



December 1968



December 1972



Keeping the Memory Alive

Vol 10 December 2012

## THE TRACKERS'

# C R O N I C L E

We ran out of CRO supported NASA manned space flight missions of the sixties and seventies a while back, so until we can come up with a new, suitable and lasting, theme (suggestions still welcomed) the newsletter will a) continue to be somewhat patchwork in content, or b) have to be reduced in size. You will also gather that I am getting desperate for suitable material.

It is out there.

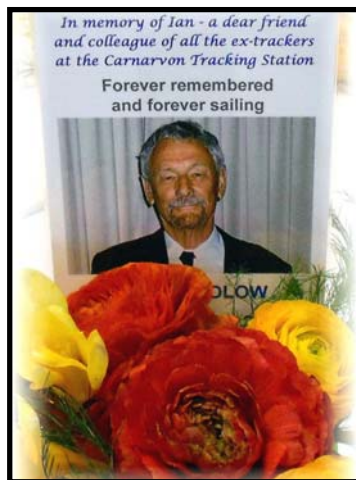
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## Tribute



This memorial bouquet and photograph were cast into the sea from a jetty at the Koombana Sailing Club, Bunbury, on Saturday, September 1st.; thanks to the thoughtfulness of Lauri Glocke (nee Teeny Bopper). It was followed by a libation of red.

A total of 19 Trackers, partners and sons attended the memorial service.

## Skylab Plan



The original plan for re-entry was for the CSM, on the last mission, to do a retro burn while docked with the workshop, then separate, do a sep maneuver, and then finish the CM reentry, with the workshop burning up and falling into the Pacific Ocean.

That plan was dropped due to the damage the workshop sustained during its launch. There were concerns about the structural integrity of the workshop and being able to withstand the CSM burn(s). The new plan was to just let the orbit decay and worry about the problem in the future.

*Courtesy Terry Watson - Project Apollo*

## New Year, Revisited



## Whereabouts

**A**s a result of Paul Dench supplying his "staffing list", augmented courtesy Brian Milne, the "Whereabouts" table of those for whom we have no contact details has expanded to more than one page. Thanks to those who have sent updates.

C Abott	Jim Crossland	Peter Hardwicke
Eric Ainsworth	Noel Cunningham	Ron Harmes
Gay Albon	F Dawes	Anne Harvey (Brookes)
Bill Arbery	Peter Dawson	D Hatch
Allan Barber	Peter Del Fante	Gail Heileman
John (Allan) Barber	Andrew Dempster	Stan Hills
Matt Barber	Jean DeVis	Ernie Hindley
Keith Barnard	Marilyn Dick	Dave Hine
Barrow	Olive Dick	A Holgate
Deidre Beaumont	Neville Dippell	Phyllis Hook (Watson)
Elizabeth Beckett	Cheryl? Dixon	J Hopkins
Keith Beveridge	L Donkin	Vivienne Lawer (Hopper)
Michael Billings	John Draper	
Denis Black	Mike Dresser	Deidre Howard
G Bond	Bruce Duff	B Hughes
S Boyce	I Dunleavy	B Hunter
Bill Boyle	Bob Dwyer	D Hutchins
B Bradley	Dave Elliot	Ian Jones
Phil Brindley	J Erickson	S ??? Judd
Hans Britz		Vera Kastropil
Dave Brooks	Ian Few	John Keane
Charlie Brown	Ian Findlay	Mike Keen
T.F.A Brown	G Francis	Jim Keenan
W Brown	Ben Franklin	John Kelman
J Burdett	David Froom	Joy King
R Burdett	Jamie Gardiner	M King
Martin Burgess	L Gardner	L King
Robert Burns	S Garner	Roy Kjellgren
Joe Cabone	C George	Gloria Klarie
Joy Cameron	Joe George	Peter Kloppenburg
Geoff Cardwell	J Gerschwitz	Henry Larsen
G Carrick	G Goodlace	Russ Leighton
Brian Clarke	L Gore	G Linney
Brian Clifford	Lyn Grant	F Lippett
Keith Clifton-James	Claude Granville	Alex Liu
Barbara Cobcroft	Bob Halse	Gloria Lyon-Roberts
Bill Comstock	Geoff Hammond	Ross MacDonald
?? Coombs	R Hanes	John Mahaffey
Ron Cottis	Bea Hardman	Peter Maine

*The quest continues; the list never seems to get very much shorter.*

*I have been given information concerning the possible whereabouts of a few of these, but so far have not been successful in obtaining, or confirming, details. The Reunion Dinner brought out some missing persons, but there are also a few who do not wish to be contacted.*

