Roads to War. It has evolved out of Newsletter 223 and I am hoping to get enough information to publish it as a book. It should be online by the time you receive this newsletter. I am intending to go up to the National Archives in Canberra to research information I can't find on the internet. Many of the files exist but have not been digitised but if you personally attend their office you can read them directly without having to pay. This will provide me with a lot more information. And lest you think this is very noble of me to sacrifice my time for this, I have to point out that my daughter and two of my grandchildren live up there and I haven't seen them since early this year. They are the real reason I am going.

I propose to add to it, or amend it, as I receive new information and I won't necessarily alert you to all the changes. It would just become too complicated. However any large or significant changes I will put in the newsletter so that those of you who are not computer oriented will not miss out. So dip into as the fancy takes you and please contact me if you can add anything to it.

With so much additional information on our servicemen, there is very little about boring old roads and bridges in this newsletter. It will be mostly about people and, as usual, something beautiful.

Talking of things beautiful, we had our first social function for over a year when we attended the RSL dinner back in May. It was a great success and we were blessed by the presence of two doyens of the CRB – Stan Hodgson and Noel Anderson (accompanied by Margaret). I made a small presentation to them as a gesture of our appreciation for the service they provided, not only to the Association, but also to the CRB and the State. They are both interested in our activities and have contributed stories to the newsletter that have been memorable. It was wonderful to see them in such fine fettle.



Stan Hodgson and Noel Anderson.

They are two wonderful characters and I am honoured that my life has intersected with theirs.

**David Jellie**  
*Chairman and Editor*

## What's coming up

### Occasional Lunches at Shoppingtown Hotel, 12 noon.

*Monday 9 August*

*Monday 11 October*

*Monday 8 November*

*Monday 7 February 2022*

Please let Kelvin York know on 9438 1028 if you propose to attend.

### Dinner at Glen Waverley RSL, 6.00 pm

*Thursday 7 October*

Please put this in your diary and I will remind you about details closer to the date.

### Regional Visit to Warrnambool and the Western District, October 2021

We are planning this trip for the 14, 15 and 16 October. We are putting together an outline program and if you are interested, please let me know on [pdjellie@hotmail.com](mailto:pdjellie@hotmail.com). Those of you who have already expressed interest need not reply.

### Royal Australian Botanic Gardens at Cranbourne, November 2021

We propose a visit in November 2021 – date to be determined. We can arrange a tour and have lunch at the venue.

## What's been happening

### Dinner at Glen Waverley RSL, Thursday 13 May

Indicating our relief at coming through 2020 without mishap, we had a wonderful response for this event. We had our best ever attendance (38 people) and it was also pleasing to see some new members as well – Alan Collins, Eddie Schubert and Ric Anderson.

I also invited an old friend along, Peter Roberts. Peter is the son of our ex-Chairman, Caleb Roberts, and I

introduced him to Stan. Stan was for a time, early in his career, assistant to Caleb when Caleb was the Chief Engineer. This was back in the Exhibition Building days. It was great to see them reminiscing and exchanging stories of this colourful character.

I've included a few photographs of some of the better looking people.



David Dix, John Wright, Rosslyn Wright, Glenys Veitch, Jill Miles, David Miles, Gary Veitch, Richard Bortko and David Williamson.



Margaret and Noel Anderson, Iris Whittaker, Sara Jellie, Graeme Stone and Alan Collins.

## New member

### Richard (Ric) Anderson

With Ric joining the Association, I think we have our first living father/son membership. Ric's parents are Margaret and Noel Anderson – so I think it would be fair to refer to him as a son of a gun! Ric's service, like Mal Kersting's, spans all four road organisations – CRB, RCA, VicRoads and the Department of Transport. Ric provided me with following description of his service.

Ric actually started work with the CRB during the school vacation of 1969/1970. He was a Junior Chainman for three months with Engineering Surveyor Tom Wall - on the Hallam Bypass section of the Princes Freeway behind old GMH Dandenong factory, and the Gordon Bypass on the Western Freeway.

After completing school at Burwood High in 1970, he commenced work as a Junior Chainman with Engineering Surveyor Mick Condie, on the Lower Yarra Freeway (now the West Gate Freeway) on the western connection to Geelong Rd. Then early in 1971 Ric was appointed as a Junior Draftsman in Title Survey Division at Head Office in Kew, working in Keith Mason's team. In 1972 he transferred to a drafting position in John Turnbull's Engineering Survey Section in the Fraser Annexe opposite the laboratory building at Kew. In this position Ric provided drafting duties and support for the survey teams and Survey Equipment Officer, Fred Lutz.

He resigned in 1974 to work with Eddy Lusk and Nick Phizacklea at their newly formed Lusk & Phizacklea survey company where they did title surveys, aerial mapping, topographic surveys. One of their biggest jobs was a topographic and feature survey of the proposed Hume Highway duplication from Avenel to Longwood.

In 1976 Ric returned to the CRB Title Survey Division and worked as a Survey Assistant with Duncan McArthur and many other Licensed Surveyors until transferring once again to Engineering Survey Section as Survey Assistant working with many of the surveyors. He was then promoted to Engineering Surveyor with his own survey party doing feature surveys for many projects including a stint at Orbost on the new Snowy River Crossing project.

Late in 1982, Ric was offered an opportunity to work on the Hume Freeway Project at Wodonga. Jane and his 2 year-old daughter, Kate, moved up to Wodonga early 1983 and their other two children, Christopher and Rebecca, were up there.

In 1988 his family moved to Euroa where he was surveying on the construction site of the Euroa Bypass and later, the Violet Town, Glenrowan and Wangaratta bypass sections of the Hume Freeway. In 1993 Ric transferred to the regional

office at Benalla where he continued to enjoy the rural lifestyle that he loved so much. He worked in the Program Delivery section of the region under Lester Watt supporting the Maintenance Patrol teams and the Sector Engineers.

