



June 1965



June 1966



Keeping the Memory Alive

Vol 10 June 2013

THE TRACKERS'

C R O N I C L E

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Extract from "From The Trench of Mission Control to the Craters of The Moon"

Courtesy "Dutch" von Ehrenfried

CARNARVON

The new Carnarvon tracking station in Western Australia was built in the early 60's. It was built as part of the STADAN network and just added the Mercury equipment. In May of 1964, a team of flight controllers headed up by Dan Hunter, including Stu Davis, Bill Garvin, Jim Moser and I went to Carnarvon to develop the operational procedures for the team. This station is in, what we would call, the "outback." It is located near the Tropic of Cancer. This station would be the first to receive the spacecraft and be able to communicate with the astronauts after a long flight across the Indian Ocean.

To reach that station, we would first have to fly tourist class from Houston to LA, then to Hawaii, then to Fiji and then land in Sydney. We stayed there about a day or so. Then we would fly in a DC- 3 from Sydney on the east coast of Australia to Perth on the west coast. Then you would drive 260 miles north on a two lane paved road to Geraldton which was a truck stop and then another 300 miles on lesser roads to Carnarvon. You would stop to 'pee' along the way because there were few gas stations. When you got out of the car, the flies would cover your sweaty back. This journey is so tiring that Dan Hunter wrote a complaint to the travel office to allow-people to travel first class for extended long flights.

We stayed at the Gascoyne Hotel. It was made of corrugated sheet metal and had one bathroom on the second floor for all the guests. But, it did have three bars; one for men; one for women; and one for couples. If you saw the movie, "Crocodile Dundee", that bar scene pretty much captures the bar at the Gascoyne Hotel. The owner, Gordon Meiklejohn was a great host.

While I have a dozen stories to tell about this trip; I will only retell the one that relates to operations. (there are more to hear!).

During one simulation, we had our NASA team at the consoles and the Australian Maintenance and Operations (M&O) people were in the back room getting the tracking station ready. We had one of us playing the "System" guy, one playing the "Surgeon" and I was playing the "CapCom." One day, we were already for this one particular test and per the timeline, I called out on the communications link; "M&O, Capcom, ready to support test." No response. I checked to be sure I had punched up the right call button on the comm panel. "M&O, this is CapCom ready to support." Again, nothing. I tried again. Nothing. I took off my headset and walked into the back room. There were all the guys sitting down with a cup of tea. "What's going on, we're in a test." "It's time for tea" was the response. "Well I hope this doesn't happen during the flight." I was to learn a few more cultural shocks.



Bill Garvin, "Dutch" and
Jim Moser at the Gascoyne

Photograph "Dutch" von Ehrenfried

To be continued

Whereabouts

As 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>

Searching for Water Vapour in the Galaxy

Courtesy Tony Green

"Here is a copy of the letter by Woody The Turd (Q6 honorary title) proving that we DID discover stuff in the Southern Skies."

You may have noticed that during April the FPQ-6 antenna was behaving very differently from normal. In fact it was not being used as a radar at all, but rather as a passive device searching for radiation arising from clouds of water vapor in our galaxy. It turns out that the water molecule emits a spectral line, characteristic of water alone, at a frequency of 22235 MHz or a wavelength of 1.35 centimeters. This spectral line has been studied in the laboratory for several decades, but it was only 2-1/2 years ago that it was first detected outside the earth's atmosphere by a group at the University of California at Berkeley. Since that time, radio astronomers have detected many other molecules in our galaxy including ammonia, formaldehyde, cyanogen, methyl alcohol, formic acid, silicon oxide, and carbon sulfide.

Over the past two years the sources of H₂O radiation visible from the Northern Hemisphere have been carefully studied by several groups of astronomers. At the Naval Research Laboratory, we have an 85-foot radio telescope near Washington, D. C. which is ideal for such work. The only problem was that we were not able to study the rich regions of the southern Milky Way because this part of our galaxy never rises above our horizon.