## Whereabouts ctd.

Roy Mallinson	Diane Pitman (Housley)	George Small
Bob Marr	John Platten	Lyn Smart (Willis)
Keith Mathieson	Gerry Plummer	J Smith
Alec Matthews	D Powell	
K McCarson	M.J.K Power	P Smith
Ian McDonald	Wendy Puccinelli	Roger Smith
S McDonald	Lorna Quinn	Bill Smythe
Frank McGregor	Roger Ramsden	Hazel Snook (Howse)
Eileen McLaughlan	A Rees	Dave Standbury
Don McLellan	Dave Rendell	John Stanton
Nola Meiklejohn (O'Byrne)	Frank Rice	Alex Stevenson
R Miller	Doug Richards	Barbara Stephenson (Vernon)
Ray Mills	D Richardson	Barbara Teahan
Marilyn Milner (Gobby)	Harry Richmond	Barbara Teasdale
John Mogg	Ralp Richmond	Des Terrill
Sharon Morgan (Todd)	Dave Rickards	Alan Thomas
J Murray	G Riley	Christine Thomas
Dennis Naylor	Brian Robinson	Howard Thomas
Gloria Neal	Lynne Rosser	Don Thompson
Ellie Nichols	Ted Rosser	Jack Thompson
K Elton Nickerson	Lindsay Sage	Patsy Thompson (Nolan)
Graham Nielsen	Stewart Sands	Larry Tomkins
John Noble	Ron Sargeant	Frank Toomey
? O'Brien	Russell Schwarzer	Mike Travell
Joan Oats	Bob Scott	Norma Turner
W Oliver	Michael Scott-Malcolm	Ernst Uhl
Denis Owens	Lorraine Scott-Malcolm (Erlandsen)	Tony Vingerhoets
John Paddon	Dorcas Sefton-Bellion	Dave Walker
??? Mrs Parkinson	George Sefton-Bellion	Mrs B Ward
John Parkinson	D Selby	Tom Ward
Alan Paterson	Ron Shand	N Wardle
? Paull	Fred Sharland	A Watermeyer
Mike Pender	E Sharples	Irene West
Wendy Petersen	? Sheehan	Bernie Wilbourne
Don Pettitt	Jeff Shuttleworth	Garnet Wilmott
T Phillips	P Sims	Brian Wilson

## Catch the Buzz



The "Catch the Buzz!" DVD's are now available for sale at the museum. Cost is \$22.00 plus postage. It features:

- Carnarvon Airport Welcome;
- Kids Q & A;
- Cocktail Party, which includes Buzz's inspirational speech, and
- Opening of museum

It is a great memento if you were there, if you weren't ...you'll wish you were! But at least now you'll feel part of one of Carnarvon's biggest events.

Please order through our website at

<http://www.carnarvonmuseum.org.au/buzz.html>



## Recollections

By Alan Gilham



It was during the early sixties, after the Cuban missile crisis of late 1962 and the J. F. Kennedy speech about putting a man on the moon that I became interested in the space program. In particular listening to

the broadcast of the first Gemini flight with John Glenn, it seemed to be the way to go.

At that time I was working on some of the first main frame computers of the time and spending more time going out and repairing them than there were days in the week.

In early 1965 I noted an advert in the "Electronics Weekly" from Amalgamated Wireless of Australia asking for people to go to Carnarvon, Western Australia to operate and maintain the electronic equipment to be installed in the ground station there for the Apollo project. I applied and was accepted.

In June 1965 together with several other people I attended a short course arranged by AWA in London's Tavistock Hotel. This course was really "a get to know Carnarvon" and having obtained the appropriate visas and clearances I was bound for New York (first class) and thence on to Dallas for the inaugural course on the Unified 'S' Band system designed for the Apollo project. This course was given by Collins Radio at their factory in Arapaho Road in Richardson County, Dallas, Texas.

There were seven people on that course mainly Australians of English, Irish and Italian ancestry, a "true blue" Aussie and three Brits. At weekends we took the hire cars back to Hertz for

cleaning and refuelling and occasionally went with the Hertz people to Love Field to collect the rental cars left by departing visitors.

The Texans, being great jokers, once allocated me a huge vehicle to drive back; it was very fast and nearly got me into speed problems. Arriving back at Hertz they were all laughing over it, but at least they had a cold beer waiting for me.

One weekend one of the instructors, me and two others went on a "self drive" flight to Fort Worth and surrounding areas. I actually "drove" the plane to Fort Worth under the eagle eye of the instructor.

