



March 1965



March 1966



March 1969



Keeping the Memory Alive

Vol 16 March 2018

# THE TRACKERS' CROCNICLE

Included in this issue:

Memories of the Opening of the  
3<sup>rd</sup> Phase of Museum - final .....2

Whereabouts ..... 3

Quotations .....4

LOS .....4

From A Carnarvon Viewpoint - ctd. ....5

CROing about Carnarvon - ctd. ....6

Extracts from "Recollections From My Years  
At Carnarvon" - ctd. ....7

Mercury Redstone Rocket Dedication .....8

Social Club News - April 1967 .....9

Mini Reunion.....10

Guess Who?.....10

Quotations.....10

12<sup>th</sup> Picnic Day .....11

Terence (Terry) Kierans - Editor  
CRO Trackers  
PO Box 93  
QUINNS ROCKS WA 6030  
AUSTRALIA  
Mobile: 0414 25 1091

[tk@crotrak.com](mailto:tk@crotrak.com)  
<http://www.crotrak.com>



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

*By the Editor*

**Y**ou've got a dream too, I know all of you do. You know what my dream was? I wanted to fly aeroplanes. Like, a naval aviator off an aircraft carrier. You know how old I am?

Kids: No.

<Laughter>

GC: I keep saying I was born a month after God created water. Now, that's a long time ago.

<Laughter>

GC: But I've been around a long time. So I was your age during World War II which is something you're gonna have to read about. It went on around here in Australia. And I watched people make aeroplanes do crazy things, and I said I wanted to do that. And the reason I'm telling you this is because you all have a dream. You'll all have a dream about being a teacher, a scientist, a doctor, an astronaut or pilot. It doesn't make any difference. Stick with your dreams because you never know how good you can be.

And I just stuck with my dream about wanting to fly aeroplanes and I took a fate - F-A-T-E - a little road through life that led me from one place to the other. When it came time - there was no space program. When the space program came along I wasn't good enough. I didn't qualify. I hadn't done everything that I needed to do to become an astronaut. But yet I was selected. I don't know why. So you never know why.

But I was selected and ended up walking in space, flying three times, and going to the moon twice. It's crazy. I went to the moon before you were born. It sounds crazy to me.

The point I'm saying is - my dad used to tell me - who's your favourite hero? C'mon.

Audience: Dad.

GC: My dad, right? You know he is. My dad or my grandpa or somebody like that. My dad used to say "Whatever you do, soccer field, football field, in a classroom, just go out and be the best you possibly can. You're not gonna be better than everyone

else in everything. But sooner or later your best is gonna rise to the top and you're gonna surprise yourself. And when that happens you'll be able to do anything you want to do. Any dream you have you can make come true."

And I don't care whether you're a little girl or not. You can go to the moon, you go to Mars. You don't need these guys. Okay. So remember that. You can do, in your lifetime - you've got iPhones right? You've got more of a computer in an iPhone than I had in both of my hands to land on the moon. How about that? And I can't even use an iPhone. <laughter> I've gotta go to my grandkids.

But I'm here to show you a movie, because you know what I want to do? To you young man? I want to get you excited about doing something. I want you to get excited about becoming good at something. Maybe the soccer field. I don't know. Who cares? You just want to be the best you can possibly be. And when this movie is over, the last things I said in the movie, and I want you to pay attention if you're going tonight, if I can go to the moon before you were born, is there anything you can't do if you want to do it badly enough? No. You get it. You're shaking your head. You got it right? You see, I knew it.

And so I hope you enjoy - it's a little experience about going to the moon. Hopefully it's a little inspiration for you to maybe do something exciting like that in your life 'cause you've got a lot of life ahead of you. And I really hope you have a chance to enjoy it.

I've got a lot of questions for you grown-ups out there because - but I don't want to embarrass you 'cause I know you can't answer them.

<laughter>

GC: But I can only say thank you. I don't want to be up here too long. This is a wonderful reception. There could be 100,000 people here; it wouldn't be any better for me. I tell you what, this is very personal with me being here today and I will remember it and I do thank you. God bless all of you.

