



Rom Vassil

Rom worked with the Aerodist program in the field between 1965 and 1969. During the first few years he worked on both measuring and ground marking activities in New South Wales and Queensland. Back in the Rialto office Rom was engaged in Aerodist data reductions including the ultimately unsuccessful automated chart reading system. From 1967 Rom's Aerodist field work was mainly with helicopter supported ground marking operations in the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

Romulus Anthony Vassil was born in Sydney in 1930. Rom was registered as a licensed surveyor by the Surveyors Board of New South Wales in September 1955 and was also registered as a New South Wales mining surveyor. He was registered as a licensed surveyor by the Surveyors Board of Victoria in August 1974. Prior to and after his New South Wales registration Rom undertook survey work in Sydney, the Blue Mountains and southern New South Wales.

In 1956 Rom moved to Ottawa to take up a surveyor position. For the next decade he worked in Canada as a land surveyor. In 1956 he was a land surveyor in the Province of Alberta. In 1960 he became a dominion land surveyor working mainly on the dominion land survey in the Provinces of Alberta and Manitoba and the Yukon Territory. The dominion land survey was a massive undertaking that commenced in 1871 to subdivide many of the Prairie Provinces into one square mile lots for agriculture and initially to assert sovereignty over the land. Rom was also a Manitoba land surveyor in 1960 and in 1961 was a land surveyor in the then British Honduras (now Belize). Rom returned from Canada to take up a surveyor position with Nat Map in late June 1965.

As well as Aerodist surveys, during 1966 and 1967 Rom was also involved in spot photography operations. During 1967 and 1968 he was engaged in vertical control field survey work with the Johnson Ground Elevation Meter. From 1970 Rom was the senior surveyor who commenced field survey operations with the WREMAPS 1 airborne laser terrain profiler which continued in operation until 1979. During the summer of 1974-75 Rom was a member of an Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition and undertook aerial photography operations over Enderby Land from a base at Knuckey Peaks. In 1977 he was involved in coastal photography operations and in 1979 undertook map inspection and supplementary photography field work.

In the late 1970s Rom became the senior surveyor responsible for planning and staff development in Nat Map's Dandenong office. During 1980-81 Rom was seconded to the joint Commonwealth/State committee of inquiry into electricity generation and the sharing of power resources in south-east Australia. The inquiry was headed by Sir David Zeidler and Rom was a senior executive officer (Class 10) in the inquiry secretariat.

In 1977 Rom commenced a course of study in economics at Monash University and was awarded a Bachelor of Economics degree in 1983 with a major sequence in history and a minor sequence in economic history. Also in 1983 Rom undertook a major review of the operations of the Division of National Mapping. Later Rom undertook further post graduate study and was awarded a Graduate Diploma in International Law from the Law School of the Australian National University and a Diploma of Education from Monash University.

In March 1984, Rom was seconded to Nat Map's Canberra office where he was appointed supervising surveyor of the then Offshore Boundaries and General Branch. During his time in Canberra Rom restructured his branch to better focus on its core activities and as a consequence it was renamed the Maritime Boundaries and Scientific Liaison Branch. Rom retired from Nat Map in February 1987 and returned to Melbourne where he lived at Mount Eliza. Rom then took up teaching posts over the following decade. Between 1987 and 1996 Rom was a part-time economics and business studies teacher at the prestigious St Margaret's School at Berwick. Also from 1987 to 1991 Rom was a part-time senior tutor in economics at The University of Melbourne. He eventually retired in 1997 and continues to enjoy his retirement living in the south-eastern Melbourne bayside village of Mount Eliza.

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>.