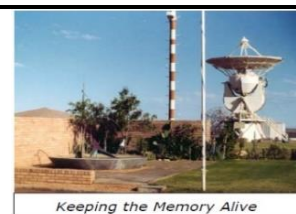


# CRONICLE

VOLUME 20 – JUNE 2020



## Note from the Editor

By Lauri Glocke

Hi Everyone

This edition is a tad late as I have had visitors for the past few weeks, so the usual routine has been a bit disrupted.

I am really hoping that you all get this before I go to Carnarvon on Friday (today is Wednesday) ☹️ and I'm typing as fast as I can!!! I'll be up in Carnarvon for six to eight weeks and looking forward to the warmer weather up there. I really do love living in Collie but the winter cold..... Brrrr!

A big shout out to Lorraine Sartori (Rooney) for writing the article for the [crotrak.com](http://crotrak.com) Admin page which has been "under construction".

Another page which is "under construction" is the **UHF Command Site**. Is there anyone out there that could write an article which would explain what the function of this site was?

You will recall I put "**Keep the Date Free**" event details on your email with the March CRONicle for the yearly event at the Carnarvon Space & Technology Museum which had not been finalised at that time.

We were hoping to have the opening of "Phase 4" which was to be a full-size model of an Apollo Lunar Excursion Module (LEM) to coincide with the 49th Anniversary of Apollo 15 (AS-510) but this has now been postponed until next year.

Meanwhile I hope everyone is keeping safe and staying healthy.



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*Still happy to accept any help, suggestions, or submissions from Trackers for future editions.*

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## From A Carnarvon Viewpoint – ctd.

### *Gemini IV*

#### *America's first EVA – By Hamish Lindsay*

##### White tells of his spacewalk experiences.

At 6:19:31 GET (0735:30 AEST) Grissom summarized the moment, *"Looks like we won one after all!"*

McDivitt, *"Ha! Ha!"*

At 7:35:40 GET, nearly 5 pm spacecraft time, (0851:39 AEST) over Hawaii, White began to think of getting some sleep, *"Bacon and egg bites, toast and orange juice, and I'm about to go to sleep."* He managed to get about 4½ hours of restless sleep.

At 17:24:35 GET (1840:34 AEST) over the ship Rose Knot Victor off the west coast of Peru in South America Houston wondered how the astronauts were getting on with all the EVA clobber they weren't able to dump into space.

RKV Capcom asked, *"Gemini IV, Flight asks how you are doing at getting things stowed away and if you are getting a little crowded up there?"*

McDivitt, *"Indeed we are crowded. We have got most of that junk down in the foot well, and I guess we are going to have to hold some of it during re-entry."*

Capcom, *"Oh Boy - that sounds like a lot of fun."*

McDivitt, *"We are trying to figure out what to do with all the stuff we've got."*

Capcom, *"Well, let's see – there's a lot of empty space up there around you."*

McDivitt, *"Yes, and I sure wish we could get to it."*

Houston Capcom Gene Cernan then asked, *"You might ask him to go briefly over the trouble he had closing the hatch."*

RKV Capcom, *"Flight advises they have good communications on this air-to-ground remoting – and would like you to go over the problems you had with the hatch closure."*

McDivitt, *"Roger. There are two gears that we have that go around when you pull the handle back and forth. One of them is the gear that sort of acts as a ratchet – a little cylinder with a piston in it and a spike behind it that engages the ratchet. We were having a little trouble with that before we got it (the hatch) open and after we got it open we had difficulty getting this ratchet to work."*

*Also we had a great deal of difficulty in getting the hatch to close far enough so we could even start latching it. Then Ed had to push the ratchet in with his hand on every go until it started. And I was pulling on the thing until I thought I was probably going to break a lug right out of the hatch. We finally got it going, and it finally came forward. So I don't think we ought to try opening it up any more."*

Capcom, *"Roger. Sounds like a good idea to keep it closed."*

To be continued

EXTRACTS FROM  
“RECOLLECTIONS FROM MY YEARS AT CARNARVON – ctd.