Still working in North Eastern Region (NER), Ric transferred from Technical Officer to Surveillance Officer as the region gradually phased out many of the road patrols and let contracted out maintenance functions. He was involved in surveillance of maintenance contracts and bituminous sealing contracts until his first "retirement" in 2013 (to take advantage of the resignation packages being offered).

From 2013 to 2017, Ric worked for several of the contractors doing SprayLine resealing works throughout NER and Northern Region – "on the tools" driving suction sweeper and other trucks.

In 2017 he returned to NER to administer rehabilitation and safety improvement contracts working with the Project Delivery team and the Road Safety team. By this time VicRoads was also the Registration and Licensing authority but it disappeared to become Regional Roads Victoria.

In late 2020, Ric retired again – and he described his second attempt as being very successful!

His son, Christopher, commenced with SprayLine in Benalla in 2006 and is still working for SprayLine at their Wendouree Depot in Ballarat. This might also be a first – having three generations in the same family working for the CRB and its successors.



Ric (centre) with his parents, Margaret and Noel. Some people are blessed with good looks – and the men aren't too bad!

## News from our members

### John (Sean) Cribbin

Our warmest congratulations are extended to John who turned 99 on April 30th, 2021.



John studied his Bachelor of Engineering at University College Galway, part of the National University of Ireland. He graduated in 1947.

From September 1947 (just prior to his qualification) until December 1948, he worked in Engineering Maintenance for the Galway County Council with the Assistant County Engineer, at Athenry.

In the summer of 1949 he transferred to Clifden for survey work, but by the winter of 1949 he secured a position with the Engineering Department at Limerick City Council. This work related to housing inspections under the Small Dwellings Act, which was overseen by Government. It related to both private and commission housing. The work mainly entailed inspecting houses under repair and those being built all over the city. He said that he enjoyed the work because of the insight he had due to his father being in the house building industry. However there were a few surprises. On one occasion he walked in and saw that the residents had used the brand new, varnished, wooden toilet seat as a photo frame and had it hanging on the wall!

In 1953, there was an advertisement in the Irish Independent for young engineers in South Africa. He wanted a change. By this stage he was married with one daughter. Married men were contracted for five years, single men for three. After a successful application he resigned from his position in Limerick and he left Ireland in October and arrived in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, in November.

He was not the only engineer from overseas. South Africa had been affected by the war and was in need. Initially, six expatriates went out to work there. There were three from Ireland and three from Scotland and others followed later.

It was in South Africa that his civil engineering career took off. He worked for the Province of Natal Highway Department – Planning Division. Within each section, he received further instruction and understanding so as to work in a totally different climate to Ireland. This later stood him in good stead when he came to Australia.

At the end of his contract in December 1958 he and his family left of their own volition, with three daughters in tow, in time to be home in Ireland for Christmas. Although he very much enjoyed his work in South Africa, he felt a country based on apartheid was not where he wanted to raise his family. However, there was no work that winter in Ireland so he tried Birmingham in the UK.

His experience in South Africa was varied – highway planning, structural design, material (soil mechanics), and construction and he attained a position with the Birmingham Corporation in roads and design.

Unfortunately, it soon became clear that the only prospect for advancement was to sit further exams over and above his degree qualifications so as to obtain associate membership of the Institute of Civil Engineers. Despite his experience, his qualifications were not seen as good enough for promotion in England.

It was then that he decided to go down to London and investigate if there were any positions vacant through Australia's State offices. New South Wales only wanted single people, Victoria and Tasmania had nothing, and Western Australia didn't appeal. That left only Queensland and South Australia. He heard from the South Australia office within five weeks. They offered him a position and told him that they had to be ready to leave within two days. He negotiated some extra time as his fourth child was not yet six months old.

Having sailed aboard the P&O *Orcades*, they docked in Fremantle, Western Australia in June 1960 before continuing on to disembark in Adelaide, South Australia. From that time, he worked for the South Australian Highways Department as an engineer until 1965. The work revolved around road maintenance, based in the country towns of Naracoorte and Crystal Brooke until 1962 when he was transferred to Adelaide.

There, he was involved in road design, which was much more interesting. However, again, it became clear there was little chance of promotion despite joining the Institute of Engineers in 1963 and he seriously thought of returning to Ireland with six children and no job after having been moved to three different areas of South Australia within a three year period. His family's welfare was paramount and changing schools was not good for the children.

It was then that he noticed an engineering position with the Board of Works in Melbourne, Victoria. He sent an application and was flown over for an interview. After being offered the position, he resigned from the South Australia Highways Department and moved his young family to Melbourne. He worked in Melbourne from September 1965 and never looked back. His starting net salary with the Board of Works was £67.13.8 per fortnight.

Due to a colleague being on sick leave when he commenced, his position in design work was short-lived and it soon became apparent that he would be engaged in traffic signal design – something he had never done before. This involved the design of all traffic signals throughout the State and, in particular at that time, the major project of St Kilda junction which occurred in the late 1960s, where in later years an underpass was built to ease congestion. He also worked on the Tullamarine Freeway signalling in the early 1970s.

In 1972 he was sent to the University of New South Wales in Sydney to attend a three month short course in traffic planning and control.

He worked on the traffic signal controls on the South Eastern Freeway which opened in 1972 and is today known as the Monash Freeway. In those days the signals were fixed-timed on the traffic lights. And although maths played a role in the design of signals it was imperative the timing was checked to ensure road traffic operations flowed around the city (and state) and operated efficiently – especially in a city whose population was continually expanding. Calculating solutions to solve these problems was not always easy as there were no microprocessors or computers like today to alleviate these issues. Microprocessors were just coming in when he retired.

In July 1974 the Highways section of the Board of Works was amalgamated with the Country Roads Board and he continued to work on signal design. His office was relocated to the Kew offices of the CRB.

He also did some part time teaching at RMIT to supplement his income.

He retired in November 1982. He joined the joined the VicRoads Association and attended many of our lunches and functions, always enjoying catching up with past colleagues.

## VALE

### Richard Howland

I have only just heard that Richard (Dick) Howland died in September 2019 at the age of 92. Dick worked in Bridge Division. Dick was a memorable character and those who knew him will always remember his immaculate attire and speech. We extend our sincere sympathy to Rosa.

