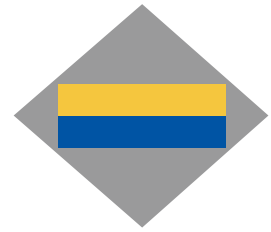


COMRADESHIP

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President's Report



Our Comradeship Editor, Jill Bear tells me she has lots of reports for this edition of the Newsletter. Thank you to all the contributors. We have certainly started off the year with some frenzied activity, all around Australia, and in Borneo.

April 21, in brilliant sunshine, saw the opening of the final stage of the upgrade of the Kokoda Memorial wall at the Dandenong Ranges National Park in Fern Tree Gully. This was part of a \$1.5million upgrade supported by the Victorian State Government, and in my view should be seen, not only by every Victorian, but every Australian. It honours, and tells the story of all those who fought on the Kokoda Track during World War 2. A terrific joint effort between Parks Victoria, associated Army Units, and Local and State Government. My sincere thanks goes to our own Marg Briggs who, as the 2/14 representative, stuck with the project through its highs and lows till completion.

April 22 saw approx 18 intrepid travellers, under the control of Ian Hopley commence a "Return to Balikpapan" trip to Southern Borneo. Ian tells me it went very well, with no major hick-ups, in that remote part of the World.

April 23 and our Melbourne reunion got under way, after a short ceremony at the Shrine, beside the 2/14 Battalion tree. The Reunion saw a great turnout of 73+ people, including a good smattering of Veterans and visitors. Boy, do those West Australians, ably led by Phil Kemp, the "Heartbreak Kid", know how to party.

April 24 and a lot of us were back at The National Park in Fern Tree Gully, for the annual Children's Legacy Day, where Chris Ingram, our Secretary, was the guest speaker.

April 25, and the annual ANZAC Day march to the Shrine was also well attended. Children from Kingsbury Primary School, with teachers, and parents, as support, carried our Banner again. Some of us then went off to the Palmerston Hotel, and joined the 2/16th, 39th and 2/27th battalions at lunch. I believe a good turn up at the Brisbane march was also achieved.

My sincere thanks to all who supported the various functions over this busy time, and I look forward to seeing you all again soon.

**Till the next time,
Michael Ralston
President.**

2013 LEGACY SCHOOLS ANZAC COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE

This year the service was held on 24 April, and it was the 2/14 Battalion Associations turn to provide a speaker. I was happy to volunteer as I knew from reading the March edition of Comradeship, that my speech was ready-made. With an audience of over 400 children from the Dandenong Ranges area I felt it would be appropriate to read to them what other children have said about ANZAC Day.

Firstly, I chose to read the essay written by a 6th grade student from Kingsbury Primary School after her experience of being in the March in 2012 with several of her school friends who assisted by carrying the 2/14 flags. Her piece was so moving I wanted to share it at this special service. The second piece I chose was the 2012 Kingsbury Award winning essay written by a Year 10 student from Reservoir High School. It was about the action of VX15241 Cpl Charlie McCallum for which he was awarded the DCM. (You may like to re-read both these pieces on page 4 of the March Comradeship.)

The choir of Ferny Creek Primary School and the Upwey High School Band provided the music.



Cam Thompson, with Michael Ralston, laid the wreath on behalf of the Battalion.

The set up for the service was different from previous years as it was held in front of the new Kokoda Memorial Wall which had only just been opened on the previous Sunday. It was an honour to be part of this annual service in this very special place in the beautiful Dandenong Ranges National Park.

Chris Ingram

UPCOMING EVENT: – THE KOKODA CONCERT

If you missed the opportunity to hear *Kingsbury VC* played at events last year, or if you want to hear it played again, you'll want to join us at **The Kokoda Concert**.

Members of the **2/14 Battalion Association** and champion **Hawthorn City Band** are currently working together on what will become a unique and moving experience – the retelling, through words and music, of the 2/14 Australian Infantry Battalion on the Kokoda Track during World War 2. Don't miss out on this once only performance of what promises to be a dramatic and memorable production.

We urge you, your family and friends, to join us on

**SATURDAY, 13 JULY AT 7.30 PM AT
ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, 4 CHAPEL
STREET, EAST ST KILDA**

Please use the booking form enclosed with this copy of **COMRADESHIP** to ensure your place in the audience.

Cost of tickets is very reasonable:

\$15 adults, \$8 concession & children (14 & under), WW2 veterans free

There will be one interval at which refreshments can be purchased.

The event will conclude at approximately 10.00 pm (or perhaps a little later).

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Chris Ingram at chris.ingram@margni.com or tel: 03 9561 5790.