BY DAVID JOHNS

## 14 Ignition spikes on the data.

There were two steerable antenna arrays close against the northern side of the T&C building at Carnarvon. The aerials were used to receive telemetry from satellites. If the incoming signal was weak, interference like radiation from a car's ignition could invalidate the recorded signal. Sometimes before a particular satellite was due, the net would be used to advise all Carnarvon Tracking Station staff that ALL vehicle use was prohibited until a further notice, usually no more than 40 minutes, until the satellite passed over the horizon. Vehicle prohibitions did not bother me much but they were an inconvenience for people who had to travel around the site to do their work, like the air conditioning or technicians or Daphnie on her mail rounds. I recall one occasion when the net advised that a vehicle prohibition would start in five minutes time. I was about due to drive to the T&C building for lunch so I jumped in the SPAN site car and drove up to the T&C building and parked near the aerials and went inside for lunch, all before the car use prohibition started. While I was eating lunch, the site Operations Manager was on the net advising that there was a vehicle in use somewhere on the site and it had to cease immediately. Over the next thirty minutes he repeated the demand about five more times, sounding more annoyed and serious each time. I remember thinking it was unheard of for trackers to ignore such a direction, but obviously someone on the site was ignoring it. After about 40 minutes, the vehicle restriction was lifted and I later heard that the safety officer was sent around the site to try to find out who had been driving when it was prohibited. I stayed talking to someone for ten minutes and then went out to get in the car and drive back to SPAN. As I was getting into the car, my foot bumped the throttle and I heard the motor give a quick rev up and down. Within a milli-second I knew exactly what had happened. I had, and still have, a habit of leaving vehicles idling instead of turning them off. It comes from driving heavy farm tractors and bulldozers and trucks where it is often better to idle a heavy diesel engine rather than turn it off. Also, there was a large bank of air conditioning heat exchangers with unusually loud fans on the northern side of the T&C building and they had completely blocked out the sound of the idling motor when I had parked the car right under the aerials and gone inside for lunch. Not wanting to drive away and draw attention to the situation, I casually turned off the motor and went back into the T&C building, through the building and out another door and then walked back to SPAN. I knew the telemetry crew went off shift at 3:00 pm so I waited until about 4:00 pm and then walked back and collected the car. Over the next few days there was a witch hunt to find the disobedient driver but I was never suspected. I suppose I should have told the telemetry people what I had done so they would not waste time fault hunting on their own equipment but I whimped out and did not tell anyone.

# MY TIME AT SPAN IN CARNARVON



*by Peter Davies* (LOS 2019)

The station was operated by Amalgamated Wireless Australia (AWA) under contract to the Dept of Supply. The Station Director was Lou Wainwright, who later had an assistant station director. His Admin Officer was Milton Turner and he also had a secretary. As a Public Servant I was responsible to the Station Director, not AWA.

Carnarvon Tracking Station was a few miles outside the town and spread over a large site, with the main centre (top camp) which housed Admin, the main tracking system and antenna, computer centre and control centre. There was also a generator building, a MINitrack centre, workshops and the SPAN building which was the first building you came to after the main entrance.

The SPAN building had a doorway opening to the main equipment room housing the radio telescope electronics and recording equipment, the riometer equipment, darkroom and workshop. On the roof of the building was the dome housing the Razdow telescope, accessible via an external staircase. Staff consisted of the observer, maintenance staff (2) and operators (3) but only one of the operators was present at a time. Outside the building was a dome housing the antenna dish for the radio telescope, also outside was the antenna array for the riometer. Surrounding the SPAN site, vegetation had been planted (wattle type natives) to improve seeing. This attracted a family of emus. There was a irrigation system installed.

When I first got there, I was raw. I had no ephemeris, no data on the tilt of the sun, no data on solar regions. To send reports all I could do was say a region was in the top right of telescope image etc. This gradually improved as I got the SESC daily report, when I could quote region numbers etc. Boulder wanted observations every 5 mins, but this was obviously impossible except during periods of high activity. I spent my time in the dome, listening to local radio, occasionally going downstairs to check on the telescope, whose output was displayed on paper charts for each of the three frequencies monitored. Flares were recorded from subflares upward. Classification was up to the observer's judgement as there was no quick measurement system. Large flares (class 2 or over) were reported to Boulder via teletype via the comms centre at top camp and for large flares via voice through the comms centre.

*(To be continued)*



## “CHIT CHAT” – From our Trackers

I did get a response from Hamish Lindsay about the high-altitude density (HAD) Rocket Launcher. Hamish advised he took a couple of photos of the firing post. They can be found in the Honeysucklecreek.net site - Other stations/Carnarvon/Hamish Lindsay's photos.

Hamish said there is also a brief movie of the HAD rocket at the end of his Movie of the construction of CRO. Thanks for the response Hamish!

