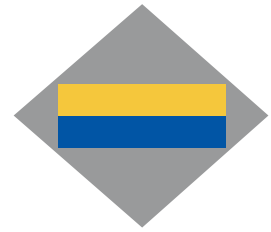


# COMRADESHIP

[www.2nd14battalion.org.au](http://www.2nd14battalion.org.au)

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## President's Report



The last few weeks have been some of our busiest, as we prepared for the Melbourne Shrine Service, the Reunion at a new venue, and the traditional ANZAC day march. I am very pleased to say that we had record attendances at all events.

Staging a reunion at a working Army Base comes with problems and the Committee worked their butts off to make sure that everything went off well; and it did, with over 90 people in attendance. The tour of this ancient barracks was also a highlight. Seeing the Cabinet War Room, left much as it was during WW2, and still being used today for meetings, put us in the mood for a memorable Reunion in The Officers' Mess. It was wonderful to see 2/14th Western Australian Veteran Phil Kemp and his family come from all parts of Australia to participate again, as did Matt Power from Mount Tamborine in Queensland. Our local, Max

Caldwell, made up the group of Veterans who all seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves in this unique setting. Rob Eden, once again, did a sterling job at keeping the motley crew in order.

Then, on a beautiful sunny morning, over 60 marchers stepped off for the annual ANZAC day march to The Shrine. Max Caldwell led the parade, ably assisted by the children, teachers and parents of Kingsbury Primary School, all in school colours, the colours of the Battalion, Yellow over Blue. What a sight we made, as we swung into St Kilda Road, heading for the Shrine. I was sent photos, as we marched, of the 2/14th marchers in Brisbane, also well attended. Congratulations all, our fathers would have been so very proud.

I am coming to the end of my stint as your President; Vice President Craig Iskov will be taking over in September, after the elections. Craig is the son of our 2/14th Veteran Bob Iskov, who is doing it hard at the moment. I wish him well, and have every confidence that his son, Craig will continue on with the traditions of this proud Association, and add some fresh thoughts on the future running of the organisation.

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

### 2014 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS - FIRST REMINDER PAYMENT WAS DUE 30 APRIL 2014

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).

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 kinsfolk members, which includes in-laws you have full voting rights of the Association and are 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 kinsfolk members, which includes in-laws, all adults have full voting rights of the Association and be able to attend

all services and reunions. Please include the ages of children if they are under 18.

#### Single Membership at \$25 pa

If you wish to transfer your payment electronically, the Commonwealth Bank account details are as follows: BSB: 063 000 Account No: 0090 0598

If you joined the Association between October and December 2013 your membership subscription will not be due until April 2015.

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.*

## HEALING THE WOUNDS OF WAR

Continuing a tradition that dates back to the First World War, the annual 14th Battalions memorial service will be held at St George's Uniting Church, on Sunday, 24th August, commencing at 10.30am.

The service remembers the death at Gallipoli of Rev Andrew Gillison, Chaplain of the 14th Battalion and minister at St George's, as well as all those who served in the 2/14th and 14/32nd Battalions during World War II, and later conflicts and peace keeping roles.

Guest speaker on this occasion will be Rev John Bottomley, former minister at St George's and now deputy director of Creative Ministries Network. He will speak on "Transforming Tradition".

Lunch, hosted by 2/10 Light Battery, 5/6 The Royal Victoria Regiment and St George's congregation is available for \$10 at the Drill Hall next door to the church, following the service. To assist with catering, please **RSVP** your lunch booking before 15 August by phoning 0423673273 or email [charnpolo@yahoo.com](mailto:charnpolo@yahoo.com)

If you are unable to attend this service, you might consider coming to one of the other memorial services held at this time of the year, including the services at Reservoir High School and Austin Health (Heidelberg Repat) on Friday, 22nd August, or the Kokoda Campaign memorial service in Geelong on 31st August. See the **Coming Events** notice for further details.

## MELBOURNE REUNION 2014

The day began as usual, with the Wreath Laying at the Battalion Tree, beside the Shrine of Remembrance.