This was an enjoyable experience.



At the end of the course we went on

to Washington for a few days to look around the Space Centre at Greenbelt Maryland, and then we split up returning to UK and Australia respectively.

After the usual family visits and packing up ready for our new life in Australia we set off from Heathrow in a piston engine Bristol Britannia.

This flight stopped at Kuwait airport, which was then just a shack guarded by a man on a camel, then following the coast of India to Ceylon.

Back in the air to Singapore we ran into a tropical thunder storm. The plane was tossed about like a straw in the wind and I spotted water condensation coming in from the door. I called the stewardess who gave me great confidence by turning as white as a sheet and calling for the flight engineer.

*To be continued*

# The Carnarvon Space Festival

*By Hamish Lindsay*

***"It is with excitement we welcome guests to the Carnarvon Space Festival. It is an event that has been forty years in the making and the whole region has laid out the welcome mat."***

***"Please relax, enjoy and slip into Carnarvon time."***

Karl Brandenburg, Shire President.

As an ex-tracker from Carnarvon I received an invitation and a program of events planned for us over the two days of festivities.

The schedule began at Perth domestic airport at 0830 on Friday 22 June with a welcome near the boarding gate. Two musicians serenaded us as the group gathered, and decorated mocktail drinks were laid out on a table. Dr. Buzz Aldrin arrived with his partner Michelle, son James, manager Christina and bodyguard and was immediately engaged as he approached us. He spoke with many of the trackers and guests and posed for photographs. He spent some time with one boy who was promised the trip by his mother, but the father refused to pay the costs.

There were two charter flights, using Fokker Friendships. We were on the first (Buzz was on the second - I wondered what his thoughts were as an astronaut and jet fighter pilot grinding along in an old propeller driven plane). Looking at the colourful ground sliding past below, with the morning sun sparkling on the sea, golden sandbanks scattered in the blue and green waters over Shark Bay, I realised this was the first time I had flown into the town; while living there I was always driving my car.

On arrival at Carnarvon around midday at Terminal 3, we disappointed

the waiting crowd by not bringing Buzz with us on the first plane. Hundreds of people were waiting behind a high metal barred fence, including around 200 school children from the surrounding district. While we were waiting for the second plane to arrive I heard a teacher addressing the expectant kids, "Are you excited?" then added, "This could be one of the greatest moments of your life."

The welcoming ceremony beside the airport terminal building began with an elder of the local Yinggarda community giving a traditional aboriginal welcome. Then Mr Karl Brandenburg, the shire president, handed over the first ever keys of the town to Buzz.

Buzz addressed the crowd wearing a blue coat with a red scarf. Looking at the sea of little faces in front of him with three school colours; red, blue



*Photograph - Kathy Franin*

and purple, he said, "I am wearing blue for you, red for you, and blue and red make purple for you", pointing to the purple school colours.

The school children and Buzz went off to a tent on the old OTC site for a question and answer session. There were around 400 school children in the tent from Carnarvon, Perth, Onslow,

*Continued on p10*

# Open Day

## WELCOME TO THE CARNARVON TRACKING STATION

You are free to drive around in your car and enter most buildings but please observe all road signs, If some sections become crowded you may be directed to park elsewhere and a courier bus will convey you to the sections you wish to see.

Afternoon tea: will be provided for a modest charge in the Crew Room between 2.15 and 5.15 p.m.

Evening meal & Barbecue: between 6.30 and 9.30 p.m., light meals may be purchased in the Crew Room. You may, if you wish, buy Q barbecue pack and cook your own food on the barbecues on the front lawn of the T & C Building.

-Films-: NASA films will be shown continuously in the Lecture Room at T & C.

T.V. Replay: Continuous replays of lunar walks by Apollo Astronauts will be shown in the Control Room

Computer Games: War Games, Noughts & Crosses, 'Blackjack,' can be played on the Computers. Go to the Computer Room or the Control Room at T & C.

