



June 1965



June 1966



May 1969



May-June 1973



*Keeping the Memory Alive*

Vol 13 June 2016

## THE TRACKERS'

# CRO NICLE

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## NASA and the Omega Speedmaster ctd.

*From the now defunct website "clubspeedmaster.com", and an essay by Alan A. Nelson, M.O. [C.O.].*

The issue was finalized by a letter from Dale Myers, Associate Administrator for manned Space Flight, to Dr. George Low, the deputy director of NASA, on November 13, 1972.



*"The special Bulova chronographs purchased by MSC for possible application for Apollo 17 and Skylab, have failed their qualification tests both in humidity and acceleration. I have instructed the Manned Spacecraft Center to take no further action with respect to chronograph testing or other companies watches. I consider the Bulova watch issue closed."*

The last manned lunar landing Apollo 17 was scheduled for December 1972. As this date approached, the Bulova Watch Company became increasingly concerned that its products be used for this last manned lunar mission. Letters were sent to the special assistant to the President at the White House from Bulova indicating their displeasure with the use of Swiss chronographs in the American space program.

Thus it was decided by the Administrator on NASA, James Fletcher, that if a suitable Bulova chronograph could be found, it would be used on the last Apollo mission. The astronauts responded by stating that if forced to wear the Bulova time piece, they would also wear the Omega as "*insurance*." Bulova had insisted that chronographs chosen by NASA follow the policy of the "*buy American*" regulations established by the Senate. Both Omega and Bulova wished to comply with this, however, as of 1972, Bulova did not manufacture a US made chronograph.

Following the lunar landing, the space program continued, and 1975 marked the first handshake in space between the American and Soviet crews during the Apollo and Soyuz mission. The American and Russian crews were BOTH wearing the Speedmaster Professional.



### 1978 Test Program

The topic of astronaut timepieces was quiet for several years until 1976 when Bulova became interested in supplying time pieces for the Space Shuttle missions. Bulova had numerous public and private officials contact NASA in order to gain their objectives. Senator Jacob Javits from New York contacted the Administrator of NASA, Robert Frosch, to lobby on Bulova's behalf. Once again, NASA initiated a competitive solicitation. A new deadline was extended several times so Bulova could participate.

In September 1978, astronaut chronograph watches wishing to be considered for the space shuttle program underwent yet another round of prescribed space flight environmental testing.

*To be continued*

## 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	Cheryl? Dixon	Vera Kastropil
Eric Ainsworth	L Donkin	John Keane
Gay Albon	John Draper	Mike Keen
Bill Arbery	Mike Dresser	Jim Keenan
Allan Barber	Bruce Duff	John Kelman
John (Allan) Barber	I Dunleavy	Gloria Klarie
Matt Barber	Dave Elliot	Roy Mallinson
Keith Barnard	J Erickson	Bob Marr
Barrow	Ian Few	Keith Mathieson
Deidre Beaumont	Ian Findlay	Alec Matthews
Elizabeth Beckett	G Francis	K McCarson
Keith Beveridge	Ben Franklin	Ian McDonald
Michael Billings	David Froom	S McDonald
G Bond	Jamie Gardiner	Frank McGregor
S Boyce	L Gardner	Eileen McLaughlan
Bill Boyle	S Garner	Don McLellan
B Bradley	G Carrick	Nola Meiklejohn (O'Byrne)
Phil Brindley	C George	R Miller
Hans Britz	Joe George	Ray Mills
Dave Brooks	Richard Govern	Marilyn Milner (Gobby)
T.F.A Brown	Brian Gray	Sharon Morgan (Todd)
W Brown	Ann Green	J Murray
J Burdett	Terry Haggett	Dennis Naylor
R Burdett	Peter Hardwicke	Gloria Neal
Robert Burns	Ron Harmes	Ellie Nichols
Joy Cameron	Anne Harvey (Brookes)	K Elton Nickerson
Geoff Cardwell	D Hatch	Graham Nielsen
John Cawthrey	Gail Heileman	John Noble
Brian Clifford	Ernie Hindley	? O'Brien
Keith Clifton-James	Dave Hine	Joan Oats
Barbara Cobcroft	A Holgate	W Oliver
Jim Crossland	Phyllis Hook (Watson)	Denis Owens
Noel Cunningham	J Hopkins	John Paddon
F Dawes	Deidre Howard	Diane Pitman (Housley)
Andrew Dempster	B Hughes	John Platten
Jean DeVis	Ed Humphreys	D Powell
Marilyn Dick	B Hunter	M.J.K Power
Olive Dick	D Hutchins	Wendy Puccinelli
Neville Dippell	Ian Jones	Lorna Quinn