Veterans, Matt Power, Max Caldwell and Phil Kemp at the Tree Ceremony

Rob Eden presided over a brief ceremony, at which President Michael Ralston read the poem, Killed in Action, by a veteran of the First World War, 4th Australian Light Horseman, Harry McCann. In it McCann reflects

on his experience at Gallipoli, where the dreams of so many young Australians came to an end, leaving families at home to grieve.

As always, we thank the Shrine for their practical assistance with the ceremony, including the provision of the catafalque party and the presence of their representative, Shrine Governor, Colonel John Coulson. Thank you, too, to Howard Cornish, on hand with his bugle.



Some of the guests at the Melbourne Reunion

This ceremony was followed by a tour of Victoria Barracks, as described in a separate article, before over 90 members, including veterans, **Matt Power, Max**

**Caldwell, Phil Kemp,** and Matt's brother, John, gathered in the Officer's Mess for the luncheon.

The highlight of this event was the awarding of Life Membership to Matt Power and Ross Wilkinson. Their citations can be read elsewhere in this edition. In his reply to the award, Matt paid tribute to Michael's contribution as president. He went on to reflect on the Balikpapan campaign, describing the masterful organisation of the invasion, which was designed to save lives while achieving its objectives.

Special thanks are extended to Colonel McGowan, President of the Officer's Mess at Victoria Barracks for granting permission to hold the reunion in this historic venue; to Ron Newland and his security officers for facilitating our presence on the base; and to Brad Sutton and his team from Brighton Catering for the delicious food. The work of Rob Eden and John Smith in liaising with the Barracks to stage the event, must also be acknowledged with much appreciation.

The holding of the Reunion at the Barracks was initially planned four years ago, but the elements stepped in, and the long time taken to repair the building following severe hail damage meant it only became available to us again, earlier this year. It was also unfortunate that during that intervening period, the attack on Holdsworthy Army Base had led to much more stringent security measures being applied to active military installations within Australia. Consequently, there were, no doubt, some members who could not attend because of the need to comply with these tight security restrictions. As we hope to continue to hold the Melbourne Reunions at this venue, now would be a good time to organise your government issued photo identity card for future occasions. (See last edition for information on this process.)

## 2014 YARRA VALLEY LEGACY ANZAC SERVICE FOR SCHOOLS

Our hearts sank when, as we came down the Burwood Highway hill to Springvale Road on our way to the Legacy Schools Service at Ferntree Gully National Park on 30th April, the heavens opened and the rain came down in a torrent. Looking ahead, however, we could see an area of clear sky at the foot of the Dandenongs. Perhaps, with a bit of luck, we would be all right, after all.

Yarra Valley Legacy President David Heale presided over the event, as well as speaking about the origins of Legacy, set up by former soldiers, in the wake of World War I to care for the widows and children of their fallen comrades.



Noel Bear (at right) laid the wreath on behalf of the Battalion

The other speaker was Alan Jameson, Vice President of the 39th Battalion Association, who reminded the children of the crucial role the battalions commemorated on the Memorial Wall we were gathered before,

played in ensuring the freedom we enjoy today.

During the service, students from Ferny Creek and Tecoma Primary Schools supported the singing, while band members were from both Upwey High and Tecoma Primary.

About 200 school children were in attendance for the moving ceremony, and as Legatee David Heale acknowledged in closing, the rain gods held off, until a light sprinkle began to fall at the very end of the service.



A section of the crowd of school children



## ANZAC DAY – MELBOURNE

A beautiful sunny day had the crowds out in force for the March in Melbourne this year. Over 60 kinfolk joined veterans **Max Caldwell**, in the lead with **Matt Power** and **Phil Kemp** following in cars. **Cam Thompson** made a late entry for the 'Eyes Right' near the Eternal Flame. The children from Kingsbury Primary School (see report following) added to the impact made by the Battalion contingent as it made its way proudly along the route of the march.



We all felt nervous and expectant for the march to begin as the roaring music started playing in perfect symphony. We felt proud being a part of this spectacular march.



