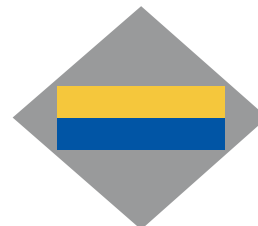


COMRADESHIP

www.2nd14battalion.org.au

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VOL XXXIV No.1
March 2014

President's Report



"They shall grow not old, as those who are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them."

I have lost count of the number of times I have recited the above over the last 12 months, mostly at a Veterans passing, and formal ceremonies, and there have been a few of both over the last 6 months. We said farewell to our old Battalion mate from New Guinea, Ben Moide recently. George Friend, one of our members from Queensland, represented the Battalion at the State Funeral. Ben lived for almost 70 years after the end of his WW2 services, an achievement in itself for a local. I have fond memories of Ben, a character, and met him on many occasions, both here and in PNG. He came to visit us at the Holiday Inn for dinner at the end of our last trek. He told me he had been to a granddaughter's funeral that morning and that he

needed to be with us, as it was important to keep relationships strong between both our countries. My son, Paul, and he clicked, and as I left the function, to get some much needed sleep, Ben and Paul started up a singsong with others. What a great memory.

When I look back, we have achieved much, but there is still a lot to do. Our membership remains strong all over Australia, and we now have the reputation as an independent, professional organisation that gets things done, but we need all of your support, as we continue the journey. Help is needed for the reunion preparation and the proposed concert. Please, contact Secretary John Smith if you can assist.

Preparation for the coming ANZAC Day March and annual reunion has commenced already. Max Caldwell, a sprightly 2/14th Vet will lead the march this year. Also great news, army Colonel Greg McGlone, President of the Officers' Mess Committee, Victoria Barracks, St Kilda Rd, Melbourne has granted permission for the 2/14th Reunion to be held in the Mess there.

Ian Hopley from SA has seconded a few of us to assist with the trip to Balikpapan, Borneo in 2015, to honour and celebrate the 70th anniversary of the important battles the Battalion fought there. We hope to achieve a few surprises there for you also. We are looking at a second Kokoda Concert with the Hawthorn Band, possibly staged at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance.

Have a great 2014. Elaine and I are heading overseas shortly for about a month. Our Vice President, Craig Iskov, will take over in my absence, but we will be back for the Reunion and March. For those of you doing it tough at the moment, and I know a few, my thoughts are with you.

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

2014 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE BY 30 APRIL 2014

Membership Subscriptions fall due on 30 April 2014 and we would be pleased to receive them by the due date. Please use the remittance form in this copy of Comradeship. If you wish to pay directly by internet or bank transfer please email John Smith (jlsmith1946@gmail.com) for banking details.

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.

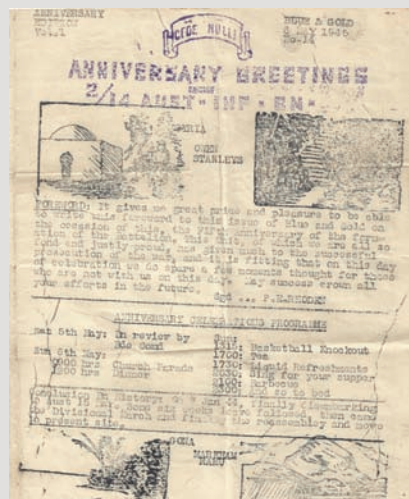
If you joined the Association between October and December 2013 your membership subscription will not be due until April 2015.

Please note:

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

MEMORABILIA

A 1945 issue of the Battalion newsletter, Blue and Gold, has recently come to hand. Those who participated in the email discussion concerning the Battalion motto towards the end of last year will be interested to note Cede Nulli is included in the letterhead.



Page 1 of the 5th Anniversary Newsletter

Blue and Gold first appeared on 19 Jan, 1945, and that first edition includes the words to the Battalion Song, Spearhead of the Army. Digital copies for January - May, 1945 can be found in the Battalion War Diary, available on the Australian War Memorial Website.

Also received recently, is a photo taken after the fall of Gona.



The caption attached to it reads: "This photo, taken about 30 minutes after the last major attack at Gona, shows some survivors of the 2/14 Battalion. VX18815 Sergeant-Major E.J.M. Taafe, seated with a bottle of saki and a Japanese flag, still wears his helmet, split by machine gun fire and grenade fragments in earlier attacks in late November, 1942. Australian War Memorial No. 151432. I believe it was taken by a war photographer for the London Times, but I cannot verify this."

The archive already includes Maurie Taafe's hat, medals and some other of his effects, so this photo will be a useful addition to that story.