# LEST WE FORGET



I have been able to get more information about some of the officers included in Newsletter 223 and some new entries altogether – as shown below. These are included in the master copy of Newsletter 223 on the website.

Thank you to Kelvin York, John Rebecchi, Noel Anderson, Stan Hodgson and Ian Goldie for additional information.

In this newsletter I propose to concentrate on members of the RAAF. The contribution of Australia to the war in the air was enormous. In Australia when we think of war we remember Gallipoli, Tobruk and Kokoda. But few think of the air force. However, thirty percent of all Australians killed in the Second World War – for all services – were members of the RAAF serving against Germany and Italy. Even more remarkable, 27,000 Australians served in the air war against Germany and Italy, which is three percent of the 900,000 Australians who served. Few Australians realize that three percent of Australia's service personnel suffered 30 percent of those killed in action.

According to the Imperial War Museum in London, the bomber war was fought mainly by young men in their late teens and early twenties. A quarter of them came from Australia, Canada and New Zealand. More than 8,000 men were killed in training and non-operational flying accidents.

Operational flying was perilous. During the war, 51% of air crew were killed in operations, 12% were killed in non-operational accidents and 13% became prisoners of war. Only 24% remained alive.

## Lloyd George Lawson 401223



Flying Officer Lloyd Lawson

Lloyd was born in Camberwell in 1916 and attended Scotch College. He enlisted in January 1941 and in his enlistment paper he cites his civilian occupation as chicken sexer.

Lloyd attended his initial training course at the 1 Wireless Air Gunners School (WAGS) in Ballarat where over 6,000 RAAF personnel were trained during WW2. Approximately 20% of the trainees died in action or on active service.

WAGS was established in April 1940 as part of the Empire Training Scheme which aimed to support RAF Bomber Command. There were 58 Wireless Air Gunner Courses and 12 Navigator Courses conducted between 1940 and 1945. Lloyd attended the eleventh course between March and August 1941. Thirty five of his fellow trainees were killed in action and others were to become prisoners of war.

Lloyd also trained in Port Pirie and left Australia in the *Mariposa* in October 1941. He disembarked in Bournemouth and he was crewed up with Flight Sergeant G.N. Reeve D.F.C.. Reeve returned to Australia but was killed in an air accident after his return.

He served in the RAAF over Europe with the Pathfinder Force in Bomber Command and was discharged in February 1946 with the rank of Flight Lieutenant.

The Pathfinder Force was an elite corps of crews with high navigational ability. It evolved from the somewhat limited accuracy of bomber crews during the early years of the war together with the development of more sophisticated and difficult to use electronic navigational aids. In August 1942, the officer in charge of Bomber Command, hand-picked crews from operational bomber squadrons to form the Pathfinder Force. It was commanded by veteran Australian bomber pilot, Air Commodore D.C.T. Bennett, who retained command throughout the war.

The gallantry of the Pathfinder Force is now legendary. Its contribution to the war effort was immense and the greatest of its many successes was its part in the sustained Battle of the Ruhr. The Pathfinder Force flew over 50,000 individual sorties against some 3,440 targets. The cost in human lives was grievous. At least 3,727 members were killed on operations.

Lawson completed 45 operations with 35 Squadron after which he won his Pathfinder Badge. He completed 37 missions with Reeve. The other eight were with various pilots, one of whom was Commanding Officer Brian Robinson D.F.C. who was later killed. He completed two raids over Berlin with Robinson and said it was a terrifying experience as the Group Captain believed in flying straight and level across the target – and did so through all the Berlin defences.

His tour included raids on Kiel, Stuttgart, Pilsen, Duisburg, Essen, Hamburg, Turin, Milan, Lorient, Naxaire, and many other targets.

Flight Sergeant Lloyd Lawson was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal, conferred on him by the King at Buckingham Palace on 2 November, 1943. The citation stated: *"With a large number of operational sorties to his credit, Flight Sergeant Lawson has proved himself to be a most capable and efficient Air Gunner. During his missions, when severe opposition has been encountered, he has never faulted in his duties. The safety of his aircraft has frequently been dependent upon his direction and the effective operation of his guns. Throughout all his operations, which includes attacks on Essen, Hamburg, Berlin, Turin and Milan, his conduct has been exemplary"*.

There is a report on file by Pilot Officer G. N. Reeve which describes an incident on one mission. It is written in a very stilted, militaristic style so I will paraphrase it. Reeve was nervous because it was his thirteenth mission over Germany



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL UK0621

2 November 1943 – RAAF officers outside Buckingham Palace after an investiture. Left to right: Flying Officer L.G. Lawson DFM, Flying Officer C.O. Aubert DFM and Warrant Officer J. Carson DFM.

in a Halifax. They were climbing slowly at 140 m.p.h. when an engine cut out and the plane stalled. Reeve ordered the flight engineer to jettison the bombs. However one of the big bombs became stuck and the weight of it threw the plane out of balance and it began to spin. While the flight engineer struggled with the hand release the plane fell spinning from 16,000 feet to 8,000 feet. At this height, Reeve ordered the crew to bale out. He said they nearly lost Lloyd George Lawson of Melbourne. He was half way out the escape hatch when suddenly the bomb gave way and the plane straightened out. They made it back to base on three engines.

Lloyd was an Experimental Officer in Materials Research Division.

### William (Bill) James Kendall 58751

Bill was a wireless mechanic with the Royal Australian Air Force. He was born in 1924 in Hawthorn and enlisted in 1942. His previous occupation in civil life was 'as a junior pay clerk with the Dunlop Rubber Company.

Bill attended St Patrick's School in East Melbourne and the headmaster, as one of his referees said that "He is a steady, patient, willing worker of more than ordinary ability. He is a strikingly honourable, straight, reliable boy: of good address, perhaps a little diffident on first approach." I knew Bill, albeit fleetingly, but I think this is a very apt description of him as a man.