*The quest continues; the list has got a bit shorter, thanks to George Allen; Sue van Dongen et al. 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 last Reunion Dinner brought out some missing persons, but there are also a few who do not wish to be contacted.*

## Whereabouts? ctd.

Roger Ramsden	George Sefton-Bellion	Christine Thomas
A Rees	D Selby	Howard Thomas
Dave Rendell	Ron Shand	Jack Thompson
Frank Rice	Fred Sharland	Patsy Thompson (Nolan)
Doug Richards	? Sheehan	Larry Tomkins
D Richardson	Jeff Shuttleworth	Frank Toomey
Harry Richmond	Ray Skender	Mike Travell
Ralp Richmond	Lyn Smart (Willis)	Ernst Uhl
Dave Rickards	J Smith	Tony Vingerhoets
G Riley	George Small	Dave Walker
Brian Robinson	P Smith	Tom Ward
Lynne Rosser	Roger Smith	Mrs B Ward
Ted Rosser	Dave Standbury	N Wardle
Lindsay Sage	John Stanton	A Watermeyer
Stewart Sands	Bill Smythe	Irene West
Ron Sargeant	Hazel Snook (Howse)	Bernie Wilbourne
Bob Scott	Barbara Stephenson (Vernon)	Glen Williamson
Lorraine Scott-Malcolm (Erlandsen)	Barbara Teahan	Garnet Wilmott
Michael Scott-Malcolm	Barbara Teasdale	Brian Wilson
Russell Schwarzer	Des Terrill	Ray Zatorski
Dorcas Sefton-Bellion		

## LOS



Tom Lysaght passed away in May, 2016.

Tom arrived at the Tracking Station, after serving his time in the Royal Australian Navy, accompanied by his wife Joan and their three children, by whom he is survived.

He will be remembered not only for his work ethic, but also for his charitable works in Carnarvon and his musical prowess. Shifts permitting he played in a band at the Port Hotel with Geoff Broom, John Ford, and initially John Easterbrook on drums. His signature tune was *Il Silenzio*, which number, together with David Bowie's *Space Oddity*, and Frank Sinatra's *Fly me to the Moon*, were played at his funeral service.

Tom worked in USB before transferring to Stadan as a Shift Supervisor.

## Editor's Note

The continuation of the article, "*Nvidia sinks moon landing hoax using virtual light*" has been held over until the next issue to make room for the coverage of the opening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the Carnarvon Space and Technology Museum by Captain Gene Cernan (somewhat shortened due to layout problems), and yet another LOS.



## From A Carnarvon Viewpoint - ctd.

### Gemini IV

America's first EVA

4 - 8 June 1965 AEST

By Hamish Lindsay

Flight Director Gene Kranz went into overdrive and worked his normal day preparing for the mission, but in the evening he returned to work in secret on the EVA procedures. Kranz planned to have the hardware qualified and procedures for the EVA ready fourteen days before the launch.

The remote tracking station Capcoms were given double-sealed envelopes and told to only open them on instructions from Flight Director Gene Kranz. If no instruction was issued, the envelopes were to be returned unopened. Inside was another envelope marked Plan X detailing procedures for an EVA. It wasn't until the final week of training, on 25 May 1965, that the message from HQ arrived, "*We are GO for EVA*", and the media were informed.

