



Ed Burke

Ed worked with Nat Map's Aerodist program from 1966 to 1970. He commenced Aerodist operations as a technical assistant in New South Wales and later worked in Queensland and the Northern Territory up to and during the 1970 field season. Ed was also involved with Aerodist surveys over the Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea between 1966 and 1969.

Initially an Aerodist remote operator, Ed later became a relief master operator. He was one of very few people to work with Nat Map in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Antarctica.

Edward Henry Burke was born at Melbourne in 1931; he is the older brother of another Nat Mapper, electronics technician Kevin Burke (Nat Map 1962-65). Ed's early trade was an aircraft sheet metal worker where he completed a 5-year apprenticeship at the Government Aircraft Factory at Fisherman's Bend. But after working for some years in his trade Ed was looking for work that would take him out of the workshop. Initially he successfully tried his hand as a truck driver based in north-eastern Victoria. But after a while at this employment Ed needed to hone his trade skills and while working in the general sheet metal industry he met fellow employee Errol Maruff whose brother, Rod, worked with National Mapping. The attraction of outback work saw Ed join Nat Map's then Geodetic Survey Branch as a field assistant in May 1961.

Ed worked on geodetic surveys in Australia and the then Territory of Papua over five field seasons until the end of 1965. In 1961 he worked on the Mt Tietkens to Well 35 traverse in Western Australia and on the Mt Kintore to Mabel Creek traverse in South Australia. On these traverses Ed worked under Nat Map surveyor OJ *Bob* Bobroff from whom he gained a solid grounding in Tellurometer operation. The following year Ed was a designated Tellurometer operator on the Winton to Broken Hill traverse. In early 1963 Ed successfully undertook a basic survey course with fellow Nat Mapper Bob Goldsworthy (1939-1985). The course was held at the School of Military Survey at Balcombe on the Mornington Peninsula.

Later in 1963, Ed was a member of the Nat Map survey field party under HA (*Bill*) Johnson that carried out a triangulation and Tellurometer survey in the highlands of the Territory of Papua. Ed was again involved on that survey the following year. Also in 1964 Ed worked on the Charleville to Mount Howitt survey traverse in Queensland.

In early 1965 Ed attended a training course in Canberra run by Nat Map's Tony Bomford on observation techniques for longitude using the Almucantar method and observations for latitude using the circum-meridian method. Later that year Ed was an observer on first order

traverses from Gary Junction to Young Range in Western Australia and from Neale Junction in that State to Voakes Hill in South Australia. Towards the end of 1965, Ed worked on the beaconing of and the traverse connection to the Johnston Geodetic Station near Kulgera in the southern Northern Territory. During the summer of 1969-1970, Ed was a member of an Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition where he surveyed in the Prince Charles Mountains from a base at Moore Pyramid. Ed did further survey work in the Prince Charles Mountains during the summer of 1971-1972 when he was an expeditioner based at Mount Cresswell and worked at Mt Ruker and the southern Prince Charles Mountains.

Throughout his Nat Map career Ed was also engaged in aerial photography activities. As well as spot photography during Aerodist operations, Ed's aerial photography activities included a spot photography operation from Mackay with Rom Vassil in 1967. Ed later worked as a line navigator during Nat Map's high altitude aerial photography program using a Learjet platform in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1977, Ed was a Wild RC9 aerial survey camera operator during coastal photography operations between Broome and Darwin. During the 1980s, Ed also carried out block aerial photography operations in Nat Map's Cessna 421C aircraft VH-DRB.

Ed retired from Nat Map as a senior technical officer in 1989 after some 28 years of dedicated service. Soon afterwards he moved to Queensland's Sunshine Coast hinterland. Today Ed lives at the hinterland village of Flaxton with his wife Nicolette who had her own successful career as a school librarian.

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>.