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Dear Members,

This is the second newsletter published under the new regime. I hope you found the previous one satisfactory despite one of the photographs of the Fiat plant in Turin coming out upside down when it was printed. The photo also shifted. I don't know how this happened because it is the right way up in my electronic version. If any of you know what might have caused this, please let me know.

I have contacted everyone who previously received a hard copy and they are responding to me with email addresses so I hope everyone can eventually be connected. Actually, it might not be a bad thing issuing the newsletter in this way. Before, I had to be cautious about what I said of the organisation for managing roads in Victoria, because I did not want to bite the hand that fed us. In fact, I have had a number of external requests to comment on road maintenance in the past but I rejected them because I didn't want to offend the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). I have no such restraint now. If you recall, Ian Goldie and Reg Marslen wrote letters recently, which I published, in which they criticised the condition of our rural roads. I fully agreed with their sentiments. Ian recently wrote to me hoping that his comments were not the cause of the Department of Transport and Planning withdrawing their support to us, but I assured him that this was not the case.

I returned from my trip to Italy on 24 June but have been laid low for over a fortnight - and I mean laid low. I contracted Covid in Italy and during that time, I slept solidly for a couple of days after which I fully recovered and felt full of energy. My trip home was a nightmare. The economy class seat was far too small for my body and I was wracked with pain and stiffness. Sleeping was impossible. I had a four-hour stopover in Doha but, to pile on the misery, the plane was delayed a further four hours. We landed in freezing weather in Melbourne at around three in the morning and I had to wait about an hour for a taxi because the airport was deserted. I then got another viral infection which I thought must have been related to the Covid but my GP discounted that. I was put on a course of antibiotics and for a fortnight I could not do anything except sleep. I have never felt so tired in my life. Jet lag was no doubt a factor - and age. I remember when I worked for OPCV I used to go in to work the day after my return from far flung places without too much trouble.

I won't travel abroad again unless I can obtain a reasonably priced Premium Economy fare (for the leg room) and break my flight mid journey. Going to my destination in Tuscany, I worked out that I travelled for 36 hours without a break and the trip home was even longer. These times include train travel in Italy and you must remember that there are no seats in the concourses at Italian railway stations - to deter homeless people from taking up residence - so you have to stand all the time.

Apart from the Covid, my trip was most enjoyable. There were ten of us in residence at Colle Di Val D'Elsa. Three of the others contracted Covid - two before me and one after. Artistically, it wasn't a great success. I did three paintings and am not fully satisfied with them but then again, I'm never satisfied with any of them. We travelled only in Tuscany but the sites (and sights), food and wine and company were first class. Some of you may have read a travel writer in The Age criticising Italy for being too expensive and flooded with tourists. But he was talking of visiting Venice at the height of the tourist season. What would you expect?

Nothing was further from the truth for us. In Colle - a city of 20,000 people (say the size of Warrnambool) - we attended a free classical musical concert that you would pay \$150 to see in Melbourne. It comprised an orchestra of about 20 players, a choir of a similar size - all local people - and an imported baritone and soprano. The locals turned up in droves and it was touching to see an elderly lady in front of me waving to her grandson in the string section of the orchestra. Presumably it was her daughter sitting next to her who kept on pulling her hand down. Verdi and Puccini were well represented but so too, were other composers.



The street where we lived in Colle.

Each morning, our group strolled to the end of the street to an outdoor café for a coffee and *dolci* and to organise our day. This cost about four Australian dollars a head. We had a wide choice of restaurants serving high quality food and wine at less than two thirds the equivalent price in Australia. The staff were friendly and English was widely spoken. It was a pleasure to be in such company. On one of our excursions to Chianti, we dined at a restaurant in a tiny village called Lamole. No more than 50 people lived there and yet their restaurant would merit two chef's hats here in Melbourne. We walked in off the street and the lunch was memorable and quite reasonably priced. The service and advice on the wine was excellent. If you don't believe me, Google it and read the reviews.



Our morning meeting in Colle.

Further down the hill we stopped at an even smaller village where only 29 people lived, but they had four restaurants and 300,000 bottles of wine. The young man in the wine shop who told me this, lived there for six days a week and went back to Florence every Sunday to see his girlfriend.

So don't believe everything you read in the papers.

WHAT'S COMING UP

Occasional Lunches at Shoppingtown Hotel, 12 noon.

Our next lunch will be held on Monday 7 August 2023. Others are scheduled for 9 October and 6 November. There is no longer a requirement to contact Kelvin York - just turn up.

Dinner and drinks at Glen Waverley RSL - Thursday 5 October at 6 pm.

We will provide details in the next newsletter.

Annual Golf Day

Our Golf Day will be held on Friday 10 November 2023. Details will be provided later in the year.

Other events

Ballarat/Bendigo Trip - 15-17 November 2023.

This trip is locked in for Wednesday 15 November to Friday 17 November. We were originally going to be briefed in Ballarat and Bendigo about arrangements for the 2026 Commonwealth Games but Premier Andrews has put an end to that. However, there are other infrastructure works proceeding - such as housing - so we hope to learn about that.

A meeting with Regional Roads Victoria has been confirmed in Ballarat on 15 November. Basically, we spend the first day in Ballarat and the second day travelling to Bendigo via Murtoa. The third day is spent in Bendigo before we disperse to home destinations.