He trained in Australia and then served in the UK from 1944 to 1946. His file indicates extensive training in Australia (including Signals School at Point Cook and Richmond, NSW) before his embarkation to England. It is not clear where he was in England but there is one mention of Metheringham in Lincoln. His proficiency in all categories was rated 'A' class and his character was rated 'Very good'.



Although he never talked about his experiences after the war, one of his colleagues said that he also served as a wireless air gunner in Sunderlands for the Coastal Air Patrol.

Bill must have studied engineering after his discharge in 1946 and he worked for the CRB in Plans and Survey and later as the Municipal Engineer in Dandenong Division. He was discharged with the rank of Sergeant.



Bill's enlistment photograph and circa 1960s.

### Kevin Alexander Bush

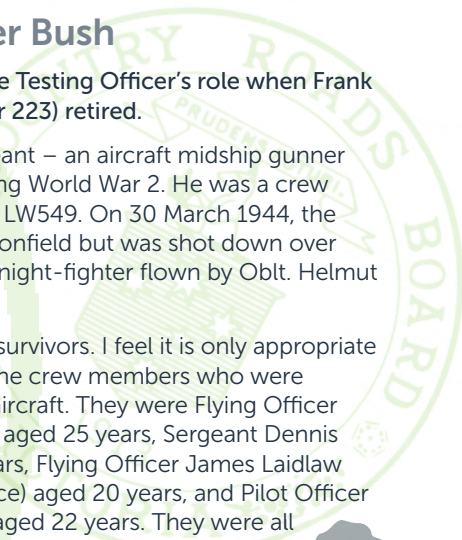
Kevin took over the Pipe Testing Officer's role when Frank Jackson (see newsletter 223) retired.

Kevin was a Flight Sergeant – an aircraft midship gunner – in 640 Squadron during World War 2. He was a crew member in a Halifax Bill LW549. On 30 March 1944, the plane took off from Leconfield but was shot down over Germany by an Me 110 night-fighter flown by Oblt. Helmut Schultze II.

Kevin was one of three survivors. I feel it is only appropriate to record the death of the crew members who were recorded as lost in the aircraft. They were Flying Officer Martin Corcoran (RAAF) aged 25 years, Sergeant Dennis Cutler (RAF) aged 21 years, Flying Officer James Laidlaw (Royal Canadian Air Force) aged 20 years, and Pilot Officer Frederick Shuttle (RAF) aged 22 years. They were all boys in my eyes.

Three survived. Apart from Kevin the other two were Flying Officer John Austen (RAF) and Flight Sergeant James Henderson (RAF). As the plane was going down, Kevin could not immediately undo the Perspex bubble in order to get out of the crippled bomber. Finally, he was able to release the bubble and jumped out to find that he was hanging by only one strap of his parachute as he descended.

He landed in the snow and injured his ankle. A German policeman arrived on the scene and told Kevin to stand up. Kevin couldn't because of his injured ankle. He was subsequently handed over to the German military and became a Prisoner of War in Stalag Luft L6 Heydekrug until the war ended.



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Immediately after the war, before joining the CRB, Kevin worked as a carpenter building houses for the building workers on the Eildon Dam project. He enjoyed this part of his life largely because he could drive around the district in his MG sports car accompanied by his wife Lily.

Kevin retired from the CRB in 1981.

### Arnold Ralph Easton 410469

Arnold was born in Corryong in 1917, and after attending primary and secondary schools in Bairnsdale, he started work as a civil engineer at Preston City Council, studying at night at Swinburne and RMIT. He enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force in January 1942. He cited his previous trade and trade qualifications as Draftsman, Assistant Engineer and Survey Draftsman.



Arnold Easton at enlistment and in 1979.

In his first year with the RAAF, he trained as a navigator at Somers, Mt Gambier, Port Pirie and Nhill. In 1942 he was a Pilot Officer and was promoted to Flying Officer in 1943 and finally to Flight Lieutenant in 1944.

He left Melbourne in January 1943 for Brighton in the UK (via the USA) where he attended Officer's School. He was posted to 467 Squadron at Waddington in Lincolnshire. He flew in Lancaster bombers and was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross (D.F.C.). It stated that Flight Lieutenant Easton had completed numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which, he invariably displayed the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty. In his discharge papers, his Squadron Leader said: "This Officer is outstanding in every way. His great sense of duty and efficiency has been an inspiration to all. He is highly competent and extremely reliable." His Group Captain, D. Bonham-Carter added: "I have a very high opinion of this officer".



This is the regular crew of Old Fred on 23 of the plane's 49 missions. Two men were RAF and the remainder were RAAF. Arnold – the Navigator – is centre rear.

Arnold published a book in 1997 called *We Flew Old Fred: The Fox Lancaster POF (DV372)*. In it, he meticulously detailed every mission he flew as described in his log book. He identified every crew member and described what happened on each mission, including the flight paths.



This was the route taken for the raid on St Pierre du Mont on 5/6 June, 1944 (D-Day).

The route was taken well to the west to be clear of the Normandy invasion forces.





A painting of Old Fred the Fox

The forward section of Arnold's plane is in the Imperial War Museum. I found an article on <https://somethingverybig.com/tag/lancaster-dv372/> written by Adam Purcell in 2009, which provided the following information.

Avro Lancaster Mk I DV372 of 467 Squadron flew its first operation on 18 November 1943. The target was Berlin. Over the next seven months the aircraft would fly on 50 raids, including the entire Battle of Berlin period, the infamous Nuremberg Raid and the Transportation Plan operations on French railway targets in the lead-up to D-Day.

*Old Fred*, as it was known on account of its squadron code letters PO-F, was on the strength of 467 Squadron. The man with whom *Old Fred* is probably most associated, is Flight Lieutenant Arnold Easton, a 467 Squadron navigator who flew 20 trips in the aircraft from March until May 1944. His logbook was preserved, and befitting his civilian career as a civil engineer, it is one of the most detailed and comprehensive wartime logbooks. It was the basis of the book, *We Flew Old Fred – The Fox*, written by Arnold after the war.

