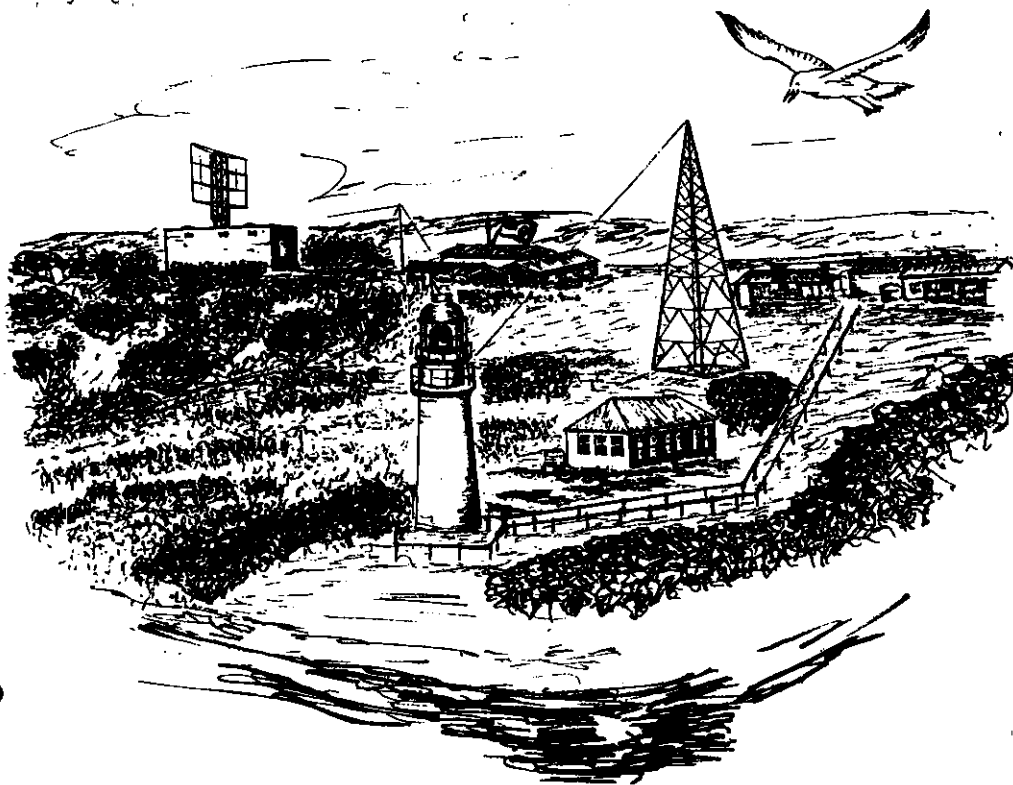


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13 RADAR CAPE OTWAY

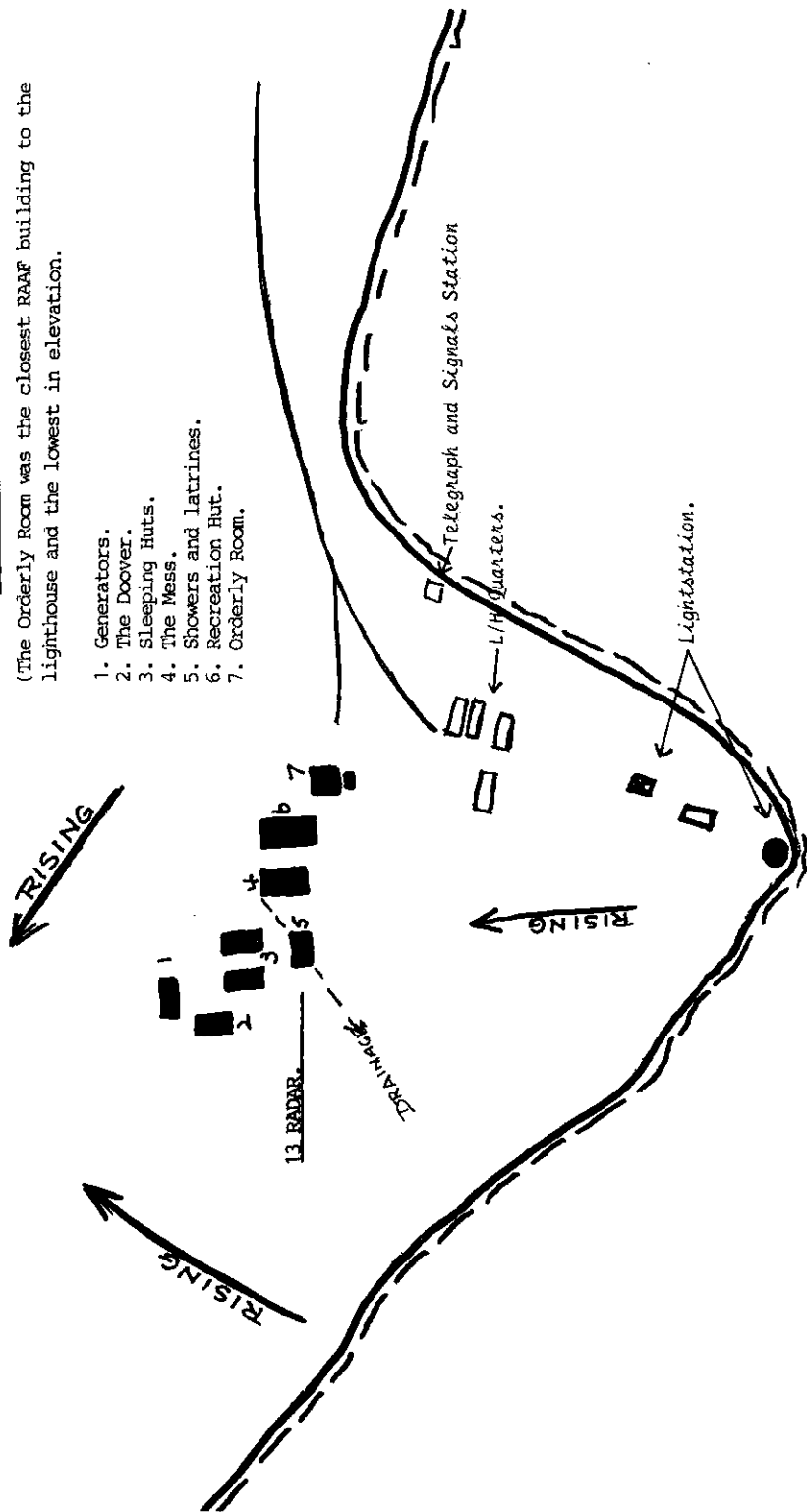


Edited by **MORRIE FENTON**

A "Not-to-scale" sketch plan of the Cape Otway area in 1942 as Digger Nottle remembers it.

(The Orderly Room was the closest RAAF building to the Lighthouse and the lowest in elevation.

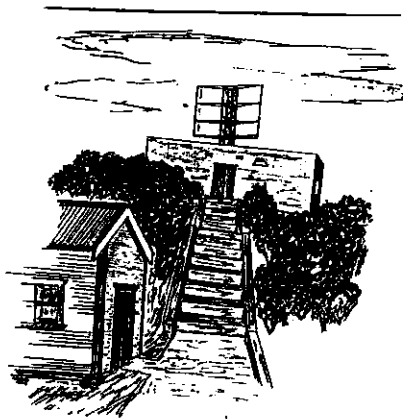
1. Generators.
2. The Doover.
3. Sleeping Huts.
4. The Mess.
5. Showers and latrines.
6. Recreation Hut.
7. Orderly Room.



13 RADAR CAPE OTWAY

"DOWN SOUTH ON VICTORIA'S SHIPWRECK COAST."

13 Radar was one of Australia's first radar stations set up on the mainland at a key coastal location to watch over southern shipping lanes.



Edited by MORRIE FENTON

13 RADAR
CAPE OTWAY

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Edited by M.E.Fenton

Published By

M.E.Fenton.

**(Morrie Fenton)
27 Lasscock Ave,**

LOCKLEYS 5032

EDITOR'S REMARKS.

Since colonization first began, Cape Otway has been recognized as a landfall for shipping about to enter the treacherous waters of Bass Strait, and to lessen the dangers, the famous old Otway lighthouse was built in 1848. 13 Radar was set up on this same site almost 100 years later.

It was in 1940 that a German minelayer had been along the southern coast, and had been at work near Cape Otway. An American vessel, the CITY OF RAYVILLE struck a mine and went down near Cape Otway—the first American ship sunk in WW2. So no surprise that 13 RS was set up there in June 1942 - one of the first on the Australian mainland and soon after Australia's radar program had begun. Also the Navy had requested that radar stations be set up at key locations along our shipping routes.

Operationally, 13 RS was not very active, and putting its story on paper was not easy....a not very exciting story of 59 years ago. There was a great lack of incidents worth reporting, and there were far too many boring inspections. But the strangest aspect was the complete lack of photos....not a single one, whereas most stations in all areas had a few available. So I've attempted a few sketches adapted from some modern photos, and I've used a few old tourist photos.

Nevertheless, 13 RS was important as a southern 'rest' station, and as a training station for the many new radar men being turned out from Richmond.

Not too many other stations stayed on air for four years, and it has surprised me how many chaps have revisited Otway over the years. Perhaps they liked the place.

Morrie Fenton.

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Sketch plans of huts	Inside back cover.	
Don Bailey		

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

I am pleased to acknowledge and to express my appreciation for the efforts and co-operation of all the 13 RS contributors. It's certainly not easy to cast the mind back so far, especially as the stay at the Cape seldom exceeded a few months, and I feel we all did really well. 'Digger' Nottle proved to be the expert, and Bob McD my special adviser (as indeed he was back in 1944)...their help was invaluable. And as is usual, I'm grateful to Pete Smith and the Newsletter....and to Ed Simmonds who so often prevents me opening my mouth and putting my foot in it! So Thanks One and All....the story has turned out better than I expected.

Thank You : 'Digger' Nottle.

Reg McCarthy

Don Bailey.

Bob McDonnell.

Ken Nice.

Ron Richards.

Alan Every.

Bill Harnath.

Alan Weeks.

Leo Doolan.

Don Parncutt.

Jim Patterson.

Ron Keats.

Peter Yeomans.

Pete Smith.

Ed Simmonds.

RAAF Historical Section

(Janet Beck)

Vict. Tourism Information Service.

Great Ocean Road Information Service.

For photos and illustrative material, I thank

Ron Coat.

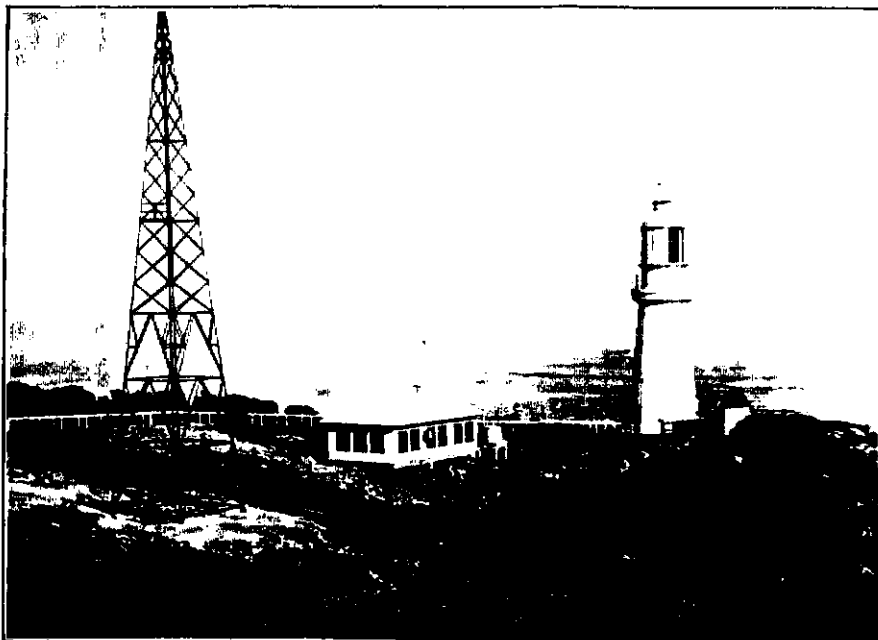
Bob McDonnell.

Bryan and Margaret Wardle.

Various Brochures.

Morrie Fenton.

#####



CAPE OTWAY AND APOLLO BAY. The photo above shows the Cape Otway Lightstation as it appeared in the war years when 13 RS was set up close by. The mast and building are believed to belong to the radio beacon then operating. The photo appears to have been taken from the 13 RS Dover hill surrounds. The photo below is of Apollo Bay in the same period. Captain Loutit, of the schooner APOLLO, named the bay in 1845 when seeking shelter from the westerlies on a trip to Portland.



INTRODUCTION.

Australia's lighthouses and radar stations seem to have had a somewhat similar task....the one to send out a beam of light to guide shipping through dangerous waters....the other to send out a beam of radio waves from a prominent site to detect aircraft and shipping. So during WW2 the two were often sited close to each other - and 13 Radar at Cape Otway, built in 1942, was placed close to the historic old Otway lighthouse which had been built in 1848. This was after several early sailing ships had been wrecked along the coast, some with heavy loss of life.

The Cape Otway lighthouse was the first to be built along Australia's southern coastline, and 13 Radar was the first radar station to be built along the same stretch of coast.

A primary purpose of the radar unit was to detect and report on all shipping (and possibly enemy subs and minelayers) in the vicinity of the cape - though of course all plots, whether of aircraft or shipping, were reported. Additionally, being an early station in Australia's radar program, it became a training station for the freshly trained radar personnel from Radar School where operators and mechanics learned something of the routines of an operational station.

Directly east of Cape Otway, and performing a similar duty, was the Wilson's Promontory lighthouse and 14 Radar Station, so that all shipping turning north from Bass Strait towards Melbourne was likely to be plotted and reported. South of Cape Otway was Cape Wickham on King Island. The treacherous stretch of water between, even after 150 years of navigation, still sometimes is known by the name bestowed in sailing ship days...."the eye of the needle," and is the entrance to the treacherous Bass Strait.

The lighthouse carried out its duties from 1848 to 1994 when it was replaced by a small light tower and automatic light with less range powered by solar energy.

The radar unit ceased its wartime watch in 1946.

#####



CAPE OTWAY RE-VISITED.

Morrie Fenton.

In 1984 I was stricken with a bad bout of nostalgia. At the time my wife and I were staying in the lovely little town of Apollo Bay in Victoria. Just 20 miles further south was Cape Otway where as an 18 year old AC1, I had spent three months learning something of the routine of an operational radar station....13 Radar. That was in 1944.

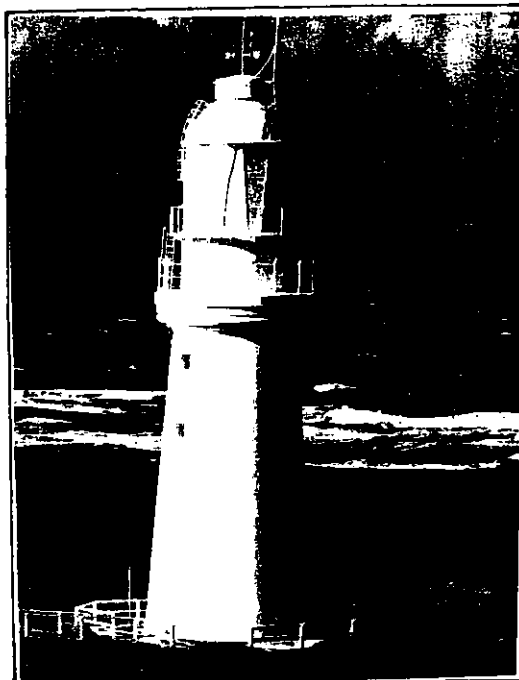
It was a pleasant, sunny day, so down we went, just for the fun of it really, but imagine my surprise to find the old concrete blockhouse 'Doover' still there.....and I was welcome to inspect it, so the friendly lighthouse keeper told me.