MELBOURNE REUNION WEDNESDAY, 23RD APRIL

9.30 am: Wreath-Laying Service, 2/14 Battalion Tree, Shrine of Remembrance

A short service of commemoration will be held at the Battalion Tree, northwest corner of the Shrine of Remembrance (near the eternal flame) at 9.30 am, Wednesday 23 April.

Please come along for a moment of quiet reflection before adjourning to the Barracks Tour or Reunion Luncheon, later in the day.

11 am: Tour of Victoria Barracks

After a short walk from the Shrine (5 minutes) to the Barracks, we will be met for a tour of the Barracks, which will include the War Cabinet Room. The declaration of War against Japan was signed in this room and much of the Pacific War planning occurred here also. Of course, this is only a small part of the tour through these historic buildings.

If you wish to know more about Victoria Barracks, visit the following website: <http://john.curtin.edu.au/behindthescenes/offices/victoriabarracks.html>

Bookings are essential – please let Rob Eden (0439 990 449) or John Smith know by Monday 7th April if you wish to come on the tour. The number will be limited to “30” so please book early. Please take note of the security requirements.

The tour organiser needs to know numbers so that there will be sufficient tour guides. NOTE: There is no wheel chair access on the tour.

The tour will finish at 12.00 noon and we will then proceed to the Officers’ Mess for the Reunion Lunch.

12 noon: Luncheon, Officers Mess, Victoria Barracks

The Officers Mess Committee at Victoria Barracks has extended an invitation to us for the Reunion Lunch this year to be held in the Officers’ Mess. This is a very exciting opportunity as the Mess is a very special place - St Kilda Road, Melbourne (Opposite the Shrine of Remembrance). Please read the security requirements below.

A ramp is available at the rear of the building if access is required for wheelchairs or walking frames.

Cost: \$60 per head.

Includes a superb buffet lunch, beer, wine and soft drinks. Spirits at your own expense. Please see enclosed booking sheet for further Information re dietary requirements, etc.

Booking forms must be returned, no later than Monday, 14th April. If you do not make a booking, you will not be admitted, as a list of

guests needs to be provided in advance for security reasons. Make sure you have your Driver’s Licence or Passport with you on the day.

Dress Code: Smart Casual.

Master of Ceremonies: Rob Eden will be hosting the event as usual.

Please contact him (0439 990 449) if there is something you would like to have included in the program.

Public Transport: Southbound trams from Flinders St, with the exception of Route No 1, travel along St Kilda Road to the Shrine of Remembrance. Disembark at tram stop 18.

Parking: 2, 3 and 4 hour car parking is available in Birdwood Avenue, (behind the Shrine).

The City of Melbourne operates ticket machines and enforces parking restrictions in the area.

Parking for the Wreath-Laying Service will be available at the back of the Shrine on the grass, but you will need a permit (we are still negotiating with the Shrine), which you can obtain by telephoning John Smith on 0427 522 999.

For the tour and luncheon - all guests should meet at the security checkpoint at the gate in St Kilda Road (closest to the city) at least 5 minutes prior to the start time.

PLEASE BE PUNCTUAL.

Security

The Department of Defence has strict security in place for admission to the Barracks. If you do not make a booking you will not be admitted.

You will also need to provide Government Issued photo ID, eg Driver Licence, Passport, etc. for admission to Victoria Barracks. There are NO exceptions to this requirement. Please phone John Smith on 0427 522 999 if this is a problem.

Security may inspect personal property. Photographs are not permitted on the site, except in the Mess, by our designated photographer. Everyone must remain in designated areas whilst at the function.

HOW TO OBTAIN A GOVERNMENT ISSUED PHOTO ID

To enter Victoria Barracks, you will need to show a government issued photo ID. We realise that, for our elderly guests, this may prove difficult, if they no longer have a driver’s licence or current passport.

However, there are two options available. If you need someone to help you navigate this process, please contact Secretary, John Smith

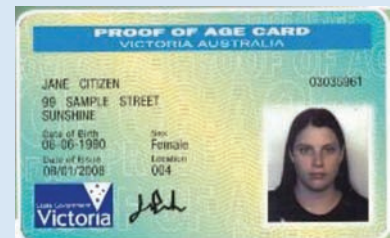
(0427 522 999) immediately, and a committee member will be only too pleased to assist.

1. Apply for a Proof of Age Card

This can be applied for at Post Offices, Vic Roads Offices or selected pharmacies or chemists. Note that the application takes 20-25 business days to process, so act quickly.

- Complete the Application for a ‘Proof of Age card’ form available from the above locations.
- Present the form with your original full Birth Certificate and either Credit card, Bank Passbook or Medicare card to someone who has known you for at least 1 year and who is listed on the electoral roll. This person must complete the ‘Referee’s declaration’.
- Sign the applicant’s declaration in the presence of an authorised person, who will also sign the ‘Authorised Person’s declaration’.
- Visit the PO, Vic Roads office or photo point pharmacy with your original proof of identity documents, have your photo taken by them and lodge the application.
- Pay \$10 application fee (refundable by the Association, if necessary.)