On the second day we propose travelling from Ballarat to Murtoa via Stawell and Horsham, taking in Silo Art along the route. At Murtoa, we have booked a tour of the Stick Shed. After lunch at Murtoa, we follow the Silo Art trail through Rupanyup and St Arnaud to Bendigo.

We will keep you informed on the development of the program in later newsletters. Let Jim Webber know if you are interested in coming.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Our last Occasional Lunch at Shoppingtown Hotel broke the attendance record. Over thirty people turned up including five people who had represented the CRB in cricket matches against the Public Works Department, Tasmania.



The five cricketers from the CRB cricket teams that played against the Public Works Department, Tasmania who attended the Shoppingtown lunch on 19 June - (From left to right) Bill Saggars, Lance Midgley, Jim Webber, Gary Edwards and Max Palmer

Max, who lives in Oxenford on the Gold Coast, was on holidays in Melbourne. He has the unique experience of having played for both teams.

Bill, Gary, Max and Jim played in the original match in 1962 in Ulverstone, when the CRB team was captained by Noel Allanson.

Jim Webber is preparing a history of the matches between the two organisations and would appreciate borrowing any copies of Roadlines and Interchange magazines that included reports on the matches. He would also love to hear from anyone who knew where the scorebook might be located.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Leanne Knudsen

Leanne wrote to me while I was in Italy regarding her involvement in the Australian Border Force (ABF) Foster Carer Program for detector dogs. She explained that the Detector Dog Program breeds, develops and trains labradors for the ABF and supplies dogs throughout Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Indonesia to name a few countries. Some ABF bred dogs go out to work for other agencies within Australia, such as Australian Federal Police, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, State Police Forces, Armed Forces and Corrections. They run a program a little like the Guide Dogs, where the puppies go to Foster Carer homes from 9 weeks of age and are cared for by the family for approximately 12 months. But their training is different.

She thought that some of our members might be interested in the program which covers metropolitan Melbourne and Geelong. I thought this was a wonderful topic for inclusion in our newsletter and I asked her to write a story about her involvement. This is what she wrote.

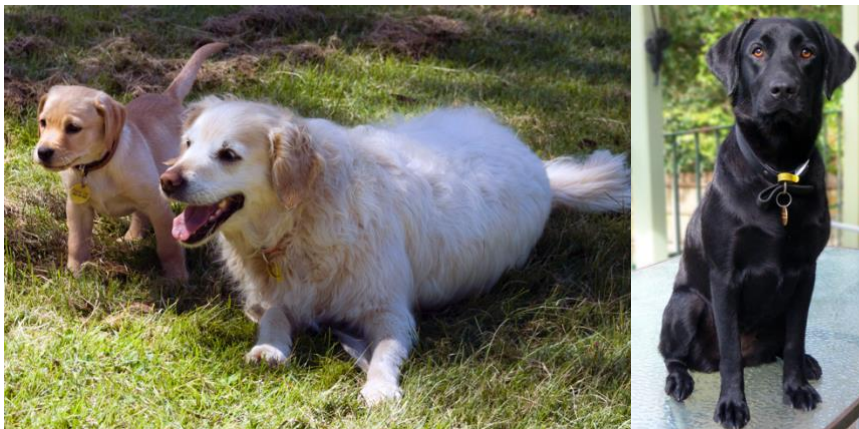
'We joined the program in 2010. Our first puppy, Namba, was a nine-week-old black female with loads of personality. She was a big hit with our family and our family dog, a golden retriever named Honey.

The detector dogs are mostly outside dogs, and the ABF want the puppies to be independent and resilient. You need to have a secure backyard and walk them daily, very good to help keep you fit as well. At least three outings a week to enhance their confidence and gain experience around crowds, loud noises, busy intersections, stairs, confined spaces, noisy playgrounds, children, and sudden movements. It's an adventure for the puppy and carer and so much fun for all the family.

ABF covers the cost of food, veterinary care, and some equipment. You are well supported by the staff in the Foster Carer Program and you don't have to be experienced with dogs to be in the program. Going on holiday is no problem, just return your puppy to the ABF facility and on your return, you resume your care of the puppy. It's a win for all.

I remember all my family and friends saying I would be hopeless at giving the puppies back after 12-15 months. I am a softy when it comes to dogs. My answer was I would be fine, I have my own dog and anyway if the pup was selected for training, I would just get another puppy which of course was exactly what I did.

Next came Trinny in 2011, Georgie in 2012, and Florin in 2013. The first three puppies were selected for training - drug detection for Namba, Australian Federal Police for Trinny and New Zealand's first and very successful Stink Bug Detector Dog for Georgie. You can google her and see her at work.



Honey with Georgie.

Florin.

Florin was not selected by any agency. As her carer, she was offered to us, and we purchased her as our pet. You are under no obligation to do this. We withdrew from the program in 2014, once Florin became part of our permanent family. We decided two grown dogs were enough to handle.

In May 2019 I retired from work and we lost Honey to old age - she was nearly 16 years old. I contacted ABF and rejoined the Foster Carer Program.

Kiko, our fifth dog, female and black, arrived in July 2019 and what a ball of energy. Beautiful dog, doing all the right things and a pleasure to have as part of our household. She is a great mate for Florin as well. To our surprise and delight Kiko was selected in 2020 to join the breeding team at Border Force which meant she would stay with us through her breeding time and then she would be our pet. Win, Win all around.

Kiko's has been a Mum twice with eleven puppies so far, we now wait to see when she may be selected to have another litter.



Leanne with Kiko.

