

# OBITUARIES

THE AGE  
7-12-2000

## David Roy (Dave) Hocking

Surveyor and cartographer  
18-8-1920 — 14-11-2000

**As a surveyor and map maker, he was both explorer and bushman. His outdoor skills stood him in good stead, while his professional dedication continued beyond retirement.**

By PHILIP HOCKING

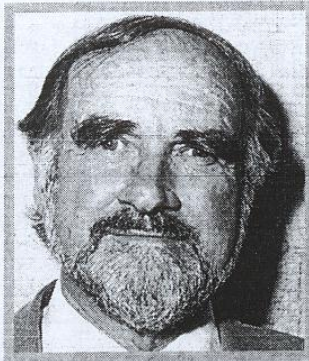
In his profession and member associations Dave Hocking's personality and professional achievements earned the respect of all who came to know him.

Shortly after World War II, he joined the Commonwealth Government Department of National Mapping (Natmap) as its first field surveyor, reluctantly retiring in 1985.

Dave was the eldest surviving son of Olive and Fred Hocking of Ivanhoe. His mother was the English bride of an AIF soldier of the Great War. His father served in Gallipoli, and was later badly wounded in the bloody battles of the Somme.

Dave grew up watching horse-drawn vehicles delivering goods to shops and houses and pioneering light aircraft land in paddocks near his home, which was about 10 to 12 kilometres from the centre of Melbourne. (These days it is often difficult to find a car park in the same area.)

As one of five sons, he started work as a draftsman with a civil engineering firm in 1936, joining the AIF in 1940. He served with 2/1 Survey Regiment in Palestine, Syria and Transjordan and then 2/7 Survey Battery in Papua New Guinea. He later transferred to 2/6 Commando Squadron for the hard-fought Battle of Balikpapan in Borneo. He attributed his interest in survey and mapping and the need for accuracy, to a high



opinion of his "excellent teachers, (the) surveyors" in the ranks of the survey units.

After the war, he started playing cricket again, which he loved, and also resumed his involvement with the scouting movement. As rover leader with the 2nd Ivanhoe group, Dave shared his love of the great outdoors, especially the Bogong High Plains. He also developed closer links with the highly respected Bill Waters, who was a scout leader.

However, professional pursuits were to soon absorb most of his time and energy.

In the field of National Mapping, his leadership qualities and reputation for thoroughness were evident when he began astronomical observations, barometric heighting and annotation of map detail on aerial photos. His early work took him to remote parts of Australia.

He later travelled to southern Australia, including his much-loved Wilson's Promontory.

He led four topographic survey parties to the Northern Territory and other states of Australia, becoming well known to many in northern and north-western Australia for his determination to set up observation points in even the most difficult and seemingly inaccessible wild country. He was deeply committed to developing accurate maps of the nation, working and studying hard to improve his knowledge and skill.

He became inaugural secretary and then chairman of the Australian Photogrammetric and Remote Sensing Society. As Australia's delegate to the International

Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) he travelled to congresses in Europe, South America and Japan.

Following his official retirement, he started work at the Association of Aerial Surveyors Australia, attending conferences in the US and Europe as its executive director. He was involved at an international level in most aspects of his profession.

Also, his interest in the accuracy, of military maps, particularly those used in the Gallipoli campaign of 1915, continued. He visited Turkey, working alongside a British cartographer.

At Lone Pine he stood with his father near the site of the bomb pit where his father had fought in the legendary campaign.

He served on industry bodies including Surveying and Mapping Victoria and the Australian Mapping and Surveying Council. He was a positive contributor to professional meetings and an interesting, informative speaker.

He encouraged the professional bodies of surveying and mapping to amalgamate and better serve the industry and community. When he at last withdrew from official public life in 1998 he remained interested in the field and was always ready to answer inquiries from Australia and overseas.

But he maintained to the end that the highlight of his life was his marriage to Iris Natrass (Nat), also of National Mapping. He knew that without her strong and loving support he could not have continued his professional development over the years.

Dave Hocking was a caring, proud and concerned father of seven and was much loved by nine grandchildren. His kindness and loyalty; direct and stimulating comments and advice; sense of humor and ready wit will be sadly missed by all who knew him during his 80 years.

*Philip F. Hocking is Dave Hocking's brother.*