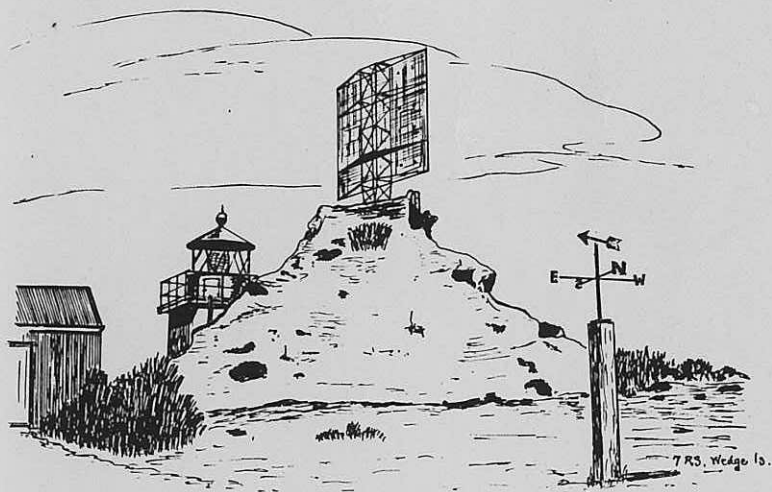
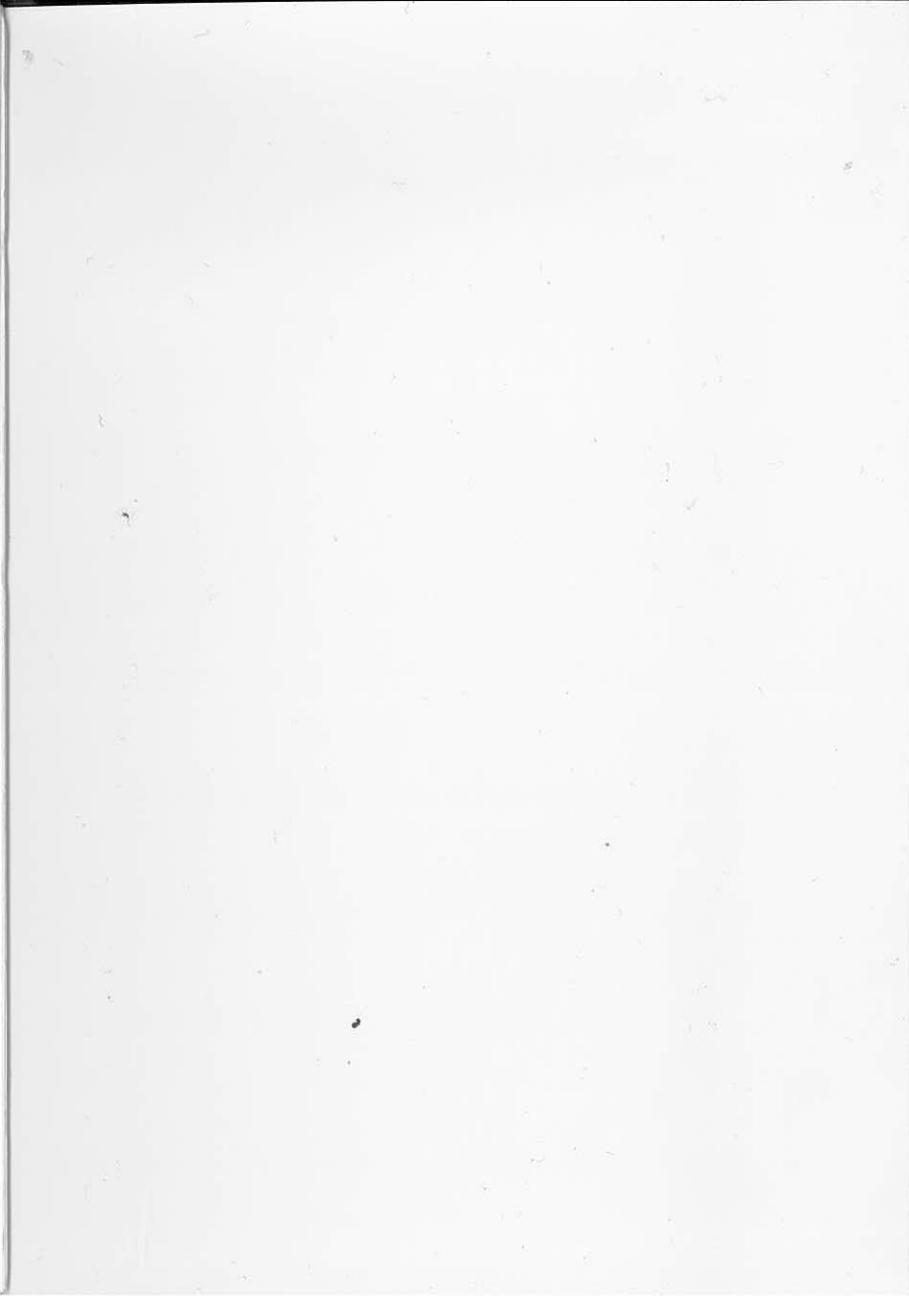