In Western Australia, a similar card can be applied for through the Department of Transport (ph 13 11 56) at a Driver and Vehicle Services Centre or by using this link: http://www.transport.wa.gov.au/mediaFiles/licensing/LBU_F_POA1_ProofOfAgeCard.pdf



For a faster, but more expensive option:

2. Apply for a Keypass Identity Card at the Post Office.

The Application form can be downloaded at <http://auspost.com.au/media/documents/keypass-application-form-jan14.pdf>

- You will need to prove your age with an Australian Birth Certificate (not an extract) or Passport, which may be expired up to 2 years.
- Prove your identity with a statutory declaration (which includes your current address) from an authorised person who has known you for at least 1 year, such as your solicitor, nurse, dentist, optometrist, doctor or pharmacist.
- Provide a passport style photograph which the person who signed the statutory declaration has also endorsed. (As most pharmacies provide this service, your regular pharmacy is probably the best place to get the photo and statutory declaration signed.)
- Attend for an interview at a Post Office.
- Pay \$55, (refundable by the Association).
- The Keypass will be sent within **10 business days** of the interview.

KINGSBURY AWARDS 2014

Two Kingsbury awards ceremonies took place in December last year. Michael Ralston, Craig Iskov, Rob Eden and Max Caldwell were on hand to present the Bruce Kingsbury Achievers' Award to Ishrat Zaman and Patrick Pusztai from Kingsbury Primary School. In his letter of thanks, Patrick expressed his gratitude to the Battalion for the scholarship, which will support him in the commencement of his high school years and for the Battalion's "wonderful contribution to our school, over the years." The Bruce Kingsbury Award is very much valued by the Kingsbury Primary community.

At a similar ceremony at Reservoir High, veteran Max Caldwell presented Hannah Nguyen with the Bruce Kingsbury Scholarship, for her essay, which appears below. Hannah was formerly a student at Kingsbury Primary, where she had hoped to win the Kingsbury Award. She appreciates the great privilege that winning this scholarship embodies.



Hannah Nguyen with Craig Iskov, Michael Ralston and Max Caldwell.

BRUCE KINGSBURY ESSAY Hannah Nguyen



As we flip the pages of history, it is hard not coming to the realisation of how many people sacrificed their lives in the gruesome battle in Papua New Guinea against the Japanese. Younger generations today remember their courageous souls and the victory they brought back for Australia. Throughout World War II many men have stood out while fighting in the warzone, but not enough talk could praise

the courageous act of Bruce Kingsbury and his comrades from the 2nd/14th Battalion.

Our hero, Bruce Steel Kingsbury was born on 8th January 1918 in Melbourne, the second born of Philip Blawcowe Kingsbury and his wife Florence Annie. Bruce was a real estate agent, a soldier who attended Melbourne Technical College. It is no surprise that a scholarship is named after him since Bruce Kingsbury, himself received a scholarship, a scholarship from Windsor State School, one of the schools he attended. Later, he left the city for a job as caretaker. He and his boyhood friend Alan Avery later worked on a sheep station in New South Wales. After experiencing all the possibilities, he came back to Melbourne and joined his father in their real estate business at Northcote, and played in the Jika Cricket Association.

Pages of history continue, our hero continued to embark on his adventure when he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force on 16th May 1940. Before joining his comrades from the 2nd/ 14th Battalion, he was posted to the 2nd/ 2nd Pioneer Battalion. He soon joined his close friends and made acquaintance with Harry Saunders, a brother of the Aboriginal soldier who was Captain Reg Saunders. The training took place in the Middle East, but soon the unit took part in the invasion of Syria which began on 8th June 1941. On the day of 24th June 1941, Kingsbury and his platoon attacked Hill 1284. Although it was a failed battle, we could not say our heroes' courage and endurance was for nothing. It was just the beginning of a glorious victory.

Kingsbury and the 2nd /14th Battalion returned to Australia in March 1942. After five months, they were sent to Papua New Guinea to face their Japanese enemies on the Kokoda Track. On the 27th and 28th August, at Isurava, the Japanese furiously attacked the Australian's headquarter with a significant number. But that did not discourage our heroes' courageous souls; they fought in hope to regain lost ground immediately. Misfortunes befell on 9 Platoon as they suffered heavy losses, but the platoon's survivors volunteered to join another group for a counter – attack, including Kingsbury. He furiously attacked the Japanese, shooting his Bren gun from the hip, he fired bullets despite death may come. While waiting for his comrades to catch up, he moved ahead, still firing, the ticking of his life's clock ended under a sniper's bullet. His life was stolen on the 29 August 1942.