#### The crew.

The crew for Gemini IV was announced on 27 July 1964. Command Pilot James McDivitt and Pilot Edward White had known each other since their college days and had been in the same class at the Air Force Test School. Backup crew Frank Borman and James Lovell, both 36, first met when undergoing testing by NASA. All four were second generation astronauts, selected by NASA in September 1962.

**James Alton McDivitt**, aged 35 for the mission, was born in Chicago, Illinois, on 10 June 1929 and went to school in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He received his BSc. in aeronautical engineering from the University of Michigan (first in class) in 1959, and an Honorary Doctorate in Astronautical Science from the same University in 1965.

He joined the Air Force in 1951, fighting in the Korean War, and retired with the rank of Brigadier-General when he retired from NASA in June 1972. He logged more than 5,000 flying hours. He joined NASA in the second intake in September 1962, and this was his first space flight.

He commanded the Apollo 9 Earth orbiting mission, and was Program Manager for Apollos 12 through 16.

He regards his highlight in space was getting Apollo 13 home safely.



*To be continued*

## Footnote

From an email message from Ed Fendell:

"The secondary objectives which are the EVA stuff were added post mission. I carried the secret flight plan called Flight Plan X in sealed envelopes in my foot locker to CRO. My team members did not know we had done the planning in secret for the EVA, and had no knowledge in advance what was going on. By the way, as one of the three planners, I still have a copy of Flight Plan X".

## CROing about Carnarvon

*A personal reminiscence by John Ford.*

*I spent three years, 1966-69, at Carnarvon Tracking Station (NASA call sign: CRO) as a young single "tracker"; and Eloise and I later returned in 1972 for almost two years, as a recently married couple.*



*Our first child, Piers, was born in March 1973 at the Carnarvon Hospital, and I remember its shady verandas with affection.*

*Having exposure to life in Carnarvon (and at CRO) from both single and married viewpoints, I can affirm that for those of us lucky enough to fall through that particular "looking glass" it was a truly unique life experience. To me, coming from Melbourne, it was a broad and exciting canvas.*

\* \* \* \* \*

I was probably one of the very few technical staff to turn up at Carnarvon Tracking Station seeking employment. Most professional and technical people would have been recruited from afar, and would have been flown in, complete with possessions and indeed families.

I had been veering back and forth from music to electronics, and was about to embark on another musical phase in Perth when I accidentally planed a few mm off the tips of my "picking" fingers. This made me a non-player for a few months at least, so I decided to head north for a while.

I was well aware of the tracking station and the prawning fleet in Carnarvon, and of the US Navy's VLF station at North West Cape. Adventure, romance and riches beckoned! Well, possibly.

I had just spent a year as a seismic survey technician, or "Observer", in remote parts of the Great Victoria and Gibson deserts, and had also just written off my car, so it seemed the best idea was to get straight up to Carnarvon.



Some musician mates ran me up to the Bullsbrook pub one afternoon,; bibulously pointed me north up the Great Northern Highway, and turned me loose.

I was travelling light, just a duffel bag. I had left my precious records, guitars and amplifier with my friends at the Leederville band house, and it felt very free and easy to be hitch-hiking.

I got a ride that night as far as Moora, and next day a delightful farm family picked me up. They cheerfully squeezed me into their Holden along with the kids and a kelpie pup, and got me to the Three Springs pub that night.

So far so good- no kipping under a quandong yet! Having a beer with the locals, I met two very earnest retired mining men who were off to find "the old Galena mine".



We poked about for a good few hours next day before they dropped me off at the Murchison Bridge at midday to wait for my next ride.

*To be continued*

## Extracts from "Recollections From My Years At Carnarvon"

*David Johns*

### **L**iving Conditions ctd.

I used to see him there at dawn, working the machinery and getting in a hour or two before his men came to work and he would often still be at it after they left - he was a real worker.