I climbed the steps up the sandhill - through the bushes I saw the familiar shape of the old Doover - doorless, no windows - but how the memories flooded back. The rusted base of the old turntable only was recognizable inside, but nevertheless in my mind's eye.....there was the Receiver - the WT gear - the strange old phone switchboard - the plotting table. That's where the transmitter stood, and the mechanics' bench. There we made the brew when we were on dog-watch, and suddenly I recalled the name of the Corporal Op. in charge of my watch...Bernie Frith...and I hadn't thought of that in over 40 years.

A container ship was ploughing past, and I remembered there had been more shipping than aircraft plots. Probably the reason why the station had been planted there, for other than the flights across to Tasmania, few aircraft were plotted.

Nothing was recognizable on the camp site itself, and the scrub had reclaimed the area. There were a few gutters and cement pads...but the memories were there too. Perc the cook who fed us: the Guards who called us; the clerk who paid us. No ghosts, but plenty of memories.

When I arrived home, the nostalgia was still bad, and out came the diaries and stories I had scribbled 40 odd years ago. The memories were there too, and so here they are...and yours too....memories and stories of 13 RS.



THE CAPE OTWAY LIGHTHOUSE.

The Otway lighthouse and keepers' quarters were built over a three year period from 1846 to 1848 to the design of Colonial Architect Mortimer Lewis. The light first shone out on 29th. August 1848 marking the entrance to Bass Strait, a much feared and treacherous passage for early shipping. The Cape area and its terrain had been particularly difficult to penetrate and negotiate, but eventually a safe landing area was found at the mouth of the Parker Creek, only a short distance from the Cape so that equipment and supplies could be brought almost to the intended lighthouse site. Good building stone was available locally, also lime and water, and the tender of £1995 from Geelong contractor McGillivray was accepted. But the work proceeded so slowly that in October 1847 the Government dismissed the contractor and assumed responsibility itself, assembling a party of 40 stonemasons under the control of a Royal Navy surveyor, Lieut. Charles Yule.

The work was completed in August 1848 at an estimated cost of £4300. - but after only 9 years, it was necessary to rebuild the keepers' quarters. In 1859 a telegraph station was erected near the Cape - a link in a line from Melbourne to Tasmania via King Island, but two years later the cable was broken, though the link from Otway to Melbourne via Geelong was maintained to warn of approaching shipping.

The first light system comprised 21 oil lamps in three groups of seven, with the heavy arrangement turned by a mechanism worked by descending weights which were rewound several times each night.

In 1891 the system was replaced by an incandescent kerosene lantern apparatus employing three groups of five glass panels, rotating in 5 minutes to give a triple flash every minute. The system was electrified in 1939 with the lens floating in a mercury bath to reduce friction. Also in 1939 a marine radio beacon was installed with the lighthouse area then presenting the appearance when 13 radar was set up in 1942.

THE LIGHT IS EXTINGUISHED.

More than 3000 interested folk gathered at Cape Otway on Thursday, 6th. January 1994 to witness the final working night of the historic light. There was some live music for entertainment, a commemorative service, and various historians attended as the most recent light-keeper, Peter Scott appeared on the balcony in company with a lone piper who played 'Lights Out' on the pipes as the Union Jack was lowered.

Among the many visitors was a senior lady who, as a 7 year old back in 1926, had lived at the Cape - her father was one of the four light-keepers of the day. She remembered particularly the schoolroom in one of the cottages where 12 children were needed to attend to keep it open. The station then was able to provide its own milk, cream, butter and eggs, and the children all rode their own horses.

On Friday morning, the light was extinguished, and as with other manned lighthouses in Australia, it was replaced by an automatic light which at Cape Otway is a 2 metre high solar powered light with a range of 19 miles. The old lighthouse will be preserved and will welcome visitors on week-days during arranged hours.

#####



THE OLD SIGNAL STATION.

An historic building at the Cape is the old Telegraph and Signals Station just NE of the lighthouse. It has seen many changes of fortune since it was built about 1861 as a terminal station to a Tasmanian cable which was unsuccessful, and was abandoned. The building then became a Signals Station to send shipping information to Melbourne and Sydney, and operated until 1880. Subsequently it has been used as lighthouse accommodation - as the school - and as war-time Navy quarters and Signals station, which evidently was its WW2 function when 13 RS was set up in 1942. The old building is presently being restored.

The photo shows the rear aspect of the building, and the top of its tower can be seen above the roofline.

#####

INTRODUCTION TO THE A50'S DIARY.

13 Radar at Cape Otway was one of the RAAF stations set up at key locations on main shipping routes to satisfy Navy requirements so that a watch could be made for possible enemy shipping activities - minelayers and subs particularly. While it cannot be claimed that 13 RS carried out any memorable action against the enemy, nevertheless its watch was prudent and precautionary from May 1942 to May 1946...a very commendable war-time effort.

The station came on air at Cape Otway in mid-1942 - it was an early mainland station and the first along the southern coast. Its operations commenced when Australia's radar program was still getting into gear. For that reason, the well known transportable steel tower was not yet available, so the Doover was cast on site from concrete - a blockhouse which was then partitioned into three rooms, or compartments for the Transmitter, the aerial turning gear, and the Receiver, or Operations room.

The gear itself was a mix of Air Warning (AW) Receiver and aerial, linked to an English CD/CHL Transmitter.

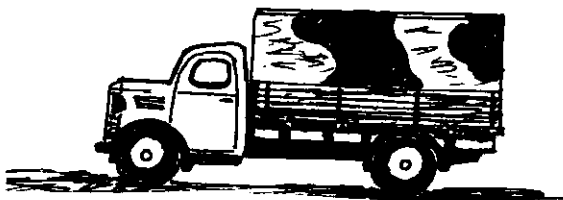
The aerial turning gear was floor mounted in the central partitioned compartment, with the big cogged gear wheel almost on the floor. At first the aerial was turned through 360°, then reversed because of the lack of a rotatable junction between the aerial and the gear, but this was later corrected to allow continuous rotation.

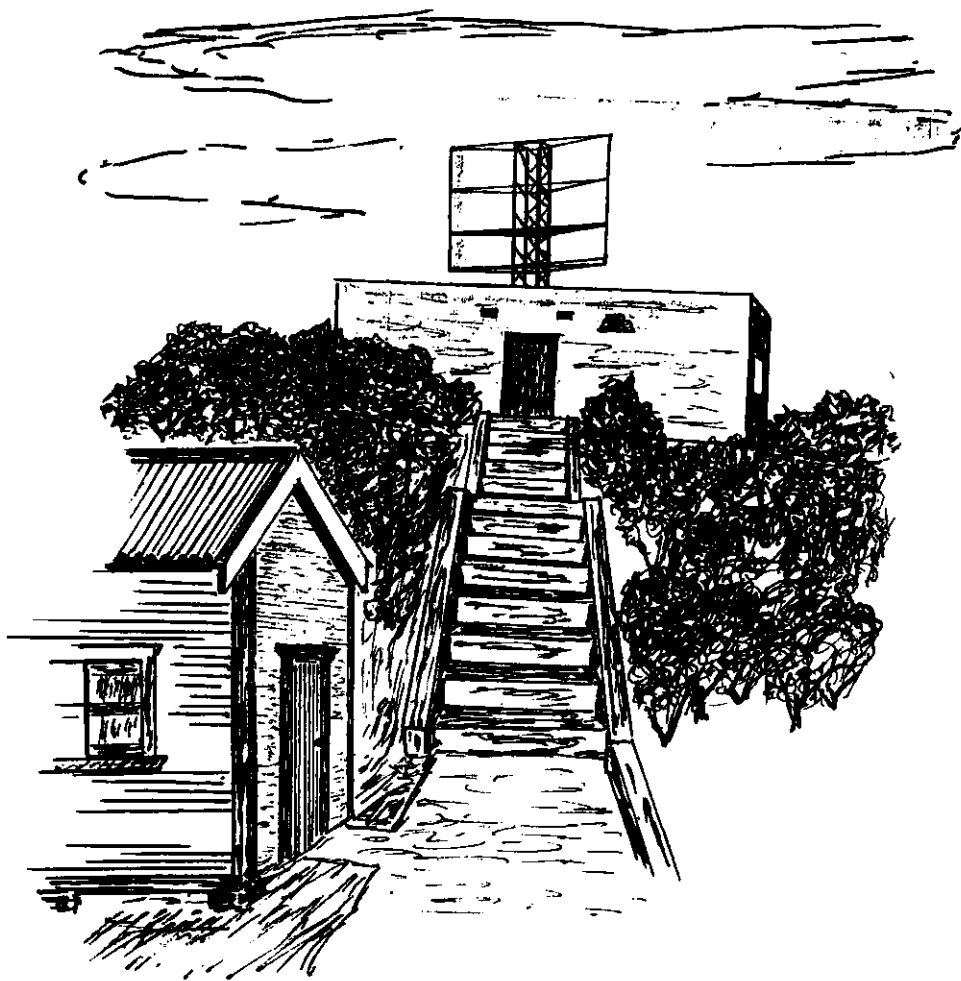
In the Receiver room, an AT5/ARS wireless telegraphy set was eventually positioned, and a daily schedule to link the station with 7FS at Preston was set up.

By the blacked out window on the south side was the Recorder's desk, next to an old style Ericsson phone switchboard, which was hooked into a local party line, though Preston was usually contacted by a direct land-line. At the rear of the room was the BL4 - the IFF gear to recognise friend or foe, and hardly necessary at Cape Otway.

The Doover was built on top of a sandhill almost within stone's throw of the lighthouse, and the camp was immediately below it - only a few concrete steps separated the Doover from the sleeping hut.

#####





An impression of the approach to the 13 RS Doover.

THE OFFICERS AT 13 RADAR, CAPE OTWAY.

Commanding Officers.

13/6/42 P.O. Harrison R.L.
 21/11/42 P.O. Fletcher R.W.
 7/2/43 F/Lt. Johnson A.S.
 17/1/44 P.O. Stark J.
 25/3/43 P.O. Bennett N.R.
 27/6/44 P.O. Dennis F.R.
 25/8/43 F.O. Bass E.J.
 7/4/45 F/Lt. Muir J.D.H.
 4/7/45 F.Sgt Graham A.D.
 11/7/45 F/Lt. Gravell W.J.
 24/7/45 F.Sgt Graham A.D.
 27/11/45 Sgt. Manthorpe J.R.
 17/12/45 F/Lt. Ross J.B.
 14/1/46 F.O. Parramore I.I.
 26/3/46 F.O. Mulcahy B.S.

Other Officers.

25/7/42 P.O. Young I.W.
 7/8/42 P.O. Katz B.
 19/2/43 F.O. Skinner E.B.
 8/3/43 P.O. Gibbons R.W.
 12/6/43 P.O. Balfre J.D.
 15/6/43 P.O. McMichael H.O.
 29/11/43 P.O. Cooper J.
 6/12/43 P.O. Gallagher B.F.
 15/3/44 P.O. Bennett N.R.
 15/4/44 P.O. Dennis F.R.

#####

PERSONNEL — 13 Radar, Cape Otway.

The alphabetical list of names that follows comprises the names of men from the records researched.....the record produced has to be regarded as 'incomplete.'

Arbuthnott	W.	Evans	R.L.	Lunney	J.
Anderson	G.	Every	A.	Loneragan	J.F.
Adamson	R.P.	Eller	J.H.P.	Leabeater	C.
		Edsall	G.	Lewis	J.A.
				Leahy	G.
Bunker	M.A.				
Bradshaw	R.P.				
Bowe	D.H.	Frith	B.J.	McLean	J.A.
Bryan	J.R.	Fendler	M.F.	McArdle	F.C.
Bagley	A.	Fenton	M.E.	Magee	F.L.
Bramwell	R.	Friday	A.M.	McCormack	E.J.
Burns	V.N.			Menner	N.J.
Boyd	L.C.			McCarthy	R.J.
Brown	R.J.	Gazzard	V.J.	McDonald	S.F.
Bell	M.	Gannon	L.F.	Manassa	J.
Bent	E.T.	Gillies	N.H.	Menday	R.E.
Bowie	L.E.			McCann	J.A.
Bushby	N.R.			Major	N.R.
Brennen	F.D.	Hocking	W.H.	McDonnell	R.T.
Bailey	D.	Hickling	L.T.	McKenzie	A.K.
Burnett	J.	Harvey	F.H.	Murray	D.G.McN.
		Hathaway	R.W.	McConnell	J.
		Harnath	W.		
Coles	R.A.	Hickman	D.		
Campbell	A.J.	Hannon	J.	Nottle	A.G.
Crossley	R.W.	Hardy	G.	Nice	K.
Coyne	P.J.				
Corbin	D.				
Cork	K.P.	Isaacs	M.	Osborne	H.W.
Cox	R.B.			O'Connor	A.E.
Cope	P.				
Campbell	W.F.	Jones	L.T.		
Cuttriss	D.R.	Jordan	J.H.	Patterson	T.
Coster	J.E.	Jelbart	S.J.	Parker	R.S.
Crowther	N.			Plumer	F.C.
Corbett	-			Payne	J.H.
		Komcoff	N.	Plumridge	M.R.
		Killorn	R.J.	Potter	R.E.
Davies	F.M.	King	R.G.	Parncutt	D.
Dawson	W.J.	Kinvig	W.L.	Parkinson	K.V.
Duckworth	M.	Keats	R.		
Davies	J.J.				
Doyle	R.J.			Reeves	T.
Dyker	E.A.	Lay	G.I.	Richardson	T.A.
Dunshea	J.	Landells	H.D.	Rodney	G.
Dennis	R.V.	Lawson	L.	Richards	R.
Decker	H.H.	Longworthy	G.	Richardson	J.
Doolan	L.	Lamond	A.S.	Ryan	A.L.
Davis	J.				

PERSONNEL 13 Radar, Cape Otway. (Continued.)

Richardson	C.N.		
Roberts	C.D.D.		
Raw	A.A.		
			<u>Security Guards.</u>
		Bunten	A.E.
		Beecroft	L.
		Barrie	R.K.
		Barnes	G.T.
Savage	G.F.	Crisp	T.H.
Skeffington	W.	Counihan	R.
Skeggs	G.N.	Dalton	J.J.
Sankey	A.	Day	W.J.
Schofield	E.G.	Etherington	N.
Scott	D.J.	Hockham	W.R.
Sasson	P.B.	Holtham	E.A.
Sibson	R.	Jerrams	L.W.
Streat	J.A.	Miller	W.H.
Sweeney	K.W.	McEachern	C.M.
Slee	I.B.	Meehan	J.P.
Sweet	L.C.	McLean	W.M.
Spain	D.R.	McIvor	W.T.
Skinner	A.W.S.	McDonald	T.J.
Simmons	T.H.	Smith	D.J.
Stott	J.C.	Tussup	E.G.
Smith	H.G.		
Taylor	G.D.		
Thompson	L.		
Thomson	A.		
Tye	A.J.		
Tudball	K.D.		
Ulett	J.G.		
Veitch	R.		
Walls	A.		
Weinert	M.L.		
Whitlock	J.		
White	D.F.		
Walsh	J.R.		
Whelan	R.B.		
Williams	J.L.		
Weeks	A.W.		
Yeomans	P.		
Yum	R.		

Unfortunately, though the list of Personnel is quite large, it must be regarded as incomplete.

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK.

of (Unit or Formation) NO. 13 R.D.F.

No.

Summary of Events.