Kingsbury Primary students with Max Caldwell and Cam Thompson

The cold raging wind swept passed our solemn faces. Our fingers were paralysed by the temperature of the freezing weather in the early morning.

Following is the report written by two of the students from Kingsbury Primary School and published in the school newsletter.

### ANZAC Day By Alysia & Chenxi



The 25th April was a tense and thrilling ANZAC Day, where our senior JSC leaders marched in the 99th ANZAC Parade with the admired 2nd/14 Battalion Association members. We

travelled to the Shrine of Remembrance on a train from Reservoir Station with a few teachers and parents.



The city was crowded when we walked down Swanson Street, following a 2nd/14 Battalion Association member to our marching position. Either medals or Rosemary were pinned to almost everyone's chests, honouring and remembering the soldiers.

When a voice yelled from a distance "eyes right", we had to glance to the right to the Eternal Flame to respect it. The crowd waved and clapped us all the way through the march, giving us confidence and support.



"Lest we forget" in dark brown letters was printed on the outside walls of the Shrine for the fallen. Thousands of poppies were under our feet inside the Shrine, with 400 medals displayed on the walls, each of them representing 100 Victorians who died. The medals came from different wars from all around the world, in different centuries.



We must never forget the sacrifice of the brave men and women who fought in the cruel wars.

Lest we forget.

## EVENT CALENDAR

### 2014

**Committee Meeting**  
Sunday, 1st June 2014  
at 11.30am  
East Malvern RSL

**Reunion – Queensland**  
Thursday, 31st July 2014,  
at 10 am – 4 pm  
Riverside Receptions,  
Oxley Drive, New Farm

**Bruce Kingsbury Memorial Service**  
Friday, 22nd August 2014  
at 9.30am  
Reservoir High School

**Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (Austin Health)**  
Friday 22nd August 2014  
at 11 am. Enter via Gate 9  
300 Waterdale Road,  
Heidelberg West

**Healing The Wounds of War**  
Sunday, 24th August 2014  
at 10.30 am  
St George's Uniting Church,  
4 Chapel Street, East St Kilda

**Kokoda Campaign Memorial Service**  
Sunday, 31st August 2014  
at 11 am  
Osborne House, North Geelong

**AGM and Committee Meeting**  
Sunday, 28th September 2014  
The Shrine of Remembrance,  
Melbourne

**Annual Pilgrimage**  
Sunday, 28th September 2014 -  
Annual Pilgrimage  
The Sanctuary,  
The Shrine of Remembrance,  
Melbourne

**2/16th Battalion Reunion Lunch**  
Sunday 5th October 2014  
at 11.30 am  
Old Hepburn Springs Hotel,  
Hepburn – Newstead Road,  
Hepburn Springs  
RSVP Trevor Ingram 0419 333 347  
Email: [tingram@globalskm.com](mailto:tingram@globalskm.com)



## ANZAC DAY, BRISBANE

The pictures of our wonderful ANZAC Day came from the new phone!

A small group from 2/14th Battalion Association was led in the Brisbane March by **George Priestley** and **Arthur Toombs**. Fittingly, the group was the first World War II unit to follow section leader, Major-General (Rtd) Darryl Low Choy.



(L-R) Trevor Pryor, Terry Twine, Warren Major, Ron Smith, Maj-Gen Darryl Low Choy, John Hay, George Priestley, Arthur Toombs, Megan Jesser, Bruce Lees

Early in the march, Darryl was left well in front as the vets were descended upon by the media. Order was restored by the time we reached the dignitaries and "eyes left" was observed.

I never cease to be amazed by the genuine appreciation shown by the growing crowd for the veterans. The applause is continuous and the sentiments called out to the participants reflect a very thankful audience. It is quite emotional.

Following the march, a group joined **Dudley Warhurst** for lunch and a chin wag. As well as the story related about Ivan Leask, included in the Queensland Report, Dudley told of us of his recent photo shoot where he is to be the "face of Seniors Week". It will be interesting to see some of the magazines and posters.