There were three drinking bars at the Port Hotel. There was the Fish Bar, so named because there was a large fish tank along one wall. The Fish Bar had a carpet floor, dress standards, soft music, air conditioning and was a nice place to pass the time of day if you were the socialising type, particularly on hot summer days and evenings.

The Front Bar had open doors to the main street, no dress standards and was popular with manual workers who wanted to do some serious drinking.

The Side Bar opened onto a side street. It was mostly frequented by aboriginal people and was as rough and coarse and grubby as a bar can be.



Wilson managed his hotel with a firm grip, which sometimes meant he found himself in the middle of someone else's brawl.

There was a noted occasion, that I did not see but I heard a lot about, when Wilson and his brother are alleged to have struck a patron with an iron bar while breaking up a fight.

There were two sides to the story but the press has seen to it that one side of the story will stay with Wilson for life.

There was a beer garden at the hotel and bands often played there until late. I was an infrequent drinker and I worked long hours so I rarely visited the beer garden and the bars. Mostly, I thought the beer garden bands were more noisy than musical but I managed to sleep through most of it.

After I had lived at the Port Hotel for about nine months, I tired of the noise and moved to a Tracking Station managed duplex at 29 Babbage Island Road. Peter Roberts and Dave Gardiner lived in 29B Babbage Island Road, and Bob Houghton and I lived in 29A. Bob was a young English engineer who worked at the tracking station until about 1973, when the tracking station was starting to contract. Bob was a fine fellow and we have remained good friends ever since.

After Bob left, John Rudkin, who had previously worked at Carnarvon and then returned to England for a while, came back to the Carnarvon Tracking Station and shared 29A Babbage Island with me. John was fine company and we got on very well.

In the 1950s and '60s the nearby Gascoyne River had flooded through the town. Levy banks had since been constructed around the town. Once the levy banks were completed, the town could expand and a new suburb "*Morgantown*" was being built to accommodate a growing workforce at Carnarvon.

Over the next few years I visited the homes of many of the trackers at Carnarvon. It was noticeable that while most of them were happy to be at Carnarvon, they tended to see it as a temporary chapter in their lives, and few of the trackers put down permanent roots while at Carnarvon.

*To be continued*

## Apollo: Where Are They Now?

*Thanks to Tony Sala for providing this. One of his hobbies is to see as many as he can, first-hand.*

The Apollo Command Module Capsules are on display at various sites throughout the U.S. and the world.

Some of the Apollo Lunar Modules were deliberately targeted to impact the Moon to provide artificial moon-quake sources for seismic experiments. The list below gives the locations of these displays, and impacts where applicable; plus links to NASA's *Master Catalog* for descriptions and details of the missions (for those of you reading the pdf version of these newsletters).

### [Apollo 12](#)

Command Module "Yankee Clipper"  
Virginia Air and Space Center, Hampton, Virginia

Lunar Module "Intrepid"  
Impacted Moon 20 November 1969

### [Apollo 13](#)

Command Module "Odyssey"  
Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center, Hutchinson, Kansas  
(formerly at Musee de l'Air, Paris, France)

Lunar Module "Aquarius"  
Burned up in Earth's atmosphere 17 April 1970

### [Apollo 14](#)

Command Module "Kitty Hawk"  
Visitor's Center, Kennedy Space Center, Florida \*  
(formerly at U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame, Titusville, Florida)

Lunar Module "Antares"  
Impacted Moon 07 February 1971

### [Apollo 15](#)

Command Module "Endeavor"  
USAF Museum, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio

Lunar Module "Falcon"  
Impacted Moon 03 August 1971

\* Visited by Tony Sala

*To be continued*



## ACROBITS '73

### MY JOURNEY TO AUSTRALIA (ctd.)

by D.A. Pettinger, U.S.B.