Time	Activity	Suggested Vantage Points
2.30 to 2.45	Demonstration USB Antenna moving under Computer Control	USB, T & C Building
2.35 to 3.00	Live Satellite Tracking	TLM, T & C Building
3.15	Launch of Jimsphere Balloon {very large silver balloon being inflated behind T & C or see it being tracked at FPQ6 Radar.}	Behind T & C, or At FPQ6 Radar
3.30 to 3.45	Simulated Tracking of ALSEP {Apollo Lunar Surface Experiments Package.}	USB, T & C Building
4.15 to 4.40	Live Satellite Tracking	TLM, T & C Building
4.45 to 5.00	Demonstration USB Antenna moving under Computer Control	USB, T & C Building
5.00	Second Jimsphere Launch	T & C or FPQ6
5.15 to 6.00	Simulated Tracking of ERTS {Earth Resources Technology Satellite.}	USB and TLM, T & C Building
5.50 to 6.15	Live Satellite Tracking	TLM, Ac/ Aids
6.30	Balloon Launch (with aluminium sphere attached.}	Behind T 11, C, or at FPQ6 Radar.
7.00 to 7.30	All Antennas slave (move in conjunction with each other) together.	USB, AA in T & C Building, Q6
7.45 to 8.15	Simulated Tracking of ERTS {Earth Resources Technology Satellite.}	USB and TLM, T & C Building
9.15 to 9.30	Demonstration USB Antenna moving under Computer Control	USB, T & C Building

USB - Unified 'S' Sand System, TLM - Telemetry, T & C - Telemetry & Control

AA - Acquisition Aids

## The Fisherman Who Rode a Horse

*Continuation of an extract from the autobiography of Ken Watters.*

We got back to Dad's caravan just after midnight and went across to the showers and had a real good scrub up before Mum had a chance to spot us. Bub's face showed a few bruises and his left eye didn't look the best but we had no broken bones and I think we both felt a lot better now that it was behind us.

I received word back from the Education Department that my application for a scholarship had passed the first stage and they now wanted me to attend an interview in Perth at my earliest convenience. I took leave from the Tracking Station and loaded up my old Landrover and headed off to Perth two days after getting the notice.

The interview went very well and I had great news to take back to Carnarvon. It looked like I would be going back to school. All that was left now was to be accepted by the West Australian Institute of Technology.

On returning to Carnarvon I decided that if I was going to be travelling to and from Perth from school to work during the holidays then I had a real need to trade my beloved Landrover for something more suited to the long travelling and much cheaper to run. Max Garth, my shift supervisor, had a 1600cc Volkswagon station wagon that he was absolutely rapt in. It was very fast and reliable and cheap to run.

I decided to visit Ocean Motors who were the VW Dealers in Carnarvon and Mr. Girak showed me brochures of a new VW that was about to come onto the market. It was a 1600cc VW Fastback. It came with twin carburettors as standard equipment and the pictures on the brochures made it look fantastic. Girak offered me a good trade on the Landrover so I put my order in for the first available Fastback to come into WA. I had to wait two months and even then I did not get a choice of colours. It arrived in a nice light grey colour. Of course my brothers and my Dad all had a dig at me for buying a washing machine. Dad had his nice big Humber Super Snipe and John his flash Holden but they were soon to learn that my VDub was nothing to laugh about.

The day I took delivery I asked Mr. Girak where he wanted me to leave my Landrover.

"Just park it up the back and bring the keys to my office", he said.

I parked the car up the back but try as I might I could not pull the key out of the ignition. They had never been out since I had bought the old girl and had rusted in so badly that no amount of tugging with my pliers would move them. I returned to the office to finish signing up for the VDub. After the paper work was finished Mr Girak passed me the keys to my new car and held his hand out for the keys to my Landrover.

"I'm sorry I must have left them in the Landrover", I replied hunting through my pockets.

"That's OK we'll fetch them in later", replied Mr Girak shaking my hand.

*To be continued*



## Social Club News - April 1969

### THE FULL LIFE ctd.

BY BURGEE

Comes the dawn - three spoons of Weeties and we're off to the islands. For an hour or so the night's cramps, bumps and miscellaneous noises are forgotten. This is it, Blue Water Sailing at last - getting away from it all - a life on the ocean wave. Must have a boat of my own, until quite distinctly the level of conversation drops to nothing and everyone has a fixed green smile on his face, enjoying it whether he likes it or not. "How soon do we arrive?" says a fishing type. "I'll take a fix" says a navigating type, going below and up again in five seconds flat. "I think we are 150 miles off course" says he half an hour later. "Look, I'll prove it." Nobody is interested. "Sit under a tree for half an hour" says a comic type. He very nearly gets flung overboard.

Finally the islands. A day and a half of relaxed exploring, fishing and sunbathing. Broken only by the occasional up anchoring and moving to another spot every 45 minutes, the happy carefree job of gutting the fish and overnight anchor watching. The end is in sight. The question of when to leave arises. It is democratically discussed.

"I want to fish some more" - "I want to explore" -  
 "I want to take a noon sight" - "I want to sleep" -  
 "I want my breakfast" - "I want to leave" says the Captain. We leave.