Place.	Date.	Summary of Events.
CAPE OTWAY	28/5/42	No. 13 Radio Station formed at CAPE OTWAY, VICTORIA, to Provisional War Establishment H.D-273 Authority 251/9/1079.
		(1) Personnel - 1 officer (P/Lt.) 45 Airmen.
		(2) Mechanical Transport - 1 Tender, light.
		To provide Air Warning by means of R.D.F. equipment.
		Equipment comprised 1 only CD/CHL Transmitter A.W. Aerial Turning Gear and Receiver, two Ford (Mercury) V8, 25 K.V.A. Petrol generating sets.
		Buildings comprised four naval buildings, one reinforced concrete building R.D.F. equipment and two reinforced concrete dug-outs for generating sets.
	6-13/6/42	Advance party of officers from Air Board comprising P/O.R. CHOATS and P/O. together with the commanding officer of the Unit and a inspector from the Department of Interior paid a visit.
	13/6/42.	The following personnel arrived at the Unit with equipment and barracks:
		A.4732 P/O. P.L. HARRISON Commanding Officer
	43235	CPL. BAGLEY, A.S. Radio Mechanic
	60837	AC.1 NOTTLE, A.G. " "
	60859	AG.1 SANKEY, A. " Operator
	80155	AG.1 DAWSON, W.J. " "
	41964	CPL. DAVIES, P.M. Service Police.
	21802	CPL. GAZZARD, V.G. " "
	41263	CPL. PAYNE, J.H. " "
	4034	LAC. BEEVER, T. Cook
	27297	LAC. COLES, R.A. General Hand (Lab)
	50679	AG.1 HUCKING, W.H. D.M.T.
	40731	LAC. WOODRUMACK, E.J. Clerk Stores.
	49449	AG.1 McARDLE, P.O. Clerk General
	13/6/42.	Work commenced on six new buildings comprising two huts for sleeping and mess building, one orderly room and guard room combined latrine and ab.

13 RADAR.....THE A50's DIARY.

13 Radar - (or RDF station as it was known at first) formed up at Cape Otway on 28th. May 1942, and provisionally it was to be manned by 1 officer and 45 men. Their RDF equipment was to be a CD/CHL Transmitter linked to an AW aerial and Receiver with the power supplied by 2 Ford Mercury V8's with 25 KVA generating units. The initial buildings were to comprise 4 station huts and 1 re-inforced concrete blockhouse to house the air warning equipment. The chosen site was adjacent to the old Cape Otway light-house of 1848 vintage.

On 13th. June, the C.O. P/O. P.L.Harrison and the first party of 12 men arrived at their new unit and work immediately commenced on 6 new camp

buildings - and it's interesting to note that 3 Service Police with Corporal status were in the initial party which suggests they were the overseers for the work.

Over the following week, 4 more men arrived, and once the air warning equipment had been installed in the Doover, 13 Radar went on air, commencing operations on 27th. June 1942 - the first radar to operate along the southern coast and one of the first in Australia. By the end of June, the station complement was 1 officer and 27 men.

P/O. I.W.Young was posted to the station as Technical Officer in July and he arrived on the 25th....his big task was to keep the equipment up and running, and he also received some helpful advice from F.Lt. Marsh, a senior technical man who spent a day with him on 29th. July. This suggests that the gear was not yet performing to the standard expected.

At the end of July the station complement was 2 officers and 33 men.

P/O. Young was posted away early in August - he was replaced on Tech Duties by P/O. Katz....and then the proposed station establishment was amended to 1 officer and 62 men (though this figure was never achieved.)

The camouflage of the station was the next big task, though the camp was well concealed in the hollow behind the Doover, and another urgent problem was to find an adequate supply of water for such a large number of men. Evidently there was a well nearby which necessitated the erection of a windmill, the setting up of tanks, and the laying of a pipeline.

During October, rifle practice was begun for the Security Guards, and the camouflage work was completed. On the 21st. P/O. Fletcher arrived on posting with authority to take over command, and on the following day P/O. Harrison and P/O. Katz departed.

The strength of the Guard detachment was reduced on the 27th. to 1 corporal and 4 men - a reduction of 11 - and at the end of October there was a total of 37 men on the unit.

The 1st. November saw an Army tender arrive with the necessary rations - this was to be the method of delivery in future - and on the 16th. 3 electricians arrived to instal electricity for the Navy....perhaps this was an observation post or perhaps in the old signal station.

An organ was donated to the unit in mid November and this was picked up from Lavers Hill. (the story of the organ remains a mystery) Then over the remainder of the month came a succession of officers pursuing their various interests, all no doubt inspecting the effectiveness of the work completed around the camp. The most welcome visitors would have been 3 airmen from 1 RIMU whose task was to carry out work on the aerial turning system, probably to ensure continuous rotation was possible.

The camouflage work on the station was still causing some concern (and much work, though the camp's position behind the sandhill was itself very effective) and a succession of visiting officers and officials and many workmen were all on the site for varying lengths of time. Additionally 3 airmen from 1 RIMU attended to the feeder system, and a new land-line to 7 FSHQ at Preston was brought into service.

At the end of December there were 41 men on the unit.

On 9th. January 1943, a couple of officials from the Department of Interior visited to investigate the unit water supply which was hardly satisfactory.... then on the 12th. came the Big One....the AOC Southern, Gr. Capt. Pearce and his party spent a day on the unit.

There were a few more visiting officers and their parties on the station during the remainder of the month during which a new phone was installed

in the Control Room.

February began with the arrival of F.Lt. Johnson on posting - and the unit tender was despatched to Geelong to take delivery of a new engine to replace a defective unit.

Then came a shuffling of jobs as the C.O. (now promoted) F/O. Fletcher was posted to command 314 Radar and with F.Lt. Johnson assuming command of 13 RS. Then came a rifle shoot on the 25th. and a series of lectures on machine guns and demolition procedures.

On 29th. F/O. E. Skinner took temporary command while F.Lt. Johnson was in hospital with an ankle injury.

The inspections and visits continued in March - there was a Canteen Audit, and resulting from a Department of Interior official being at the station, the doors and windows were screened against insects.

F.Lt. Johnson the Commanding Officer returned from his stay in hospital on the 5th., and then came a lecture on the Vickers Machine Gun for all Personnel.

P/O. R.W. Gibbons arrived on posting on the 6th. as RDF Tech. Officer - then followed more M.G. lectures and some more camouflage work. But more important was the selection of a site for an ASV Beacon, the erection of the necessary poles, and the arrival of men to instal the equipment. Meanwhile, there was M.G. practice for all personnel out on the range and lectures for the new arrivals.

There were three events of some importance in April - early in the month the ASV beacon was brought into service, and on the 12th. two plumbers arrived to instal a hot water service, while on the 18th. considerable damage was sustained by the camp buildings which was caused by heavy gales, and the windmill was blown down.

Other than that, there was even more M.G. practice and lectures, and 4 Tommy-guns were received to be added to the station armaments.

May proved to be a continuation of the station activities of the previous month - there were officials from the Department of Interior who obviously came to assess the storm damage to the camp buildings, and to plan the necessary repairs; while W/Cdr. Cunningham, the Southern Area RDF Officer and F.Lt. Thomson arrived to inspect the gear....perhaps there was some concern the storm had caused damage at the Doover too.

On the 10th. the installation of WT equipment was completed - 3 WT Operators arrived on posting, and a daily schedule of tests with Preston was commenced, even though plot reporting would have continued via the new landline. During the month, intensive machine gun practice and lectures continued unabated, and there was also one competitive rifle shoot.

June 3rd. "Unit tender overturned on the Cape Otway road about 8 miles from the unit. Extensive damage to the tender but no injury to personnel. Replacement received same day."

Rifle, M.G. practice and lectures continued through June.

The Southern Area Education Officer was on the station on the 9th. to interview and advise personnel on the advantages of the RAAF Education Scheme; then on the 12th., P/O. Balfe the Tech Officer departed to take over 328 RS at Wallal in W.A....his place was taken by P/O. McMichael. And the Librarian of SAHQ also visited to inspect and bring the library up to date.

On the 22nd. the M.O. from the School of Technical Training was on hand to dispense any injections due, and on the 26th. the replacement tender ran off the road about three miles from the station and hit a tree. Although its engine was damaged, luckily no personnel were injured.

The month of July was given almost completely to lectures, demonstrations and personal practice on the Vickers, the Thompson sub machine-gun and the hand grenade. On the 15th. several senior officers from SAHQ arrived to inspect the operations of the station relative to their particular duty;- and F.Lt. J.E.Jackson arrived to act as President of the Court of Enquiry into the circumstances of the accident to the station tender on 26th. June.

The lectures on the Vickers and Tommy guns continued into August, also the rifle practice out at the station range. On the 12th. Mr. Cottman, Inspector of Works for the Department of Interior, made an inspection of the station buildings, also he had a look at the site chosen for the erection of a garage for the station tender. The various station accounts were audited on the 18th. and on the 31st. a party from the Southern Cross Windmill Company completed the installation of a diesel water pump to replace the broken windmill.

September....a very quiet month. Other than the now customary armaments lectures and practice, the only excitement was the authority which arrived on the 24th. 4 corporals were promoted to T/Sergeants, and one LAC was promoted to T/Corporal.

October was not the most exciting of months either down at 13 Radar....the Signals Officer from Southern Area HQ was a visitor to check out the WT arrangement and to advise the telegraphists on procedure. Then the Medical Officer from 7 STT at Geelong arrived well equipped to bring up to date the needles and inoculations of all personnel.

On the 16th. P/O. McMichael the Technical man, left on posting to 1 RIMU and on the next day a party of officers headed by Group Capt. Chamberlain was at the station to make a general inspection. 13 RS was within fairly easy driving distance of Melbourne, and the station was now finding itself a popular unit to inspect....especially during a spell of pleasant weather.

Yet another general inspection on the 3rd. November, and a further Signals check up on the 14th.

On the 16th. Section Officer Hunter from 7FS HQ was a visitor....there had been one or two WAAAF's on the station at various times - drivers mainly, but this was apparently the first WAAAF Officer to visit the station. Next, the station camouflage was checked over yet again, then a building contractor arrived to attempt an improvement in the station water supply while an official from the Department of the Interior arrived to inspect the camp buildings. 13 Radar must have been a very fussy station to be on, and in a continuous state of preparedness!

Finally, on 29th. November, P/O. J.Cooper of 67 Squadron arrived to act as C.O. during the absence on leave of F.Lt. Johnson.

Not the most noteworthy of months.

On the 4th. December, P/O. Cooper was recalled to 67 Squadron - his replacement as Temporary C.O. was F/O. R.Steel, though only 2 days later P/O. E.F.Gallagher arrived to takeover until the return of F.Lt. Johnson on the 13th. The final piece of officialdom for the month was the inspection of the unit accounts....yet again.

The C.O., F.Lt. Johnson, newly returned to his station and his duties, was taken sick early in the new year and was admitted to the Sick Quarters at 7 STT. 10 days later he was attached to No. 1 Convalescent Depot.... meanwhile P/O. J.Stark arrived at the Cape to take-over as C.O. Then in a further shuffling of officers, P/O. E.Gallagher was posted to Radar School at Richmond to undergo a Radar Officer's course. Then on 26th. January, 2 corporals from 1 RIMU arrived....their task was to instal BL4 equipment.

A party of Staff Officers from SA HQ visited the station on 6th. March - their varied tasks were to inspect the Administration, the Messing arrangements, the station defence, finishing with the engines and generators. Their inspections seemed to all co-incide fairly closely on the length of time taken, for they all left the same afternoon.

On the 9th. March, P/O. Bennett arrived from Radar School, and P/O. Stark proceeded on leave on the 15th., leaving the newly arrived young officer to act as Commanding Officer.

Two officers from 107 FCU arrived on inspection duties on the 21st. and the radar operators received instruction from them...and finally P/O. Bennett took over as C.O. on 25th. March.

April proved to be almost a 'non event' month - no problems - no inspections - no maintenance of buildings. But P/O. F.Dennis arrived at 13 RS as a sperrumary officer - and apparently he became Temporary Commanding Officer.

In May the A50's become just a little more informative - the unit's accounts were inspected by the Area Finance Officer who declared them O.K. (Surprise!) and advice was received of 5 promotions among the men

On the 29th. a mobile dental unit arrived and all were checked and brought up to date.

Finally, on the 30th., the big brass was back again - the AOC, the SASO and the Area Radar Officer. Also the Senior M.O. from 7 SIT arrived on duty.

The station strength was 2 officers and 41 men at the end of the month. (C.O.'s report extract) Recreation afforded on the unit include billiards, badminton, table tennis, wireless and piano. Four tennis racquets and a supply of balls are held by the Welfare Committee. Members make full use of this equipment and play tennis in Apollo Bay as opportunities permit

Quite a few happenings in June - P/O. Bennett proceeded on leave and P/O. Dennis relieved him. The stores clerk was promoted to Acting Sergeant, and the Unit Wall Newspaper - "The Doover News"- made its appearance.

On the 24th. the Radar Football Team defeated the Apollo Bay team - a significant and rather prestigious occasion. P/O. Bennett was posted away to command 355 RS and P/O. Dennis took over as C.O. of 13 RS which then had 1 officer and 42 men on strength.

(C.O.'s Report) The efficiency of operation of receiver and transmitter seems to have improved due to the keenness of the mechanics who have laboured untiringly in an effort to obtain the best from the equipment.

Best range over sea, 108 miles. Best range on shipping, 24 miles.

The Area Filter Officer arrived on 7th. July to enquire why the radar gear could not locate and plot the daily aircraft flying between Tasmania and the mainland....it was pointed out that the pattern of the transmission, or the beam, was such that low flying aircraft would not normally be located. On the 25th., the BL4 (IFF) was despatched to Laverton - the operation of that equipment was hardly necessary at Cape Otway.

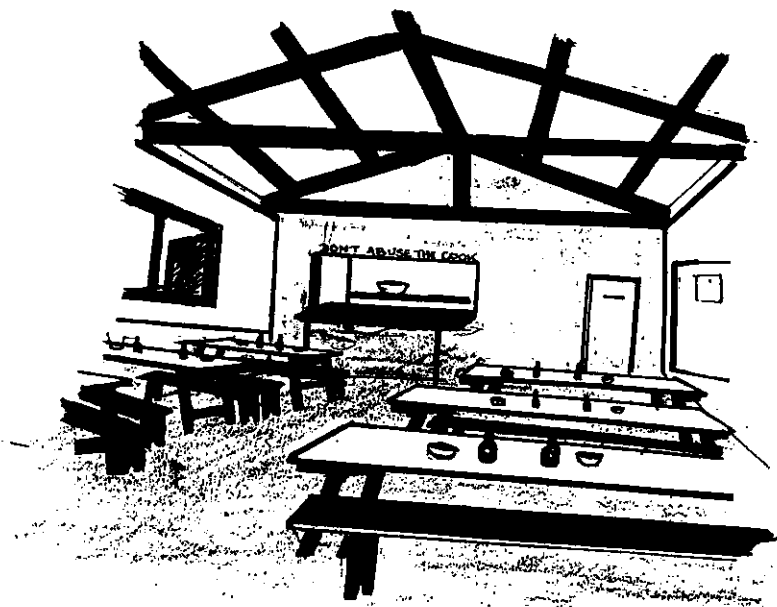
During this month notification was received of 2 promotions in the 'ranks,' - and the wall newspaper, 'The Doover News,' was issued.

There were now 30 men on the unit.

(C.O.'s Report.) A 200 yard range has been set up and some rifle shooting has been done.

A total of four entertainment runs and four church runs have been made to Apollo Bay.

The weather has made outdoor games impossible.



The Mess Hut on a radar station was a fairly standard arrangement everywhere, both in size and fittings.

The tables were all RAAF collapsible - so too the seating forms which each sat three on the two sides of the table - and in very limited comfort. Sugar, salt and pepper, sometimes sauce or jam, adorned each table, and behind the serving hatch the Cook and one or two helpers dished out soup, main course and dessert according to the Menu for the day - basic fare but pretty nourishing.