Then one morning in June, 1972 I received a telegram which instructed me to call London immediately. Upon doing this I was given details of the first available flight to Australia, and was asked if this was a convenient date because of the need to terminate personal affairs.

Well I decided it was and accepted the date offered which was 15<sup>th</sup> June, 1972. The days that followed were indeed hectic as I hurried around terminating personal affairs while the big day gradually loomed nearer.

The 15<sup>th</sup> of June finally arrived and I found myself at London's Heathrow Airport waiting for my flight to be called. I waited for what seemed hours until eventually flight BA 591 for Australia was called for the first time. The usual tearful farewells took place; and then I turned and hurried off towards the departure gate to board the aircraft. The aircraft was a BOAC VC. 10.



All the passengers searched for their seats and then proceeded to ram coats and huge quantities of hand baggage into the luggage lockers above the seats. Finally everyone seemed to get themselves sorted out and sat quietly awaiting take-off. At last we started to move; we taxied towards the main runway with the big jet engines quietly purring away, when quite suddenly the Captain's voice boomed out over the speaker system - *"We have a fault, this aircraft will not be taking off, we will be returning to the terminal"*.

Minutes passed while blank faced passenger anxiously wondered what was going off. The silence was broken by one of the ever cheerful Stewardesses who announced that the fault was proved serious and we would have to disembark and wait for a replacement aircraft. Meanwhile we were to be given lunch at their expense.

It was in fact four hours later when we left London. Our first destination was to be New York. We flew at 35,000 feet at an average speed of 550 m.p.h. The journey takes just over seven hours.

It was dark when we landed in New York. The passengers had all been issued with a host of forms to fill in prior to landing, such things as Entry Permits and Customs Declaration, etc. We all had to visit Customs while the aircraft was being refuelled. Everywhere you looked there were stern faced cops with evil looking firearms strapped to their legs.

Not only was our luggage searched but they insisted on searching us as well, you quite literally had to stand against the wall, hands raised while the Customs men frisked you, no one was spared; both men and women alike had to be searched.

Finally we were herded into a small lounge to wait to return to our aircraft. There were no refreshment facilities in this room. The majority of people were very pleased indeed to get back to the aircraft. We took off again, this time bound for Los Angeles.

*To be continued*

## Memories of the Opening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Phase of Museum

*By the Editor*



*Photograph ~Courtesy Phil Youd*

Taking advantage of a cheaper flight involved an early start to the journey from home to the terminal, as at 5:30am.

Fortunately the weather had improved so there were no hazards on the journey other than some other road users. Navigated by Lauri Glocke (aka Teeny Bopper), and driven by my wife, we successfully negotiated a major detour and arrived at the Skippers terminal at the required time for booking in.

One pleasant surprise was meeting up with Tito Teraci; the other, the plane was a fair bit larger than the one which only just about managed the return trip from Carnarvon after meeting Andy Thomas back in September 2014. I know of one ex-Tracker from that journey who swore that if the weather was bad he'd cancel his current trip.

The weather looked to be staying fine and we looked forward to an uneventful flight. It was not to be. As we

approached Geraldton we were subjected to severe buffeting which had the effect of trapping the flight attendant half way down the fuselage with a tray full of hot tea and coffee cups. I do not know how she managed to retain her balance, and composure, and not spill a drop. Fortunately the rough passage was over after about twenty minutes and we had a smooth landing at our destination.

No visit to Carnarvon by an ex-Tracker can be complete without the pilgrimage to the old site. This trip was no exception.

Lauri and I were fortunate to be with Kathy Franin, who provided transport for the three of us over the ensuing five days.

Once we had negotiated a dirt track and



*Photograph ~Lauri Glocke*

a large bed of dirt alongside the Station gates we paid a quick visit to the old Span site before driving up the hill to the ruins of the T and C building.

*To be continued*

## LOS

I am advised that sadly, Peter Milne (ex-Computers) died of cancer in June 2014.

Regrettably I have no further details to add.



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# Keeping the Memory Alive

## 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;  
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