I have to say this whole experience has been a privilege and a pleasure for my whole family and so rewarding. To see the puppies, develop to adulthood and then start a working life is a very proud moment for a foster carer. All your time and effort has paid off and you have made a significant contribution to the program and to the safety of our borders. If you have the time and willingness to take this on you will not be disappointed.

Foster carers are needed urgently. The ABF Detector Dog Program is always on the hunt for volunteers to join the foster carer team. If you wish to participate in helping to protect Australia's borders and our community by raising a pup to become a future detector dog, please contact the ABF as shown below.

Leanne Knudsen'



**Australian
BORDER FORCE**

**Foster a future
detector dog**




To learn more and apply to foster a future detector dog, please scan the QR code or visit the website

www.abf.gov.au/detectordogs

VALE

As promised, I include obituaries for Bruce Addis, David Ferguson and Ian Gardner. These three men provided a huge contribution to Victoria and I hope I have done justice to their legacy. It is sad that their contributions cannot be distributed to a wider audience than our newsletter, but we are all enriched by the memories we have of them. We extend our condolences to all their families and friends.

I will provide obituaries for Peter Lowe and Dennis Moore in the next newsletter.

Bruce Addis

Bruce died on 8 May 2023. About a month before his death, he had a fall and underwent emergency surgery. At 95 years of age, he recovered remarkably well but sadly, not long afterwards, he contracted pneumonia and died.

Bruce was resident in Rye Sands Age Care where he was a favourite because he was so easy to care for; he was always polite and well mannered, he showed them all great courtesy and respect, and of course, he never lost his charming personality.

He was born in Murrumbena on 30 July 1927 to parents, Fred and Isobel. From the time Bruce was nine, he, his brother Ivan, and their father Fred were fending for themselves, and they had moved to Castlemaine, where Bruce spent a great deal of his early life.

In order to encourage his further education, and in recognition of his academic achievements, Bruce was offered a scholarship to Melbourne University to study. He graduated as a civil engineer in 1950. That same year he gained employment with the Renmark Irrigation Trust as an assistant engineer and over time was promoted to engineer, a position he held until 1955, when he left and joined the Country Roads Board.

It was also in 1950 when Bruce married Ophir and they became proud parents to two children, Mark and Shelley. In 1970 Bruce and Ophir went their separate ways, and five years later Bruce married Marjorie Robertson. Bruce and Marjorie spent 45 wonderful years together. When Marjorie passed away in 2019, Bruce was both stoic and devastated.



Bruce and Marje just after Marje's 100th birthday.

I was honoured that Bruce wanted me to give a eulogy at his funeral. This is what I said.

'Bruce joined the Country Roads Board in May 1956 and commenced working with Dr Keith Moody on the design and construction of the Board's new Mechanical Workshops and Depot at Glen Waverley.

On completion of that project he moved into Bridge Branch where he was to spend the rest of his 30 year long career with the organisation. In the 1960s he played a significant role in the design of the Phillip Island Bridge at San Remo. He became Senior Design Engineer for Municipal Works in 1971, Bridge Design Engineer in 1977 and, in 1985, he was appointed General Manager - Bridges.

But Bruce's greatest legacy was the elevated section of the West Gate Freeway from the Burnley tunnel in the east, to beyond Montague Street in the west. This project was located in a busy commercial area with an irregular pattern of streets and public transport and atrocious foundation conditions. Building a bridge across this area while keeping all these services operating was a challenging task to say the least.

A new method of construction was being introduced in Europe and America which appeared to solve many of these problems - and so the Board sent Bruce and his bridge design colleague, Keith Opie, to France, Switzerland, Holland, Denmark and the UK to investigate the best way to construct the elevated freeway. It was known as the match cast segmental balanced cantilever method of construction. Bruce and Keith were convinced that this was way forward and while in France, they retained the services of the eminent French engineer, Jean Muller, who was the original proponent of the system, to provide and advise on the prosecution of aspects of the project. In today's money, the project would be valued in billions of dollars.

West Gate was the largest and most complex project undertaken using this system. Bruce admitted that we were doing new things in virtually every aspect of the structure and there were a number of world firsts introduced. The project attracted international interest in the engineering world. Professor Bernard Godfrey - of Steel Designers Manual fame - visited the project from England during its construction and praised the integration of the design and construction to produce a structure unparalleled in its precision.

Steering this project through its conception, design and consequent construction was undoubtedly the highlight of Bruce's engineering career.

I first met Bruce in the 1970s. I had returned to Head Office after a stint of road and bridge construction supervision, to lead a design team for the bridges between Warrigal Road and Springvale Road on the Monash Freeway. I did not know what had hit me. He was a small man with a belligerent demeanour and a gruff voice and he appeared to bully me relentlessly. But then I got to know him, underneath this demeanour I found a very considerate person to the point of being soft. Of course, he would not own up to it. He was also a great mentor and always went to the trouble of explaining the reasoning of all his decisions. He once told me I was a good engineer but it was a pity I wasn't a soldier!

When we completed the West Gate Freeway project - for which I became the Project Manager (and explains my premature white hair) - Bruce wrote a personal letter to me thanking me for my contribution. Its kindness and consideration touched me and I treasure it today. It is the only such letter I ever received from one of my bosses.



Receiving the Engineering Excellence Award of the Institution of Engineers Australia.
Left to right: Ian Stoney (CEO), Jim Wilson (Ex-Project Manager), Ron Albany (Construction Manager CITRA), David Jellie (Project Manager), Horst Kayak (Design Manager} and Bruce Addis (Chief Bridge Engineer).

