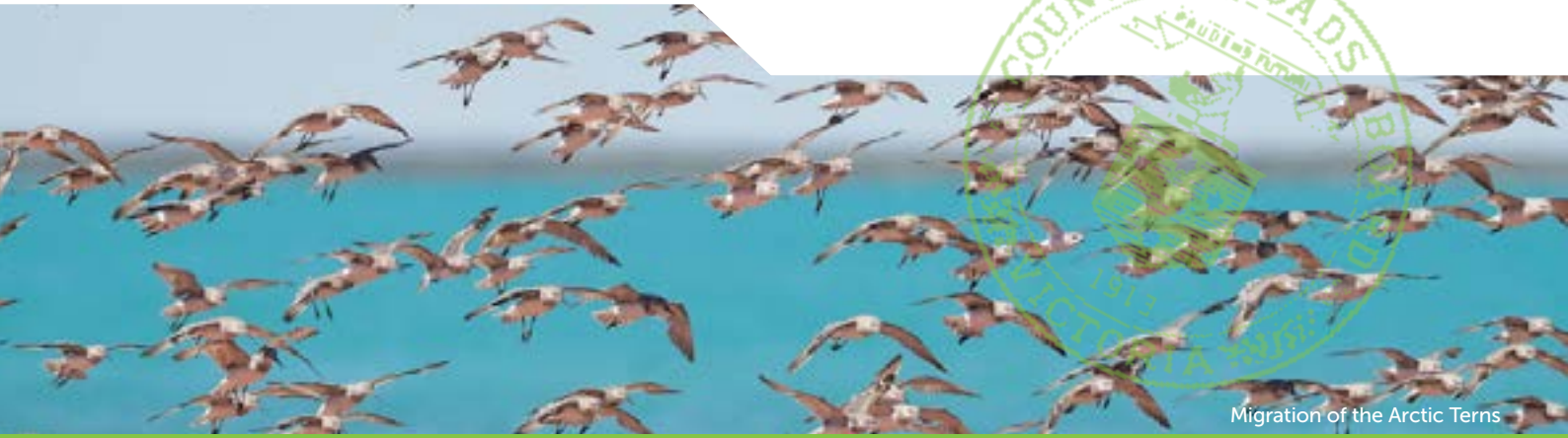


# VicRoads Association

## Newsletter No. 228



Migration of the Arctic Terns

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 have two very dear friends – both engineers – whom I have known since the 1960s. One is English and the other is Australian. Both share my interest in art and history. I met both of them for the first time in London at around the same time. I enjoy the company of these two men immensely. Always have. But I rarely see them as one lives in London and the other in Adelaide. I rate them in the category of 'best friends'.

David Stacey is the Englishman. He and I worked together in the design office of Rendel, Palmer and Tritton (RPT) in Victoria Street London on the design of two English power stations – Eggborough in Yorkshire and Ironbridge B in Shropshire. Both power stations closed down in the past few years. David was sent to Eggborough and I was sent to Ironbridge to assist in the supervision of their construction. After I left England to return to Australia, David was sent to Jordan where RPT carried out all engineering duties for the Hashemite Kingdom. Later, he left RPT and joined another firm and became an international water resources consultant, working in South and South East Asia and the Middle East.

We eventually lost touch but when Pam and I went back to England in 1985, I was able to contact him and our friendship resumed immediately. He and his family came out to Australia for a holiday in the 1990s and David has again visited since then. On the other hand, we have been back to London many times and enjoyed his generous hospitality. In fact it is a very lop-sided friendship in terms of providing hospitality.

David is, in my view, an excellent draughtsman and water colourist. He will be very embarrassed when he reads this – I send him the newsletter – and I expect him to scoff at this but I stand by my opinion.

David has had a lifelong interest in British painting of the 18th and 19th centuries. He has contributed articles to *The British Art Journal*, *The Burlington Magazine* and other academic

journals on the art history of this period. In addition to his engineering qualifications he has a postgraduate degree in the History of Art from Birkbeck College, University of London. Early this year his book, *Art and Industry*, was published and his research and scholarship astounds me. I have nothing but admiration for him and I am fortunate to have his friendship. I will write more about David's book in future newsletters.

The Australian friend is Hugh Orr. I met him at a party of Australian friends in Maida Vale on the eve of his departure for America. He ended up working for Skidmore Owings and Merrill in San Francisco and the next time I met him was in 1966 when he arrived on the door step of our wreck of a house in Canterbury, with his American wife (Diane) and their small daughter, Pamela. They were living nearby and later, bought a house in our neighbourhood. Although they shifted back to Adelaide – where Hugh's family lived – we keep in touch regularly and have had many happy times together.

Hugh's interest in art, like David's, involves writing about it. He is a keen collector of prints and artefacts and he has been researching the work of John Gould for many years. I am sure many of you would have been members of the *Gould League of Bird Lovers* during your school days. Named to honour the work of John and Elizabeth Gould, *The Gould League of Bird Lovers* was formed in 1909. It was originally set up to prevent bird egg collecting and to educate for the protection of Australian birds. Gould League members were recruited via schools and received membership certificates and badges. Members were encouraged to enter competitions in bird mimicry, write stories and poems and attend 'bird-day concerts'.

The Gould League has made a significant impact on generations of Australians and their environmental attitudes. Being a Gould league member as a child in primary school gave children the opportunity to belong to a group that was learning about and protecting native bushland and its wildlife. Although not operating in some Australian states the Gould League still functions in Victoria.

Hugh has written extensively about the whole process of the production of Gould's prints, some details of which I will publish in later newsletters. However in this newsletter, under the heading 'And Now For Something Beautiful' I have included a blog based on a paper by Hugh and written by Karen Severud Cook, recently retired, of the University of Kansas, Kenneth Spencer Research Library which has the largest collection of Gouldiana in the world - and that is another story! They have given their permission to reproduce it. I have edited it very slightly.