Like many surviving Bomber Command aircrew, Arnold kept some bits and pieces relating to his wartime service when he returned to Australia. Arnold's son, Geoff, used to play with his flying helmet, putting it on and pretending to connect the intercom cable, with its distinctive bell-shaped Bakelite plug, into an imaginary 'aeroplane'. Somehow it never stayed plugged in.

Geoff and his wife decided to donate his leather flying helmet and metal circular navigational computer to the Imperial War Museum in London. They were unique relics with a direct connection to *Old Fred*. They allowed Geoff and his wife to crawl into the aeroplane through the bomb aimer's escape hatch in the nose. They then used the yellow handrails on the side of the fuselage to move up underneath the flight engineer's position into the cockpit proper. There, just behind the pilot's seat, was the navigator's bench and, tucked in underneath it, attached

to a swinging arm, the unpadded metal bucket chair in which Geoff's father sat for twenty operations over enemy territory. Pulling the chair out, Geoff sat down and placed the helmet on the desk. He looked around, soaking up the atmosphere. Among the instruments and equipment remaining in the cramped compartment, hanging from the bulkhead to his left was a rather familiar-looking bell-shaped Bakelite plug. Could it be?

Geoff picked up the end of the intercom cable on the helmet. He pushed the two bell-shaped plugs together. There was a snug click. For the first time in nearly 70 years, the flying helmet was reunited with *Old Fred*. Geoff stood up, stooping somewhat under the low roof of the fuselage. He exited the aeroplane the same way he came in, leaving his father's flying helmet on the desk.



The forward section of Old Fred.

Arnold also described his emotions when he visited the Imperial War Museum when he re-acquainted himself with *Old Fred*. He said:

*'As I gaze up at her, a feeling of deep pride engulfs me. She looks huge. Just for a fleeting moment I feel she is mine and mine alone. It is hard now to comprehend the fact that she has survived all those daring, tumultuous and hair-raising experiences, half a century ago. Many times I guided her through periods of unbelievable difficulty and danger, and then, after debriefing, slept, as best I could,*

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*whilst she was prepared by the ground-crews ready to venture forth once more the next night.*

*I always wondered what was to come next – life or death? A parachute jump from a blazing aircraft? Escape or capture? Imprisonment perhaps for years to come? If we had known, would we be able to cope? Now as I gaze at her my emotions deepen. It is unbelievable. All I feel like doing is to reach out and touch her. She is real! Events of long ago flood through my mind. The aura which has enveloped the two of us is indescribable – is it a type of love? Admiration perhaps. Or just deep respect we have one for the other? For all that time she has waited patiently in the Museum for one of her Australian crew members to come to her – other Australians have come, only to gaze, and then seemingly unimpressed, just pass her by.*

*Suddenly out of the blue it seems as if PO-F quietly says to me – “Let’s live again one of those bombing raids, eh?” Like a flash, my inner being urges me to shout the reply, “Now? I wouldn’t have the guts to!” Perhaps it is my pride that prompts me to remain silent and she continues – “What about that nine hour trip to Munich?”*

In September 1945, at his own request, he was transferred to the Reserve to join Qantas Airways as a navigator. There he flew in Lancastrians – the civil version of a Lancaster - between Sydney and Karachi, but health problems forced him into giving up flying and he returned to life as a civil engineer. He qualified in 1950 and worked for APM before joining the CRB in 1973 where he worked until his retirement in 1979.

Like Bill Kendall (also ex-RAAF), Arnold worked in the Municipal Section at Dandenong Division. One day he brought in some long, aluminium strips, which his aircraft had dropped as part of the British ‘Windows’ deception to confuse German radar operators.

He freely talked of his experiences – some of his colleagues thought it was his way of coping. However, his colleague in Dandenong Division, Stan Hodgson, told me that the Chief Engineer at the time, John Mathieson, had asked Stan to ensure that Arnold was provided with work that was not too stressful.

## John Butcher 159104



John was born in Northcote and enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force in January 1945 when he was an 18 year old student. It was noted on his enlistment form that he played the mouth organ. He was a Leading Aircraftman (LAC) and trained as a signaller in Shepparton, Adelaide and Point Cook before being posted to 76 Wing Headquarters in Darwin – and later to the RAAF Station there.

John did not serve outside Australia and was discharged in May 1946. On discharge, he was awarded the Returned from Active Service Badge and, in 1987, he wrote to the Air Office (Department of Defence) to see if he was eligible for the General Service Medal and/or the Defence Medal which were issued after the war. The answer was as follows:

*‘As a result of your service in the RAAF, you qualified for the awards of the War Medal 1939-45 and the Return from Active Service Badge.*

*The Defence Medal was awarded to members of the RAAF who completed six months non-operational service in the Northern Territory, north of parallel 14.5 south latitude between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945.*

*The Australia Service Medal 1939-45 was awarded for eighteen months full time service between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945.’*

So, because he enlisted so late in the war, John did not qualify for these additional awards.

John worked for 38 years with the CRB. He started work at the Exhibition Building in July 1946, as a junior clerk in the Claims Section of Accounting Branch. He was 19 years old. He spent most of his career in the accounting field, except for a brief sojourn in Benalla as the Divisional Engineer’s Clerk. He eventually became an Allocations Officer (Municipal) in 1977, assessing Councils’ requests for funds and making recommendations to the Board. He retired in 1984 and died in 2005. He met his wife, Patricia Elliot, at the Exhibition Building where she worked for about 5 years, until they married in 1958.



Warren Butcher’s first day at VicRoads – December 1960. With his father, John, at the opening of the office in Kew.

Their son, Warren, also worked for the CRB/RCA/VicRoads from 1979 until 2006 in the Major Projects Division. He was initially a plant operator in Metropolitan Division and later became a Senior Surveillance Manager on major projects like the M80, Monash Freeway, and the Hallam and Pakenham Bypasses, among many other projects.