Trevor Pryor, Terry Twine, Megan Jesser, Dudley Warhurst, Fran Ralston, Elisa Nowak and Chris Twine

Thanks go to Fran Ralston for providing the lovely food for lunch.

Again it was a pleasure to be involved with our group. Megan commented toward the end of the day, "It feels just like a family." So true!

Trevor Pryor

## QUEENSLAND REPORT

### John Leask Visit

In February, we were contacted by John Leask who had two uncles, Ivan and Norm, serve with the Battalion. John hoped to speak with a veteran who had served with them and so we met at the Bardon residence of **Dudley Warhurst**.

After some general discussion, John asked if Dudley had known his uncles. Dudley replied that he had and that he had stumbled across Ivan on a stretcher at Isurava. Dudley had removed Ivan's ID to hand in and also removed a small golden boomerang which he resolved to return to his family as they lived not far from his hometown of Benalla.

I wish I had taken a photo of John's face at this point! Whatever he had hoped to get from the visit had obviously been achieved in abundance. As I have said before, while the body is letting Dudley down, the mind is still sharp.

John added that the Ivan's mother had given her 3 sons a boomerang to carry as a gesture that they return. On ANZAC Day, Dudley told the visiting group of his emotional experience when he returned Ivan's boomerang to the family. Every eye was filled to one degree or another.

### Bellairs' Legacy

Fran Ralston joined me to attend a presentation from the Bellairs family to The Southport School (TSS). Bill Bellairs (39 Bn) was a great supporter of the 2/14th especially in attending the annual reunion. Bill regularly led 3 cheers for the 2/14th in recognition of its timely arrival at Isurava to relieve his exhausted 39th Battalion. Bill also supported a number of associations on the Gold Coast and had a particular interest in TSS.

The perpetual trophy, awarded for "moral strength" is, appropriately, one of Peter Dorman's statues of Bruce Kingsbury VC.

### Pre Kokoda Visit

In March, a request was received from Stephen MacPherson, son of a 2/25th Battalion soldier, to meet with a survivor of the Kokoda campaign, prior to taking his twin 16 year old sons over the Track in April.

I collected **George Palmer** (39 Bn) and off we went to meet them at Dudley's. Father and sons were impressed with the two veterans and prepared to head off for the venture, concluding at Bomana War Cemetery on ANZAC Day, with renewed inspiration.

Unfortunately, I have to apologies that pictures associated with these events were lost in my phone's destruction.



Aidan Grimes lays a wreath in honour of the 2/14 Battalion at Bomana War Cemetery, PNG, on ANZAC Day.

### LUTWYCHE WAR GRAVES

Michael Webster reports that the Commonwealth War Graves people have done a clean-up of the area in the Lutwyche Cemetery, where three soldiers from 2/14th are interred, and rehighlighted the inscriptions on the headstones.



Pte William Gaskell left the battalion 12/9/42 and died of wounds 13/12/42.



Sgt J.L. Flaherty left the battalion 5/3/45, died on 11/4/45.



L/Cpl R.J. Free left the battalion 4/11/45 and died on 23/11/45.

Tevor Pryor

## VICTORIA BARRACKS TOUR

When one views the imposing bluestone edifice of Victoria Barracks as visible from St Kilda Rd, one is not aware of the dozen or so separate buildings, behind it on the 12 acre site. Such was one of the surprise discoveries made apparent to the members of the Battalion Association lucky enough to be included in the Barracks tour prior to the Reunion Luncheon in Melbourne this year.

The three oldest buildings on the site, all bluestone, date between 1856 and 1859 and were built by British soldiers, as accommodation block, hospital and keep, surrounded by a secure defensive wall, some of which remains. The hospital was soon moved when it was decided that its proximity to a cess pit made it a less than ideal location. With a layout, designed according to standard British colonial practice, the inclusion of a keep provided a place of last resort in the event of hostile attack, with firing holes ahead and observation slits at either end. Today it constitutes an ideal wine cellar for the Officers' Mess.



