

# SPOTLIGHT ON NORFOLK ISLAND ... A Training Mission with a difference

By Terry Liston and Vic Kollosche

*Two District Staff Officers, Vic Kollosche and Terry Liston recently spent 8 days on Norfolk Island helping to upgrade training and ambulance operations for the island's Division. Their report shows they obviously enjoyed their assignment.*

Norfolk is 1,610 kms east, north east of Sydney, 1,456 kms east, south east of Brisbane and 1,063 kms north, north west of Auckland.

The total land area is 3,455 hectares of which more than 1,000 hectares are National Parks and reserves.

It is a semi autonomous external Territory of Australia and visitors who are Australian Citizens do not require a passport to enter the Island, however, they are required by the Australian Government to have a current passport or valid document of identity before being allowed to return to Australia.

Captain Cook discovered Norfolk Island in 1774 whilst on his second voyage around the world.

In 1788 the first penal settlement was formed at Kingston and abandoned some 26 years later. During 1826 the second penal settlement was established and closed in 1855. The third settlement began on 8th June 1856, with the arrival from Pitcairn Island of the "Bounty" Mutineers. The names of their descendents still abound on Norfolk Island today and indeed such names as Quintall, Christian, Nobbs and Buffett are members of the Norfolk Island St. John Ambulance Division. Today, the permanent population of the island is less than 2,000 with about 750 visitors to the island each month.

Despite its relatively small size, the island has 160 kms of road most of which are very narrow. The speed limit is a maximum of 50 kmh around the island and 40 kmh within the town. Horses, cattle and geese have right of way and there are no seat belt laws.

Kingston had a 21-bed Public Hospital with excellent facilities. The Hospital Board is responsible to the Minister of Health (Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly) for its efficient operation. Patients requiring more advanced care are first stabilised in the hospital intensive care section and evacuated by air to the



*Part of "Quality Row", the early Kingston settlement.*



*The Norfolk Island Division: Supt. Bonnie Quintall M.B.E. is standing 2nd on right. Terry and Vic are next to her.*

Australian mainland, usually to Sydney and R.A.A.F. Hercules aircraft are often used to accomplish this task.

The Hospital Board is responsible to the Minister of Health for the efficient operation of the Ambulance. The Board owns all equipment and provides funding for any replacements although service clubs are very supportive and have donated many items of equipment. Their ambulance is a 1972 Ford, four-berth vehicle which once

belonged to the R.A.N. and there are plans to replace it shortly. It is garaged at the Hospital and is fueled and serviced by a daily paid Hospital employee.

The Norfolk Island Division is made up of 14 adult uniformed members, who are exceedingly keen and well turned out, with Mrs. Bonnie Quintall as Superintendent. Divisional parades are held monthly and training sessions conducted on a weekly basis. Meetings and training

*Continued Next Page.*

# INSTITUTE OF AMBULANCE OFFICERS

## A Very Stimulating Seminar

**The Institute of Ambulance Officers (S.A. Division) Bi-Annual Seminar has been and gone, the culmination of many months preparation by Paul Clark and Peter Dickinson. Approximately 120 people attended representing both voluntary officers and St. John Ambulance Service employees, nursing and medical staff and ambulance officers from Victoria and Tasmania.**

Among the speakers were highly respected members of the medical profession. Mr. James Young, Chairman of the State Ambulance Board, opened the Seminar, underlined his full support for the Institute's aims and objectives.

Visiting N.S.W. Paramedic Ian Broad, gave a most thought-provoking paper on the Sydney paramedic system, followed by Dr. Christ Baggeley from the Accident Emergencies Unit of the Flinders Medical Centre on Cerebral Resuscitation, which was very well received. In the afternoon Clements displayed their Lifepak 8 and Lifepak 200.

"Are community based CPR Programmes Effective" was another important subject discussed by Ian Broad, and State Comms Officer Gordon Best brought up various aspects on ambulance communications of the future.

Sunday's programme began with Bob Hindrichs of the N.H. & M.R.C. Road Accident Research unit attached to the Adelaide University, who gave a broad overview of the units activities and what their

responsibilities are at the scene of an accident.

Mr. Donald Simpson, Professor of Neurosurgery at the R.A.H. and Consultant Neurosurgeon at the A.C.H., presented a stimulating and very interesting talk on neuro-trauma, in rural areas.

Mr. Peter Tamblyn, Chairman of the Road Trauma Committee of the Royal College of Surgeons, discussed the inappropriate admission of trauma patients to some country hospitals, rather than evacuating these patients to major public hospitals. He also covered the role of the trauma centre in treating these patients.

Bringing the Seminar to a close, Dr. Fred Gilligan, Director of the R.A.H. Intensive Care Unit, covered "Aeromedical Evacuation and Helicopter Safety".

Organisers were delighted with the high level of response and participation by everyone who attended. All Speakers found themselves engaged in vigorous question times at the end of their presentations.



Donald Simpson

Much favourable comment was heard on the very varied and interesting programme presented, and any suggestions for improving our next efforts will be most welcome.

(from page 26)

sessions are held at the Hospital. Prior to the formation and involvement of the St. John Division, crewing of the Ambulance was of an ad hoc nature and usually by persons trained only to first aid levels. On some occasions one of the nursing staff assisted with the crewing. Currently nine Brigade members are rostered two at a time for periods of one week.

The initial call for an ambulance is made to the Hospital and the duty crew then summoned by telephone or in some cases by citizen band mobile radio. The roster and call out system is working very well, with

most members of the community being very impressed with the smart turnout of uniformed personnel.

Superintendent Quintall arranged for us to conduct two F/A sessions for the public. The course was well attended and it looks like some students will be interested in joining the local division.

### The Local Lifestyle

There are four types of people living on Norfolk Island — the Islanders, direct descendants of the Pitcairn people from the original crew of the "Bounty"; Mainlanders who have taken up permanent residence; T.E.P. (Temporary Entry Permit) holders, mostly young

people on working holidays; and tourists.

Staying with an Islander meant we saw the lifestyle in closer detail. It is very "laid back" — no-one locks their cars or houses and shops open anywhere between 8.30 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. Traffic jams are common — people stop for a chat in the middle of the road, and you have two choices — sit there and wait or join in the conversation. The best chuckle we got was when we turned up at the only take-away food shop in town to find it closed for lunch.

Vic and I found it so easy to slip into the Norfolk lifestyle, it took us 3 days to return to "normal" when we got back.