<applause>

## Whereabouts

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

C Abott	Cheryl? Dixon	Ian Jones
Eric Ainsworth	L Donkin	Mike Keen
Gay Albon	John Draper	Jim Keenan
Bill Arbery	Mike Dresser	John Kelman
Allan Barber	Bruce Duff	Joy King
John (Allan) Barber	I Dunleavy	Roy Mallinson
Matt Barber	Dave Elliot	Bob Marr
Keith Barnard	J Erickson	Keith Mathieson
Barrow	Ian Few	Alec Matthews
Deidre Beaumont	Ian Findlay	K McCarson
Elizabeth Beckett	G Francis	Ian McDonald
Keith Beveridge	Ben Franklin	S McDonald
Michael Billings	David Froom	Frank McGregor
G Bond	Jamie Gardiner	Eileen McLaughlan
S Boyce	L Gardner	Don McLellan
B Bradley	S Garner	Nola Meiklejohn (O'Byrne)
Phil Brindley	G Carrick	R Miller
Hans Britz	C George	Ray Mills
Dave Brooks	Joe George	John Mogg
T.F.A Brown	Richard Govern	Sharon Morgan (Todd)
W Brown	Peter Hardwicke	J Murray
J Burdett	Ron Harmes	Dennis Naylor
R Burdett	Anne Harvey (Brookes)	Gloria Neal
Robert Burns	D Hatch	Ellie Nichols
Joy Cameron	Gail Heileman	K Elton Nickerson
Geoff Cardwell	Stan Hills	Graham Nielsen
Brian Clifford	Ernie Hindley	John Noble
Keith Clifton-James	Dave Hine	? O'Brien
Barbara Cobcroft	A Holgate	Joan Oats

*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.*

*Additions have been marked with an asterisk.*

## Whereabouts ctd.

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

## LOS



**JOHN FLETCHER**

24.12.32 — 2.2.2018

## From A Carnarvon Viewpoint - ctd.

### Gemini IV

#### America's first EVA

##### Carnarvon Third Pass

Author: *"At Carnarvon we were all getting ready for the next pass, but hanging onto every word coming down the voice channel from Houston. To us this first space walk was one of the supreme moments of the Gemini Program, and we were agog to hear how it was going, and what we would find when they came up over our horizon. There was so much to go wrong."*

White, *"I was waiting for the GO and it came a little earlier than I expected. I was expecting it over Guaymas. I thought maybe I had lost track of time up there - it was going faster than I had anticipated. Chris Kraft had thought we were ready to go over Hawaii, and since we were going to lose a portion of the night time on the other end of the EVA due to the late launch he decided to let us go over Hawaii."*

##### The Spacewalk EVA Begins.

While the spacecraft was travelling between Hawaii and Mexico, White eased himself out of the hatch with the manoeuvring unit, or gun. A glove he had left on the seat seemed to acquire a mind of its own - it rose off the seat and gently drifted out of the hatch after him to waft off into space.

White called, *"I'm outside the spacecraft, as a matter of fact."*

McDivitt, *"He has the hatch open. He's standing in the seat."*

Hawaii Capcom, *"Roger. Houston will give you a GO/NOGO to exit spacecraft over Guaymas."*

Capcom, *"Roger. Everything looks good here. What do you think?"*

Capcom, *"We're happy with it. Everything looks good on the ground, Gemini 4."*

McDivitt, *"When he's moving around out there he's really rocking the spacecraft around."*

At 4:28:14 GET (0544:13 AEST Friday 4 June) the Hawaii Capcom told the spacecraft, *"We just had word from Houston. We're ready to have you get out whenever you're ready. Give us a mark when you egress the spacecraft."*

McDivitt, *"Okay. We've got our GO now. Is that right?"*

At 4:30:19 GET (0546:18 AEST) White announced, *"Okay. I'm separating from the spacecraft."*

McDivitt, *"He's separating from the spacecraft at this time Hawaii."*

White, *"Okay. My feet are out."*

White, *"I think I'm dragging a little bit so I don't want to fire the gun yet."*

##### White soars into space.

At 4:30:36 GET (0546:35 AEST) came the moment White drifted clear of the spacecraft with, *"Okay. I'm out."*

McDivitt, *"He's out. He's floating free."*

White spoke later of his feelings of the moment, *"There was absolutely no sensation of falling. There was very little sensation of speed, other than the same type of sensation that we had in the capsule, and I would say it would be very similar to flying over the Earth from about 20,000 feet. You can't actually see the Earth moving underneath you ... I think as I stepped out, I thought probably the biggest thing was a feeling of accomplishment of one of the goals of the Gemini IV mission. I think that was probably in my mind. I think that is as close as I can give it to you."*



*To be continued*

## CROing about Carnarvon

*A personal reminiscence by John Ford.*

Once in a while the young single trackers came out, guys and also girls, no doubt in the spirit of fearless research.

