



Oz Ertok

Oz worked with Aerodist as an electronics technician (technical officer engineering) both in the field and in the Rialto Building workshop from 1971 to 1974. He started with the Aerodist measuring party at Dubbo in May 1971 and worked with that party at Rabbit Flat in the Northern Territory and later at Christmas Creek, Balgo Mission and Halls Creek in Western Australia. (Oz gained his first-ever driver licence on 18 August 1971 at the Halls Creek police station.) Later in 1971 Oz was with the Aerodist field party at Camooweal in western Queensland. During Aerodist measuring operations over the Coral Sea in October 1971 Oz was stationed for some time at Maer Island some 200 kilometres north-east of Cape York. (Maer Island was the home of Eddie Mabo whose successful albeit posthumous decade-long High Court case led to the Court's decision in 1992 that overturned the doctrine of *terra nullus* and allowed the granting of indigenous land rights in Australia.)

In 1972, Oz continued working with the Aerodist measuring party from Kalgoorlie, Laverton, Featherstonhaugh, Carnegie homestead, Wiluna, Balfour Downs homestead, Kidson Field, Blyth airstrip and Forrest in Western Australia. In 1973, Oz worked with Aerodist in Victoria and New South Wales and later from Onslow and Esperance in Western Australia.

In 1974, the final year of Aerodist field operations, Oz worked from Wyndham, Halls Creek and Derby in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. Also in 1974, Oz conducted tests with a JMR Doppler satellite receiver at survey control station R 110 (Savage Hill) on Bigge Island in the Bonaparte Archipelago north-east of Derby

Ozcan Ertok was born at Konya in Turkey in 1932. Konya is today a city of over a million people located in the Central Anatolia region of Turkey about 260 kilometres south of the capital Ankara. Konya has a rich history with the region said to date from around 3,000 BC. In medieval times Konya was the capital of the Sultanate of Rum. Oz undertook his primary and secondary school education in Ankara and later gained a Diploma in Electrics. He joined the Turkish Air Force as a civilian radar technician in 1951 and served there for some nine and a half years. While with the Air Force Oz undertook further study and gained Diplomas in Radio (Wireless) Electronics and Radar Electronics in 1953 and 1955 respectively.

In 1957 and 1962 Oz successfully completed further advanced courses of study in Italy where he firstly gained a Diploma in Advanced Radar Technology and later a Diploma in

Nuclear Electronics. Between 1960 and 1970 Oz worked with the Turkish Atomic Energy Commission where he was a nuclear electronics expert at the Nuclear Research Centre in Ankara.

Oz immigrated to Australia in November 1970 and was initially accommodated at the Balgownie migrant workers' hostel located at Fairy Meadow near Wollongong. About a month later Oz moved to Melbourne where he was accommodated at the Midway migrant hostel at Maribyrnong. Oz joined Nat Map in late January 1971 after being interviewed by Syd Kirkby. After his time with Aerodist, Oz worked in the field with Nat Map's WREMAPS 1 laser terrain profiler until the end of 1979. Oz also worked in the Dandenong office on various items of electronic and photographic equipment including the Digital PDP 1140 computer that supported the digital mapping system. In 1983, Oz worked with Nat Map's Canberra based Bathymetric Mapping Branch where he undertook two tours of sea-borne duty on the *MV Cape Pillar*. Oz's first tour was from late January to 10 March 1983 in the Investigator Group off Port Lincoln and the Nuyts Archipelago off Ceduna in South Australia. The second tour was from 21 April to 1 June 1983 in the Great Australian Bight off the Nullarbor Cliffs.

During the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s Oz spent time in Antarctica. In the summer of 1974-75 Oz and surveyor Rom Vassil were members of an Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition. Here Oz was the Wild RC9 aerial survey camera operator during aerial photography operations over Enderby Land from a base at Knuckey Peaks. During the following summer of 1975-76 Oz returned to Enderby Land where he continued to undertake aerial photography operations from Mount King base with Nat Map surveyor Mike Morgan.

In 1984, Oz wintered at Mawson while engaged directly by the Antarctic Division on temporary release from Nat Map. During this expedition he installed the first of the Inmarsat satellite communications systems in Antarctica. In 1986, Oz wintered at Macquarie Island while again engaged directly by the Antarctic Division to install an Inmarsat communications system and to fulfil the role of communications officer.

Oz retired from Nat Map in 1991 when aged around 60 years. But he had not seen enough of Antarctica, so during 1991-92 Oz wintered with other Greenpeace expeditioners at the Greenpeace World Park base at Cape Evans on Ross Island. Maintaining an Inmarsat satellite system that provided both telex and telephone systems was one of Oz's primary roles. He also installed solar panels and a wind generator as well as batteries for solar and wind energy storage. The Cape Evans base had been established around 1985 and was dismantled at the end of Oz's expedition.

In 1995, Oz settled at Noosaville on Queensland Sunshine Coast where he designed and built his spacious and comfortable home. But Oz hasn't fully retired yet; he continues to travel overseas including visits to Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Dubai, China, Canada, Russia, and the Arctic North-West Passage as well returning to outback Australia where he recently revisited Rabbit Flat. Oz also enjoys his daily bicycle rides and swimming in the sea at Noosa.

Source

McLean, Lawrence William (2015), *The Aerodist Years: Recollections of the Division of National Mapping's Airborne Distance Measuring Program 1963-1974*, accessed at : <http://www.xnatmap.org/adnm/ops/prog/aaerod/adist6374/intro/intro.htm>.