

COMRADESHIP

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Print Post Approved PP3394340023



VOL XXXV No.2
June 2015

President's Report



What an amazing few weeks in April. It began with the simple, but moving, service at the 2/14 tree at the Shrine, followed by another wonderful annual reunion luncheon. The historic Victoria Barracks was the venue for the event and once again we had a full house. We were honoured to have the very engaging author and producer, Patrick Lindsay, as the guest speaker. Patrick spoke about leaders and leadership in the 2/14 and focussed on a number of the great names in our history. He spoke not only of our men who were born leaders but also those who had responsibility thrust on them under tragic circumstances.

Most of us would have heard the names and the stories of these men, but Patrick's personal approach and moving analysis had many in the room in tears. We also had a thorough research piece written by Jill Bear and read by Chris Ingram on the family

service connections between the original 14 Battalion "Jacka's mob" and our 2/14 Battalion. Past President Michael Ralston was awarded Life Membership of the 2/14 Battalion Association for the incredible amount of work he put into the association over many years. My sincere thanks to everyone concerned for the huge amount of work undertaken by our people to put this day together.

I attended the Anzac Day Dawn Service at the Shrine and it was wet, crowded, moving and wonderful. The march itself was very well attended by the 2/14 family and I was very proud to accompany 2/14 veteran Max Caldwell and past President Michael Ralston along the route. A number of us later joined 2/16 and 39th members for lunch and that is a wonderful relationship that we must continue. Of course, it was a special time for us, not only the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings, but within one day of the raising of the 2/14 Battalion, 75 years previously.

Picnic at Puckapunyal was held on the 17th of May to celebrate that early period in the Battalion's history. There are more events throughout the year, including the Queensland reunion on 30 July, so please join us if you can. The events are listed in this magazine and also on the 2/14 website.

My best wishes to all,

Craig Iskov

President

GILLISON MEMORIAL SERVICE

Following successful representation to the Principal at St Michael's Grammar School, the **Gillison Memorial Service** will be held one more time, on 22 August, at 2pm, at the former St George's in East St Kilda, now Performing Arts Centre for St Michael's Grammar.

This service will commemorate the centenary of the death at Gallipoli of Andrew Gillison, chaplain of the 14th Battalion, as well as being a service of commemoration for the various battalions and their associations who have become involved with the service over the years.

Note that the service will take place in the afternoon.

2015 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE BY 30 APRIL 2015

Membership Subscriptions fall due on 30 April 2015 and we would be pleased to receive them by the due date. Please use the remittance form in this copy of Comradeship. To pay by internet please transfer to our Bank Account: **BSB 063000 Account No 0090 0598**, and include your name in the description.

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 to attend all services and reunions.

Family Membership (\$50 pa)

For couples and all children (including adult children) residing at the same address. One copy of Comradeship will be mailed four times per year. If you are a kinship member, 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

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 joined the Association between October and December 2014 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.*
- *Please keep us updated with changes of address, phone numbers or email addresses*

THESE HE LOVED

Let there be trees, dear Lord, and birds about,
To make that foreign spot a friendly one.
These he loved, home in his native land.

Blue skies and the soft flush at evening in the West,
With little tinted clouds among it all,
The quiet peace of all the world at rest.

Yes, and the hot sunlight streaming in the day
Upon the water, blue and mirror clear,
The white sail boats, at anchor in the bay.

These he loved, the sea breaking on the golden shore,
Gently at times, at others greatly vexed,
As if it's hungry jaws had felt no land before.

There at the sea's dim end, the sky began, soft cushion of
the stars,
Down on the world a boy looked up,
Seeking an answer to his earthly prayers.

So, in that foreign place, near that white cross,
Let there be trees, dear Lord, and birds about,
These ...he loved.

Desmonde Florence Downing.

Desmonde Florence Downing was born in 1920 in Sydney. In December 1942 she enlisted in the Citizen Military Forces and trained as a voluntary aid. In 1943 she transferred to the Australian Imperial Force and, as a member of the Australian Army Women's Medical Service, served in hospitals in Australia before serving in Bougainville from February 1945.

From October that year until February 1946 she was based at Lae, New Guinea. Discharged in Sydney on 11 November, she was awarded a mention in dispatches.

She passed away in 1975 after a very successful costume design career in theatre and television.

Desmonde wrote this poem in memory of her only brother, who died while on service with the Royal Australian Air Force.

2015 YARRA VALLEY LEGACY ANZAC SERVICE FOR SCHOOLS



Children laying wreaths at the Memorial Wall

The Dandenong Mountains, to the east of the city are always a few degrees colder than the rest of Melbourne, so the annual Yarra Valley Legacy schools service was quite bracing this year.