Bruce retired in 1987 while West Gate was still under construction but I made sure that he and Marje came to our project completion party, because it was he who had the foresight, courage and determination to turn the dream into reality.

I saw Bruce a lot in the following years as we were both members of the VicRoads Association committee. I went to see him a few months ago and we had a very happy time chewing the fat together. It was palpable how he loved Marje and, standing here today, I know that this is what Bruce wanted.'

The other great love of his life was the Army.

He joined 22nd Construction Regiment Royal Australian Engineers (RAE) in 1956 as a member of the CRB's 104 Construction Squadron and was promoted to Lieutenant in 1958. He rose rapidly through the officer ranks to Major and, in 1963, was appointed OC 104 Construction Squadron. In 1968 he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and appointed CO 22nd Construction Regiment. He also saw service in South Vietnam as part of the Officer Exchange/Training Scheme.



3138256 Colonel Bruce Addis, RFD, ED

He held the position of CO until 1971 when 22 Construction celebrated its 21st birthday. Then after a short period in staff postings in 1973, he was promoted to Colonel and appointed to Commander 6 Engineer Group - Victoria's top RAE posting. He continued in this posting until his retirement on 30th July 1976. On 26th August 1982 Colonel Addis was appointed as the Colonel Commandant of RAE Southern Region and he retired from this role and from the Army in 1986.

Colonel Bruce Addis (sometimes referred to as the "Angry Ant" due to his diminutive stature) was an accomplished soldier who was able to think outside the box and with very definite views on military matters. He was blunt, very capable, professional, enthusiastic and dedicated and made such a huge impact throughout his military career to the Reserve of today. From recruit to Colonel in some 17 years was a remarkable achievement.

There is very little doubt that Bruce's contribution to the RAE, particularly in his role as CO, changed a regiment that appeared to be marking time and not reaching its full potential to one that stood out as a top performing regiment and superior to many RAE Reserve Regiments in Australia.

Bruce was a proud member of the Freemasons, and he espoused the four important values that help define a Mason's path through life - integrity, friendship, respect, and charity. In today's world filled with uncertainty, these principles ring as true now as they have at any point in the organisations' history.



David Ferguson

David died on 29 May 2023 at the age of 83. I have fond memories of David back in the early 1960s as we worked together in Bridge Design Division. We were both members of the same solo school which took turns to host a night of cards at each other's houses every week. He was a very canny player. In those days, David lived with his mother in Balwyn Road, and we had many enjoyable nights there finessing and over-trumping with great gusto.

I am indebted to Bill Saggars who wrote the following tribute to David and to Brian Negus who provided the photographs.



David began his CRB Engineering career in the Bridge Division's design section in 1963 where he distinguished himself by suggesting an alternative to the design and subsequent construction of two nearby bridges across a river in regional Victoria. Being a short distance apart across a bend in the river, David suggested an alternative solution would be to realign the river - the eventual outcome. Having come under notice for this initiative, David was selected as the CRB's Assigned Engineer to the Melbourne & Metropolitan Transportation Study that began in late 1963 and ran through to 1969. It was an ideal appointment.



The initial agency-based Study Team. From left to right: Louis Fouvey (Melbourne Metropolitan Tramways Board), Bob Evans (MMBW and later, CRB), Lionel Cunningham (Melbourne City Council), Joey Delaney (Study Director, MMBW), Ian (Euan) Richards (Victorian Railways) and David Ferguson (CRB).

Initially, David was involved in assisting the setting up of the metropolitan-wide 5 per cent home interview survey and assisted in carrying out roadside surveys for freight movements. During the study's later transport network planning stage, he was responsible for the veracity of the multi-faceted inputs to, and the running of the assignments to alternative travel networks on an IBM 7090 computer at the Weapons Research Establishment, Salisbury, South Australia. The 7090 machine was the most powerful computer in Australia at that time and, with a national security clearance for David, the Study team was the only external group to have access to it. David's work necessitated regular overnight flights to SA as the various trial transport networks evolved. Access to the computer was restricted to overnight hours. On another occasion, David was required to make a trip to the USA to re-jig the USA Consultant's initial model for public transport v. road use, the mode-choice model on which political and institutional sensitivities depended.

Back at the CRB In 1969 after the completion of the Transportation Study, from the Board's Secretary, the Traffic and Location Engineer received a direction for an extremely challenging Geelong Urban Area Pilot Traffic Study:

"The Board has approved an office pilot study being undertaken in conjunction with the Divisional Engineer, with unofficial discussion with the Town and Country Planning Board if necessary."

This meant that it was expected that the project be carried out within the organisation, without any special traffic data collection or any local exposure. When Divisional Engineer Bill Neville attended any major, local function he would garner information on the job numbers at major work sites which he would pass on to assist the modelling of work-based travel patterns. With David's underpinning traffic modelling structure essential to the outcome, the Geelong Pilot Traffic Study was able to be completed. The project report led to a Grade 1 Engineer team member receiving recognition in a senior officer's commendation to the Board and the Chief Engineer requesting a personal copy of the report. The Pilot Study's travel loadings for road use across control lines were remarkably similar to the later work of a full-scale home-interview based consultant study.