I hope you enjoy it.

David Jellie,  
Chairman and Editor



## News from VicRoads

### Registration and Licensing

The following press release was issued early in September.

'The Victorian Government is inviting suitably qualified parties to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to be a joint venture partner to support the delivery of VicRoads' Registration and Licensing (R&L) and Custom Plates services.

The R&L business maintains registers of more than six million registered operators and five million driver licence holders, including learner permit holders and boat licence holders, registered operators of motorcycles and heavy vehicles in Victoria. R&L also plays an integral role in supporting access to the network and most importantly, regulating safer drivers and vehicles.

The Custom Plates business offers the public the opportunity to select the colour, size, design and shape of number plates and buy the individual display rights to a registration number.

The Government is seeking an established, mature and trusted partner for this exciting opportunity to modernise a number of VicRoads services to make them more user-friendly for motorists and deliver value for money for all Victorians.

Leading up to this major milestone, VicRoads and Department of Transport employees and their

representatives, stakeholders and industry partners have been actively engaged on the proposed joint venture and will continue to be engaged at every stage of the development.

The Government can also confirm that all employees involved in the delivery of R&L and Custom Plate services will be offered a position with the joint venture partner or the Department of Transport on terms and conditions that are no less favourable.

The Government, together with the Australian Services Union and the Community and Public Sector Union have reached an agreement on the key terms and conditions which will support current employees. Following this agreement, formal consultation will commence on the proposed operating model and staff matching process.

The joint venture model will ensure the Government keeps responsibility for key regulatory and policy functions, retains ownership and regulation of data, and will continue control of pricing, privacy, road access and safety.

The joint venture partner would operate the relevant functions of R&L, while modernising the IT system, promoting innovation, and enhancing customer experience through increased investment.'

## What's coming up

### Occasional Lunches at Shoppingtown Hotel 12 noon

*Monday 8 November*

*Monday 7 February 2022*

There is no longer a requirement to contact Kelvin York – just turn up if COVID protocols permit.

### Dinner at Glen Waverley RSL

We have had to cancel dinner on the 7th October because of COVID rules. We will defer it until the New Year.

### Warrnambool Trip

We have had to cancel this trip because of COVID. We will reschedule it for May 2022 when the calving of the whales begin. We will provide details in later newsletters.

## Royal Australian Botanic Gardens at Cranbourne

Monday, 15 November 2021

There is still a very real possibility that this will go ahead. We have booked two bus departure times from the reception centre – one leaves at 11 am and the second at 12 noon. If the bus is unable to operate because of COVID restrictions we will cancel the visit until next year.



If we are able to go ahead, lunch may be available (again subject to COVID restrictions) at own cost at the Boon Wurrung Cafe after your bus tour. You can also visit the Gardens without going on the bus tour.

Contact Jim Webber if you wish to book a place on [jimwebber@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jimwebber@optusnet.com.au) or 0412 064527. Partners and friends are welcome. Also advise whether you prefer the 11am or 12 noon for the tour.

Cranbourne Gardens are at 1000 Ballarto Rd, Cranbourne. Access by car is via the South Gippsland Highway. Coming from Melbourne, drive through the town centre and turn right into Ballarto Road which is on the outskirts of Cranbourne. It is clearly sign posted.

If COVID protocols prevent this tour, we will contact all those who have registered accordingly.

## Vale

### Patricia (Pat) Russell

I was very saddened when Tom Glazebrook rang me from Bendigo to tell me that Pat, Tom's wife, had died.

After Tom's death, Pat invited me over to her place to help her in clearing out Tom's office. I was amazed at her energy and positive attitude to life. She was quite determined to sell the house and shift up to Bendigo to be close to her daughter, Jill. She achieved all this – fairly single-handedly – within a few months and after her shift I went up to Bendigo and had lunch with her. She and Tom had very fulfilling lives. I extend the sympathies of the Association to Tom and Pat's family.

### John Wilson

John died recently in Geelong after suffering Parkinson's Disease. He was 78.

John worked in Traralgon on the planning of the Warragul Bypass and later became the Assistant Divisional Engineer in Bairnsdale. Around 1990, he was appointed Divisional Engineer in Ballarat and he later moved to Geelong in the same capacity.

We extend our sympathies to his family.

## News from members

### Lyn Briggs – on Jeff Briggs and Meryl and Bill Turner

Lyn wrote to me as follows:

'Tonight I have only just read the Newsletter and saw the tribute from Mike Kennedy to Jeff, which brought me to tears. Mike and Jeff got on very well and when I also worked with Mike, we had a lot of laughs.

David I think you know Bill Turner who was the Director Finance on the Sixth Floor in the 1980s. Bill was a cadet back in 1969/70 or thereabouts and he was also a member of the Wine Club after it was formed. Bill, his wife Meryl, Jeff and I became great friends and had remained so even when they moved to Queensland. About seven years or so back, Meryl was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and went through all the chemotherapy etc, and went into remission for quite some years. Jeff and I went to Queensland in 2019 and stayed with Bill and Meryl and had a great catchup. We had stayed with them over the years when Jeff used to run in the Gold Coast marathon and caught up with them annually when they came to Melbourne to see friends in December. About a month after we returned, Meryl's cancer came back and about a month later Jeff was diagnosed with the same cancer. Jeff and Meryl both went through weeks of chemotherapy on Thursdays. Bill and I kept in close contact supporting one another. Meryl was doing OK earlier this year but things went down-hill and she was diagnosed with a rare brain disease, which was untreatable, and she passed away on 17 August, just five months after Jeff. I was able to watch the funeral online, which is a great thing now that we can't be there in person. If life had been normal, Bill would have come to Jeff's funeral and I would have flown up for Meryl's, but like lots of others, we were denied that opportunity. I keep in contact with Bill offering support, as unfortunately I know the road Bill is travelling down now. Next Friday it will be six months since Jeff passed. It is hard to believe. I am doing OK with help from my wonderful neighbours, family and friends. I have had to learn so much over the past months, selling my car, paying bills online, online banking, changing all the bills into my name, sorting out Jeff's superannuation over to me etc. but see a light at the end of the tunnel, only a couple of things left to sort out, thank goodness.