Thus it was that we sought out a suitable antenna in the Southern Hemisphere and found just what we wanted in the FPQ-6 at Carnarvon. During April Ken Johnston, Steve Knowles, and Woody Sullivan, all radio astronomers, conducted this experiment while Ken Asbury provided programming support for the RCA 4101. The experiment would have been impossible without the unfailing support of all the Carnarvon personnel, especially Mr. R. Jacomb and the FPQ-6 crew headed by Brian Clarke. We are grateful to them and to all the other friends we made during our visit to Carnarvon.

As for the experiment itself, technically it went quite well with only a few minor difficulties here and there. We removed the radar "nose cone" and replaced it with our own radiometer. We found that the antenna operated quite adequately at such a high frequency as 22 GHz. We carefully searched at about thirty likely positions on the sky and discovered two new sources of water vapor in the constellations of Norma and Carina in the southern Milky way. We named them Fred and Ethel, but to the world of astronomy they are known by the rather dull names of G282.5-0.0 and G331.5-0.5. Like the northern water sources, these appear to be regions of hot, ionized gas lying between clusters of young stars, some stars perhaps so young that they are still in the process of formation. Also like other H₂O sources, our new ones appear to be very intense, point-like "beacon" sources. Due to the success of this project, it is hoped that in the future other radio astronomers will take advantage of the FPQ-6 for their own experiments. Thus you may soon see the antenna tracking the stars, rather than satellites and balloons, once again.

Woodruff T. Sullivan, III
E. O. Hulburt Center for Space Research
Naval Research Laboratory
Washington, D. C. 2039

The Carnarvon Space Festival ctd.

By Hamish Lindsay

Buzz continued, "In the late fifties the cold war between the Soviet Union and the United States was escalating and tensions were high. In October of 1957, while I was still stationed in Germany, the Soviet Union pulled off a sudden and unexpected technological feat - they launched Sputnik. And in response a year later America formed the National Aeronautics and Space Administration - NASA - with the goal of reaching space. The space age was born and the space race was about to begin. On April 12th 1961, the Soviets made an incredible achievement by sending the first human into space - that was Yuri Gagarin - for one full orbit of the Earth. In response, only a few weeks later, NASA launched America's first Mercury astronaut, Alan Shepard, on a 15 minute sub orbital flight that touched the edge of space.



President John F. Kennedy pins NASA's Distinguished Service Medal on the jacket of astronaut Alan B. Shepard Jr. after MA-3 flight

This was definitely impressive, but, we wondered, what's next? President Kennedy asked NASA and its ranks of engineers and rocket scientists led by Werner von Braun, what was possible? They told him it would take at least 15 years before we could put a man on the Moon. Instead of accepting

what was possible, on May 25th 1961, just three weeks after Alan Shepard's flight, President Kennedy boldly challenged America to commit to the goal of landing a man on the Moon before the end of the decade.



*The Decision to Go to the Moon:
President John F. Kennedy's May 25,
1961 Speech before a Joint Session
of Congress*

We had not even put a man into orbit! The rockets and spacecraft needed to go beyond Earth orbit didn't exist. Many thought the challenge was impossible. We didn't have the know-how. But we did have a leader with the vision, the determination and the confidence that we could get there. By publicly stating our goal, and by putting a specific time period on a very specific accomplishment, President Kennedy gave us the back door. We either had to do it, or fail. And no one was interested in failing.

If space was going to be our next frontier then I wanted to be a part of getting there ..." clapping and calls from audience, "so after I completed my tour of duty in Germany, where I was with my good friend Ed White (pilot in Gemini IV, and later died in the Apollo 1 fire), I decided to continue my education and to receive my doctorate in astronautics from MIT.

To be continued

8th Picnic Day

"Five years is still a long time between drinks."



Photograph - Valerie Kierans

This picnic was the last until 2015. Next year we will be celebrating the 45th Anniversary of the first lunar landing at the Bridgeleigh Reception Centre.

A turnout of 29 was pretty good with some travelling from afar like Derek Major from Kalgoorlie; Teeny Bopper and Roger from Collie, and Ken and Judy Watters from Nilgen. Apologies were received from John Preece and John Riolfo.

Museum Membership

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OF AN INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION – model rule 5



Carnarvon Space and Technology Museum Inc

I, email:
(insert APPLICANT'S name)

of
(insert APPLICANT'S residential or postal address +
required under section 27 of the Associations Incorporation Act (1987))

apply to become a member of the above Association.