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Radar
Sketchbook



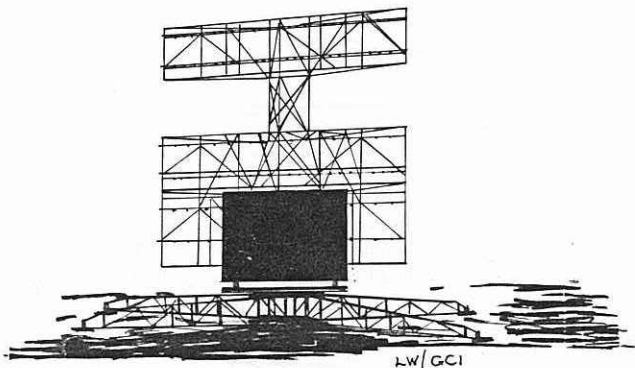
MORRIE FENTON





Radar
Sketchbook

A BRIEF GLIMPSE OF
THE SECRET R.A.A.F.
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MORRIE FENTON

RADAR SKETCHBOOK.

A Brief Glimpse of
the Secret R.A.A.F.
Stations of W.W.2.

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Morrie Fenton.
(M.E.Fenton)

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*Alan & Mary
Best wishes
Thanks for all your
help.
Morne Fenton*

RADAR SKETCHBOOK

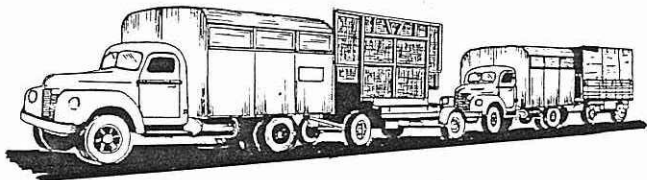
Not all RAAF Groups in WW 2 were giant air bases, or large units with hundreds, even thousands of personnel. The small Radar units, for instance, usually had about 25 to 30 personnel, and each worked as a completely independent little community. There were Radar operators and mechanics - guards and wireless operators - a fitter/DMT - sometimes a general hand. There was usually a clerk in his orderly room or tent - a few sergeants to see all was well, and most importantly a clean and competent cook in charge of the kitchen. A Commanding Officer of not too senior rank headed the station complement. There were camp duties and walkabouts, maybe a cricket match or an occasional picture show. Everyday life around the station was usually fairly easygoing provided the 'On Duty' roster was strictly adhered to, and the equipment was always in good order and operational.

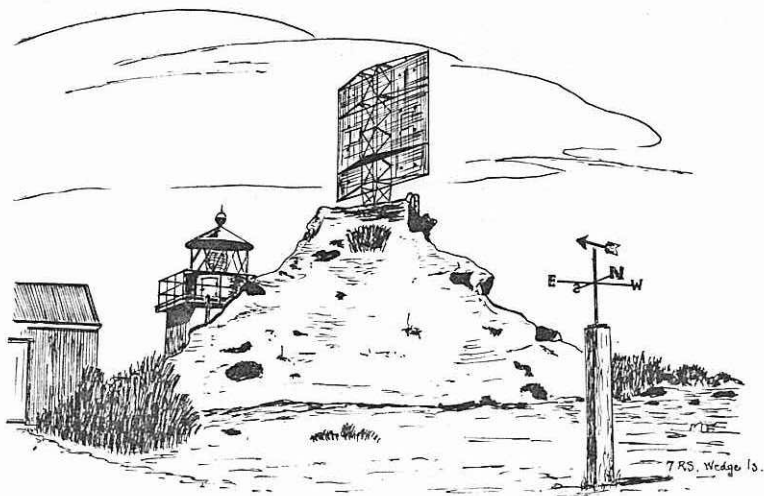
Having served out a 'tropical tour' at a couple of fairly comfortable GCI Doovers, it was with some astonishment, almost disbelief, that I saw in the recent Pictorials, and heard at the Reunions, of the decidedly uncomfortable operating conditions tolerated and cheerfully endured by many Radar operators, particularly on the portable LW/AW stations. Extreme heat, weird bugs and insects, tropical illnesses, even headhunters, cannibals and the occasional enemy incursion - all seem to have been endured stoically and even with some good humour in decidedly uncomfortable Doovers and camps, from the N.W.A. through to the islands almost as far north as the Philippines.