At a side table bread was available - it was sometimes fresh, too - also a mug of tea straight from an urn, while outside in true radar fashion was the DIY wash-up system - a half drum of hot soapy water and one of fresh rinsing water,

The tables could be cleared for meetings, concerts and the like - and with the addition of a visiting Chaplain, the Mess quickly became a non-denominational chapel.

Many of the northern Mess huts had louvred sides with fly-wire for coolness, and even a tunnelled flyproof door. A few even harboured a tenant under the roof - a harmless carpet or tree snake, both great deterrents for mice and other nasties. These were pretty rare though.

A radar maintenance party arrived on the 11th. August and spent 4 days overhauling and (hopefully) improving the performance of the gear - and the Area Radar Officer was also on the job checking the results and the equipment. Probably 13 Radar was ~~not~~ performing quite up to expectation. On the 23rd August, F/O. Bass arrived, and two days later he took over command from P/O. Dennis who was off on pre-embarkation leave, then on to 1 P.D.

The 30th. saw a meeting of all personnel to form a Welfare Committee, their first task being to organise a series of competitive games over 4 weeks. Similar committees were responsible for sports and entertainment at many radar stations in all areas.

The equipment overhaul - a fault with one Ford generating engine - and rough weather at the cape were all responsible for a high number of hours "off air" during August, and the station now had 1 officer, 38 men and one 30 cwt. Bedford on strength.

(C.O.'s Report.) A series of competitive games has been completed.

Four entertainment trips, 2 Pictures and 2 dances to Apollo Bay have been made.

Football and cricket practice has commenced, and tennis is frequently played in Apollo Bay on stand-down days.

The Mess room has been calcamined cream, and this has brightened the appearance a good deal.

The morale of the personnel is considered quite good.

September. A special mention this month. The tender made an 'entertainment trip' to the Bay so that personnel could attend a dance. No doubt an 'invite' came from the organisers so that the dance was not lacking in partners for the local girls....eligible men were in short supply during those years - an example of the happy co-operation between town and 13 RS. And 8 or 9 men also attended a special church service marking a National Day of Prayer.

On the 8th., the M.O. from 7 STT visited, and 7 men received injections; while on the 11th., the Area Equipment Officer and the Armaments Officer, also the Education Officer visited 13 RS....a nice trip was had by all! The station ceased 24 hour watch at 1800 hours on the 15th., and this marked the beginning of a daily 4 hour watch from 0700 to 1100 hours. The beginning of the end perhaps?

Then on the 16th. a competitive rifle shoot was arranged on the Bay rifle range between 13 RS and the 19th. Battalion VDC....and the VDC were the victors. Final score, 277 to 251, with 10/- for the highest scorer. Another clutch of Staff Officers visited on the 21st - this time Signals, Cypher, and Cypher Security were represented, and the Cypher Officer explained how to use RADCO, the new cypher.

On the 22nd., Cpl. Crossley was taken by ambulance to Heidelberg with suspected malaria - and on the 28th. a defect developed in the ASV beacon, requiring a new component.

The station had been operational for 389 hours this month, reporting 61 aircraft plots and 309 shipping plots. And 3 men were promoted.

(C.O.'s Report.) Members are well provided for with reading matter - one RAAF Circulating Box Library, one State Welfare Library, and other books and periodicals.

The billiard table continues to hold its place as top favourite for the evenings. The contractor is at present working on the recreation room, lining the eaves and fitting new windows. This should make the room less draughty, brighter and more comfortable.

Rabbit shooting is particularly keen at the moment, not that we are short of rations, but in a competitive spirit.

The Unit vegetable garden is progressing fairly well.



The Sleeping Hut on southern radar stations was set up pretty well in accordance with RAAF practice - a wire bunk, a locker, a straw palliasso and three substantial grey blankets. There was a correct and proper way of preparing and displaying everything for the C.O.'s inspection too, but then the C.O. had to time his inspection to suit the sleeping habits of the denizens of the Dog Watch who usually retired to pick up an hour or two of shut-eye after breakfast.

The sleeping hut was often the scene of a bit of fun too - usually harmless. The bunks sometimes just collapsed, or the bedding was short sheeted. On one occasion a chap opened his locker, and an angry and obviously upset penguin took him on - and effectively won.

On wet and stormy days and nights, the only readily available warm refuge was one's bunk, dressed - or undressed - in overalls pulled on over other clothing or pyjamas or whatever. It could be very cosy, particularly with an overcoat over the bunk!

"Lights Out" was usually at 10 p.m. at the latest, and in deference to those going on Dog Watch, the hut was not too noisy after 9 p.m. and reading or letter writing proved popular with all.

I guess a WAAF sleeping hut was much the same really.

Early in October, the Dental Officer from STT set up shop at 13 RS and all personnel were examined; and on the 10th. the ASV beacon repairs were completed and the beacon was back in operation. On the 18th. the station accounts and stores were audited, while on the 25th. 5 staff officers from 7 STT - the SASO, the Principal Medical Officer, the Chief Signals Officer and the Security Officer arrived to inspect that section of the station relevant to his duties and interests, and all were satisfied and happy. The appointment of a Sergeant Clerk to replace the Corporal was discussed, and this was to be attended to. On the 26th. an official from Gilbert and Barker arrived to calibrate a 500 gallon petrol storage tank, and various repairs were attended to on the station buildings. The kitchen and Mess doors were painted, and camouflage paint was removed from the Mess windows. A number of fly-wire screens were renewed, and laundry facilities were installed in the shower room. At the end of the month there were 20 men on the unit.

The Area Radar Officer, F.Lt. J. Jordan, and a maintenance party of 4 arrived in November to spend four days adjusting and improving the performance of the equipment. In 1943, F.Lt. Jordan had been the respected C.O. of 38 Radar on Bathurst Island. And also an officer and an NCO from the Area Finance Office, while inspecting accounts and stores, decided that the records had not been properly maintained since the unit was formed. Both parties departed on the 10th.

The maintenance work that had been carried out on the station buildings was inspected by an official from the Department of Interior - and on the 22nd. a fridge mechanic HQ checked and adjusted the fridge.

On the 23rd. a general meeting of the personnel Welfare Committee was held which was followed a week later by the Sergeants and Officers get-together. F.Lt. Bass then travelled to Melbourne when empty drums were being returned in order to attend to arrangements for the delivery and collection of safe hand mail.

During the month a start was made on the painting of the station buildings, also station equipment and stores were checked.

At the end of the month there were 16 men on the unit.

(C.O.'s Report) The usual entertainment trip for pictures or dance to Apokko Bay has been made.

Members are well provided for as regards reading matter. One State Welfare library and other books and periodicals, also a daily newspaper is provided from Unit Welfare funds.

The airmens' Mess has been painted inside and outside, consisting of windows, blackout shutters and doors.

The unit vegetable garden has to date provided one meal of broad beans.

A group of Service Police Officers were on the station early in December, and on the 11th. 107 FCU requested a 24 hour watch be maintained because of the possibility of an enemy sub in the vicinity. (the sub was U862, which crossed Australia from west to east, sinking at least two ships and shelling another. 7 Radar at Wedge Island was also alerted, possibly other stations.) Also a small party from Radio Physics Laboratories arrived at 13 RS to study atmospherics.

Several personnel were innoculated and vaccinated on the 12th., and on the 13th. there was interference on the radar screen, but it was decided it was coming from the radar on a corvette, and not from the sub.

(C.O.'s Report for December on following page.)

(C.O.'s Report,) December 1944. A particularly enjoyable Christmas dinner was partaken of by members of this unit. Two geese were obtained some time before Christmas and fattened for the festive meal. A plum pudding and a Christmas cake were made for us in Apollo Bay, and pints of cream were donated by local residents. The mess table was decorated with wild flowers and gum tips. After dinner, the lighthouse keepers and their wives were our guests and all joined in a musical and games evening.

The unit vegetable garden has provided several meals of carrots and silver beet during the month.

January 1945 began with a couple of unusual emergencies for a radar station - Guards were supplied to watch over two Anson aircraft that landed on the emergency strip at Apollo Bay.

And on the 21st., Sgt. Friday departed by ambulance for 6 RAAF Hospital with an attack of malaria. On the 22nd. the station went on 24 hour watch until normal hours from 1900 hours to 0500 hours were resumed on the 25th. And a Medical Officer, a Dental Officer and an Accountant Officer visited on the 25th. to inspect according to the particular interests of each. The station was on a Dusk to Dawn watch for most of the month, with 239 aircraft plots and 343 shipping plots passed to 107 FCU. And from 21st. January 1945, 13 RS became a section of ADHQ Melbourne. There had been 2 promotions among the OR's during the month.

(C.O.'s Report) The usual weekly entertainment trip, pictures or dance, was made to Apollo Bay.

Members are well provided for as regards reading matter.

During the month a football and 6 ping pong balls have been received.

The billiard table is the main attraction for the evenings.

Food is of a good standard. Fruit and green vegetables are provided from Supplementary Ration Allowance.

The AOC, Group Capt Eatts, OBE, AFC, attended by a party of officers, visited the station early in February; and a competitive rifle shoot with the 19th. Battalion VDC was arranged, with prizes for the highest scorer on both sides. And it was noted that a few jobs still needed to be attended to on the camp buildings.

There was another promotion among the OR's; and 184 aircraft and 137 shipping plots were passed to ADHQ. 120 miles was the best range.

There were now only 13 men on the unit.

(C.O.'s Report.) With such a small number of personnel on the station, the sporting and general activities are of course rather limited.

The interior woodwork of the Airmens' sleeping quarters has been painted, brightening up the appearance.

An evening game of football has recently commenced.

Food is of good quality and very well prepared.

Morale is considered good.

A Medical Officer arrived on the station on the 7th. March, probably with station hygiene and cleanliness foremost in his mind....then on the 25th.

a Mobile Dental Unit, unable to reach the station as the dental gear had been set up in a caravan and the road just wasn't suitable, was set up in Apollo Bay where personnel were sent for treatment.

The radar had operated well during the month; and there were 13 men on the station.

On the 7th. April, F.Lt. Muir arrived to take-over as C.O. of 13 RS, and F.Lt. Bass departed on pre-embarkation leave. The Medical Officer arrived back again, also W/O. Campbell and his team of maintenance men to check over the radar gear.

There were two more visitors of reasonable consequence before the month ended....the Accounting Officer from 7 STT and the Education Officer from Southern Area HQ who arrived on the 23rd. but with only 11 men on the unit at this time, he would not have had much advising to do.

(C.O.'s Report.) The number of personnel being only eleven, duties for the personnel are more numerous and arduous. The fatigues are carried out daily, but due to severe winds blowing over sandy areas, it is hard to maintain complete cleanliness. The Telegraphist has been posted ...no W/T calls are now made with ADHQ. Messing is not considered good. The new cook does not appear to have any idea of preparation and presentation of food. This airman would be more suitable on a larger unit where there is greater rotation of messing staff. It is hoped to exchange him as bad messing, particularly on a small unit is detrimental to contentment and morale.

The inspections continued next month - records, station buildings, and the 'weightiest' visitor for the month was the AOC Southern Area, G.Capt. Eaton, OBE, AFC, who made a general inspection of the station. At the end of the month another 4 officers visited as a group to make their inspections (one wonders if they had to wait for the fatigues to be completed.) (C.O.'s Report for May.) The number of personnel is now twelve. The posting of the new operator will facilitate fatigues. A Telegraphist has been posted to the unit.

All personnel on the station are in a very fit condition. The new radar operator is unfit for operating due to eye trouble. Repairs are required to the grease trap to avoid complications.* From the 28th. May the unit is to ration itself from subsistence allotment. This will mean that all visitors will have to give ample warning of their visit and provide the necessary coupons.

June 1945. In recent months, with restricted hours and reducing numbers of personnel, the comments in the A50 Diary are also reducing. This month's activities are covered by three Diary entries;

A F.Lt. Medical Officer in company with 2 S.Ldrs inspected the unit;

The Army ceased to supply the unit with the customary rations, and in future 13 RS had to obtain its own supplies from the town;

And finally, the unit accounting records were inspected.

Not a particularly noteworthy month.

(C.O.'s Report.) Operation continued on the four hour watch basis from 0700 hours to 1100 hours. No trouble was experienced with any part of the radar equipment. Results from the equipment continue to be very satisfactory. The traffic plotted by the station is very small and it is difficult to see the actual use of the station in this respect. The unit commenced to ration itself on subsistence allowance on the 3rd. June. Rations procurable are quite satisfactory and the messing standard is fair.

In July the unit records were again inspected - and on the 3rd. a party of officers from Southern Area H.Q. inspected the unit, and on the same day A/Cdr. De La Rue DFC. Inspector of Administration, visited the unit

*See "Ode to a Grease-trapper," Page 29.

The following day saw a shuffling of positions - F/Sgt. Graham assumed command for one week, then on the 11th. he handed over to F.Lt. Gravell who in turn handed over again to F/Sgt Graham after two weeks in charge. There were now only 10 men on the unit.

(From the C.O.'s Report.) With such a limited staff, a considerable effort is required in order to complete all returns at the end of the month and little margin is left for unforeseen eventualities. However, as a change to 'Care and Maintenance' is expected shortly, the unit should operate efficiently until such time as the changeover occurs.

Considerable work has been done on the equipment records during the month. The attachments of an LAC Clerk Accounts for two weeks and an indefinite attachment of W/O. Haywood have assisted in the clarification of these records.

The A50 Diary for August carries only one entry recording that three officers arrived on the 1st. to investigate the loss of motor fuel. (with so few men remaining on the unit, the effective control of motor fuel must have been difficult to police.)

LAC's Leabeater and Davey were posted away for discharge, and LAC Sibson was posted to 14 Radar.

In September, the Medical Officer from WTU Lara carried out an inspection on the 6th., and on the 11th. a party from Southern Areas HQ inspected the unit, particularly the radar and signals arrangements.

An instruction from HQ converted the unit from one on restricted watch to a fully operational unit. The strength of personnel has been increased to some extent to cover the instruction. With no officer on the unit, a considerable amount of work had to be done by inexperienced personnel causing some delay with returns.

During October, LAC Edsall was taken ill and an ambulance and crew arrived to convey him to hospital. Then on the 25th. a W/Cdr. and party arrived on an inspection tour. A Warrant Officer remained at the station to bring the records up to date.

There were now 23 men on the unit - perhaps the station strength had fallen too far, but to date no instruction had been received regarding the station going on full time.

A maintenance party of four arrived on the 9th. November to check and adjust the gear, and command of the station was handed over to Sgt. Manthorpe.

Early in December the Area Inspector of Accounts found all station records to be accurate and satisfactory, then on the 14th. the No. 1 motor broke down. Southern Areas HQ was informed the ASV beacon could only operate on limited hours.

On the 17th. F.Lt. J.B.Ross took over as C.O. - and on Christmas Day only a skeleton staff stayed on the station to enable all others to enjoy Christmas away from the station.

There were now 15 men on the unit. A further decrease is expected in January due to discharges.

January 1946 appears to have been the beginning of the end for 13 Radar Cape Otway, for although F.Lt. Ross arrived as Commanding Officer, he and two NCO's were posted away on discharge - two airmen were posted to HQ and two were posted to 1 PD. The newly arrived C.O. was F.O. Parramore, and he was left with 8 men.

The Cook was posted for discharge late in the month, and no word was received

of a replacement. "Members of the unit have not gone hungry, however. Rations purchased in Apollo Bay are satisfactory with the exception of fruit and vegetables, which are scarce and expensive."

Big trouble in February - No 2 motor broke down - a Radar Operator was posted away on discharge and Mechanic LAC Edsall was off to Central Sick Quarters with another bout of malaria.