The Concert advertising leaflet and booking form will also be available on the Association's website: <http://www.2nd14battalion.org.au/>



Hawthorn Band

ANZAC DAY BRISBANE

A dozen marchers stepped off in the Brisbane March including veterans George Priestly and Arthur Toombs. We were joined by a descendent of a 2/16 veteran, which gave us representation of the three battalions of 21 Brigade.



We were also joined by Fredrick Soka from Popendetta who at 12 years of age had worked as a carrier and stretcher bearer in the Gona area.

As Arthur had been recovering from back trouble he started off in a wheelchair, attended by granddaughter Kylie. As we turned into Adelaide St he left that and joined George and Fredrick on foot. The crowd went mad! (So did wife Dot about 200m further on when she saw him out of the chair!)

There were nods of approval from a number of dignitaries at the official dais as this sharp looking group presented "eyes left". No thoughts here of a group of amblers taking the shine off the formality of the occasion.

As usual the large crowd was clearly appreciative of all units as they passed and, also as usual, I was extremely proud to be associated with our group who do credit to veterans and the Association



2013 Group (L-R)
Trevor Pryor, Ron Smith, Kylie Toombs, Megan Jesser, Michael Webster, Fran Ralston, Fredrick Soka, Arthur Toombs, George Priestly, David Toombs, Ken Boyne, Terry Twine.

In a break from tradition, instead of adjourning to a local parkland for lunch and comradeship, we headed off to meet up with Dudley Warhurst whose health didn't allow him to march. It was great for everyone to catch up with him.



Fredrick Soka and Arthur Toombs with Dudley

During his stay, Fredrick Soka:

Attended the St Paul's School ANZAC Service, Spoke with students at Yandina State School, Attended the Dawn Service at Kallangur as a guest of Pine Rivers RSL sub branch, Marched in Brisbane with 2/14 group and joined Dudley for lunch. Attended 3 year old's birthday party.

Vale Henry Ah Chee. QX30257

Henry (Harry) Ah Chee, passed away on 29/4/13 at Caboolture in Qld. At his funeral, niece Cheryl spoke of a loving family man, of a top notch stockman and a man well respected in his community. It was wonderful to see Jack Thompson in attendance to farewell Harry as not only were both from the 2/14th, but both had been committeemen at Caloundra RSL sub branch, a club that Harry helped found and which conducted the RSL service.

The family appreciated the thoughts of the Association and also the eulogy that Ross Wilkinson had prepared.

MEMORIAL UNVEILING

A new memorial to honour World War II veterans who fought along the Kokoda Track has been unveiled at Melbourne's Dandenong Ranges National Park. A special wreath-laying ceremony was held at the Kokoda Memorial Wall in the park at Ferntree Gully on Sunday, 21 April. The memorial honours the 624 Australian troops who died in the initial onslaught on the Kokoda Track, and the Papua New Guinean guides who supported the troops.

Speakers, who included Major General Paul McLauchlan (representing Chief of Army), Hon Hugh Delahunty (Veteran's Affairs), Hon Kim Wells (former Treasurer) and our own, Margaret Briggs, sister of Capt Claude Nye, paid tribute to the strength, courage and commitment of those who fought in the Owen Stanley Campaign. These were Australians fighting on Australian soil, making the sacrifice necessary to maintain our freedom. Those who returned have made significant contributions to our country, but we should not forget that war has also denied

us the contribution of those, such as Bruce Kingsbury VC and Claude Nye, who made the ultimate sacrifice.



Margaret Briggs, sister of Capt Claude Nye at the opening

The project has been achieved through the contributions of Parks Victoria and the staff at Dandenong Ranges NP, State Government of Victoria, David Yardley (sculptor), Philip Piperides (bronze casting) and representatives of 39 Bn, 2/16 Bn, and 2/14 Bn. Special mention must be made of the commitment of Marg Briggs and Hon Kim Wells, who have worked together on developing this park into

a place of special commemoration since the early 1990's.



Marg Briggs and Hon Kim Wells



David Yardley's sculpture: Mates

MELBOURNE REUNION 2013

Following the usual commemorative service of at the Battalion tree near the Shrine of Remembrance, the Battalion held its annual Melbourne reunion at the Celtic Club on Tuesday 23 April.

Veterans present included Col Blume, Max Caldwell, George Collins, Jim Coy, Bob Iskov, Phil Kemp, Norm Mattila (2/27) and Cam Thompson, with apologies from Peter Forster, Val Gardner, Gordon McLean, Matt Power, Lindsay Romer, Lionel Smith, Norm Stringer, Bob Turnley and Doug Watkins.



President Michael Ralston with Col Blume

Among the speakers were Hayley Berkhout who spoke on her role in organising commemorative events at the Shrine of Remembrance; Jennifer Phan, winner of the 2012 Kingsbury Scholarship, who, coming from a large family, acknowledged the importance of the scholarship in assisting her to continue her studies; and Barb Hinsley, Principal of Kingsbury Primary School, who reminded us that History teaches us about the Future, and that the school, through its association with the Battalion, seeks to challenge its students to live up to the values of the Battalion.