This small sketchbook shows a selection of about twenty Doovers and a few camp buildings. It has been put together as a small recognition of the fine record and service of all Radar personnel, whether in the cold blockhouses down south, or in the hot, airless Doovers of many northern stations.

Most of all, though, it's a tribute to the friendships... some for just a year or two... some of fifty years... some by letter or even by phone. And thanks for all the friendly help.

Morrie Fenton.





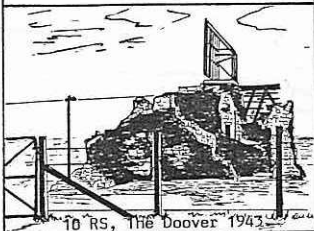
7 RS, Wedge Island. The Doover was sited on the 800 foot cliffs of the windswept island, and on really stormy nights it proved difficult even to gain entry to the tower because of wind force - and conversely, equally difficult to leave it.

The trip out to the island by fishing cutter became almost legendary because of the choppy seas, and it's on record that one seasick airman made the trip lashed to the mast - and later actually refused leave rather than make the return journey.

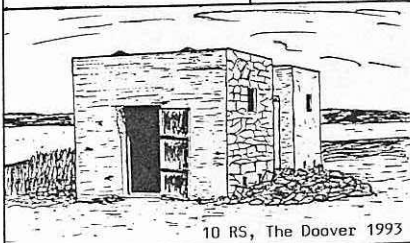
Because of the isolation, the men of 7 RS became skilled in organising their own recreation, and fishing, swimming, cricket, football and concerts became regular activities. This ability to organise continues to this day, for annual reunions are arranged by the unit's long serving cook, and a nostalgic 'Memories' pamphlet is produced for each occasion.

10 RADAR—
(YANKALILLA)
CAPE JERVIS.—

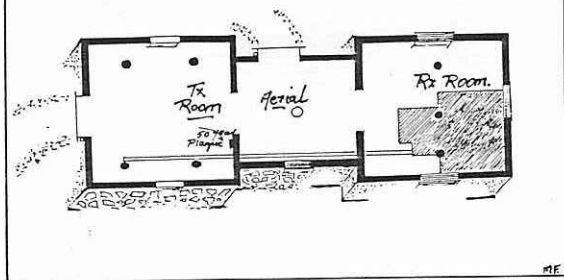
50 Years Celebrated,
10th March 1993.