David Heale presided over the event, with Yarra Valley Legacy President, Marion Windsor, reminded the audience of guests and school children, that we remember those who have served their country, and celebrate their courage and selflessness. She acknowledged that war is a terrible thing, destructive of families and in recognition of this fact, Legacy was set up by former soldiers, in the wake of World War I to care for the widows and children of their fallen comrades.

The other speaker was Trevor Ingram, Victorian representative of the Western Australian 2/16th Battalion Association, who explained the significance of the Memorial Wall and Terrace where we

were gathered, and the terrible toll the Owen Stanley and Gona campaigns took of the battalions involved.

During the service, a choir of students from Ferny Creek and Tecoma Primary Schools and Upwey High supported the singing, while band members were from both Upwey High and Tecoma Primary. The Catafalque Party was supplied by 310 Army Cadet Unit, Dandenong; Iain Townsley played the pipes during the wreath laying; and Max Rayner Henderson was the bugler.



A section of the crowd of around 200 school children

ANZAC DAY MARCH 2015



Max Caldwell and Michael Ralston cover up for the weather

On a typically wet and slightly windy Melbourne morning, a small group of intrepid 2/14 descendants joined veterans **Max Caldwell** and **Phil Kemp**, with **Cam Thompson** in the seats of honour, near the Eternal Flame, in the March along St Kilda Rd to the Shrine of Remembrance. **Max Caldwell**, in the lead, marched on, smiling at the cheering crowds. The students from Kingsbury Primary School were once again steadfast in the rain, proud to support these wonderful men.



Kingsbury Primary students providing flag waving support



President Craig Iskov with Cam Thompson after the March

MELBOURNE REUNION 2015

The day began as usual, with the Wreath Laying at the Battalion Tree, beside the Shrine of Remembrance. Veterans **Max Caldwell** from Melbourne and **Phil Kemp** from Western Australia, were there to remember their comrades.

Rob Eden presided over a brief ceremony, at which President Craig Iskov read the poem, *These he Loved* by Desmond Downing, which appears elsewhere in this edition.

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, Lieut Colonel Don Reid. Thank you, too, to Howard Cornish, on hand with his bugle.

This ceremony was followed by the **Annual Reunion**, at which over 90 members, including veterans, **Lionel Smith**, **Max Caldwell**, and **Phil Kemp**, gathered in the Victoria Barracks Officer's Mess for the luncheon.



Some of the guests at the Melbourne Reunion share a drink with veteran Max Caldwell, second from left.

In his keynote address, guest speaker, author, **Patrick Lindsay**, added the quality of Leadership, to the Courage, Endurance, Sacrifice and Mateship, enshrined in the pillars at Isurava, as a deciding factor in the outcome of the campaign.

Patrick drew attention to the redoubtable **Ralph Honner** who arrived to take over the 39th Battalion following the death of their commander, and applied his considerable intelligence and understanding of how to inspire and motivate men, with the result that the tyro militia unit could withstand the Japanese onslaught until the more experienced AIF 2/14 and 2/16 units arrived.

Then, **Capt. Phil Rhoden** took over the 2/14 following the loss of **Lt Col. Key**, and despite being only 27 years of age, held the Battalion together during the withdrawal along the Kokoda Track.

Capt. Stan Bisset, similarly, was a natural leader, a man of outstanding courage; loyal and selfless, who supported Rhoden throughout the withdrawal.

Patrick also elaborated on examples of leadership shown by the other ranks: **Bruce Kingsbury**, VC for his single-handed attack that saved Battalion HQ; **Charlie McCallum**, DCM for providing a rear guard, covering the withdrawal of his platoon; **Corporal Lindsay 'Teddy' Bear**, MM for taking over his platoon when his platoon commander was killed; **John Metson**, BEM for his refusal to be a burden to his comrades, but who was among those betrayed to the enemy at Sangai.

In his conclusion, Patrick affirmed that our Diggers showed us a distinctive style of man. For them, leadership was inclusive, judged by performance rather than by decree. It drew people along, rather than pushing them from behind.

Among the other speakers, **Lucy Lu**, Kingsbury Scholarship winner from Reservoir High, read her essay on **John Metson**; **Karen Brkic** read an extract from a diary kept by her father, Toby

Mann, covering the landings at Balikpapan; **Chris Ingram** shared the article prepared by **Jill Bear** on the family links between the 14th Battalion of the First World War and the 2/14th, which appears elsewhere in this issue. As well, **Darryl Thomson** provided an interesting display from the Memorabilia collection.

One of the highlights of this event was the awarding of Life Membership to **Michael Ralston**, in recognition of his outstanding service to the Battalion in his role as President over the last eight years. The current health of the Association can be attributed in very large part to Michael's effective leadership during his time in office.



