



3 CRU 50th Anniversary Open Day.

Brendan (Curley) Godwin
Former member of 3 CRU and 114 MCRU
Former Radar Technician
1969 to 1973

On Friday the 3rd November last year (2017), a bunch of people got together at Williamstown to celebrate the 50th anniversary of 3CRU. The day began at 10.00am when a bunch of ex-CRU blokes and blokettes converged on the EastRoc building at Williamstown for an open day and B-B-Q. A big thank you has to go to the C.O. Wng Cmd Jason 'Bart' Burstow, along with Flg Off David Harrison for their thoughtfulness and generosity in organising the event and showing everyone around.

***CO Wng Cmd Jason Burstow
And Brendan Godwin.***



3CRU now runs 24/7 and everything they do is Top Secret. The unit was inconvenienced by our presence. Operations needed to be suspended for 4 hours and the operations room declassified for our tour. That obviously means we have no photographs from inside EastRoc. The tour commenced with a 'Declassified' presentation on the history and development of 3CRU which comes under 41Wing (Air Defence) which, along with 42WG (Airborne Early Warning and Control), 44WG (Air Traffic Control) and 92 WG (Maritime Operations), come under the Surveillance and Response Group (SRG). This was followed by a tour of the operations room. What was, in 1970, controlled by a Marconi computer with 24bits and 32K of memory that took till morning tea to boot from reels of punch paper tape, is now a huge network of, much more powerful, computers running far more sophisticated software.

By way of painting a broad brush. In 1970 both 3 CRU and 114 MCRU were two separate radar systems, one fixed and the other supposedly mobile. The mobile version turned out, for all practical purposes to be not mobile.

Fast forwarding to today 50 years later, the 1967 dream has finally taken shape. With the passage of time and technology, it has effectively taken the better part of those 50 years to develop and build this unit into what it was always meant to be which is a very effective control and reporting unit. Today 3CRU and 114MCRU are combined operationally as one CRU. The original TPS-27 radar unit was replaced with the TPS-43 (right) in 1979, which was mobile. This has now been replaced with the TPS-77 which is truly mobile. CRU has several TPS-77 units that, once on site, can be deployed within a day. The radar is fed to the control room via satellite. Aside from the several TPS-77 radar heads, the unit takes radar feeds from many different sources including Air Services. When combined with 3 JORN ([Jindalee Operational Radar Network](#)) or Over-the-Horizon radar sites, CRU has coverage of every inch of Australia as well as surrounding off shore, all controlled from the one control room at Williamtown. Today operationally for any deployment, 114 MCRU provide techs and 3 CRU provide operators. (See further info [HERE](#)).

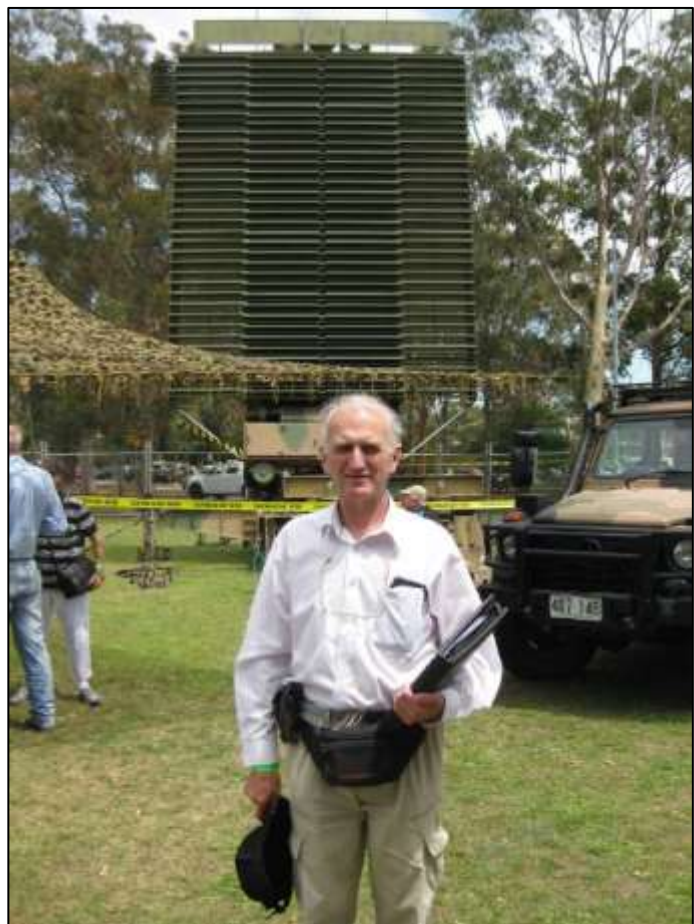


A TPS-77 was deployed to Afghanistan as part of the RAAF's operations there. A TPS-77 was relocated from Duckhole Hill to outside EastRoc on the lawn for the open day. Old radar techs were in their element looking it over. It takes a 2 or 3 truck convoy to relocate the TPS-77. One for the radar and the truck in the background, (over my left shoulder), in the pic at right provides the satellite link and power.