All being well, provided the mainsail does not fall down, we see Carnarvon just as the tide is going out. "Full speed ahead" cries the Captain, "We'll charge the bank." Slowly and gently we grind to a stiff halt. "Everyone overboard and push" he cries from the cockpit. Over you go. Gradually, oh so gradually, the boat is pushed clear. "Roger" you hear faintly. "Full ahead - right hand down a bit". Forty horsepower take charge and the bows dip gently to the swell, dipping you gently at the same time. Somewhere along the line your fellow pushers have pushed off and left you hanging on to the bows, your trousers fill at each dip like a pair of hydraulic wind socks, stretching your elastic braces to the limit. You are glad when someone treads on your fingers accidentally and notices you down there. "Trying to duck out of that 20 cents you owe me" he says maliciously. The Captain, who feels you might foul the anchor if left there too long, orders you hauled aboard.

*To be continued*

## The Carnarvon Space Festival ctd.

Exmouth and Denham. 12 youngsters were chosen to ask questions. It was reported that Buzz seemed taken aback by one question from a primary school student, "Were you scared when the switch broke to the ascent engine?" Buzz's initial response was, "Who told you that?"



*Equipment Configuration at The Fascine Lodge*

After we had booked into the Fascine Lodge in Brand Drive, we adjourned to the dining room at 1400 for a PowerPoint presentation by Paul Dench, Terry Kierans, and Jim and Alison Gregg on some memories and the role of the station; and at the end we ex-trackers had to stand up to be applauded.

There was no provision in the schedule for visiting the old NASA tracking station site, so David Johns, ex-Carnarvon tracker, offered to take us out to the site during a brief spell with nothing scheduled on the Friday afternoon.



*David Johns at the gate*

We arrived at the gate (all new to me - it was built after I left) and drove up the drive. First we passed the SPAN building, still there operating as a transmitting station for Broadcast Australia, but all the rest of the station was gone except for the concrete foundations.

Looking around I was reminded of the ideal horizon for a tracking station - absolutely ruler flat right around for 360 degrees. I noted with surprise there was good water in Tickle Belly Flats. My main memory of it was as a dry dust bowl, but David remembered canoeing on it in the 1970s.

I located the T&C building and found my mission post at the voice receivers, now very different from my last view of the place. My last memory was a tiled floor, surrounded by walls and racks of communication equipment. It had no window; there were no windows



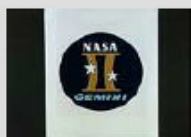
*USB Antenna - All That Remains*

in the Gemini operational areas. The USB floor area was a smooth dark patch with swirls where cars had been doing wheelies. Only four concrete blocks remain of the 9 metre USB antenna.

On the way to the FPQ6 radar site I could see the foundations for the power house and Command and Voice Transmitter sites on the left.

*To be continued*

## KEEPING THE MEMORY ALIVE



### Carnarvon Tracking Station 1964 - 1975



#### Present Day

[Click for full size](#)

*Mick and Sue Coffey's Carnarvon Steel Supplies of Cornish St Carnarvon fabricated and donated the sign*

*Signwriting generously donated by W&K Painting of Egan St, Carnarvon*

*Photograph by Phil Youd - Edited by Terence Kierans*

[Click here to commence entry to the original station](#)

**M**y sincere thanks to all of those who have contributed to the website so far; listed at: [http://crotrak.com/thank\\_you.htm](http://crotrak.com/thank_you.htm).

At long last I have included some more photographs from the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion Dinner, courtesy Joan & Tito Teraci. Plus a few sites have been updated with photographs from Hamish Lindsay.

A call goes out, yet again, for material. I can arrange copying, scanning, whatever, so as to get them uploaded to our website, or published in The CRONicle; you need have no fears regarding their safety.

## Rotary Club of Carnarvon



The Rotary Club of Carnarvon will be holding their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary festivities on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June and Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2013, including a gala dinner on the Friday evening, at the Woolshed.

If you would like to be part of these celebrations will you please contact the co-ordinators Dennis and Joy Wade.

E-mail: [dwandjwade01@westnet.com.au](mailto:dwandjwade01@westnet.com.au)

Phone: 08 9998 5252



# Keeping the Memory Alive



*"And from the crew of Apollo 8, we close with good night, good luck,  
a Merry Christmas, and God bless all of you - all of you on the good Earth."*

— Frank Borman

*A very merry Christmas  
and  
a healthy and prosperous New Year  
to you and your families,  
from the editor.*

If undelivered, please return to:

**CRO Trackers**

PO Box 93, Quinns Rocks, WA 6030