If my application is accepted, I agree to be bound by the rules of the Association. I enclose my membership fee of \$.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

Rule 5(2) "A person who wishes to become a member must be ... proposed by one member and seconded by another member."

PROPOSED:

SECONDED:

Name:.....

Name:.....

Signature:.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

Date:.....

----- Applicants to detach and keep -----

INFORMATION for APPLICANTS

- If your application is accepted, your name and address, as provided above, must be recorded in a register of members and be made available to other members, upon request, under section 27 of the Associations Incorporation Act.
- Annual membership fees: \$10 single, \$20 family (2 x adults & 2 x children under 16)
- Membership includes free entry and regular Newsletter via email.
- If the obligations under the Associations Incorporation Act are not complied with the Association can be wound up.
- You can contact the Association at PO Box 1150, Carnarvon WA 6701
- You can access or correct personal information (your name and address) by contacting the Association as indicated above.

OTHER INFORMATION

- If your application is accepted you are entitled to inspect and make a copy of the register of members under section 27 of the Associations Incorporation Act.
- If your application is accepted you are entitled to inspect and make a copy of the rules (constitution) of the association under section 28 of the Associations Incorporation Act.

If your application for membership is rejected by the Committee: You may give notice of your intention to appeal within 14 days of being advised of the rejection (rule 5(4)). The Association in a general meeting, no later than the next annual general meeting, must confirm or set aside the decision of the Committee rejecting your application, after giving you a reasonable opportunity to be heard or to make written representations to the general meeting (rule 5(5)).

The form can also be downloaded from:

http://www.crotrak.com/Documents/Museum_Membership_form.pdf

The Fisherman Who Rode a Horse

Continuation of an extract from the autobiography of Ken Watters.

I moved out of my single room and took up residence in the annex of Dad's caravan to save some money. It was terrible trying to sleep during the day when I was on night shift, it was about 120 deg under the canvas, and I often grabbed a pillow and walked out to the end of the mile jetty. I climbed down below and laid back on one of the huge cross beams underneath the jetty.

One time when I was sleeping in the annex Judy snuck in to visit and while I was sleeping she bent over to kiss me. I woke, immediately sitting bolt upright, head butting Judy as I went. I looked down at poor Jude she was laying on the floor with blood pouring from her nose. I had learned to wake up and get up while on the trawlers. The poor girl had to go back to work with a broken nose and two black eyes; it is a wonder that she ever wanted to have anything to do with me after that. She never again stood over me to wake me up.

Bub and a mate of his, Bob Friend, had been given jobs as Nor West Whaling's first fishing cadets. Bub worked for Peter Olsen on the trawler "Nor 1" and I am not sure what trawler Bob worked on. Prawning had started in earnest and Dad was happy with his job on the jetty. He was de facto fleetmaster in Vince Pensabene's absence and was well respected by all of the fishermen. He often had several around home for beers and some that I particularly remember were Bub's skipper Peter Olsen, then there was Per Thorsen and Chris Sorenson. They were part of the Nor West Whaling Company when it was whaling and they had some fantastic stories to tell.

I sometimes sat in on some of their sessions with Dad wondering whether I really should be giving up the life of a fisherman then I would think of Judy and how much these guys missed out on their family lives and be somewhat reconciled.

One story that really stood out was when Per Thorsen was skipper of a whale chaser. The chaser had no gear box. To go from forward to astern the motor had to be stopped and restarted backwards. Per had the same engineer for years and he knew exactly how long it took him to do this. He was coming into the Nor West Whaling jetty one day and as he approached he rang the telegraph to go astern but nothing happened. He rang it again and again until it was too late to avoid hitting the jetty. He hit the jetty about thirty yards from the seaward end and the chaser went right through it and out the other side. There were people running down the jetty in both directions some were left stranded on the severed seaward section and had to be brought ashore by dinghy.

Per headed the chaser out to sea and giving the wheel to a deckhand he went below to the engine room and found the engineer fast asleep on some jute bags spread out on the decking. There were many similar stories and I still do not know how much truth was in any of them but knowing the character of the narrators it would not surprise me if every one was God's gospel truth.