George Collins, who served with the Battalion in the Middle East and Papua, shared his story with us, and explained his connection with the George Collins Kokoda Award, now in its fifth year, which aims to raise awareness among Baw Baw Shire students of the actions and bravery shown by Australians who served in Papua New Guinea during the Second World War.

A common theme among these speakers was the ways on which the Battalion Association has established a role for itself in maintaining and communicating the spirit of the 2/14 Battalion to a new generation of young Australians.

Rumour has it that the Kemp family, ably led by veteran, Phil, in company with the Ralstons, made it a long day.



Standing: Barb Hinsley (Kingsbury Primary School), Norman Mattila (2/27Bn), Max Caldwell, Geoff Barker (Reservoir High School), Michael Ralston Seated: Phil Kemp, Bob Iskov, Cam Thompson, Jennifer Phan, George Collins

We thank the Celtic Club, for again providing a suitable venue, good service and a most enjoyable lunch. We also appreciate the assistance rendered by the staff of the Shrine of Remembrance in support of our memorial service at the Battalion tree.

MELBOURNE ANZAC DAY MARCH

Patrick and Ishrat (Kingsbury Primary School)

On Thursday, 25 April the Grade 6 J.S.C. group marched in the ANZAC Day Parade. We marched on behalf of the 2/14 AIF Infantry Battalion. We marched with them because our school was named after the Victoria Cross recipient Private Bruce Kingsbury.



Cam Thompson leading the Battalion contingent

Our veteran leader Cam Thompson lead the way for the Battalion Association. On the day we met a Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel, who helped the diggers on the Kokoda Track, as they

rescued and saved a lot of diggers. In the parade we marched from Federation Square to the Shrine holding the main banner for the Battalion. After we finished, we ventured into the Shrine and saw many old banners and medals in the Crypt. It was a great day and thanks to the 2/14th Battalion Association,



Our helpers from Kingsbury Primary School.

the teachers and the parent helpers! Veterans participating in the March included Max Caldwell, Bob Iskov, Stan Jenks, Phil Kemp and Cam Thompson.

MEMORABILIA

Just a reminder that the Battalion has a securely stored collection of items donated by those associated with the Battalion. Darryl Thomson, son of Lieut Alex 'Sandy' Thomson, as our Memorabilia Officer, is always pleased to receive items that can be used to tell the story of the 2/14 Battalion and those who served in it. If you have anything that you would like to pass on to us, please contact Darryl, whose details can be found in the contact list on page 8.



Memorabilia items on display at the recent Reunion

OBITUARIES

Prepared by Ross Wilkinson

QX30257 Lance Corporal Henry Charles (Harry) AH CHEE

Army records in Canberra show that Harry was born on 30 September 1920 at Normanton in North Queensland. He enlisted on 12 March 1942 at Brisbane and was shown as living at Cloncurry at this time. After time with a Training Battalion in the Recruit Depot, he was sent to Port Moresby and marched in to the 2/14 Battalion on 21 September 1942 as the Battalion was providing a rear guard at Uberi, prior to being relieved from the rigours of the Kokoda Campaign.

Harry was posted to 11 Platoon in B Company as the Battalion recovered from its heavy losses on the Track. B Company had suffered heavily during the campaign with 11 Platoon suffering 9 killed and 10 wounded out of a total strength of 36. 2 of the three Platoon Commanders had been killed including Lieutenant Moore, and the third was wounded.

He was not to be with the Platoon for too long as 7 Division Headquarters concocted a plan to create a mobile fighting force of three companies of 120 men per company. These were to be raised, one each, from the already depleted battalions of the 21st Brigade. 2/14 was to provide A Company of this force which was under the command of Major Challen of Brigade HQ and it was named after him – Chaforce. Harry was posted to Number 5 Section in 2 Platoon of this force.

Initially, the plan was for Chaforce to outflank and harass the, by now, retreating Japanese. However, the speed of the enemy retreat meant that the initial role could not be undertaken so a new task was created. By this time Kokoda had been recaptured and the Japanese were consolidating defensive positions around the Beachhead at Buna, Gona and Sanananda.

A Company was attached to 2/31 Battalion and supporting its attack along the beach east of Gona Mission, the Company was struck by heavy machine and mortar fire killing 9 and wounding 15, including Harry Ah Chee. Harry was evacuated and rejoined the 2/14 Battalion after Chaforce had been disbanded and all remaining members rejoined the Battalion.

Back in Australia, the Battalion spent time at Ravenshoe in Queensland until August 1943 when it was sent back to New Guinea to take part in the Markham-Ramu Campaign, culminating in the battle at Shaggy Ridge.