These, of course, can be driven into a C17 if the relocation is to somewhere like Afghanistan.

After the tour we had a wonderful BBQ on the lawn under a marquee. Memorabilia, such as patches, medallions or memorial port, was for sale but unfortunately the special 50th anniversary patch was sold out to all the serving members. They will be ordering more so if anyone wants one, get your order in.

They cost around \$7-\$8.





The plagiarized Donald Duck symbolizes Duckhole Hill.
The headset and mic symbolizes control. Donald's backdrop is the radar's PPI

I went into the confessional box after many years of being away from the Catholic Church. Inside I found a fully equipped bar with Guinness on tap. On one wall, there was a row of decanters with fine Irish whiskey and Waterford crystal glasses. On the other wall was a dazzling array of the finest cigars and chocolates. When the priest came in, I said to him, "Father, forgive me, for it's been a very long time since I've been to confession, but I must first admit that the confessional box is much more inviting than it used to be."

The priest replied, "You moron, you're on my side."



Inside EastRoc was a very large historic photo album. One thing I never knew before was that, after completing the Hubcap Conversion Course at 3 CRU in 1969 and posting to Amberley, our CO at 114 MCRU was Wng Cmd William Waldock who was the 1st CO of 3CRU.



Marg and Geoff "Gronk" Mayhew.

There were 60 to 75 guests at the open day. Most were former operators/plotters from 3 CRU and some from intermediate eras. A number of Warren (Waza) Turner's RAAF friends who represented 3 CRU on numerous ANZAC Day marches in Port Macquarie were also there. Festivities concluded around 2.00pm following which about 150 of us reconvened at 6.00pm at the Wests Leagues Club in New Lambton on the other side of Newcastle for a semi-formal cocktail party. Everyone had different coloured name tags. Green for serving 3 CRU members, yellow for serving former 3 CRU members, purple for ex serving 3 CRU members and blue for spouses. I had this explained to me at the door but very few knew about it. This arrangement made it very easy to navigate around and work who to strike up a conversation with.



Geoff Mayhew and Brendan Godwin,

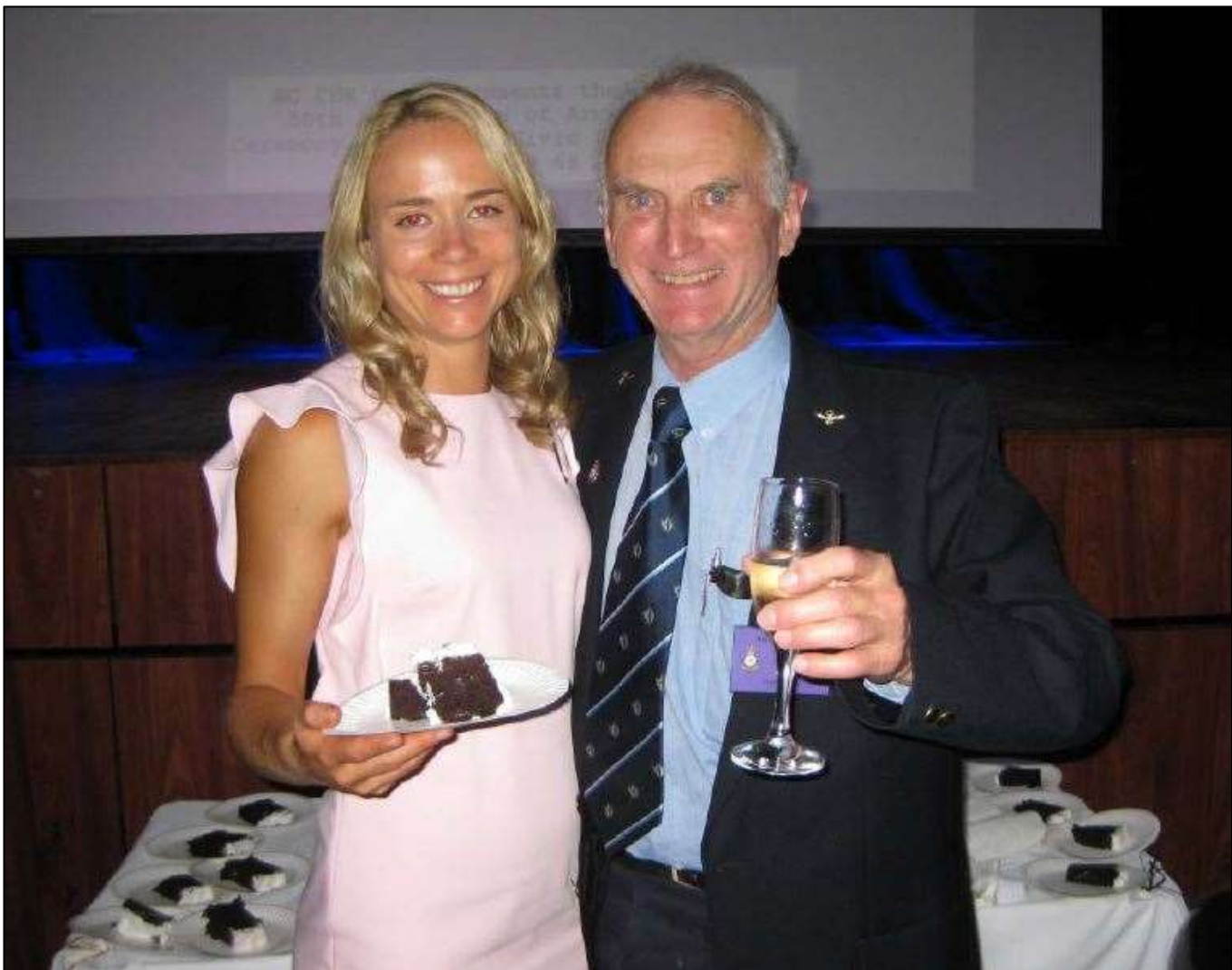
There were a number of speakers and a guest speaker who was a former 3 CRU member who had an interesting story to tell of when he was seconded to the Mascot tower to resolve a UFO issue which turned out to be a faulty radar. The CO proposed toasts to all deceased, former and current 3 CRU members. Air Commodore Craig Heap (right) gave a very down to earth talk. Rather than talk from the stage, he took his mic and came down and stood in the middle of everyone to talk. Craig is Air Commodore of SRG - Surveillance and Response Group and was very insightful.