10 RS, The Doover 1943

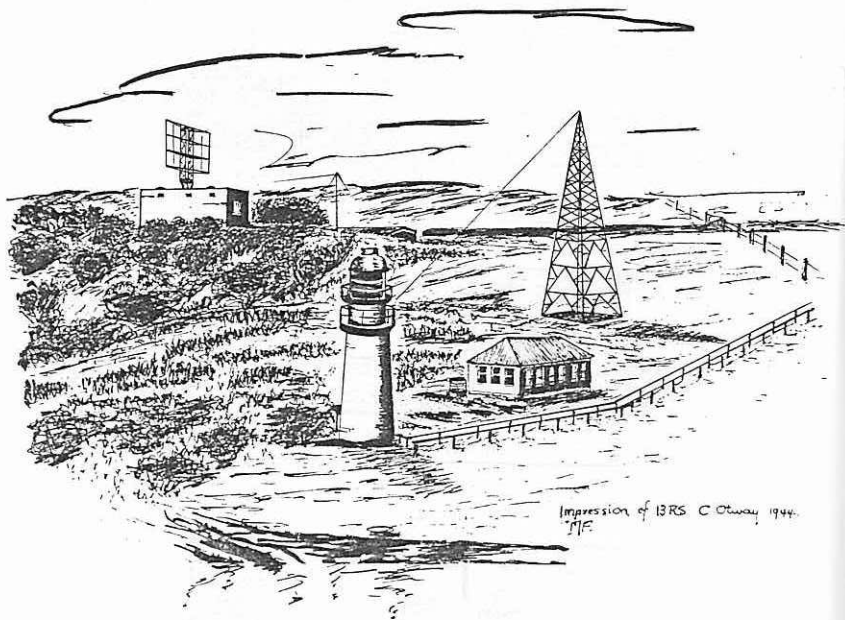


10 RS, The Doover 1993



10 RS Cape Jervis. Two Radar stations only became operational in South Australia after the fortunes of war had changed dramatically. 10 RS was built on a strategic site from which it was able to monitor the narrow waters of Backstairs Passage. Mk. V COL was installed, and the station was staffed largely with WAAAF personnel.

In March 1993, the station celebrated its 50 years, and a goodly number of the wartime personnel was able to gather at the Doover which they found to be as solid and strong as ever, before enjoying a celebratory lunch together.



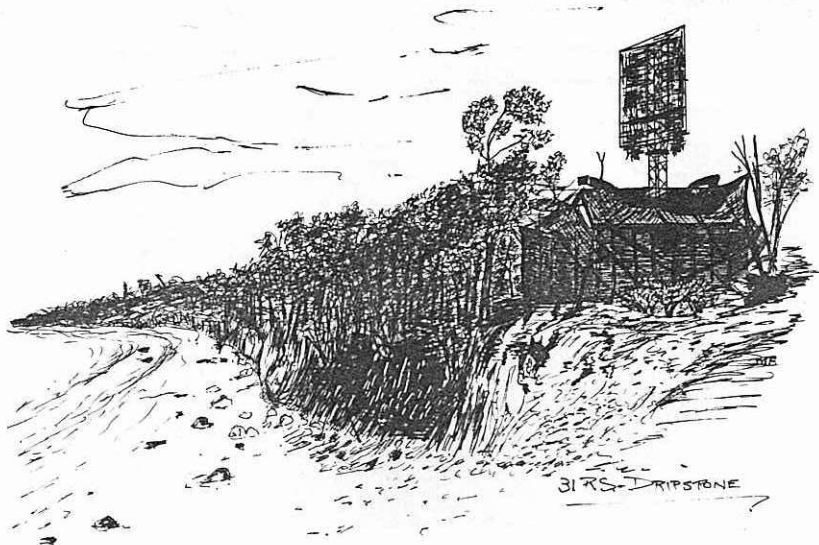
Impression of 13RS C Otway 1944.
J.F.

13 RS Cape Otway was built on the first line of sandhills behind the famous old Otway lighthouse, and the camp buildings were constructed immediately behind the Doover in the sheltered hollow.

The station, together with 14 RS across at Wilson's Promontory, guarded the entrance to the Bay, and most of the plots were of shipping approaching the Port of Melbourne.

The Doover was a large concrete blockhouse divided into three, and a landline provided direct contact with Melbourne. In the camp Rec. hut was a full size billiard table, and as the camp was only twenty miles from Apollo Bay, a Saturday night excursion to the pictures in the Institute was a regular thing.

Today, only the lighthouse and cottages remain, though the deserted blockhouse can still be found among the low scrub and bushy growth.



31 RS at Dripstone is understandably the most famous of Australia's 140 Radar stations, and its historical importance has mainly centred on the early days of the Pacific war, and the air attacks on Darwin. But 31 RS was also associated with other locations.

The station was moved to Point Charles when its Dripstone site was no longer usable - then to Fenton in early 1944 when the station there, 319 RS, moved on to Drysdale. By some strange manoeuvre, 31 RS next appeared at North West Cape at Exmouth in W.A., but this probably came about after a station number change for the big AW already there, which continued sometimes to be known as 310 RS - sometimes as 31 RS. During this confusion, the tower and equipment managed to be destroyed by a cyclone. This happened in February, 1945. After again being re-equipped with LW/AW, the station eventually moved on to Morotai.