Returning to Australia, the Battalion spent time at Kairi in Queensland. With an uncertain role for Australian troops for the rest of the war, 7 Division was earmarked to assist American forces in retaking The Philippines and so moved to the Townsville area to train for amphibious landings. At the last minute General MacArthur changed his plans to exclude all Australian involvement and so a new role had to be found for the Australians.

On 1 July 1945, the Australian 7th Division landed in an amphibious assault at the oil town of Balikpapan on the island of Borneo. This resulted in an assault on the Japanese positions protecting Manggar airfield with B Company playing a supporting role to the main drive. The only casualties suffered were in the patrolling to mop up and secure the area until the Japanese surrendered on 15 August 1945

Harry was with the Battalion when it was sent to the Celebes Islands in the Dutch East Indies (now Sulawesi under Indonesian rule) to carry out a peacekeeping role. This entailed the restoration of civil law and order and the containment and repatriation to Japan of Japanese soldiers until the return of the Dutch Army to assume control.

Elements of the Dutch military arrived during this period and effective control of the Celebes was passed to them from 2/14 Battalion over several days leading up to 2/14 Battalion's embarkation on HMAS Kanimbla for Australia on 22 January 1946. It was at this point that Lance Corporal Henry Ah Chee marched out of the Battalion.

He was finally discharged from the Army on 4 June 1946.

Harry was an important member of the 2/14 Battalion Association regularly attending ANZAC marches and reunions until his health deteriorated. He assisted with the raising of funds for the Queensland Branch by making and donating beautiful hand-made leather belts at each reunion luncheon in Queensland.

His contribution and his ready smile will be missed.

Trevor Pryor adds:

When I moved to Brisbane 5 years ago, fate destined that I lived in a position that ensured I drove past Henry's residence almost every day. Many, many times, there he was sitting on the veranda working on one of those belts. They were a work of art.

I recall how the smile, previously mentioned, would spread when talk turned to his battalion activities. It was almost impish when he spoke of his prowess with the Bren gun. It wasn't his ability with the rapid fire weapon that provoked the grin, but his description of his ability to use it as a single shot firearm – obviously a most difficult operation.

In the words of Lt. Col. Phil Rhoden, "The 2/14 is the story of a band of valiant soldiers."

Henry Ah Chee was an honoured member of that band.

NX127039/N7933 Corporal FRANCIS JACK AVERY

Francis Jack Avery was born on 13 March 1921 at Brunkerville in New South Wales, inland from Newcastle. He was living at Maitland when he enlisted at Gympie in Queensland on 18 July 1942.

After initial service in a Militia unit, he transferred to the AIF and marched in to the 2/14 Battalion

on 6 July 1943. He was posted to 18 Platoon in D Company.

After service with the Battalion in the Markham Ramu Campaign, where D Company suffered a number of casualties, Francis left the Battalion following its return to Australia. He marched out on 23 April 1945 and was discharged from the Army on 1 May 1945.



VX53512/V507044/VX146718 Lance Corporal COLIN NEWTON CAMPBELL

Army records in Canberra show that Colin Campbell was born in Prahran, Melbourne on 18 January 1925 and was living in Moonee Ponds when he enlisted in the Army on 19 May 1943. However, his first short-lived attempt at enlistment was 18 April 1941 in the name of Jack Vincent Burges with his birth year 1921.

He was initially posted to the 4th Infantry Training Battalion but after 2 months his real identity and age were discovered and he was discharged in June 1941 for having given a false answer on attestation.

Two years later he re-enlisted under his correct name and was initially posted to 23 Infantry Training Battalion. It appears from his records that during this time Colin had difficulty adjusting to the discipline of Army life.

He transferred to the AIF in July 1944 and marched in to the 2/14 Battalion on 1 August 1944, serving with them in the Balikpapan campaign in Borneo.

Prior to the Battalion returning to Australia, Colin was transferred to the 31/51 Militia Battalion and shipped to Rabaul which had been the regional Japanese headquarters since January 1941. There were large numbers of Japanese troops to be contained and repatriated to Japan as well as removal of tonnes of ammunition and bombs and investigations of war criminals. It was during this time that Colin was promoted to Lance Corporal.

He returned to Melbourne in June 1946 and was attached to 3 Military District before final discharge on 23 December 1946.

NX37026 Private BERNARD FRANCIS DAVIDSON

Army records show that Bernie was born in Sydney on 24 January 1920 and was living at Warren, near Dubbo, when he enlisted on 21 June 1941.

Nothing is known of his early service other than he marched in to the 2/14 Battalion on 28

OBITUARIES CONTINUED

August 1943 and posted to 18 Platoon in D Company. He saw active service with the Platoon in the Markham Ramu Campaign.