No 1 motor was then used to repair No 2 motor, and the station was back on air. But the only Operator on the station was posted away, and permission was sought to close down the station operations.

The only happy incident was the arrival of a Cook from 1 PD., LAC Andresson. Only 7 men were now on the station.

It is hoped there will be a marked improvement in the meals which have tended to consist of either eggs or meat, potatoes, bread and butter and tea which can hardly be called a balanced diet.

A similar pattern continued in March. LAC Edsall returned from hospital, but then left immediately on discharge. So too the FDMT and F.O. Parramore, and F.O. Mulcahy arrived to command the unit - or what there was left of it.

But three Staff Officers arrived to prepare the unit for disbandment and closing, and found there were only 6 men on the station.

In April, various officers, NCO's and one airman arrived on attachment until 8th. May. The AOC Southern Area, Air Commodore Knox Knight and his party arrived presumably to wave the flag (or perhaps to lower it). There were only 3 now 'on strength.'

During May all were posted away or ceased attachment.

The last load of equipment left the station, and after four years of watching from Cape Otway, 13 Radar closed down.

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THE COOK'S OFFSIDER,

Perc the Cook at 13 RS was certainly a hard case....maybe he'd been a shearer's cook or similar....who knows. But he was a good cook and knew it, and was very fussy about his kitchen and was so very clean himself.

In contrast, his hardworking offsider always looked hot and sweaty - his overalls stained and greasy - and no wonder, for Perc kept him at the pots and pans, and the kitchen too, until everything was spic 'n span.

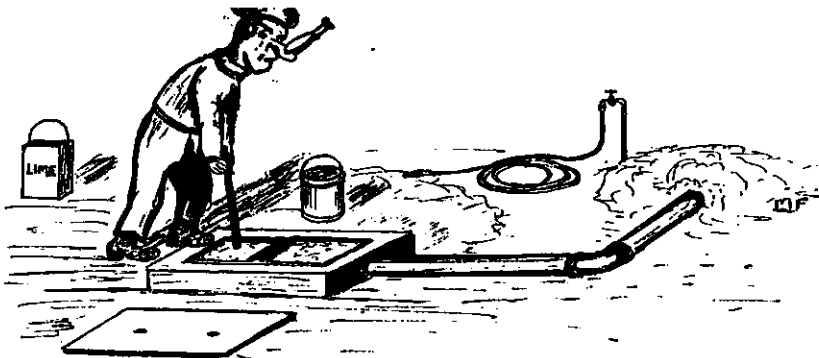
One day Perc made his customary appearance at the serving hatch, and broke up the queue with another of his dead-pan and outrageous statements:

"Got me off-sider to have a shower last night....he even washed under his 4-skin. He scored two gum leaves and a dead lizard!"



M.F

Hey Perc, Look Here! You wouldn't believe it!



ODE TO A GREASE-TRAPPER.

The Sergeant frowned down on the men
With visage far from kind.

"Latrines for you - you, chop some wood,
What else have I got in mind ?

A volunteer is what I want,
I need a willing chap,
I want him round behind the Mess,
To clean a blocked Grease Trap.

I wouldn't pick just anyone,
Who might turn out a shirker;
You're just the chap I had in mind -
You look a trusty worker!"

The Sergeant pointed straight at me,
I must have looked a fool,
"Of course I saw you raise your hand,
Now don't give me no bull!"

I'll show you what you have to do,
The Cook's got tools and gear,
And see the job's done clean and neat,
No mess left - do you hear ?

So get to work!" the Sergeant barked,
"With this here scoop and tin;
This lime goes round the place as well:
I know it stinks - just don't breathe in!"

Oh loathsome pit with fetid stench
And lid so foul and crusted,
Oh why was I the only one
The Serg. said could be trusted.

Oh, what a greasy overflow
That taints the morn so fair,
I hose it down and lime it quick,
Retreat to breathe fresh air.

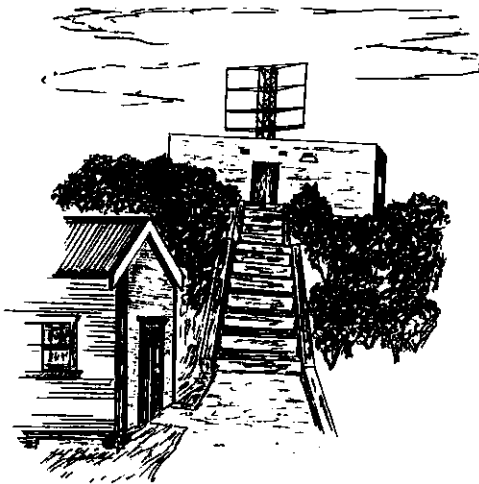
I hold my breath - then breathe I must;
There's sludge still inches thick:
The smell so vile - the pipes so choked -
I can't help feeling sick.

But Virtue earns its own reward -
When trap's as clean can be,
The cook calls from his kitchen door;
"Come have some scones and tea!"

There's strawberry jam and fruit cake,
And here's a mug - just fill it;
And what that Sergeant doesn't know
Won't hurt his Mess-fund, will it?"

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M.F.



SETTING UP 13 RS AT CAPE OTWAY.

'Digger' Nottle.

My first posting from Radio School at Richmond was to No. 13 RS at Cape Otway, Victoria. On the 13th. June 1942, thirteen airmen including myself travelled from Melbourne to Apollo Bay via Geelong, then on by motor coach to arrive in Apollo Bay somewhat the worse for wear. I was one of the lucky ones who did not feel the sickening nausea brought on by travelling from Lorne to Apollo Bay on the then rough and unsealed Great Ocean Road. However, after some refreshments, we were soon back to normal and finished our journey to Cape Otway on the back of a RAAF truck. On arrival, we were greeted by our C.O. P/O. Harrison and other airmen. There were also two RAAF semi-trailers waiting with 13 large packing cases on board ready to be unloaded. P/O. Harrison reckoned we had a burden to bear.

We were not alone at Cape Otway....there was the well known lighthouse and a communications station manned by the Navy. The lighthouse stood out sharply against a background of the white-capped ocean and sky stretching to the horizon over the grass covered knobby point of the cape. From this point the grassed slope rose to the NNW for a few hundred yards where it met the cliff face and the low scrubby bushland, then rising sharply to higher ground and a small knoll on which the Doover blockhouse was situated. To the NE the grassed area dipped into a large depression, then rose to the north and east to meet the bushland. The station Orderly Room was situated on the northern rim of this depression just before it met the bushland. The recreation room and other buildings were in the scrubland north and west of the Orderly Room.

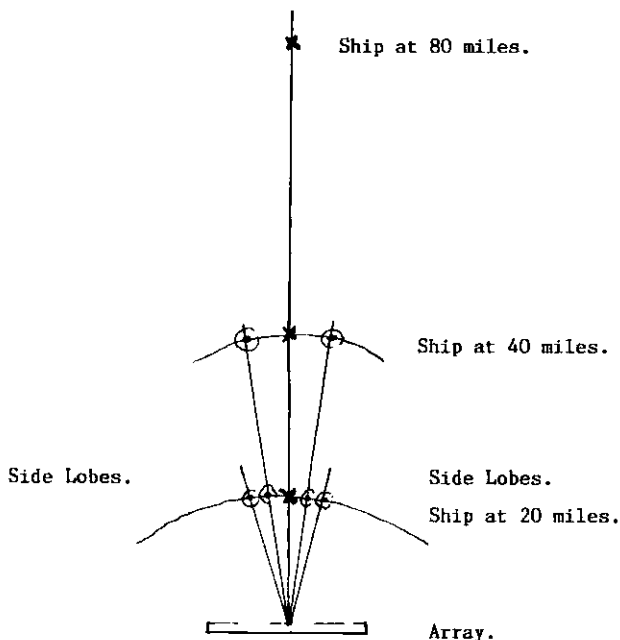
Cape Otway was about 400 feet above sea level, and when big seas were running, which was most of the time, and with the wind blowing a gale, the whole area was covered in soft sea spray. This created a problem. It perpetually coated the array and feeders with salt which had to be scraped off the dipoles, and the open wire feeders.

An English CDCHL transmitter and an AW receiver came out of the packing cases....the AW array was already in place above the Doover and installation of the gear went well. The transmitter dictated the type of feeders - open wire to the TR switch, thence to a junction box on the back of the array where beaded coaxial cable took over. The only problem came about when the matching coaxial cable stub, about three inches long, had to be soldered in place in the junction box along with the open wire feeders from the transmitter and the coaxial from the receiver.

Matching on paper was simple enough - a 1 to 1 scale drawing with all connections clearly shown. This operation was carried out in atrocious weather conditions and with great difficulty.

The first attempt with an 80W soldering iron hardly melted the solder, let alone make a good soldered joint. Eventually the joints were made with a 150W iron with a one inch diameter tip, and then only with me manipulating the iron and my mate, Arthur Sankey, applying the solder to the joints.

Because of its position, 13 RS was virtually non-effective to the north. The Otway Ranges threw back a solid block of Permanent Echoes to saturation. The height above sea level gave regular plots of 50 miles on shipping under normal conditions. However, when we first encountered 'temperature inversion' the first plot on a ship was over 80 miles to the west. Before the morning was over many false plots had been passed to Preston on this one ship. It later became evident that a mismatch between the array and the transmitter was responsible.



The sketch shows roughly what happened. The false plots (circled) were all plotted on the main lobe bearings.

13 RS may have been the first station to encounter 'TI.' Our first encounter with 'temperature inversion' came about early one morning, before dawn, when a blip appeared on the trace about 80 miles to the west. After a few more plots it became evident that a ship was involved. The information was passed to Melbourne and later confirmed as a ship. At this stage the only worry we had was the extreme range. P/O Harrison was informed. Also at the same time, King Island came in strongly as a PE and was recognised. As the morning passed, the ship's course was plotted to within 40 miles of the station. On the next clockwise sweep of the array, a faint blip appeared at the same range south of the ship. The C.O. was notified and

I joined him in the ops room. The Operators, the radio mechanic, the C.O. and I confirmed a faint blip, and the plot was passed on. (I should say here that because of the solid block of PE thrown back from the Otway Ranges to the north, the array did clockwise and anticlockwise Sweeps, controlled by limit switches in each direction.) From here on....BOY!.....had we put 'the cat among the pigeons!' From the diagram, it can be seen that when the array rotated in a clockwise direction the side lobe to the right of the main lobe picked up the ship and was plotted on the main lobe bearing to the south of the ship. The blip from the left side lobe appeared to the north of the ship. And Vice-versa for anti-clockwise sweeps.

It was not long before a plane appeared to take a look. From memory it was a fine warm winter day and clear skies. The plane departed and soon after our visitors arrived. Top RAAF Officers and civilians, all expert in the field of Radio Direction Finding, (RDF). By this time the ship was 20 miles away and No. 13 was turning on a 'show' for our visitors. I am not sure at what time the effect of 'TI' faded, but the ship, no longer escorted by 'ghost' submarines, arrived at the cape, turned sedately and headed for Port Phillip Bay and Melbourne, unaware of the 'panic' it had no doubt caused in Melbourne. Our visitors departed and 13 RS returned to normal.

THE BILLIARD TABLE.

Shortly after we went on the air, Frank Plummer and I were granted a few days leave. We went to Apollo Bay on the early transport and booked into the Hotel Ballarat where we were given a two bed cabin at the rear of the hotel. During the day we spent some time in the bar and it became evident that there was a shortage of domestic staff. That evening after dinner, Frank and I offered to wash and wipe up, and our offer was gratefully accepted by our hostess. The following morning Frank and I made our beds and had breakfast in the kitchen and made ourselves useful for the rest of the day. On our return to camp we told the boys what we had done and how our efforts had been appreciated by our hosts. Many of the airmen who stayed at the hotel followed our example and helped with the domestic tasks. Our hosts responded in a wonderful way. They moved their billiard table from the hotel and set it up on a concrete slab in the recreation room at 13 RS. It remained there for the duration of the war.

The people of Apollo Bay went out of their way to make us feel at home. Parties and other functions were arranged to suit the station's leave rosters and many of the airmen spent their leave days in family homes. Long bamboo fishing poles with hook, line and sinker attached were suggested by the fishermen for fishing from the rocks below the lighthouse, and they gave us a couple of cray pots as well. There was a small beach in the lee of the cape where some of us used to swim, though there was no room to swim more than a few strokes, weather permitting.

Apollo Bay was a small picturesque fishing village, nestling in the lowland between the sea and the bright green foothills, dotted here and there with the stark white trunks of old trees. It was a delightful place.

RETURN TO APOLLO BAY AND CAPE OTWAY.

'Digger' Nottle.

On the Sunday before the Moomba Festival Parade in Melbourne in 1979, my wife Patricia and I visited Apollo Bay and Cape Otway. What a surprise Apollo Bay proved to be, for it had changed so much.

We continued on to Cape Otway, arriving about 3 pm. The Cape had not changed other than the only evidence of 13 RS was the concrete Doover blockhouse and an 8 ft. high wire mesh fence enclosing the area of the lighthouse and the old 13 RS site. A communications station was still operating. A notice on the gate informed us visitors were allowed on Thursdays only. There were a number of people wandering around the cliff tops and coming up from the rocks below. My wife and I were travelling in a Ford F100 utility, and I followed the perimeter fence until we were on the higher ground overlooking the old Doover. There was nothing more to see other than the green cape, the light house, the buildings and the ocean beyond.

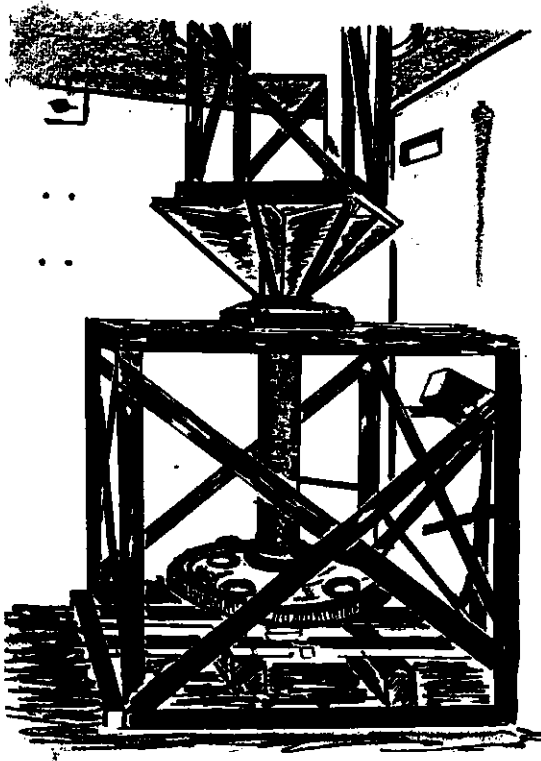
By this time, most of the visitors had left, leaving only a few stragglers. I spoke with a chap in white shorts and shirt on the other side of the gate, told him where we had come from and that I had been involved in the installation of the gear in 1942. We waited until the other visitors had left, then he opened the gate and let us in. He told us that many of the airmen who had served at 13 RS had visited the site. Surprisingly, the only things he knew about were the 'Doover' and the 'air raid shelter.' However, he accompanied Patricia and I as we walked around the site.