## James (Jim) Henry Albert Drayton

56270

Jim was born at Winchelsea in 1917. He enlisted in May 1942 and joined the Royal Australian Air Force. He was working at the Country Roads Board at the time of his enlistment. His file in the Australian Archives has not been digitised so I have relied on information provided by his daughter, Jan.

He was attached to the Airfield Construction Squadron in the Northern Territory (NT). It is likely that he joined the first squadron which was formed at Ascot Vale in April 1942 – known as the 1 Mobile Works Squadron. It moved to Pine Creek in July 1942. It was renamed 1 Airfield Construction Squadron in July 1944. The Squadron left for Morotai in Indonesia in January 1945 and relocated from there to Tarakan in Borneo in April 1945. The Unit was disbanded on 30th November 1945.

However his posting at discharge was with No. 7 Airfield Construction Squadron (7ACS) so that he must have been transferred at some time. This unit was first formed in October 1943 as No. 7 Mobile Works Squadron and served in the New Guinea and Bougainville Campaigns.

He was sent to the NT immediately after enlisting as his first letter home to Ella, his wife, was dated January 1943. He wrote many, many letters to her during the three and a half years he was in the RAAF.



Ella and Jim Drayton.

He was a Corporal at the time of his discharge in 1945. He joined the CRB soon after returning from the war and remained for the rest of his career with CRB until he retired in 1975. He was employed as a grader driver in Geelong Division then moved to Box Hill and became the Chief Driving Instructor attached to the Mechanical Sub-Branch at Syndal. This role saw him working throughout Victoria in training drivers and assisting in the purchase of new plant. He was then promoted to an Engineering Assistant position located on the fourth floor at 60 Denmark St as a controller of the CRB's construction plant throughout the state until he retired.

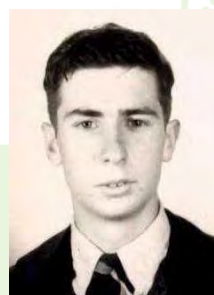
He talked very rarely about his time in the RAAF up until members of his family travelled to the NT. He recalled how they used to jump from their machines and hide in trenches when the Japanese fighters came over.



Jim died in 1999. Jim had another connection to the CRB. His daughter, Jan, married Norm Bettess. At Jim's suggestion, Norm joined the CRB in 1966 and worked in Plans and Survey (under Noel Anderson – ex RAAF), in Dandenong Division and in Building Services until he resigned in 2001.

Jim Drayton

## Alan Graeme Muir 148033



Alan was born in Flemington in 1926 and enlisted in the RAAF at Essendon in March 1944 when he was 18. At discharge in June 1946, he was a Leading Aircraftman posted at Air Defence Headquarters in Darwin. His record shows that he was suitable to train as a radar operator because his maths and speech were deemed to be 'OK'.

Alan's enlistment photograph.

The daily pay applicable to his mustering was six shillings and sixpence (6/6) per day. If he were married he would have received an extra 4/6 – and for children, 3/6, 2/6 and 1/6 for each child thereafter.

He attended Radar School at Richmond in NSW and was posted to Darwin where he served until his discharge.

Alan was head of the Geology Section in Materials Research Division of the CRB for many years.



## And now for something beautiful

*I would love to receive your suggestions or submissions on what you think is truly beautiful.*

So far we have explored art, music, poetry and architecture. I think in this issue I would like to look at squares or piazzas. Although these are all man-made spaces I think it is likely that many of them just grew without any plan. I love international travel and one of my favourite pastimes was to sit in a local square – whether it be village or city – and watch the locals at work and play. They are great places to sit and read, or to eat and have a coffee.



The fountains at play in the courtyard of Somerset House.

Most of all, I like to see children playing. In Somerset House in London you can walk through a colonnade away from the bustle of The Strand into a large, multi-purpose courtyard. It is used for concerts and in summer, an array of 55 fountains dance vertically in the air for children to get soaking wet. In London in summer, it is uncomfortably hot so why not cool off in the fountains? In winter, it is home to a popular open air ice rink which appeared in the opening credits of *Love Actually*.

This is not the most beautiful square in the world but the memory of the enjoyment of the children will stay with me. I loved seeing them shrieking with excitement in the water.

A square that could easily be thought to have been built without a plan is the Piazza del Campo in Siena, Italy. But it is quite intentional. It's homogenous architectural form was dictated by guidelines drawn up in 1297, before the actual building of the square and the civic buildings. If any structure didn't adhere, then they were torn down – as was the antique church for St. Peter and Paul. This signifies that it was always the intention to create a harmonious structure between the buildings and the square.

And it is not a square. It has a circumference of 333 metres and is paved with a shell shape design of red brick divided by 10 lines of white travertine stone creating a shell like appearance with nine sections pointing directly to Palazzo Pubblico, the civic headquarters.

It is famous for the Palio of Siena – arguably is the most important event in Siena, taking place on July 2 and August 16 every year. In the Palio, the various Siennese "contrade", or areas in which the city is divided, challenge each other in a passionate horse race in the heart of the city in the Piazza del Campo.

Another square that I love is in Krakow, Poland. It is the centre of the city and is the largest medieval square in Europe 3.8 hectares or 9.5 acres. It dates back to the 13th Century and its busy street life attracts tourists from around the world. Historic townhouses and churches comprise its perimeter and in the centre stands the huge Cloth Hall Built in the Renaissance style with a beautiful attic decorated with masks.

Squares don't have to be big to be enjoyable. I visited Sicily in 2009. It was a captivating place with many memorable sites and experiences. When we got to Palermo we



Siena's Piazza del Campo.



Siena's Piazza del Campo.



Krakow's Rynek Główny (City Square)

immersed ourselves in places like the botanic gardens (one of the earliest in the world) and the Capella Palatina (the Palantine Chapel) and the Monreale Cathedral – both World Heritage sites. It was truly exciting.