I seem to have rattled on a bit, hope you don't mind. Hopefully the dinner will go ahead but if not, when it can finally go ahead it will be great to see every-one at the RSL.

Lyn.'

### Derek Trewarne

Derek wrote to me in response to my request for photographs of people for Roads to War. This is what he wrote:

'Hi David,

Please find attached a picture of Flying Officer John Henry Pittard 419670 who enlisted on September 11, 1942 aged 18 years. He became a flying instructor stationed in Benalla. John was my uncle.

I've very much enjoyed the information and stories about CRB/VicRoads personal who served in the World Wars. I hadn't realised how many men I knew had served in the forces. I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised as I started work at the CRB as a junior clerk in January 1963, only eighteen years after WW2 hostilities had ceased. Military history is an interest of mine as my father was a 'thirty niner' having enlisted in November 1939. He was a lieutenant in the 6th Division's 2nd/2nd Field Regiment and saw action in North Africa, Greece, Crete and Ceylon (as it was then), before returning to Australia.

Kind regards,

Derek Trewarne



Flying Officer John Henry Pittard 419670

# LEST WE FORGET



## Flight Sergeant John James Joseph Turner 410017



John's enlistment photo and another taken in Halifax in May 1943. On the reverse it said 'Enjoying the sunshine outside the barracks.'

John joined the RAAF just shy of his 21st birthday in June 1941. He described himself as a clerk (at the Country Roads Board, Exhibition Buildings).

He was born in North Carlton and was living in Northcote. He was a bright student having attended Christian Brothers College and St Kevin's. In his Leaving Certificate year he successfully completed English and British History (both with honours), Latin, French, Maths 1, Maths 2 and Maths 3 and by the time he enlisted he had four subjects to complete the course for the Association of Accountants of Australia. He was tall when compared to most of the others – six feet – and played in Ivanhoe's 1st eleven in sub-district cricket as well as football, golf, water polo and tennis.

He attended training schools as a navigator at Temora, Bradfield Park (both NSW) and Ascot Vale (Victoria) and in August 1942 he embarked for Canada where he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). There he was awarded his Air Observer's Badge and by April 1943 he was in Halifax, Yorkshire, where RAF 15 Squadron was based. During John's service, this squadron was engaged in the battles of Berlin, Ruhr, Biscay Ports, France and Germany and Fortress Europe.

He was killed in action described as a flying battle on 8 June 1944 although the circumstances of his death was a mystery. The file states:

*"In crew of Lancaster Mk-111 LM-534 which took off from Mildenhall at 0049 hours on 8.6.44 to carry out an attack on Massy. Nothing was heard of aircraft after leaving 15 Squadron, RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk, England.*

*In crew were: Flt Sgt J.J.J. Turner*

*Flt Sgt J.E. Armstrong*

*Flt Sgt C.J. Watson buried Bonnelle, Seine et Oise*

*and 3 RAF, 1 RCAF*

*IRRC (presumably International Red Cross) advise Lilley, Hales both RAF and 1 unknown dead.*

*NOK (next of kin) notified of burial by letter 27.6.46."*

This is the only entry in his file regarding his death – and it was written well after the end of the war. There is no letter on the file informing John's parents. I presume that the three officers named (Turner, Armstrong and Watson) were RAAF. There is a handwritten note that said that it was checked against the IWGC (International War Graves Commission) list – dated 27/10/49. There is an indecipherable handwritten note at the bottom which, I think, relates to amended burial particulars and it is dated 1951.

However the mystery has been solved. On The Royal Air Force Command's website, there is an entry for John and the circumstances of his death. It said that they took off from Mildenhall to bomb rail facilities in support of the Normanby Landings. The plane crashed at Nonnelles (Yvelines) and exploded on impact, killing all crew members. They were all named and it said that funerals were held some 19 km ESE of Rambouillet. It also noted that they are now buried at Viroflay New Communal Cemetery, Ile-de-France, France.



Viroflay New Communal Cemetery where John and his fellow crew members are buried.

## LEST WE FORGET



### Private Ernest William Miskin 422



Private Ernest William Miskin  
– from the Australian War  
Memorial.

Roads Board letterhead requesting his Victory Medal, the typist made the same mistake. Ernest crossed out the 'e' and replaced it with 'i'. But his dilemma continued. In the photograph of the CRB staff taken in 1930 his name was again incorrectly spelt. Even on the Roll of Honour for the Allendale Fire Brigade, the spelling is incorrect.

Noel Anderson told me about a character who worked with him at the Exhibition Building and I researched his details as follows:

Ernest was born in Allendale near Creswick and enlisted at 23 years of age in July 1915. He called himself a labourer. He had some trouble with bureaucracy in that his name was often misspelt as 'Misken'. In 1922, in a letter written by Ernest on the Country



Ernest's brother, Hugh, is also on the Roll of Honour of the Allendale Fire Brigade.

Ernest was attached to the 31st Battalion and he left Australia in November 1915 on HMAT *Wandilla* A62. The page on his embarkation roll in the Australian War Memorial contains 34 names. Thirteen of them are labourers (including Ernest), two were farmers, one a cordial manufacturer, two clerks, one shearer, one confectioner, two butchers, two miners, one barman, one book-keeper, one carpenter, one caterer, one plumber, one baker, one cook, one contractor, one tram conductor and one trucker. They were all privates except one of the labourers who was described as a bugler. There is not one that would be deemed to be educated in any way. They were all from Victoria, NSW and Queensland except one from New Zealand and a few from Great Britain. Most were Church of

England and Roman Catholic except for two Presbyterians, one Baptist and two Methodists.