'A' Block of Victoria Barracks built in 1860-1862

Later buildings from the 1860s were put to tender, and include that formidable front building, which incorporates a now rarely used ceremonial entrance'

Up until 1921, the Barracks shared the site with various other non- military institutions, including children from the Melbourne Industrial School, destitute men from the Melbourne Migrant Home, Police Hospital and Police Barracks.

During the Boer War, the parade ground was a camp for the Victorian contingent. This area is now half its original size, following the addition of further buildings to the site during the 1930's and 1970's.



War Cabinet Room, 10 Oct, 1943. From left to right are Prime Minister John Curtin; Secretary to the War Cabinet, Sir Frederick Shedden; Treasurer, Ben Chifley and Ministers, Norman Makin, Arthur Drakeford, and John Dedman.

It's finest hour was during the Second World War, when, because the Defence Department had not yet moved to Canberra, the Barracks was the site from which the war was administered.

The War Cabinet Room, and the next door War Advisory Committee Room were the hub of government decision-making, with regard to the promulgation of the war. From here Curtin declared war on Japan in December, 1941.

The peculiarly-shaped table, maps on the wall, brown-out curtains and 'refreshment' cabinet are still to be seen in the room. From these rooms, important decisions with regard to theatres of war, rationing, man power controls and any other business that would contribute to and support the war effort were taken.

In 1957, the Defence Department made the final move to Canberra, but Victoria Barracks continues to serve an important administrative function within the Australian Department of Defence, witnessed by the fact that our group was unable to have access to the Cabinet Room, until a meeting chaired by the Chief of the Army, had concluded there.

For those of you who missed out on the tour, Peter Judge, head of the Corps of Guides, informed us that Barracks tours, which had been suspended following the attack on Holdsworth Barracks in Sydney, are planned to recommence within a few months. The tours give access to an important aspect of Australia's history and those who visited the site in April heartily recommend them.

## ROTARY KOKODA CLASSIC

The Broadwater-Southport Rotary Kokoda Memorial Walk held annually since 2005, has been changed to the Rotary Kokoda Classic, to be run/walked along Gold Coast beaches on Saturday, 9th August, 2014.

The 10 and 15 km courses will start at Seaway, Main Beach. Surfers Paradise Cenotaph (beach end of Trickett St), in conjunction with Surfers RSL, will be the mid-way point for the long walk (9.4km) and also Registration point for the short walk (3.4) en route to Broadbeach SLSC.

The Walk/Run will culminate in a short memorial service at the Rotary Kokoda Memorial Wall, Cascade Gardens, commencing at 10.30am.

The intention of the changes being made is both to re-focus attention on this magnificent memorial and also coincide with Kokoda Day, which will be held the day before at the Memorial.

For more information visit <http://kokodaclassic.com/> ; phone 0417 620 516 or email [cmyers@smh.net.au](mailto:cmyers@smh.net.au).

Download entry forms from <https://endurancecui.active.com/event-reg/select-race?e=8425151>

## MEMORABILIA



The above photograph was taken in 1946, at the Shrine Pilgrimage. Only a handful of members have been identified so far. If you'd like to have a closer look to see if you can recognise anyone, please contact the Editor (03 9889 3466 or [jillebear@gmail.com](mailto:jillebear@gmail.com))

## LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

At the recent Annual Reunion in Melbourne, veteran, Matt Power and former Association secretary, Ross Wilkinson were awarded Life Membership of the Association. Their citations appear below:

### VX 16374 Sergeant Matthew Robert Power

Matt was born in Traralgon and was living in the nearby small town of Gormandale when he enlisted on 23 May 1940. He was inducted into the Army at Caulfield Racecourse before marching into the 2/14 Battalion several days later.

Matt is one of the approximately 115 "original" men who were to spend their entire service in the Battalion for the next 5 ½ years and who saw service in every campaign in which the Battalion was involved. When the companion volume to Bill Russell's official history was being prepared for publication, Men of the Second Fourteenth, Matt was an important contributor because of his keen eye for detail over this continuous service.