The war may have ended, but his name, his honour, his act of courage is still living with us today. He was honoured with the Victoria Cross, a suburb was named after him and a scholarship was named after our hero, the Bruce Kingsbury Scholarship.

As Australia's duty, we are bound to remember the days where our heroes sacrificed their lives, and on every year November 11th, we wear the red poppy with pride, to remember the comrades, the brave soldiers, the 2/14th Battalion but most importantly, we remember Bruce Kingsbury's bravery in the battle fighting against the Japanese.

Many cry in sorrow for the loss of a good friend, a soldier, some engraved his name in their hearts. The story will continue to be passed on as people remember. "Recounts note how Kingsbury took down many of the enemy soldiers in his charge towards them, firing many accurate shots and doing much damage" Georgia Lee wrote. It is a pity that a brave soul has gone, not to waste, but to the victory of Victoria for "Cowards die many times before their deaths, the valiant never taste of death but once."



We are thankful for the bravery of soldiers who fought in the war against the Japanese, for the brave souls that have lost their lives in order to bring safety back to Australia, to the 2/14th Battalion for taking part in the fight against the enemy, and for Bruce Kingsbury. We will remember him as a good friend to some, a soldier to others and a brave soul to Australia. Lest we forget.

OBITUARIES

VX15638 CORPORAL NORMAN LESLIE STRINGER



Army records in Canberra detail that Norman Leslie Stringer was born in Beaufort, Victoria, on 28 June 1918. He was living at Red Cliffs when war broke out and he enlisted on 17 May 1940. He attested at the General Details Depot at Caulfield

Racecourse before being posted to the 2/14 Battalion in 21 Brigade 7th Division of the AIF.

Norm marched in to the Battalion on 20 May 1940 at Caulfield and was part of a motley group of would-be soldiers who travelled by train to Puckapunyal Army Camp arriving on 21 May 1940, where he was posted to 7 Platoon in A Company, joining others from North-West Victoria. The Battalion was still building up to its wartime establishment as it began training for war in the Middle East.

On 18 October 1940, the Battalion was ready, issued with desert clothing and equipment, and entrained for Sydney where on the 19th, the troops boarded the grand old liner, Aquitania and sailed for the Middle East.

After settling in at Julis Camp in Palestine, the Battalion was soon sent to Mersa Matruh in north-west Egypt to strengthen the fortress defences because of a possible German breakthrough in North Africa. However, the Battalion was very quickly on the move again as the British High Command ordered a combined British and Australian invasion of the Vichy French territory of Syria, fearing its alliance with Germany would pose a threat to Allied forces in Cairo and the oil fields of Persia.

It was expected that the French would surrender after initial token defence but no-one told the French Foreign Legion who were opposing the Allies. In reserve for the early operations, A Company was in the thick of it at Damour with 7 Platoon shelled heavily by French artillery. However, it was not long before the French finally surrendered and the Battalion moved to Tripoli to strengthen the defences there in case of a German attack to retake Syria.

By Christmas 1941, the Battalion was expecting to return to Australia, as Japan had commenced its Asian expansion plans on 7 December 1941. The Battalion was at sea in the Indian Ocean as one of the pawns in the political game being played by Winston Churchill who wanted the Australians to go to Burma and John Curtin who wanted them returned to Australia, to meet the threat to its northern border.

Finally, the Battalion arrived back in Australia for some home leave before moving to Yandina on the Sunshine Coast to train for the jungles of

New Guinea. On 6 August 1942, the Battalion boarded the US Liberty ship, James Fenimore Cooper, and sailed for Port Moresby, arriving on 12 August and moving immediately to the foothills of the Owen Stanley Range.

Whilst A Company suffered heavily during the Kokoda Track fighting and were cut off behind enemy lines for 6 weeks, Norm did not take part in this fighting as he had been detached from the Battalion with several other NCOs on a special patrolling mission at Jawarere. He rejoined the Battalion when it was recuperating at Koitaki.

It was in the terrible conditions at Gona on the North coast that Norm came into his own, leading to the Battalion Second in Command and later Historian, Major Bill Russell, referring to him in the Battalion History as: "The redoubtable Corporal Norm Stringer, prince of scouts and patrol leaders..."

Armed with his Thompson sub-machine gun, time and again he would lay down accurate and withering cover fire to enable the recovery of the wounded or the withdrawal from hidden enemy fire. He was recommended for but not awarded a mention in despatches for numerous acts of "stamina, courage and initiative" in the often extremely swampy and impenetrable terrain.

In part, the nomination reads, "On two occasions in the Gona area he crawled forward alone to a position almost in the enemy lines and observed their dispositions and strength. Due to the information gained on these occasions the Battalion was able to take successful action against the enemy."