To our right as we entered was a solid block of concrete imbedded in the ground where we had poured it - it was the step up to the Orderly Room entrance which had faced the south. Further up the slope and to the left I identified the site of the recreation room. The concrete slab on which the billiard table had stood had been broken up and left among odd bits of corrugated fibro cement roofing material. Higher up the slope were bits of fibro roofing and brick footings where the barracks, kitchen and storeroom had stood. "Over to the right is the air raid shelter" we were told as we headed through the scrub which soon formed a canopy over our heads, so low in places our escort and I had to duck. We soon came to an opening in a concrete structure completely over-run with scrub where Frank Plummer had installed our power units in 1942. "This is the air raid shelter" our escort informed us. I walked along and found the two vents where the exhausts of the two Mercurys had passed. The vents were still blackened with carbon. I reached up and touched the edge of the vents with my fingers - they came away covered with carbon residue. I explained what the air raid shelters had actually been. We crossed the scrubby bushland to the Doover. The angle iron structure of the array mast had been cut off at roof level with an oxy torch and the base frame and associated drive gear left to rust. Otherwise the place was empty. "The only other concrete is in the old 'chook run'" our escort said as he led the way along the path. Sure enough we ended up in an old 'chook run.' The concrete floor was covered in rubbish and was only evident in a couple of places. With a piece of old timber I raked away the rubbish and exposed the concrete drain which had taken away the waste water. The old toilet and ablutions block floor, covered with rubbish washed down over the years was still there.

I told our escort the story of the Hotel Ballarat and the billiard table, and how the people of Apollo Bay had made us feel at home. Then I told him the story of the Temperature Inversion and other 13 RS incidents and RAAF life.

We parted late in the afternoon, Patricia and I grateful our escort had allowed us entry, and he 'tickled pink' about the information he could now pass on to his future visitors.

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INSIDE THE DOOVER. 13 RS was an early style Doover, and was cast from concrete 'on site.' The aerial turning 'works' rested on a central slab - and its remains are still in place, quietly rusting away after 59 years.

As Australia's radar program gained momentum, the standard Doover was a transportable tower, with a framework that bolted together. The aerial turning gear was then mounted in a compartment above the Ops room.

AN EARLY POSTING TO 13 RADAR.

Reg McCarthy.

Now for your enquiry on 13 RS. Together with three others, I travelled from Richmond Radio School to Melbourne, thence Geelong and finally to Apollo Bay by 'Sims' coach, early in June 1942. A unit tender took us to Cape Otway - a further 26 miles - or 8 miles as the crow flies. The station was still being built and I noticed the buildings were being constructed from a white wood - jarrah being the only timber used for housing and similar constructions in W.A. I later learned that the timber being used was indeed very durable. I recollect that the latrine area then consisted of a long deep trench - with suitable seating, which evidently was replaced as construction and improvements progressed.

I found the weather extremely cold at Otway - possibly the worst I have encountered in my life. However, I do not recall how the hot water was generated for showers, kitchen etc. Doubtless the reliable old wood copper played a large part.

The power for the station was generated in two engine rooms - one at each end of the camp area. These were partly constructed below ground with cement and concrete walling. Each engine room was equipped with a Ford V8 25KVA direct drive to a generator. The Fitters were hard put to get a satisfactory result from the units due to excessive cold. I understand they were finally modified by having special heating applied to the fuel lines.

I cannot recall what type of receiver was at 13 RS, - but I can remember that the transmitter was in a separate housing or room adjoining the operating area and required special attention when under power. P/O. Katz was a Supernumerary to the station, and he was particularly interested in the operation of the transmitter. I noticed in a recent edition of Radar Returns that P/O. Katz had been sent to England during WW2 for research purposes....possibly the same man.

In the periods we had off-duty, climbing down the cliffs to sea level - about 300 feet - was a popular past-time, particularly as there were caves dotted along the base of the climb-down. However, special care had to be observed, both in climbing down to the beach and caves, and to watch against being trapped by an incoming tide.

I spent about four months at No. 13 and had regular leave to Apollo Bay and Melbourne. One hotel at Apollo Bay was named the 'Ballarat,' but I was advised in an enquiry I sent to Apollo Bay that it had been burnt down and is now known by a different name which has now escaped me. The Great Ocean Road trip was an extreme experience, and on one or two occasions it was necessary to stop the coach to clear away light landslides - the shovels etc. for this purpose being carried in the rear of the coach. All journeys completed were undertaken without mishap - or was it good management.

In company with six or seven others, I departed No. 13 early in September 1942. It happened that I had the lowest service number and was appointed to attend to the journey details en route to W.A.

Armed with rail warrants we arrived at the Geelong Rail Station and had to wait there as one other transferred chap was on leave and had to meet us at the station - I had carried his kit bag along with my own. Having to wait for our leave-taker, I placed his kit bag on the ground between my legs -

and along came the man and the owner of the bag to claim it. The man was the late Doug Scott - who after that meeting in 1942, I was to meet again some 50 years later.

Finally Morrie, I would, as an ex-radar person, like to pass on my thanks to you and others for your efforts in various publications of past Radar history.

Pete Smith and the "Radar Returns" also deserve congratulations for his never ending efforts to keep "RADAR" alive.

Time swallows up much history and memories become dull - just as trees grow in what remains of No. 13 Radar Station's engine rooms of 60 years ago.

Congratulations again, and my good wishes for future endeavours.

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EARLY DAYS AT 13 RADAR.

Don Bailey.

Not long ago, my wife and I spent a week's holiday at Apollo Bay and naturally enough being an ex-13 radarite, we visited Cape Otway lighthouse and the old radar site for the first time since early 1943 when I was there as a wireless telegraphist. I did not know that the Doover, or as they now call it, the concrete bunker, was still standing, so it was quite a surprise to see it again, and very nostalgic to look through the window and recall where I used to sit in the corner to operate the wireless. The manager of the park was very friendly and was interested in any information I was able to give him; and when leaving he gave me a large photo poster of an aerial view of the area.

Unfortunately I have no 1943 photos or memorabilia because, as you know, cameras were then taboo.

At that time I lived in Hampton, a suburb of Melbourne, and every second weekend I had leave from Friday to Monday. I travelled to Apollo Bay in the back of the Navy transport truck, then by mail coach to Geelong and steam train to Melbourne, returning the same way on the Monday. The road to the camp was unmade, also very dusty and very, very winding, and I plus some of the sailor lads stationed at the lighthouse were always hanging over the back and feeling far from well.

There was one incident that always stayed in my mind which, at the time, did not seem very funny but now it does - it concerned an elderly Guard whose name I think was Ted. He was then probably in his forties. He was playing billiards while some of us young'uns were playing records probably a little too loudly. Evidently Ted wasn't able to concentrate on his shots, for all of a sudden he ups and grabs all the records and broke them over his knee, then threw the pieces at us. One of the records was a favourite of mine - Frank Sinatra with Tommy Dorsey's orchestra singing "I'll take Talula." I think it was the first record he ever made.

My time at Cape Otway was fairly mundane - nothing much happened. We used to track the plane from Essendon to Tasmania over Wilson's Prom every day; and there were differing opinions whether a blip was a shoal of fish, a whale, or maybe a sub. And sometimes we would climb down the cliffs and either fish off the rocks or walk along the shore exploring the caves.

While at Apollo Bay, my wife and I visited the old cable station museum where I noticed a Morse key supposedly used at 13 Radar, with a note that further information was available from the War Museum in Canberra.

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MEMORIES OF 13 RS, CAPE OTWAY, DEC. '42 TO MARCH '43. Peter Yeomans.

"The mind in 2001 is tired but some memories remain....."

I was posted to 13 RS after 'Passing Out' from Radar School and given a "Summer Holiday" at Apollo Bay before posting to SWPA - in those days personnel were never sent north before their 19th. birthday.

The Cape Otway Doover...this was a concrete pill box made to last 1000 years with a large, heavy antenna above driven by gear assisted electric motors and fed with Selsyn motor cables. Gale force winds were the norm, which meant climbing on the roof with heavy ropes to tie the antenna in a fixed position to stop the driving shaft gears being stripped (Scared stiff and B cold)

The transmitter was enclosed with $\frac{1}{4}$ inch brass plate to stop radiation affecting the health of personnel (but try telling DVA that!) The receiver was of home-brew quality and replaced the original supposedly lost at sea when the whole station was imported from the UK.

I recall operators singing endless versions of "Red River Valley" to stay awake on night shift.

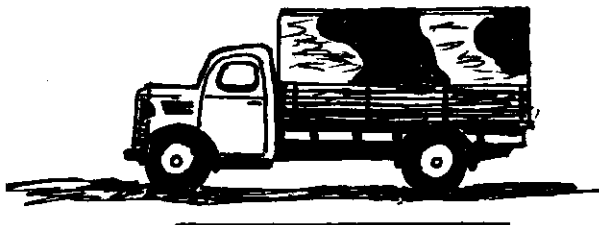
Japanese submarines following BP Iron Ore ships through the off shore mine-fields on their way through Bass Strait and round the corner to the east coast shipping lanes. History reveals these same subs sank 19 freighters as well as the Sydney Harbour raid. They surfaced on calm nights to charge their batteries. One Sunday morning at dawn a small float plane was launched and flew off towards Melbourne and Western Port looking for the Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary troopships. A frantic call to HQ Melbourne was - some 2 hours later - answered by the cleaning lady who stated "There's nobody here, Luv, they don't start until 7.30 a.m."

We had no Army or Navy and certainly no Air Force defences around Victoria available to call on. The Defence Forces stood down at 5 p.m. on Friday and resumed the war at 7.30 a.m. on Monday. The Japs knew exactly the true state of our defences.

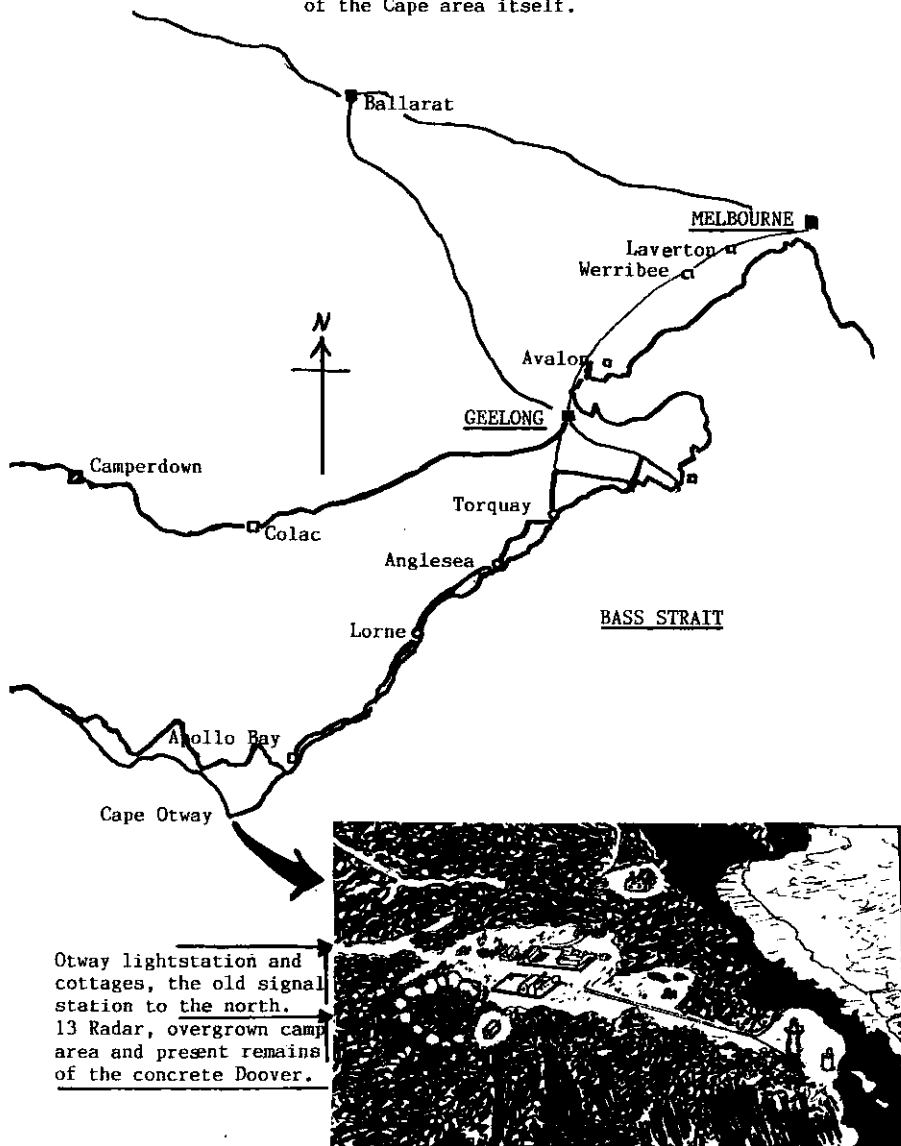
In lighter vein, the red brick Ballarat Hotel in the Bay was our haven when allowed out of Stalag Cape Otway - they ran out of beer the day before my 19th. birthday when my posting to 315 RS was confirmed. I finished legless toasting my great adventure ahead in a foul concoction called "Irish Stews."

But we ate great food at the pub on our days off, if the station 'blitz buggy' was available to take us into town. This station transport deserves a mention....it was a pre-loved Army truck with no springs and very doubtful brakes which was our life-line to Geelong and civilisation. A few days after my 19th it carried me, my kit and a timber box of tools away from the Cape. Gee! that box was heavy and full of completely useless tools.....but that's another story.

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A Map showing the general route and some of the towns between Melbourne and the Cape Area - also an idea of the Cape area itself.



In late May 1944 after some six weeks leave, I was posted to No. 13 RS at Apollo Bay which, along with Gabo Island, Wilson's Promontory and Metung, could have been loosely described as 'Resting Stations where the northern warriors recharged their batteries in preparation for some further operations to defeat the yellow peril.'

Of the four stations, Gabo was an island with a rough crossing of the bar at Mallacoota (out) - The Prom - a fourteen mile walk to the lighthouse from Tidal River with gear on pack-horses (out) - Metung - wonderful - I'm sure the WAAAF Operators would have welcomed those bronzed airmen from the North....but apparently the Air Board thought otherwise - shame on it.

The three stations had to accommodate the Vic and Tas returnees as there were no stations in Tasmania or the Bass Strait Islands.

So off to 13 RS it was. Train from Melbourne to Geelong - bus down the Great Ocean Road to Apollo Bay and then a horror ride in the back of a truck sitting at the sides and looking out over the back. I suffered car sickness for the only time in my life to arrive on the 29th. May '44 for what proved to be a very pleasant stay.

As you know, in 1994 I followed your 1984 footsteps to the Cape and saw much the same remains, but was surprised how little the resident guide knew about the presence of 13 Radar on the site in the war years....he invited me to have a look around which I did. They were still sending in the weather reports - a practice which highly amused Babs as she found they were still using the same code that was used in 1944. (Perhaps the Japs hadn't cracked it.)

I recall that the station had to close down when the wind reached Force 6. I think it was to save the aerial turning motor when it wouldn't turn. Some opportunists used to try to persuade the Assistant Keeper 'Merv' that he should advise Force 6 so they could continue whatever they were doing other than operating.

And what about the farmers party lines - hearing the farmers talking about their woes. On some occasions someone would cut in just to confuse them; and there were the long, long conversations with the WAAAF's at Preston Town Hall, and the invites that came to visit them on the next trip to Melbourne....but I wasn't one of the lucky ones.

I now find it most difficult to recall any operating there as I think I only worked one afternoon shift, and an odd day or two. The difficulty was to get a seat with all the keen young bucks who actually wanted to operate the thing.

I found an old Apollo Bay leave pass, which showed I had a fair bit of time off in my three months there, from 29/5/44 to 15/9/44; and there were other times when I must have been the Duty Corporal at the Hotel Ballarat, my job there being to keep some of the young bucks maintaining good RAAF Order and Discipline.

On the 7th. June 1944, I was to meet Babs, (my future wife) when the bus arrived - but she had to work so her telegram afterwards informed me. But the C.O., P/O. Dennis was there to meet his wife and daughter, and I had lunch with them at the Cafe in the Bay. 13 Radar was his first command (he had expected a northern posting) and at his enquiry, I was able to fill him in on the 'hardships' encountered on the only station I had been on....132 Radar at Darwin. He was most interested. Somehow we built up a rapport and I found him to be a really nice guy....he gave me two weeks leave on full pay to get married, while Babs was DOCKED her two weeks from Laverton. Lousy so-and-so's.