He was wounded during the battle of Isurava, with his 15 Platoon being one of the first body of 2/14 troops onto the Isurava battlefield. Despite being shot in the back, he walked out of Isurava, after returning to the front line to ensure his squad had retreated.

He was finally discharged from the Army in December 1945 whilst the Battalion was undertaking peacekeeping functions in the Celebes (Sulawesi).



Michael Ralston and Margaret Briggs present Matt with his Life Membership award

On his return to Australia, Matt became a schoolteacher. This career enabled him to return to Papua New Guinea some years later, when he became headmaster at Keravat High School in Rabaul, East New Britain.

Matt finally ended up in retirement in Queensland like many of his former comrades-in-arms, however, he remained actively involved in the Victorian-based Battalion Association.

In 2001, he became Vice-President with a view to becoming President, but this was accelerated with the death of then-President, the Reverend Tom Douglas.

During Matt's Presidency, the Association was required to ascertain the exact location of the Isurava battlefield for the development by the Australian Government of the memorial on that site. As well as having been a major contributor to the "Last Parade" return to PNG in 1998, Matt had been a member of the reconnaissance party that positively identified the 1942 site of the Battle of Isurava during a visit to the area in 2000.

Consequently, he was well placed to manage the discussion.

At the time, there was some disagreement on detail but Matt, who had flown down from Queensland for this important meeting, calmly but firmly controlled the meeting resulting in the final decision being reached.

Matt, along with Col Blume, was then invited to attend the official opening and dedication of the memorial as a representative of the 2/14 Battalion Association.

Matt has been a very important and active member of the Association, with his knowledge of the Battalion through his involvement in every Campaign. He has made himself available to attend pilgrimages in Papua New Guinea and, more recently, given expert advice during three trips to Balikpapan, namely 2010, 2012 & 2013 and is hoping to go on the next one to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the battles in Balikpapan.

His local knowledge has made it possible to locate the sites of important battlegrounds there, including the positive identification of the position of Waite's Knoll during the visit in 2012.



Ian Hopley and Trevor Pryor working with Matt to identify Waite's Knoll in 2012

He was last year made a Life Member of the Borneo Bears Australian Rules Football Club in Balikpapan, and has fostered local community relationships with visits to schools, there.

Matt has shared his memories with a number of authors and documentary makers in respect of the Kokoda Track campaign, as well as with many members and kinfolk over many years, seeking to know more about the Battalion's wartime experiences.

Our President Michael is particularly grateful to Matt for being a Mentor to him during Michael's years as President.

We thank Matt for all he has done in the name of the 2/14 Battalion and hope he continues to remain active for many years to come.

### ROSS WILKINSON

Ross is the son of Corporal William Wallace "Bill" Wilkinson of Headquarters Company. Bill was with the Carrier Platoon for the Syria and Kokoda Campaigns, then became Batman/Company Clerk for Headquarters Company Commander, Captain Bill Russell, for the Gona and Markham-Ramu Campaigns. He was evacuated to Australia in late 1943 with severe, recurring malaria and subsequently, was unable to return to the Battalion spending the remainder of the war at land Headquarters in Melbourne.

Ross spent two years in a CMF Officer-training Regiment with the intention of enlisting in the permanent army, before breaking his leg in an accident led to him being medically discharged. He was then employed as a Patrol Officer in Papua New Guinea that included appointment as a commissioned officer in the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary and as a Magistrate of the PNG Courts. This enabled Ross to be stationed at and walk about many of the PNG battlefields.

Because of his prior military experience and qualifications to use explosives, he worked with the Australian and PNG Defence Forces destroying unexploded bombs and munitions left over from the War. As a result of this service Ross holds the Police Overseas Service medal and the Papua New Guinea Independence Medal.

On return to Australia, Ross gained his Town Clerk's qualifications and worked with various Councils in Victoria. He spent his last 6 years of working life with the State Government in the Transport area before retiring in 2012.