Some historians have written about class distinction in the British forces during the First World War. One of these was Susan Tyne who wrote a research paper that studied the relationship between officers and enlisted men in World War One. (Department of History, Rochester University, 2006). In it she said:

*"The officer class recruited for the war was officially upper class. Prior to the war, all officers in the army were recruited from British society's elite, and once war broke out, these men continued to serve in higher positions among the senior officer staff. The officers closest to the men, junior officers, are largely remembered as the "Public School Officers" since most received their training in the Officer Training Corps (O.T.C.) at boarding schools. Historian John Keegan sums up the qualities of these men: "Officers had to be gentlemen... though education at one of the public or better grammar schools which ran an O.T.C. was in practice often found sufficient..." These broader qualifications for officers opened their ranks to men from the middle class. Many arguments have been made as to why these officers, most coming from the academic world, could assimilate into the role of commander. Most discussions, however, generally conclude that the competitive spirit and structure of the public schools was so similar to the army's that there was a natural transition from school to army: "For the British regiment, with its complex and highly individual accretion of traditions, local affinities, annual rituals, inter-company rivalries, fierce autonomy and distinctive name... was an extension, indeed a creation of the Victorian public school system." Although these public school officers could assimilate into army life and structure, they brought a distinctly civilian approach to discipline and built relationships with their men just as they would with schoolmates."*

It is possible that similar distinctions occurred in the AIF although, possibly, not as pronounced. The hierarchy of upper class commanders, middle class officers and working class rank and file are apparent in the Australian Army. In fact, some soldiers played the role of servants and waited upon officers of higher class who enjoyed luxuries that the men in the trenches could not comprehend.

It was usually the Lieutenants who led the men in the field and looked after them like a mother hen and her chickens – so when an action was successful it was usually the Lieutenant who was awarded a decoration while an infantryman may only get a mention in despatches. Certainly, in the CRB annals those that were decorated were mainly the officers. I think the Second World War broke down these distinctions. Sir John Monash was an exception to the rule. Although an educated man, he had the added burden of both German and Jewish heritage to resist. In fact it was more pronounced in the Australian hierarchy than the British. The Anzac historian, Charles Bean, and Keith Murdoch conspired to remove Monash

because of his supposed inborn Jewish propensity to push himself forward. When Australia's Prime Minister, Billy Hughes, went to England to sack Monash, he consulted senior British and Australian officers who were aghast at the notion – saying that Monash was their most effective leader. Hughes changed his mind and Monash became one of the most effective generals on the Western Front. He was knighted on the battlefield by King George V.

Ernest disembarked at Suez in December 1915 and was transferred to hospital at Tel el Kebir in March 1916. He had two stints in hospital before embarking aboard a ship called 'Horcrata' in March 1916 bound for Marseilles in France to join the British Expeditionary Force. He was wounded in July 1916 with a gunshot wound to the leg – described as being slight. The 31st Battalion fought its first major battle at Fromelles on 19 July 1916, having only entered the front-line trenches three days previously. The attack was a disastrous introduction to battle for the 31st – it suffered 572 casualties, over half of its strength. I can only presume this was the battle in which Ernest was wounded.

He was hospitalised in France and then evacuated to England in August 1916. In the hospital at Norwich his wound was described as 'severe'. I suspect his leg had become infected.

In November he was transferred from Norwich to the First Auxillary Hospital at Harefield Park House in Middlesex. There, his leg was amputated. The file says "L(ef)t leg amp. to thigh." In December 1916, Ernest was transferred to another hospital and he was discharged in April 1917 for return to Australia.

He married Vera Cox in 1918 and they had three children. He must have joined the CRB soon after his return from the war as he wrote a letter from there in 1922. He had a long career at the Board – at least into the 1950s. Noel Anderson (Chapter 7) remembers him working in the 'Tin Shed' at the Exhibition Building in the Postal Section.

He died in Melbourne in 1964.



Australia's 1st Auxillary Hospital at Harefield Park.

## Private Edward Mitchell Furnmston 2460

I had trouble finding an archive for Edward because both the CRB tabulation and the Roll of Honour misspelt his name as 'Furmiston'.



Corporal Edward Mitchell Furnmston.

Edward was born in Healesville. He was 27 years old when he enlisted in July 1915. His occupation was a labourer, as were so many others who enlisted. He was attached to the 24th Battalion, 5th Reinforcements. This battalion was raised in May 1915 at Broadmeadows, Victoria. It had originally been planned that it would be formed elsewhere and draw its recruits from the less populous states of Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia. However, due to the large number of recruits from Victorian volunteers it was decided to raise the battalion in Broadmeadows using only Victorian volunteers. As a result of the hasty decision to raise the battalion, very little training was carried out before the battalion sailed from Melbourne on board RMS *Osterley* in September 1915.

Once in Egypt, like many others, he spent 19 days in hospital in Abassia being treated for venereal disease (VD). Worse still, he was later to spend another 87 days in England receiving treatment. He joined his unit in France in July 1916 when the battalion was involved in the battles at Pozieres and Mouquet Farm where the Australians suffered terrible casualties. In December he entered hospital in France with bronchitis and this appeared to dog him for some time. He was repatriated to Aldershot in England and after a month of treatment he was given a month's furlough but he then had the second bout of VD mentioned above.