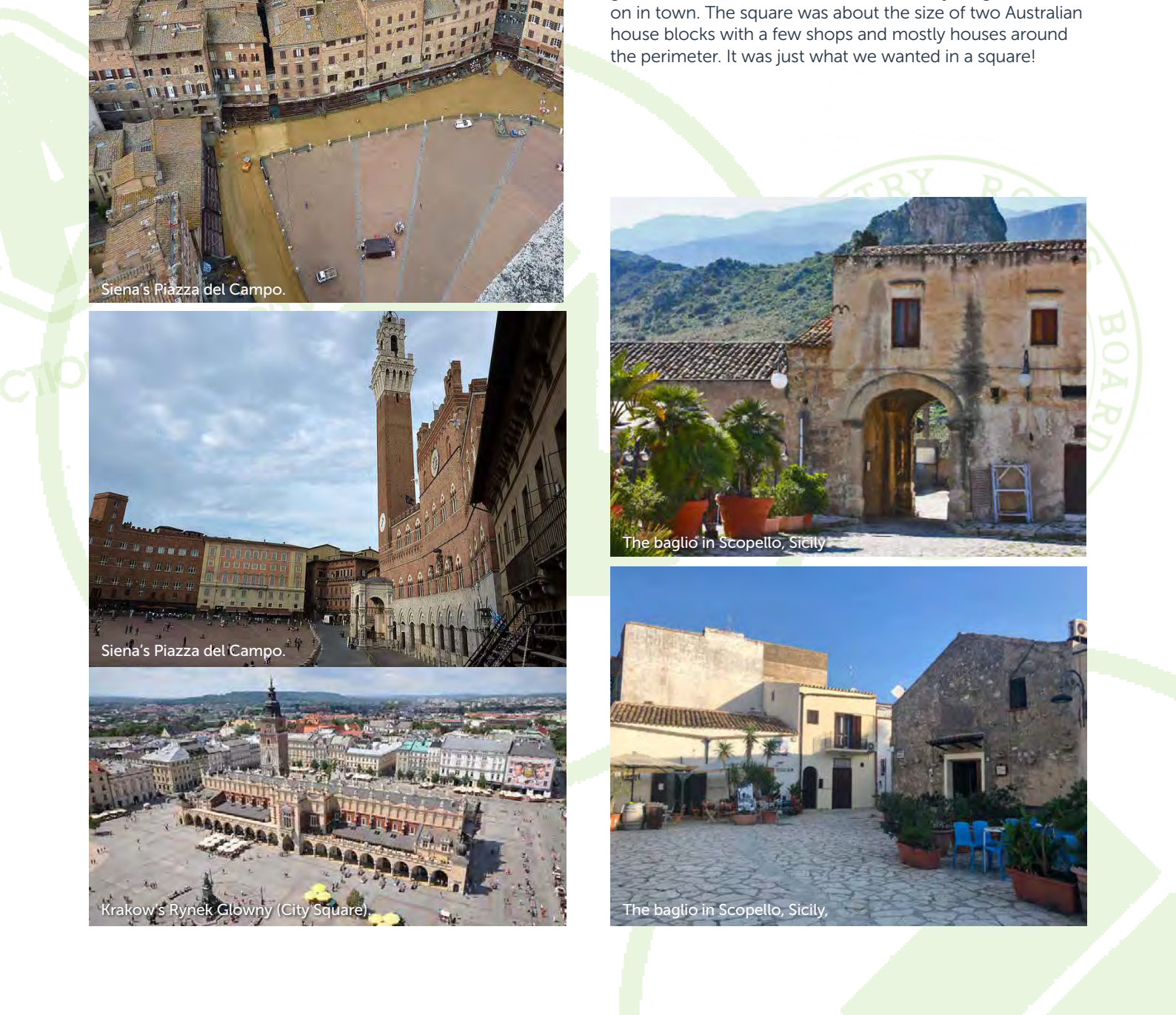
However by that stage we felt that we needed a day or two of rest and recreation and we looked at our road map and saw a small village on the coast – a fairly short drive from Palermo. It was called Scopello. We were travelling with friends and we decided to aim for there and see what transpires. We hit the jackpot. It was perched on a cliff above the sea with a few hotels which offered us relaxing accommodation and in the centre of the village was the old baglio. Here we sat drinking coffee and eating delicious gelati – read and talked and watched everything that went on in town. The square was about the size of two Australian house blocks with a few shops and mostly houses around the perimeter. It was just what we wanted in a square!



The baglio in Scopello, Sicily



The baglio in Scopello, Sicily,



## The 'Old Tin Shed'

Reading Noel Anderson's recollections of working in the 'Old Tin Shed' certainly brought back memories of the similar humorous stories that dad, Donald John 'Jack' Ross, shared with us over the years.



Jack commenced his career with the CRB in March 1956 and settled straight into the Plans & Survey Division in the 'Old Tin Shed'. Many strong friendships began during this period and remained so throughout dad's life, with Noel certainly being one of those.

During the period, about 1956-1961, we were living in a CRB house at 116 Springvale Rd, Springvale so the commute was certainly a fair distance. I believe this house was one of many properties purchased in preparation for road development but as the house still exists, I assume plans were changed.