Veterans Phil Kemp and Lionel Smith reminisce with Howard Cornish (centre) at the Reunion

Special thanks are extended to **Colonel McGowan**, President of the Officers' Mess Committee at Victoria Barracks for granting permission to hold the reunion in this historic venue; to 2/14 Association member, **Ron Newland** and his security officers for facilitating our presence on the base; to **Tamara Goodsall**, the Hospitality Co-ordinator; and to **Brad Sutton** and the team from Brighton Catering. The work of Rob Eden and John Smith in liaising with the Barracks to stage the event, must also be acknowledged with much appreciation, while their bump in/out team of Kay, Craig and Richard Iskov, Ray Fergusson, Karen Brkic, Rhonda Hunter and Kaye Hamilton, and Chris Ingram doing some fundraising, were indispensable to the success of the day.

BACK TO BALIKPAPAN

Over the weekend of the 27th June at least 33 people will be descending on Balikpapan in Southern Borneo to attend the 70th anniversary of the Battalion's landings there. Balikpapan is a place that you have to get to through other destinations, as there are no direct flights there. Most participants will be direct descendants of WW2 veterans, so it should be a special time for them, as we visit the landing area of Yellow Beach and over the Manggar Bridge to the captured Manggar airfield.

Clarence Cunningham a WW2 2/14 veteran from NSW will be with us, with his son Clarrie, as will be Garth Pratten, a WW2 history professor, based in Jakarta, so we should have no shortage of tour guides. We will also visit the recently discovered

Waite's Knoll where Japanese coastal guns took out 3 Australian Matilda Tanks on the foreshore. Parts of those tanks are now at a memorial on Pasar Ridge inside the Chevron Oil Company facilities, another area we hope to visit.

There is a planned visit to the Bos Samboja National Park where Orangatang and Sun Bears are rehabilitated back into the jungle, and a sunset river cruise to see Proboscis monkeys in the wild. There will also be plenty of time to relax and enjoy the facilities of Balikpapan's premier resort, The Novotel. See you there intrepid travellers.

Michael Ralston and Ian Hopley



Troops survey the damaged Matilda Tanks by Japanese coastal defence guns



Captured Japanese coastal defence gun

OBITUARIES

VX147186 Private Edward George COUSINS

Edward Cousins was born in Deepdene on 4 July 1923 and was living there when he enlisted in the AIF on 18 October 1943.

Little is known of his service other than he marched in to the Battalion as a reinforcement on 18 June 1945 after it arrived at Morotai. He served with the Battalion for the duration of the Borneo Campaign and subsequent peacekeeping operations in the Celebes.

He remained in service and marched out of the Battalion on 22 January 1946, the day the men boarded HMAS Kanimbla at Pare Pare to return to Australia. Edward Cousins was finally discharged from the Army on 14 August 1946.

N45381/NX142877 PALLIER Nolan (Noel) William Thomas



Army records in Canberra indicate that Noel Pallier was born in Woonona NSW on 9 April 1919 and was living there when he enlisted in 34 Battalion of the Militia Forces at Dapto on 9 January 1940. He was working as a plumber at this time.

The Defence Act prevented Australia's Permanent and Militia Forces from serving outside Australia and its Territories. In order to meet a declared obligation to provide an overseas contingent to support British Forces, a volunteer Force called the Australian Imperial Force or AIF was formed and left Australia.

This meant that the Militia became responsible for the defence of Australia's shores and its military establishments. Called up for full-time service in September 1941 when the Pacific situation was worsening, Noel attended camps at Liverpool, Wallgrove and Ingleburn Army Camps. Showing promise as a soldier, he was promoted to Corporal on 15 November 1940 and then Sergeant on 6 March 1941.

He also attended a number of training courses during this time including 1 Division Training School, Bren Gun Carrier Training School and

then finally, the Infantry Officers Training School. This qualified him to be promoted to Lieutenant on 18 March 1942.

In September 1942 Noel attended the School of Military Engineering before returning to 34 Battalion. To say he was getting a well-rounded military education would be an understatement. However, in November of 1942, he embarked for Port Moresby with infantry reinforcements after having earlier transferred his enlistment to the AIF in August of 1942 at Dapto.

Lt Pallier marched in to 2/14 Battalion on 19 December, 1942 and was told in no uncertain terms that he would need to prove himself to this predominantly Victorian and battle-hardened unit. Noel was appointed to command 9 Platoon in A Company to oversee its reinforcement and retraining after the gruelling Kokoda Trail and Gona actions. A month or so after taking up this command, on the receiving end of a simple 'G'day' and a friendly smile, Noel made the acquaintance of his platoon sergeant, the already decorated Lindsay 'Teddy' Bear. Together, the battle hardened sergeant and the novice, but keen to learn, lieutenant would make a formidable team.