During the terrible fighting on 28 and 29 November 1942, when the Battalion lost many of its finest through attacks against hidden enemy positions, a Japanese sniper shot their aboriginal comrade and friend, Harry Saunders, who was just in front of Norm during a surprise attack; an incident Norm described on many occasions.

Like many of his comrades in this battle, frequently described as the worst conditions ever encountered in World War Two, Corporal Norm Stringer finally succumbed to the conditions and was evacuated to hospital. So long was his time in recovery, that he was not able to return to the Battalion in time for the Markham-Ramu Campaign and the fighting at Shaggy Ridge in 1943. After taking part in the invasion of Balikpapan in Borneo, in July 1945, he was finally discharged from the Army on 6 December 1945.

After the war, he joined the 2/14 Battalion Association and served as its Area representative for North-west Victoria, maintaining contact with the many veterans who returned there or the widows and families of his deceased comrades.

He served on the committee for many years and was accorded the honour of being elected President in 1962. Of course, being on the committee served a two-fold purpose for our veterans. The constitution provided that the Association committee comprised office bearers plus 25 committee so the quarterly meetings also served as "mini reunions".

He was a tremendous help with the compilation of the companion history, Men of the 2/14

Battalion, spending many hours, days and weeks sifting through military records to ensure the information for publication was accurate.

For his great service to the Association and its family, in 2010 he was accorded the great honour of being awarded life membership.

Not only was Norm a great bloke but he was also a brave soldier who well served Australia, his comrades in arms and the veteran community at large in war and peacetime.

He will be greatly missed.



Norm Stringer with members of his family on the award of his Life Membership

OTHER UNITS

Those who have attended the Queensland Reunion in recent years will be saddened to hear of the passing of two stalwarts of the Papuan Infantry Battalion (PIB), **Ben Moide** and **Alan Hooper**.

Greg Ivey, from the PIB NGIB HQ PIR Association has provided the following:

Sadly, I advise you of the death of **PN67 Lance Sgt Ben Moide CBE**, a famous warrior of World War 2. Ben, aged 88, was living with family at Waigani on the outskirts of Port Moresby.

Ben's father came from the village of Saguane on Kiwai Island near Daru in the Western District while his mother came from the Motuan village of Pari, 5km to the east of Port Moresby. Steven Benjamin Moide was born on 21 June 1924, the third of nine children. Ben's mixed cultural background was a marked feature of his Army and civilian life.

Ben left the Catholic School at Badili to sign up for the Papuan Infantry Battalion on the day of its formation, 1 July 1940. He was 16 at the time, and did not tell his parents what he was intending. He told the Australian Enlistment Officer that he was 19. Ben's recruit training sergeant was the equally famous (former Police) Sgt Katue MM from Kikori. Lahui Ako's biography of Ben (Nameless Warriors) published in 2012 by UPNG (www.pngbuai.com/buybooks) reveals that Ben learnt quickly and was promoted into leadership roles by his Australian taubadas.

Post-war society was difficult for Ben and other soldiers unless they re-enlisted in the Pacific Islands Regiment (from 1951). Ben persevered through the development

problems of Port Moresby and found employment with the Australian Administrator, the University of PNG Vice-Chancellor and finally SP Brewery. After the war, Ben was also very active as a leader in the RSL and in the developing Rugby League organisation.

Ben was honoured with a MBE then a CBE and he was chosen to represent all ex-Servicemen at all PNG Remembrance Day Services (23 July) in recent decades. In that capacity, Ben was an advocate and an icon for the PIB and NGIB in Papua New Guinea. Ben was a frequent and welcome guest at ANZAC Day and Kokoda Day services in Qld where his presence reminded everyone of the critical role played by the PIB and NGIB in all the PNG campaigns (except Milne Bay) during World War 2. Ben maintained a close relationship with Capt Alan Hooper (PIB, ANGAU) as they reminisced, in Motu, about their war experiences.

It is too soon to assess Ben's broad legacy but his cross-cultural work and his published perspective as a Papuan warrior would both rate highly among historians. Our PIB NGIB HQ PIR Association has lost one of its heroes.

Capt Alan Hooper, aged 95, passed away almost within a fortnight of the death of his World War 2 Platoon Sergeant, Ben Moide.

Alan was an early and long-term Member of our Association (which we now call by a slightly different name). His intelligent and wise contribution surpassed the normal role of "Member". His guidance was often sought and always respected and he has left a lasting historical legacy for us to maintain. He participated diligently and professionally in the Commemorations and Reunions of PNG servicemen, but now another link to Kokoda/Owen Stanleys and our Association's post-War origins has sadly passed.



Ben Moide and Alan Hooper at a recent reunion.

EDITORS APOLOGY

The photograph that appeared with the obituary for Brian Cooke OAM in the December 2013 edition of Comradeship, was of James Hudson, not Brian Cooke. The correct photo is included to the left.