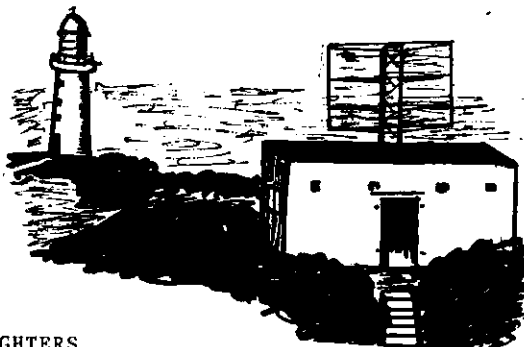
There was of course the Huxley accommodation house at the Cape - they were lovely people, and I think it was for all of £3 she spent a lovely Saturday and Sunday there. I suppose many others did too....I don't know how they managed conjugal visits - we only became engaged that week-end, so anything like that was out for us.

The saga* of "Dinger" (short for Hum-Dinger) - from memory he was a very fat blue-heeler; and on the only afternoon shift I remember, he insisted on lying virtually under my chair where he very nearly took us off the air with his very silent entertainment. It is said that hot air rises. Well, I can vouch for that. I wonder how you would write up the A50's... "Station found off air owing to a foul odour penetrating the Doover from a known source and causing acute discomfort and distress to all in the vicinity."

I now wonder if the DVA has any coverage in its RMA listings for this type of disability, as it should be worth at least a 10% pension (perhaps even a Gold Card) apart from the damage to Australia's defences if the station was forced off the air through desertion by the operating crew.

On leaving the Cape on 18th. September '44 on pre-embarkation leave, and with apologies for plagiarism to the unknown author who described the war-time invasion of Australia by the American troops as "Overpaid - oversexed - and over here" - how could one sum up 13 RS. Perhaps Over-crowded - over fed and down there.

** The Saga of Dinger has been described separately and slightly embellished.*
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THE BEAUFIGHTERS.

13 RS wasn't overwhelmed with aircraft plots - there were a few every day but not many. But somewhere nearby was a Beaufighter OTU - they knew where we were - and they knew how to avoid detection. All would be quiet and normal - then suddenly came a nerve shattering roar overhead as up and away went a Beaufighter, no doubt with the crew laughing their heads off at the earthbound types below.

M.F.

**Unit Stamp to be
impressed hereunder**

Signature of Airman to Whom This Pass is Issued

Wm. L. Linnell

Royal Australian Air Force

LEAVE PASS

Leave for the Period and Destination shewn on the Inside of this Pass is Granted to

Epl. W. C. Bennett

whose Signature appears on back

НАБЛЮДЕНИЯ

[illegible]

Thanks to Bob McDonnell, we now know what a 13 RS Leave Pass looked like.

"DINGER," - THE DOG IN THE DOOVER.

"Dinger" was the camp mascot and everyone's friend - a rather plump and nondescript blue heeler. His full name was "Hum-Dinger," the prefix being bestowed because of his long and obviously happy association with the Cook and the Mess. This had endowed him with a torrid flatulence hard to imagine or describe....he 'hummed'...and hummed **SILENTLY**.

"Dinger" also favoured the warmth of the Doover in cold weather, and my first unsuspecting encounter with him came about as he relaxed and stretched on his side beneath the Operator's chair.

An evil smelling cloud suddenly mushroomed to fill the Ops Room....so powerful in fact that it rendered all positions untenable - a silent, all pervasive tribute to the rich contents of the scrap bin outside the Mess where "Dinger" often gulped a hurried extra meal.

How should we record this disturbance to the smooth running of the Doover, and how best to describe it?

Someone suggested a 'no frills' entry in the Log Book...."GAS!" Another more realistic suggestion..."A pungent odour possibly due to cross wiring or a transformer cooking."

Happily the emergency was resolved when we opened the Doover door - firstly to expel the offensive vapours - and secondly to expel the offending "Hum-Dinger."

"Dinger" may have been air-minded when he elected to join the Air Force, but he certainly wasn't air-conditioned.



I'll get you yet mate....it's stew tomorrow!

FROM RADAR SCHOOL TO CAPE OTWAY.

Morrie Fenton.

In April 1944, my stint at Radar School was finally finished, and in typical radar fashion, I was despatched on my way to 13 RS at Cape Otway, feeling already independent of RAAF authority at the tender age of 18 years 2 months. Amazingly, all seemed to work out O.K. - first to Geelong by train, then on by service bus along the Great Ocean Road which in 1944 was far from the tourist drive it is today. Rough, unmade and very narrow, nevertheless the road offered beautiful coastal scenery - more rugged than anything I had ever seen before, and far better to watch the scenery than the road!

The 13 RS tender picked me up in Apollo Bay - another rough ride, very winding and twisting this time until we reached the old light-house, vintage 1848, and the new radar station, vintage 1942. To a new operator of very recent status, the station proved very comfortable really, with sleeping huts for about 40 men - an adequate Mess hut, Rec hut and the mandatory Orderly Room. And very important were the showers - as hot and plentiful as one could wish for in such a cold location. Over the camp, the great bat wing aerial could be seen turning 24 hours a day over the concrete blockhouse which was the early style Doover, housing the radar gear; and hidden in the scrub were the bunkers for the two V8 motors and generators.

I found there were about 40 men on the unit, some being on a southern posting after 12 months or so on a northern station - like an R & R posting. The remainder of the men were like me - young chaps direct from radar school on a post graduate course. They were taken under the wing of the senior men, and there they learned the routine of an actual radar unit to prepare them for more responsibility at northern stations.

From alongside the Doover on a fine day, a truly wonderful vista of the coastline and sea was possible...but an even more enduring memory is of Beaufighters. I don't know where they came from or where they went...but suddenly there was a nerve shattering BLAAHHH over head as those whispering death machines poured on the herbs directly over the station to end their silent approach...then up, up and away like a rocket.

There were the expected chores - some bearable like picking up stores and mail - others unbearable, like cleaning the greasetrap; but by and large, camp life was O.K.

Saturday was the night out for the week - it was entertainment night. The pictures or the dance were on in the Bay, and the town became the happy stamping ground for all from 13 RS. Eleven o'clock or thereabouts, and it was back on the truck for the queasy trip back to camp with several hanging over the rear tailgate.

The wonderful result of service at 13 RS Cape Otway - or any other southern station - was that it introduced the new chum to the radar life, and to new friends with similar interests, for new friends soon became old friends who were met again and again at Wing - or FCU - or on any northern radar station.

And fifty years later, it was great to renew some of those friendships again at Canberra, Bendigo, Wagga or wherever a Reunion was held, and also to find our radar history now so well recorded.

In the last decade or so, Radar has become almost like Family.

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INSTANT MEMORIES OF CAPE OTWAY.

Ron Richards.

A few thoughts came quickly to mind when 13 Radar was mentioned....and it's good to share them with chaps who still remember the place:

A 'never to be forgotten' experience was the trip into Apollo Bay in the back of the station truck...we were tossed around like peas in a bottle as we pitched across the wooded and scrubby area on the way into town...through paddocks and windswept moonscapes. Always there seemed to be one or two chaps hanging over the tailgate, while others were varying shades of white or green when they finally almost fell out.

And I remember the long sleeping hut where we all defied both wind and winter. Here it was when the freezing blasts tried to blow the place off the map, as an 18 year old with a weak chest I contracted pneumonia. I was unable to get off the iron bunk, but I was assisted to the Medic's cabin, and there the Sergeant Orderly saved my life for sure. No Doctor was available, but he got M and B tablets from Apollo Bay and kept me on a stretcher in his quarters where he nursed me and fed me. He was a No. 1 Samaritan...I feel he must have been a true Christian and I still bless him.

On one of the few better days at the Cape, I went on a walkabout with Cec. Leabeater, a Radar Operator who had been passed over as Air Crew material in the E.A.S in Canada. The idea was to shoot rabbits - with a .303! Anyway, Cec. climbed through a fence and I propped my rifle against the wire. There was a BANG as it discharged heavenwards. Of course as the old song goes...."I didn't know the gun was loaded." We didn't press our luck hunting bunnies after that episode.

On strength were several Senior Ops down from the north and they tried to put us young chaps on the right track. One was Max Weinert, and a bit of a favourite with the ladies from the stories he told. Another Corporal was studying "Meat Inspection" via the Services Correspondence Course. And Don Sharkey was a Mechanic and station snooker and billiards champ. He fell for a lass in the bay. The story goes that he tried to lure her to the beach no doubt with lustful thoughts in mind, but her mother providentially intervened and saved the day....and no doubt her daughter.

Then of course there was the irrepressible Bernie Frith who was always first in the queue for a Leave Pass for a week-end in Melbourne - but he always had fierce opposition.

When I was given a few days' leave in Adelaide, I could save a day by catching the Adelaide Express that night in Ballarat. Well, I made it - but how I got there I now have no idea.

There would be many stories about Perc. the Cook. My story is how he encouraged the camp cats to copulate on the kitchen floor. I think Perc. was more enthusiastic about the idea than the cats!

Finally, there was the farce of phoning my parents from the lighthouse switchboard and being unable to say where I was. Down there at Cape Otway the war was a long way off...it was difficult to understand why the Powers-that-be were so concerned.

A MIX OF BITS 'N PIECES, FROM '43 TO '46.

Alan Every.

My stay on 13 RS was very brief. My paybook tells me that I arrived at Cape Otway on 24th. May '43 as a 'wet behind the ears' RDF mechanic straight from RDF School Richmond. I arrived at 10 RS on 26th. June '43 so I had only about one month at 13 RS. I have to admit that I have much stronger recollections of my six months at Cape Jarvis than my brief stay at Cape Otway. Maybe it was the girls that made 10 RS more memorable.

Like you, I remember the rough old dirt track from Apollo Bay out to the station. Also the bitter cold. Also like you I was there in mid-winter. Mind you, the site of 10 RS 500 feet above Backstairs Passage was not exactly warm either.

I remember one unpleasant characteristic of the Doover which was an early Mk.V English set....it didn't have an aerial transformer and the aerial was connected to the set by a hard wired co-axial cable. You were supposed to rotate the antenna 360 degrees in one direction then reverse it to run 360 degrees in the other direction. If you happened to doze off in front of the screen on a quiet night shift, (something that was easy to do) you finished up with the co-axial cable in a corkscrew around the antenna post and usually broken at one end or the other. I really have no recall of the names of the men or of the building layout of the camp....but I do recall a little blond girl in Apollo Bay who insisted on knitting socks for me. I must have been a fast worker in those days considering the short contact I would have had with Apollo Bay in four short weeks.

I married in 1949 and we spent our honeymoon in Apollo Bay. I went out to the site of the station for old times' sake only to find there was very little of it left.

Good luck with your project.

Bill Harnath.

1941 - '45 were the years when enormous advances in technology were made - and almost without a ripple!

One of the stories of 13 RS I want to tell is a good example. I don't know if you worked on many of the British COL rigs, but several people who did agree with my opinion that the echoes they showed had rather furry edges. AW echoes always looked cleaner to me, and I often wondered why. At 13 RS I thought about this a lot. One would have thought that the actual master pulse in the AW would have wandered about a bit because it was derived from the AC power system, whereas the COL pulse came from a blocking oscillator, which should have been much more stable than the mains timing. There was only one difference in the timing circuits that I could see. In the COL, the pulse from the blocking oscillator in the transmitter was routed to the time base circuits in the receiver via a multivibrator. This used two triodes, as far as I can recall they were fairly high Mu types. In the AW, there was also a MV, but this drove both the Transmitter and the time base circuitry. It used 6J7's as pentodes. Now the turn on and off times of these was very much faster than the COL circuitry. This meant that the slope of the wave-form edges was much more gradual in the COL. Somewhere along this slope both the transmitter pulse and the time base initiation occurred. Because the triode circuit slope was so much lower, the

actual firing points were that much more indefinite, so that the relation between the transmitted pulse and the time base could vary even during the time of the brief transmitted pulse. The AW did not suffer from this particular problem nearly so much.

In 1944, I soft-talked the C.O. into trying the AW synch circuits to drive the COL transmitter. The difference was quite obvious. Correspondence with Headquarters brought no interest or action, so the matter was dropped. Twenty five years later, long distance colour TV relays were upon us, and the mystery words "phase jitter" were first bandied about. Pulse rise times in nano-seconds were the thing. But we had found the trouble and its cure twenty-five years before!

Activity was slowing when I was at 13 RS, but the winds were not. The Navy station at the lighthouse had an anemometer which had four cups mounted on a vertical shaft, driving a generator-voltmeter gauge, calibrated up to 100 knots (I think). We had one storm in 1944 which burnt out the generator, and then blew the cups off!

My last story is about the great way the Navy and RAAF were treated by the local residents. They were always doing us one good turn or another. So, for Christmas 1943 the troops got together and arranged a concert for the locals in the town picture theatre. Not to be beaten, the locals put on a Christmas Dinner, at mid-day, which lasted till about 5 o'clock. You can imagine the artists were feeling no pain by the time they had to appear on stage! Every body not on duty did something for the show, and though it may not have been up to the Tivoli standard, both the performers and the audience were satisfied with the results. The band was called 'The Children' because they should have been seen but not heard! We got back to the station in time for the 6 a.m. shift, but I suspect that most of the plots that morning were not in the station log. Ah well....it was not such a bad war all the time!

Well, Morrie, I can't think of anything else that might be of interest. I hope you dig up enough to make an interesting book. All the best.

Alan Weeks.

Your letter re 13 RS to hand...it is nearly 60 years ago, and I must admit my memory is somewhat dim. I was only there for a short period - I think three or four weeks - hardly long enough to know the place. My main recollection is the cold nights and the hair-raising trip along a dirt and winding track in an Air Force utility to Apollo Bay. Saturday night seemed to be the time for the trip. The Apollo Bay Hotel was the venue for a few drinks, a meal and a dance. I have a faint recollection of the lighthouse and I think of the Doover. Sorry I cannot help you more.

I spent over 18 months at Archer River in the Gulf of Carpentaria on 311 RS. We spent time on Horne Island before establishing 311 at the mouth of the Archer River....it was a rather rough existence.

After leaving 311 I spent short periods on several units around Australia, then did a conversion course to Air Radar. I was in a Mosquito Squadron at Penrith in New South Wales when the war ended.

I was on No. 13 Wireless Mechanics Course.

Best of luck with your booklet.

Leo Doolan.

Thanks for your letter of 19th. February re the station at Cape Otway.... Yes, I was there but only from late August 1945 until December 1945, interrupted by leave and a short spell in hospital with malaria, so my memory cells do not have very much recall of my time at 13 RS.

When I arrived at Apollo Bay and found my transport to the station, I found there was only a very short spell on air, with a station complement of two Operators, a Mechanic, a Cook, General Hand, Clerk, Fitter DMT, Medical Orderly (a Sergeant) and the OIC was a F/Sgt. Graham. The station operated from about 0700 hours to 1100 hours and was in contact with the F.S. by telephone via Apollo Bay and Colac.

Our rations were not supplied, and Sustenance was provided at the rate of three shillings per day per person plus ration coupons, which meant that food was purchased from shops in the Bay usually on a daily basis. Saturday was the Big Day....and Sunday was a day of recovery.

Not long after I arrived, the Cook, Sam Osborne, went on leave and cooking was on a voluntary basis, and for some unknown reason I became a cook, probably because I was the only one who could light the fire!

On Sam's return, I continued as Cook's offsider as there was an influx of radar bods from 16 RS at Gabo Island, which had been my original station in 1943 after Radar School. It was quite a reunion, as some of them had been there from late 1943 until late 1945 when Gabo closed.