On returning to Australia, Bernie marched out of the Battalion on 29 March 1945 and transferred to 2/33 Battalion which was part of 25 Brigade. As part of the 7th Division, 2/33 Battalion landed at Balikpapan and took part in some of the heaviest fighting.

After the Japanese surrender, 2/33 Battalion undertook a peace-keeping role on Borneo before returning to Australia. Bernie was finally discharged from the Army on 22 May 1946.

VX64482 Lance Corporal JAMES ROSS IRVINE

Army records in Canberra show that Ross Irvine was born in Shepparton on 27 September 1920 and was living in Sale when he enlisted in the Army on 30 October 1941 at Royal Park in Melbourne. Little is known of his early Army life spent in a recruit training battalion in Australia and his movement to Port Moresby.

However, 2/14 Battalion records show that on 20 August 1942 he marched in to the Battalion to join his older brother, VX 19453 Sergeant Charles Cameron Irvine who was the Platoon Sergeant of 14 Platoon. Ross was posted to the Anti-Aircraft Platoon which was armed with Bren Light Machine Guns. The Platoon was to provide additional infantry support on the Kokoda Track and at Gona but battle casualties and sickness caused the evacuation of all but two members.

Unfortunately, Ross's brother, Cameron, was killed in action during the Battalion's initial attack against unknown enemy positions at Small Creek, Gona, on 28 November 1942.

When the Platoon returned to Australia it was amalgamated with the Carrier Platoon and reformed as the Medium Machine Gun Platoon armed with Vickers Machine Guns. The Platoon provided significant support to 21 Brigade operations in the Markham Ramu Campaign, particularly attacks at Pallier's Hill and Shaggy Ridge.

Unfortunately illness was to again strike the Platoon with malaria and scrub typhus causing many evacuations including Ross who left the Battalion on 26 January 1944. After a period in hospital, Ross was discharged from the Army on 15 June 1944.

The Association was represented at the funeral by the Gippsland Representative, Gary McCulloch

NX173943/N454632 Private KENNETH ALLEN JENSEN

Army records show that Ken was born on 25 February 1925 at Avon Dam, near Wollongong in New South Wales. He was living at Bathurst when

he enlisted in the Militia on 16 July 1943.

He transferred to the AIF and marched in to the 2/14 Battalion on 4 July 1944 where he was posted to 10 Platoon. The Battalion War Diary records that the Battalion was at Strathpine and 57 reinforcements marched in from Canungra Jungle Training Centre on that day.

Ken saw active service at Balikpapan in 10 Platoon whose commanding officer was Lieutenant "Teddy" Bear. He remained with the Battalion during its peace-keeping operations in the Celebes (Sulawesi) and was at Pare Pare when he marched out on 14 January 1946.

He was discharged from the Army on 24 October 1946.

NX153338/2908 Sergeant ERNEST LESLIE MEWBURN

Army records in Canberra show that Ernest Mewburn was born in Burrowa, NSW, on 5 February 1923 and was living in Overton when he enlisted in the Army on 19 May 1943. It appears from these records that he may have been in Queensland when he made the decision to enlist.

After initial training in a reinforcement battalion, 2/14 Battalion records show that on 6 July 1943 Ernest marched in to the Battalion whilst it was recuperating from the Kokoda and Gona Campaigns at Ravenshoe in Queensland. He was posted to 17 Platoon in D Company to rebuild the Company after it had suffered over 50% battle casualties and many more losses from malaria, dysentery and scrub typhus.

With the airborne landing at Nadzab, near Lae, securing the area and commencing the Markham Ramu Campaign, 2/14 Battalion's role after flying in, was to secure the right flank in the Atzera Mountains. D Company led this advance suffering casualties from enemy fire whilst crossing the Busip River.

Moving up the Markham Valley, D Company suffered further casualties at Wampun near Kaiapit whilst supporting the Battalion Headquarters but accounted for 26 of the enemy in the attack on the position. The Company supported the A Company attack on Pallier's Hill where further casualties were suffered. Active patrolling to contain the enemy became the Company's main role until the Battalion was rested from the Campaign.

On return to Australia the Battalion was training in the Townsville area anticipating a proposed 7th Division role in the seaborne invasion of the Philippines. At the last minute this was changed with the Americans deciding to go it alone. An alternate role, being the invasion of Borneo, meant that the sea landing training was not wasted and on 1 July 1945 the Battalion landed at Balikpapan to secure the oil fields and Manggar airstrip.

Holding the high ground above the airstrip meant that D Company suffered the brunt of the enemy counter-attacks and sustained its most casualties since the Kokoda Track. One of its members was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for this

action.

After Peace was declared in the Pacific, the Battalion was sent to the Celebes (now Sulawesi) in Dutch East Indies to undertake the restoration of law and order until the Dutch could return. This role included the containment of Japanese soldiers and their repatriation to Japan, the destruction of arms and ammunition and restoration of the civil administration.