Brian Cooke OAM

As Editor, I apologise for any distress my error may have caused, and I thank Les Ramage for drawing it to my attention.

ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIVE MARCH ASSEMBLY PLAN (MELBOURNE)



Assembly Point

Flinders Street East (St Paul's Side), next to Federation Square.

Step Off - The 7th Division "step off" time is 10.00 am so marchers should be in position by 9.30 am at the latest. Look for the Banner.

Vehicles will be provided for all veterans who would prefer to ride and they will be brought to the assembly point. The vehicles will be labelled with the unit. There will be no open trucks or land rovers, just cars and maybe mini buses. Meet at our form up point, at the 2/14 banner, and we will arrange a vehicle for you if required. **(Transport request must be made before 19th March 2014 - please contact John Smith on 0427 522 999 or email (jlsmith1946@gmail.com))**

The March organisers make the following points:

- Marchers are requested to form up 6 abreast.
- Next of kin should march as a group behind the veterans and be old enough to march the full distance.
- Clothing should be respectful.
- Please do not carry photographs.
- Prams and pushers are not encouraged.
- Next of kin should wear medals on the right breast.

We will march up to the forecourt of the Shrine past the VIP dais and perform an "eyes right" at the Eternal Flame, the banner and flag bearers will dip the banner and flags at the same point before the entire party left wheels past the Flame and disperses beyond the main flag poles.

Children from Kingsbury Primary School will hold the ropes from the banner (4 students) and will carry the flags (2 students). They will be wearing their school uniforms, which are in the Battalion colours. Two older descendants of veterans will be required to hold the banner. If you wish to do this please advise the Secretary, John Smith as soon as possible on 0427 522 999 or email (jlsmith1946@gmail.com)

Once again our comrades from the 2/16 Battalion Association have kindly extended an invitation to join them for lunch and/or drinks and a chat at the Lord Palmerston Hotel after the March. The hotel is located at the corner of Palmerston Crescent & Kingsway in South Melbourne.

The nearest **parking** will be at Federation Square car park. The RSL will also provide golf buggies at the entrance to the car park at the Russell Street extension to take veterans to the start of the March. Buses will be available opposite Simpson and his Donkey in Birdwood Avenue to return veterans to the City. Please note wheelchairs/scooters are no longer available, so if you feel you are unable to march, you will need to go in a car. Golf buggies will be available along the March route in case of an emergency.

QUEENSLAND REPORT

In December I attended the Graduation Parade for students completing their primary years at Yandina State School. I have only been attending such events for around 60 years and found this to be one of the most entertaining of them all.

Principal, Rob Jennings, had invited local resident Darren Percival as guest speaker. Following his introduction by student leaders, I learned that he had been runner up in the 2012 series of "The Voice". Following the fascinating musical 'Welcome to Country' by school parent Lyndon Davis, Rob's entertaining talk, including a rendition of the "Hot Concrete Barefoot Shuffle", and the rousing sing along presentation from Darren, I felt grossly inadequate as I rose to present the 2/14 Battalion Association bursary.

My trepidation was soon quashed by the excitement, enthusiasm and gratitude of the two recipients, Emma and Reddell. As their picture shows, the girls were thrilled with their efforts and the resultant rewards. Just as happy were Alex and Tiana, who spoke at the Remembrance

Day Ceremony (see previous Comradeship) when they were presented with Battalion colour patch badges, as thanks.

It is hoped that during the coming year, students from Yandina and Kingsbury Primary might make contact with one another. In the meantime I am looking for theatrical ways to embellish next year's presentation.



Trevor with bursary winners, Emma and Reddell

Farewell Alan Hooper.

PIB and ANGAU member Alan Hooper was laid to rest in January, just days after celebrated PNG veteran, Ben Moide. Alan had been Ben's platoon commander at

one stage during their war service. And they were good mates. Alan was a regular supporter of the Qld reunion and often donated copies of his books, *Love, War and Letters*, and *Kokoda - Ten epic war treks retold and Papua revisited*.

Alan's family made the difficult choice not to adhere to Alan's request for a small family funeral. Their decision was well received by the many family and friends who chose to pay respects including those from the PIB/PIR, 39th, 49th and 2/14 Battalion Associations. It was a pleasure to join Michael Webster in representing our Association.



Tribute to Alan Hooper

Trevor Pryor

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REPORT

Greetings from the land of the Crow eaters.

In December, I was invited to speak at the Centacare Kokoda Trekkers group about the role of the 2/14 and 39th Battalions in the establishment of the Isurava Memorial. The Centacare trekkers raise money for Centacare's Disability Services and have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars over many years. The event was hosted by Senator Anne McEwan, a keen trekker. Their 2014 Kokoda trek plans are well underway.