I also had a message from Tito teraci who said he recalled in either 1964 or 1965, he and Fred Dyksyra towed the Had Rocket on its trailer in the Tropical Festival and then after the procession they left it on display at the pony grounds. Unfortunately, there were no photographs though.

Email from Geoff Broom 26 March 2020

Hi Lauri,

All my immediate family have now read the mention of Lynette's LOS, and we are all happy with it, so thank you to you Lauri for the way you did it, and thank you to the CROtrackers for the condolences, they are much appreciated.

Now a bit more info for you:- Phil Dickinson and I became great friends. At some stage he came to USB as supervising technician, he was a real nice guy and we got on well together. He didn't have a wife and family to hold him down, and if I remember correctly he drove a Mercedes Sports Car, so if he felt the need for a bit of feminine company he had the car to catch one with.

We kept in contact by post for quite a while after I left the station, he kept me informed about what was happening at the station and I informed him about the nice young ladies one could look at in Auckland NZ CBD when they were on parade around lunchtime.

We in NZ have just begun an at least four week lockdown period, which means we must stay at home except to go to the supermarket or doctors or chemist to get prescriptions, and we can fuel our vehicles if needed. We can't use our vehicles for any other purpose - no joyriding or visiting friends.

Cheers for now,

Geoff.

Geoff has sent in his and Lynette's stories of their time in Carnarvon and I will start this off in this edition.

Paul Linnane (co-editor) and I will be getting together to discuss the next edition and we will be dedicating a page to all the stories Paul Dench has received from CROtrackers. These were passed on from Joan and Paul's son and we are incredibly grateful to have them.



## ***“CHIT CHAT” – cont.***

Alan Gilham emailed to say “In mulling over events which took place last year and finding how strange they were in how they all interlocked together I thought I would put them down on paper and hope that they will be of interest to you”.

### **Strange Coincidences**

On the twenty second of July last year out of the blue, or should I say the outback, I received an email and picture from Maureen Tiddums who lives in the Pilbara she was lamenting the fact that as a pupil at the Carnarvon Mission School she presented a painting to an astronaut together with her friend, Christine Jones, when he visited the Tracking Station in March 1966 and there was no official record of this in the Carnarvon Space Museum.

This was the attached picture.

I could recall the event of the visit by Wally Schirra but not that presentation, after all it was nearly 50 years ago, and I was approaching my ninetieth year so I was entitled to a ‘senior moment’.

I searched – as far as it was possible – the archives of the West Australian and those of the defunct Northern Times but could not find any reference as to the event.

I could not recognise the main people in the picture apart from Monte Sala and myself standing behind Monte.

I emailed the information to Colin Mackeller who maintains the Honeysuckle Creek website who immediately identified Lewis Wainwright, Wally Schirra and Wilson Tuckey.

By another coincidence Colin had recently obtained from Hamish Lindsay negatives covering Wally Schirra's visit and presentation and was about to publish them on his website which he then did.

Later on Colin had a visit from Lewis Wainwright's son who had brought along a cutting from the West Australian.

So here are the things I find remarkable, how did Maureen get my email address and secondly, Colin was already working on updating the information on Wally Schirra's visit.

It was good to know that this enabled Maureen and her friend to have some recognition as it was all part of the life of Carnarvon in those days.

Alan Gilham. The ninth of May 2020.



*“CHIT CHAT” – cont.*

*Had an email from Lorraine Sartori giving an update on what she has been up to with moving into her new house and even had time to fit a bit of camping in.*

*Unfortunately, there was also some sad news... another LOS for one of our Trackers.*

Hi Lauri,

How are you doing in isolation and in the damn cold as I heard on the radio this morning! Guess you are used to it. I have survived the isolation with no effort at all, didn't bother me staying at home as I had plenty to do with still moving in and finding places for things. Have also been out bush with friends on two camping trips and it was magnificent.

I read a death notice in the West Australian this morning for John Alan Barber, known as Alan. He was one of our trackers. I have since confirmed with a neighbour in this street whose Aunty Gill (recently deceased) was married to Alan and they lived in Cairns. Gill only died in about February, I think. There is reference to Gill in the death notice, so it is definitely him. I am sure there would still be trackers around who would remember Alan and he may be on the “Where are they?” list. I believe he met and married his wife in Carnarvon as she was a nurse at the hospital and was the sister of three brothers who were all managing stations around Carnarvon (one of them was the father of my neighbour).