It was during this time that the British Commonwealth Occupation Force was formed for the occupation of the Japanese mainland. Requests were made to all Australian units for transfers to the new Force and Ernest was one of those who put up his hand. He marched out of the 2/14 Battalion on 1 November 1945 and moved to Morotai where the Australian contingent, now known as 34 Brigade, BCOF, was being formed.

34 Brigade comprised of three new infantry battalions and support units and Ernest was posted to 168 Australian General Transport Company. The Force's role was, from 21 February 1946, to control the administration of 57 million square kilometres of Japanese land and about 20 million of the population. A further role was the dismantling of Japan's wartime capability of which 168 AGT played a prominent part.

As an experienced soldier, Ernest was rapidly promoted to Platoon Sergeant and at the time of his separation from the Army was an acting Warrant Officer and Company Sergeant Major. At his own request, he was discharged from the Army on 9 December 1947 and returned to civilian life.

Ernie was a member of the 2/14 Battalion Association Inc and took part in Association events when he could. His most recent involvement was to unveil the 2/14 Battalion Memorial Plaque at the Australian War Memorial in November, 2009.



Stan Dillon and Ernie Mewburn unveil the 2/14 Battalion plaque in 2009

He will be missed by his former 2/14 Battalion comrades and the ex-service community at large.

LATE NEWS: Just before going to press, we received with sadness the news of the passing of three more Battalion stalwarts: **Gordon McLean**, and Life members **Jim Coy** and **Ethel Ferguson**. Our sympathies are extended to their families. Full obituaries will appear in the next edition.

BALIKPAPAN 2013

A contingent of 17 people flew to Balikpapan for ANZAC Day 2013 celebrations.

The group with direct association to the 2/14th consisted of veteran Matt Power, his wife Bertha, Peter Holdsworth (Matt's nephew), trip organiser Ian Hopley, son of Bill Hopley, Nina and Gus Gerace, Kathy Cummings, Jenny Enright, George and Steve Shores, all children of Trevor Shores and Ray Ferguson and Heather Higgs, children of Lindsay Ferguson.

Also in the party was historian Phil Shehan who has been involved in interviewing and documenting histories from various members of the battalion, Phil Dandy, another historian who has written a book on the battles in Balikpapan, associate member Todd Shone and Grant and Jo Hutton.

Matt Power was able to guide the group through the various sites we visited and provided amazing recollections of both the men involved as well some of the scenarios and amusing incidents that happened during the campaign.

Local expats Ian Hale, Dave Webster and Russell Wood had been very busy planning for our week in Balikpapan and everything went very smoothly. We are very appreciative of their efforts.

Day 1 saw us following the steps of the battalion from its landing on "Yellow Beach" (a short distance from our hotel), a trip along the Vasey Highway over the Manggar River and into the area of the Manggar airfields where most of the fighting took place. We were able to reach the recently rediscovered 'Waite's Knoll', a site of Japanese gun emplacements which had provided very stiff opposition for the battalion before being overrun. Five 2/14th members paid the supreme sacrifice taking and holding "Waite's Knoll". We could gain a good understanding of the difficulties the battalion had to endure during these battles.



Matt Power explains the landing at Yellow Beach

Day 2 we visited the Australian International School and took part in their ANZAC day service. Matt addressed the school at the service and later in a classroom setting. For many of us the service brought back

memories of our own childhood services. Students recited the ode in both English and Indonesian. We are hopeful of an ongoing relationship with the school. We then visited the sites of some Japanese gun emplacements at Petrosea.

Day 3 ANZAC Day was an early start for the dawn service held on Pasar Ridge. A large contingent of over 220 expats and Indonesian veterans were present, along with school children and the Australian Military Envoy from Jakarta. Matt Power addressed the service and laid a wreath on behalf of the Battalion. The 2/14th flag took pride of place draped over the Matilda tank memorial. Matt also presented a 2/14th tie to Indonesian Chevron Oil Senior Vice president Mr. Ted Etchinson. Later in the day we also managed to watch the Anzac Day AFL game between Collingwood and Essendon. Some left happier than others.