The Sandhurst did have the reputation of being a bit of a blood-house then, partly from the proximity to the Aboriginal Reserve and partly because it was just out of the way. It sometimes seemed that any group wanting to get "out of town" and play up might come to the Sandhurst.

As with the Port Hotel, there was a large beer garden out the back, though no band. This hardly seemed to matter, as there were pool tables, and anyhow the idea was to get a bit drunk and noisy with your mates, and a band sometimes inhibits that.

I introduced myself to them on one or two occasions, without making much impression; it was all too improbable for them.

The day came finally when I could start at the Tracking Station, and I was able to move from the Sandhurst into the Port Hotel single accommodation, not in the old upstairs rooms but at the rear, where the publican (then Wilson Tuckey) had built a 22 unit motel.

In fact, for a few weeks I shared a caravan parked in the backyard, as there was no space anywhere else. Boomtown!



My caravan mate was another young "new-hire" technician, David Gardiner, and though David and I were very different, and never worked together, there was always a bond of shared novelty between us, and of shared uncertainty too.

"Caravan accommodation? What is this??" What it was, of course, was the spirit of the North West, or



anywhere in rural and outback Australia: make do with what was at hand, whatever it took to do the job, and move on!

We did move on, by and by, into our motel units, where we enjoyed more privacy, though adjacent units did share a common bathroom and toilet. This never seemed to matter to anybody at the Port - it was all part of the lifestyle.

I was assigned to the Range and Range Rate site, which was on top of the ridge nearest the highway, so it was in that sense the most visible



Photograph by Alan Gilham

part of the station complex.

It was also part of the Scientific Tracking and Data Acquisition Network, so was separate from the Manned Space Flight Network.

At first my heart sank a little, as it seemed a rather staid backwater compared to the Gemini missions then being supported up on the hill at MSFN. R&RR also tended to be staffed by more mature married men, apart from a few young operators and technicians like me.

However, I enjoyed my time there. The equipment seemed really advanced technically, and the role we played was of scientific significance. R&RR tracked and downloaded telemetry from a wide range of satellites, such as the IMPs (Interplanetary Monitoring Platforms), OSOs (Orbiting Solar Observatories), OGOs (Orbiting Geophysical Observatories) and many others.

Two tracking systems, a 28-foot squared array of VHF cavity backed slots and a twin-dish S-Band system, were mounted on X-Y axes pedestals.

To be continued.

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

David Johns

### The Flybys ctd.

He was particularly jaded with it all and was counting the days until he could retire and go back to the little farm he had grown up on.

He said something that I have never forgotten. He said he has no interest to visit any new country and in all of the many countries that he had visited, they all had one thing in common. They all boast that they have a lot of freedom. He said that even people who live in oppressed societies grow to believe the oppression is just the government exercising a reasonable restraint to maintain a coherent society. To me it seemed like a crazy statement but he had been in more countries that I will ever be in so how could I argue, but it did make me ask if our society is as free as we say it is. With hindsight, I think the world may have changed a lot since he told that to me over thirty years ago.

It chanced one evening in November 1972, a few days before a flyby crew was due to arrive in Carnarvon, that I was sitting at home watching the ABC TV news when it featured the flyby Super Constellation taxiing into its parking bay at Perth airport, having just arrived at Perth from a distant NASA Tracking Station, via Mauritius Island.

The news reader commented on the special work that the aircraft was doing for NASA and that the crews and their families were looking forward to a few days of rest in Perth and the camera panned in on an attractive young lady in tropical clothes who was jaunting down the stairs of the aircraft with a happy bouncing six year old in tow.

I did not know that they were allowed to carry friends and family on the plane and I got to thinking that if friends and family could ride on the plane, then maybe I could too. I had a pilot license (for very small planes) and I would have given my right arm for a ride on the Super Constellation.

A couple of days later the Flyby personnel arrived in town and the next morning the plane was up there droning away as it settled in for a long day of pretending it was an Apollo rocket.

The Commander of the Flybys was Evan



Gull. During the Carnarvon flybys Evan was mostly in the Carnarvon Communications Room, wearing a headset and talking to people in the plane, people at Houston and people in the various work centre around the Carnarvon Tracking Station.