In 2000, after 40 years as Secretary of the Association, John Stirling sought help from someone who could eventually take over the Secretary's role. Because of his local government experience, Ross was urged by his father to contact John, so in 2000 he joined the Committee as Assistant Secretary and in 2001 took over from John. Ross held the post of Secretary for 8 years, until his resignation in 2008. For several years during this time, Ross and his wife Louise, were also editors of the Association Newsletter, Comradeship. From 2000 until 2013, Ross was also Public Officer of the Incorporated Association.

Ross, with his intense interest in military history and strong research capabilities, continues to contribute actively to the Association. For many years, as his special tribute to those who served in the Battalion, he has prepared the obituaries for publication in Comradeship and written eulogies for delivery at the funeral services of our veterans. There are many members of the Association and of the general public, who have benefited from Ross's rich store of historical knowledge, which he shares generously, so that connections with the Men of the 2/14th can be renewed and maintained. Among many other instances where he has provided information on the Battalion, he was responsible for writing the text for the information panels about the Battalion now on display at Dandenong Ranges National Park, at Ferntree Gully.

Well done, Ross. Bill would be very proud of you.



Current secretary, John Smith and Michael Ralston confer Life Membership on Ross Wilkinson

## 2/14 BATTALION ASSOCIATION BALIKPAPAN LANDING 70TH ANIVERSARY TRIP June-July 2015

The 1st of July 2015 will be the 70th anniversary of the 2/14 Battalion landings at Yellow Beach, Balikpapan, Borneo.



Members of 2/14th Battalion landing at Balikpapan on 1 July, 1945

Whilst it is early days, the association is putting together preliminary plans for a commemorative tour of Balikpapan with accompanying services to be held in Balikpapan between 29 June 2015 and 5 June 2015. Our expat supporters in Balikpapan have assured us of their assistance.

As with past 2/14 Battalion Association Balikpapan tours, in order to keep costs to an absolute minimum, instead of using a tour company, we will put together an itinerary and then it will be up to participating persons to arrange their own airfares. This will allow participants to shop around for the cheapest airfares available and also make their own stopovers en route or on return.

The Association will attempt to negotiate a discounted rate at a Balikpapan Hotel to keep

### Proposed Itinerary BALIKPAPAN – 29 June to 5 July 2015

Day/Date	Place	Event
Mon 29 June	Aust-Balikpapan	Arrive Balikpapan by own arrangements (which may be from Port Moresby, PNG)
Tue 30 June	Balikpapan	Tour Balikpapan including Manggar Beach & Waite's Knoll
Wed 01 July	Balikpapan	Yellow Beach landing site & Pasar Ridge Commemoration Service. PM: Manggar Besar River cruise*
Thu 02 July	Balikpapan	Kampung Batu (Petrosea) Japanese guns **PM: Somber River village & Proboscis monkey cruise
Fri 03 July	Balikpapan	**Bos Samboja National Park – orangutans & sun bears PM: at leisure
Sat 04 July	Balikpapan	At leisure. PM: Farewell dinner
Sun 05 July	Balikpapan-Aust or other port	Depart Balikpapan by own arrangements

\*if possible  
\*\*optional

everyone together and, in conjunction with our Balikpapan expatriate supporters, arrange the appropriate local tours and services. A costing for the tours including the buses, national park admission fees and extras will be advised in due course but will be kept at cost. Meals, visas, travel insurance will be individual expenses however where a meal is arranged, a costing will be provided.



Japanese gun emplacement on 'Parramatta' Ridge, Balikpapan

### Possible optional Papua New Guinea stopover extension.

Many members and supporters in the past have expressed interest in visiting Papua New Guinea without actually walking the Kokoda Track.

In conjunction with our supporters at Our Spirit Tours, we are considering a possible, optional 3-day stopover in Port Moresby for those persons who would like to visit the Bomana War Cemetery and see Ower's Corner, the commencement of the Kokoda Track which allows a great view of the Owen Stanley

Ranges and Imita Ridge. This extension will be conducted by Our Spirit Tours.