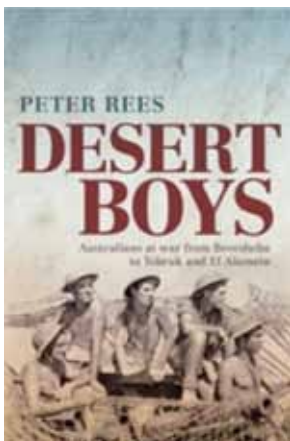


Tank Memorial at Pasar Ridge

continue over page >>>

BOOK REVIEW: DESERT BOYS - PETER REES

Allen & Unwin 2011 RRP \$49.99



"Australians fought in the deserts of North Africa and the Middle East in both World Wars. This is the human story of those soldiers, sailors and airmen; their involvement in some of the toughest campaigns of modern times, and their life away from the battlefield. Using letters, diaries, interviews and unpublished memoirs, Desert Boys provides an insight into the thoughts, feelings and experiences of two generations of Australian soldiers. In many cases these were fathers and sons going to successive wars with all the tragedy, adventure and hardship that brought. Desert Boys is a

absorbing story of bravery and hope, of endurance and determination, of mateship and adversity a very long way from home." Allen & Unwin

The book touches on aspects of 2/14 Battalion's experiences in the Western Desert and, more particularly, the Syrian Campaign, through the

activities of individual soldiers. The author contacted the Association for assistance to track veterans and families of veterans in relation to the story of three men who made the ultimate sacrifice: Ken Von Bibra, Christopher Walker and Oliver Dossetor. These were all newspapermen who could have had an easier life reporting on the war, but instead chose to enlist as ordinary fighting men. All three were killed during or following the Battle of Jezzine. Lionel Smith was one of those who was contacted by the author and made a contribution to the story.

The author reports on the amusing episodes that lighten a soldier's life on active service, as well as the politics of service life, including relationships between senior officers and their strategic impact on battles. The book also examines the generational effect of fathers and sons serving in their nation's armies during the First and Second World Wars.

Whilst the book is not a military history, the research does throw further light onto the fighting qualities of Australian soldiers and their impact on the battles in which they fought through those times. It is an easy read and an excellent addition to the military library.

Ross Wilkinson

BALIKPAPAN 2013 Continued

>>> Day 4 we got into tourist mode and visited the BOS Samboja orangutan and sun bear sanctuary, and concluded the day with a BBQ hosted by the expats at a local pub.

Day 5 was a visit to the local Borneo Bears AFL football games followed by a wonderful sportsman's evening featuring ex-Hawthorn players, Robert "Dippa" Dipierdominico and Gary Buckenara, and rugby legend John Connolly. Matt again spoke to the group and had the honor of presenting the ANZAC Day cup to the 2013 winning team, the Jakarta Bintang. Matt has also had Life Membership of the Borneo Bears AFL Club bestowed upon him.

The group had a wonderful time embracing the memories of the 1945 campaign as well as current life in Indonesia. Planning

is now underway to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Balikpapan landings in July, 2015.

Ray Ferguson & Nina Gerace.



Those with direct association standing on Yellow Beach

*Back: Ian Hopley, Heather Higgs, Ray Ferguson
Front: George Shores, Kathy Cummings, Nina Gerace, Bertha Power, Steven Shores*

70 YEARS AGO - RAVENSHOE

When the Battalion was relieved at Gona, in January 1943, it was in deep need of a respite period in which to recover and recuperate. With the recognition that the war to the north of Australia would not be over quickly, the Higher Command designated that the Atherton Tablelands should become the main training ground for Australian troops. 21st Brigade was sent to an area in the vicinity of Millstream Falls, near Ravenshoe (pronounced Ravenshoe), where the Pioneer Platoon worked tirelessly, building cookhouses, digging drains and creating camp facilities.

The toll had been so great in the Papuan campaign, that not only did the Battalion need to re-organise, but almost to re-form. Apart from those killed in action, many of the sick and wounded from the campaign were medically downgraded and did not return to the Battalion. Reinforcements came from NSW, Queensland and South Australia, as there were not enough new recruits from Victoria, now that the militia battalions were being mobilised.

Training exercises were carried out in the surrounding area, though distances travelled were hindered by a lack of transportation. The troops found life in the Ravenshoe area to be rather dull, and divisional concert parties, and a race meeting helped relieve the boredom.

The area where the Battalion was camped is now incorporated in the Millstream Falls National Park, and is worth visiting. Travel from Ravenshoe on the Mount Garnet road,

and you'll see the entrance to the Park on the left hand side about 3 km out of town. There is quite a bit of evidence of wartime occupation around the area, with an old nissan hut near the corner.



Millstream Falls National Park, Ravenshoe

From the picnic area there is a path down to the Falls. In the bush to the east of the picnic ground is another path which takes you through the area that the Battalion occupied, with panels describing the ways in which the various parts of the camp were used.