In September, 1943, the 2/14 Battalion returned to Port Moresby for the Markham Ramu Campaign which aimed to clear the Japanese from the area of northern New Guinea between Lae and Madang. As part of the 7th Division, the Battalion began the push up the valleys to clear the Japanese from the area, and Noel, leading his platoon on patrol had his first experience of action. Finally the Japanese made a stand at an area in the Finisterre Mountains that became known as Shaggy Ridge.



Pallier's Hill from King's Hill. The Japanese were dug in on the transverse ridge at the end of the saddle

On the 10th October, as the Japanese withdrew into these mountains, one of the sister battalions of the 2/14th, the 2/27th, had their supply line cut, leaving them isolated, and without access to ammunition. Noel and his platoon were sent up a feature named Kings Hill to try to identify the Japanese position. The next day it became clear that the enemy had dug in on a transverse ridge, at the end of a razorback saddle from where 9 platoon was on Kings Hill.

The order that came through to Noel was simple: Capture the hill before dark.

Yet to get to that hill, the platoon would have to cross that kilometre long saddle, in plain sight of the enemy. As far as the platoon was concerned, it was "do or die" with the clear expectation of the latter.

Below them in the valley was a 25 pounder field gun, which only had 19 rounds of ammunition. The arrangement was that they would fire one shell each minute, ensuring the Japanese would keep their heads down, and by a trick of the terrain, and this artillery support, the platoon was able to cross the saddle, just below the ridgeline, remaining concealed from the enemy until the last moment. As they approached up the almost sheer slope, the Japanese could hear, but not see them and sent grenades rolling down the slopes towards them, one of which hit Noel in the leg. Undeterred, Noel crawled on up the hill and continued to observe and direct the action until the Japanese were routed.

Noel was evacuated by air to Port Moresby and spent two months recovering from bullet and shrapnel wounds before returning to 2/14 Battalion. His actions and leadership would see not only the naming of that ridge "Pallier's Hill" but also the gazettement of his name on 8 March 1945 for the award of Mention in Despatches for "Exceptional services in the field in New Guinea." It was the most significant action the battalion was involved in during the Ramu-Markham campaign, and as well as Noel's MID, resulted in the award of the Distinguished Conduct Medal to Teddy Bear, and two Military Medals and another MID to the section leaders. Noel's comment was: "Every man who went in with me should have been decorated. But the Australian Army don't do things like that."

The Battalion returned to Queensland for an extended period of training and in July- August 1944 Noel undertook a course at the Photo Interpretation Wing of the Military Intelligence School.

Shortly after returning to the Battalion from the Course, having caught the attention of Army Military Intelligence, Brigadier J G Rogers, Noel was seconded to the Directorate of Military Intelligence and flew to Hollandia (now Jayapura, West Papua) to assist General Blamey's Advanced Land Headquarters with planning the next series of advances. However, as a lowly lieutenant, he was not comfortable working with a group of brigadiers and generals and sought release back to the Battalion and operational service.

On return to 2/14, on 12 April 1945 Noel was appointed the Battalion's Intelligence Officer and on 20 May 1945 accompanied the Commanding Officer, Lt Colonel Philip Rhoden on a flight to Morotai to commence planning for the Balikpapan landing on Borneo. The landing took place on 1 July 1945 and the detailed preparation by the Intelligence Section under Noel's guidance, was pivotal to its success.

With the final surrender of the Japanese and the end of the War, the Battalion moved to the Celebes (Sulawesi) to take up a peacekeeping role to assist with the return of the civil government. Lieutenant Pallier was to find that the Intelligence role was to become somewhat removed from military duties as he was required to investigate crimes and incidents as there was no qualified civilian police capable of doing this work.

Finally on 1 November 1945 Noel marched out of the Battalion and returned to Australia where

he was discharged from active service on 5 December 1945 and transferred to the Reserve of Officers.

Noel and his sergeant, Lindsay Bear, remained close and loyal friends throughout their lives. Lindsay contended that Noel had saved his life on at least one occasion, and named his son in Noel's honour.



Noel Pallier with Noel and Liz Bear in 2005

VX86940 Private Raymond Alfred POLTROCK

Raymond Poltrock was born in Stawell on 27 February 1923 and was living in Abbotsford in Melbourne when he enlisted in the AIF on 28 August 1942 at Royal Park.

Nothing is known of his service prior to marching in to 2/14 Battalion on 2 March 1945 while it was training in North Queensland. Polly, as he became known, was posted to 11 Platoon in B Company.

The Battalion embarked for Morotai Island from where it set out to land at Balikpapan on 1 July 1945. B Company led the advance along the south east coast to Sepinggang Airfield with 11 Platoon in the lead. The Company suffered casualties during the campaign but 11 Platoon was fortunate not to sustain any.