He returned to France in July 1917 and shortly after, he was charged with being absent without leave for five days for which he was confined for five days and forfeited 13 day's pay. In March 1918, during the German spring offensive, he was severely gassed and transferred to a French hospital who, in turn, transferred him back to hospitals at Ipswich and Dartford in England. He had recovered by May but immediately after he had succumbed to another bout of VD which hospitalised him for another 27 days. He returned to France in September 1918 and was hospitalised almost immediately on his return with an inguinal hernia. This was the cause of his discharge from the AIF as medically unfit.



## LEST WE FORGET



Edward's brother, Harold, enlisted a week after Edward. He joined the same Battalion and they embarked for Egypt together. Harold did not fare as well as Edward. He was discharged in July 1917 as medically unfit for further military service due to wounds received while on active service. He sustained gunshot wounds to both legs and his left shoulder.

Edward returned to Australia on 28 March 1919. He died in Deniliquin in December 1956 at the age of 68.

### Lieutenant Keith Bannatyne Lewis

Keith graduated with a Diploma of Mining Engineering from the University of Melbourne in 1913. He was born in Windsor in 1898 and enlisted on 6 January 1915 at the age of nearly 25. He described himself as a mining engineer and then crossed out 'mining'. He was engaged by the CRB as a draughtsman.

Keith was a member of a middle class, Presbyterian family whose fortune had been acquired through mining. They lived in a two-storey family home in Armadale. At the start of the war, Keith was already working at the CRB, while Athol, Phyllis and Owen were at university, Ralph was studying geology prior to entering university, and Ronnie and Neil were at Wesley College with Brian, at eight years of age, expected to follow them.

In Brian Lewis' family history, 'Our War', it stated that Keith enlisted from a deep moral compulsion in contrast with 'those who went in because they were out of work and the pay was very good'. He was a typical product of the staunchly patriotic Protestant public school system.

Keith embarked for the Middle East in July 1915 and arrived in Suez in August. He proceeded to Gallipoli to join the 4th Field Company Engineers but after two months he was evacuated to hospital in Malta with enteric fever. News of this disturbed his family back home and the evacuation of Gallipoli deflated them. Keith was in hospital for six weeks and on 14th December 1915 he embarked for Australia for recovery. He disappointed his father on his return as he told no tales of heroics and the glory of war and he preferred to wear mufti rather than uniform.

In the meantime, Keith's brothers, Owen, Athol and Ralph had joined up from a sense of obligation. In May 1916 he embarked for Plymouth where he was attached to the 2nd Australian Tunnelling Company which was deployed to France in September 1916. It states that he was in France for the entire period (except for two periods of leave) but it provides no clues as to where he was located. The Australian War Memorial

indicates that the 2nd Tunnelling Company operated at Vimy, the Ypres Salient, Messines and the Belgian Coast.

In 1916 – 1917 all four of the Lewis boys were in action in France and Belgium as tunnellers or artillerymen. Ralph was the first casualty. His family was informed that his leg would be saved but a head wound hospitalised him for six months. He was the lone survivor of a heavy bombardment – his face heavily scarred and dented by shrapnel. Ralph was repatriated in 1918. Owen was the next casualty. He was wounded, twice, and had 20 bullet holes and the loss of two toes. He was patched up and sent back to the front. Four months later he was killed. He had just turned 21. James was grateful when John Monash – a friend from engineering days – removed Athol from danger.

Keith was promoted to Lieutenant in May 1916 and at the end of the war he was granted extended leave on pay to study geology at the Royal School of Mines in South Kensington.

Keith did not return to the CRB as his address in 1920 was care of the Maude and Yellow Girl Reefs gold mine in Glen Willis, Victoria. He married Doris Charlesworth in 1921, in Lottah, Tasmania, and he remained in Tasmania for the rest of his life.

There are two other stories to tell. Phyllis Lewis, sister of Keith, was engaged to the future Prime Minister of Australia, Bob Menzies, during the war. Menzies was eligible to enlist but gave no sign of doing so. Menzies' two elder brothers had enlisted but his parents decided to withhold Bob to provide support for them. Phyllis and her family could not understand Bob's staunch support for conscription. They felt it was odd that he wanted to send unwilling men to



The Lewis family in 1915: (back, left to right) Ronnie, Owen, Keith, Athol, Ralph; (front, left to right) Phyllis, Edith (mother), James (father), Brian, Neil.

From Brian Lewis, *Our War* (1980). Reproduced courtesy Estate of Brian Lewis.



war. Tension about the engagement grew when Owen was killed while Bob was safe at home. The engagement was broken off.

The second story relates to Keith's son, Donald. He became a Spitfire pilot during the Second World War and was tragically lost shortly before his 20th birthday. Donald served in No 452 Squadron of the RAAF with William Douglas Willis who also worked for the CRB before enlisting.

In 1966 Keith applied to the Repatriation Department for benefits due to ill health under the requirements of the Repatriation Act. I can only surmise that it may have been due to gassing.

He died on 15 June 1984 at the age of 93.



## Sports news from the past

This is the CRB team that ran in the Sun Herald Fun Run in 1979. They trained each lunch time changing into their strip in the Materials Laboratory shower room. The photo was taken in about July 1979. There are a few we can't identify. Can anyone help us in identifying the strangers?



Left to right: Tony Doyle (?), Keith Beresford, Geoff Jameson (rear), Dino Sartori, Tom Casamento (front), Ken Vickery (rear), Geoff East (?), John Harding (rear), and unknown (?).

### Derek Skues

Derek is a reader of our newsletter although he is not a member. He is a member of my art studio – Elgin Artists. He wrote to me as follows:

'My view on war is very similar to your own.

I was a participant in the two moratorium marches in Melbourne associated with the Vietnam War. I had a vested interest as I had been called up in the first intake in 1965 but was able to defer it as I was a student, but in 1969 I was asked to attend a medical. Fortunately, I had an adverse medical report from my pacifist doctor, which meant I was not finally enlisted.