Another challenging project for David was to produce an estimate of the likely increased traffic volume on the West Gate Bridge ahead of the proposal to remove the toll regime. This work involved giving account to the

cost of travel. His answer was within a few hundred vehicles of the subsequent daily volume, not a very common outcome in those days. With diminishing opportunities within the Road Construction Authority, David left the organisation to establish a well-regarded consulting role in travel modelling work.

A background interest of David's over the years was with the Melbourne University Car Club's timing team, heading up their official role at major motor races. This background led to his involvement in Donald Campbell's successful world land speed record attempt on Lake Eyre. A welcome companion to past school friends on regular 'safaris' across Australia and later on overseas cruises, he also became a respected leader of the Scotch College-based chapter of the Masonic Lodge.

In recent years, David has attended a regular monthly luncheon with former colleagues. When those colleagues were notified of David's failing health, Joe Delaney AO, the initial Director of the former Transportation Study, asked that his thanks be passed on for the work he did for him during the Study.

David was a quiet, meticulous, insightful and respected major contributor to the constructive application of transport modelling, mentoring others in a developing era.



David and his family - obviously a very special occasion.

We extend our sincere condolences to his wife, Lesley, and the families of his two sons, Tim and Marcus.

Ian Gardner

Ian was born in Lydenberg, a small country town in South Africa's Transvaal bushveld. He spent much of his young life on his aunties' farms. He admired his two older brothers, Basil and Dean. In World War Two, Dean's plane was shot down over Romania. Dean had written a prophetic letter home, explaining to Ian (just a boy at the time) he may have to step up and be 'the man of the house.'

Ian's two sisters, Eleanor and Meg, were also a big part of his life - for the whole of his life - friends as much as siblings. Ian always spoke lovingly about his nanny, Sannie. He referred to her as his mother's mentor. Nanny played a primary role in Ian's childhood. He never forgot this and held her in his heart until the end. His son said that Ian was not an emotional man, but any time he spoke of 'Nanny' he ended up in tears - such was their bond. In old age Nanny returned to Ian's home to help with his sister's 21st birthday. A short time after she died in Ian's arms. Sannie's sister said she had chosen to return home to die.

Ian's two aunts, Annie and Margaret, were a big part of his life. He loved them. They spoilt him and he spent much of his time on their farms outside Lydenberg. He often described his mother and her sisters as some of the first 'feminists' in South Africa.



Ian's first car.

Ian told stories to his family about hunting Kudu (antelopes) to make the family's recipe for biltong - a South African jerky. And there were enough black mamba snake stories to scare the hell out of everyone. They can measure more than 4 metres long and are among the world's fastest snakes. After the family sold the South African farm, the farmhouse was demolished, revealing a frightening number of black mamba nests in the roof. On the farm, Ian's mother once pulled back an eiderdown to put one of the kids to bed and disturbed a black mamba curled beneath. Life in the Transvaal was not for the faint-hearted.

Biltong was a constant in their lives. Ian experimented with various machines and boxes and lights to dry Australian steak to replace South African game meat. His children were his taste testers and food critics. Across the generations he converted sceptics into biltong lovers!

Ian and his wife, Maureen, started married life in South Africa where three of their five children were born. As a civil engineer he worked on many projects - the largest being surveying roads in Namibia.



Ian and Maureen on their wedding day.

His son said that the family slide nights included images of their long, tall father behind a long, tall theodolite in South West Africa's dusty, arid landscapes. Giraffes and African thorn trees on the horizon completed the scene. In his last days he was still enjoying YouTube travels through Namibia and southern Africa.

In 1960 Ian was offered a job with the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority and the family migrated to Cooma, leaving friends and family behind. With three children under seven, it was a big decision to leave and start a new life in Australia. Remember this was in the days when international flights were in Fokker Friendship propeller planes that stopped in the Indian Ocean to refuel.

Ian was forever grateful to Maureen for her adventurous spirit. They missed South Africa, but quickly grew to love their new country. It was a decision neither regretted. Life was not easy for them in the early years in Australia as Ian quietly battled with the challenges of a new professional environment and establishing a new home for the family.

In those days there was no internet, and international phone calls were measured by the minute due to high costs. Ian and Maureen realised that they were saying goodbye to friends and family possibly for the last time. Ian did manage a return visit once in the 70s and it was the last time he saw his home country.

After finishing up on the Snowy project in 1962, Ian accepted a position with the Country Roads Board in Horsham, where two more children were born. He became the Assistant Divisional Engineer, a position he held for two years. Ian took his family on picnics at highway overpasses he had worked on in the Wimmera. The Wailes overpass is now etched in the family history.

Bridges and roads were his passion, and Ian's idea of holiday snaps was a series of freeway shots and photos of road maintenance. His family rolled around on the lounge room floor in exasperated boredom, but this was not enough for him to stop explaining the finer points of the engineering he had photographed.

Ian had a strong work ethic, coupled with a love for good food and a beer or two. In his late thirties a heart attack caused him to take stock. After this he always thought his days were numbered. He often warned his kids that he would not live to see retirement ... or perhaps his 50th birthday ... or any other major milestone! Ironically, he lived until he approached his 95th birthday. This was probably one of the few times he was okay with being told he was wrong.

Ian loved an audience. He enjoyed speechmaking, telling stories, sharing jokes, and making people laugh with what he called his 'funnies'. In Horsham he joined Rostrum, a club that assisted members with public speaking skills. Clearly, they worked their magic! He was a proud man with a big personality. He loved socialising and engaging people with tall tales and true ... and if some truth had to be sacrificed, well then, so be it! He proudly became Horsham Golf Club President.