A funny incident occurred when B Company were dug in at Amborawang to protect the 2/16 Battalion supply line. L/Cpl Alfred "Slugger" Reid and Private Poltrock were called for their turn of sentry duty in the middle of the night. The Japs had been throwing sticks to try to discover the location of the perimeter, and men had been getting hit by the sticks.

The following episode is recorded in Bill Russell's history of the Battalion:

Polly whispered that he thought he had heard movement earlier in night. Polly and Slugger sat beside their hole, the latter with his Owen gun cradled in his right arm. After about 15 minutes Polly commenced to crawl to a log to sit down and Slugger, forgetting which side his mate was on, put out his left hand and encountered a hand passing him as it's owner was crawling by. Discarding his Owen gun, he dived upon the 'intruder' and grasping him by the throat, called out "give me a hand Polly, I've got a Nip". Receiving no reply, he shifted his hands higher up, during which the 'victim' was able to gasp, "I'm here mate". Slugger is now known as 'Strangler'.

Polly served with the Battalion in its peacekeeping role in the Celebes (Sulawesi, Indonesia) until he

marched out on 1 January 1946. He returned to Australia and was discharged from the Army on 5 April 1946.

VX 16374 Sergeant Matthew Robert POWER



According to Army records in Canberra, Matt was born in the Gippsland town of Traralgon on 23 August 1919 and was living in the nearby small town of Gormandale when he enlisted 23 May 1940. He was inducted into the Army at its camp at Caulfield Racecourse before marching into the 2/14 Battalion several days later.

Matt was posted to 15 Platoon in C Company and took part in the Battalion operations in North Africa at Mersah Matru and then the Syrian Campaign. C Company took an active part in the attack on the Jezzine position where he was part of a three man patrol that scouted the Mount Kharat position and took enemy troops prisoner. Matt wrote a very detailed account of this patrol for the C Company chapter of Jim McAllester's book Men of the Second Fourteen Battalion.

The Battalion was part of the Australian force that returned to Australia to meet the immediate threat posed to its northern shores by the Japanese Forces. The 2/14 Battalion was the first of the AIF troops to cross the Owen Stanley Mountains to relieve the Militia troops of the 39 Battalion and take the brunt of the Japanese advance.

During the Japanese attack on the 39 Battalion positions at Isurava on 26 August 1942, C Company was the first of the AIF troops to move into and takeover these positions whilst under intense enemy fire. By this stage Matt had been promoted to Corporal and was a section commander

As the Battalion took over the Isurava positions, supported by 2/16 Battalion and 53 Battalion on the other side of Eora Creek protecting the right flank, the remnants of 39 Battalion refused to leave the position even though ordered to withdraw. Finally after several days hard fighting and greatly outnumbered, the position was lost and the battalions were forced to withdraw in scattered formations although fighting all the way. C Company suffered many casualties and Matt was one of those wounded.

The Battalion was involved in the heavy fighting

on the withdrawal along the Kokoda Track and continued to suffer casualties. It suffered heavily at the Brigade Hill Battle and continued to withdraw to Imita Ridge where it was relieved and returned to Port Moresby to recuperate. However, by this stage the Japanese had commenced their own withdrawal back to the north coast beachhead of Gona, Buna and Sanananda.

The Battalion, significantly reduced due to battle casualties, was once more called upon to take up the offensive. Flown to the north coast, it once more went into the attack on Japanese positions at Gona. With the extreme urgency of the High Command, the attack was put in without knowledge of the Japanese positions because there was no time for reconnaissance. Once again, heavy fire from unknown Japanese positions meant that C Company suffered heavy unwarranted casualties.

But finally the Japanese were defeated and the Battalion could return to Australia to rest and rebuild with reinforcements. Whilst at Ravenshoe in Queensland, Matt was promoted to Sergeant in readiness for the next stage of the War in Papua New Guinea.

After the initial landings by sea and air to capture the town of Lae, 2/14 Battalion was flown into Nadzab to patrol the Saruwaged Mountains to prevent the Japanese escaping to the North coast. It then took part in the active pursuit of the Japanese up the Markham Valley to Kaiaipit where some resistance was met. It then continued on into the adjoining Ramu Valley until the final Battle at Shaggy Ridge where the Japanese were defeated and forced to once again retreat. Fortunately C Company casualties were light compared to the previous campaigns.

On return to Australia the Battalion once again moved to Northern Queensland where it undertook training in amphibious landings in preparation to assist the American forces recapture the Philippines. However, at the last minute General MacArthur decided that the US forces would do this alone and the Australian High Command undertook the campaign to capture the Japanese held islands in the Dutch East Indies that were by-passed by the Americans.