I rehearsed my best arguments and I went to see Evan about my riding in the plane. When I arrived at the Communications Room I could see that Evan was busy, very busy. I sat outside of the room and watched him through a glass partition and I could hear him on the net. Among other things, he was explaining to some of the Carnarvon staff that some of their procedures needed changing but he was doing it in such a way that there was no inferred criticism and there were a lot of compliments.

Evan was impressive. He was in his mid thirties, tall, good looking, confident, articulate and right on top of his job. When he had a quiet moment, I introduced myself and after some brief pleasantries, I quickly got to the point and asked him if I could ride on the plane.



I expected an interrogation but he was quickly onto the net and talking to he captain of the plane. *"Say Frank, you're going to have company tomorrow, there's a guy here who's going to Perth tonight and he will be on the plane with you tomorrow."*

The Captain's response was quick, *"Great, I haven't met a Carnarvon tracker so he can tell us what it is like down there."*

So that was that, it only took ten seconds and I was on the plane tomorrow. Evan asked about the road trip to Perth. I think he would have enjoyed a road trip to see the country but it was not an option for him. He thought it was a long way to drive and he said if it was him, he would be looking for a co-driver to Perth.

He said, *"Why not get a co-driver who can go on the plane too"*. I thought I would have no problem selling that to another tracker so I agreed and Evan told the Captain of the plane that there would be two of us.

The Captain gave me directions to a gate in the fence at Perth airport where I was to meet the crew the next day at 3:30 am. I chatted a little more with Evan and then he got busy so I left.

*To be continued*

## Mercury Redstone Rocket Dedication



The Carnarvon Space and Technology Museum is a museum dedicated to the little known story of Carnarvon's role in the NASA manned space program and the Overseas Telecommunications Commission (OTC) in the early satellite communications industry.

Since opening in 2012 we have expanded twice and had three astronauts visit our museum to open each phase.

Phase One: Buzz Aldrin

Phase Two: Andy Thomas

Phase Three: Gene Cernan

We are a small dedicated group of volunteers that have received little government funding until 2017, when we received a \$50,000 grant from the Gascoyne Development Commission to assist building a full size Mercury Redstone rocket as a display. The total cost of the project will be approximately \$95,000. The \$45,000 we have generated ourselves from visitor entry fees.

May 18 & 19 2018 we will be having an official opening of our 25 metre tall rocket. It is hoped to bring retired NASA Assistant Flight Director Ed Fendell to Carnarvon to dedicate our rocket and attend a fundraiser for the museum. Ed was involved with the training of staff at the NASA Tracking Station in the 1960's and is featured in the movie "*Mission Control - The Unsung Hero's of Apollo.*" Ed has also kindly offered to come out to Carnarvon from Houston at no charge for our functions.

Our museum is hoping to raise \$6,000 to help us fund to bring Ed from Houston to Carnarvon. This amount, along with our own top up and a potential small grant from the Shire of Carnarvon will make this event a success.

Your donation will assist with making our museum even better. Our full size Mercury Redstone rocket display will be a rather large entry statement that will be seen for miles by the driving public. The official opening will be another news worthy story which we hope Perth television stations may once again send a crew up to show off our wonderful museum.

We hope to secure funding by March 2018.

Please donate now

<https://www.gofundme.com/mercury-redstone-rocket-dedication/donate>



**SOCIAL CLUB NEWS April 1967 ctd.**STATION NEWS

by DICK SIMONS

The first mission last year, Surveyor A, was highly successful while Surveyor B did not function according to plan and was deliberately destroyed.

Everyone is hopeful that the forthcoming mission will be as successful as the first.

The transfer of the teletype facility, from its present location to the room adjacent to the Apollo control room, is now under way. The space thus vacated will be taken over by the Test Equipment Section.

The extension to the SPAN building is well on the way to completion with floor tiles being laid at this time. In connection with SPAN we welcome on site Peter Davies who recently arrived from Woomera with his wife and three children. Peter, who is employed by the Ionospheric Prediction Service of the Department of the Interior, will have the job of interpreting those peculiar squiggles churned out on graph paper by the SPAN machine.

Howard Thomas is not broadcasting the fact that he recently received the blue print copying machine - we're doing it for him.

Since early February, some use (mainly Testing) has been made of COMSAT for voice and teletype circuits. Frequent users of these facilities will welcome the news that in future there should be a reduction in interference and background noise plus an improvement in speech quality. What about the Houston echo?