Ian on his appointment as DE Traralgon - 1984.

Ian transferred to Ballarat Division where he served as Assistant Divisional Engineer for 13 years before taking up the position of Divisional Engineer in Traralgon in 1984. He was elected staff representative on the Victorian Road Construction Authority Board. After retiring, Ian partnered with some engineering friends to create their own consulting company. With them, well into his seventies, he travelled around Australia consulting on road maintenance.

After any social event or catch-up Ian always asked, 'When will I see you again?' He was so appreciative of what people did for him as he became more dependent in later life. He never took this for granted. He lived out his final years in an Arcare Aged Care facility. Every time his family took him out he'd call them, even before they got home, to say thank you. He made sure people knew he appreciated their support.

Coffee shops were a favourite venue for Ian. Many baristas knew him by name. He would make them guess how many coffees were sold daily in Melbourne. Recently he asked for a toastie from a favourite cafe. Ian waited in the car while his son ordered. The barista apologised: the kitchen was closed. Then he noticed Ian in the car. 'Don't worry,' he said. 'I'll make it myself.' He personally delivered it to the car, and had a great chat with Ian because he hadn't seen him for a while. That made Ian's day!



Ian telling one of his stories.

Nesta Eirlys Noble

Nesta was the wife of Andrew Noble. She died recently at the age of 98.

After serving with the 2AIF during the war, Andrew worked for the Borough of Willesden (in London) and Glamorgan County Council (in Wales). While in London, he met his wife-to-be, NESTE (Nesta) from Derwen in North Wales. He was earning £8 per week and Nesta - a fully trained nurse - was earning £5 per week. They married in Wrexham in North Wales on 26 February 1949 and not long after they came out to Australia. Andrew had to hire a morning suit for the wedding - for the princely sum of two guineas!

They had four children - Ian, Jenny, Jane and Sue. We extend our sympathy to them. Nesta also had 11 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren. Her death notice said, "Proud of her Welsh heritage, Nesta a 'Tough Taffy' finally reunited with her loving Husband, Andrew."

FROM THE ARCHIVES



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P03747.001

This is a formal group portrait of officers mainly from the 22nd Construction Regiment, a Supplementary Reserve unit in the Citizen's Military Forces, based at Swan Street, Melbourne. They are outside a wooden building, possibly under instruction at a Holsworthy area military camp. In their civilian employment, most were engineers from the Victorian Country Roads Board (CRB) who carried out part-time corps training as reservists with the Royal Australian Engineers (RAE). Officers and men carried out annual training in camps and other locations throughout Victoria and often at the School of Military Engineering in NSW where this image was possibly made.

Back row (standing), left to right: Second Lieutenant Jack Sterkenburg; Lieutenant David Nicholson; 3126009 Captain Les P Malseed; 2/35078 Captain K D (David) Freeman; Second Lieutenant Jack Lowrey and Second Lieutenant Doug Boyle.

Front row (seated): 3137498 Captain Geoff R Hunt; 3137339 Captain Graeme W Marshallsea; 3138256 Major Bruce Addis; Lieutenant Colonel Bob Handley (Commanding Officer); Major David Hewson and Lieutenant Howard R Menz (extreme right).

Four of these officers were subsequently posted to South Vietnam for brief periods in order to gain further experience in a wartime environment which would prepare them for the senior appointments some would later assume. Those four officers were Les Malseed (1969); Geoff Hunt (1971); Graeme Marshallsea (1969) and Bruce Addis (1967).

LEST WE FORGET

Glyn Jones and David Crabbe have been of great assistance to me in tracking down ex-Warrnambool Division staff who served in the war. Here are the stories of a few of them.

Corporal Allan Owen, VX50695

Allan enlisted in the Australian Army on 17 March 1941 at Brunswick. He was born in June 1915 in Terang in the Western District of Victoria. Prior to enlisting, Allan was working in the building trade which was classified as an essential service. On his Attestation Form he described himself as a 'Roofing Fixer'. He worked on projects at the University of Melbourne, Puckapunyal barracks, Somers and Yallourn camps and the Ammunition Factory in Footscray.

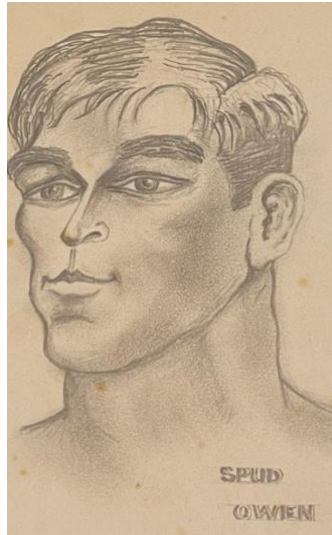
Immediately after enlisting, Allan was transferred to the Signals Training Depot at Balcombe. Signallers were soldiers specializing in military communications, mainly operating wireless communication systems and equipment, to keep commanders informed of troop movements, battle progress, supply lines and the like. They also conveyed information from the front to the command line and the field headquarters.



Allan Owen's enlistment photograph - 1941.

On completion of four month's training in Balcombe, Allan was transferred back to Royal Park and soon after he embarked for the Middle East in September 1941. He was attached to the 1st Australian Corps of Signals. His archive does not provide any indication of where he served in the Middle East but the Corp's memorial in Rocky Creek, Queensland states that it served in Egypt, Libya, Tobruk, Cyrenaica, Palestine and Syria.