The Battalion took part in the amphibious landing by 7th Division to secure the important oil town of Balikpapan in Borneo. Still a Platoon Sergeant Matt took part in C Company operations that saw it lead the Battalion advance up the coast to capture the strategic airfield at Manggar and then hold it against Japanese counter-attacks. The company suffered further casualties in these actions until the Japanese surrendered after the atomic bombs were dropped and the War ended.

Matt was finally discharged from the Army in December 1945 whilst the Battalion was undertaking peacekeeping functions in the Celebes (Sulawesi) and returned to Australia.

Matt was one of the approximately 115 "original" men who were to spend their entire service in the Battalion and who saw service in every campaign in which the Battalion was involved.

On his return to Australia, Matt became a >>>

>>> schoolteacher, perhaps influenced by the Battalion 2ic, Major Bill Russell who was a Victorian schoolteacher who went on to higher roles in the Education Department. This career enabled Matt to return to Papua New Guinea some years later when he became headmaster at Keravat High School in Rabaul, East New Britain.



Matt in discussion with a student at a school in Balikpapan in 2012

Matt finally retired to Queensland like many of his former comrades-in-arms, however, he remained actively involved in the Victorian-based Battalion Association. He became Vice-President with a view to becoming President but this was accelerated with the death of the then President, the Reverend Tom Douglas.

During Matt's Presidency, the Association was required to consider the exact location of the Isurava battlefield for the development by the Australian Government of the now impressive memorial on that site. There was some disagreement on detail but Matt, who had flown down from Queensland for this important meeting, calmly but firmly controlled the discussion, resulting in the final decision being reached. Matt was then invited by the Australian Government to attend the official opening and dedication of the memorial, together with Col Blume, as our Association representatives.

Matt was a very important and active member of the Association with his knowledge of the Battalion through his involvement in every Campaign. As mentioned, he made extensive contributions to the information in McAllester's **Men of the 2/14 Battalion**.

He made himself available to attend pilgrimages in Papua New Guinea and, more recently, those in Borneo at the Balikpapan battle sites. His local knowledge assisted in locating important battleground features as well as fostering local community relationships. He was preparing to attend the forthcoming pilgrimage to Balikpapan when his fatal medical diagnosis was made. He was thrilled to know that another 15 platoon member, Clarrie Cunningham, would be going.

Lest we Forget

The 14th and 2/14th Battalions AIF

As this year marks the centenary of the landings at Gallipoli, it is fitting to review the connections between the 2/14th Battalion and its forerunner, the 14th Battalion.

The 14th Battalion, also known as "The Bacon Stealers", and later, "Jacka's Mob" began accepting recruits from the suburbs of Melbourne from the last week of September, 1914. Together with the 13th, 15th and 16th Battalions it formed the 4th Brigade, commanded by (then) Colonel John Monash. It took part in the landings at Gallipoli on 25th April, 1915 and remained there for the entire campaign.

In France and Belgium between 1916 and 1918, its battle honours include the **Somme 1916-18, Pozieres, Bullecourt, Messines 1917, Ypres 1917, Menin Road, Polygon Wood, Passchendaele, Arras 1918, Ancre 1918, Hamel, Amiens, Albert 1918, Hindenburg Line, and Epehy**.

It's most famous member was Capt Albert Jacka, one of the most highly decorated men of the First World War. He won the first Australian Victoria Cross of the war at Gallipoli, and the Military Cross and Bar in actions in France that official historian Charles Bean claimed warranted two bars to his Victoria Cross.

The formal connection between the 14th and 2/14th Battalions began with a special dinner on 18th August, 1940, where the Colours of the 14th Battalion were handed on to the 2/14th in acknowledgement of their continuation of a tradition.

Originally, the colour patch of the 2/14th Battalion was a black over blue diamond on a grey background. However, on 9th October, 1940, at the request of the 14th Battalion, the 2/14th changed its colour patch to the incorporate the same yellow over blue bar of the older battalion. There were a few grumbles from the younger men when they heard there would be a change - all that sewing, I suspect, but this discontent faded away when they realised what they were changing to. The grey diamond background, signifies the Second AIF, distinguishing the new patch from that of the First AIF battalion.

As far as is known, three men served in both battalions: **Major William Wauchope Crellin, Edgar 'Ted' aka "Bill" Bellamy and Alfred 'Harry' Bell**.

When 2/14th was formed in 1940, Major Crellin was its first Second in Command. He stayed with the Battalion during its establishment from April until July, when he left on promotion to be Commanding Officer and Lieut Colonel of the 2/43rd Battalion.

Crellin had joined the First 14th in July 1918, as a newly commissioned lieutenant, recently graduated from the Royal Military College. He came on strength as a platoon commander, and

remained with the 14th for the closing stages of the war, through the defence of Amiens and the final push that advanced on and eventually took the Hindenburg Line. He remained through the repatriation process, finally leaving the unit in June 1919.