Of course, many of my contemporaries did go to Vietnam, which changed them enormously. Only some are prepared to talk about their experience.

I have always been aware of the impact of the Second World War through my father's involvement as a dental officer in New Guinea and Borneo treating not only our troops but also the captured Japanese troops. Also, my lifelong involvement in Lord Somers Camp and Power House has made me aware of the impact of war with 73 of our members losing their lives in the same war. We have an annual atmospheric roll call in our bush chapel to remember them.

"C Company" of the 2nd/14th Battalion was the "Power House Company", which served in the Middle East, New Guinea, Borneo and the Celebes. One of three of the Power House Rugby Club members who played with the Wallabies in 1939, Stan Bisset, who I knew well, received the Military Cross for bravery on the Kokoda Track. His brother Butch died in his arms. The Battalion was eventually commanded by a 23 year old Power House member, Phil Roden, who was appointed as a result of all senior officers being killed in preventing the Japanese troops reaching Port Moresby.

All these facts are recorded in Alan Gregory's book on Lord Somers Camp and Power House, entitled "It's Only the Game that Counts".

Kind regards,

Derek'

## And now for something beautiful



Most people have a curiosity about birds. Their colours, behaviour and flight are to behold. Birds are everywhere in all terrains and climates. Many can run, jump, swim and dive but some have lost their ability to fly. The smallest is the hummingbird – about five centimetres long. The largest is the ostrich – about three metres tall. Birds evolved alongside dinosaurs 160 million years ago.

We envy their ability to fly. Imagine if it were possible to blow up your chest and take off into the sky and look down upon the world. What freedom! What excitement! I think one of the miracles of birds is the regular seasonal migration some of them undertake over huge distances. I had the privilege of witnessing this once at Roebuck Bay near Broome on the north west coast of Australia.

Each year around 100,000 shorebirds and terns migrate from Roebuck Bay to their northern hemisphere breeding grounds, where they will pair up, nest and raise their chicks before returning to Broome a few months later. For many of these birds, this migration is a 20,000 km round trip, which they will undertake every year of their adult lives.

Shorebird departures from Roebuck Bay take place from early March until mid-May, peaking in the first half of April. Most birds depart in the late afternoon. When the birds are ready to migrate, they assemble on the shore to get ready to depart. A group of anything from 5 to 500 birds, usually all of one species, gather together and arrange themselves in an east-west line. They become excited

and agitated, with much chattering and wing-stretching. Suddenly, the assembled birds take to the air. Sometimes, as if doing a practice run, and they will circle and return back to their line-up on the mud. They may do several of these practice runs. Finally, they take off and quickly gain height, rising high above the bay and arranging themselves in an aerodynamic v-shaped formation. Once the flock has formed the right shape and reached a suitable height, they orientate themselves to the north and begin their extraordinary journey to Asia.

Migration occurs between breeding and wintering grounds. It carries high costs in predation and mortality, including from hunting by humans, and is driven primarily by availability of food. Migration of species such as storks, turtle doves, and swallows was recorded as many as 3,000 years ago by Ancient Greek authors, including Homer and Aristotle, and in the Book of Job. Modern scientific studies now use techniques including bird tagging and satellite tracking to trace migrants. Threats to migratory birds have grown with habitat destruction especially of stopover and wintering sites, as well as structures such as power lines and wind farms.

The Arctic tern holds the long-distance migration record for birds, travelling between Arctic breeding grounds and the Antarctic each year. Some species such as albatrosses circle the earth, flying over the southern oceans, while others such as Manx shearwaters migrate 14,000 kilometres

between their northern breeding grounds and the Southern Ocean.

The timing of migration seems to be controlled primarily by changes in day length. Migrating birds navigate using celestial cues from the sun and stars, the earth's magnetic field, and mental maps.

What could be more beautiful than this?

In Europe in the latter part of the 18th Century and throughout the 19th century there developed great interest in natural history and a fascination with birds and animals from far off lands. Most people did not have the opportunity to see these creatures alive but they could see pictures of them in books and a small industry grew up publishing exquisite large folio sized pictures of birds. Photography had not been invented but they could be portrayed efficiently and economically by the recently developed process of lithography or drawing on stone and hand colouring. The wealth created by the Industrial Revolution meant that there were greater numbers of affluent people who could afford to buy the very expensive and lavishly illustrated books produced by this process. John Gould was one who saw the opportunity of publishing books of this type, building on his career as an ornithologist, and making a good living at the same time.

John Gould (1804-1881) was the son of a gardener at the Royal Gardens at Windsor Castle. Growing up in the area he developed a passion for birds and became expert in taxidermy. His most famous commission was to stuff the King's giraffe which had unfortunately expired. At age 23 in 1827 he was appointed Curator and Preserver at the newly formed Zoological Society of London. In 1829 he married Elizabeth Coxen (1804-1841) a governess who was a talented artist and it was she who enabled him to publish the first of many large folio sized books on birds including the massive seven volume *Birds of Australia* 1841-1848. In order to do this he had to collect "specimens" by shooting them or otherwise obtaining bird skins for his artists to work from. Despite the code of his eponymic league, he slaughtered thousands of birds in this pursuit. He ate many of them. But you have to remember there were no cameras in those days so most of the exquisite sketches, paintings and lithographs of the birds were copied from dead specimens.

But what sort of a man was John Gould? One of the papers written on Gould by Hugh Orr is *Aspects of the Letterpress in John Gould's The Birds of Australia, January 2021*. This paper reviews the over 600 letterpress or texts of Gould's *Birds of Australia* with a view to gaining some insights into Gould's character. This topic was suggested to Hugh by Karen Severud Cook, recently retired, of Kansas University's Kenneth Spencer Research Library which has the world's largest collection of Gouldiana. Karen prepared the article below - issued as a blog- using the extracts from Gould's letterpress contained in Hugh's paper.