Bertha and Matt Power

On a recent trip to Queensland we caught up with Matt and Bertha Power at Mt Tamborine. As usual, Matt was his sprightly self

and when quizzed, told me of his recollections of being wounded at Isurava. I have requested Matt to consider writing his memoirs which I hope he will do.

Matt is adamant he wishes to return to

Balikpapan in 2015 for the 70th anniversary of the landings.

I recently had the privilege of meeting Mrs. Betty Roberts, widow of VX8257 Cpl. Ernest (Bob) Roberts, who lives in Adelaide.

Mrs. Roberts is a very fit 95 year old who married her husband, Bob, after his return from the Middle East with the battalion in 1942. Best man at the wedding was battalion colleague VX18083 Alan Pullyn, who later won the Military Medal at Gona. Because of a shortage of uniform items at the time, Alan did not have any suitable AIF uniforms left so he borrowed a British Army uniform for the wedding.



Ernest "Bob" Roberts -Jerusalem 1941



Bob marries Betty in Melbourne in 1942. Best man is VX 18083 Alan Pullyn MM

Bob Roberts who joined the battalion in 1940, was injured in the Middle East just prior to

the battalion returning to Australia as a result of a bomb blast that badly affected his back in 13 places. According to Mrs. Roberts, Bob deliberately did not report his injury as being 'wounded in action' as he thought he would be left in hospital the Middle East and not return to Australia with the battalion. He put on a brave face but was admitted to the ship's hospital on the return voyage. On arrival in Australia, he ended up in hospital in Queensland then was sent back to Melbourne where he was discharged from the army medically unfit in 1943.

Sadly for Bob, his older brother Richard "Dick" Roberts, SX2804, a Commando sergeant in the 1 Independent Company, was involved in the defence of Kavieng, New Ireland, and captured by the Japanese when the remnant tried to escape the island. Along with the rest of the NCOs and other ranks, he died in the sinking of the POW ship, Montevideo Maru, on 30 June, 1942.

Bob and Betty moved to Adelaide in 1954, where Bob pursued a career in advertising. They had 4 daughters, Bronwyn, Robyn, Jennifer and Sian and subsequently had 5 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. Bob was active in Legacy and was a president of

70 YEARS AGO - THE LONG WAIT BEGINS

Following the action at Shaggy Ridge, the Battalion spent over a month in Port Moresby, then returned to Australia by the end of March, 1944, for six weeks leave. During this leave, the troops reassembled in their capital cities in order to take part in the Seventh Division marches in Perth (27 March), Adelaide (4 April), Sydney (14 April) and Melbourne (19 April). (Brisbane had to wait until 8 August, for their march.)

On their return from leave, the unit was based at Strathpine, just north of Brisbane, for several months. 7th Division Commander, Major-General Vasey, had directed that his troops should spend some time within reach of a city and civilisation, following their deployment in New Guinea during the Ramu-Markham campaign. On the General's orders, the emphasis during this time was on recreation, aimed at producing physical and mental fitness, rather than on military training. Many inter-battalion sporting events were held, including an Australian Rules competition in which the Battalion team defeated all opponents, except for a narrow defeat by 2/16 Battalion.

A special feature of this period was the renewing of old friendships in the Nambour-

Yandina district. There were several organised visits to the area at the invitation of the townsfolk, as well as weekend trips made by individuals.

Following the 7 Division march in Brisbane in August, the Battalion moved to the Atherton Tableland, this time to camp on the Barron River at Kairi. The move was approached with enthusiasm in the expectation that they would soon be deployed in the re-taking of The Philippines.



Close up of a section of the huge crowd watching the march of the 7th division, New Guinea veterans, through the streets of Melbourne, at the corner of Bourke and Swanston streets on 19 April, 1944.

the South Australian Branch for some time. He passed away in 1983.

Mrs. Roberts fondly recalls a "young" Matt Power and recalls her husband getting angry with Matt for daring to get a tattoo on his arm. How times have changed! She also recalls her husband's friendship with battalion stalwart, Lionel Smith.

Bob Roberts' photograph appears on page 240 of Jim McAllester's book, "Men of the 2/14 Battalion".

Mrs. Roberts is now back on the Comradeship mailing list and sends her regards to our members.



Mrs Betty Roberts with Anna Hopley

Bob Thompson is still doing well in residential care in Adelaide and still enjoys a chat about the 2/14 Battalion.



Kim and Anna Hopley pay a visit to Bob Thompson

Balikpapan Landings 70th Anniversary - 2015

We are already planning for the Balikpapan Landings 70th anniversary commemoration in July 2015. A working party is being put together and further information will appear in Comradeship. Even though it is 18 months away, make a diary note now as this trip will be well subscribed.