Harry Bell is an interesting character, in that his year of birth was something of a moveable feast.

Born in 1886; at 31, he claimed to be 5 years younger on his WWI enlistment papers in 1917, and to be only 40 on his WWII papers, when he was in fact aged 54. When Harry died in 1951, he was 65, having miraculously aged 25 years in 10. Small wonder, then, that, though an original member of the Battalion, his time with it was limited to little more than three months. His departure to the Guard Battalion made way for the enlistment of his son, John Henry, who was also creative with his date of birth, though not as radically. John served with the Battalion in 10 Platoon, through the Middle East.

Harry marched into the 14th Battalion on 3rd Sept, 1917, when the Battalion was stationed in Belgium, and saw action in the 3rd Battle of Ypres and the Passchendaele Offensive then the defence of Amiens and the push towards the Hindenburg Line during 1918: Menin Rd, Polygon Wood, Passchendaele, Arras, Ancre, Hamel, Amiens, Albert, Bapaume, St Quentin, Hindenburg Line and Epehy.

Of the men who served in both battalions, **Edgar 'Ted' aka 'Bill' Bellamy** has the honour of being the only one of the three to serve with the 14th Battalion at Gallipoli and in action with the 2/14th. He arrived on the Peninsula with the 4th Reinforcements on 2 June, when after 5 weeks in the trenches, since the Landing, the Battalion had come out to the Reserve Gully.



Bivouacs in the Reserve Gully the Battalion moved to from Courtney's Post.

Throughout June and July the 14th remained active in the defence of the ANZAC area.

Ted was taken on board the Hospital Ship "Delta" with dysentery on 8th August and following medical downgrading, spent the rest of the war in the administrative roles in England.

Ted answered the call of duty a second time in June 1940, and served with the Transport Platoon in the Syrian Campaign. He was discharged following the return to Australia in 1942, at the age of 48.

He was taken on by the Labour Corps on two subsequent occasions, but was discharged unfit on both occasions. He died in 1949, aged 55.



14th Battalion at Church Parade in the Reserve Gully, August 6 prior to August Offensive.

Five 2/14th men, two of whom were brothers, had fathers who fought in the 14th Battalion.

John Theodore "Jack" Ransom of 14 Platoon, C Coy, served with the 2/14th Battalion from May 1943 through the Ramu-Markham Campaign to being wounded on 7 July 1945 during the action at Manggar airfield, Balikpapan. He was the son of **Charles Alfred Ransom**, bootmaker of Clifton Hill, who enlisted with the 14th Battalion on 11 Sept, 1914 and took part in the landings at Gallipoli. On 10 May, during the period known as the defence of ANZAC, Charles had the first finger of his right hand blown off by a bullet. The wound turned septic and he lost power to the hand. He was returned to Australia and discharged in early 1916, but continued to work as a bootmaker.

Jack's uncle, Charles' younger brother was Leslie Frederick "Pappy" Ransom, who served with 2/14 through all campaigns.

Frederick Singleton Collins who served in 9 Platoon in the Middle East and Papua, and **Ronald Douglas Collins**, also in 9 Platoon from 1940 to 1945, were sons of **Frederick William Brown Collins** who was wounded at Gallipoli on the 19 May during the defence of ANZAC, and took part in the battles at Bullecourt and Messines in 1917 before being medically downgraded, returning to Australia in September, 1918.

The father of **Graham C Whiting**, who was with 7 Platoon of the 2/14th through all campaigns, was **Stanley Joshua Whiting** who was also wounded in the chest around 5 May, 1915 during the defence of ANZAC and returned to Australia in August, 1916.

Note that all three of these men were wounded in May 1915, during the defence of ANZAC, indicating the intensity of the action during this time.

Lieut Jack Gurney Clements mid marched into the 2/14th on 19 Jan, 1942 just before the Battalion left the Middle East. Sadly, he was killed in action at Gona on 28 Nov, 1942. His father, **Cpl Harold Charles Clements** was with the 14th Battalion from October 1916 until February 1919. After recovering from wounds

sustained at **Arras** in March 1918, he and was awarded the Military Medal (MM) on 8 August, 1918 for leading his men into Morcourt, east of Corbie on the Somme, and taking 20 prisoners.



14th Battalion crest laid out in small stones at the entrance to the Rest Camp at Sarpi. Design by Lieut Norman Bear, MM.

There were several links of uncle-nephew and cousin-2nd cousin between the two battalions:

Lindsay Alfred Bear DCM MM was the nephew of **Norman John Bear** awarded the MM for "devotion to duty and reckless disregard of danger" at Messines; brothers, **Hugh Alan Buckler**, killed in the 2/14th Battalion's first major action in Syria, and **Sydney Hamilton "Ben" Buckler** were nephews of **Cpl Cyril Buckler**, killed in the 14th Battalion's first major action in France, at Pozieres; **Ronald Frank Woodward** was the nephew of **Frank Edward Spencer** who was wounded twice at Gallipoli, and discharged with a damaged right arm.