Air Nuigini fly to Singapore 4 times per week so participants availing themselves of the PNG stopover can continue on to Balikpapan via Singapore and meet with the group to commence the Balikpapan arrangements.

### Expressions of interest

2015 will be a busy year for military commemoration especially with the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings in April and the 70th anniversary of the end of World War 2.

Initial indications are that the 2015 2/14th Balikpapan tour will be heavily subscribed and it is essential that we start planning as soon as possible. Numbers will be strictly limited and if necessary, a selection ballot will be held.

Further information and expressions of interest will be called for in the next edition of Comradeship.

Further initial information is available from:

**Ian Hopley (SA) 0433 019441**  
**Michael Ralston (Vic) 0417 550861**  
**John Smith (Vic) 0427 522999**  
**Trevor Pryor (Qld) 0407 500588**

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## Around The Traps

2/14th veteran **Bob Iskov** is in Wangaratta Private Hospital recovering from a recent fall and subsequent stroke. Son, Craig, reports Bob has regained enough speech capacity to again coach football, politics and grandchildren. He is currently awaiting a placement in a rehabilitation ward in Wangaratta Base Hospital and the family is hopeful of a good recovery.

Recently, Bob was thrilled to have a visit from Pastor Magi Goro, a family friend from PNG. Magi Goro is a Chimbu man from the PNG Highlands who lives in Port Moresby, with his wife Debbie and six children. Magi is supervisor of over 150 churches in the Southern region of PNG and is much loved among the people there. When Bob, Craig and Richard Iskov stayed on with Kenn Iskov in Port Moresby after the 2/14th PNG trip in 2004, Magi presented them with a bow and arrow each, saying "Bob was a warrior who helped to keep our country free from the Japanese invader".

When planning to visit Sydney for a conference last week Magi advised Kenn Iskov that he wanted to come down and see Bob, for whom he has developed a great love and respect. Magi did find Wangaratta a little cold, given that it was snowing on Mt Hotham during his visit.



*Pastor Magi Goro from PNG visiting Bob Iskov in hospital recently*

Earlier in the year a group of local porters from Kagi Village, PNG, also came to Wangaratta, with the intention of visiting Bob at the RSL there. Unfortunately, Bob was taken off to hospital for the night, leaving Craig and the Ralstons to host the night.



*The visitors from Kagi, sporting 2/14th hats, with Michael Ralston and Craig Iskov*

The next day, the Kagi group went round to Bob's house and serenaded him there. [Editor's note: One of my fondest memories of my trek on the Kokoda Track was coming into Naduli, the village up the hill from Kagi to the sound of the young men singing. Totally uplifting. Lucky Bob. I'm sure it did him good.]

Sandy, wife of **Peter Forster** reports that is faring very well overall, although he spent a few days in hospital with an infection in early April. She passed on that life at Fairway Hostel is wonderful - a truly beautiful facility just 500 metres from home and providing much better care than where Peter was previously. "It's the ideal model of 'personalising care.'"

Below is a photo of Peter and Sandy taken in March at the South Melbourne Market. "We took him there in his wheelchair in a maxi-cab. He loved it and was treated like royalty by all the traders who've known him over the past 20 plus years," explained Sandy.



*Sandy and Peter Forster on a recent visit to South Melbourne Market*

**Neva Hopley**, widow of 2/14 Battalion member **VX 149573 William (Bill) Hopley** and mother of Battalion Welfare Trustee and executive member Ian and his brother Glenn passed away peacefully at Beaudesert, Queensland on 21 February 2014 aged 89 years.

Neva was a long-term supporter of the association since her marriage to Bill in 1949 and regularly attended 2/14 Battalion functions, especially in latter years after she and Bill moved to Queensland.

Neva's brother Bill (Doc) Davis was a member of the 2/10 Battalion RAE who was captured in Singapore in 1942 and spent 3 years in captivity including working on the infamous Burma Siam Railway. In that time Neva was the secretary of the 2/10 Battalion Family Support Association later to be amalgamated into the POW Association.

Bertha Power represented the association at Neva's funeral.