To be continued

Social Club News - December '70

Page 13.

FOR NEW EMPLOYEES

If you are interested in any of these activities, contact the relevant person listed below:-

SOCIAL CLUB	Bob Unwin	Ext. 69
GOLF CLUB	Paul Oats	84
SOCCER CLUB	Dave Troup	55
FISHING CLUB	Viv Batty	24
PISTOL CLUB	John Findlay	37
BASKETBALL CLUBS	Hans Britz	62
	Roy Dice	37
YACHT CLUB	Jim Wilcox	37
HOT RODS	Frank Sloane	12
MOTOR CYCLE CLUB	Roy Lester	77
BADMINTON	Lesley Morling	79
SERVICE CLUBS - Rotary	Peter Davies	62
Lions	Jim Cleary	69
Apex	Bob Unwin	69
TRADE UNIONS - P.R.E.I.	Tito Teraci	65
ASEEDA	Frank Vinton	69
HAM RADIO CLUB	Roy Lester	77
FIRST AID. CIVIL DEFENCE, FIRE FIGHTING	Harry Whitworth	41
DISCOUNT STORES (Perth)	Bob Unwin	69
PETROL AT STATION PRICE	Obtain docket from Admin. between 1000 and 1100 hours Mondays and Fridays	

.....

Another helpful translation :

WE WILL LOOK INTO IT - By the time the wheel makes a full turn, we assume that you will have forgotten about it too.

Recollections ctd.

By Alan Gilham

They then stood by the door jamming a cot mattress around it until the plane landed with some violent skidding before finally coming to a halt. We were delayed some six hours whilst the door seals were fixed and thence on to Perth.

This last leg of the journey was perfect. We saw the North West coast of Australia very clearly and spotted a large dust cloud moving down the coast road obviously caused by a large vehicle, later we came to know and love, the large Gascoigne Trader trucks which were the life line of Carnarvon.

Spending a few days in Perth we purchased a VW Kombi in which we explored Perth and the surrounding countryside. After this we headed north through places like Midland and New Norcia until we got to Geraldton some 300 miles from Perth. I used to joke that Geraldton, situated some 300 miles south of Carnarvon, was where you had to go to get your hair cut. The haircut wasn't bad but it was the tar they dabbed on if they nicked you with the shears that stung.



Heading north from Geraldton to Carnarvon was through a much more desolate landscape made memorable by having a petrol station called the Billabong some 150 miles along the way. There was a very small weather beaten sign a few miles from there

indicating that Shark Bay was down the track to the left, if you cared to take it. There was also a sign at the 26th Parallel so that you knew where you were.



We spotted the antennas of the tracking station on Brown's Range from quite a distance away having crossed over the dry river bed of the Wooramel River.

We called in at the tracking station to find where we were going to live and then on to 4 West Street which we were going to call home for at least a few weeks.

At West Street we had pigeons nesting in the roof but with the aid of a broom I gently eased them over the edge and into free flight, nest and all. Later we were infested with cockroaches which caused us to move to a new house in Babbage Island Road

The next few months were hectic; an American team had arrived to commission the equipment. We had problems on the angle sensors on the antenna and had to wait until there was very little wind at night whilst the antenna was pointing to set star positions. The angles were then set to correspond to the star positions.

If I recall correctly at the end of that period the antenna was .0023 degrees out on the X axis and about .004 degrees on the Y axis, but to all intents and purposes it was "spot on" since any corrections were to be undertaken by Houston during actual missions. The memory of those clear star filled nights was brought to the fore when having a meal outdoors at Ayers Rock some 38 years later.

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](#)

My sincere thanks to all of those who have contributed to the website so far; listed at: http://crotrak.com/thank_you.htm.

At long last I have included some more photographs from the 40th 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.

45th Anniversary Reunion Dinner

Saturday, 19th July 2014 — It's closer than you think.
Bridgeleigh Reception Centre, Wanneroo, WA

Mark your diaries and start saving.
Tickets go on sale from November 2013.

Keeping the Memory Alive

Subscription Renewal

Name:

Mailing address:

.....

E-mail address:

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