- 7 -

*To be continued*

# Mini Reunion



Trevor Mosel (Stadan), Maggie Lambert (Computers), Terry Kierans (Ops)

# Guess Who

Guess who?  
(Answer in June issue)



# Quotations

*"We went to the Moon as trained observers in order to gather data, not only with our instruments on board, but also with our minds. Plutarch, a wise man who lived a long time ago, expressed the feelings of the crew of Apollo 15 when he wrote, The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be lighted."*

~ David Scott

*"For when I look at the Moon I do not see a hostile, empty world. I see the radiant body where man has taken his first steps into a frontier that will never end."*

~ David Scott

# 12<sup>th</sup> Picnic Day

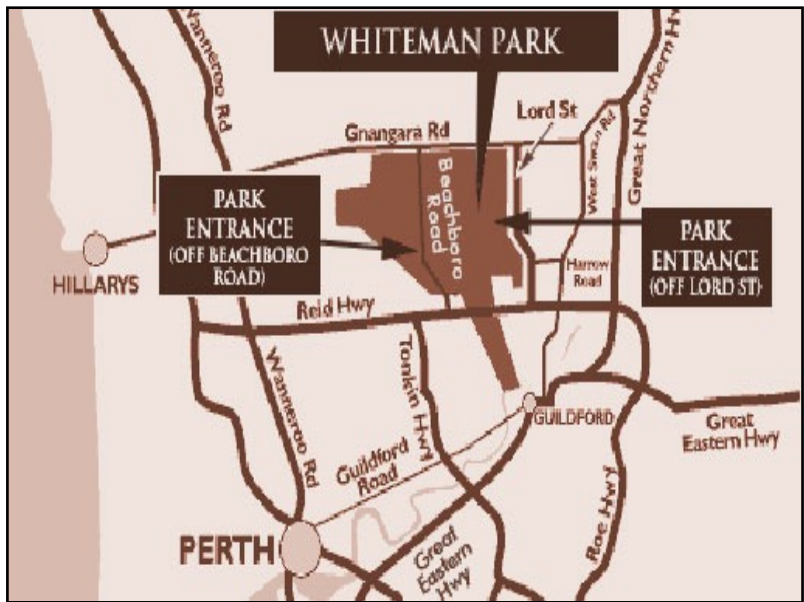
*"No more Reunion Dinners ..."*

So ...the Perth Chapter of the CRO Trackers will be holding their twelfth annual picnic / barbeque at:

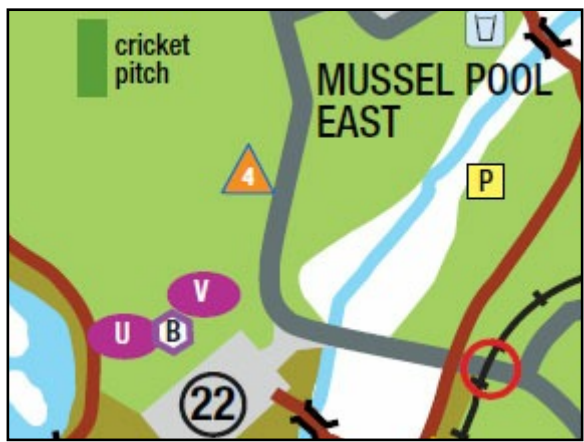
**Whiteman Park, Mussel Pool, Shelter V**  
(it's under cover)  
some 20 kms and 25 minutes from the Perth CBD.

**Date:** Sunday April 8<sup>th</sup> 2018 (1st Sunday after Easter)  
**Time:** Lift-off 11 am WST  
**BYO:** Everything

### Look out for the banner at Shelter V





... and for those who get lost.




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

# Keeping the Memory Alive

**KEEPING THE MEMORY ALIVE**

 **Carnarvon Tracking Station**   
**1964 - 1975**



**CARNARVON TRACKING STATION**




Think the entrance to the site of the former Carnarvon Tracking Station which operated from 1964 to 1975.

It was a joint venture between the Commonwealth Government of Australia and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States of America.

Maintenance and operational services were provided by Air-Operated Wireless (AOWS).

The Carnarvon Tracking Station was directly involved with the NASA space program which included the Gemini, Apollo and Skylab missions.

For more information please visit the Canberra Space and Technology Museum just a few kilometres north from here at the end of DC Road the Earth Station site.

**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:

**CRO Trackers**