## John Gould (1804-1881): Birdman in the Australian Bush

When John Gould set out with his wife Elizabeth and eldest son (three younger children remained in England with their grandmother) in 1838 on the five-month sea voyage from England to Australia, his goal was to observe birds in the wild, collect specimens and enable Elizabeth, an artist, to make drawings for their planned book about Australian birds. Their first stop was Tasmania (then known as Van Diemen's Land), where the Goulds were befriended by the governor, Sir John Franklin, and his wife. Elizabeth, who was pregnant, stayed with the Franklins and made drawings of plants and animals. Meanwhile, Gould explored the bush in Tasmania and on the Australian mainland in New South Wales and South Australia, including Kangaroo Island. After the birth of another son, the Gould party travelled to New South Wales, where Elizabeth's brothers, Charles and Stephen Coxen, had settled. Following the Goulds' return to England in 1840, *The Birds of Australia* appeared in 36 instalments, the first on December 1, 1840 and the last in 1848. Elizabeth had died in 1841, so the later parts were illustrated by another artist, Henry Constantine Richter, working under Gould's close supervision. The lithographic crayon drawings, printed in black and hand-water coloured by hired colourists, contributed to the success of this landmark early book about Australian ornithology.

Gould also wrote the descriptive text accompanying each illustration with assistance from his accomplished and devoted secretary, Edwin Charles Prince. The comments about many of the birds of south-eastern Australia were based on Gould's own observations. Although John Gilbert, an assistant who accompanied the Goulds to Australia, had supplied specimens and notes about birds from other parts of Australia (before being killed by Aborigines near the Gulf of Carpentaria), the examples discussed here are firsthand accounts that reveal Gould's keen observational skills, deep interest in birds, and nascent ambivalence toward the killing of birds for sport, food, and scientific collection.

Gould's text enlivens this static picture of **Rose-breasted Cockatoos** by describing the breathtaking experience of seeing flocks in motion. "The Rose-breasted Cockatoo possesses considerable power of wing, and like the house-pigeon of this country (England), frequently passes in flocks over the plains with a long sweeping flight, the group at one minute displaying their beautiful silvery grey backs to the gaze of the spectator, and at the next by a simultaneous change of position bringing their rich rosy breasts into view, the effect of which is so beautiful to behold, that it is a source of regret to me that my readers cannot participate in the pleasure I have derived from the sight."

The nesting habits of Australian birds were also intriguing. Gould writes that the **Spotted Pardalote's** nesting habits differ from known members of its genus in nesting

underground; "availing itself of any little shelving bank that occurs in its vicinity, [it] excavates a hole just large enough to admit of the passage of its body, in a nearly horizontal direction to the depth of two or three feet, at the end of which a chamber is formed in which the nest is deposited. The nest itself is a neat and beautifully built structure, formed of strips of the inner bark of the Eucalypti, and lined with finer strips of the same material.

**Spotted-sided Finch nests are "frequently built among the large sticks forming the under surface of the nest of the smaller species of Eagles..."**

Above ground, Gould was surprised to find that Spotted-sided Finch nests are "frequently built among the large sticks forming the under surface of the nest of the smaller species of Eagles...both species hatching and rearing their progeny in harmony. He observed "little finches...sitting on the small twigs close to their rapacious but friendly neighbour... a Whistling Eagle."

Some birds could co-exist with European settlers. Gould

comments that the Piping Crow-shrike (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) "...is a bold and showy bird which, when not harassed and driven away, greatly enlivens and ornaments the lawns and gardens of the colonists by its presence, and with the slightest protection from molestation becomes so tame and familiar that it approaches close to their dwellings, and perches around them and the stock yards in small families of six to ten in number. Nor is its morning carol less amusing than its pied and strongly contrasting plumage is pleasing to the eye. To describe the notes of this bird is beyond the power of my pen, and it is a source of regret to myself that my readers cannot, as I have done, listen to them in their native wilds..."

Equally bold but less welcomed by colonists, a raptor, the Allied Kite (*Milvius affinis*), has a "confident and intrepid disposition [that] renders it familiar to every one, and not unfrequently costs it its life, as it fearlessly enters the farm yard of the settler, and if unopposed, impudently deals out destruction to the young poultry, pigeons, &c. tenanting it. The temerity of one individual was such, that it even disputed my right to a Bronze-winged Pigeon that had fallen before my gun, for which act, I am now almost ashamed to say, it paid the penalty of its life; on reflection I asked myself why should advantage have been taken of the confident disposition implanted in the bird by its Maker, particularly too when it was in a part of the country where no white man had taken up his abode and assumed a sovereign right over all that surrounds him.

While "a most delicate viand for the table," the Partridge Bronze-wing (*Geophaps scripta*) is less endangered due to its isolation. "It is to be regretted that [it] should be so



Rose-breasted Cockatoo/*Cacatua eos* in *The Birds of Australia* (1848), vol. 5, plate 4.



Spotted Pardalote/*Pardalotus punctatus* in *The Birds of Australia* (1848), vol. 2, plate 35.



Spotted-sided Finch/*Amadina lathamii* in *The Birds of Australia* (1848), vol. 3, plate 86.



Allied Kite/*Milvius affinus* in *The Birds of Australia* (1848), vol. 1, plate 21.



Piping Crow-shrike/*Gymnorhina tibicen* in *The Birds of Australia* (1848), vol. 2, plate 46.



Adelaide Parakeet/*Platycercus adalaidae* in *The Birds of Australia* (1848), vol. 5, plate 22.



exclusively a denizen of the plains of the interior that it is available to few except inland travellers ... It is withal so excessively tame, that it is not unfrequently killed by the bullock-drivers with their whips, while passing along the roads with their teams."