Cam Thompson had two cousins in the 14th Battalion, twins **Stanley Bowerman** and **Lionel Bowerman Thompson**. The twin's enlisted together on 10 Jul 1915, fought together on the Western Front and were promoted 2nd Lieutenants in the field together, their careers marching in lock-step until Lionel was invalided to England in January 1917. Three months later, on the 11 April, 1917, Stanley was killed in the attack on Bullecourt.

In his [History of the 2/14th Battalion](#), Major Bill Russell notes that from the 14th Battalion:

The 2/14 Battalion inherited a great tradition... received with intense pride... The Regimental Battle Flag... became at once a treasured possession and a symbol of ... high courage and devotion.

In many ways, the links between the two battalions sustained the men of the 2/14th through their greatest challenges. 100 years since they landed at Gallipoli, it is fitting that we should honour and remember the men of the 14th Battalion, First AIF.

Jill Bear

EVENT CALENDAR 2015

Committee Meeting

11.30am, Sunday, 14th June 2015
East Malvern RSL

Balikpapan 70th Anniversary Trip

From 29th June 2015 to 5th July 2015

QLD Reunion Lunch

30th July 2015 at Riverside Receptions, 50 Oxlade Drive, New Farm.
Enquiries to Trevor Pryor at teepee_au@yahoo.com

St George's Service

2pm, Saturday 22nd August
at the former St George's Church, Church St, East St Kilda

Bruce Kingsbury Memorial Service

From 9.30am to 10.30am
Friday 28th August 2015
Reservoir High School,
855 Plenty Road, Reservoir. 3073.

Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (Austin Health)

11am, Friday 28th August 2015
Enter via Gate 9,
300 Waterdale Road, Heidelberg West

Kokoda Campaign Memorial Service

11.00am, Sunday 30th August 2015
Osborne House, North Geelong
To be confirmed

Annual General Meeting

9.30am, Sunday 27th September 2015
Rats of Tobruk Hall,
44 Victoria Avenue, Albert Park

Annual Pilgrimage – The Sanctuary

12 noon, Sunday 27th September
The Shrine of Remembrance Melbourne

2/16th Battalion Reunion Lunch

11.30am, Saturday 10th October 2015
Old Hepburn Springs Hotel,
Newstead Road, Hepburn Springs
RSVP Trevor Ingram 0419 333 347
Email: trevor.ingram@bigpond.com

Committee Meeting

11.30am, Sunday, 6th December 2015
East Malvern RSL

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AROUND THE TRAPS

The following photo was pasted on Facebook on 29th March by Andrew Johnson. It's good to see the memorial near where Butch Bisset died in August, 1942 has been reinstated.



The restored Bisset memorial on the Kokoda Track

Also representing the Battalion at the funeral of Nolan Pallier was **NX168913 Ken Asgill**. Ken joined the Battalion during the Ramu Markham Campaign and was in 10 Platoon, with Lieut Lindsay "Teddy" Bear for the landings at Balikpapan. He was delighted to have his photo taken with Teddy's son.



Noel Bear with Ken Asgill at Noel Pallier's funeral

<http://www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au/veterans/stories/robert-bob-francis-iskov>



2010 Bruce Kingsbury Award winner, Aleisha Nicholson

2010 Bruce Kingsbury Award winner and Kingsbury Primary School captain, Aleisha Nicholson is now a Year 11 student at Bundoora Secondary College. Aleisha recently applied to and was accepted for the very prestigious UBS Young Women's Leadership Academy in Sydney. The UBS Young Women's Leadership Academy offers students the opportunity to travel to Sydney, stay the week, complete seminars on business and leadership as well as liaising with respected female business leaders.

The opportunity was made available Australia wide to girls in Year 11. Aleisha was chosen from among an overwhelming number of applicants, and is one of fifty applications accepted into the program. Well done, Aleisha.

The last series of interviews that **Bob Iskov** completed for the Department of Veterans Affairs can now be viewed at the following URL:

EDITOR'S NOTE

Through the wonders of technology, this issue comes to you from the Library at Windermere in the Lakes District of the United Kingdom. As such, I must thank Craig Iskov and Chris Ingram, for their assistance, in providing notes and photographs for the Reunion and ANZAC Day March.

As Trevor Pryor is also travelling, the Brisbane ANZAC Day report will appear in the next edition.

I must also apologise to George Priestley who is, of course, a veteran member of the 2/14th Battalion, despite my assigning him to the 39th in the last edition. I hope you're still going strong there, George.