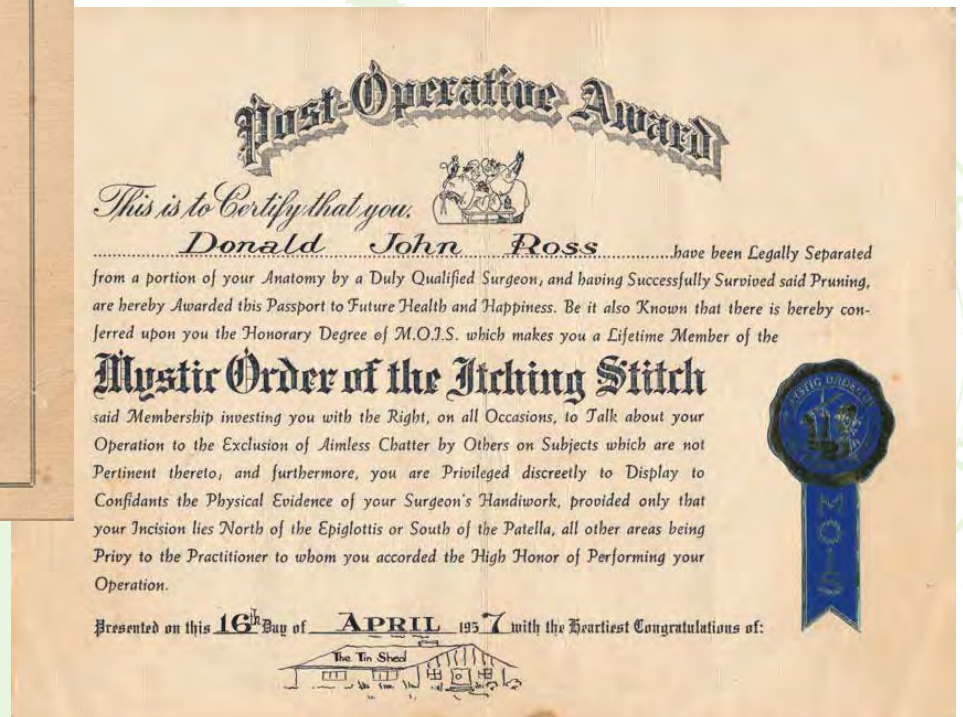
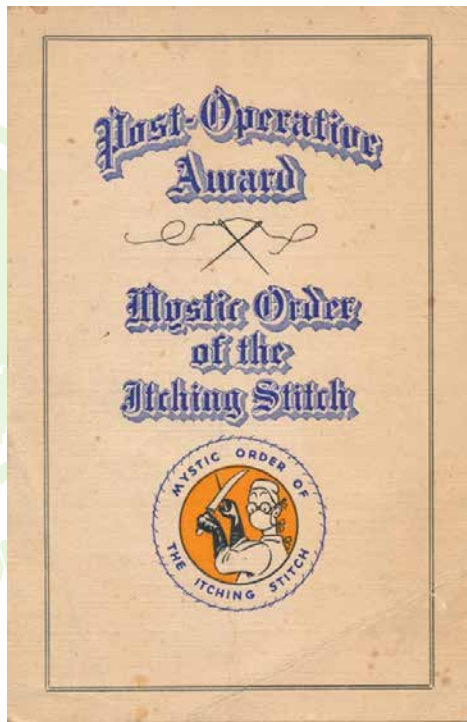
Thankfully dad was a hoarder, and it is so interesting to explore his memorabilia. The following photo was tucked away with the document that was obviously published in an early newsletter.



Another example of the good-hearted humour that took place within the corrugated walls was displayed after Jack had surgery in 1957. For years Jack had suffered from regular bouts of Tonsillitis but over the previous year it progressed to Quinsy and Jack was off work and bedridden having treatment. It was finally decided that the time had come to remove the offending tonsils.

Even though I was only a small child at the time, I have a strong memory of dad going to hospital, having surgery and then recovering at home... he was not a good patient but even he managed a laugh when presented with the following from his new workplace!

Janet Macloy (Ross)



## Trivia and didactic whimsies

### A different sort of war

Kelvin York first put me on to Lloyd Lawson's story of service in the RAAF and suggested to me a number of other people who served during the war including Harold Sharpie Eicke, VX114998. Harold was an accountant and finished his career as the Board's Auditor. I remember him badgering me about what I thought were trivial details when I was the Project Manager on the West Gate Freeway – but I suppose that is what auditors are all about.

#### But Kelvin told me the following story.

Lloyd and our Harold were not the best of buddies. When we worked on the Lower Yarra Crossing Project at Altona, staff were requested to have their salary paid into a bank account. All did, except Lloyd, who insisted on cash payment. He didn't want his wife to know how much he received. Harold was the Metro Divisional Accountant. He was obliged to bring Lloyd's pay to the site each fortnight, which he did with obvious displeasure.

We had a regular courier service to transport concrete test cylinders from the site laboratory to Kew. On days when Harold was expected, Lloyd would keep a few cylinders aside. He would then prevail upon Harold to deliver these cylinders, saying they had missed the regular collection and were due for testing that day. He added that, if Harold didn't, Lloyd would have to hire a courier. Harold was very cost-conscious, and had to agree, although again with obvious displeasure. I guess he thought it undignified for the Divisional Accountant to be seen unloading the cylinders at Kew.

Lloyd and Gordon Wilson used to travel home from Altona via the Kew RSL. One day I received a phone call from Lloyd's wife, complaining about the excessive amount of overtime he was obliged to work. We never worked overtime on weekdays, but I had to tell her that it was essential that he did so in order not to delay the construction program. I don't know whether or not she believed me.

### What's in a Name?

Did you know that the word refugee entered the English language from the French word *refugié*, literally 'refuged', applying to one who's taken refuge?

In Australia, the surnames: Chauvel, La Trobe, La Nauze, Cazaly/Cazalet, Dumas, Collette, Cordner, Arnaud, Bartel, Barrett, Bellett, Bonyng, Boyer, Bonney, Bernard, Fontaine, Fletcher, Emery, Gambier, Gilbert, Gross, Joubert, Jaques, Lambert, Lansell, Latreille, Lepine, Martin, Olivier, Perdriau, Rivett, Robin(s) Touzeau, Vautier, Winnett and many others, are of Huguenot origin.

Huguenot was the nickname given to French Protestants in the 16th Century who tended to be middle or upper class and able to read. Tens of

thousands fled from France during the 17th Century, particularly after 1685, when the limited toleration of the Edict of Nantes was revoked. This occurred during the reign of Louis XIV, the 'Sun King' who built the Palace of Versailles. The refugees made their way to the British Isles, Ireland, Holland, Germany, US, even as far as South Africa. It's now thought that one in seven people in England probably have French Huguenot ancestry.

In England, where the majority settled, as they became integrated into the English-speaking community, some changed their names and spellings: from Dubois to Wood, Blanc to White, Le Noir to Black, from Petit to Little or even Pettit etc. If you're interested, the Huguenot Society of Australia Inc. has lists of names and research. <http://www.huguenotsaustralia.org.au>