Hope all is well with you

Kindest regards

Lorraine

### ***Derek and Ronald Hutchinson***

I also had an email passed on to me from the Carnarvon Space and Technology Museum from Sue Hingston (nee Hutchinson), to say both her father, Derek Hutchins and his father, Ronald Hutchins, worked (at separate times) at the Carnarvon Tracking Station. Sue's father worked again for NASA at the Tidbinbilla Tracking Station in Canberra.




**ERIC SIREL**  
15 January 1926 - 18 March 2020  
Passed away peacefully  
at Clare Holland House.

Beloved husband of Nora (dec).  
Loving father and father-in-law  
of Helmi and Chris, Gunnar and Cathy,  
Harold and Donna.  
Adored Opa of 7 grandchildren  
and 5 great-grandchildren.

*Dad, Opa, Great-Opa .....*  
*When we look at you we see more than a*  
*man who has taught us some of life's*  
*most important lessons.*  
*We see a man who represents what our*  
*family is, where we come from*  
*and how strong we are.*

The funeral service for Eric will be held in  
St Peter's Lutheran Church, corner of  
Boolee and Cooyong Streets, Reid on  
Thursday, 26 March 2020,  
commencing at 1:30pm.

*A special person, a special face,*  
*A special someone we can never replace*

 **WILLIAM COLE FUNERALS**  
Canberra - 6253 3655

## **LOS - (Loss of Signal)**

Since our last CRONicle **Robyn Fort, Ken Anderson, Alison Gregg, Eric Sirel and John “Alan” Barber** have been acknowledged on the LOS web page and this can be accessed on our website ‘CROTRAK Keeping the Memory Alive’ website page - <http://crotrak.com/index.php/los>

***Condolences are extended to all the family members and friends of our recently passed CROtrackers.***

## **Snippets of Stories of Geoffrey and Lynette Broom** (Dec) **at work and at play in Carnarvon Western Australia, from November 1965 to February 1972.**

Paul C Dench was my first Boss at Carnarvon Tracking Station. These snippets were sent to Paul to assist him in writing a book about life in Carnarvon and at Carnarvon Tracking Station, which was a NASA Tracking Facility and tracked the US Astronauts to the moon and back.

First E-mail to Paul C. Dench.      16 Mar 2004

Hi Paul & Joan,

I think it is really fantastic to hear from you after all these years. We are both reasonably well, apart from the usual ravages of time, and Lyn suffers a bit from arthritis - how are you and Joan? I hate to have to admit it, especially to you Paul, but I have gone digital in my later years - got interested in computers and got one in about 1998 (my OS is Windows 98), and just last week I bought a digital camera as my old 35mm Yashica finally packed it in last year when one of the windows fell in and jammed it all up!!

Now to your letter - yes I was in Dallas with you. Remember driving that big Yankee car around Dallas (you driving I mean) and some young bloke in the back saying "it's Digital Dench driving" as you went round the corners - that was me being my usual cheeky self!!! The car did go round in definite steps though, sort of digitally. I was driving a car in New Calédonia some years ago with friends of ours in the back, it had power steering which I had not driven before, and they cracked up laughing saying it felt like being in the back of an aircraft with the rudder being used a lot. That was the same effect and reminded me of it later after I had gotten the hang of power steering.

In the Festival Parade you and I were in the front part of GT11+1/2 with 4 more people in the back, so we had a bit of a view of what was going on, though not much, and there were 4 people in line astern in the Agena, and I think Frank Vinton was the one in there with the view.

The other Festival Parade we did with the Flying Saucer, you and I were two Aliens, dressed in costumes made by you, and it was our job to catch a young lady down the main street and put her into the Flying Saucer (she helped us to do just that as we did not have much of a field of view), after which ladies undergarments were ejected through the top of the Saucer. We still have pictures in our photo albums of all that.

***Next Edition is .....***

Paul's Reply

18 Mar 2004



# CRO Trackers 14<sup>th</sup> Picnic Day

The Perth Chapter of the CRO Trackers  
will be holding their 14th annual picnic / barbeque at:  
**Whiteman Park, Mussel Pool, Shelter V**  
(it's under cover) some 20 kms and 25 minutes from the Perth CBD.

**Date:**

**Time:** Lift-off 11 am WST

**BYO:** Everything

Look out for the

Still postponed at this stage.  
Will advise via email if we will have a  
Spring event!



Please note: Donations to defray the cost of hiring will be accepted, gratefully, on the day. Thank you.

# 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](#)

If undelivered  
Please return to:  
CROTrackers  
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Collie WA 6225