As part of Balikpapan 2015, we are also planning an optional short PNG stopover for those who would like to visit Port Moresby, the Bomana War Cemetery and a drive to Ower's Corner, at the start of the Owen Stanley Ranges for a view of the Kokoda Track and Imita Ridge. No need to walk the track.

Details will appear in a future Comradeship.

Ian Hopley

EVENT CALENDAR

2014

2/16th Reunion Lunch

Saturday 22nd March 2014
- 12 noon
Old Hepburn Springs Hotel,
Hepburn Springs

Wreath-laying Service

Wednesday, 23rd April 2014,
9.30 am
2/14 Battalion Tree,
Northwest corner
The Shrine of Remembrance

Annual Reunion – Melbourne

Wednesday, 23 April 2014
- 12.00noon
Victoria Barracks, St Kilda Road,
See page 2 for details

ANZAC Day March

Friday, 25th April 2014
See assembly details and time on page 5

Yarra Valley Legacy ANZAC

Service for Local Schools

Wednesday, 30th April 2014,
11.00 am
Ferntree Gully National Park

Military History Tour of HMAS Cerberus

Thursday, 15 May 2014
Leaving The Shrine at 8.45 am

4th Committee Meeting

Sunday, 1st June 2014
East Malvern RSL

Reunion – Queensland

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

AGM & 1st Committee Meeting

Sunday, 21 September,
- 11.00 am
The Shrine of Remembrance

Annual Pilgrimage

Sunday, 21 September,
-1.30 pm The Sanctuary,
The Shrine of Remembrance

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Around The Traps

Annette Coy called in to see **VX 22775 George Russell** and his wife, Sylvia, on a visit to Sydney before Christmas. They have moved into a care facility, Milford House, in Randwick, though Sylvie misses her unit. Their daughter, Susan, continues to give them sterling support.

A group of 2/14 Battalion kinfolk spent pleasant evening together at the Bamboo House, in Melbourne, recently. **VX22729 Percy 'Ginty' Foreman's** daughter, Jan Erskine was down from Mildura and **VX21199 Stan Bisset's** son, Jim, was also in town. They were joined by various **Bears, Edens, Iskavs, Ralstons, Thomsons, and Toby Mann's** daughter, Karen Brkic, and many stories of departed fathers were shared. Jan passed on a copy of some of her father's recorded memories of the battle at Isurava, as well as a significant file of material provided by **VX22379 Wally Scott's** daughter, Carol Kennedy. Wally was a survivor of the Buckler party, which spent 40 days in the wilderness, making their way back to Port Moresby from the battle at Isurava.

WX13895 Cyril Allender had a chat with Marg Briggs late last year, to express his sadness at the passing of so many of his fellow soldiers. Cyril passed on his memories of the death of Marg's brother, Claude Nye, during the battle at Brigade Hill, in 1942.

When he was in Queensland at the start of December, Michael Ralston visited **VX15317 Dudley Warhurst**. Though almost blind,

Michael reported Dudley was the best he'd seen him in a while. Dudley is having to get

used to listening to the cricket, rather than watching it.

If you who have ordered a **Memorial Paver** at the Cascade Gardens Memorial, Queensland, we have to report that there will be a delay in their being laid. Unfortunately, some of the pavers were damaged by a courier when in transit from NSW. **Talking Stones**, who make and lay the pavers, have said they will deliver them in person, to avoid a repetition of the incident.

VX15237 Bob Iskov has finally decided to grow a beard. This is the first time ever in his 93 years; he did have a moustache once in the 1960's (but not for long after Amy went on strike). He has quoted 3 reasons for not shaving.

1. "I have been shaving for 80 years and I'm sick of it."
2. "All the AFL players are doing it."
3. "Ned Kelly died with a beard, I will too."

In March, Bob will receive a special visitation from a Papua New Guinea cultural group which will perform for him at Wangaratta.



Bob Iskov's new look

THE HISTORY OF THE SECOND FOURTEENTH BATTALION

BY W. B. RUSSELL, MA, BEd

As you are probably aware, the 2/14 Battalion Association, re-issued the History in 2011 and to date we have sold around 400 copies. The profits from these sales help the Association to continue supporting our veterans and widows and maintain our educational goals which we believe is the future of the Association. Our relationship with several schools continues as we bring to their attention World War 2, and the important and unforgettable contribution that the 2/14 Australian Infantry Battalion made to the freedom of Australia.

Perhaps you have a school in mind where your children or grandchildren have attended, and would like them to have a copy of the History in their library. If you wish to make a special purchase for a school

or local library please contact Chris Ingram (details below).

Or, if you don't have a copy or you're seeking that special present for a younger member of the family, please order your copy or copies.

Please email me at chris.ingram@margni.com or telephone (03) 9561 5790 for details of how to purchase a copy of this important book.

The order form is also available at the Association's website:
www.2nd14battalion.org.au

Chris Ingram
Special Projects Officer