It is certain that he served in Egypt at some stage because he and his comrades often told stories of them riding a donkey down one of the main streets of Cairo. During his army years he had the nickname of 'Spud' and one of his mates drew a portrait of him - which Allan kept for life. Unfortunately, the artist's name has been lost.



Pencil portrait of Spud Owen - date unknown.
Family collection.

He served in the Middle East from September 1941 until April 1942 when he returned to Adelaide on the Dutch steamer *MV Ittersum*. He arrived back home on 6 April 1942 and four months later, on *MS Sea Witch*, he embarked for Port Moresby in New Guinea.

In New Guinea, he was classified as a Group III Driver Mechanic and it appears that he worked in this capacity (and as a storeman) until he was evacuated back to Australia aboard the *MV Duntroon* in June 1943. He disembarked in Townsville. In October 1943 he was admitted to hospital for renal investigation but he was discharged after a few days only. It must have been a false alarm.

In 1944, he did a refresher course of four weeks duration at the First Australian Army School of Signals and emerged with the classification of 'Distinguished'. It was cited that "*He displayed a sound all round knowledge on entry and has shown marked keenness, and put much hard work into the Course. He is reliable and shows initiative.*"

He was sent to Morotai in Netherlands East Indies in April 1945. He was hospitalised there in September 1945 with otitis externa - a swelling and inflammation of the external ear canal. In January 1946 he returned to Australia on the *SS Georgetown Victory* and disembarked in Brisbane. Incidentally, this ship was built in Baltimore in the USA and was launched in April 1945. On 20 April 1946, she ran aground at Killard Point, County Down in Ireland with 1,400 British naval rating and RAF personnel aboard. Fortunately, all hands were saved but the ship completely broke up. The ship had a service life of barely one year.



Corporal Allan Owen - date unknown.
Family collection.

There is an entry in his archive which barely draws attention. It simply states that Allan was transferred to Victoria in early January 1946. It doesn't mention the importance of this because in February 1946, Allan married his sweetheart, Eileen May Stewart. Allan and Eileen had met through Allan's army buddy, Bob Mitchell, who was courting Eileen's sister. Allan and Bob were to become brothers-in-law.

Allan was discharged from the Army in April 1946.

Allan became a Soldier Settler after the war. As newlyweds, Allan and Eileen first settled in Warrnambool, Allan's home base. They then moved to a bush block near Timboon where Allan cleared their land, established a small dairy herd and also drove the school bus. They then took up a Soldier Settlement block at Alanvale in 1954 and shifted there with four small children. Alanvale is located about half way between Warrnambool and Hamilton in Western Victoria.

Like other settlers, the family lived for about a year in a tin garage while their house was being built. The site was barren, and the orchard that was planted struggled to grow in the strong winds and without constant water. Shelter belts were planted and in time they helped immensely. Living conditions were primitive for everyone in the early days. Families depended on cast iron stoves for heating and cooking, wood burning coppers for hot water, and oil lamps. Tank water was rationed in dry spells. Eventually, the purchase of a generator enabled powered lighting in each room of the house until electricity was finally connected to the district. The large diesel engine that originally powered the milking plant in the dairy was still relied upon for some years during periodic 'brown-outs' and 'black-outs'. Power supply was not overly reliable in those days.

The first 200 sheep purchased by Allan and Eileen died overnight in a cold snap and times were initially tough as they battled to establish themselves. Their 12 years at Alanvale consisted of mixed farming - dairy, sheep and cropping - which meant they were always busy. Twice daily milking, along with crutching, marking, dipping and shearing sheep and annual ploughing, sowing, fertilizer spreading and harvesting of crops made for a huge workload, but Allan and Eileen always believed that "being your own boss was worth at least 10 quid a week". The children also pitched in by collecting the eggs and the kindling, progressing to helping with milking, rounding up sheep, helping in the shearing shed, schooling the horses, feeding the dogs and so on. Often work became a game, such as racing each other when turning the haybales - first to the middle of the paddock was the winner. They made a sled for the pony in order to gather timber from the plantations for their annual bonfires.

Allan was a lover of horses and dogs. He always preferred a horse and cart to tractor when it came to feeding livestock and traversing the farm. He kept a draught horse and several riding horses. When the children grew, he bought and broke in many Moyne Falls ponies for constant use by his children. For a time, he and Eileen

bred Labradors, some of which became guide dogs, and he kept several faithful working dogs. His dogs were all well trained and sought after by other farmers.

But when the big drought of 1967 hit, Allan had to find work elsewhere. He came to the Country Roads Board on the Regional Economic Development Scheme (REDS). This was a scheme to assist struggling farmers to support their families. In the Western District, REDS was used to clean up highway reserves and make them more accessible for fire-fighting units.

Allan was a top worker and stayed on in Warrnambool Division as a bridge worker until he retired in the 1980s. He was the relief overseer when the normal precast yard overseer was on leave.

I received great assistance from Glyn Jones (ex-Bridge Engineer Warrnambool) and Allan's son, David - who also worked for VicRoads - in writing this story. Glyn said that "*Whilst the records are factual, they cannot express the respect and affection that we who worked with him felt.*"

Allan died in Warrnambool in 2008 aged 93.

Sapper Louis (Lou) Mervyn Lehmann, VX86417 (V225019)

Lou came from Hopetoun in Western Victoria. He was born on 4 February 1922 and enlisted in the Australian Army at Williamstown on 15 July 1942. Lou was a senior draftsman in the CRB's Warrnambool Division.