Gould's regret for the predicted disappearance of the **Adelaide Parakeet (*Platycercus adalaidiae*)** did not curtail his specimen collecting. "This beautiful *Platycercus* ... may in a few years be looked for in vain in the suburbs of this rapidly increasing settlement [Adelaide], as it ... is even now much persecuted and destroyed by the newly arrived emigrants, who kill it either for mere sport or for the table; for, like the other *Platycerci*, all of which feed on grass seeds, it is excellent eating. It was only by killing at least a hundred examples, in all their various stages of plumage,

from nestling to the adult, that I was enabled to determine the fact of it being a new and distinct species."

We may disagree with him, but Gould was a man of his times, and his views are part of the history of ornithology. Although the science of ornithology has since moved on, aided by technological innovations not dreamed of in Gould's lifetime, the artistry of the beautiful illustrations in his books still attracts modern viewers. These illustrations allow us to see the birds through the eyes of Gould and his artists, and it is equally worthwhile to read Gould's eloquent written observations about them. The John Gould Ornithological Collection, accessible at the University of Kansas Libraries website, offers the opportunity to pair pictures and descriptive text while reading digitized copies of Gould's books on the Internet.



Partridge Bronze-wing/*Geophaps scripta* in *The Birds of Australia* (1848), vol. 5, plate 67.

## Scam watch

### **I don't want to alarm you unnecessarily but I thought these messages are worth including.**

This notice was recently posted in the Boroondara Bulletin.

"Phone and online scammers are stealing money and personal information from local residents, police say.

Inspector Craig Pearson, Boroondara Local Area Commander, said scammers often work in teams and claim to be from legitimate businesses, banks and utilities. Some use forged documents and create a sense of fear.

"They may ask you for remote access to your computer to help them 'Catch the hacker'," he said. "They are the hackers. Do not provide remote access to your computer. Just like a burglar, if you didn't invite them into your home, don't let them in."

Inspector Pearson said that in a recent incident, a 95-year-old Hawthorn woman told a scammer she didn't have a computer and didn't drive, so the scammer had a taxi pick her up and drive her to a bank. "She was told to keep it secret from her family and that transferring her money was the only way to keep it safe."

If you suspect a scammer has contacted you, talk to your family, call local police, and keep up to date with the latest scams at Scam Watch."

The following message was posted on the Seniors Online Victoria:

"Computer takeover scams are on the rise, according to the latest update from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) Scamwatch.

Computer takeover scams, where scammers impersonate a well-known business to try to gain access to computers, have increased 184 per cent compared to the same period last year.

So far this year, scammers have stolen more than \$7.2 million from Australians through this type of scam, including over \$4.4 million from people aged over 55.

To gain access to people's computers, scammers call or send text messages pretending to be from a well-known organisation, such as Telstra, eBay, NBN Co, Amazon,

banks, government organisations, police, and computer and IT support organisations. The scammers create a sense of urgency and ask people to download remote control software.

Once the software is downloaded and the scammer has control of the computer or device, they ask people to log into secure applications such as emails, internet banking or PayPal accounts. With access to these applications or the information they contain, scammers will try to impersonate their victims or steal their money.

Scams of this nature often come out of the blue. They might start with an unexpected phone call, SMS, email or pop up saying you've been billed for a purchase you didn't make, your device has been compromised, or your account has been hacked.

It is important not to share your details or follow the instructions of a caller you do not know or did not expect. ACCC Deputy Chair Delia Rickard's advice is:

"If you receive contact from someone claiming to be from a telecommunications company, a technical support service provider or online marketplace, hang up. If you think the communication may have been legitimate, independently source the contact details for the organisation to contact them. Don't use the contact details in the communication. Also, don't click on any of the links."

"Remember, your bank will never ask you to give them access to your computer or accounts, nor will they ask for the codes to verify transactions. You should never provide those numbers to anyone except to verify transactions you are making in your mobile banking app or through your online banking," Ms Rickard says.

If you think you have been scammed, contact your bank or financial institution as soon as possible.

Delete any apps or programs the scammers asked you to download to your computer. Support in recovering from these scams including how to check if your identity and computer is secure is available through IDCARE on 1800 595 160 or [www.idcare.org](http://www.idcare.org).

Scams can also be reported to ACCC's Scamwatch."

## Trivia and didactic whimsies

### Sign seen outside a local bookshop



### Some interesting anagrams

You probably know by now that I am a cryptic crossword tragic. I love the trickery of anagrams. Just to remind you, an anagram is a word or a number of words in which the letters can be rearranged to form another word or number of words. Some examples are given below.

DILIP VENGSARKAR [Ex-Indian Cricketer] = SPARKLING DRIVE

DORMITORY = DIRTY ROOM

ASTRONOMER = MOON STARER

THE EYES = THEY SEE

A DECIMAL POINT = I'M A DOT IN PLACE

### The power of prayer

During a church service, the pastor asked if anyone in the congregation would like to express praise for answered prayers. Suzie stood and walked to the podium. She said, "Two months ago, my husband, Phil, had a terrible bicycle accident and his scrotum was crushed."

There was a muffled gasp from the men in the congregation. "Phil was unable to hold me or the children," she went on, "and every move caused him terrible pain. We prayed as the doctors performed a delicate operation, and they were able to reconstruct the crushed remnants of Phil's scrotum, using wire to reinforce and shape it."

The men in the congregation cringed and squirmed uncomfortably. "Now," she announced in a quivering voice, "thank the Lord, Phil is out of the hospital and the doctors say that with time, his scrotum should recover completely." All the men sighed with relief.

The pastor rose and asked if anyone else had something to say.

A man stood up and walked slowly to the podium. He said, "I'm Phil." The entire congregation held its breath. "I just want to tell my wife the word is sternum."

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