Right through the evening there were several large screens showing PowerPoint slides of 3CRU from 50 years ago to today. A lot of these were interesting and they caught the attention of many.



For those of you who read the September 2017 issue of RAM volume 59, see [HERE](#), you could not have missed Trev's encounter with the attractive Jane from Tasmania who was attracted to his Radtechitis while he was visiting the Eumundi markets north of Brisbane. For those who might be still sceptical of the phenomenon of Radtechitis, I can report that it is very real. I had the same experience myself at the cocktail party.



FlgOff Frances (Frankie) Bell and Brendan Godwin

The very lovely "Frankie" homed in on my Radtechitis (or was it for the cake) and there was nothing I could do about it. Fly Off Frances (Frankie) Bell is from Logistics and duly advised me that the cake did have its own RAAF nomenclature. My slice of the cake, that she is holding for me, is:

Nomenclature
AF3CRU050/S

Description
Cake, Anniversary, slice – for the eating.



As Trev said, for those of us who carry the genus Radtechitis Amorous, it certainly is a burden to carry.



Sgt Charlene (Charlie) Morgan, Warren (Waza) Turner, Cpl Kylie Hawley and FlgOff Frances (Frankie) Bell

The Wonderful cake.



Which was cut by the CO - Jason Burstow



After the official cutting of the cake, the lovely Charlene (Charlie) Morgan had the duty of carving the cake into at least 150 slices.





On the Thursday afternoon prior to the anniversary event, Warren (Waza) Turner, Nina (daughter of Stan Strahan) and myself took a trip to Keith Tulloch wines to taste the local produce of the Hunter Valley wine region. With Waza being a member, we were looked after handsomely and tasted some delightful wines.

An American tourist asks an Irishman, "Why do Scuba divers always fall backwards off their boats?" To which the Irishman replies, "Well, if they fell forwards, they'd still be in the fookin boat."



Flying Officer David Harrison, Brendan "Curley" Godwin, Warren "Wazza" Turner.



Flying Officer David Harrison, Nina (Daughter of Stan Strahan), Warren "Wazza" Turner.



A little history.

On the 1st November, 1967, number 3 Mobile Control and reporting Unit (3 MCRU) was formed at Duckhole Hill at RAAF Base Williamtown. The first unit CO was Wing Commander William F.A. Waldock. (01 Nov 1967 to 31 Mar 1968)

The Unit was established to provide radar control services to the expanding Air Defence network in the Port Kembla to Newcastle strategic area.

As a mobile unit, 3 MCRU's main role was to deploy to Northern Australia in times of a defence emergency.



In January 1978, the Unit was advised that its new badge had been approved by Her Majesty. An original design was submitted in late 1975 by Flying Officer Jim Stewart and given local endorsement by Unit and Headquarters Operational Command.

It transpired that the design resembled that of an RAF station in the UK called RAF Coltishall and the Gaelic motto was replaced by an English translation. A modified design was endorsed by the Chester Herald in October 1977 and submitted to Her Majesty for approval.





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