One of the panels on the Walking Track

Jill Bear

EVENT CALENDAR

2013

4th Committee Meeting

Sunday, 2nd June, 11.30 am
East Malvern RSL

Kokoda Concert

Saturday, 13 July at 7.30 pm at
St George's Church,
4 Chapel Street, East St Kilda

Reunion – Queensland

Thursday, 26th July,
10.00am – 4.00pm
Riverside Receptions
Oxdale Dve, New Farm

Kingsbury Services

Friday, 23rd August
9.30 am Reservoir High School
11.00 am Austin Health,
Repat Hospital Heidelberg

St Georges Church Service

Sunday, 25th August, 10.30 am
4 Chapel Street, East St Kilda

Kokoda Campaign Memorial Service

Sunday, 25th August, 11.00 am
Osborne House, Geelong

AGM & 1st Committee Meeting

Sunday, 22nd September, 11.00 am
The Shrine of Remembrance

Annual Pilgrimage

Sunday, 22nd September, 2.00 pm
The Sanctuary,
Shrine of Remembrance

2nd Committee Meeting

Sunday, 1st December, 11.30 am
East Malvern RSL

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Around The Traps

After leading the Melbourne march so valiantly this year, **VX16377 Cam Thompson** is having a stint in Cabrini Rehab hospital. It's a long story, but after a fall off his golf buggy, in which he suffered a bad cut to the forehead, he has had a couple of weeks in hospital where he received a pacemaker and had an operation to remove a skin cancer. He's looking a bit like he's been in the wars, but he reckons after all this, he'll be a new man.

VX15317 Dudley Warhurst, VX147608 Doug Watkins and VX14065 Peter Forster were also on sick parade earlier in the year, but are now much recovered and continue to soldier on. As Alan Hooper, of PIB/ANGAU noted recently, "no-one wants to live to be 100... until you're 99."



Jenny Patterson, niece of **VX15796 Cpl John Metson BEM**, has sent this photo of John and his new bride (Betty Ferguson) taken in 1942. The bridesmaid is Jenny's mother, Norma Ferguson, but Jenny would like to know who was the best man? As he wears a 2/14 colour patch, he was obviously a soldier serving with John. If anyone thinks they recognise him, please contact the editor.

You may have seen Nancy Ormsby, on the recent Desert War two-parter on the ABC, speaking about the experiences of her second husband at Tobruk and El Alamein. Nancy was previously the widow of 2/14 member, **VX15291 Charlie Fitzpatrick**.

Trevor Brooker, 2/16 veteran from Dungog, NSW, has made contact with our Secretary, Chris Ingram, through Trish Dillon, wife of **NX171751 Stan Dillon**. Trevor Brooker has kindly sent four 2/14 colour badges which he works in cross-stitch. They are mounted on a gold brooch. Chris will probably raffle these at next year's reunion, but if anyone is keen to have one please let her know. Contact details are on back page of Comradeship.

Sadly for Trish, Stan has gone into a nursing home. With his difficulties with walking, Trish could no longer manage. If you'd like to contact Stan, it is best to do so through Trish. Again, contact Chris for Trish's phone number and address.

We note with regret the passing of the following widows: Mrs. Jean Ferrari, widow of **VX15650 Pte Thomas A Ferrari**; Mrs Bobby Neal, widow of VX62485 WO2 John Edward Neal; Mrs J Weeks, widow of VX13739 Cpl Stan Weeks MM; Mrs Maureen Jorgensen, widow of **QX32826 Cpl Alexander Clyde Jorgensen**.

Craig Iskov, son of Bob, has been busy with his camera. You can view some of his photos from years past at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/2-14-photos/>

2013 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS - FIRST REMINDER

PAYMENT WAS DUE 30 APRIL 2013

If you have forgotten or overlooked your membership payment we'd be pleased to receive this at your very earliest. Please keep a record of your payment, either with your cheque butt or the tear-off record at the bottom of the remittance form (enclosed in this copy of Comradeship).

The new membership categories are as below:

Couple membership (\$40 pa) for married couples or partners who reside at the same address. One copy of Comradeship will be mailed four times per year. If you are kinship members, which includes in-laws you will also have full voting rights of the Association and be able attend all services and reunions.

Family membership (\$50 pa) for couples and all children still living at home (including adult children) all residing at the same address. One copy of Comradeship will be mailed four times per year. If you are kinship members, which includes in-laws, all adults will have full voting rights of the Association and be able to attend all services and reunions.

Single membership at \$25 pa will remain the same

PLEASE NOTE: If you are an existing **Single** member you may add your spouse or partner and children if you wish without them having to apply as new members. Additional lines have been added to the remittance form, which is enclosed with this copy of **Comradeship**, to accommodate the extra names. Please include the ages of children if they are under 18.

If you wish to pay directly by internet or bank transfer please email chris.ingram@margni.com for banking details.

If you joined the Association between October and December 2012 your membership subscription will not be due until April 2014.

Remember timely payment saves your Association the additional costs caused by following up overdue membership subs.

Please note:

- **Payment for veteran membership is optional.**
- **Widows of 2/14 veterans are not required to pay the membership fee.**
- **And please keep us updated with changes of address, phone numbers or email addresses.**