Lou's file has not been digitized. I will be able to complete his story once I have examined his service record in the National Australian Archives in Canberra.

He served in New Guinea and, possibly, the islands to the north of Australia. Peter Crabbe is investigating further.

He was discharged on 8 August 1946.



Lou Lehmann on his retirement - 1981.

He died of a stroke in January 1992 just before his 70th birthday.



Lou Lehmann (right) and Max Irwin (ex RAAF) at work in the design office in Warrnambool - 1978.

Sergeant Maxwell (Max) Frederick Irwin, 430090

Max was born in Port Fairy in April 1919 and he enlisted in the RAAF in December 1942. He was a senior draftsman at the CRB's Warrnambool Division.

Max's service records have not yet been digitized but the following anecdotal information has been provided by his long-term colleague at Warrnambool, Glyn Jones. Glyn is, by his own admission, an aircraft enthusiast - although his wife describes it more as 'Plane mad'. Glyn owns Max's aircraft recognition books from the war with his name and rank marked on each of them.

Glyn was pretty certain that Max did not serve outside Australia but he was retained as an instructor on plane recognition. Glyn had a vague recollection that Max was colour blind. He retained his bristly little moustache - beloved of airmen - and conducted himself in a military manner. He and Glyn always attended the annual air show at Laverton. Apparently, Max's family lived at the end of the airstrip at Laverton so they had first class seats for the show.



Max Irwin with Warrnambool Division colleagues - 1982.
Left to right: Lou Lehmann (ex 2AIF), Viv Gilfedder, Don Gleeson and Max Irwin.

According to the nominal roll, Max was discharged from the RAAF's 5th Transport and Movement Office in November 1945.

I will eventually go up to the National Australian Archives in Canberra to examine Max's service records and complete his story.

Driver Mervyn John (Jack) Townsend, VX117966

Jack was born in Warrnambool in August 1920 and he enlisted in the Army in September 1942. He was a labourer who worked on bridges in the Warrnambool region and later in the Divisional precast yard.

His file in the National Archives has not been digitized so I will have to visit Canberra to view it. I am not 100% sure that this is the right Jack Townsend. I hope his archive will have a photograph in it.

He was discharged from 148 General Transport Company on 14 November 1945.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL

A very dear friend died in South Australia just a few days before I flew out of Australia for Italy. Her name was Diane Orr. We met Diane and her husband, Hugh, back in the 1960s and we've always remained close even though they shifted to South Australia a long time ago. Diane was American born and was one of the most gentle and kindly people I have known. I will always miss her.

Hugh sent me this letter from a family friend and has given his permission for me to publish it.

Dear friends:

I wanted to share this quilt story with you and was afraid I'd be too emotional to share it in person when we next meet.

A dear friend of mine went to the Mary Potter Hospice about 2 weeks ago but died last Thursday. As you know our friend Marg has made over 100 quilts for this Hospice. Diane, my friend, was given a quilt as they do for all patients when they arrive.

However, when I saw the one given to Diane I knew it wasn't one of Marg's because it was quite frankly rather dull. So I rang Marg and asked her how I could source one of hers. She invited me over and we chose a couple for me to take to the Hospice.

Diane immediately chose the bright yellow, blue and white one because she said it made her feel cheerful.

We put it on her bed and five days later she died. Her family was very touched by what this quilt meant to Diane and thus to them. Her daughter, Pam, told me that she sat with her mother all day on the day she died and the quilt just offered some brightness to the whole situation.

Pam also told me that they wanted the quilt to be buried with Diane whose body is being taken to Kangaroo Island for burial. Pam told the funeral directors not to stuff it down at the foot of the coffin but to have it in full view for the angels (as she said) when Diane passes into the unknown.

I know you will appreciate what this one quilt meant to one family ... and although we don't know the stories behind those given to other patients, we can only imagine similar sentiments.

So, Marg, I thank you personally for this gift of love which I know you said you make and give unconditionally so you don't mind if it goes to the angels in the end.

With love to each of you

Rachel

TRIVIA AND DIDACTIC WHIMSIES

Explaining politics

I told my son, "You will marry the girl I choose."

He said, "No."

I told him, "She is Bill Gates' daughter."

He said, "Yes."

I called Bill Gates and said, "I want your daughter to marry my son."

Bill gates said, "No."

I told Bill Gates, "My son is the CEO of the World Bank."

Bill Gates said, "OK."

I called the president of the World Bank and asked him to make my son the CEO.

He said, "No."

I told him, "My son is Bill Gates' son-in-law."

He said, "OK."

And that's exactly how politics works.

And thus, began the practice of hiring dumb people to work in influential positions of government. The practice is unbroken to this date.

He can't be everywhere

The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. I will eventually go up to the National Australian Archives in Canberra to examine Max's service records and complete his story.

At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray: 'Take only ONE God is watching.'

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies.

A child had written a note, 'Take all you want. God is watching the apples....'

Wifi

I was staying overnight at a hotel on business. I took my computer down to the bar to check a few things out. I sat down at the bar and I asked the bartender, 'What's the Wifi password?'

He said, 'You need to buy a drink first.'

I said, 'Okay, I'll have a beer.'

He replied, 'We have Molson's on tap'

I said, "Sure. How much is that?"

'\$8.00.'

I gave him the money. 'Here you are. OK now, what's the Wifi password?'

he replied, 'youneedtobuyadrinkfirst'...No spaces and all lowercase.'

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