Sorry I cannot recall any cold nights....they belonged to Gabo! Spare time was spent either swimming at a nearby beach or fishing for crays at which we became rather adept, using the yabbie technique of meat on a string and a spear similar to the native spear used in the SWPA.

Travel to the Bay was an experience in itself, and the return trip on a Saturday night was even more exciting - or frightening. Waking up next morning in one's bunk was quite a pleasure!

In the 1980's I made a trip along the Great Ocean Road from Warrnambool to the Cape. The road had improved a bit and the road to the Bay had been altered. I visited the site where the camp had been....it was overgrown, and was the aerial system for the Department of Civil Aviation, and was a 'no go' area.

The lighthouse is no longer a working light, and the buildings are now, like other lighthouses, a rather expensive B and B facility. A couple of years ago I visited the Green Cape lighthouse (next one north from Gabo) and the keeper told me that the manned lights have been replaced by less powerful remote lights which require minimal maintenance, and shipping now uses the GPS for navigation.

Morrie, I'm sorry I cannot provide more info, but perhaps this little bit could be a missing link. I hope it helps...and I hope the booklet turns out well.

Don Farncutt.

I left Radar School in June '43 and went to 47 RS at Geraldton, and in March '44 to 325 RS which was then up near Marble Bar in NW Aust. In December '44 we moved the unit to the eastern states to form up with other sections of the RAAF, and on May 2nd. we left Brisbane for Morotai and then later to the landings in North Borneo.

About a week after the war ended, a couple of us were posted out of the unit in Miri, North Borneo, a lot earlier than the others, and at that

time there were so many awaiting discharge that it couldn't all be handled at once, and in my case I was re-posted to 13 Radar. So my association with Otway was for a few months only, from about September to December 1945. At that time the Doover was only being switched on every now and then by the Radar Mechanics, and as far as I can remember I never operated it.

My memories are mainly of trips into Apollo Bay in a canvas covered truck where the DMT revelled in switching the ignition on and off whilst on the move, so creating a lot of backfiring noises. Apart from the few laughs that this engendered, it was also our method of notifying the Bay people of our arrivals and departures.

After being in places like 20 miles from Marble Bar and the Borneo jungles for a couple of years, trips in to the Bay were a comparative heaven. Small township though it was, it still had a cafe, milk bar and a 9 hole golf course. This latter was no great attraction, but some of us tried our hand at the game in the company of some of the local girls. There was the occasional dance and one night the locals staged a concert - a mixture of under-developed talent and a few over-developed egos! The Post Office was run by a Mr. and Mrs. O'Dwyer, (I think) and when they took a holiday there was a relieving Post Mistress by the name of Mary. She was a charming girl and she and I went out together sometimes, the friendship lasting beyond Apollo Bay, although when she returned to her home town somewhere near Mildura we lost touch. Some of the girls we saw at the dances and in the milk bar were names 'Jones.' It seems that the then small population of the town were all related one way or another, because when an elderly lady died, nearly everyone went to the funeral. One of the Jones girls told me that the deceased was just about everybody's grandmother!

Well, so far my recollections seem to have been mostly social ones which as you can see, relate to the time I was there with little or no work on the Doover. Also in September to December the weather was improving, although down at the Cape it could be quite cold, even then.

We had fairly comfortable quarters with sheets on the beds, a luxury only experienced once before on an American landing ship; and the food and the Cook at No. 13 were reasonably good.

Of the personnel I have no real recollections. A few were like me - they hadn't been there very long. One I remember was a student of theology, and he would sit outside looking towards the ocean while reading the Bible. His intention was to be a minister in the C of E, as he said it offered 'a career and a place in society.' Another was Les Corbin - we lived close to each other, and when we met as neighbours, I remembered his name, and we eventually realised we had been at 13 RS at the same time.

Morrie, if this little bit of my memory (hopefully still fairly accurate) is of any help, I will be very pleased. If you think there's something I may know about, kindly let me know and I will try to jazz up the old grey matter again.

Jim Patterson.

Glad to know you are still endeavouring to keep Kadar on the map with informative books.

Although I was attached to 13 RS, it was not until the war was over, and then only for about four months. So, unfortunately, I'm unable to provide any real information about the station.

However, for what it is worth, I can provide some personal anecdotes which of course involve others on the unit at the time. I have written my auto-

biography which basically recalls the interesting episodes during my service days which I thought were worth recording. Attached is an extract from the book which may be used as you wish.

The only other item I recall were days off duty when we were able to get a lift on the unit vehicle into Apollo Bay where we were welcome to make ourselves at home at the ABC Cafe. A very friendly association had obviously been built up over time between the Unit personnel and the proprietors. They had three daughters of a suitable age to be of interest which may have been the original attraction. I believe that after the war one of them married one of the chaps. I learned how to make a malted milk and when busy I actually served in the shop.

Another attraction was the local picture theatre to which the girls were escorted. Also there was a 9 hole golf course which required some negotiation. Through a fence, over a road, and around some hazards left behind by the local livestock. Still it was all good fun.

Morrie - this does not sound like war-time service, but more like a holiday. However, the war was over and all we wanted was to go home. If the stories are of any value, you can use any or just consign 'em to the bin. But I have enjoyed reliving the moments while writing of them.

Extract from the autobiography of Jim Patterson.

The war in the SWPA was over at the beginning of September, but at the end of the month I was transferred to 13 Radar (from 14 RS) With another colleague I set off to walk back to the horselines at Tidal River.

We thought we would be clever and take a short cut straight across the swamp area but this was not such a good idea. I sank down to the waist in the mire which was bitterly cold, and I started to cramp.

Fortunately I managed to get out and was pleased to make the camp. They told us that they had recently lost a horse in the same area. I know I did not feel well at the start of the trip in the back of the truck and even worse on arrival at Foster to catch the train.

Things settled down on the trip to Melbourne and on to Geelong. However, after travelling the unsealed Ocean Road between Geelong and Apollo Bay in the rear seat of a passenger coach complete with its petrol fumes, I did not feel very well on arrival. On entering the bus depot to await transport to the camp, we were greeted by a pleasant young lady who silently pointed to a large sign behind her on the wall which said - "Smile, damn you, Smile." This broke the ice and I did smile. I have made use of that phrase many times since then.

The Radar Station was situated at the lighthouse, so we were then treated to another winding thirty mile trip in the rear of a covered truck.

All this suffering and the war was over!

We did have some light-hearted moments at Apollo Bay.

A clarinetist, a flautist, another colleague playing my cornet and me on an improvised set of drums made from kitchen utensils...and we had a jazz band. We rang the girl on the telephone exchange who plugged us in to all the local girls and we gave a recital over the phone.

A group of us set off with some of the local girls to Colac for a party which went a bit late. After delivering our lady friends we arrived back at camp at 5 a.m. and I had to be on duty at 6 a.m. Quite difficult to watch a radar screen for six hours after not having been to bed and on an empty stomach. Just as well the war was over.

In November I had some days' leave and set off home on the luggage carrier

of a motor cycle with Stan Green who lived near us at Upwey. An attempt to make a cushion with sponges from the beach was not very successful as after the first few bumps they just compacted into a hard lump. The long trip home particularly over the unmade corrugated road as far as Geelong did nothing for my posterior. Whilst home the CEBS Annual Rally was held in the Melbourne Town Hall attended by the Governor General, the Duke of Gloucester, and I managed to obtain an invitation. It was then back to Apollo Bay until the 17th. January when I came home on pre-discharge leave. My official discharge date was 31st. January 1946 having served just ten days over three years.

Ron Keats.

It's hard to recall so long ago, but I do remember the station, the trip to the Bay and so on. I was sent to 13 RS from Wilson's Prom. due to sickness, and I stayed there for about a year I think. While there, I had 3 or 4 trips to Heidelberg Hospital by ambulance because of malaria which I guess stopped me from being posted north again, much to my regret.

A silly little story....one night while having a few drinks in the cookhouse, somebody spiked my drink for a joke - but I went beserk and broke just about everything I could lay my hands on, though I did not know I had done so.

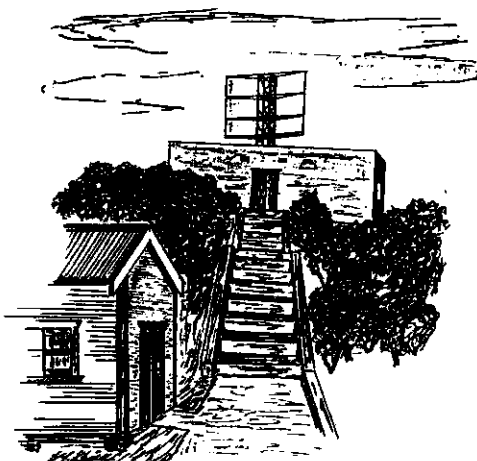
Next day the boys had a great laugh, and I had to repair what I had knocked around. They told me this and that and had great fun at my expense...but I managed to laugh myself.

When I went to hospital with malaria, they would give me three weeks leave which I did appreciate but of course I would have appreciated not having malaria.

I do feel that I can remember you the more I jog my memory.

Many years ago I drove to Adelaide via the Coast road, and called into the Cape just to remember, but the place was bare, though the concrete Doover was still there, but that was all of course.

Sorry I can't give you much more, but it was nice to think you did remember me. By the way, I still looked like a yellow man because of the atebirin when I got married.



THE 13 RS 'ROMEO.'

Des was one of the several newly arrived and duly instructed young operators from Radar School and duly posted to 13 RS - these postings usually lasted only a couple of months before the young op was posted north.

Des might well have been called the Camp Romeo, for he obviously thought himself irresistible. He was soon attempting to charm a local lass, travelling into the Bay where she worked whenever the opportunity presented itself.

One night we were all waiting to return to the camp - we were on the truck under the rear canopy. Somehow our Romeo was still holding hands with his girl friend - his hand thrust down between the canopy and the side panel, with Romeo oblivious to everything except the electricity of love passing from boy to girl. Along came Bernie, the hard case of the camp, who recognized the embarrassed girl, and took in the unusual situation at a glance. Smoothly he slipped his hand into Romeo's thus freeing the obviously relieved girl, then giving Des a thrill as he delicately and deliciously tickled his way up and down Des's hand and forearm.

"She's a bit of all right" was Des's verdict all the way out to the camp....and just would not accept the truth when told he'd been holding hands with the camp's irrepressible and madcap corporal.

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An impression of an engine room entrance.

FROM RADAR SCHOOL TO 13 RADAR.

Ken Nice.

I'm afraid I cannot help much as 13 RS was my first posting after Radar School at Richmond and I was indeed an 18 year-old rookie at the time which is now 57 years ago.

13 Radar was very isolated at Cape Otway and my stay there was from March to July 1944 - about 4½ months - after which I was posted to 1 PD prior to departure to 105 FCU in Darwin in the August of the same year.

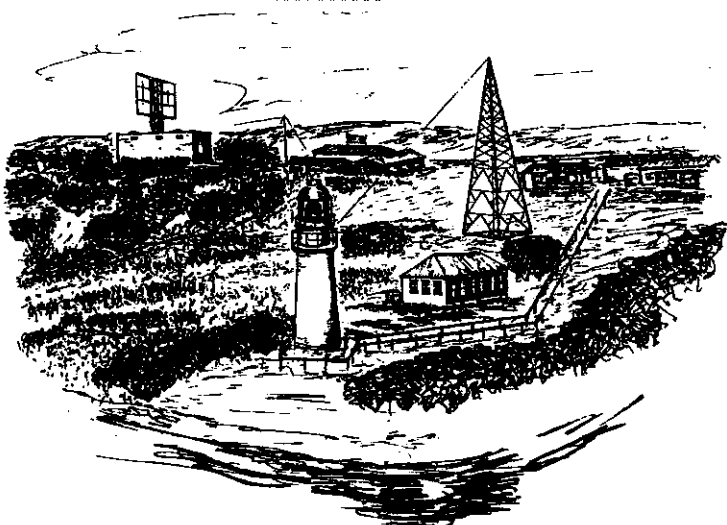
During my stay at Cape Otway not much happened unfortunately. I can't for the life of me at the moment even remember the gear we operated! ! except that it was electrically operated and had to be tied down on many occasions due to high winds. It was a bleak place in the winter, and apart from trying to train rookies like myself, was mostly staffed by personnel who had returned from a tour of duty in the Darwin Area or perhaps New Guinea.

The Otway lighthouse was nearby, also a small number of Naval ratings, but we never saw them much as radar stations at the time were off-limits to anyone other than authorised personnel.

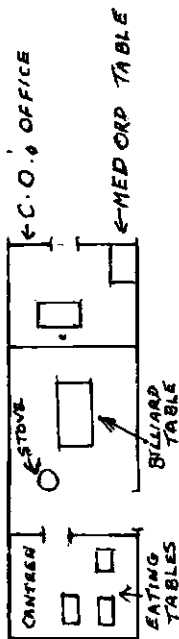
I can remember learning to play snooker etc. to pass the time, and sometimes being allowed to go rabbit shooting with 303 rifles if the WOD was feeling in a good mood. On one of these excursions we came across an old grave absolutely in the middle of nowhere and then found the graves of very young children who perhaps had been shipwrecked somewhere along the coast back in the 1800's.

We often had a day's leave in Apollo Bay which was a delightful little town at the time, but I haven't been down that way for some years now. I do apologise for the lack of information on my part concerning 13 RS as I must admit I now cannot recall the name of any one of the other chaps down there though I can see their faces in my mind's eye so to speak.

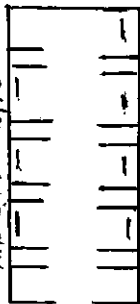
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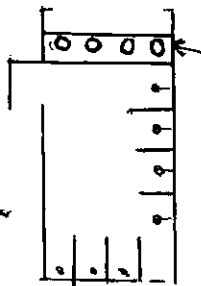
RECREATIONAL HUT



SLEEPING QTRS
RAD OPS & W/TOPS



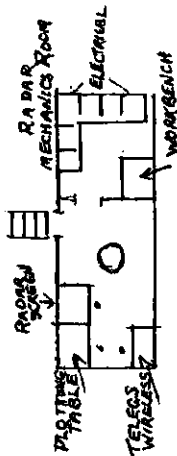
TOILETS & SHOWERS



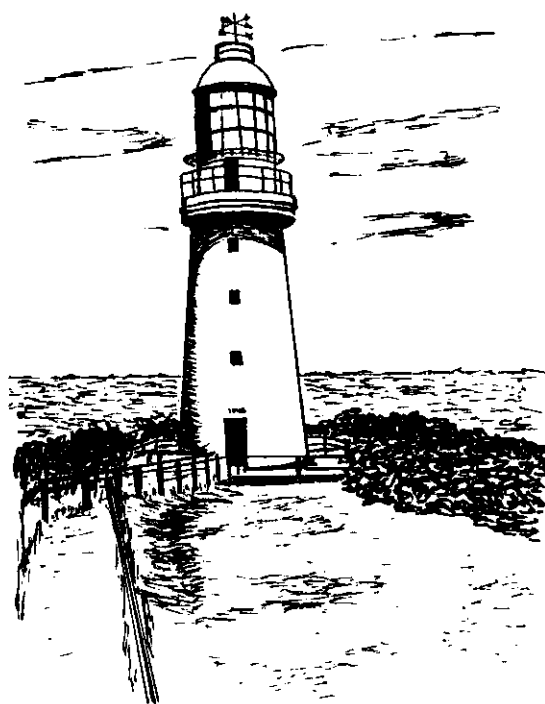
WASH BASINS
OUTSIDE TOILET
BLOCK

9

SLEEPING QTRS
C-O: MCO'S. RAIL



The Story of 13 Radar at Cape Otway concludes with these sketches of some of the huts as Don Bailey remembers them in 1943.



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